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## ***Jeux d’anches* – Accordionistic musical education through musical performance**

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**Abstract:** *Since the second half of the XX century, with the invention of the converter system, original writing for accordion has come, generating new challenges to interpreters, composers and the instrument itself. Obviously, to approach new works, musicians have been achieving increasingly strict, disciplined and transversal levels of musical preparation and knowledge in order to achieve contemporary language and technique skills. In this context, there is a vast repertoire of new works, such as: Berio Sequenze, Gubaidulina De Profundis, Bochmann Essay XVIII, among others, whose contribution to the music teaching and instrumental practice has a determinant role in the pedagogical and performance fields. The piece Jeux d’Anches, composed by Magnus Lindberg, is also on the list as an important contribution to explore the instrument (accordion) in the high level dimension and potential. Through this article, the author pretends to reflect about the accordionistic musical education, to introduce new performance possibilities and to discuss new writing techniques for classical accordion.*

**Key-words:** *Jeux d’anches, accordion, Magnus Lindberg, Contemporary Music, musical education*

### **1. Introduction**

Following an initial interest in the rigor of serialism and french spectralism (tone construction), Magnus Lindberg's style of composition (fig. 1) expanded to include aspects of minimalism, free jazz, progressive rock and music from Southeast Asia (Los Angeles Philharmonic Association, 2014). The opening of his music to various influences, assimilated and integrated in a very personal way, occurred during his Parisian period, from 1981 to 1993 (Ircam-Centre Pompidou, 2013).

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Fig. 1. *Magnus Lindberg*

In the late 1980s, Lindberg's music redeemed itself to a new modernist classicism, in which many of the ingredients of musical language (harmony, rhythm, counterpoint, melody) were reinterpreted again for the post-series (Boosey and Hawkes 2014). It is this neoclassical orientation in its harmonies and formal design that makes its works attractive to a large and varied audience (Harley, n.d.).

Since 1988, Lindberg chose to work harder with harmony and sound colors. The composer's pieces are full of all kinds of intricate figuration and textures but underlying all of them are resonant (high contrast, such as the three primary colours). Lindberg has developed what he calls 'Chaconne technique' to organize his harmonies, that is, a cyclical chord progression travels the sometimes submerged, sometimes evident piece. The composer also developed a strong notion about narrative form, with a concern for dramatic development and contrast (Harley n.d.).

Technically, Magnus Lindberg's music is based on a solid construction of harmony and rhythm. Often the composer applies the technique of Chaconne, where the musical narrative is built on a repeated harmonic sequence (Nieminen 2007). French spectralism contributed to the development of his harmonic writing, combined with the principle of Chaconne: chords applied cyclically on the work (Ircam-Centre Pompidou, 2013).

According to Martin (2010), this sophisticated harmonic system to organize dodecaphon chord progressions is intended to reach harmonic unit. Lindberg writes his works to, around and through this cyclical harmonic base.

Its musical language is usually very complex but also full of strength and liveliness (Ondine 2014). Instrumental virtuosity is a feature of much of his work (Los Angeles Philharmonic, 2014). The composer himself declared "Only the Extreme Is Interesting" (Nieminen 2007).

After the first compositional style, Lindberg's works exhibit rules of more

counterpoint composition, while the feeling of virtuosity and electricity remains. What has always been a feature of Lindberg is the speed with which his music evolves, kaleidoscopic colour and driven by a furious intensity (Bridle 2001).

*Jeux d'Anches* is an incredibly dense plot of harmonic patterns in the form of arpegges with sustained notes. After changing the sequence of powerful chords, the piece turns dramatically and, when it seems to go to a second part, the music stops (Mobia n.d.).

Magnus Lindberg, despite much musical activity, presents essentially a vertically (harmoniously) part conceived. Important is the gradual change of register, i.e. the great line - perhaps more than the details of notes (Bochmann, Personal Communication, 2010).

The expression *Jeux d'Anches* is an organistic term, used among others by César Franck, to describe the sounds of the pallet instruments, wrote Lindberg about his work. In this solo accordion work, Lindberg tries to combine serial and spectral writing (Dalbert, 1991).

*Jeux d'Anches* was raised by Finnish accordionist Matti Rantanen (b. 1952), to whom the work is dedicated. It has an approximate duration of 9 'and, in the 1993 edition of Wilhelm Hansen Helsinki AB, develops in 221 compasses (13 pages, 48 systems).

