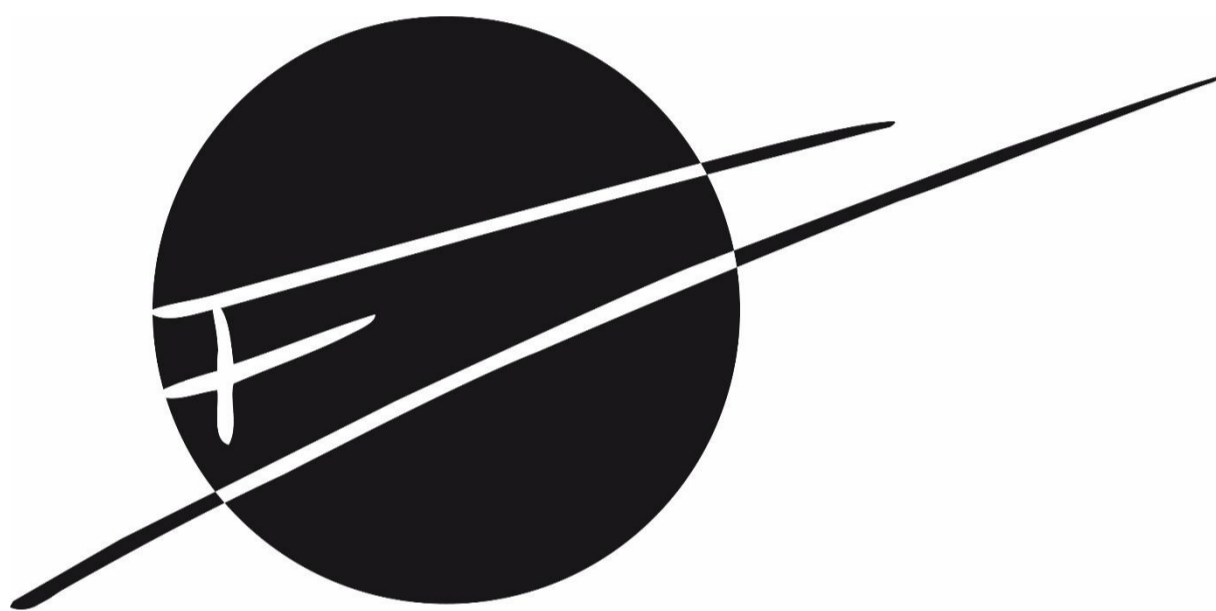


Erik Desimpelaere

RHAPSODY ON A WINDY NIGHT

For solo double bass, mezzo-soprano and orchestra

(2019)



RHAPSODY ON A WINDY NIGHT

2 Fluiten (2. speelt ook piccolo)

1 Hobo

2 Klarinetten in A

1 Fagot

2 Hoorns in F

1 Trompet in C

1 Trombone

Percussie I (Crotales, Basdrum, Pauken, Keyboard klokkenspel/Celesta)

Percussie II (Cymbaal, 2 Wood blocks, Tam-tam, Tamboerijn, Zweep, Vibrafoon)

1 Harp

Solo contrabas *'The rhapsode'*

Mezzosopraan *'The hallucinated voice'*

8 1^{ste} Violen

8 2^{de} Violen

6 Altviolen

6 Celli

4 Contrabassen

2 Flutes (2. doubling piccolo)

1 Oboe

2 Clarinets in A

1 Bassoon

2 Horns in F

1 Trumpet in C

1 Trombone

Percussion I (Crotales, Bass Drum, Timpani, Keyboard Glockenspiel/Celesta)

Percussion II (Susp. cymbal, 2 Wood blocks, Tam-tam, Tambourine, Whip, Vibraphone)

1 Harp

Solo Double Bass *'The rhapsode'*

Mezzo-soprano *'The hallucinated voice'*

8 1st Violins

8 2nd Violins

6 Violas

6 Violoncellos

4 Double basses

[NL] 'Rhapsody on a windy night' is een compositie voor contrabas solo, mezzosopraan en orkest, gebaseerd op het gelijknamige gedicht van T.S. Eliot (1888-1965). Het gedicht maakt deel uit van Eliots eerste bundel, 'Prufrock and other observations', gepubliceerd in 1917.

