

Paul STEENHUISEN - PROGRAM NOTES

PIECE: EXEGESIS

The word exegesis has multiple meanings, one of which is “a critical explanation”. It can also mean to guide or lead, with the root exegete being an interpreter or expounder, as opposed to a paraclete, a comforter. The first part of the compositional process consisted of the production of numerous schema which established the macro-structure of the work, after which the results were compiled and more objectively and artificially drawn into the micro-level, directing contours and contour spans, playing techniques, interval content and disparately approached pitch goals. The result is a piece that was written “backwards” from an initially vague design where musical stock is traded with general rewards in mind but no concrete idea of the specifics that will actually make it function. The conflict embedded within the discrepancies between the strictures of the outsides and the desires and energies of the insides, their successes and failures, are at the heart of the piece.

First performed by the CBC Vancouver Radio Orchestra, with Mario Bernardi, conductor.