

When I arrived in Paris in the Autumn of 1979 on a travelling fellowship from the University of California, the only musician I knew there was a young American, Leslie Lind, who was studying flute there, so I set about writing her a piece. I had rented a small studio not far from the Porte St. Denis, but it was too small for a piano, so at first I had no good place to work. I discovered three or four places in the city where there were pianos one could use for a few francs an hour, if no one else was using them. The places I frequented the most were the Église Américain on the Quai d'Orsay, and a small building near Montparnasse that was shared by two or three American colleges as a center for their overseas programs. I could never predict whether, after trekking all the way across town, I would even be able to use the instrument, and I think I must have developed quite a reputation in these places, which I inhabited at any hour I could, trying out the newest phrases of Leslie's piece. After three months my situation improved considerably: I took a larger studio near Cardinale Lemoine, rented a piano, and was finally able to really get down to work. Leslie gave the first performance of Triptych that spring at the Centre Américain on the Boulevard Raspail - my first European performance.