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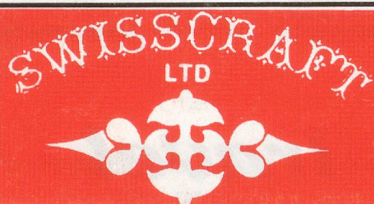
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An Opera for Zürich

The City of Zürich provides the subject for a new opera. This musical project entitled "Nachtbuch" is not your ordinary title-operatic work.

Anybody expecting a historical portrayal or a biting social commentary about Zürich will be badly disappointed. Nachtbuch, literally translated as night-book reflects the way the city, commonly mistaken to be Switzerland's capital, reflects our thoughts when we're asleep. It's an unusual concept. The composer, Susanne Hinkelbein collected a lot of material about the city, such as historical subjects up to dialogue one can hear in tramways for example. It's a real mixture of bits and pieces of the city and she tried to incorporate it into a score which has a psycho-analistic view. She compares the subject, the city, as the patient on the psychologist's couch. Everyday occurrences from the streets of Zürich mixed with historical aspects which come to haunt us while we are asleep are a large aspect of this modern opera. The original ideas of the opera come from a collection of everyday sounds which Susanna Hinkelbein has collected in Zürich, for example the screeching of a tram on its way in the streets of Zürich. She has used banal little fragments to make a complete opera. To describe "Nachtbuch" as an opera is something of an irony. The orchestra comprises just 3 musicians and of course as you might imagine the music is strange reflecting many different aspects and places. Some very strange songs can be heard about such things as woman having headaches, being concerned about hair-loss etc. In short "Nachtbuch" presents us with a journey through our dreams. So no wonder the opera has a dreamlike structure and a number of strong fears running throughout the piece. (a weird opera for a weird world, maybe? Ed.)



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