

Choregie project

FORTUNA WONT BE FAUVEL'S MATCH!

Flattery, Avarice, Vileness, Variability, Envy, Laxity



Sheep, what are we waiting for? There's a wolf in the flock!

Fortuna Won't Be Fauvel's Match! is based on a gothic allegorical verse romance in which the central metaphor for moral decay and decadence is an ambitious horse/ass. The main character – Fauvel – is an incarnation of sin, irrationality, unreliability, dominance, flattery. Fortuna Won't Be Fauvel's Match! mocks human egotism, hedonism, hypocrisy and excesses of the governing classes, of secular as well as church rule, a society contaminated by sin and corruption. The ruling class is despotic and greedy, forgetting about the natural equality of people. Man through politics/the church is a symbol of everything that is wrong with our society and the system which administers it. This issue fascinates since it judges exploitations in the human society and poses the question if today, after 700 years, it is any easier to talk, or do we still whisper.

music: Lojze Lebič (1934): Fauvel '86 (Slovene text by Janez Menart)

for soloists, mixed choir, piano, percussion, hand instruments and recordings on tape
(partially adapted for a girls' choir)

Excerpts from Roman de Fauvel (1310 – 1314)

director and production designer: Karmina Šilec
adviser for movement: Sidra Bell
costume designer: Belinda Radulović
author of the image: Miguel Vallinas
light designer: Andrej Hajdinjak
sound designer: Danilo Ženko
assistant director: Dorian Šilec Petek
set design creation adviser: Marko Japelj

performers:

vocal theatre Carmina Slovenica
instrumentalists: Nino Mureškič, Žarko Ignjatović, Živa Horvat, Nadja Stegne
Fauvel: Eva Germ
Fortuna: Jasmina Črnčič
narrator from the tape: Aleš Valič
Angels: CS Prime (leader Jasna Drobne)
conductor: Karmina Šilec

photo cover: Dorian Šilec Petek

duration: 84'

Slovene text editor: Metka Damjan

English translation: Saša Požek

Premiered: Slovenian National Theatre Maribor, 2015

Production: Carmina Slovenica, 2015

The choregie project Fortuna Won't be Fauvel's Match! is based on the only music-scenic work by the composer Lojze Lebič, Fauvel '86, which is in places expanded with compositions from the original medieval novel Roman de Fauvel, and fragments from medieval ritual plays, literature and philosophical writings.



ABOUT THE PROJECT FORTUNA WON'T BE FAUVEL'S MATCH!

Fortuna Won't be Fauvel's Match! sprang to life in literary and philosophical »underground«, in the language of medieval social criticism. The project is based on the expanded »animal epic« from the 14th century, an allegorical verse drama with an ambitious horse being the central metaphor for moral decay and decadence. Man through politics/the church is a symbol of everything that is wrong with our society and the system which administers it. This issue fascinates since it judges exploitations in human society and poses the question if today, after 700 years, it is any easier to talk or do we still whisper. As we try to find sense in the cynicism of today, in our longing for a »better way« it seems that Fauvel resonates with all his intensity and colour, as he did originally, several centuries ago. He is comically and tragically serious, scatological and devout, formally daring and populist. Just like anti-governmental political debates of our time in the US and Europe the libretto or the medieval texts in Fauvel »praise« fraud and madness, and move into the satirical supervision of devout but at the same time superstitious abuse by the church, political doctrine and corruption. Nothing goes by without Folly and it fascinates because of its knowledge and knowing the right truths.

The opus of the composer Lebič doesn't include directly politically engaged work, and Lebič comments on his composing of Fauvel '86 that he was interested in »wider, more

fundamental issues between politics, an individual, society and music«. The project Fortuna Won't be Fauvel's Match! is a social criticism and all these subversive truths have to be told directly into the ear of the mind.



ABOUT ROMAN DE FAUVEL

The work derives from the French allegoric verse romance which revolves around a horse (or ass) and was composed as a counterpoint to heroic poems written by clerks at the French court: Gervais du Bus, Raoul Chaillau du Pesstain and the famous pioneer of Ars Nova, the composer Philippe de Vitry, in the beginning of the 14th century, and preserved in various manuscripts under the title *Roman de Fauvel*. It is one of the earliest music scenic works and it has, due to its complexity, an important place in the history of music, literature as well as visual art. With the hybrid half-man half-ass in the title role, Roman de Fauvel represents a rich Gesamtkunstwerk of texts, visual representation and music.

