Zaum: Beyond Mind

Sound theatre for voice, bandoneon, interactive electronics, choreography and lighting.

2010

Duration: 20-30 min.

Caroline Wilkins

in collaboration with Oded Ben-Tal

Zaum in Tiflis, 1917-1921:

KRUCHONYKH

pale are all

the lands

and red

the noses

i alone am sev-

ere

and black

like

a plaster

thing fragment

mindfragment

speech-

fragment

Let -

Terfragmen

t

pleasing the plague

of her husband Lazhila lived on the Zhil crops of banter Great

Zaum : Beyond Mind - Technical requirements

Sound:

4 speakers on speaker stands (i.e. not higher then shoulder height from the floor) cables; no need for mixing desk.

Piano.

1 microphone for piano (small diaphragm, cardioid) + cable Mic stand

Props:

2 tables covered in black cloth + 2 chairs Standing black screen 2m x 1.5m Floor cushions for audience (optional)

We bring our own laptop, sound card, and microphones.

Lighting:

- 4 Fresnel spotlights (2 large, 2 small, with 'barndoors' and one diffuser).
- 2 Profile spotlights.

Projection

projector + screen (we will be projecting a short film and would need someone to start and stop the projection on cue. We can bring the film on DVD or as a quicktime/avi file)

Performance space:

No stage, audience on same level as performance, small gangway in middle.

We bring a laptop, sound card, wireless vocal mic and contact mic (to be attached to bandoneon)

Scene I

Both performers are behind a screen to one side of the stage as the audience enters.

BLACKOUT. Build corridor light Upstage R.

Live, amplified 'voices-off' relayed on all 4 speakers.

Bubbles appear from all sides of the screen.

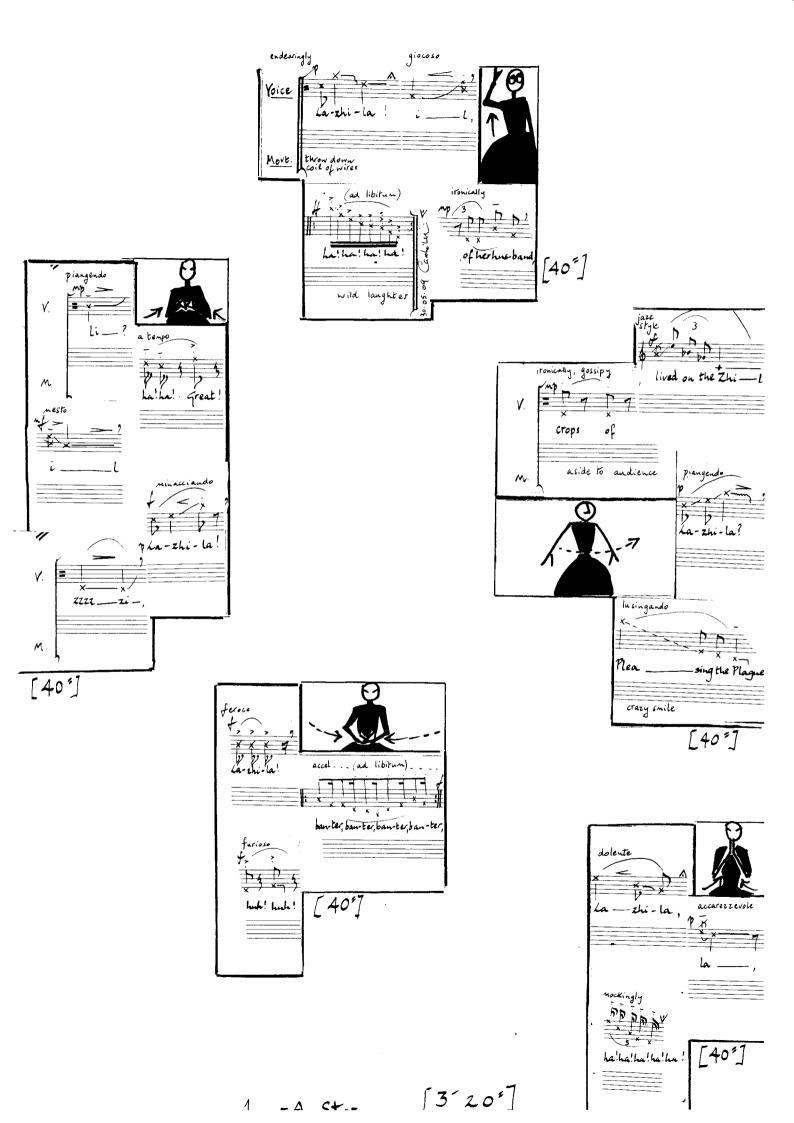
Singer runs from behind screen towards upstage R. Turns to table containing computer and activates the space bar:

