

Überlala. Song of Million Paths

Werktitel: Überlala. Song of Million Paths

Untertitel: Für Violine und Orchester

KomponistIn: [Ivičević Mirela](#)

Entstehungsjahr: 2024

Dauer: ~ 20m

Genre(s): Neue Musik

Gattung(en): Orchestermusik

Besetzung: Soloinstrument(e) Orchester

Besetzungsdetails: Violine (1), Orchester

Art der Publikation: Manuskript

Beschreibung

"“Mommy, when I grow up, I want to go everywhere“ said my 3-year-old daughter Livia Lili. Everywhere = „überall“ in German, and „überlala“ in her own magical language. I thought myself: this is a clear case for professor Balthazar. Balthazar is a hero from an 80ies Croatian cartoon, love for which I have been passing on to Livia nowadays as well. An old benevolent genius, Balthazar used not physical strength or weaponry, but the power of his mind to invent a solution to any problem. After a round of thinking, he’d activate his magical machine to produce an invention that would make anything possible. Apart from the lovely plot and animation, the cartoon featured an extremely well orchestrated, colorful, patchwork-like original soundtrack by Tomislav Simović, music that has been one of my earliest and strongest sonic influences.

A few years ago, Ilan, whose passionate quest for sound gems from all over the world is well known among his social media followers, shared another cartoon featuring the original soundtrack by the same composer, the Academy-award winning animated film „Surogat“. This made me smile, the way you always have to smile when you realize that someone on the other side of the world has just had the same emotional experience as you. The power of music, the classic. I think it was a coincidence. And it wasn’t.

The contract for Überlala contained what I found a peculiar request: to dedicate the piece, and others, to certain Eloïse and Chiara. I didn’t know who they were, and I only ever dedicate to humans I know extremely well, or in their remembrance, if they are not among us anymore. I was ready to decline, when suddenly my intuition made me realize, these are children. And

cannot really know children. They don't know themselves either, they have just started journeying to get to know themselves. What we can and should do, is shine the light on all the possibilities they could take on their journey. In my case, to provide a unique or even profoundly shaping experience like the soundtrack to Prof. Balthazar was for me. Soon after, I briefly met Eloïse and Chiara, and they indeed are two magical human beings, just as I thought they would be. But if we haven't met, it would have made no difference. Every child is absolutely worth of dedicating a violin concerto to. That was also the moment I realized they were right there in my line-up: a benevolent genius, violinist, and his magic machine, symphony orchestra, ready to follow me everywhere.

I've orchestrated the first bar on 8th October. That day I watched the news. I couldn't sleep, I couldn't concentrate for days after, haunted by the images of horror. War child myself, albeit luckier than many - otherwise I wouldn't be here writing these lines - I've been familiar with those kind of images, the terminology, the scenarios. But one can never get used to it, on the contrary. Amplified through personal experience and the déjà vu's, the level of empathy is almost paralyzing, as well as the desperate hope that it is just a bad dream which will be over soon. But you know it's real and it's just the beginning.

The day I finished the piece, there was at least 11 000 fewer children in this world, because they were deemed their lives not worth preserving. I never thought I'd be composing a piece dedicated to children, while at the same time watching videos of children getting killed on my phone on a daily basis. I cannot stop thinking in desperation how much better the world could have become if those children would have been given a symphony, instead of a death sentence. And how much better a child, even the child of your enemy, is, besides being the most monstrous of acts, also extremely intelligent and self-harming. Because the way we treat the children of our enemies has a huge impact on the world we're leaving to our own children. Because nobody can be truly happy if they are not safe in the world full of pain.

Being no surgeon, no state leader, no soldier, I cannot do much to stop the horror or ease the pain. But I can imagine. And invite you to join me. I often said my music is a space of freedom, and in the pieces I composed, including Überlala, are kind of "sonic Yugoslavias" based on the comfort from my childhood memories, prior to all the blood-shed, "one state solutions" where you can freely go wherever and with whomever you want, where you'll hear weird instrumental combinations, acoustic imbalances, sudden changes, harsh contrasts and chaotic clouds of sound, but also a strong solidarity among all involved, which in the end creates a functioning whole that will keep on creating such pieces. Call them utopian, I call them much needed visions of the better world we repeatedly fail to sustain."

Mirela Ivičević, Werkbeschreibung, Brüssel Philharmonie, abgerufen am 06.03.2025 [<https://web.archive.org/web/20240613072953/https://www.brusselsphilharmonic.be/en/concert-programme/note-uberlala>]

Auftrag: für Brussels Philharmonic - I&I Foundation Commission (Schweiz)

Widmung: Eloïse und Chiara Collardi

Uraufführung

23. März 2024 - Brüssel (Belgium), Flgey

Mitwirkende: Ilya Gringolts (Violine), *Brussels Philharmonic*, Ilan Volkov (Dirigent)

Britische Erstaufführung

5. Mai 2024

Veranstalter: *Tectonics Festival '24*

Mitwirkende: Ilya Gringolts (Violine), BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Ilan Volkov (Dirigent)

Aufnahme

Titel: [Mirela Ivičević: Überlala. Song of Million Paths \(2024\)](#)

Plattform: YouTube

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Datum: 13.06.2024

Mitwirkende: Ilya Gringolts (Violine), BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Ilan Volkov (Dirigent)

Weitere Informationen: Live Mitschnitt der Britische Erstaufführung