

Projects Philosophy

The modern world is characterized by its unstoppable development. The pace of life is inhumanly fast. We try to keep up, run along but we end up in its cruel carousel. We will talk about a lonely man's hopes against his reality. His illness, loneliness, and the struggles at the crossroads of life and also the consequences which he puts himself in. This is a lonely man's journey to regain peace and balance, drawing inspiration from nature and returning to loved ones.

We will try to shed light on one of the silent diseases of the 21st century. It arises from the endless movements and possibilities. In this mountain of information man loses himself, the meaning of life and most of the time the outcome of this is loneliness. He longs for something deep, real and wants to return to oneself. Unfortunately, this way of life is expected of us in the modern society.

In our opinion, man has never been as lonely as it is now – this century where the opportunities are infinite, brings with itself very often severe psychological and physical illnesses. In which people unconsciously lead themselves till the edge without realizing how much physical-mental health and life itself is fragile. This was also a painful personal experience for trio HORTUS which encouraged them to choose this subject for their project. With modern possibilities, in conditional peacetime, so many young, powerful people still struggle from chronic illnesses. The artists want to draw public attention to these people suffering who, in the madness of the pandemic, have only been deprived of a stable treatment. Everything was put on pause which was a setback for many people who are depended on the continuity of their treatment. It is also a fight against a part of the society that lacks the empathy, who, while healthy themselves, do not realize the importance of stable health and the need to be able to maintain it. The biggest misfortune in recent years, the COVID-19 pandemic, only highlighted the problem. Many people were deprived not only of their usual rhythm of life, treatment possibilities and also everything they ran after. They found themselves mostly alone and realizing what they ran after was not important after all.

Together with us you will be able to experience a person's loneliness and his dreams, the fight against illness and the struggle with distance. His return to home to loved ones as a stronger person. Our "medicine" is returning to nature, which is very characteristic of the Latvian people. By observing ancient rituals, meditating in its silence and beauty, we are inspired to further create art, music and dance.

Process

The story of our project "Expectations versus Reality" began with Magone Runka (pianist) and Marcis Runka (trumpeter) wanting to collaborate together in an ensemble. As brother and sister, they thought it will be interesting, to actively promote the chamber music repertoire for trumpet and piano. Since it is not a common mixture of instruments for chamber music, the challenge was obvious: the lack of repertoire. Magone and Marcis decided to go forward with their not-so-traditional ensemble anyway. Curiosity to explore the limits of this ensemble, with such challenges, played a big part in this decision. While establishing the vision for their ensemble 'HORTUS', the goal was clear: attracting new composers to create original works through artistic self-expression of an uncommon ensemble.

Motivated to execute this vision, Runka siblings started forming their project and soon enough it was evident that the visual compound was missing. Already been confronted with many challenges HORTUS decided to take it a notch further; by encouraging Anna Russke (ballerina) to join and make their already not-so-traditional ensemble even more unique. Subsequently followed long hours of deliberations,

exchanging ideas, and inspiring each other until these three artists were ready to express their art on a platform. It was important for HORTUS to find a platform which supports creativity, and nothing is off-limits when it comes to self-expression. Therefore, after examining many competitions and project choices, they decided to focus on GOODMESH contest.

The main goal in this project was to create and maintain an equal role for Marcis, Magone and Anna in terms of repertoire and scenography. Since all three artists are based in different countries (Netherlands, Germany and Latvia) the opportunities were very limited and scenography had to be especially adapted to this situation. The current epidemiological situation in the world also posted its challenges which restricted the ability to travel and meet. Continuous ups and downs, the daily changes in the government restrictions have repeatedly made HORTUS adapt their plans; even got some of them trapped in different countries at some moments (closing of borders). Continuous rehearsals and conferences through internet, learning dance choreography remotely, the creation of musical ideas from countless hours of video chatting only made them long to meet on one stage.

In this project the audience will have the opportunity to see and feel this difficult path to each other. It was these difficulties that inspired HORTUS to find the most original solutions. Expectations were seemingly easy and achievable goals. Reality was the pandemic, travel restrictions, trying to film similar footage in three different countries, finding time in their daily lives to put together their ideas. It took time, energy, and effort. Marcis, Magone and Anna decided they would meet on stage only in the last composition, to highlight and channel the problems and non-standard situations in which this project was made. Their ensemble will express its range of emotions with the audience vividly and will still leave a place for the viewers' imagination.

The performance of HORTUS starts with Ketting's composition for trumpet solo, where the trumpeter Marcis Runka will be merging with the audience to highlight feeling of loneliness in a crowd.

Accompanied by Hindemith Sonata for trumpet and piano the program will continue with dancing in the shadows. It will reveal the gloomy loneliness, the mood of confusion, the darkest sides of modern society and the sharpness of empty reality. Ziedonis' epiphany inspired words will be displayed in the scenography.

The culmination of "Expectations versus Reality" will be dancing in the shadows with the recitations of Ziedonis epiphany to accentuate a person's loneliness at a time when everything is taken away. To develop musical and dramatic story line, using the Sumera solo cycle for piano, HORTUS will try to find a way to reach one another.

Bright notes of Stevens sonata for trumpet and piano symbolizes artists personal return to nature and their meditation in it. They will all meet on stage for the first time in the last composition of Asia Ahmetzanov, designed as a solemn, full of hope conclusion - a festive ritual, celebrating small moments of being together.

Impressions

This project was inspired by the events of recent years. Both the pandemic and the artists personal experiences, walking through the twists and turns of life, led them to start thinking about, how much we as a society lack support and how fragile we are. When in a different country, due to a job or chasing after personal growth; the world feels so small and there is always an opportunity to return home. A lifetime seems infinite, and we feel we have enough time to catch everything. But only the hardest experience of recent years made us think and opened our eyes to the reality - that our expectations

versus our reality are two different stories. Maximalism in youth doesn't think often about the path they choose; until life leads them to understand it, unfortunately often, in a much harsher form.

HORTUS wanted to tell this story already for a long time, but this topic has always seemed too heavy and personal. They wanted to empathize and use their struggle as an inspiration to push themselves further in their artistic lives.

"Distance and meeting" is the main idea of our performance. Reading Imats Ziedonis' epiphany finding such precise words in the "Feeling of Bridge" - the way from one shore to the other, from one heart to another. Ziedonis talks about the bridge as an opportunity and will help reveal the emotions we feel and channel our experiences to our viewers in a more understandable way. Ziedonis talks about the bridge over anxiety, failures and daily stress and a safe path from one soul to another. "Feeling of Bridge" seemingly compact prose helped us to organize our thoughts, to clarify the understanding of how on stage, depict the contrast between routine and pandemic emptiness. The deep, quietly bright words inspire and invite us for deeper thoughts. These words resonate perfectly within HORTUS and the problems we like to address.



