

# There's no boredom in the Garden of Female Composers...

Im Garten der Komponistinnen kommt keine Langeweile auf...

Concert performance on 28 August 2021  
at the Frauenmuseum in Bonn



**BTHVN**  
2020

40 Jahre  
frauenmuseum f  
kunst, kultur  
forschung e.V. m

MUSIKFONDS

PRO  
MUSICA VIVA  
MARIA  
STRECKER-  
DAELEN  
STIFTUNG

BERLINER  
KÜNSTLER\*  
PROGRAMM

DA  
AD

GEMA  
Stiftung

## **Eleonore, Emilie, Elise - Beethoven and the Question about Women In Bonn in the 18th century • In the Land of Longing • In Music**

An exhibition project of the Women's Museum in Bonn in the frame of **BTHVN2020**

My imaginary *Garden of Female Composers*, made of rear-view mirrors from the former East German car brand Trabant, was created for this exhibition. As part of the locally and globally celebrated 250th birthday of the world citizen Beethoven and the German reunification 30 years ago, these mirrors have adopted a retrospective symbolism in relation to German-German and European cultural history. In the expansive, reflective installation they are screwed onto curved threaded rods and iron feet and have transformed into strange plants. For a concert performance in this special garden, contemporary female composers were invited to create small songs for female voices. They come from Romania, Brazil, Japan, France, Russia, Ukraine, the Czech Republic and Germany. Their beautiful portraits are embedded in selected mirrors and surround the reflected images of the guests of honor Ludwig van Beethoven and Pauline Oliveros.

The imagination of a reflecting garden in which they could let their imagination run wild by inventing musical flowers inspired the composers to come up with wonderful ideas for their songs. The titles and lyrics refer to personal experiences, poems, myths and musical traditions from their home countries. With the effects of climate change on people, animals and plants, the composers' garden also takes on a further level of significance.

Due to the Corona pandemic, guests could not be invited to the concert until 2021, now as part of the next exhibition *Boredom in Paradise*. In shimmering green silk dresses, four singers made the songs resound and the silent garden bloom up in shades of many colors. Delayed by a year, now Beethoven's 251st birthday, 31 years of the German reunification and 40 years of the Women's Museum in Bonn could be toasted and celebrated with lively discussions about music, literature and visual art in the *Garden of Female Composers*.

Gisela Weimann

# **Premiere of songs by contemporary composers**

**Violeta Dinescu**

**Katia Guedes**

**Ellen Hünigen**

**Mayako Kubo**

**Clara Maïda**

**Natalia Pschenitschnikova**

**Olga Rayeva**

**Annette Schlünz**

**Susanne Stelzenbach**

**Karmella Tsepkolenko**

**Lucie Vítková**

**Singers**

**Ensemble Stella Nostra**

**(Amy Green, Ellen Hünigen, Susanne Wilsdorf)**

**and the soprano Katia Guedes**

**Costumes / stage management Alexandra Bentele**

**Video documentation Lioba von den Driesch, Gisela Weimann,  
Ellen Hünigen**

**Concept / direction Gisela Weimann**

# Program

## **Annette Schlünz**

*Knallgelbe Forsythien* (Bright yellow forsythia)

For vocal trio, 2021

Soprano, mezzo-soprano, alto

Poem: Ulrike Draesner

## **Karmella Tsepko**

*Sub Rosa* (figurately under the seal of secrecy)

For 3 female voices, Odessa 2020

Text: Karmella Tsepko

## **Natalia Pschenitschnikova**

*Requiem for a flower II*

For 3 voices, 2020-2021

## **Olga Rayeva**

*Laudamus*

For 3 female voices, 2020

## **Mayako Kubo**

*Umeno Hana* (Plum blossom branch)

For 2 female voices, 2020

Haiku: Kagano-Chijo (1703-1775)

## **Ellen Hünigen**

*Eiblume* (Egg flower)

Für 3 female voices, 2021

Poem: Ellen Hünigen

**Clara Maïda**

*Fiori Fuori* (Flowers outside)

For soprano solo, 2021

**Violeta Dinescu**

*Fiori de mucegai* (Mold flowers)

For 3 voices, 2020

Text: Tudor Arghezi (1880-1967)

**Susanne Stelzenbach**

*Fünf Augenblicke* (Five moments)

For soprano and mezzo-soprano solo, 2021

**Lucie Vítková**

*Skalničky* (Rock garden perennials)

For three voices, 2021

**Katia Guedes**

*Kletterrosen* (Climbing roses)

For 3 female voices and electronics, 2021

Text: Katia Guedes

## Work concepts of the composers with texts and poems

### Annette Schlünz

*Knallgelbe Forsythien* (Bright yellow forsythia)

...Now Ulrike Draesner's *Forsythia* for three female voices come to the composers' garden. I have been working with her texts again and again since 1998. They are brittle and not easy to open up to the music and that is precisely why they are exciting to me, like a plant that you have to nurture and care for and that still retains its own strength.

