

The Fifth Sun

for percussion quartet, opus 20

- I. Humans made of Ash
- II. Giants eaten by Jaguars
- III. Converted into Turkeys
- IV. Monkeys in the Mountains
- V. Silhouette of a Rabbit

commissioned

by the Fonds voor de Scheppende Toonkunst

composed

for Tambuco (ensamble de percusiones de México), between 31st August and 31st December 2001

dedicated

to Ricardo Gallardo

duration

ca. 13 min.

premiered

on 2nd August 2002 at the Centro Nacional de las Artes in Mexico City (Mexico) by Tambuco

published

by Donemus

scoring

Percussionist 1: Snare Drum, 5 Tom-toms (the 2 lowest very low), 5 Temple Blocks, Marimba (5 octaves)

Percussionist 2: Very High Tuned (Junior) Conga, 4 Unspecified African Drums (middle register), 6 Wood Blocks, Crotales, Glockenspiel

Percussionist 3: 4 Bongos, 8 Congas, Vibraphone

Percussionist 4: Piccolo Snare Drum, Snare Drum, Bass Drum, 7 Tom-Toms, Tam-tam (small)

Marijn Simons on *The Fifth Sun*:

The Aztec mythology tells about the collaboration of the gods to create a new, fifth world; the Fifth Sun -the Sun of Movement- the world we live in today.

The gods could only achieve this re-creation by sacrificing themselves in a sacrificial fire. A rich and arrogant god lost his courage when he had to throw himself into the fire. But a modest and sick god showed great decisiveness by jumping into the furnace with a big leap. Ashamed the rich god still threw himself into the fire and both gods appeared as sparkling stars in the sky. Outraged about such audacity the gods beat the rich god with a rabbit of which the silhouette is still visible on the moon. In the eras before the Sun of Movement there were four other suns and worlds according to the Aztec mythology. These suns were dominated by the four elements: water, earth, fire and wind. Every time a total destruction made an end to these suns and every time the sun and the world were recreated identically with the remainders of the previous one. Every new cycle produced an improved form of life. Humans were made of ash in the era of the first sun; the Sun of Water. A catastrophe took place. Water covered the earth (Noah's Ark!). Humans were destroyed and changed into fish. In the second era -the Sun of Earth- people were giants, but actually they had a weak constitution. During the destruction of this sun the giants were eaten by jaguars. The end of the third sun -the Sun of Fire- was not less dramatic. It rained fire and the people were converted into turkeys. The people who approached their fate in the fourth era -the Sun of Wind- were banished to live as monkeys in the mountains.

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