The romance portrays the main character, an ambitious horse named Fauvel. The name of this anti-hero is double: it means a 'false veil' and is at the same time an acrostic of six major vices:

Flatterie	Flattery
Avarice	Avarice
Uiléni	Vileness
Variété	Variability
Envie	Envy
Lâcheté	Lechery

Fauvel gains prominence on the French court due to the »strange spinning of Fortuna's wheel«. Fauvel's absurd climb to the position of the king reflects how God's order is turned upside down when men allow animals to rule: evil is allowed to rule while the good is forced to suffer.

Images about the »world upside down«, in which people and animals swap roles and relationships, came to life in the Middle Ages (not to take into account parallels from the Antiquity). An animal as a figure of the »inhuman« Other is often present in literature (Bestiaries) and serves the purpose of moralizing. The theological and philosophical construction of the character of the »animal/bestie« points to the exclusive access of human beings to common sense. Interesting is the choice of the animal – the ass who is itself a parody, that is of a horse, the symbol of knighthood.

The character of Fauvel mocks human egotism, hedonism, hypocrisy and excesses of ruling classes – of secular as well as church rule. Fauvel is an incarnation of sins, irrationality, unreliability, ambition, flattery (Roman gave birth also to the English expression »curry fauvel«, or »curry favor« – to seek to gain favour by flattery). The colour of the chestnut, reddish-yellow, or fawn ass Fauvel adds another symbolic dimension, since the colour »fauve« represents vanity, the colour of evil and deceit.

Roman de Fauvel draws a satirical picture of the gothic Middle Ages and is a barely veiled criticism of social climbing, false publicity and mostly ambition. Fauvel is a personification of evil and tyranny, of a society contaminated with sin and corruption. The ruling class is despotic and greedy, and it forgot about the natural equality between people. Fauvel has – as an allegorical incarnation of pure evil – a universal background since he fights against Fortuna, the Daughter of God.

THE STORY

Book 1

The first book is a rebuke against the clergy and society tainted by sin and corruption. The governing class is despotic and greedy and forgets about the natural equality between people. All segments of the society are corrupt and the end of the world is without doubt nearing. Fauvel, though he is a horse, no longer resides in a stable, but is set up in a grand house, a royal palace, by the grace of Dame Fortune, the goddess of Fate, as a reflection of lack of Common Sense. He changes his residence to suit his needs, and has a custom manger and hayrack built. Everything around him, from furniture to animal frescoes, is glamorous, but false and a result of fraud. On his court people from all levels of society stroke him to make sure »no dung can remain on him«. Church and secular leaders far and wide make

pilgrimages to see him, and bow to him in servitude. These potentates brush and clean Fauvel from his head to tail. The influence of Fauvel on the Church is disastrous, its God's given superiority is surrendered because of corruption. Secular power has lost its compass just as well. It is despotic and greedy. On the peak of his triumph Fauvel has about fifty allegorical characters around him (Carnal Lust, Envy, Laziness, Vanity, Fraud, Hypocrisy, Sodomy, and others). But Fauvel is still worried how he can remain in power. After Fortuna granted him such an ascent, things could turn upside down. So he decides to marry Fortuna. Thus he could influence his wheel of fortune.

Book 2

Fauvel travels with his courtiers to Macrocosmos and asks Dame Fortune for her hand in marriage. Fortuna is a woman of both – beauty and ugliness – she masters two wheels which determine the whole of humanity. One of her escorts is also Lady Vainglory whose nature distracts those who climb higher, so they don't see their almost certain fall. Fauvel declares love to his »loved one«, but she denies him. Fauvel keeps courting, without success. In the meantime Fortuna talks about her work, about the relationship to God and Wisdom, about her two crowns and wheels, and about the roles of Envy, Truth and Injustice. She talks about human necessity to accept what fate brings, about the contrast between Nature and Fauvel. About the difference between the Macrocosmos (World) and the Microcosmos (Man), and foretells the inevitable end of Fauvel. In the end Dame Fortuna reveals that Fauvel's role is to give birth to an even more twisted ruler than himself and labels him as the herald of Antichrist. But Fauvel keeps begging and declaring his love. Fortuna doesn't want to dismiss him empty-handed and proposes he wed Lady Vainglory in her stead. Fauvel is happy. All his courtiers and Lady Vainglory return to his marvellous and festive city of Esperanza (Paris). The guests at the wedding are Flirting, Adultery, Carnal Lust, Hypocrisy, Infidelity, Venus and many other followers of Fauvel. This crowd floods the city and the court, everyone is thrilled at Lady Vainglory's charm and at the promise of a tournament.