## 2. Interpretative analysis of the work

Observing the texture, the tempo and the sound spectrum, it appears that the piece is composed of sections that are distinguished by the use of free bass and standard bass, by the application of more or less fast pulsations or figurations and by the use of different sonorities. On the other hand, in this piece articulation plays a fundamental role. The rigorous composition process leads to the end result being characterized by the sound richness where the listener can hear sounds with various types of *accents*, *tenutos*, *staccatos*, and spectrums of sounds that appear in the form of arpeggiated chords, originating a pleasant resonance.

The first three movements of the work, performed in free bass, calm in terms of pulse (*tranquillo*, *comodo*, *animato*) and rhythmic figures, can be grouped in an A section. The next movement (*andante*), with a predominance of arpeggiated chords accompanied by predefined chords in the standard bass, it can be classified as section B. It follows a return to the section A performed in the free bass, with the tempo *moderato* and *andante*. Still in this *andante* movement, there is a return to the standard bass (left keyboard), that is, to the B section. The end of the *andante* resumes the execution in free bass, corresponding to the A section.

From the lively tempo onwards, the pulse speeds up, the sound volume grows, the figures become faster and the tempo shorter in duration. Some passages that follow in standard bass (9 bars in *vivace and leggero*, 11 bars in *presto*) appear as a small interlude, with ostinato accompaniment of arpeggios and arpeggiated chords that are prolonged and announce the end of the work. Therefore, all the exposed material from the live movement onwards can be considered as section C.

On the other hand, Lindberg's harmonic thinking remains evident in *Jeux d'anches*, taking into account the sounds that are repeated throughout the work, some of the repetitions occurring at key moments. For example, the sonority of the first suspended arpeggiated chord (Bb-Ab-F#-E-D) presented in the quiet tempo (figure 2) is recurrent and, with or without slight modifications, is clearly repeated in the following movements (figures 3 ÷ 5). At the end of the piece, the first and the last notes of that chord (Bb, D) are insistently remembered, until they become inaudible (figure 6).

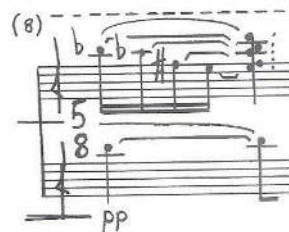


Fig. 2. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches" (suspended first arpeggiated chord)

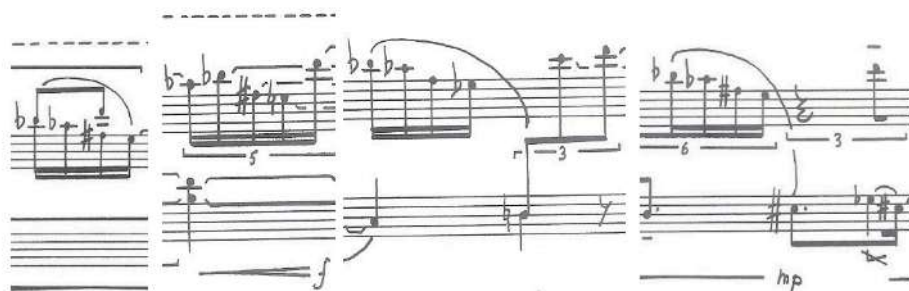


Fig. 3. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches" (two chord repetitions in tempo "comodo" and "animato")

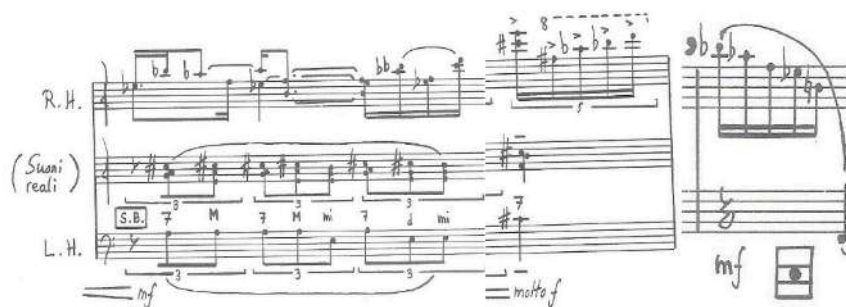


Fig. 4. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches"  
(two repetitions of the chord in the 1st andante, one repetition in the 2nd "andante")

