

Larisa Vrhunc: Hitrost razpadanja (The Rate of Decay)

Saar Berger, horn
Boštjan Lipovšek, horn
Franci Krevh and Matevž Bajde, percussion
(members of Percussion Ensemble STOP)
Steven Loy, conductor

duration | 10.29
rec | Studio 26, Radio Slovenia, March 2013
music producers | Nina Šenk, Boris Renar
sound engineers | Aleks Pirkmajer Penko, Miro Prljača



*The rate of decay of the world is harrowing.
It is faster than the decay of the body
into soil, soil into dust, dust into breath.
It is faster than the decay of the word
into voice, voice into trace, trace into ice.
The rate of decay of the word is voice.
The rate of decay of the body is time.
The rate of decay of the world am I.*

*(Boris A. Novak, from the collection Mojster nespečnosti -
Master of Insomnia, translation: Neville Hall)*

The source of inspiration for the composition **Hitrost razpadanja (The Rate of Decay)** was the poem of the same title by Boris A. Novak. It served the composer as a double orientation, for both content and form. In terms of content, the word “decay” is key to understanding the work, as it is “translated” into music in the form of a sequence of textures whose density and consistency gradually disintegrate. Formally, one can discern the logic of the verse scheme in the series of textures, with the first and most frequently repeated texture, connected with the incipit of the first verse, being particularly impressed upon the listener’s consciousness. It is marked by a broad dialogue between the two horns, whose parts frequently lead canonically. On each subsequent appearance, however, the consistency and density weaken, until the composition finally falls silent in long notes. One wonders whether the disintegration of the musical texture could also be understood as a metaphor for the current disintegration of society. It is precisely through this kind of thought that it is possible to confirm that the new generation of Slovenian composers build upon the legacy of modernism, while at the same time seeking new paths, new directions, new beauty and a new criticalness.

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ice gradually away and back to the lips

blocks

Rain stick

Beer cans change touching point

Larisa Vrhunc (b. 1967) studied music pedagogy (1985–1990) and composition (1989–1993 with M. Gabrijelčič) at the Ljubljana Academy of Music, before continuing her studies of composition at the Conservatoire de Musique de Genève (1994–1996 with J. Balissat) and privately (with E. Gaudibert). She then returned to the Ljubljana Academy of Music for specialised studies in 1998 (with M. Gabrijelčič and D. Škerl). In June 1999, she also graduated in composition from the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Lyon (with G. Amy) and was then a guest of the Künstlerhaus Schloß Wiepersdorf in Berlin for five months. She furthered her studies at various compositional courses (S. Gubaidulina, B. Ferneyhough, M. Jarrell, K. Huber, H. Lachenmann, H. Kyburz, P. Dusapin and others). In the autumn of 2000, she also studied at the Paris institute IRCAM for one month. Larisa Vrhunc is an associate professor of music theory at the Faculty of Arts (Department of Musicology) of the University of Ljubljana. For her work she has received the Student Prešeren Prize, the TEMSIG Award, the Prešeren Fund Prize, the Prix Fondation Royaumont at the 1st European Composers Competition “Choeurs & Maîtrises de Cathédrales” (Amiens - France), the Prix du Conseil d’Etat (Geneva - Switzerland), one of three equivalent prizes at the European Woman Composers Competition (Nijmegen – The Netherlands) and first prize at the 2nd European Composers Competition “Choeurs & Maîtrises de Cathédrales” (Amiens - France). She was also one of eight prizewinners at the 13th Boswil International Composition Seminar and is a recipient of NEM scholarship (Montreal - Canada).



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