

Letter dated 19/02/1990

Dear Miss Bancaud,

Here are some general ideas on my music and some details about the works you have mentioned.

- A. My conception of man (humankind ?) and of the universe is based on the following doctrines : Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism.
- B. Music language
 1. Geography : the town of Hué (former capital of the Empire of Vietnam) is the center of Vietnam. The landscape, colour and light, and the character of this town. It is both ancient and poetic, near the mountain (about 8 kilometers) and is not far from the sea (9 kilometers), with a beautiful river running through it (The River of Perfumes).
 2. The vision of Hué can be seen in works like *Images lointaines II (Distant images II)* for soprano and orchestra (1981) or *Les Jardins d'autres mondes (The gardens of other worlds)* (1987) for harp and instrumental orchestra. Hué, with its imperial palace has become a historical city with historical buildings. It has kept its own orchestra and Imperial corps de ballet to this very day. Hué, with its court music and so-called recreational music (I have studied percussion technique in court music as well as in music for theater).

The vision of one's town of birth (or the soul of this town) with the music of this central part of Vietnam (not to mention other foreign-country musical roots like those of India or Japan), and the ideas of Oriental philosophies, are the three main elements inherent in my musical language.

After these words about my music, here are some details about the works themselves.

- I. *Kiem Ai* :

This is a cry to awaken man's conscience

 - I used *The Exodus* by Tu Fu (a 7 th century Chinese poet) to begin the work (choir of the crowd ; murmurs then cries).
 - The end begins with a quotation in Vietnamese from the poem *The song of the silkworm and rice* by Tu Fu, then the children's choir, a utopian dream of a peaceful world (like the song of adolescents in an unreal world).
The orchestration is often violent : war, destruction, oppression. A deliberate violence to express these ideas.
- II. *CHU KY*

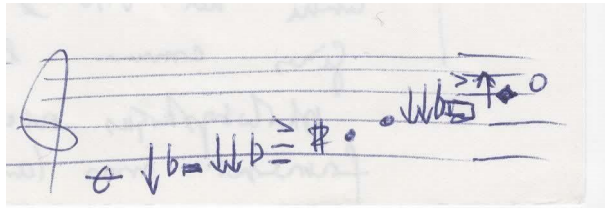
The presentation text for the Chu Ky series can be used for the seven Chu Ky pieces as a whole .

CHU KY
Chu Ky I 1978 (string trio)

- Chu Ky II 1976 (brass quintet)
- Chu Ky III 1977 harp
- Chu Ky IV 1977 4 percussions
- Chu Ky V 1983 Flute and harp
- Chu Ky VI (vocal group)
- Chu Ky VII 1986 harp and instrumental ensemble

Analysis of *Chu Ky III* :

- 1) Form : cyclical (the musical lay-out is based on the idea of a cycle)
- 2) Harp technique
- 3) The G note used as the first spirit to engender the world
the basic series is inspired by Raga Todi :



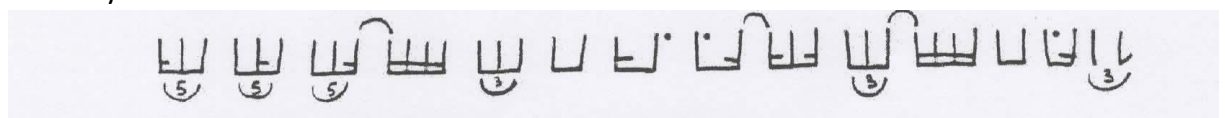
- III. *Jeu des 5 éléments I (Play of the 5 elements I)* (violin and cello)
 - Consult the presentation text for series of studies about the Elements
 - a) Earth-Fire (1981) for solo viola
 - b) Metal-Earth- Water (1981) for solo viola
 - c) Wood-Earth (1982) for solo cello

Play of the Five Eléments I is based on the correspondence and the opposition of the chosen elements. The principal chosen elements are surrounded by secondary elements which intervene randomly or through the unfolding of the series (here the series is treated more or less the same as in the serial theory). This is why the form of these studies is not as precise as in that of the *Chu Ky*, it depends on the encounters of the elements and translates the conception of a constantly moving universe.

Basic series



Basic rhythm



Prajna Paramita

You can develop the ideas in the presentation text

I'll give you a cassette in which you can hear Prajna Paramita's music.

It may be a good thing to give me a rough idea of the plan of your work and I shall give you details if you need them. Otherwise it would be difficult for me to give them all.

We'll be in touch. All the best for this work.

Translation : Lilian and Jean Rossi