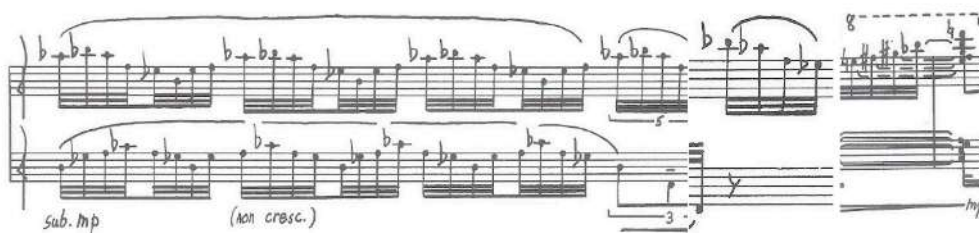


Fig. 5. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches"  
(one repetition chord in "scorrevole" and two repetitions in "vivace and leggero")

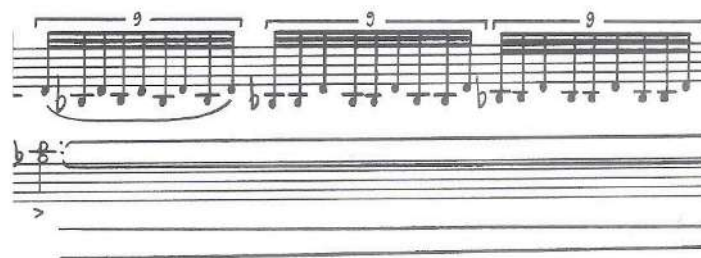


Fig. 6. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches" (chord final repetition)

Above, the structure of the work *Jeux d'anches* is presented in more detail and the resources used with the accordion with converter system are highlighted.

The piece begins with a high range (highest note on the left-hand keyboard - C#6) and with registers of a voice triggered on both keyboards (figure 7). The upper voice enters a minor 3rd interval (D-F) in the weak beat and the musical discourse is processed in a lively dialogue between the voices, with the lower voice being performed in free bass (BB notation). This first part in section A is presented in a



*calm* tempo, in *pp* sounds and exploring the instrument's high sounds, concluding with the presentation of suspended arpeggiated chords.

Tranquillo  $\text{♩} = 54$

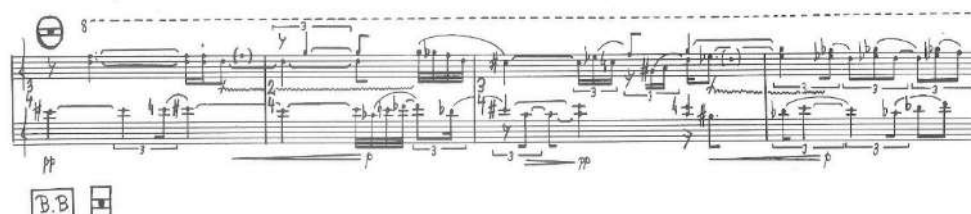


Fig. 7. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches" (initial exposition – section A)

A new section is then started, now one octave lower than the previous one, at a slightly faster pace, sometimes oscillating between the two octaves, in a speech that intensifies and where tremulous and chords begin to appear arpeggios in stronger sounds (fig. 8). It should be noted that the entrance of the upper voice in the weak beat will be frequent throughout the whole piece, mainly at the beginning of each thematic presentation.

Comodo  $\text{♩} = 63$

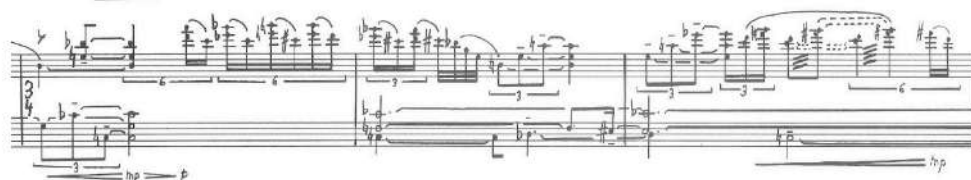


Fig. 8. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches" (section A - enhancement of arpeggiated chords)

In the movement *Animato*, a faster tempo follows, where the articulation of sounds, using accents and tenutos, assumes a preponderant role (figure 9).

