

Michel van der Aa



Michel van der Aa 2007 © Marco Borggreve

OPERAS

After Life

2005-06, rev. 2009

1 hr 40 min

Opera for 6 singers, ensemble, video and electronic soundtrack

Text: Libretto by Michel van der Aa after Hirokazu Kore-Eda (E)

2S,M,A,2Bar;

0.1.1.bcl.0-0.1.0.1-positive org(=hpd)-strings(3.3.3.2.2); electronic soundtrack; video projections

"Michel van der Aa is the hottest property in Dutch music at the moment... Van der Aa's piece combines the imaginary with the real, intercutting the fictional operatic action with documentary video interviews in which a variety of people are asked to remember the defining moments in their lives... But it's the meshing of that plot with the documentary elements that proves so teasingly effective, for as the 100-minute piece goes on, the boundary between the two blurs until the four interviewees are seen on video encountering the operatic characters, so that their touching stories seem to infuse the fantasy with something much more directly emotional. It's a strange effect, supported and sustained by van der Aa's ensemble writing, which is dominated by richly detailed string textures and enriched by electronic transformations."

The Guardian

World Premiere: 02 Jun 2006

Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Michel van der Aa, director; Netherlands Opera / Asko Ensemble

Conductor: Otto Tausk

The Book of Disquiet

(Das Buch der Unruhe)

2008

1 hr 15 min

Music theatre for actor, ensemble and film

Text: Libretto after Fernando Pessoa, adapted by Michel van der Aa (E,G,Pt)

1.0.1.1-0.1.0.0-perc(1):vib/glsp/3metal pieces/cabasa/maracas/egg shaker/4Chin.tom-t/BD/bamboo chimes/ratchet/whip(med)/wdbl(lo)/2log dr/tgl(hi)/2susp.cym-4vln.3vla.2vlc.db-soundtrack(laptop, 1player)-film(2screens)

World Premiere: 02 Jan 2009

Hafenhalle09, Linz, Austria

Michel van der Aa, director; Klaus Maria Brandauer, actor / Bruckner Orchester Linz

Conductor: Dennis Russell Davies

One

2002

1 hr

Chamber opera for soprano, video and soundtrack

Text: Music, libretto (E), video & directed by Michel van der Aa

"Michel van der Aa fascinates in One... important is the sheer quality of the notes themselves, possessing a highly concentrated, sublime sharpness and a taut beauty, both mechanical and human." (Ernst Vermeulen, NRC Handelsblad, 13 Jan 2003)

"Mastery of the disorientation. With its absence of personalised psychology the piece spreads its aura over generations, since it reflects its secrets with the clarity of a mirror." (Sybill Mahlke, Der Tagespiegel, 12 Oct 2003)

"One is masterly... a wonderfully poetic piece. As enchanting as a dream." (Erik Voermans, Het Parool, 13 Jan 2003)

"Intense opera... The piece is innovative in its individual design. Imagery, sound and movement add up to more than the sum of its parts." (Roeland Hazendonk, De Telegraaf, 14 Jan 2003)

World Premiere: 12 Jan 2003

Frascati Theatre, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Michel van der Aa, director; Barbara Hannigan, soprano