Het gedicht volgt de gedachtegang van een anoniem hoofdpersonage, dat men zou kunnen beschouwen als 'The Rhapsode'. Deze persoon dwaalt 's nachts rond doorheen de straten van een stad. De solo contrabas fungeert als een verklanking van 'The Rhapsode'. De hoofdpersoon wordt tijdens het gedicht enkele keren toegesproken door een mysterieuze stem, 'The hallucinated voice'. De tekst van 'The hallucinated voice' wordt gezongen door de mezzosopraan. Het orkest verklankt het omringende landschap van gedachten, beelden en symbolen.¹

Eliot is heel nauwkeurig in het beschrijven van de tijd (Twelve o'clock – Half-past one – Half-past two – Half-past three – Four o'clock), deze indeling heb ik dan ook gebruikt als structuur binnen mijn eigen compositie. Het getal 5 speelt een cruciale rol in de structuur van het gedicht. Ook in de muziek komt dit getal op micro- en macroniveau veelvuldig voor.

'Rhapsody on a windy night' werd geschreven rond 1911, de periode waarin Eliot studeerde aan de Sorbonne. Het is dan ook zeer waarschijnlijk dat Parijs de stad is waaraan gerefereerd wordt. Verder liet Eliot zich inspireren door 'Babu de Montparnasse' (1898) van Charles-Louis Philippe. Dit boek speelt zich af in de smerige achterbuurten van Parijs en volgt het leven van de prostituee Babu. Deze invloeden komen ook voor in de compositie: Een deel van het muzikaal materiaal is afgeleid van het lied 'Je te veux' van Erik Satie, rond die tijd een zeer populair chanson in het Parijse nachtleven. Het materiaal van 'Je te veux' verschijnt voor het eerst nadat 'The hallucinated voice' haar intrede maakt. Uiteindelijk leidt deze aanzet tot de uitbarsting van het vervormd citaat van 'Je te veux' tijdens de climax van het werk.

[ENG] 'Rhapsody on a windy night' is a work for double bass solo, mezzo-soprano and orchestra, based on the poem by T.S. Eliot (1888-1956). The poem is part of Eliots first chapbook, 'Prufrock and other observations', which was published in 1917.

The poem follows the inner thoughts of an unknown protagonist, one could call this figure 'The rhapsode'. This person wanders about the nightly streets of a city. In my work, the solo double bass plays the part of 'The rhapsode'. At certain moments during the poem, the protagonist is addressed by a mysterious, hallucinated voice. The lines of 'The hallucinated voice' are sung by the mezzo-soprano. The orchestra provides the sound of the surrounding landscape of thoughts, images and symbols.¹

Eliot is very precise in mentioning the time (Twelve o'clock – Half-past one – Half-past two – Half-past three – Four o'clock), this division is also the basis for the structure of my own piece. The number 5 plays a crucial role in the poem, this number is present in the music on many levels as well.

'Rhapsody on a windy night' was written around 1911, a time when Eliot was a student at the Sorbonne. It is not unlikely that the city referred to during the poem is Paris. One can find also a lot of influences from 'Babu de Montparnasse' (1898) by Charles-Louis Philippe. This novel is set in the squalid neighborhoods of Paris and tells the story of the prostitute Babu. These two influences are present in my music as well: Part of the musical material is derived from the song 'Je te veux' by Erik Satie, at that time a very popular chanson in Paris nightlife. The material of 'Je te veux' appears for the first time when 'The hallucinated voice' sings her first lines. Eventually it leads towards the outburst at the very climax of the piece, as a deformed version of 'Je te veux' is played by the orchestra.

Duurtijd/Duration: +/- 17 min.

Erik Desimpelaere, November 2019



¹ 'Deciphering Eliot: Rhapsody on a windy night and the Dialectic of the Cipher – Murray McArthur.

Rhapsody on a windy night

Twelve o'clock.
Along the reaches of the street
Held in lunar synthesis,
Whispering lunar incantations
Dissolve the floors of the memory
And all its clear relations,
Its divisions and precisions,
Every street lamp that I pass
Beats like a fatalistic drum,
And through the spaces of the dark
Midnight shakes the memory
As a madman shakes a dead geranium.

Half-past one,
The street lamp sputtered,
The street lamp muttered,
The street lamp said, 'Regard that woman
Who hesitates toward you in the light of the door
Which opens on her like a grin.
You see the border of her dress
Is torn and stained with sand,
And you see the corner of her eye
Twists like a crooked pin.'

The memory throws up high and dry
A crowd of twisted things;
A twisted branch upon the beach
Eaten smooth, and polished
As if the world gave up
The secret of its skeleton,
Stiff and white.
A broken spring in a factory yard,
Rust that clings to the form that the strength has left
Hard and curled and ready to snap.

Half-past two,
The street lamp said,
'Remark the cat which flattens itself in the gutter,
Slips out its tongue
And devours a morsel of rancid butter.'
So the hand of a child, automatic,
Slipped out and pocketed a toy that was running along the quay.
I could see nothing behind that child's eye.
I have seen eyes in the street
Trying to peer through lighted shutters,
And a crab one afternoon in a pool,
And old crab with barnacles on his back,
Gripped the end of a stick which I held him.

