

VOJTECH SEMBERA

LIST OF COMPOSITIONS (EN)

INSTRUMENTAL COMPOSITIONS

- Fragments of the First Snow
 - Fragments of the First Snow (for bass clarinet, vibraphone, synthesizer, electric piano and acoustic piano) is inspired by the atmosphere of a landscape covered in the first snow. The creation of this composition was a great adventure for me: originally the piece was supposed to be called just The First Snow, but after I have written it I didn't find the music to my liking and so I cut the partiture in small pieces and the Fragments of The First Snow emerged.
- Night Soundscape
 - Night Soundscape (for unspecified instrumental ensemble) is a graphic score originally written for ensemble VENI academy. The piece is in fact a picture of a night landscape – a map for every member of the ensemble, which guides them from the land to the sky. The composition is absolutely dependent on the preparation of each and every member of the ensemble, as everybody has to diligently create their own music material and define their own way in the score. There is no space for improvisation.
- 2 Nocturnes
 - Two short nocturnes (for piano) are in fact a composition etude on the subject of alternative harmonic principles derived from the idea of baroque generalbass. The pieces are titled Nocturnes because of their atmosphere rather than because of the inspiration.
- The Silent Boats
 - Composition is inspired by a setting of Ernest Hemingway's novel The Old Man and the Sea: the fishermen sailing to the sea in the chilly dark right before the dawn. Serenity of the sea interrupted only by the gambol of flying fish and by the whispers of one's own thoughts.

VOCAL AND VOCAL-INSTRUMENTAL COMPOSITIONS

- And the Night is Gentle
 - And the Night is Gentle (for contralto) on poetry by Hana Fouskova is guided by the philosophy, that singing is just a very specific manner of reciting and therefore is on the same level as speaking. The main idea of the piece is in the poetry itself and no commentary is required for it.
- 5 Haiku
 - Cycle of five haiku (for two children voices and recorder) is a purpose-less game with words and tones. Dadaistic principles are employed in both text and music, which underlines the sound of the words even further in comparison to their meaning. And that – in my opinion – doesn't hurt the idea of haiku at all. On the contrary!
- Hommage a Franz Schubert
 - Hommage à Franz Schubert is a nostalgic recollection of aesthetics of simple beauty. It's music material is derived from the last song of Schubert's *Die Schöne Müllerin*, when the stream sings a lullaby to the drowned pilgrim, whom the stream guided throughout the song cycle. It's soothing song makes one forget the injustice of the world and reminds one the good – that, which died together with the pilgrim. But how much of the good died since the times of Franz Schubert?
- 3 Madrigals

- Three funny madrigals (for boy's choir) on the poems by Jaromir Vlach is a somewhat bad mannered and almost absurd composition, which intentionally resigns on any exact pitches and concentrates rather on the rhythm of the speech and it's deformation. The composition should make the impression, that a group of adolescent boys are reciting semi-vulgar poetry, that they do not comprehend.
- Miserere
 - Miserere (for baritone and piano) is a dialogue between a man, who is searching for his true self and from the (un)purity of his heart finds God, and the dogmatic teaching of the church. This dialogue is represented in the form of prayers by an Armenian patriarch Nersetis Clajensis and the different possibilities of their interpretation.
- Mythic Songs
 - Each song of the Mythic Songs cycle (for soprano and piano) on prayers by an Armenian patriarch Nersetis Clajensis captures a woman from Greek mythology in a desperate situation – first Medea has to put a dragon guarding the golden fleece to sleep, second Hero is waiting for her lover, who is swimming across the raging sea to her, third Echo already turned to stone weeps over her past, fourth and last Eurydice is returning to the underworld after Orfeo looked at her.
- Philoctetes
 - Philoctetes (for baritone and orchestra) is inspired by a tragedy of the same name by Sophocles in which he deals with the conflict between honor and utilitarianism, idealism and pragmatism. In the composition we also find a similar conflict. It's main idea is the constant blending of two contrasting characters. A lyric character, which represents honor and the idea of some higher purpose, and a character of absolutely shameless sarcasm.
- Premonition
 - Premonition (for voice) explores the possibilities of speech in musical context. The composition begins with recitation and evolves towards much greater focus on the sound of the text, while almost ignoring it's former meaning. Absolutely crucial for the composition is the specific percussive characteristics of Czech language and it's rhythmic.
- 3 Songs
 - Cycle of three songs (for alto and viola) on tibetian folk poetry is about a trustful girlish love full of hope without the scepticism of the adulthood.

AUDIO

Recordings of selected compositions are available at <https://m.soundcloud.com/vojt-ch-embera>