Guests at the wedding are also Humility, Immaculateness, Remorse and other sisters Virtues. However not to participate in festivities, but rather to throw Fauvel from power. After dinner there is music and dancing (Bachanal), and preparations for the tournament where Fauvel celebrates an unfair victory over the Virtues. Everyone is celebrating, just the Virtues wonder how anyone can sing in such circumstances. In the streets in the meantime a wild ritual charivari is on which moves into the court as well. Lady Vainglory and Fauvel retreat into their unholy matrimonial bed.

The next morning horrible dark forces start to gather, but a miracle is happening in the dwelling of Virtues: singing angles encourage the Virtues. The Virtues ride armed to the battlefield where heavenly light shines on them and Archangel Gabriel offers them holy bread and wine.

The battle between Virtues and Sins begins. The first ones to fight are Innocence and Carnal

Lust. Innocence wins. The battle continues and the Virtues win. Truth sends Fauvel and Lady Vainglory off the battlefield. The Virtues return to good people who offered them roof over their heads in Esperanza and they are warmly welcomed there. Fauvel goes back home with Lady Vainglory where they keep making small »Fauvels«. Heresy bathes Fauvel's family in the fountain of youth. At this point the author of the book expresses concern about the damage that Fauvel brought about and addresses it first to Fortuna, then Virgin Mary, and even God. During celebration of the victory Fortuna foretells that Fauvel will fall at some point in the future. The author realizes that Fauvel will pay for his deeds and closes the book. It's time for a drink!

ABOUT THE MUSIC-SCENIC WORK FAUVEL '86

This adorable story about the masterful fraudster, portrayed according to the medieval allegoric mind, is a distant formal and contextual background of Lebič's Fauvel. There are three levels of sound action: the archaic level with music language corresponding to that at the beginning of the 14th century, on the turn from Ars Antiqua to Ars Nova; it involves the form types of the time: monodic and polyphone singing, and the music dictus of the time; the level of drama narration, the distance of which is indicated by the use of loudspeakers from which voices of the »protagonists« are heard; the reflective level which is the focus of the composer's attention; on this level psychological states created by the emphases from the narration are being transmitted in a musically radical form by means of contemporary composition.

Each of the six scenes of the composition is being controlled by the choral-singing articulation typical of Lebič. The use of various languages hints at the timeless aspects of the story about universal human insufficiency and weakness. The composer about his work:

»Fauvel '86 is not a morality play – I don't have the will or the right for anything like that today. Fauvel for me is an ironic mocking figure from times past, tangled in an ancient battle between the good and the evil, or with the words of Milan Jesih from the central scene: »From dark and bright side we are created: kneaded from lies and truth...«. The story about Fauvel has come to my mind several times in the past few years!«

L. Stefanija (Satire in Music) wrote the following about the work: »Sound action of Lebič's »endless tournament between the good and the evil« works as a signpost to the past, as a transparent »curtain« behind which a listener follows the events from the early 14th century, being aware that that is not the »right time« of the action. The »right time« does not unfold on the »archaic« level. It unfolds on two other levels, on the level of »drama narration« and the »reflexive« level which is in a »musically radical form« with »modern means of composition« – a real treasury of »refined roughness« and a wide range of finesse in sound gesture. It does not derive from paralleling the »banal« and the »sublime«, but rather from a general vision and private perception of the world – the world of music and the world of man's experience. And even though the work is distinctly world-view-oriented, openly utopic and with an attractive inspiration of »rhapsodic dramaturgy«, Fauvel is a »specifically unique« form that does not look for shelter of the music form but takes »useful individual elements«

from the whole history of music. The addressee of Lebič's satire is not the artist himself or his place in the world, it is man's ancient – eternal – companion: a personal characteristic, that impersonal one, without an address – at home in everyone's house. Sociality in Lebič's work is actually set on the supporting line: as an objective indicator of man's personal unease. The main addressee is not man's culture, it is individual nature, the spiritual side of man – the composer exposes his own »reflexion«. It needs to be pointed out that it is not about a man in a certain cultural or political milieu. It does not »code messages« with the help of certain super-linguistic, culturally conditioned codes (quotations, genres), it uses acoustic mimetics and gestures to lean on pre-linguistic, »elementally coded« lyricism of the sound as the natural anti-pole to spoken language.«