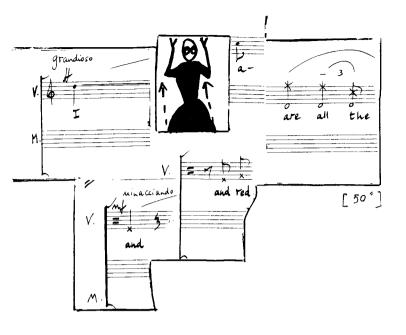
Sound File 1.

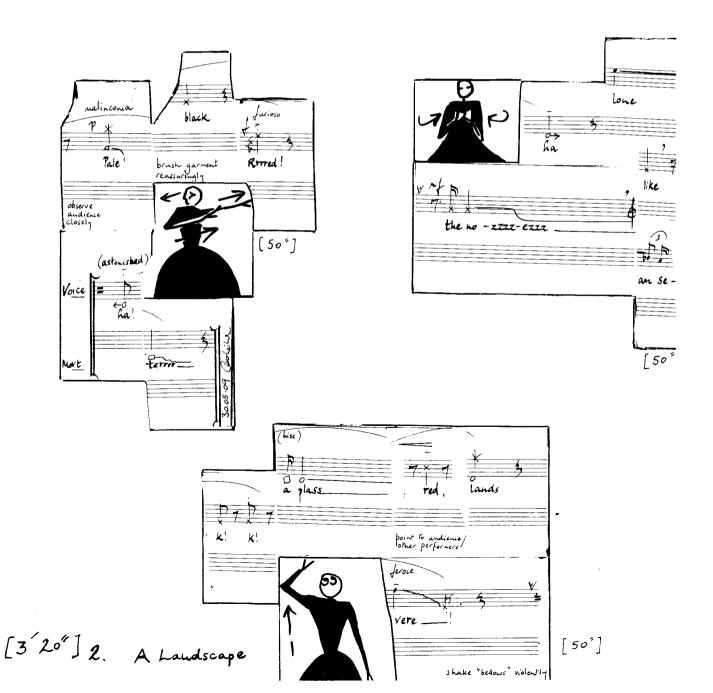
Singer moves slowly towards centre stage right into warm, diffused light, notices audience and begins *A Story*, the first of the 3 Zaum text-songs, continuing her path to centre stage.

Computer-operator-performer enters as she laughs, walking in slow motion towards his table. Singer catches sight of him and turns to stare fixedly in shock. She returns to her story showing disconcertion at his arrival. The sound file finishes and interactive electronics begin.

A Landscape, the second text-song, begins as she looks around and notices the space around the audience. She begins moving slowly downstage. *Memory*, the last of the text-songs, begins at the furthest point downstage, as she searches her gloves.







Scene II

'Memory' is interrupted by a sound file of the same name, pre-recorded voices uttering the words of the text in a dialogue between them distributed over the four speakers.

Singer turns in astonishment towards the computeroperator-performer, silenced by this intervention. Her movement is suspended for a moment before being drawn slowly backwards by the voices. She mouths words without sound, whispers incoherently.

Another sound file, *Landscape*, follows the first, as she slowly navigates around the table c. stage, on which the bandoneon is placed vertically. She discovers the 'object' and approaches to sit behind it, lowering her chin slowly on to the top surface and her fingers around the lower casing.

