

Insane, in love – opera (2002)

As a text form, the libretto does not usually have a real identity. Libretti are there to serve the music – and seem to be ill-suited as reading material. And yet, in line with the traditions of musical theatre, clear sets of rules have developed – containing standard situations and standardised forms such as cavatina, duets and recitatives, all of which provide some indications as to the form of the text. The project initiated by Christine Huber (author) and Alexander Stankovski (composer) turns these conventions upside down: an opera that consists only of text. At times, but only fleetingly, the text conforms to historical norms (as, for example, in the finale: four people are involved: they love, they suffer in love and when they suffer, they have to master an aria, but what does that mean for the text – and for a contemporary text?) The composition then plays a supporting role for the text: time patterns create the dramatic course of events – overlay, simultaneity, polyphony. The composition is produced in text-form, with subtle assistance provided by electronic means, designed for the medium of radio. In summary, text and composition belong together - one cannot manage without the other. To compose an opera, you need text – and the libretto needs composition. That is how they stay together even if there is no music. An opera in language. A spoken opera.

Christine Huber