CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ

Valse triste, after Sibelius

Film set to music by Jean Sibelius, Valse triste, Op. 44 No. 1



Arnaud Quercy

AQC0402 · CR-000402

Art Quam Anima Publishing New York

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TECHNICAL DETAILS

Medium	Digital film
Duration	5 min 25 s
Image	1920 × 1080 px, 25 fps
Date	2022
Location	France
Certificate of Authenticity	N°20221231-0072
Catalogue Number	AQC0402
Collection	Passé-Future

PROVENANCE

Origin: Arnaud Quercy, Paris, France, 2022

DESCRIPTION

Musical performance

Marion Hedin, cello David Erhard, piano

With thanks to the production team, students of IESA arts & culture: Henrik Posner, Matt Stiles, Yuhan (Lea) Chen, Pasindu Ranasinghe, and to Thomas, technical manager at L'Auguste Théâtre.

In his creation on the Valse triste, Arnaud Quercy turns the waltz into a short silent film, with the grain, flicker and intertitles of early cinema. The whole story takes place in one fixed frame: a park bench, a grating in the ground, and a pale, almost abstract space.

An old man sits on the bench with his suitcase, his walking stick and his crossword. A tiny tree is sprouting from the grating. As the waltz unfolds, life passes in front of him: a young woman walks by ("Good afternoon Madam..."), a businessman hurries past ("Hello Sir, ..."), the same young woman comes back pregnant, then pushing a stroller. Time is passing, and the tree grows with every phrase of the music ("This tree looks odd").

Then a vagrant arrives. He gently pats the old man's head and sits down beside him. The two strangers start talking about the tree ("Have you seen the tree?" / "Yes indeed! Quite extraordinary my friend.") and share a moment. Their friendship is brief. The weather turns, rain and wind sweep the park, and umbrellas fight the storm as the waltz reaches its feverish climax. In a flash of white light the old man is gone.

All that is left is a pile of logs where the tree once stood, and the vagrant, now alone on the bench, wearing the old man's hat. "Another lonely afternoon at the park..." The End.

Like Järnefelt's play, the film is about death coming quietly in the middle of ordinary life. In place of a ghostly ball, Arnaud Quercy stages a park: the seasons (summer, autumn, winter), the people passing by, and a tree that grows and falls within a single waltz. A whole life is compressed into five minutes. Is the vagrant a friend, a successor, or Death itself in a humble form? Arnaud Quercy leaves it to the viewer.

The film was made in Blender (EEVEE) with fully rigged characters: the old man ("Gramps"), the young woman, the businessman, a jogger and the vagrant. Each character was animated in its own scene, and the seasons and the rain each have their own collections. The tree is animated to grow over the course of the piece. The final look comes from Adobe After Effects ("old movie" grading, flicker and grain, Art Nouveau intertitles), with some passes stylised in EbSynth. Close-up shots were rendered separately to punctuate the narrative.

At the show, the long version of the film was projected. It is cut into two parts: a main section that can run on, and a closing section that Arnaud Quercy triggered live at a precise moment in the score, so that the image ends exactly with the music played by Marion Hedin and David Erhard.

IMAGES





WHERE THIS WORK LIVES

Collection: Passé-Future

EXHIBITIONS

PasséFutur Art Show *(2022-09-30, L'Auguste Théâtre, Paris)*

THEMATIC ELEMENTS

Valse triste Jean Sibelius Kuolema silent film Marion Hedin David Erhard Arnaud Quercy cello and piano digital film 3D animation music and image PasséFutur L'Auguste Théâtre Blender After Effects

TECHNICAL NOTES

Type	Artwork
Image resolution	1280x720 px

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