



Grasland

... From the meadow. A glowing fairy tale inspired on the life and work of György Ligeti, performed by Usine à Neige.



Usine à Neige pays tribute to the life and music of the Hungarian composer György Ligeti. In this fairy tale a hare tries to escape from an environment where danger lurks behind every corner. Discovering, experimenting and living out your fantasy are central themes in this new music theatre piece.

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Performance

From the Meadow is played by a pianist, a painter, a video artist, a hare (performer) and a children's choir. This sensory, visual and playful performance of approximately one hour contains no text and is suitable for children from the age of 6.

In seven scenes we see a hare mysteriously appearing and disappearing. His world is designed by an artist who paints landscapes on scene. In these landscapes the hare discovers children playing games and singing songs. Curiously he tries to understand their playful games and songs. The children however sing in a mysterious language and run around in ever changing landscapes. An innocent game of cat and mouse is played between the children and the hare: who's is who and where does this game lead to? Slowly their innocent game evolves into a wild pursuit of the hare by a bunch of children. Video's and musical fragments of Ligeti's work illustrate the urgency for the hare to find an escape. In the end both the hare and the children seem to have found a safe haven.



Goals and background

The goal of this performance is to introduce modern music composed by Ligeti to children and their families in a playful and visual way. Ligeti's life and work are inseparable: his music reflects his way of life and his turbulent life is traceable in his music. In order to highlight both elements we decided to create a music theatre play with strong visual and musical elements. We decided to use a metaphor to tell the story of Ligeti: a hare on the run, looking for his paradise; the meadow.

Video's and paintings reflect both the complex layers in the music of Ligeti and the different atmospheres his music evokes. Children playing games refer to the way Ligeti worked to create his compositions: playful, curious and always on the lookout for experiments to change perceptions of the audience. One of his most beloved creatures was the rabbit in Lewis Carroll's play Alice in Wonderland. In our play, Ligeti is represented by a hare.

Most of today's musical performances consist of mainstream repertoire, even from classical composers. 20th century, modern composers and their work are neglected due to the fact

that adults find it difficult to understand. Children have better ears: they experience modern music first, then create their own images and hardly worry about the meaning of it all. We believe this music opens up more possibilities to stimulate creativity amongst children. We want to share this rich musical world with audiences from all ages.

Local participation

In this project we work with local children's choirs. The children, about 30, are between the age of 8 to 10. They sing songs in a fantasy language, resembling old folksongs from Hungary. They not only sing but a few children will also play some scenes.

Before our performance we will send all the music well in advance and 2 or 3 days before the show we will work with the kids on what is expected from them. This will all be in a very playful environment: the most important things is that the kids have fun while working on creating a fairy tale together with a professional group.

This production is partly developed during a residency for the Phoenix Festival of music theater Walpurgis in Mortsel, Belgium.

The workshop is organized by Iris van Heesch (production) and conducted by Tjyying Liu and Jeroen Malaise. Both artists have experience with working with kids from different backgrounds. Liu has been working for years with children from the age of four for various theater projects and museums. Malaise is a pianist and composer, teaches at the conservatory in Antwerp and has a lot of experience in the field of interactive work with children and young people. He has developed training programs for children and works with children on stage and beyond.

The cooperation with a local choir not only gives each performance a unique character, it also brings local people in direct contact with modern music and the theatre. It will also generate a big audience. Parents, Grandparents, brothers and sisters and other family members love to see one of their own perform.

Practical information

Duration: 60 minutes

Audience: age 6+, 200-300 person per performance depending on location

For more information and bookings, please contact

Iris van Heesch 0031 6 24 53 68 57
(production and business director)

Tjyying Liu 0031 6 25 10 27 79
(artistic director)

Or email us usine.aneige@gmail.com

Crew

Creation: Letizia Renzini and Tjyying Liu

Direction: Letizia Renzini

Piano: Jeroen Malaise

Direction choir: Tjyying Liu

Costumes: Lotte Stek

Clarinet, Hare: Tjyying Liu

Lichtontwerp: Peter Quasters

Production: Iris van Heesch

Video: Mikel van Gelderen, Letizia Renzini and Lotte Stek

Live drawings and set: Mikel van Gelderen





Photography: Lotte Stek

Mission and vision statement Usine à Neige

The mission of music theatre ensemble Usine à Neige is to introduce contemporary music* to young audiences and their families in an imaginative and visual way. By combining different arts and contemporary music in a theatrical environment, we develop a new, non-linguistical language suitable for international productions for audiences of all ages and backgrounds. With this visual and musical language we strive to search for new connections between actors, musicians, composers and the audience.

We believe that the repertoire of contemporary composers and their methods to create new compositions offers children more possibilities to freely experiment and express themselves creatively. An important feature of our work is to let children explore new music themselves. Prior to each new performance we conduct workshops with children and respond to their reactions by creating new material. Local participation enhances personal connections with work that we perform. Children are part of the process of making a new theatre show. Each time we carefully assess in what way this participatory element can be part of the performance, directly or indirectly.

*Our definition of contemporary music is all music composed after 1900.