



**Heaton, R. (2014) 'Pierre Boulez 'Domaines'' [Liner notes].  
In *The inner time: contemporary music for clarinet* [CD].  
Clarinet Classics Education.**

## **ResearchSPAce**

<http://researchspace.bathspa.ac.uk/>

This version is made available in accordance with publisher policies.

Please cite only the published version using the reference above.

See <http://researchspace.bathspa.ac.uk/> for usage policies.

Please scroll down to view the document.

## Pierre Boulez *Domaines*

Roger Heaton

Boulez's *Domaines* (Areas/Domains) was originally written as a work for solo clarinet but later, whilst retaining the solo part exactly, six small instrumental ensembles were added to each of the soloist's *cahiers* or pages. The work was started during 1960, though some ideas were jotted down in 1959, and completed by 1968. *Domaines* follows on from the Third Piano Sonata of 1957 and the large-scale piece *Pli selon pli* (Fold by Fold) for orchestra and soprano, which he worked on between 1957 and 1962. There are close links between the three pieces in terms of expressive material, for example similarities between the clarinet and vocal writing, and the quasi-aleatoric nature of the notation, the layout on the page of fragments of material. A great deal has been written about the Third Piano Sonata and it is clear from Boulez's own writings, particularly the article 'Sonate, que me veux-tu?' which first appeared in English in *Perspectives of New Music* in 1963 and refers to Stéphane Mallarmé (1842–98) and particularly his poem *Un Coup de dés* (A Throw of the Dice - written in 1897 and published posthumously in 1914), that he considers this one of the most important poems of the twentieth century. The typography, the weighting and size of words and particularly their placing and spacing on the page is fundamental to the spatial concepts in *Domaines*. There are other influences, the ideas about aleatoric music and chance: there is correspondence about this with Cage (during the period 1949-1954) and similarities with works by Stockhausen and others around the same time particularly his *Klavierstück XI* (1956) with nineteen fragments on a single page.

*Domaines* as is typical with Boulez had a long period of composition. The first ideas for the piece were in 1959 when the piece had the provisional title *Concert* or *Labyrinthe* and the idea of 'six-ness' and spatial distribution of players was

there from the start. The Sacher Stiftung has a single sheet of hotel note paper dated 9 April 1959 with notes written on the back. The page lists ensembles of instruments, many of which will appear in the ensemble version of *Domaines*, and a star drawing with five ensembles at the five star points with the conductor and audience in the centre. It seems that an ensemble piece was conceived from the start rather than a solo.

During the early 1960s Boulez was working on a theatre piece, a kind of opera provisionally entitled *Marges* (margin, marginalia) which he never completed, and a short Cantata for baritone and small instrumental group. The cantata was to be composed in collaboration with the novelist Michel Butor and the project included an art book which would have graphical devices designed in layout along the lines of Mallarmé's *Un Coup de des*. The Cantata was for the baritone Barry McDaniel based on poems by e e cummings, particularly the collection *No Thanks* from 1935. This piece was to be premiered in the concert series in Ulm<sup>1</sup> in September 1968 but *Domaines* was substituted at the last minute played by Hans Deinzer. The sketches show that much of the *Domaines* material relates to the Cantata and *Marges* with some of the solo clarinet lines in sketch form having text underlaid. These fragments of text are from the e e cummings poem which Boulez later used for the 1969 chorus and orchestra piece '*cummings ist der dichter...*'. *Domaines* exists in both a solo version and one with six instrumental groups that he has always considered unfinished or in the process of revision. Minus the cummings text a revised form of the string sextet used in the cantata found its way into a new version of *Domaines* in which the clarinet dialogues with six instrumental ensembles. The first performance took place at the in Brussels December 20, 1968, played by Walter Boeykens and members of the Radio

---

<sup>1</sup> Ulmer Konzerte, a chamber concert series begun in 1956. Boulez participated in 1964,66,68 and70. These were mixed programmes of old and new music and Boulez rather uncharacteristically conducted Vivaldi and a performance of the Monteverdi Vespers (with help in terms of an edition from Leo Schrader the important musicologist who worked in Basel and who wrote the a pioneering book on Monteverdi). The Kantate was advertised in the programme but was replaced at the last minute by the first performance of the solo version of *Domaines* played by Deinzer (Sept 20 1968).

Symphony Orchestra under the direction of the composer. After Hans Deinzer first performed the solo version in Ulm Boulez requested that he did not play it again until revisions were complete, which never happened. A kind of 'revision' is the piece for clarinet and electronics *Dialogue de l'ombre double* (1982-85) which takes material from the ensemble music of *Domaines* but not from the solo part. Universal Edition published the solo part in 1970 it has since been reprinted but still contains errors.

*Domaines* consists of six *cahiers* labelled A to F. Each of these 'originals' has a 'mirror' version, making twelve *cahiers* in all. Each in turn contains six 'cells' or fragments. These range in content from just a single note to four dense lines of complex music. The performer must begin by playing all six original *cahiers*, presenting them in any order; then the six mirror versions are played, again in any order. The six cells on each page may be performed sequentially in one of two ways, either vertically or horizontally. The performer is offered a number of different ways to play many of the cells. These relate to alternative tempo markings (no metronome marks are used in the work), levels of dynamics, optional trills, use of vibrato, flutter-tonguing, and extended techniques such as colour fingerings or trills on one note, use of air sounds, and multiphonics.

