

## **Ipsa Lotto**

An electroacoustic work

**Clara Maïda**

(8' 05)

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*Ipsa Lotto* for electronics lies at the intersection of two series of pieces, *Lostery* and *in ipso tempore*.

If the piece is played as part of the series *Lostery*, it can be presented in three different ways: either separately played in a concert; or considered as the sound part of a visual installation and played in loop in the place in which the installation is shown; or else associated to the piece *Later gambler* for contrabass clarinet and electronics. If the piece is played in the context of the series *in ipso tempore*, it is played in a concert and can follow the piece *Ipsa facta* for electronics.

*Lostery 2* has been premiered in its double form: a sound and visual installation and a concert. The works *Ipsa Lotto* and *Later gambler* have been successively played in the place in which the visual installation was exhibited.

The title *Lostery* condenses the words "lost" and "Lottery". Thus it expresses a rather pessimistic state of mind in which what has been brought into play leads most of the time to failure. It accounts for the economic and social crisis that we have been experiencing over several years and for the increasing inequality between people.

*Lostery* questions two structural parameters which have a significant impact on our lives - on the one hand, the gearwheels of the societal machine in which we are immersed and which mostly conditions our destinies, and on the other hand, the notion of chance which plays a part in the path that we will or will not be able to follow. It divides individuals on the side of the more or less lucky or unlucky according to the socio-political and economic system of the country in which they were born (more or less favoured and equalitarian), their life in a country at peace or at war, the socio-cultural level of the family they have been brought up in, the possibility to study or not, the greater or lesser freedom of choice given to them, etc.

From the Latin locution "ipso facto", which means "by the very fact", "therefore, automatically", I coined the title, *Ipsa Lotto*, which might mean "by the very lot", by what one can get (or not).

The piece uses the sound recording of the machines present in game rooms or casinos (slot machines, balls rebounding on a roulette, banknote counter, chips shaken in a cup, sound of the jackpot, etc.). *Ipsa Lotto* recreates the atmosphere of these places in which to win money is the only important, sometimes even obsessional fact. The different sound morphologies evoke the mechanical dimension of the machines as well as that of the players who keep repeating the same gestures. The splinters, the jolts, the rolls, the rebounds or ricochets, the falling movements, recur in a circular space which recalls the structure of the roulette in a casino. A more abstract and structural dimension evokes the potential and endlessly recomposed multiplicity of the combinations of chance. Kaleidoscopic sound objects materialize this redistribution of chances each time the dice are thrown on a table or the chips on a roulette, for instance.

The musical work is played in a space that includes visual elements and objects related to the games of chance. A huge abstract animated machinery projected onto a screen gives a visual counterpoint to the sound mechanics of the piece. Its interlocked graphical motifs evoke the complex gearwheels of a world beyond any control. This kind of entangled web gives the feeling that the individuals are trapped in an obscure mechanism which completely randomly casts the dice. Its black and white graphics recalls that the game is binary. We win ("jackpot") or we lose ("jack shit", "nothing" in slang). It is double or quits, all or nothing. Real objects (five Bingo machines) are placed before black stands on which built objects (spheres of various sizes, small cubes) present the same abstract black and white graphics as that of the machinery and create a connection between the objects related to the games (Lotto balls, dice) and the projected image. They seem to be debris rejected by a system with an inflexible mechanics.

What is chance? Are we born on the right or the wrong side? How far can we really decide on our life? The accumulation of the sound and visual connections in *Lostery* induces the perception of a kinetic, bruitist and machinic whole. Which place is it possible to find in such a system or, inversely, how is it possible to step aside and to get out of it?

Clara Maïda, December 2016