### Ulrike Draesner

forsythien, die knallgelb, noch blattlos, ihr würfeln  
das knospen der bäume, was für ein april.  
was für ein mageres segnen, kastanien  
knospen auf autochrom, was  
für ein mageres regnen, knallgelb  
die forsythien, was für ein blättern,  
für was  
büsche. traueraugen. an  
triebe, die los. die nicht.  
regen als er hernieder. wie  
durch seltsamen wald gingich mit den seltsamen weißen  
blumen, den zu kleinen füßen:  
schnittfläche stirn. würfelt  
die lücken des waldes an. "dich gibt  
es nicht mehr für mich", hast du gesagt.  
staub auf dem autochrom. der regen. meine  
füße stecken in schuhen, die drücken.  
das knospen der bäume. nichts kehrt zurück.  
mädchenhöhe, ein  
schnitt. forsythie im brust  
bereich, hüpfend der pony  
vor der stirn geschnittener  
schopf, der gedanke an dich  
wenn du wie jetzt dort hinten  
winkst, vater, in deiner rinde,  
sich näherndes grün.  
forsythien, die knallgelb, noch blattlos,  
ihr würfeln, vorm waldrand, der kippt.  
gelbe streichhölzer, sonst nichts.  
schnittfläche stirn. würfelt  
die lücken des waldes an. "dich gibt  
es nicht mehr für mich", hast du gesagt.  
staub auf dem autochrom. der regen. meine  
füße stecken in schuhen, die drücken.  
das knospen der bäume. nichts kehrt zurück.

## **Karmella Tsepkoenko**

*Sub Rosa* (figurately 'under the seal of secrecy')

For 3 female voices

Garden of Life, Garden of Wishes, Garden of Songs, Garden of Inspiration, Garden of Love, Garden of Death... all this is a flower garden.

1. Violet – blooms unexpectedly in February with a fluorescent purple color and... dies quickly.

– A rose is just beginning to appear...

2. Mimosa – with its sunny-scented flowers in March, it's fragrance drives you crazy. Her life is also fleeting.

– And the rose is already starting to open the petals ...

3. Rose – suddenly, in beautiful May, the buds open and various beetles and spiders make love among them. The rose doesn't die.

– And she remains calm in anticipation of the next season.

4. Chrysanthemum - it blooms on a lazy October evening and ... lives for a very long time, until February frosts.

– And the rose is already waiting to be born. (translated from Ukrainian)

## **Natalia Pschenitschnikova**

*Requiem for a flower II*

for 3 female voices

When I was looking for suitable flowers as inspiration for my song, I came across, that many flowers that grew everywhere in my childhood have now become rare and have been put on a red list in Russia. This is how a piece was created in which we sing about a flower that mourns other flowers. Flowers disappear like heroes in an unequal war.

Rare, endangered, disappeared...:

*Lilium callosum* (rare), *Viola incisa* (endangered), *Veronica bogosensis* (disappeared)

I use some Latin names of flowers from the Red List as the libretto.

The musical stylistic bases are Gregorian and Russian chants, Folk songs and old Orthodox liturgies.

## **Olga Rayeva**

*Laudamus*

For three voices

When I thought about which flower suits Beethoven's spirit, the first that came to mind was the gladiolus – the flower of heroism and antiquity... But the rose – the flower of love and mystery – is also his flower... And there is another flower whose image reminds me of Beethoven – it is the hyacinth – chosen by Apollo. I want to write a hymn of these three very different flowers – seen in different ways and from different angles – to honor a genius.

## Mayako Kubo

*Umeno Hana* (Plum blossom branch)

For two female voices

Duration 3 minutes, 2020

In the poem "Heidenröslein" by Johann Wolfgang Goethe (1749-1823), the little rose is broken by a boy. The boy said: "I'll break you, little rose of the heath." The little rose answered: "I'll prick you so that you'll think of me forever, and I won't suffer from it."

The little rose pricked the boy so that he would suffer from the pain of the stab and think about her forever.

In contrast to this, the haiku poem 'Umeno Hana' by the Japanese poet Kagano Chiyo (1703-1775) represents the symbiosis of human violence and the natural world.

Haiku is a type of poetry in which the unspoken, implied, left out is more important than what is clearly expressed. In this haiku it is pain, forgiveness and sadness:

*Taoraruru*

*hitonikaoruya*

*umehana*

The one who broke it is still receiving its scent – plum blossom branch!\*

The three-line haiku is sung in Japanese and German. The two singers turn their backs to the listeners so that it is not clear who is singing in German and who is singing in Japanese.

