

## ANTI-WORLD (1972)

Anti-World is a music theatre piece scored for a dancer, soprano and baritone, and three players: alto flute, clarinet/bass cl and percussion.

Anti-World is about barriers - the invisible, irrational barriers which we imagine between people; and about freedom - or the way we restrict freedom in order to "control" each other. The original impulse for the piece came from Russian *samizdat* writings. It should be emphasised, though, that the piece is not concerned with the direct representation of a dissident's plight. Rather the argument is carried on indirectly and by analogy: visual (e.g. the Meyerhold wheel) and on a musical plane.

To this end my texts are not overtly political: a love lyric by Gorbanevskaya and lines from Voznesensky's Goya. Moreover the standpoint of the piece is not unremittedly serious. It evolves from humour to seriousness (occasionally reverting); concurrently the dancer's part evolves from mime to dance, the musicians' parts from semi-determinate to fully notated music.

Anti-World lasts 20 minutes, and was first performed by the Morley College Music Theatre group at the Cockpit Theatre, London, in June 1972.

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A note for the performers:

Anti-World lasts 20 minutes. An outline of the piece:

1-5 mins: Surrealist assembly of musicians.

Dancer's initial attempts (thwarted) at "rapport" with individual musicians.

5-7 mins: The musicians control the dancer: her movements dictated by what they play.

8-15 mins: The dancer "breaks the spell" (at the wheel-spin) and now dictates to the musicians.

The musicians play for her: the soprano sings only for herself.

Dancer/soprano confrontation.

15-20 mins: Dancer in the power of the musicians.

Baritone sings - in pity, but outside the action.

Flute plays on for herself, oblivious.

My interest in writing for dance is primarily "abstract": the correlation between musical and physical gesture. However Anti-World can be enjoyed on many other levels. What is it "about"?

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