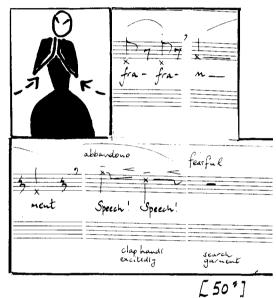
She elicits small percussive sounds from the 'object' then discovers the bellow mechanism, extending the instrument in small curves as it breathes. She rises slowly with its vertical movement.

The third of the sound files, *A Story*, has begun and increases its dramatic impact, throwing the singer back on to her seat in surprise.

Silence.









[3'20"]

'Zaum: Beyond Mind' - 'Memory' - Multiple voices

Pre-recorded and mixed by Oded Ben-Tal, notated by Caroline Wilkins, 2010.

Speech Speech Speech Speech Speech Speech Speech THING! Speech Speech Speech Speech Speech t-fragmen-t Mind fragment fragment Speech Mind fragment Fragment Thing Fragment fragment fragment fragment Let-Speech speech Thing! Thing thing thing Thing! thing thing Speech! fragment fragment Letletletletlet-Letlet-Letlet--ter fragmen-t Fragment -

fragment

Mind fragment

mind fragment

Thing! Thing! Thing!

MIND FRAGMENT

MIND fragment

mind fragment

Thing

THING!

Thing! Thing!

Mind fragment

mind fragment Mind fragment fragment Mind fragment Thing!

Thing!

mind thing THING!

Speech Speech

Speech

ter fragmen- t

thing!

speech

speech

-ter fragmen-Let-

Speech

Speech

speech

speech speech speech ter fragmen-t!

speech

'Zaum: Beyond Mind'- 'A Landscape'- Multiple Voices

Pre-recorded & mixed by Oded Ben- Tal, notated by Caroline Wilkins, 2010.

And I am pale and red, and and red Pale the lands and red are all and red Black! And red pale Black! Black Pale! Pale! And se-vere pale like like

The noses the lands a plaster like a plaster Pale! and red Pale And black a plaster like the noses the noses Like I a-lone am se-VERE a plaster like Pale! Pale like a-lone am se vere the noses the noses and black and red the a plaster Pale noses

Pale and the noses and red and black black **PALE** pale And red the noses and red and red and red like Pale and red the lands and red and red black and black black Black Black and red Black and red and black I a-lone am se-vere I a-lone am se-vere I alone am se-vere

And red Pale! Black and red

and black

Pale like and red and red

and red

Black Pale!

And black BLACK

I a-lone am se-vere I a-lone am se-vere

I a-lone am se-vere, I a-lone am se-vere, I a-lone am

severe

'Zaum: Beyond Mind': 'A Story' - Multiple Voices -

pre-recorded & mixed by Oded Ben-Tal, notated by Caroline Wilkins, 2010.

Voice 1: .Pleasing the –

Pleasing the

of

her husband

Pleasing the plague of her

Husband

pleasing the plague of her husband

Voice 2: Pleasing the plague

Pleasing the plague of her husband/ Pleasing the plague of her

husband

PLEASING THE PLAGUE O'

Voice 3: Pleasing the-

Pleasing the plague of her husband/pleasing the plague of her husband/

PLEASING THE P'

Voice 4: Of her husband

PLAGUE

of her husband

Pleasing the plague of her

husband

pleasing the plague of her husband

Scene III

Singer slowly discovers the object as an instrument, opening its bellows horizontally to rest on the surface of the table. She explores its high and low pitches, humming at mid-range in response.

The interactive electronics respond with an extension of the high pitches, causing her to turn in surprise to the computer-operator-performer. This time there is an acknowledgment of complicity between them.