Half-past three,
The lamp sputtered,
The lamp muttered in the dark.
The lamp hummed:
'Regard the moon,
La lune ne garde aucune rancune,
She winks a feeble eye,
She smiles into corners.
She smooths the hair of the grass.
The moon has lost her memory.
A washed-out smallpox cracks her face,
Her hand twists a paper-rose,
That smells of dust and old Cologne,
She is alone
With all the old nocturnal smells
That cross and cross across her brain.'
The reminiscence comes
Of sunless dry geraniums
And dust in crevices,
Smells of chestnuts in the streets,
And female smells in shuttered rooms,
And cigarettes in corridors
And cocktail smells in bars.

The lamp said,
'Four o'clock,
Here is the number on the door.
Memory!
You have the key,
The little lamp spreads a ring on the stair,
Mount.
The bed is open; the tooth-brush hangs on the wall,
Put your shoes at the door, sleep, prepare for life.'

The last twist of the knife.

T.S. Eliot (1911)

RHAPSODY ON A WINDY NIGHT

for solo double bass, mezzo-soprano and orchestra, after a poem by T.S. Eliot

Erik Desimpelaere

I. Twelve o'clock.

Twelve o'clock.

Meccanico (♩=80)

2 Flutes (2. doubling piccolo)

1 Oboe

2 Clarinets in A

1 Bassoon

2 Horns in F

1 Trumpet in C

1 Trombone

Percussion 1

Percussion 2

1 Harp

Solo Double Bass 'The rhapsode'

Mezzo-soprano 'The hallucinated voice'

1. slap tongue

pp molto secco

Crotales

p L.V.

2 very high Wood Blocks (different pitch)

ppp molto leggero e ritmico

harmonics, sounding 1 octave higher than written

p ritmico, L.V.

Tuning of the double bass: D-A-E-A
The solo part is written in C

√sul D

pppp molto dolce

Meccanico (♩=80)

8 1st Violins

8 2nd Violins

6 Violas

6 Cellos

4 Double Basses

sul A, pizz. secco, almost without pitch

ppp ritmico

sul A, pizz. secco, almost without pitch

ppp ritmico

1 Along the reaches of the street
Held in lunar synthesis,
Whispering lunar incantations

5
(← ♩ = ♩ →) Fluttuante (♩=100)

10

Fl. 1. Flute *pppp senza vibrato, freddo*

2. Flute *pppp senza vibrato, freddo*

Cl. *5 (senza decresc.)*

Hn. 1+2. Blow only air through the instrument, using the fingering of the pitches (wind effect) *p* *3* *ppp*

C Tpt. Blow only air through the instrument, using the fingering of the pitches (wind effect) *6* *p* *ppp*

Crot. *5 (senza decresc.)*

2 W.B. *pppp* Suspended Cymbal (large) very soft roll, with small dynamic alterations *ppp*

Hp. *5 (senza decresc.)* *pp* (ord.) *5* (no harmonics)

Db. solo *pp*

1
5
(← ♩ = ♩ →) Fluttuante (♩=100)

Vln. I *ppp sul tasto*

Vln. II *ppp sul tasto*

Vla. (ord. pizz.) *pppp* *ppp*

Vc. *pppp*

2

19

Fl. *pp poco espr.* *pppp freddo*

Ob. *pp poco espr.* *pppp*

Cl. *gradual accel.* *poco* *pp* *fast* *gradual rit.* *as written* *ppp*

Bsn. *pp* *pppp*

Hn. *2. only air* *ppp* *mp* *(ppp)*

C Tpt. *only air* *ppp* *mp* *ppp*

Cym. *p L.V.* *ppp*

Hp. *poco* *p* *gliss.* *pp*

Db. solo *mp*

Vln. I *poco* *pp* *ppp*

Vln. II *poco* *pp* *ppp*

Vla. *pp* *ppp*

Vc. *arco, harmonics glissando sul A* *pp* *(p)*

26

Fl. *p poco espr.*

Ob. *p poco espr.*

Ob. *p espr.*

Cl. *p* gradual accel. → fast → gradual rit. → as written *ppp*

Bsn. *p* → *ppp*

Hn. 1+2. (only air) *pp* → *mf*

C Tpt. (only air) *pp* → *mf*

Cym. *mp L.V.* 2 Wood Blocks *p*

Hp. *gliss.* *8va loco* *p*

Db. solo

Vln. I *p*

Vln. II *p*

Vla. *mp* → *p* sul A *pp ritmico*

Vc. harmonics glissando sul A *pp* → *gliss.* → *(mp)* pizz. sul A *pp ritmico*