

JOËL-FRANÇOIS DURAND

Par le feu recueilli (1997), for flute

Early in the conception of this piece for solo flute, the challenge of writing for an instrument with such an extended repertoire directed my thoughts into a direction of extreme virtuosity. Virtuosity is not necessarily about speed -although it can be one of its dimensions - but more importantly about complexity of thought, challenges to the perception of details and their relation to the whole.

Par le feu recueilli ("by the fire collected") is constructed on basically two different categories of musical ideas: one characterized by rapid runs throughout the whole range of the instrument, either in legato lines (as in the very beginning), or in short staccato outbursts of fast notes. In these sections, a few pitches act as "anchors," compensating for the constantly changing intervallic content of the melodic shapes.

In the other main type of musical ideas, the range of the instrument is divided into four different registers. As in Telemann's *Fantasies* for example, a kind of linear polyphony emerges as lines in these registers dialog with each other. In comparison to the first category, the melodic lines in these sections appear to go through timbral as well as intervallic distortion because of the use of extended instrumental techniques, as well as extensive quarter tone writing. The form of the piece develops an interaction between these two main categories, each extending in its own direction. The last page is the only calm and restful moment, as the music "collects" itself in a final and peaceful gesture.



Painting by Nicholas Roerich: Fire Blossom