

Ephemeral

For cello, electronics and video

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This piece is a version of Part III “Ephemeral” from a larger piece “In Search Of Lost Beauty...” (2016).

Duration 6 min. 21 sec.

“In Search of Lost Beauty...” program notes

“Beauty is the mystery of life. It is just not in the eye. It is in the mind.” (Agnes Martin)

Virginia Woolf makes a distinction between Moments of Being and ordinary moments. In my piece “In Search Of Beauty...” I was capturing ordinary moments, which by means of simply putting our undistracted awareness on them, transform into Moments of Being. These moments are strung together in a sequence of time with no particular storyline, mostly as visual hints of our memories continuously coming back in multiple metamorphoses and trying to intimate a storyless narrative.

“In Search of Lost Beauty...” (2016) for violin, cello, piano, electronics and video is an hour-long sequence of audiovisual novellas on the elusive subject of beauty. Here the experience of time is slowed down as to transport us into an alternate dimension where the commonly apprehended reality is inverted into the otherworldly mystique of reflections and shadows. The amplitude of this ephemeral search for beauty encompasses phenomena found in nature, everyday and art. The piece consists of 10 sections, which are woven into one structural entity of suggestive coherence. Some of the pieces were composed previously as separate works - *Serenity Diptychs* (2015) for violin, tape and photographic diptychs by Philip Van Keuren and *Inhabited Silences* (2010) for piano trio. Other sections are trying to capture the notion of beauty itself either through its poetic epithets such as *Blue*, *Ephemeral*, *Longings in Perpetual Motion*, *Shadows of Memories* or through evoking characteristics of its transient nature in *Postlude (evanescent)* or *Interlude (fleeting)*. There is no particular narrative or story visualized in the piece. It is rather an invitation to pay attention to commonly seen and familiar phenomenon, which one could call beautiful but often wouldn't bother to stop and take a closer look. The visual sensibility of this project was influenced by the French impressionist Claude Monet especially his series of paintings “Water Lilies” at L'Orangerie museum in Paris. There on huge canvases stretching across the entire horizontal length of four walls, the world of water reflections is interchangeable with reality and the habitual perception of high-low and here-there are reversed. This visual perspective invoked by Monet led to contemplation of faded boundaries between reality and reflections of it. One night after the rain, I glanced down and suddenly noticed fragments of Notre-Dame Cathedral reflected in multiple formations of puddles. It was this flash of the underworld that allured me into further explorations of the inverted sphere of reflections. As though I saw

the opening to the previously unnoticed worlds residing right under my feet, the existence of which is even more impermanent than our ordinary life.

“In Search Of Lost Beauty...” was born as a contradiction to an ever more increasing speed of our lives influenced by technology. So often people look at the illuminated screens of their devices rather than the surrounding world. This “search of beauty” gently induces to slow down our usual perception and ever-fastening mind, mostly operating in the mode of automatism, by bringing it to the current Moment of Being.

Perhaps it was no accident that the idea for the project was born in Paris, during my creative residency at the “Citè des Arts” for which I am grateful to the Institut Français. Having the luxury of time and being surrounded by the aesthetic beauty of the everyday as well as art, I had a longing to retain that perceptiveness and receptivity to beauty and somehow grasp its ephemerality.

Parts:

Prelude (subliminal)

Blue

Ephemeral

Longings in Perpetual Motion

Interlude (transient)

Serenity Diptychs

Shadows of Memories

Interlude (fleeting). “Je ne sais quoi”

Inhabited Silences

Postlude (evanescent)