

Composition: Electronic Media II

Spring 2015

Kaija Saariaho: *NoaNoa*

1. Year Composed: 1992
Orchestration: Flute + Electronics
Duration: 8-10'
2. The patch for this piece was created with Max. Although the patch manipulates the live performance by adding considerable reverberation, its most active role is sound file playback.
3. The performer uses a foot pedal to communicate with the patch. Each press of the foot pedal triggers an event; some of these events play back sound files, while others affect parameters such as the amount of reverberation present.
4. The live performance incorporates numerous extended techniques—pitch bending, flutter tonguing, multi-phonics, speaking, etc.—in close proximity and at rapidly fluctuating dynamic levels.
5. The effect of the tape is often subtle; many of the sound files closely resemble the timbre of the live musical events. The timbral interplay between instrument and tape emphasizes the attention Saariaho pays to spectral detail.
6. The sound files used in the first half of the piece are mostly recordings of solo flute lines. This makes it difficult to tell, at least from an audio perspective, which element is live and which element is pre-recorded. During the second half of the piece, the sound files become increasingly distinct from the flute timbre; however, their spectral content still shares much in common with that of the live flute.
7. Loose analysis of electronics:
 - a. Reverb (0:00-1:37)
 - b. Reverb + duet (~1:37-1:56)
 - c. Reverb (1:56-2:20)
 - d. Reverb + duet + male voice (2:20-2:52)
 - e. Reverb (2:52-3:01)
 - f. Trill texture + duet (~3:01-3:37)
 - g. Off-and-on reverb (3:37-3:56)
 - h. Low flute sounds + “airy quiver” (wind tone?) (3:56-4:15)
 - i. Reverb (4:15-4:57)
 - j. Reverb + duet (5:00-5:17)
 - k. Reverb (5:18-5:47) ...alongside return of opening material
 - l. Low & high long tones...rumble at ~5:59 (5:47-6:50)
 - m. High jingling...mostly dry but with some resonance (6:53-7:06)
 - n. Low & high tones again...the low tone is much purer this time (7:14-7:31)
 - o. Alternation of low & high tones plus high jingling with wet mix more prevalent (7:31-7:38)
 - p. Similar long tones with more & inconsistent attacks (7:43-8:02)
 - q. Reverb (8:02-8:11)
 - r. Noise...air (non-pitched) blown through flute & normalized? (8:11-8:37)
 - s. High jingling, nearly smoothed out (8:43-8:54)