Animato  $\text{♩} = 84$

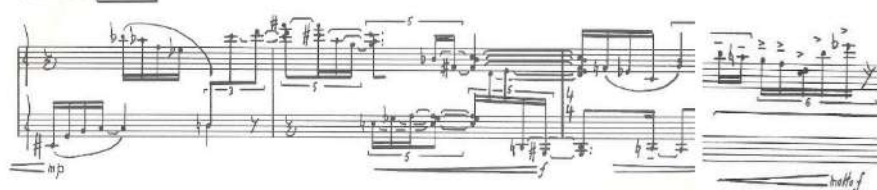


Fig. 9. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches" (section A - faster movement, use of different articulations)

In **section B**, begins *andante* tempo, the speech of the lower voice essentially plays an accompaniment function through pre-defined chords (standard bass, S.B. notation) in combinations that oscillate between: major, minor, seventh and diminished. In this structured rhythmic construction, the suspended arpeggiated chords continue to be a constant. In the final part of this movement, a six-note arpeggiated chord suspended in the upper voice is presented for the first time (figure 10). To play this chord it is necessary to use the indicator finger to press two notes simultaneously.

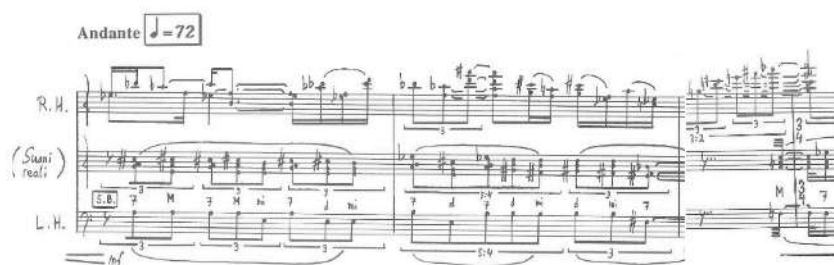


Fig. 10. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches" (section B - use of the standard bass system)

On page 4, there is a return to a calmer pulsation and the lines released by the action of the converter register, in a speech that is processed in the high register and where the dialogue between the voices in the polyphonic texture stands out (figure 11). In this A section, the left hand performs trills and several 3rd intervals. High and low melodies are sometimes accompanied by contrasting articulation. This section ends in the high register.

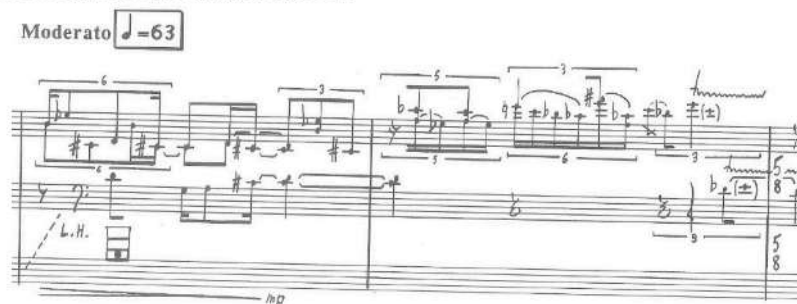


Fig. 11. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches" (section A - use of free bass)

Still in free bass system, on page 5 begins a new section (*andante*), extreme marked by homorhythmic language and melodic patterns (fig. 12) that are

repeated (triplets). The glissandos appear for the first time and the realization of 3rd intervals remain a constant.

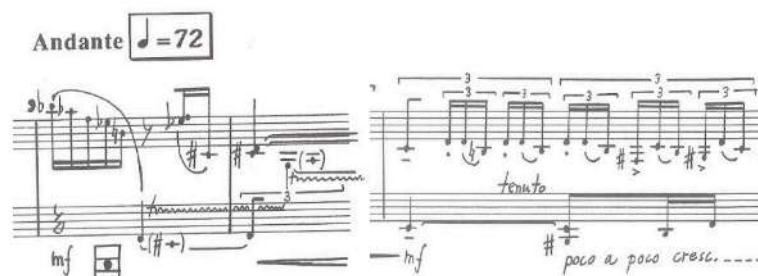


Fig. 12. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches" (section A - homorhythmic language, repetition of melodic patterns)

On page 6, the melody is accompanied by predefined chords (standard bass). In the upper voice, fast motifs are interspersed with moments of great rest in prolonged chords (fig. 13). On the other hand, in this **section B**, articulation occupies an important place, played by *legatos*, *tenutos* and *accents*.