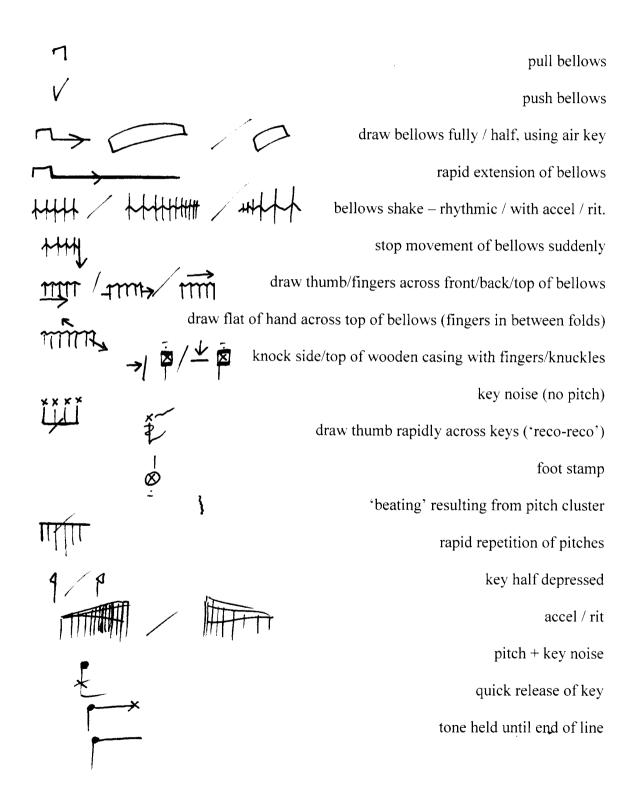
The mood changes to one of contemplation as the sounds extend in space. Singer looks in the distance beyond the audience.

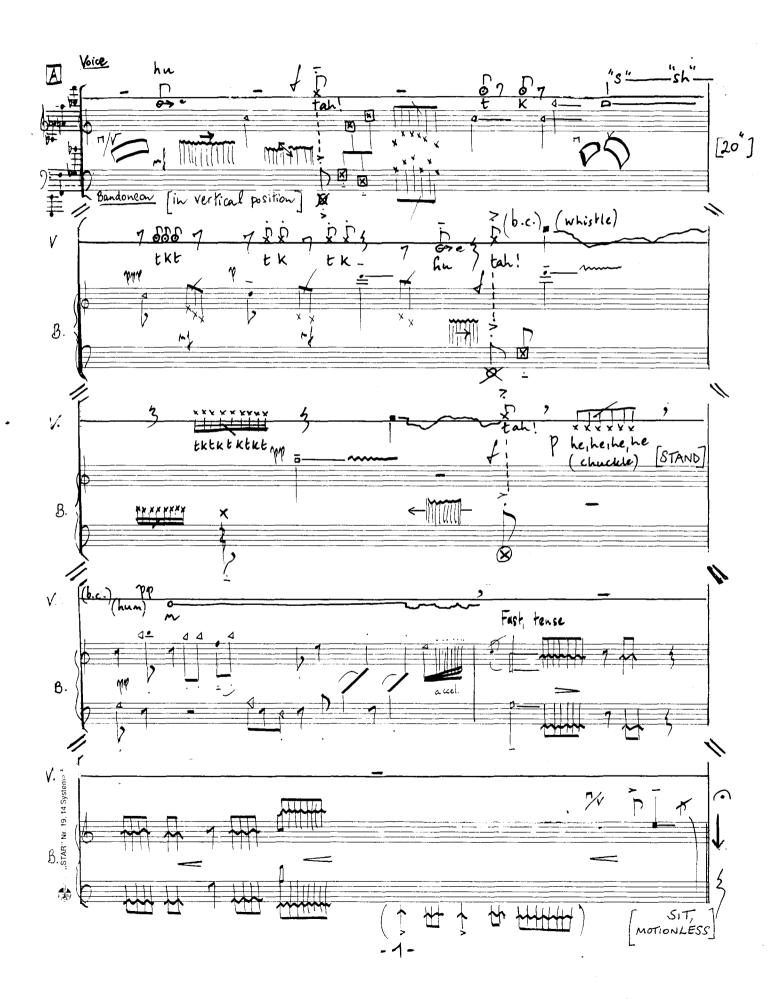
A new sound file is introduced in response to the bass pitches. The tension slowly increases in mood as the bandoneon and voice introduces dissonances and tremolo-playing. The end of the sound file heralds a vocal outburst on the part of the singer, together with dissonant chords interjected by the instrument. She laughs wildly.

