

International Lyric Festival features Martine Bellen in Frankfurt

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audio file Martine Bellen on how music influences her writing

Interviewer: And is music different for you, or what kind of music do you listen?

Martine Bellen: Well, it really depends on what I'm writing, and what I'm thinking about. I have actually this book, the Monkey God, but you have that, right? I wrote a book of further adventures of the monkey god, and this is written as a Choral Symphony. And actually I just work with form, and I'm really interested in form, but I think the poem and the form become one, and so I never, like, I knew that I wanted to write this in a Choral Symphony, and so I have like a prelude and I have coda, and I have different movements, and so that's how this works, literally as the music and the language and the form became one. And I actually just recently wrote a poem with Robert Schumann's fourth symphony, and I have it, and it's in four movements, and I listened again and again to the symphony, and I read his biography, and I read letters, and I incorporate the life and the feelings that I got from listening to the music into the poem, and also his terror, his terrors. I think that the poems reflect that, so it really depends, but I often do listen to music consciously to work with what I'm writing about, even if it doesn't correspond as directly as I say sometimes.