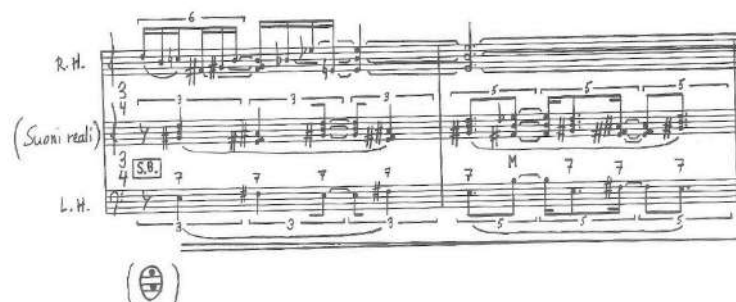


Fig. 13. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches" (section B - use of standard bass)

**Section A** reappears on page 7. The range of the lower voice, in free bass, moves towards the bass, while the upper voice performs arpeggios and suspended arpeggiated chords (figure 14). The articulation remains contrasting.



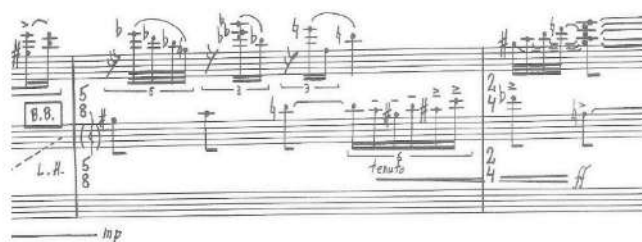


Fig. 14. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches"  
(section A - arpeggios and suspended chords)

Then, a very short transition (two measures) appears, consisting of a sequential motif that evolves upwards in a fast and lively path (figure 15). Here, the bottom line should be made using the two fixed rows of buttons (S notation). It is in this lively tempo that **section C** begins.

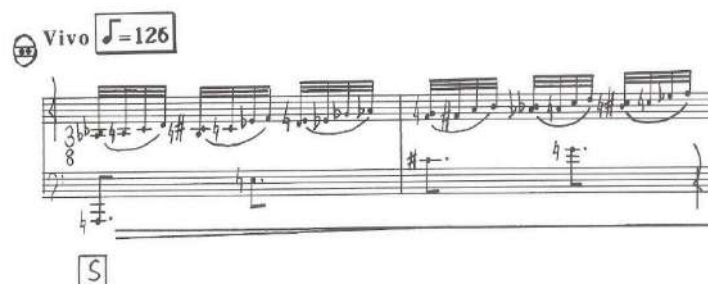


Fig. 15. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches" (section C - ascending sequential motif)

This is followed by a transition strongly marked by the opposite movement of the voices in a melodic game, sometimes homorhythmic (figure 16), which will culminate in a long trill and in unison on the notes Db and Bb, also in a very strong sound.

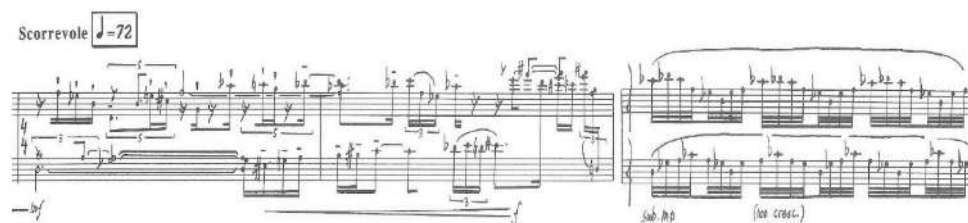


Fig. 16. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches"  
(section C - voices dialogue, homorhythmic pattern)

In tempo *Più mosso*, a new section begins, now in a faster tempo, with the articulation (*staccato*, *legato*, *accentuation*, *tenuto*) being strongly marked (figure 17). There is a recombination of previously exposed material, such as the opposite movement of the voices in a homorhythmic texture. This is the texture in several forms and concepts of contemporary music.



Fig. 17. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches" (section C - speech acceleration)

The last 10 bars of this section, with an acceleration of speech caused by increasingly faster figurations, by the bellow shake at a point of tension, by the three-voice recording in the bottomline, by the *sforzandos* on chords and by the homorhythm in *fff*, represent the climax of the work (figure 18). Special focus on the intended dynamics, where the immediate passage from a *sforzando* chord to a *mp* sonority is only possible through the concerted and rigorous action of the pressure exerted in handling the bellows.