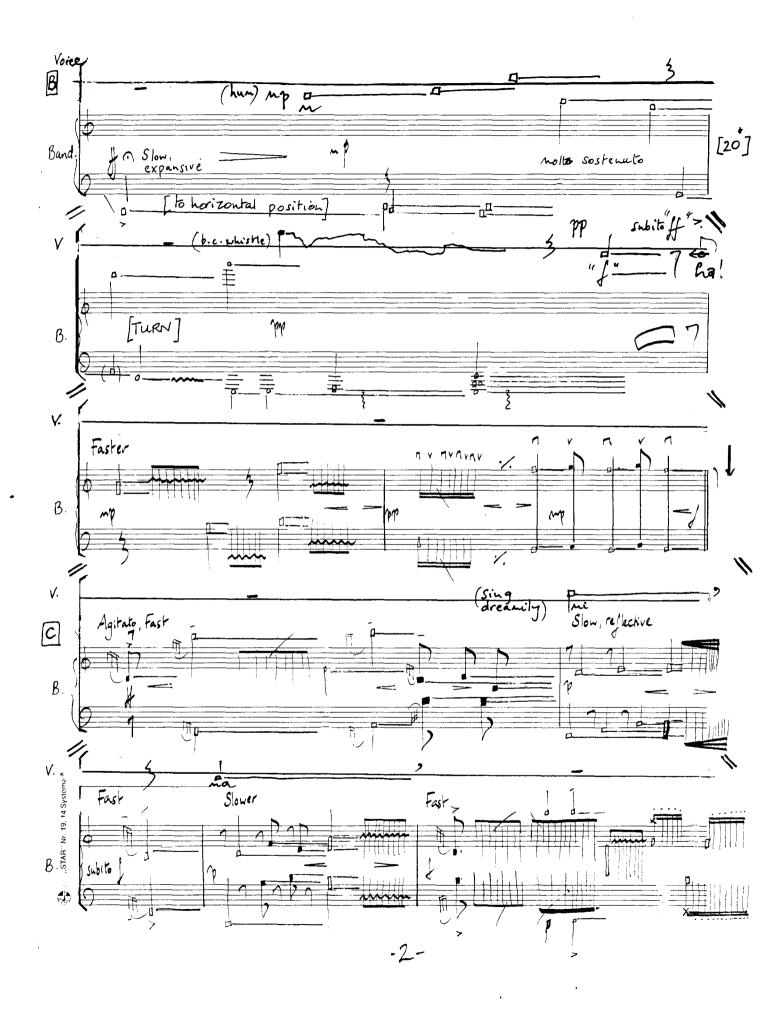
Computer-operator-performer, perturbed by the interruption, stands up to leave, walking slowly backwards towards the screen but pausing to watch. The interactive sound processing has finished. Singer is taken aback as the bandoneon begins its own 'outburst' as she holds it in mid-air. The instrument appears to have its own will and she is no longer in control, uttering exclamations. It arrives at a vertical position, by which time all live amplification has ceased, and rises in a final gesture to cover her face from view. BLACKOUT.