And not by seeing, but only by hearing the singing voices, it is possible to intensively smell the scent of an invisible plum blossom. (\* Translation: Gerolf Coudenhove)

## Ellen Hünigen

*Eiblume* (Egg flower)

Text: Ellen Hünigen

The 3-minute composition for three singers is based on my own poem. The composition of the three voices follows the image of the spatial and knowledge-forming approach that is spoken of in the poem. It's about striving towards something, an awakening in astonishment, a questioning, an attempt to formulate, to put into words and to find a cognitive resolution in a final moment that turns into sudden lightness. It's about the paradox of formulating and the formulated, although with every sound a kind of formulation already occurs – without form there is no sound, no sonority, no utterance; and yet there should be a condensation, a grasp, something that takes shape. Challenging in the shortness of the piece...

Schon von fern  
im nähern  
schafft ihr gelb und weißes  
wie eine speise lockendes leuchten  
dem kind ein erquicken  
da es nicht fragen muss

nach einem namen  
der staunende mund formt ihn  
von selbst  
im niederbeugen  
eiblume



## Clara Maïda

*Flori Fuori* (Flowers outside)

For soprano solo

With their pollination, fertilization and reproduction functions, flowers symbolize a time of recurrent renewal, a specific period that comes round every year. The title plays upon the quasi similarity of the words "flowers" and "outside" in Italian. And space (the space of the outside) is actually necessary to the manifestation of a renewal. The formal architecture of the work evokes therefore a cyclic temporal structure that alternates between an opening and a closure, an appearance and a disappearance. It unfolds an undulatory line, closer to a spiral than to a circle that gradually ever more opens sound trajectories. What is born into the world, what is unfolded, needs space. A claim is thus expressed through the musical writing of this mobile and fluid sound rhizome: the right to freedom of movement, the opening on an elsewhere, a rejection of any imprisonment, whether physical or psychic, individual or social.

## Violeta Dinescu

*Flori de mucegai*  
Schimmelblumen  
Für drei Stimmen  
Vcl. Tudor Arghezi  
Violeta Dinescu



**Flori de mucegai**  
Tudor Arghezi

Le-am scris cu unghia pe tencuială  
Pe un perete de fîrdă goală,  
Pe întineric, în singurătate,  
Cu puterile neajutate  
Nici de taurul, nici de leul, nici de vulturul  
Care au lucrut împrejurul  
Lui Luca, lui Marcu și lui Ioan.  
Sunt stihuri fără am,  
Stihuri de gropă,  
De sete de apă  
Și de faime de acum,  
Stihurile de acum.  
Când mi s-a tocit unghia îngerească  
Am lăsat-o să crească  
Și nu mi-a crescut -  
Sau nu o mai am cunoscut.

Era întineric. Ploaia bătea departe, afară  
Și mă dorea mîna cu o ghiară,  
Neguțicioasă să se strîngă  
Și m-am aștit să scriu cu unghile de la mîna  
stîngă.



*Flori de mucegai*  
Tudor Arghezi  
Violeta Dinescu

*Rubato*

*mf*

*p*

*mf*

*p*

*mf*

*p*

*mf*

*p*

*mf*

*p*

*Flori de mucegai* (Mold Flowers), is based on a poem by Tudor Arghezi from 1931. In a century of upheaval caused by two world wars, Arghezi was caught between the fronts and repeatedly imprisoned in penal camps and jails. In his poem he describes a stay in prison between despair and hope.

## Susanne Stelzenbach

*Fünf Augenblicke* (Five moments)

For soprano and mezzo-soprano voices

Duration 3 minutes

The basic idea of the composition is that the surprising awareness of hearing a single word or sound can awaken a whole chain of associations of sensations and memories that penetrate the present like sound waves. The names of individual flowers can also evoke different feelings in this context. Building on this, each 'moment' of the composition for solo voices should be based on a word or a sound.

**Lucie Vítková**

*Skalničky* (Rock Garden Perennials)

For 3 voices

My grandmother always loved her garden. When I came to visit, she would introduce me to every flower that was blooming or even give me a description of the flowers that were still underground. In *Skalničky* I would like to record one of her tours of her garden in the Czech Republic and use it as the basis for this new three-minute piece. There are very distinctive words that she often uses to describe flowers that grow in the special part of her garden called 'Skalka' (rock garden). The composition will contain audio scores with her narration and graphic scores with the musical material. The singers will try to imitate her words as they are inserted into the graphic score. In the piece they can appear 'indistinct', as in the situation in which one learns a new language for the first time.

**Katia Guedes**

*Kletterrosen* (Climbing Roses)

For 3 female voices and electronics

Text: Katia Guedes

**MORE, FURTHER, GROWTH**

The piece *Climbing Roses* takes up the idea of multiplying and multiplicity musically. Each voice starts with small cells that are multiplied by electronics. A dialogue arises between individual and all the voices as well as with the electronics. Tonally, fullness develops, the voices mix and overlap until, like the individual, they are swallowed up by the collective and can no longer be recognized individually. Our society is geared towards growth rates that tend to cause damage in many areas of our lives. Progress is measured by economic growth, the economy and the gross domestic product. Everything is produced in quantities, regardless of whether it makes sense or not, forcing people to operate the assembly line of overproduction.



The premiere team at the Women's Museum in Bonn