Music and texts sources for Fortuna Won't be Fauvel's Match!:

Authors of the texts: Gervais du Bus, Raoul Chaillou de Pesstain, Desiderius Erasmus, Milan Jesih, Eustache Deschamps

Emma Dillon: Medieval music heritage and medieval Roman de Fauvel

Samuel N. Rosenberg and Hans Tischler: Monophone songs from Roman de Fauvel

The cast:

Madness: Staša Gostenčnik

Purity: Ana Arnejčič

Shirker: Jera Topolovec

Two-facedness: Anja Žnidar

Hypocrisy: Nika Kralj

Betrayal: Špela Bočnik

Stealth: Žanet Vodušek

Heresy: Tamara Bočnik

Lie: Anja Gostenčnik

Wimp: Tajda Drevenšek

Delight: Melanja Stojkovič

Innocence: Saša Borec

Chastity: Nika Pečovnik

Variability: Ana Sandrin

Intemperance: Neža Borkovič

Vileness: Sintija Habjanič

Folly: Aina Reljič

Newscaster: Alenka Lavrenčič

Humility: Nina Pušenjak

Oblivion: Danaja Dvornik

Slyness: Urška Gostenčnik

Pride: Petra Lazar

Flattery: Kaja Gril Rogina
Vanity: Nina Hanžič
Avarice: Sara Ritonija
Modesty: Mojca Borko
Lechery: Ana Novak
Sound sleep: Iva Arnejčič
Murder: Kaja Lekš
Pity: Mojca Zidarič
Venus: Ženet Vidovič
Faith breaker: Barbara Šimek
Envy: Ana Studen

Angels: the Prime group, led by Jasna Drobne

MASTERS ECKHART AND LEBIČ: IF THERE IS NOTHING NEW, THERE IS NOTHING OLD ...

We basically do not know why we like some music more than the other. Are we inspired by some more than the other? To inspire means to breathe in an idea, which is quite close to the notion of breathing; and that has always meant life. Thus, inspiration has always been considered a divine gift. Divine breath. What is the characteristic of a composer who inspires? An ability to create moments when hearts and spirits of musicians are inspired and on the way to something new. In a way this is about creating an emotional environment which gives a rehearsal or a concert a sublime spiritual dimension. These dimensions could be described as an experience of ecstasy or as experiencing something holy. This is what the work of Lojze Lebič is like.

Many contemporary compositions lose its magic soon after the first shock resonates. The music by Lojze Lebič is, however, definitely blessed twice and maintains our fascination continuously. His music attracts attention, wonder and fascination even with listeners used to modern music literature.

Remarkable musicality and ability of constant self-reflection, originality, sincerity, wit of thought, loquaciousness, order, persistence, relentlessness, tolerance, inventiveness, organisation, honesty ... All this characterises the great artist Lojze Lebič.

Music by the composer Lebič represents an important achievement or rather surplus of Slovene musical creativity. It is music that is thrilling in its creative concept and is important also because of its prominent position in the international cultural arena.

My first encounter with his music goes back to my young age when, as a young singer in a choir, I got to know The Early Spring Song. As a conductor later on I included in my concert programmes several of his pieces, such as Spell, Summer, Spring, Winter, Autumn, Hope, A Taste of Fleeting Time, Mosaics, From the Stone in the Water, Hymn to the World, Kocbek's Songs; fragments from the Quartet and his symphonic work formed a meta-composition From Time Immemorial ..., a project that was awarded in the category Music Beyond Opera at the international competition Music Theatre Now. Music by Lojze Lebič has thus been my

essential repertoire for the past 25 years. We have performed with his pieces on stages all over the world, from Hong Kong Cultural Centre to Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires, we performed at festivals such as International Music Days, Festival d'Automne à Paris, Prototype, Melbourne Art Festival, Europa Cantat, Kunstenfestival Brussels, Holland Festival, Steirischer Herbst, Ruhrtriennale, Moscow Easter Festival, Dresdner Musikfestspiele, Polyfolia, America Cantat, Choir Olympics, Slovene Music Days. That indicates how work by Lojze Lebič is with us on all our journeys around the world.

