

Roderik de Man still is one of the most underestimated Dutch composers. He probably thinks differently about this, since during his career he gathered a rich collection of musicians around him who perform his music with verve. His wife, the harpsichordist Annelie de Man who passed away in 2010 undoubtedly was the most important one, but also in general De Man is a composer who composes close to the heart of the musicians.

This produced many works which border on the boundaries between instrumental and electronic, between composed and improvised music. Here De Man always manages to combine a refined imagination of sounds with sophisticated lyricism. It makes him the poet among the Dutch composers and in this sense more appreciation would be justified. This applies even more after listening to the double cd Past & Present tracks with many recent chamber music compositions from the last ten years and two older pieces. Most remarkable about this cd containing fifteen works for a great diversity of instruments is that De Man perfectly highlights the particular characteristics of each instrument whilst retaining his own musical personality. A fine monument for his own work and his greatest source of inspiration, his wife.

Paul Janssen, Luister April 2012