

Music



Sonja Béets releases “De Stad” (single)

[Nicole Killian](#)

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URL: <https://www.sonjabeets.eu/muziek-GB.htm>

Classical music, particularly of the operatic persuasion, often requires a refined taste to fully appreciate its multifaceted textures and unparalleled layers of emotionality, but that’s hardly the case with the brilliant “De Stad,” an excerpt from Sonja Béets’ *Muzikale Stadswandeling*. In “De Stad,” Béets is joined by the incomparable Joke de Vin on vocals in what amounts to a movingly poetic composition that draws as much from its piano melodies as it does the skillset of its stealthy mezzo soprano. With de Vin at her side, this stunningly gifted pianist delivers one of the most intriguing listens that I have come across in the autumn season, if not the whole of 2019, and once you hear it for yourself, I think you will be inclined to share my sentiments.

Joke de Vin's vocal is so emotive, so heartwarming even, and there's never a moment where it comes across to us as forced or lacking in balance from an aural point of view. Her tone is the perfect component to combine with Béets' simplistic piano play, and while both of their performances are unhindered by the burden of bombast, this song sounds profoundly complex and somewhat unreachable to a typical audience. That can be said for most classical music of a highbrow nature, but in the case of "De Stad," this is a track that demands as much from its listeners as it rewards them with, which isn't always the case in any genre of music (let alone one as lauded as the new wave of neo-romanticism is).

Béets' piano play is always the star of this show, and though she leaves only a sliver of a blank space for de Vin to colorize, it's as memorable a space as any other is in this ultra-efficient release. Even if the complete *Muzikale Stadswandeling* is too intimidating a listen for some fans, "De Stad," in more ways than one, summarizes the tone of the project that it was originally recorded with better than anything else possibly could have. If this is a mere sampling of what Sonja Béets is capable of, I'm very eager to see what she can develop as she gets a little more engrained within the mainstream eye. Her résumé speaks for itself, and it's growing all the more formidable through the release of a song like this.

"De Stad" is as strong as a tidal wave and yet as soft as silk where it counts the most, and all who count themselves as fans of the classical model would do well to give it a listen before the year is out. Popular music might be crumbling at its very foundation, but in the international underground, and more importantly, the ancient schools of the operatic, the story of mankind's relationship with sound continues to be told through the work of artists like Sonja Béets, whom I can confirm as being one of the most important pianists to emerge this season after falling head over heels in love with this amazing piece of melodic musical might.

WIKIPEDIA: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sonja_Beets

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