His pieces are performed not only by Slovene ensembles, but also by the most prominent ensembles all over the world – Spain, Singapore, America, Finland, China, South Africa... Spell seems to be his most widely performed piece. It was published by the publishing house Earthsongs and so became available everywhere in the world. Each execution I have heard was outstanding and each time I was somehow proud of it, having closely observed the audience while listening. Listening to Lebič, the audience always became present in a special way, listening even more attentively. As if the reception of music delivered from the stage lifted to another level that didn't exist before or after. There was that silence when whole attention is focused on music only and there are no other sounds, and the bodies of the listeners are motionless for a few minutes. Music and its expressive power always completely absorb the audience. The three Slovene spells: the first one against swelling up, the second against snake bites, and the third against anaemia or illness – as explorations in the »direction of primal music experience« – address performers and audiences powerfully and unforgettably.

Alongside the composer's outstanding opus, Slovene culture was particularly marked also by Lebič's critical and engaged contemplations about Slovene creativity, about the topical cultural and social-political moment, about the relationship to tradition, the past and the progress, but most of all about music of our time and its position in the cultural milieu. These records are valuable world view thoughts not only of a great composer, but also of a profound thinker, faithful to his ethic and artistic principles.

Karmina Šilec (published in the book *From Close By and Far Away*)

LOJZE LEBIČ

The academician Lojze Lebič is considered to be one of the most prominent Slovene composers, »a world-class composer« (M. Letonja, conductor), and »all this time our greatest Slovene composer and music thinker« (M. Munih, conductor). After finishing a degree in archaeology he graduated from composition and conducting at the Academy of Music in Ljubljana. As a composer he emerged from the group *Pro musica viva*. He taught conducting at the Pedagogical Academy, worked as a professor of music theory at the Musicological

Department of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Ljubljana. Lebič conducted the Students Choir Tone Tomšič and the Ljubljana RTV Chamber Choir. His experience with vocal music is largely also a treasury of knowledge and inspiration for his opus in general, and several of his vocal pieces are often included in concert repertoires. Lebič's opus, involving not only vocal pieces but also pieces for chamber ensembles and symphony orchestras, draws from the tradition of modernism. »But the composer likes to include various historical and emotional links with the world around him as well,« as written by Leon Stefanija. According to him he »is an admirer of eternal aesthetic values and at the same time an incredible narrator of personal truths, large in details and very primal in planning his music pieces, a musical mystic at his creative core and a pragmatic enlightener in his compositional solutions, strict to himself and the world, and understanding, gentle even, to everything that might widen the view beyond the inspiration of the moment.«

In 1994 he was awarded the Prešeren Fund Award for his life work, in 1995 he became a regular member of the Slovene Academy of Arts and Sciences.

As Lebič said in one of the interviews, music for him is, »among all arts the most social one; it is performed in groups (choirs, orchestras), it is listened to by a group (concerts), it is possible only in a wide communication chain between the creator, interpreter and listener, and what is thereby created and released is an unpredictable undulation and activity in the soul of a free individual«.

WHAT SAYS FORTUNA INTO OUR TIME

Truth, equity, (and) generosity have fallen;
deceit, depravity, (and) niggardliness flourish;
urbanity has vanished.

Charity, chastity, (and) honesty have lost their value;
vanity, foulness, (and) meanness stand out;
boorishness prevails.

Along hidden paths the new age travels;
the normal, well known, obligatory (ways) it disputes,
those which earlier generations kept to.

Law, reason, (and) discretion,
the protectors of harmony, (and) compassion (and) redress,
the defenders of distress, are proscribed and exiled.

Force, vengeance, (and) insolence, (which produce) discord,
and strife, suspicion (and) defamation, (which) harass with false accusation,
find support in patronage.

