

Georges Aperghis
***Récitations* (1978)**

Performed by
Dory Hayley, soprano

Visual performance and installation by
Matthew Talbot-Kelly/A Knobe Dee

Approx. 65 minutes, no intermission

Program order

Récitation 1
Récitation 12
+++
Récitation 6
Récitation 10
Récitation 3
+++
Récitation 7
Récitation 2
Récitation 5
Récitation 9
+++
Récitation 3
Récitation 4
Récitation 8
+++
Récitation 11
Récitation 13
Récitation 14

Notes

I first came across Georges Aperghis' *Récitations* around 2010, while hunting for something non-boring to sing for my final doctoral recital. As a student, I had the habit of searching through the library stacks every couple of months. I'd take every score off the shelf, brush off the dust, feel the paper, smell the ink, flip through the pages...Anything that looked interesting I'd scoop up or store away in a mental folder for the right opportunity. (I'm sure the librarians loved me.)

The *Récitations* were by far my greatest find. Once in the practice room, I was immediately hooked by the vivacious and bizarre musical language, and wild yet rigorously controlled expression. Figuring out how to produce the arsenal of sung sounds, spoken, whispered, muttered and gasped text, laughs, coughs, sighs, whoops, hoots, and croaks, all while negotiating the eye-popping tempi made me rethink my connection to my voice, body, and breath. Georges Aperghis told me he didn't want any dramatic narrative to be imposed on the music, but rather—and I'm paraphrasing here—that the drama comes from the audience witnessing the singer struggling, at her absolute limit. So I'm struggling, but it's a joyous struggle.

One of the things I love about Matthew's visuals is they bring me back to my first love of the piece, which was simply as a physical object. I've been carrying around my Aperghis score for nearly 15 years now, and it's one of my most prized possessions.

– Dory Hayley

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Two formative impressions we got from our imaginative reading of these *Récitations* scores was that Aperghis was hi-lighting quotidian rituals, while breaking apart and reassembling language and musical structure. Our intention is for the visuals to riff on these ideas. As well, perhaps again like Aperghis, we are playing with Absurdity as a portal.

The fourteen individual scores – each quite striking on their own – are projected onto fourteen individual black and white looping animations of everyday objects. Perhaps in an analogous way to Aperghis, their modelled forms are pulled and pushed almost to the point of breaking, their perceived reassembly achieved by their complete rotation. The physical installation might be seen to come from a similar impulse of hi-lighting and reframing the everyday. We are live mixing video clips of these assemblages back on top of the B&W loops.

In small ways, these visual configurations and various presences might elicit some intrigue. And point to a more open, visceral, non Cartesian sense of place. And bring us towards the almost impossible present. And...?

– A Knobe Dee / Matthew Talbot-Kelly

Artist Bios

