

EVA B

Der unveröffentlichte Film der Eva Braun (The unpublished tape of Eva Braun)

This monologue opera is an absurd, surreal description of the aging Eva Braun tracing her life, choices, emotions, regrets and forgotten dreams. The libretto is in German, and translations are available in English and Finnish.

Composer: Pasi Lyytikäinen

Librettist: Maritza Núñez

Soprano soloist and an ensemble of 9 players

Duration: 35 minutes

Composed in 2019-20

Publisher: Fennica Gehrman (fennicagehrman.fi)

"This highly entertaining show also has its dramatic, more serious turns. The music does not have any dull moments: it moves forward with a drive and includes catchy stylistic allusions: folk songs, marches and jazzy schlagers in cabaret style. A dream role for any soprano!"



NOTES FROM THE LIBRETTIST

When writing the libretto I was interested in the theme of power – not just in relation to Eva Braun but also to ourselves. The conflict between what we think and what we do is exciting since we all have both good and bad qualities. How much truth do we want to know? In every one of us there is a dictator hidden inside. Most people, however, can control this quality in themselves.

When writing an opera, a tragic approach can be difficult. Instead, my focus here has been absurdity. It conveys a strong statement which would not be possible with the means of tragedy alone.

When Pasi Lyytikäinen showed me his composition I noticed how well it interacted with the libretto. The hypnotic, repetitive theme in the fourth scene mirrors skilfully the concept of evil: both what happened in the Third Reich and in the history of mankind. In the music there is humour, humanity, sensitivity as well as contrasts between primitive, cabaret style and refined expression. The opera proceeds with a powerful dramaturgy creating almost a trance-like experience in the audience.

Maritza Núñez

NOTES FROM THE COMPOSER

I found out about the libretto as a result of a phone call from director Ville Saukkonen. He contacted me some years ago and was totally excited having found a text about Eva Braun “that would suit me perfectly”. I became thrilled although my first reaction was that it was not my cup of tea.

Saukkonen persuaded me to read the first version and I was immediately hooked. There were many things that impressed me. In front of me there were words that right away started to echo in my head. The different moods of the various scenes also impressed me: there was tragic, black humour and almost embarrassing humanism. What especially caught me was how the libretto described issues in a relationship: power and how it can be lost, expectations and dreams that remain unfulfilled, disappointments. And most of all: and how it is possible to distance yourself from evil, as if it is something alien and distant that does not touch us.

Pasi Lyytikäinen

Photos by Markku Pihjala

Reetta Ristimäki as Eva B in the production by the Finnish Chamber Opera and Greta Production in 2021.