Fraud, cheating, (and) corruption in the guise of justice,

ambition, (and) treason disguised by ash (and) sackcloth
revel in the reward due virtue.

Greed seeks spoils, as it makes private possessions common property.

From luxury (come) inaction (and) lethargy.
Along the winding road (of error) folly crawls.

From pride (come) envy (and) hatred.
These three vices drag everything down.

The passion of treacherous malice hides behind the mask of zeal,
(and) the crime of false accusation behind the figure of justice.

With gloomy face (and) emaciated look, the picture is one of hypocrisy.
Behind a show of friendship lies a structure of wickedness.

Now the prelates are Pilates (and) successors of Judas, who think it right
for Christ to suffer, these followers of Cayphas.

While their relatives with their prebends rise to offices,
their teachers, abandoned to poverty, knock on doors:
learnèd men, cheated of hope (and) with their labors over, are in want.
Good character and age have no providers.

Uncalled, unelected, younger men are in charge;
they have won their mitres and power by force
and are inferior to their positions.

Dogs of indecency, greedy (and) mute, pigs of filth, polluted by mire,
tigers of avarice, pursuing gain,
they are not interested in guarding the family (of God)
but too eagerly they seek luxury and gluttony, catering to their own hides.

They do not stand in the battle line facing the enemy;
quite to the contrary, they give way to power,
forsaking courage and its protection.

They are not concerned with great firmness
but rather with a display of personal cowardice.
They have more interest in money than in salvation.

By importuning and payment entry is made,
for the office of prelate is bought (and) sold,
and there is no shame in misusing an office.

The community of the clergy and its religious habits are in dishonor;

it is laid low (and) scorned,
with privilege given to servitude.

There is no protection for religious fervor.
They are weighed down by an all too heavy yoke
(and) harmed by them in whose hands
they are accustomed to be safe.

The whole situation of flock and shepherd
has changed;
in confusion (is) the domain of the young king.

His throne totters,
for there is no protector of his honor,
no good man carrying the burden
for the young lad.

Many vows (and) prayers, (offerings of) incense,
(and) bitter wailings for a peaceful reign,
with lamentation to match,
are brought to the altar.

Just as a ship doomed to destruction
tosses about on the sea,
so this heavy affliction
can neither be assuaged nor remedied.

(Un)like repairing the tie
of a torn garment,
so the rift in this enormous disaster cannot be put right
but only made worse.

It began through hatred, grew through envy,
(now) roars with militancy (and) rages with wickedness.

All seek their own ends, soldiers and clerics (alike);
these fear being pushed out of the court by the others;
and so, subverters of the truth, they embrace the vices;
they complain that business is handled by ignorant people.
The head man at the council (today) (was) a foreigner yesterday.

Tell us then, truth, where do you live now?
Fairness, (and) generosity, where do you hide now?
What has wickedness gained us, which has been in control?

(Fortuna in Roman de Fauvel, 14th century)

Choregie project **Fortuna wont be Fauvel's match!** is based on Lojze Lebič's stage work Fauvel '86 (Slovene text by Janez Menart) for soloists, mixed choir, piano, percussion, hand instruments and recordings on tape (partially adapted for performance by girl's choir), added materials are medieval rituals, literature, philosophical texts and music from the Roman de Fauvel (1310 – 1314).

authors of spoken texts: Gervais du Bus, Raoul Chaillou de Pesstain, Desiderius Erasmus, Milan Jesih, Eustache Deschamps

sources:

Emma Dillon: Medieval Music-Making and the Roman de Fauvel

Samuel N. Rosenberg in Hans Tischler: The Monophonic Songs in the Roman de Fauvel

languages: Latin, Slovene, French

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so the rift in this enormous disaster
cannot be put right but only made worse.*

*It began through hatred,
grew through envy,
(now) roars with militancy (and)
rages with wickedness.*

*All seek their own ends,
soldiers and clerics (alike);
these fear being pushed
out of the court by the others;
and so, subverters of the truth,
they embrace the vices;
they complain that business
is handled by ignorant people.
The head man at the council (today)
(was) a foreigner yesterday.*

*Tell us then, truth, where do you live now?
Fairness, (and) generosity,
where do you hide now?
What has wickedness gained us,
which has been in control?*

(Fortuna, from Roman de Fauvel, 14th Century)