

[Gonzo \(circus\) | Muziek.Kunst.Meer. | Review on "Todos los fueles el Fuego"](#)

by René van Peer [Jan 2020]

[English translation]

Some concerts transcend far above simply consuming the music that is being played. One of those was the performance of Maxim Shalygin's *Todos los fuegos el fuego* during the November Music festival. Composed for eight saxophonists it is the second part of a series that he calls *Similar*: compositions for ensembles comprised of the same or related instruments. The first part was *Lacrimosa, or 13 magic songs*. Seven violins tested the endurance of both musicians and listeners. It represented the ultimate plea of the human soul subjected to the judgement of the Apocalypse, a music of pain, saturated with suffering and guilt. Inspired by a collection of short stories by the Argentine author Julio Cortázar, *Todos los fuegos* is more forgiving in tone, but as an experience just as intense. That was true for the performance in November Music, and it holds good for the namesake double CD, both played with deepest concentration by the Keuris Quartet and the Amstel Quartet. What is inevitably lacking on a CD is the effect of the sound of the two quartets in the space. Sometimes you seemed to be surrounded by the instruments, sometimes the very air seemed to tremble and shudder. Shalygin managed to reach the deepest recesses of what the instruments are capable of. In tight, clustered harmonies. In extended techniques, such as tapping the keys, which sounded like a heavy downpour. And by having the musicians change instruments, which made the emphasis in the sound first shift to the depth of baritones, then to the higher registers. Except for the spatial effects this can all be heard in exquisite detail on this CD. For an hour and a half Shalygin immerses the listener in music that burns with unparalleled intensity and beauty. Now we will have to wait until the next part is revealed.