



ONUTĖ NARBUTAITĖ

WAS THERE A BUTTERFLY?

(2013)

FOR STRING ORCHESTRA 20'30"

ST. CHRISTOPHER CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
CONDUCTOR: JUHA KANGAS

LIVE FROM GAIDA FESTIVAL, ST. CATHERINE CHURCH
VILNIUS, 30 OCTOBER, 2014

Was there a Butterfly? (2013) was written on the commission by Ostrobothnian Chamber Orchestra and is dedicated to the conductor Juha Kangas. The initial musical idea and the working title of the piece was *Ostinato*. Ostinato as a constant repetition of musical patterns, connotes a constant return to the same place, the same memory, the same dream – gloomy and plunging. The butterfly flew onto the title only after the completion of the work, yet not accidentally. All through the process of writing it kept fluttering in various shapes, in the corner of the mind. Like a mysterious breath, a shadow of Psyche – in Ancient Greek Psyche, soul, breath and butterfly are referred to by the same word. Or like a symbol of metamorphosis, an idea of a momentary spreading of wings. With regard to this, it would evidently fit to bring up a line from Czesław Miłosz: "Why does a butterfly spread the wings for a flight measured by grains of Clepsydra?"

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Onutė Narbutaitė (b. 1956) learned the basics of composition from Bronius Kutavičius, studied composition with Julius Juzeliūnas at the Lithuanian State Conservatoire (now the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre), graduating in 1979.

In 1997 the composer was awarded the Lithuanian National Arts and Culture Prize, the highest artistic distinction in Lithuania. She was awarded prizes at the competitions of the best music compositions of the year held by the Lithuanian Composers' Union in 2004 and 2005 (Best Orchestral Work), in 2008 (Best Choral Work) and in 2015 (Composer of the Year). Her music was featured at the International Rostrum of Composers in 2004 (number one in the list of nine recommended works) and in 2010 (in the top ten list of best compositions).

Onutė Narbutaitė's works, a large number of which has been specially commissioned, have been performed at various festivals: Gaida (Vilnius), Vilnius Festival, Warsaw Autumn, Musica Viva (Munich), MaerzMusik (Berlin), Klangspuren (Schwaz), ISCM World Music Days (Bern and Vilnius), Icebreaker II: Baltic Voices (Seattle), Pan Music Festival (Seoul), Est-Ovest (Turin), Festival de Música (Alicante), Ars Musica (Brussels), Frau Musica Nova (Cologne), ArtGenda (Copenhagen), De Suite Muziekweek (Amsterdam), Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival (1992), Helsinki Festival (1992), Music Harvest (Odense), Czesław Miłosz Centennial Festival (Cracow), many other festivals and concerts in Europe, the USA, and Canada. Her music, as the featured composer, has been more widely presented at Aboa Musica (Turku), Kaustinen Chamber Music Week (1998), Europäisches Musikfest Münsterland, the international summer arts school Synaxis Baltica (Görlitz), and the 10th Polish and Lithuanian Musicologists' Conference (Cracow).

Narbutaitė's music has been performed by the Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra, the St. Christopher Chamber Orchestra of the Municipality of Vilnius, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the Sinfonia Varsovia, the Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Basel Sinfonietta, the Bern Symphony Orchestra, the Turku Philharmonic Orchestra, the Hradec Králové Philharmonic Orchestra, the Brandenburg State Orchestra, the Symphony Orchestra of the Cracow Music Academy, the Sinfonietta Cracovia, the Tapiola Sinfonietta, the Ostrobothnian Chamber Orchestra, the Munich Chamber Orchestra, the Ensemble Resonanz, the Amadeus Ensemble, many Lithuanian ensembles and soloists.

Onutė Narbutaitė's compositions can be found on more than 30 CDs, released in Lithuania and abroad, amongst them 7 entire CDs of her music.