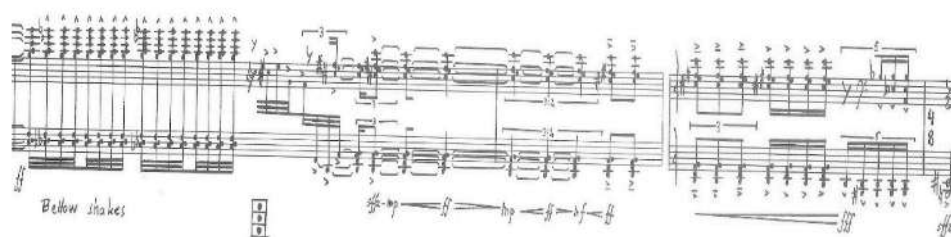


Fig. 18. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches" (section C - piece climax)

From the tempo *agitato*, it will start a moment of bellow shake in a fast movement (*ma presto possibile*) characterized by a strong rhythmic game that is based on the action of the chords executed in the upper voice. This structure is interspersed with sound (spectral) games resulting from unisons between the two keyboards, but in which the registers activated in each one produce different colours (figure 19). The intended sound is strong, and the execution is fast and precise.

These are the new models of structural concepts based on the new forms and goals for the research in musical innovation.



Fig. 19. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches" (section C - bellow shake rhythmic game, keyboards sound game)

From *Vivace and leggero*, will come a moment of dialogue between the voices (figure 20) that will culminate in an intense structure of suspended arpeggiated chords performed in a strong and quite full sonority (using the master register). The first two bars of this movement are also a testament to Lindberg's serial writing.

The accordion button keyboards disposition are essential to realize common series and motifs of pattern evolutions.

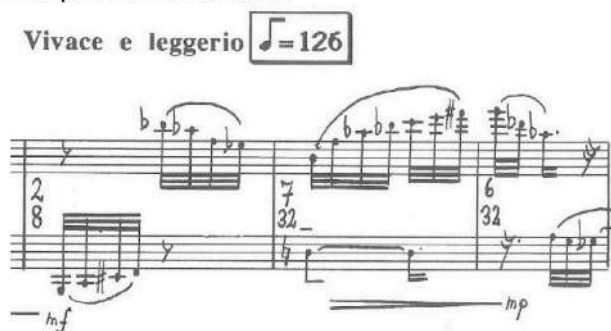


Fig. 20. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches" (section C - voices dialogue)

After *Vivace e leggero*, predefined chord structures (standard bass), in a kind of ostinato bass over seventh chords, accompany the construction of six-note chords suspended in the upper voice (figure 21). To perform these six-note chords, it is necessary to use the thumb to press two notes simultaneously. Until the end of this section, the tempo accelerates.



Fig. 21. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches"  
(section C - chords with six notes, ostinato standard bass)

The penultimate part extends the previously exposed material, but now in an even faster tempo (*presto*) and adding sequential and tremulous motifs (figure 22). The bottom row in standard bass resumes ostinatos over dominant seventh chords. The dynamics rises to *fff*, the point from which the pulsation begins a path of calm.

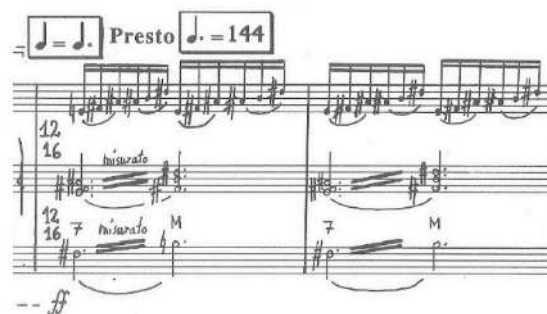


Fig. 22. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches" (section C - tremblings)

The final returns to a calm and restful time (*Tempo alla breve*, figure 23) performed in free bass system, Trills and tremolos introduce figures of 9 spindles in repetitive motion on the Bb and D notes, accompanied by a continuous sound interval in the lower voice also on the Bb and D notes. The sound mass decreases and the dynamics gradually fades to *pp*, making the final moment almost inaudible (figure 24).





