

Mgr. SILVIA HRONCOVÁ
Director of Opera

Lost objects

Lost Objects is a musical exploration of the meaning of memory. With the spine of a baroque oratorio layered with the muscle of modern times, it is a powerful monument to the loss of people, things, rituals, ideas. The piece was written by American composers and founders of the New York-based organisation Bang on a Can Michael Gordon, David Lang and Julia Wolfe. It was originally intended for the baroque virtuosity of the legendary Concerto Köln orchestra. In a slightly altered and authorised version the work will premiere 17 December 2015 at The New Stage in Prague under the baton of Artistic director of Opera Petr Kofron.

„What we thought was what’s so beautiful about a baroque orchestra and original instruments is they are fighting very hard to keep something alive which is old, which is in the process of being lost,“ says one of the authors of the piece composer David Lang. *„We had the idea to make the entire piece out of the struggle to remember things as they disappear and to honour things that are already gone. So we worked together with our librettist Deborah Artman and we have made a list of all sorts of things which are lost. Some of them are very ordinary - lost keys, lost socks, lost family members, but some of them are also more spiritual and metaphysical. Lost languages, the loss of the ability to remember things, lost explores, lost places, lost technologies. It’s a struggle to hold on to places where we have been. The piece Lost objects is about that struggle. “*

In their second major collaborative performance project, genre-defying composers Gordon, Lang and Wolfe team up with polyphonic writer Deborah Artman to work on a strange and beautiful alchemy of text and sound.

„Lost Objects is a prayer hall, a hymn but also an invention,“ explains Artman and continues, *„There is a narrative, somewhat sacred, but it is a fractured meditation. In the tenuous and hurried climate of the times we live in now, Lost Objects asks us to pause and consider the grace bestowed upon each thing, person, animal and idea, the ordinary and the not-so-ordinary lost objects of our shared and vanishing culture.“*

In the same way that oratorios such as Handel's Messiah were intended to be staged, the 3 vocal soloists and a voice chorus of *Lost Objects* inhabit a mythic and beautiful stage world, under the direction of the Michael Bielicky and Kamila B. Richter. For both of them it’s a directorial debut at The National Theatre. For over 25 years Bielicky has participated in many international exhibitions, festivals and symposiums using communication, video and VR technologies in places such as Centre Pompidou, Paris, MOMA New York or National Gallery Prague. In recent years he started using web based information technologies in public spaces. *„Experimental work is adventurous and very inspirational, we use a special program that is tailored to this project and with this tool try to create some kind of visual poetry that would attract and also irritate viewers. The theme is strong, timeless, and versatile and goes back to metaphysical realms. It also affects*

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certain mystical concepts, which are close to us. The music is a powerful and sensitive, almost hallucinogenic. Laterna Magika and its history is a frequent topic in my lectures and actually this work on this stage is my dream come true therefore this all cannot be a coincidence."

Soprano Jitka Burgetova and mezzo-sopranos Jana Horakova Levicova and Lucie Hilscherova will assume the title roles. The result is *Lost Objects*, a haunting, hallucinatory and humane music theatre piece for baroque orchestra, rock ensemble (electric guitar, electric bass, keyboard and drums), live DJ remix, solo voices and choir. The unique weave of sounds combines the resonance of animal gut and wood with the ethereal blend of soprano and mezzosoprano voices mixed with the edgy force of amplified rock instruments and drums.

The current New Stage production is performed in an authorised version without a DJ, with mezzo-sopranos instead of countertenors, and in modern tuning (442 Hz). All instruments and voices are amplified. *Lost objects* were first premiered in 2001 in Dresden and now in its new form will be presented at the New Stage four times in December 2015 and January 2016.

The following opera premiere of the National Theatre is a new production of *La Cenerentola* directed by Hungarian-born Enikő Eszenyi and under the baton of conductor Jan Kučera. Premieres are 21 and 22 January 2016 at The Estates Theatre.

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