

L A C R I M O S A
O R 1 3 M A G I C S O N G S

A B O U T T H E A L B U M

Writing music for the common 20th-century types of classical ensembles that comprise a variety of instruments has lost its appeal to me over the last couple of years.

My musical forms tend to show a reduction to homogeneous instrumental compositions: the *Marian Antiphons* for 12 voices a cappella, the *Insane Dances* for saxophone quartet, *Six Bagatelles for Two Violins*, the *Suite - Homage to Alfred Schmittke* for three cellos, and many more. And thus, I conceived of a cycle over a lifetime, titled *Similar*.

Its first chapter is to be the *Lacrimosa or 15 Magic Songs* for seven violins. This piece is a unique musical work of art: a many-sided, hour-long meditation that captures my imagination and that I want to share with a larger audience.

Lacrimosa or 15 Magic Songs is a lamentation, man's final prayer before Judgement. This prayer can at once be incisive and show the various states of mankind: gleeful, repenting, fearful, lamenting, faithful...

During the performance of the *15 Songs*, the listeners' souls are supposed to pass through a series of excruciating, excessive stages, to finally reach a catharsis. This direction determines the cycle's dramaturgic structure. My aim is to transform an immediate, openly emotional response to powerful impressions — something most contemporary art refuses to deal with — into the musical form of the *Lacrimosa*.

For all the varied techniques to be applied in the work, its emphasis is on the emotion, its aspiration to capture the listeners' minds, immersing them in the atmosphere of each part. This idea can be realised only by a multi-voice, single-timbre ensemble of violins, at once a unity and a multitude, one soul and its many voices, a number of people struggling to come at peace with the world, one another, and silence...

The composer enters a white room, unfathomable in its boundaries, empty, and silent. As soon as his efforts have brought the room to life, with each of its corners homely and dear, as soon as the feeling emerges that outside this room there is no self — he simply leaves, closing the door behind him, forever.

Having lived for seven years with the idea for *Lacrimosa* on my mind, I find it all the more incredible to hear it in recorded form. Now I will leave a world that has become dear to me, and set out to create a new one. I gladly believe that for any listener, this disk will be that special place to which they want to come back again and again.

Maxim Shalygin

S A C R E D M U S I C
F O R T H E A P O C A L Y P S E

The *Requiem* has developed from the funeral mass, and has become widely popular as a secular type of sacred music. Arguably because of its subject matter, the genre has not died during the 20th century; it has lived on through works by Benjamin Britten, György Ligeti, Alfred Schnittke, and Krzysztof Penderecki, expressing how their authors longed for reconciliation with, and forgiveness from, the world and themselves.

The heart of the *Requiem* is the *Dies Irae*, well known for the words with which it opens, but, thanks to Mozart, no less for its conclusive lines:

*Ah! that day of tears and mourning,
From the dust of earth returning.
Man for judgement must prepare him,
Spare, O God, in mercy spare him.
Lord, all-pitying, Jesus blest,
Grant them Thine eternal rest. Amen.*

It is exactly this prayer for forgiveness and reconciliation that has won the *Requiem* its popularity.

Although many varieties of it exist, to our knowledge, no purely instrumental version has been composed yet. *Lacrimosa or 15 Magic Songs* expresses an interesting and original view on the genre, in which violins can replace human voices, now sounding as a prayerful chant, then as a malignant howl or a bird song.

Most importantly, the parts relay an alternating perusal of the text of *Lacrimosa* as it is — perhaps the most strikingly human, prayerful words that exist, asking God for redemption and mercy.

The choice of seven violins has a sacral meaning. The number seven has been an object of special awe in all civilisations throughout history, for example in ancient Egypt, where it symbolised eternal life. The musical scale comprises seven naturals, whereas the visual artist's spectrum comprises seven basic colours.

The number seven is the theme of our lives. Seven is Christianity's most important number: there are seven petitions in the *Lord's Prayer*, seven virtues, and seven mortal sins — but, even more importantly, in the *Book of Revelation*, seven seals and seven trumpets announce the Apocalypse.

In this work, the composer enters a creative dialogue with fellow-composers, but also with like-minded film directors to whom the Apocalypse theme has been dear, including Ingmar Bergman, Andrey Tarkovsky, and Lars von Trier.

Iryna Tukova & Anna Reshetniak









S H A P E S H I F T

Shapeshift is a flexible performing ensemble, or band, collective, or orchestra! Shapeshift is based in The Netherlands and is a composer-performer's collective. The ensemble brings exceptional and unusual music productions, performed by the best soloists of the new generation, combining quality, vast possibilities, adventure, imagination, excitement, experimentation, and unprejudiced freshness with a sharp artistic vision.

Shapeshift works in close collaboration with composers, tailoring to their methods. The composition of the group varies depending on the needs of the production. The size can range from small to very large, while retaining the unique character and personality of Shapeshift. This all makes sure that the ensemble is the perfect basis for bringing innovative ideas into practice.

Artists:

1st violin: *Emmy Storms*

2nd violin: *Fiona Robertson*

3rd violin: *Ernst Spyckerelle*

4th violin: *Eduardo Paredes Crespo*

5th violin: *Anna Britala*

6th violin: *Anna Antypova*

7th violin: *Andrii Chugai*

conductor: *Maxim Shalygin*

project manager: *Anna Reshetniak*

MAXIM SHALYGIN

“Creativity is an unconscious act of insanity, in a burst of which the truth is born. No matter how beautiful or disgusting it may seem to people far from madness, its value is beyond doubt, both for the author and for those able to sense its invisible beauty.”