Fig. 23. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches" (section C – calm tempo)

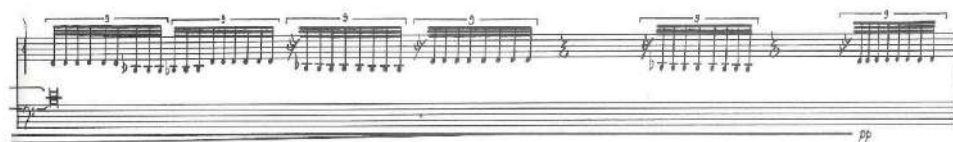


Fig. 24. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches" (section C - final moment)

Next, the main conclusions of this article will be presented and some aspects that stand out in the work *Jeux d'anches* in terms of the use of various resources available on the accordion with converter system.

### 3. Conclusions and the interpreter's point of view

From the point of view of the interpreter and the use of the accordion converter system, Magnus Lindberg writes for both systems: Free and standard bass. Lindberg uses the pre-defined chordlines in his writing, namely at the level of small reasons that are repeated in a sort of sound background feeling, while the right hand performs a different text. The predefined chords used are all possible (majeur, minor, seventh and diminished). Lindberg uses conventional notation (M, m, 7, d) to mention the desired chords. At the same time, it presents in an additional agenda the intended real sound and that should be produced in the activation of the predefined chords.

Sometimes this real sound is not possible since the predefined chords already come out of fact when building the instruments, arranged in a way and with a certain inversion. This question requires from the interpreter a certain sensitivity and ability to choose certain possible paths that can be approached the



intended result, namely the choice of an alternative chord with the same function.

At the level of effects, Lindberg uses Bellow Shake and Glissando. His creative writing is guided by possible challenges on the accordion with buttons converting, namely by performing chords on the right-hand keyboard with 6 or 7 notes (Fig. 25). This execution becomes possible by the action of the thumb or indicator, which can press 2 or 3 notes simultaneously taking into account the proximity between the buttons.

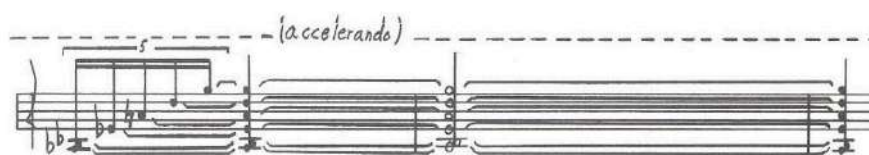


Fig. 25. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches" (chord with six notes)

Special highlight also for the moment of transition to the time briefly. By its construction, the chords intended in the upper voice in articulation with the most serious notes in the same voice will only be possible on a chromatic keyboard of buttons (given the proximity of the notes touched on the buttons), in which case the thumb finger touches the three notes in simultaneous (Fig. 26).

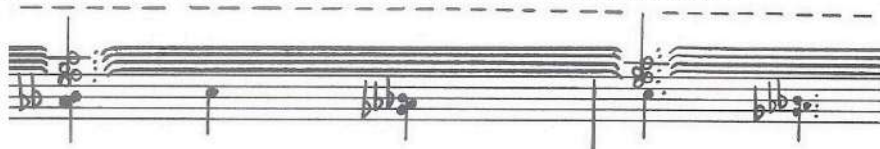


Fig. 26. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches" (chord with seven notes)

Another feature of the work resides in the writing of sequenced motifs that become easy to perform on the chromatic button keyboard, due to the order in which the notes/buttons are placed (fig. 27). That is, without changing the positioning of the fingers, the hand moves along the keyboard of the right hand, starting the same motif on different notes.

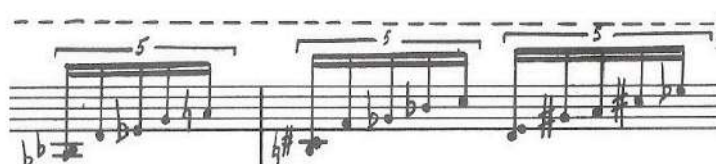


Fig. 27. Magnus Lindberg, "Jeux d'anches" (sequenced motifs)

In Lindberg, the articulation, the dynamics and the choice of registers are rigorously selected and indicated in the score. It is also relevant the use of the bellows to perform growth and decreases on the same note activated and also the repetition of notes in the same testing on alternate keyboards (echo effect). After the analysis of the work *Jeux d'Anches*, it is concluded that the innovation of writing for the accordion by the composer Magnus Lindberg inevitably contributes to the teaching of the instrument and the high level of the instrumentalists education, the development of technique and musicality and for the construction of an original repertoire of excellence that is increasingly affirmed in the accordion teaching and learning process.

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