

Rostrum of Composers 2017 - Palermo

Hungarian Radio / Radio Hongroise

Judit Varga (1979): ... alles Fleisch (2012) – 17:35
(MÁV Orchestra, conducted by László Tihanyi – Italian Institute Budapest,
12.10.2012)

... alles Fleisch ...

My piece ... alles Fleisch ... was composed in 2012 on the request of the Philharmonic Orchestra of Budapest. Its first performance was on 10 October 2012 at the Italian Cultural Institute in Budapest, by MÁV Symphony Orchestra conducted by László Tihanyi.

The piece is a requiem, and commemorates the flute artist Zoltán Gyöngyössi tragically died in car accident.

The piece is practically a huge spiral representing the periodicity of life, its continuous repetition, and within itself symbolizes its own self return. We hear the same musical material and dramaturgy process over and over again, but never in the same way. Time is getting shorter during repetitions, the substance thickens. While the first period lasts 5 minutes, its second appearance is only three minutes, and the third repeat is again shortened and takes only a minute and a half. Finally, the music process is compressed so much that is merely the essence, so by just a few beats It is possible to play a chordal construction from the soft scratch that comes back to the same nothing at the end of the arc.

In this structure there is as much a schenkeri way of thinking as in the humans there is the relative time perception. While teenage years appear to be eventful and infinitely long, an aging man in vain "fulfils" the same in one year, yet he feels the time is running.

But in this monumental variation series not only the thickening can be observed, but also the enrichment: a new, complex music layer appears as a contrast to the basic idea, but in the meantime it again and again falls to nothing by the end of the period. The more advanced the piece is, the more extensive and more complex musical layer is built up in a given section, the stronger the breakdown is - in both dramaturgy and sound moods. The round and soft tune of the tutti orchestral sound is increasingly broken by noise, rattles: con legno-s, scratched sul ponticello-s, dissected piano repetitions, tremolo-s, and totally devastating tonality and intonation stringed glissando-s.

Passing away is an integral part of life as indicated by the title and motto of the piece: "alles Fleisch is wie Gras und alle Herrlichkeit Der Menschen wie des Grases Blume. Das Gras ist verdorrt und die Blume abgefallen: "3 (Brahms Requiem item 2, Letter of Apostle Peter 1:24)

The music process is self-directed and practically writes itself: it is unstopably and organically rushing toward its end, where the basic idea, the first 5 minute period shrinks to the smallest yet noticeable music unit, and then disappears in nowhere. This ending is predestined by the first sound of the piece, just as birth predestines the death.

Now, however, this will not be the conclusion of the piece, but after a quotation borrowed from the aforementioned Brahms' Requiem, I'll cut the spiral with a sharp impulse. This moment can be considered an analogy to a car accident, since the event is going to be very clear with movie-like sounds. But we can consider this a necessity, because such a heaped up and massively peogressing mass can only be stopped by another mighty force.

The epilogue symbolizes the shortage: the chamber ensemble is as quiet as much as playing. Here the music is happening practically amongst the sounds, in pauses. Instrumentation is also programmed: the Flutes are naturally missing, on the other hand the metallic strings and the airy high clarinets play an absolute typical flute choral texture.

The scale of the solo harp steadily moves upwards, but sometimes it turns back to itself, so it seems practically timeless, endless.

The solution (and ultimately almost absolution) is given by the Bach Korál quotation, which seems a new substance and alien only at the first glance it. But as we listen to the heavy Baroque quarters, the retrospective experience becomes clearer, this Bach quotation was present from the very beginning of the piece, and was heard already in countless

transformations, since these chords have marked the formal boundaries, and always stitched the music itself.

As an atheist this is the way I imagine the power that accompanies the life of a believer.

Judit Varga – Biography



Judit Varga is winner of a number of first places at the international pianist and composer competition.

She regularly performs as a solo pianist and as chamber musician worldwide, her compositions are performed worldwide at such prestigious festivals and concert halls as Wien Modern, the Hungarian State Opera House, Cité de la musique Paris, Juilliard School in New York, Budapest Autumn Festival, Mini Festival, Konzerthaus and Musikverein Wien, Muffathalle München, Warsaw Autumn.

As a pianist and as a composer, Varga is regularly working with world leader ensembles, orchestras.

As a reward for her outstanding artistic performance, in 2011 and 2014 she received the Creative Award of the Austrian Education and Training Ministry, and in 2012 she was awarded by the City of Vienna.

Three times she was awarded Zoltán Kodály music composers' Creative Grant of the Hungarian Ministry of Education and Culture (2002, 2003 and 2006), and in 2001 and 2004 she gained the Tokyo Foundation grant.

In her broad piano repertoire the most important pieces of classical music are represented along with new contemporary compositions.

As a composer, she is particularly interested in melodizing short films and theatre performances, and in compositions for multi-media events.

Her name brands such works as the design of the Prima Primissima Prize's musical image, and she is the music composer of more than 30 theatre performances and films.

The Hungarian State Opera introduced with great success her opera "Love" (Szerelem), which was the winner composition of the competition for adaptation of the film *Szerelem* by Tibor Déry- Károly Makk- Péter Bacsó, announced on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the 1956 revolution.

In 2013 and 2014 she was the nominee of the Austrian Academy of Films in the category of "Best Soundtrack" , and in 2014 she won the prize for the film music of *Deine Schönheit ist nichts Wert*.

Judit Varga lives and works as a pianist and composer in Vienna. From 2013 she is a Professor of the Vienna Music University, and also from 2013 she teaches composition, film and media art at the Budapest Ferenc Liszt Music University.

In 2017 Judit Varga was awarded with Béla Bartók – Dita Pásztory Prize for her work.