*Domaines* is all about the number six: six *cahiers original*, six *mirroir* (almost the exact retrograde of the material) and six fragments of material on each page. The piece is serial in that rather opaque Boulezian way, based on six pitches the sketches show the integral serialist techniques: 12x12 matrices for rhythm and dynamics and a hierarchical structuring of material often using three different colours. The sketches and first drafts clearly show that the pitch, rhythm and even articulation are present in early versions, dynamics appear later and all the 'extended techniques' only appear in the final drafts. *Domaines* is also all about colour and about the clarinet - there is no question that this is a clarinet piece.

The notation demands a different and careful approach from the player where, rather than simply being concerned with the mechanics of notes and rhythms, there is an immediate concern with colour - the player explores each fragment and carefully places it in space judging continuity and pauses between fragments and, in the solo version, pages. Mitchell (2006) quotes one of the early performers of the work, Alan Hacker, as saying that Boulez was concerned about the continuity of the fragments suggesting to more quickly through the material with fewer pauses between. In my clarinet lessons on the piece with Hans Deinzer at the Darmstadt Ferienkurse für Neue Musik in 1980 he also talked about the 'phrasing' and the way in which the musical materials of the fragments determined the pauses or lack of pauses between them. *Domaines* may be fragmentary music but it is not *pointilliste* in that there is always a sense of the larger structure, the way in which the player travels from material to material and from page to page giving a sense of expressive and coherent continuity. The notation begins to look like the music sounds in the groupings and the placing/spacing on the page but more significantly requires the player to 'interpret' in the relative freedom of expressive timing and placing. It is the radical nature of this notation in Boulez (and other composers in the complex modernist tradition, as well as others using different non-traditional symbols) unlike that of say Elliott Carter, perhaps a similar soundworld but traditionally notated, which militates against the lazy employment of tradition or ingrained 'musicality' and by its very nature asks of performers an interpretation without preconceptions, without history or tradition but simply in response to the text.

## The materials held in the Paul Sacher Stiftung Basel<sup>2</sup>

(H 6a1) a plan for 'Concert', a first possible title, also here is 'Labyrinthe' as a possible title. The page is dated 9 April 1959 and also has star diagrams, also solo cl page layout and A B C 1 2 3 stuff all in green. (H 6a2) Domaines heuteurs. Webern Op. 27. There are four rows from the Webern and some minimal analysis by Boulez. (H 6a3) Instrumental arrangement plans all on scraps of paper including hotel notepaper and (H 6a4) two rhythmic sketches on the backs of envelopes. (H 6a5) is the most detailed sketch page for the solo part in three colours – red, green, blue (reproduced with permission<sup>3</sup>). (H 6a6) four pages of slightly smaller A3 size of the solo part, two pages 'original' and two pages 'retrograde'. The first page is labeled 'Doubles = hauteurs/durées'. Material is all marked A B C D F down the left side of the page and in each is set out the final version page by page – in small crosses that relate to the plans in the published version. All the notation is in biro, there are three colours, red, green, blue (Robert Piencikowski says the he used a child's tri-colour pen, three-in-one) – mostly blue on this page. Red and green are often used for some of the grace notes but this is not consistent. This use of colour, according to Piencikowski, comes from Henri Pousseur. The important aspect of this page is that this is where he has some English words in pencil (page 1 original cahier B) from e e Cummings 'No thanks' - 'birds here inventing six, whose voices are a...air, sing twilight, vastness'. These words are not descriptive of the music as such but are words to be sung. In these sketches all pitch, rhythm, articulation and phrasing is generally present, but there are no dynamics, nor are there any 'treatments' or extended techniques. (H 6a7) 24 line stave orchestral manuscript, with two sheets opened out and then stuck together. The notation is all in blue fountain pen. This is a transposed B flat clarinet version of the 'original' as spaced

<sup>2</sup> Happe H Dossier 6a Domaines 1. Fassung (edition/version)

<sup>3</sup> Pierre Boulez: *Domaines*, 1st version - Clarinet solo (1968): sketch (Pierre Boulez Collection, Paul Sacher Foundation, Basel).

out in the published version with no dynamics or treatments but with all articulation and phrasing. It should be pointed out that all the sketches and preliminary version of the piece are un-transposed at concert pitch. Deinzer told me that before the first performance he received pages of score every few days, all un-transposed, and this was the score he played from. There are some differences from the final score, for example he uses the old rhythmic version of the fragment in D.

## Bibliography

Bassetto, L. (2006) 'Marginalia, ou l'opéra fantôme de Pierre Boulez'. In J-L Leleu and P. Decroupet (Eds) *Pierre Boulez: techniques d'écriture et enjeux esthétiques*. Geneva: Contrechamps Editions. 255-298.

Boulez, P. (1963) 'Sonate, Que me Veux-tu?' *Perspectives of New Music*. 1/2. 32-44.

Edwards, A. (1989) 'Unpublished Bouleziana at the Paul Sacher Foundation', *Tempo* 169, 4-15.

O'Hagan, P. (1997) *Pierre Boulez: 'Sonate "que me veux-tu?"'. An investigation of the manuscript sources in relation to the Third Sonata and the issue of performance choice*. Dissertation Surrey University.

Heaton, R. (1995) 'The contemporary clarinet'. In *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*. Ed. C. Lawson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 163-183.

Mitchell, I. (2006) 'Towards a beginning: thoughts leading to an interpretation of Domaines for solo clarinet by Pierre Boulez'. In *The Versatile Clarinet*. Ed. R. Heaton. New York: Routledge. 109-132.

Nattiez, J-J. Ed. (1993) *The Boulez-Cage Correspondence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.