After all, gratitude for endless trials and suffering brings joy and blissful emptiness... Being shocked by music is about pain turning into beauty and getting under your skin, taking away your breath; about everything stopping to move. I want to be scratched inside by sound and experience the fleeting, invisible beauty.”

Maxim Shalygin was born in Ukraine on January 30th, 1983. He began studying composition seriously at the age of sixteen, with Irina Ivashenko. In 2004, he trained for one year with Boris Tishchenko at the N. Rimsky-Korsakov St. Petersburg State Conservatory in Russia. He received his first Master's Degree in 2010 at the National Music Academy in Kiev, Ukraine. One year later, in 2011, Shalygin received his second Master's Degree at the Royal Conservatory of The Hague, The Netherlands, where he studied with Cornelis de Bondt and Diderik Wagenaar. He currently resides and works in The Netherlands.

For over ten years, Maxim Shalygin has been occupied with the project of a lifetime: music for solo instruments. “The most concealed, intimate, and deep things can only be expressed by a single instrument,” he says. In each of his solo works, Shalygin reaches an exalted state, giving the instrument a special voice. The *9 Preludes for Piano Solo*, *Letters to Anna*, a symphony for violin solo, *Musique de Fer* for one percussionist, *Trembling Music* for accordion solo, and *Canti d'inizio e fine* for solo cello are the results of close collaboration with unique performers such as Antony Baryshevsky, Emmy Storms, Konstantyn Napolov, Vincent van Amsterdam, and Maya Fridman, respectively. On the other hand, Shalygin explores writing for symphony and chamber orchestras. His works *Passacaglia Es-moll*, *Triple Concerto Desdur*, and *Lullaby* for strings have been performed in many concert halls.

Another important thread throughout the composer's work is music for ballet. His collaboration with choreographer Lonneke van Leth resulted in scores for several ballets: *Suite - Homage to Alfred Schnittke*, *Nachtnet*, *Odyseus*, and *The Case Carmen* that were performed during the Holland Dance Festival, and have enjoyed successes in many Dutch theaters.

Maxim Shalygin is also the author of a wealth of electro-acoustic compositions. He considers some of these as a kind of musical cinema. *Two Hours in Reservoir* (using Joseph Brodsky's recitation voice) and *When Everything Ends, We Start to Sing Our Songs*, are musical works of over 50 minutes in length, with plots that engage the listener in ever-changing streams of sound shapes.

Shalygin's vocal music constitutes the most characteristic and intimate part of his work, its very heart. It is not concert music in the usual sense — it is poetry recited by a voice and an instrument (the piano) combined. It is music written for its own sake, which becomes a heritage of others.

Maxim Shalygin has participated in many international competitions. For his *Letters to Anna* symphony for violin solo, he obtained an honorable mention at the 2012 Gaudeamus Competition. In the same year, his music was selected for Lars von Trier's *Gesamt* project. Shalygin was a composer-in-residence at IZOLYATSIYA, Platform for Cultural Initiatives in Donetsk, Ukraine, and the Storioni Festival in The Netherlands. His works have been performed at many music festivals worldwide, including Gaudeamus Muziekweek (The Netherlands), Musical Contrasts of the 20th Century (Russia), Musical Youth Tributne, GOGOLFEST (Ukraine), GAIDA Festival (Lithuania), and CIME/ICEM (United States). Leading contemporary music ensembles who have performed his works include AskolSchönberg, Amsterdam Sinfonietta, DoelenKwartet, Insomnio, Nieuw Ensemble, Slagwerk Den Haag, and Keuris Kwartet.





SPECIAL THANKS

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ДАХАБРАХА



P R O D U C E R ' S N O T E S

The theme of death is not all that uncommon in music. Ever since the dawn of music itself, the loss of a loved one has been mourned over through it, such as in the Catholic mass of the *Requiem*, also known as the Mass for the Dead. However, whereas the passing of someone close might look tragic and sorrowful at times, it is often said that it can also bring mankind together.

In *Lacrimosa or 15 Magic Songs*, death is portrayed in thirteen movements, all with a very different emotional dynamic to them. Like the various states of man, these movements range from solemnly silent and still, to very direct and almost painfully disconcerting. Such as one going through mourning, the *15 Songs* are extremely dynamic, and capturing these dynamics, all the way from the slightest caress of the bow to loud and overpressured dissonance, proved a very interesting task.

Fortunately, by recording and mastering the *Lacrimosa* in DXD, 16 times higher than CD quality, we were able to capture all the tiniest details, down to the breathing of the artists, the hairs on the bows, and the timbral differences between the individual violins. By using Sonodore microphones and Merging converters, interconnected through and powered with Furutech cabling, we could make sure nothing got added or removed from the acoustical information in the recording venue.

We hope this recording may captivate you as much as it did us, and we would like to thank you for purchasing this album and thus taking another step together with us, towards a new music movement.

Brendon Heinst

TRPTK proudly uses *Sonodore* microphones, *KEF* loudspeakers, *Hegel* amplification, and *Furutech* cabling at their recording and mastering facilities, carefully optimized by *Acoustic Matters*.

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E Q U I P M E N T

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amplifiers *Hegel H50*

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