

The Sonata Threesomes

Frank Nuyts: The piano sonata re-invented!



Though “no-one had asked him to do it”, Frank Nuyts had one ambitious masterplan: to compose eighteen piano sonatas. Well, the last double bar has been written. He started out with 12. The last 6 then were commissioned by Muziekcentrum De Bijloke.

“Since, as an ex-percussionist, there were only a handful sonatas available for my instrument, I inevitably turned to the piano sonatas of Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven. Imagine, in those days I found Mozart rather shallow. How ignorant one can be... Only until I really started looking at his scores and their graphical aspects, I truly understood his genius. These sonatas became an ideal for me. In the 20th century, on the other hand, quite a few composers left only a single sonata behind, whereas the string quartet enjoyed a much bigger popularity. That very much intrigued me.”

De Bijloke decided to put all eighteen sonatas on stage, performed by eighteen different pianists. Each concert featured one new sonata alongside to two older ones. They must have been very curious indeed as to how, in this highly technological era of chaos and globalization, a composer could still enjoy using a musical form that has everything to do with the 18th and 19th century.



As said, 18 sonatas means an international group of just as much talented and passionate pianists, some young and others a bit less young. They are from **Malta, Japan, Greece** and of course also from **Belgium**. After hearing them play their respective sonatas it will be hard not to remember names as Gabi Sultana, Keiko Shichijo, Katerina Konstantourou, Marc Masson, Tae Joshioka, Frederik Martens, Barbara Baltussen, Elisa Medinilla, Luc Van Loo, Ivo Delaere and many others.

The sonatas are divided into 3 books of each 6 sonatas.

Possible concerto formulas:

- three sonatas (1 sonata from every book) by three different pianists.
- two sonatas by two different pianists framing a classical or romantic pieces.
- other combinations or programs fitting the needs of a particular setting or venue.
- all 18 sonatas as a mini festival



Performers: Barbara Baltussen
Eline Brys
Mirek Coutigny
Ivo Delaere
Bert Derycke
Katerina Konstantourou
Frederik Martens
Marc Masson
Elisa Medinilla
Keiko Shichijo
Gabi Sultana
Tae Yoshioka

Duration concert: 70 to 80 minutes
Duration festival: 6 to 7 hours

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Audio fragments of several sonatas can be found on this website:
<http://www.franknuyts.com/works/solomusic.html>



photos: Philip Van Ootegem.

Pianists and sonatas per concert:

Concert I:

Gabi Sultana plays Mock up Rock and Za-Va-Pa (as Sonata 1)

Katerina Konstantourou plays Sonata 7 or Sonata 1B

Keiko SHichijo plays Sonata 13

Concert II:

Bert De Rycke plays Sonata 2

Elisa Medenilla plays Sonata 8

Mirek Coutigny plays Sonata 14

Concert III:

Frederik Martens plays Sonata 3

Luc Van Loo plays Sonata 9

Marc Masson plays Sonata 15

Concert IV:

Eline Brys plays Sonata 4

Luc Van Loo plays Sonata 10

Elisa Medenilla plays Sonata 16

Concert V:

Marc Masson plays Sonata 5

Tae Yoshioka plays Sonata 11

Gabi Sultana plays Sonata 18

Concert VI:

Gabi Sultana plays Sonata 6

Ivo Delaere plays Sonata 12

Barbara Baltussen plays Sonata 17