

Saudade (2019)

Commissioned by the Lithuanian Composers Union

It's uncanny how one single word can trigger one's creative imagination. Now and then I've come across mystifying and alluringly sounding foreign words that seemingly contained much larger and more complex set of meaning than their equivalent in other languages. When the ascribed profundity of the word started resonating with the emotions or experiences lived through, it almost begged to be translated into music.

Saudade in Portuguese means a deep emotional state of nostalgic or profound melancholic longing for an absent something or someone that one loves. One English translation of the word is *missingness*, although it might not convey the feeling of deep emotion attached to the word *saudade*. It can be described as emptiness, when someone (parents, friends) or something (places, experiences) that should be there in a particular moment is missing, and the individual feels this desire for presence as opposed to absence. It brings sad and happy feelings together: sadness for missing and happiness for experiencing the past.

According to the writer A.F.G. Bell, the famous *saudade* of the Portuguese is a vague and constant desire for something that does not and probably cannot exist, for something other than the present, a turning towards the past or towards the future; not an active discontent or poignant sadness but an indolent dreaming wistfulness.

Saudade has evolved into a philosophical concept that means "nostalgia for nostalgia", a meta-nostalgia, a longing oriented toward the longing itself. As poetess Florbela Espanca put it "*I long for the longings I don't have.*"

In my personal experience this notion of *Saudade* symbolizes the stratum of multiple yearnings that have started layering with the "blue period" - death of my father and immigration to USA. For the last decade this thread of longing has been woven into my life coloring all experiences with the myriad hues of blue.

List of Instruments

2 Flutes
2 Oboes
2 Clarinets in Bb
Bass Clarinet in Bb
2 Bassoons
Contrabassoon

4 Horns
3 Trumpets
3 Trombones
Tuba

Harp

Percussion (3)

- 1- Timpani (with large cymbal + contrabass bow)
- 2- Tubular Bells (F 4, E 4), Bass Drum, Snare Drum
- 3 - Vibraphone, 2 Cymbals (medium and large), large Gong (f or d)

Violins I
Violins II
Violas
Violoncellos
Contrabasses

Approximate duration 16'

Premiere on October 19th, 2019 at the "Gaida" festival in Vilnius, Lithuania. Performers: Lithuanian State Symphony Orchestra conducted by Karolis Variakojis.