

RIVERS by Yuval Avital

for a vocal crowd and loudspeakers



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Rivers is a performance composition, designed to be presented in museums, art centers and galleries avoiding stages or theatres, allowing the public to walk freely next to the performers.

The two elements of RIVERS are a Crowd Music ensemble (an anti-choir of sound composed of non-musicians using their voice as an instrument of beauty) and loudspeakers.

The Vocal Crowd, composed of refugees and asylum seekers, don't need to know to read music or to have any previous musical experience. The performers have 10 elements to perform both with gesture and with voice. Some elements could be done walking, some should be done standing, some sitting, some lying down.

The loudspeakers play elaborated sounds recordings of local flowing waters, joined to the original 4 tracks of the flowing waters of Biella, Italy, where this work was premiered. There should be used a minimum of four channel looped tracks (duration 27,20") which should be disposed in a large mostly empty space in which, according to the space dimensions or the amount of new sonic material, could be multiplied (8, 12, 16 etc.)

*) In case the venue will host a large number of visitors (larger than the amount of performers), small hand megaphones could be used by the vocal crowd.



The performance elements are:

1. RIVERS:

- pose: Hands behind the back while walking or standing still, legs crossed and arms on knees if sitting, arms crossed if lying down.
- movement: still/walking/sitting/lying down.
- sound: imitation of river sound *or whispering in native language a fairy tale.

2. FOUR PRAYERS:

A. FATHER

- pose: Shaking right hand.
- movement: still.
- sound: whisper "father" or a synonym or a nickname of your father in your own native language.

B. MOTHER

- pose: Crossing hands to the chest.
- movement: still.
- sound: whisper "mother" or a synonym or a nickname of your father in your own native language.

C. HOMELAND

- pose: Opening the arm from your center, aiming downwards, head looking slightly down.
- movement: still/walking.
- sound: whisper "Homeland" or the name of your region/city/town/village, or synonym of it or a specific place connected to a significant memory in your own native language.

D. WATER

- pose: hand&s moving in a wave motion.
- movement: still/walking.
- sound: whisper "Water" or a synonym or a specific place connected to a significant memory in your own native language *OR hymn a long soft wordless melody regarding your childhood.

3. SOUND OF EARTH (MEN ONLY) /SOUND OF STARS (WOMEN ONLY)

A. SOUND OF EARTH (MEN ONLY)

- pose: kneel on one knee, placing the hand of thee other side of your body on the floor
- movement: still.
- sound: lowest note possible, adding also accents *oR low harmony in dialogue with others.

A. SOUND OF STARS (WOMEN ONLY)

- pose: stand and longer your arms upwards in a diagonal angle.
- movement: still.
- sound: ululation and highest voices *oR high harmony in dialogue with others.

5. GOOD NAMES / WORDS:

- pose: Stand and raise your right hand.
- movement: still.
- sound: say a name or a word in your own native language connected to a specific good memory.

6. BAD NAMES / WORDS:

- pose: Stand and raise your right hand.
- movement: still.
- sound: say a name or a word in your own native language connected to a specific bad memory.

7. BIRDS:

- pose: move both arms as wings or combine two hands to form a bird where the palms are creating the wings (as in shadow theatre).
- movement: still/walk.
- sound: whistle or imitate bird sounds.

8. BREATH:

- pose: freely.
- movement: still/walking/sitting/lying down.
- sound: audible breathing sounds.

9. SILENCE:

- pose: still, looking downwards.
- movement: still/sitting.
- sound: silence.

10. NEW ELEMENT INVENTED BY THE GROUP

These elements could be performed freely by the group for an unlimited duration.

Inner conductors:

within the group should be chosen 6 conductors that with an agreed cue mark an unison - where all participants perform the element at once for a duration of approximately 15-30 seconds, and then individually change (or not) for an element of their choice.

In case of men/women only elements, only the relevant group should participate in the unison.

The unisons are for the following elements:

1. RIVERS
- 3A. SOUND OF EARTH (MEN ONLY)
- 3A. SOUND OF STARS (WOMEN ONLY)
7. BIRDS
8. BREATH
9. SILENCE
10. NEW ELEMENT INVENTED BY THE GROUP (If suitable).



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photos from the world premiere

opening of Il Terzo Paradiso center by Michelangelo Pistoletto
18 September 2015, Cittadellarte-Fondazione Pistoletto,
Biella, Italy

View short videoclip of the premiere
at the following link:

<https://vimeo.com/142394068>

