

"Marionette" for blockflutes, electronics and multimedia 8'30" 2007

concept: Jorge Isaac

Inspirational source:

In "Über das Marionetten Theater" (On the Puppet Theatre, 1810) Heinrich von Kleist, through his protagonist Herr C., discourses on the infinite grace of inanimate objects. The Puppet Theater was not written for marionettes to play, but as a description of their function and value. He compares the capacities of live performers and marionettes according to romantic aesthetics.

Kleist argues that objects, unlike people, need not behave affectedly. He says the marionette, unfettered by the need to touch the ground (since it's strumming to the tune of strings pulled from the top), is far more graceful than the human dancer. Only a god or possibly an animal such as a bear, Herr C. proclaims, could equal the grace of inanimate matter, whereas humans are clumsy, weighed down by consciousness. In his argumentation for the superiority of the marionette Kleist shows a belief in the cognitive and creative superiority of the unconscious over the conscious, of spontaneity and intuition over reason.

Kleist's enthusiasm for the marionette theatre was shared by many yet the weight of his words and the endless possibilities he saw in the puppet world were not recognized until long after his death, adding justification to the notion that Kleist was a man born before his time.

The music consists of an instrumental part for soprano, tenor and contra-bass recorder (Paetzold) and an electronic part on CD.

Part I for Soprano is a musical representation of the sometimes grotesque at other times playful character of the marionette, part II a lyrical reflection on 'the grace of inanimate matter' for tenor and in part III the Paetzold (contrabass recorder) translates controlled and uncontrolled movements in a chaotic fantasy. The cd part was made of samples taken from the instruments, played by Jorge Isaac .

Marionette was commissioned by the Visionor Foundation and is dedicated to Jorge Isaac .

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