

Žibuoklė Martinaitytė

Nunc fluens. Nunc stans.

[The now that passes. The now that remains.]

For percussion and string orchestra

Dedicated to Audrys Karalius who responded to my desperate need to find a place to create during the first wave of pandemic, which seemed utterly impossible at the time. Thus, this piece was born at Oak Grove Park (Ąžuolynas) in Kaunas, Lithuania.

The title of the piece originated from a quote by Boethius "Nunc fluens facit tempus. Nunc stans facit aeternitatum" from "The Consolation of Philosophy". It means "The Now that passes creates time. The Now that remains creates eternity." This idea about two possible models of Now - one passing and another standing still - resonated with recent period of global pandemic. Suddenly we all found ourselves having just a present moment. The future was uncertain and therefore irrelevant, it was absurd to even think of it. The past vanished, becoming more and more like a dream... We had only Now, which seemingly lost its flow and stood still for a while. Days were passing and weeks, and there was no change. Only the Now remained.... As though the reality itself started to contradict the ancient truth told by the sages and philosophers that the present is fluid and constantly changing. We experienced this paradox daily - even though some changes were happening, somehow it appeared that all days are similar to one another and that the time has been stretched to eternity becoming one unified and indistinguishable present. As St. Augustine defined various models of the present time: "To speak of time with any exactness, we need to say that "there are three times: a present of things past, a present of things present, a present of things to come."

"Nunc fluens. Nunc stans." has a form of a diptych where both parts are performed without a break. First part reflects the flowing time and the second - a time that stands still.

I'm very grateful to percussionist Pavel Giunteris for his invaluable advice throughout the creative process and to the director of the Lithuanian National Philharmonic Rūta Prusevičienė.

Approximate duration 15' -16'

List of Instruments

Percussion (1 performer):

Vibraphone

Crotales

4 Gongs (sul D, E, H, C - low, in ascending order)

1 Cymbal (low, sul D)

1 Tubular Bell (sul D)

String orchestra (minimum one instrument per part, preferably 2-3)

Violins I-1, I-2

Violins II-1, II-2

Violas 1, 2

Violoncellos 1, 2

Contrabasses 1,2

In case no low register Gongs are available, they can be replaced by the same pitches in another octave. The lowest gong can be replaced by Tam-tam. If no pitched gongs are available at all, the performer can look for some creative solutions replacing them with other metal resonating instruments such as various singing bowls etc. It is important to preserve the relative pitch relationships (high versus low) and to look for somewhat similar pitches (sul D, sul E, sul B, sul C).