

Žibuoklė Martinaitytė

close the eyes of memory... (2022)

Commissioned by the Kulturplattform St. Martin, Kassel with the support of the Ernst von Siemens Music Foundation.

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The title of this piece was an incidental phrase I encountered when reading Anaïs Nin sentence "swinging between the drug of forgetfulness and the drug of awareness, she closed her eyes, she closed the eyes of memory." This conscious effort to forget in order to live through the current moment into the future seemed to be relevant to our experiences of the pandemic period, but also necessary in certain life events in general.

The phenomenon of memory was of my interest when composing this piece. For instance, our perception of music relies entirely on memory, on how we remember what we hear and then connect every acoustic event with the next one. Therefore music wouldn't even exist as such without the ability to remember. I was curious about the various types of memory - short term versus long term, the one that is episodic and the one that is semantic, also the difference between what we want to remember and what we actually remember. Memories are never accurate. We are recreating events anew every time we "remember" them. All these features of our quite mysterious inner mechanism of memory were reflected in the structure of the piece. Most gestures and textures of "close the eyes of memory..." are continuously returning, but each time they are transformed - either fragmented or augmented, with changed timbre and pitch. Nothing is ever the same as before and yet it always remains recognizable.

This piece was composed for the small Rieger organ at St. Martin in Kassel having in mind its unique characteristics such as the gradual release of the keys that creates a ghostly glissando, tremolando effect and microtonal capabilities.

Approximate duration 12'