BANDONEON

Key to notation

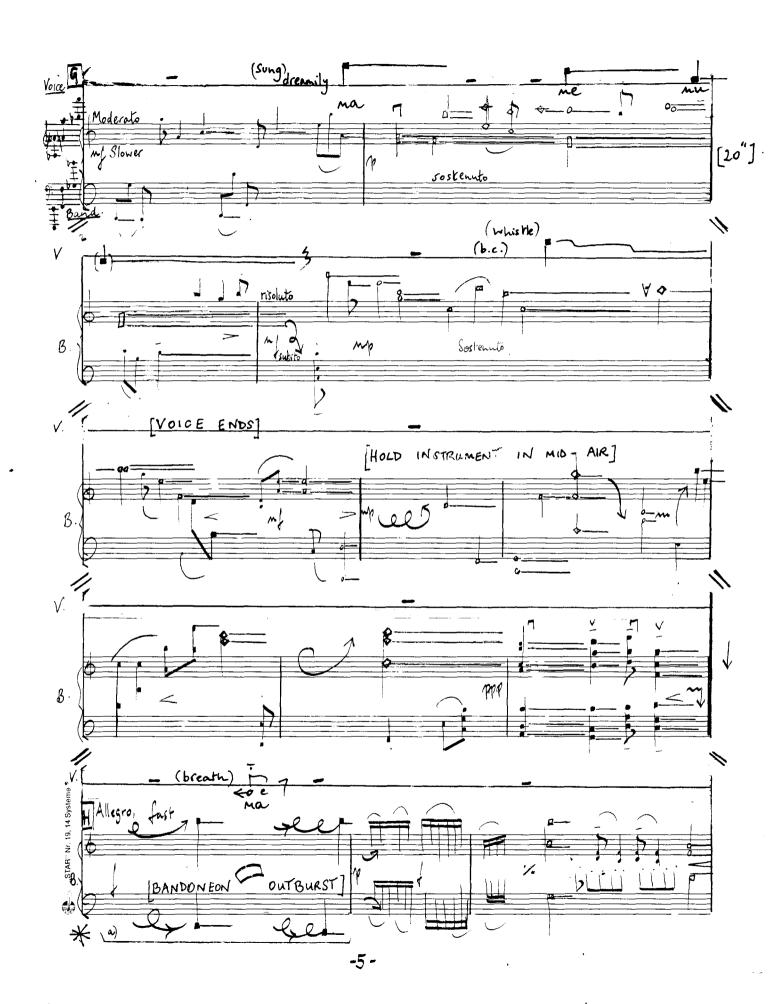


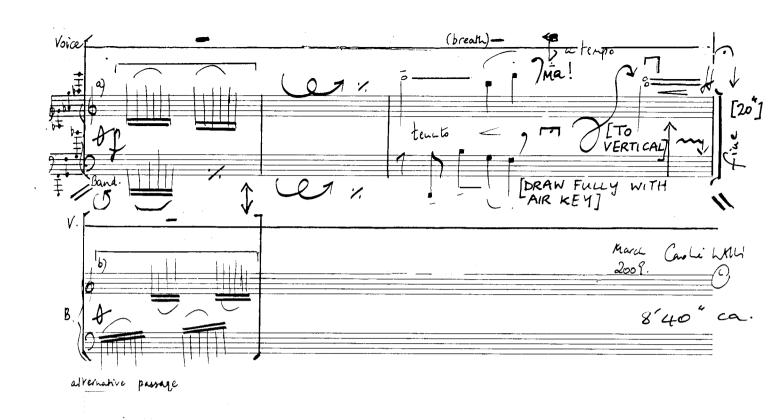


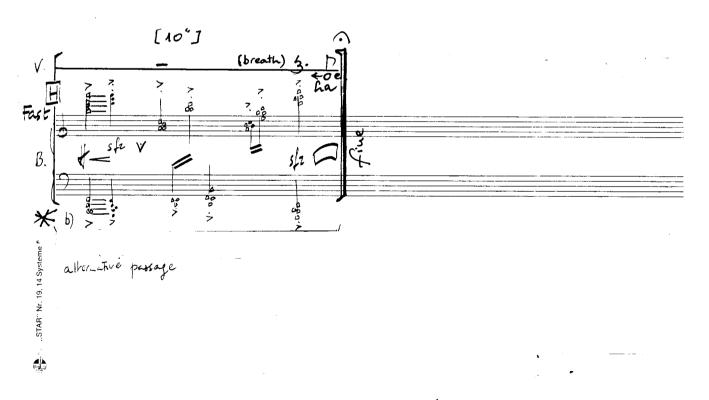




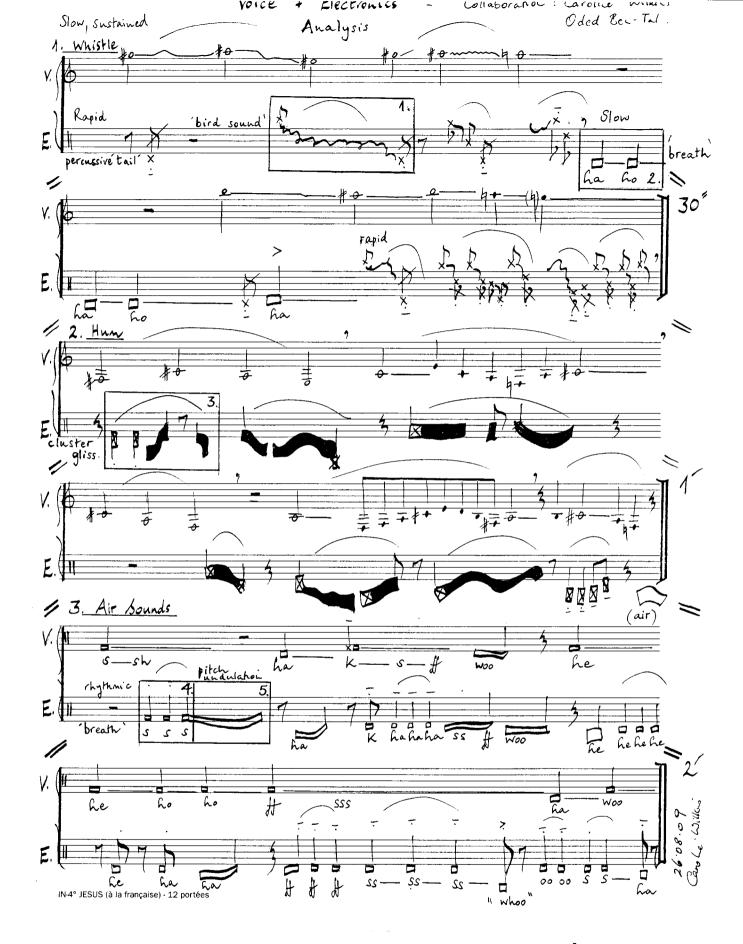


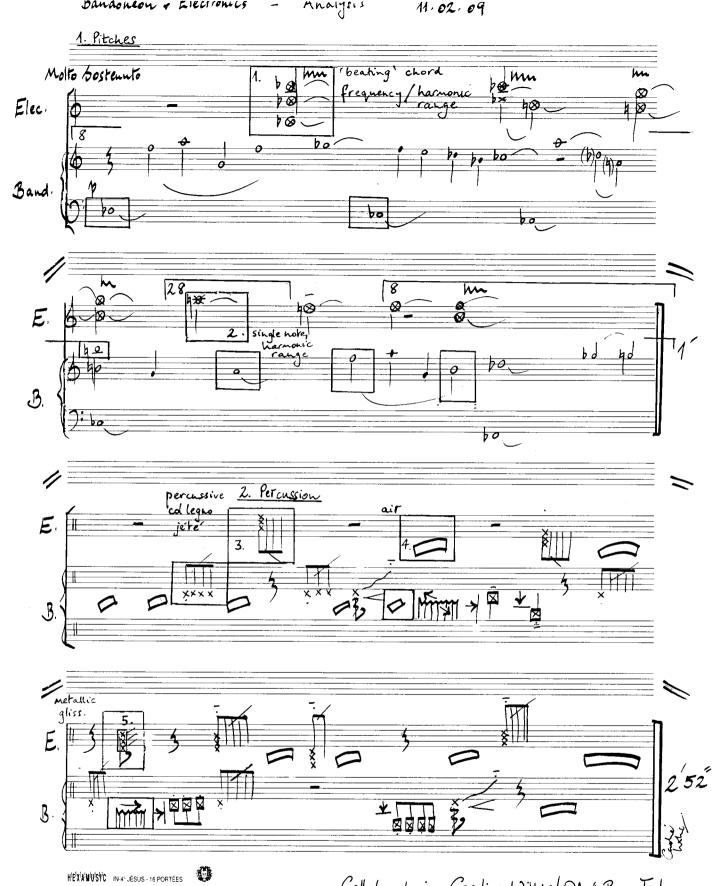






Analyses of voice / bandoneon and interactive electronics





Collaboration: Caroline Wilkis/Oded Ben-Tal

