

Dance of Dead- Beram Holy Comic

Country: **Croatia**
Category: **Short Form**
Title: **Ples mrtvaca- Beramski sveti strip**
Company: **HRT**
Authors: **Jasna Mesarić, Marija Pečnik Kvesić**
Producers: **Adriana Kramarić**
Director: **Jasna Mesarić**
Sound engineer: **Marija Pečnik Kvesić**
Other key staff: **Lela Margitić, Dražen Bratulić (actors); Stjepan Večković (Istrian instruments); Alen Sinkauz, Nenad Sinkauz (music)**
Language: **Croatian**
Length: **09:15**

SUMMARY

The Dance of the Dead – the Holy Comic Strip of Beram

“When we are in Beram, we are in the heart of Istria: on a map, the tip of our pencil is in the very center of the Istrian triangle”, writes Branko Fučić, the great researcher, connoisseur and admirer of Medieval Istrian painting. When in 1474 Vincent of Kastav left his workshop in Kastav to go to Beram, a major commission awaited him. He had to cover with paintings all the walls and the wooden vault ceiling of the little church, i.e. more than 200 square meters. Of all the images and allegories, the most frightening was the fresco depicting the Danse Macabre. The Beram villagers saw Death in action: it invaded the world of the living, skeletons pursued people of all social strata, grabbing them by the coattails and arms, blowing trumpets, playing bagpipes, drumming to the beat with bones, intertwining with them in a frightening, derisive dance of the living and the dead: pope, cardinal, bishop, king, queen, innkeeper, pauper, soldier and pilgrim. No one was spared. The image was straightforward and convincing for everyone. Walking out of the church, they looked death in the eye each time.

In a little church in the heart of Istria, Vincent of Kastav brought disorder, horror and pain into the superstitious world of Medieval common folk, illuminated the theme and the darkness of death with dread and humor, violating the natural order of things.



CHARACTERS:

Death
Cantor

Diple - Istrian flute
Documentary audio - wind, leaves
Indistinct voices and noises
Electronic music, rhythm, thump
Diple

CANTOR (with *diple*): Aaaaaah! ... Oooh my! Aaaaah!

Broom
Mih - Istrian bagpipes

CANTOR (echoing):
Aaaah! ... In ancient ... days ... oooh my!

Diple, exhalation

DEATH:
Go on, set off from this world

Voices, exhalation

DEATH:
Pour out your blood

Voices
Diple

CANTOR:
I heard a voice ...

DEATH:
You have lived a joyless life

CANTOR:
Unknown voice ...

DEATH:
And man? ... man? ...

Diple

DEATH:
Man is frantically
protesting against death

Fast-paced electronic music

DEATH:
Endures other people's violence

CANTOR:
I am separating

DEATH:
Disunites

CANTOR:
I am connecting

DEATH:
Sticks to the middle, the middle

CANTOR:
I like extremes

DEATH:
He loves mulatto women

CANTOR:
I stand out from the crowd, I know

DEATH:
He loves a girl, faithfully
like the Virgin

CANTOR:
I was holding her high ...

DEATH:
Reveals hidden secrets

CANTOR:
... above the mud ...

DEATH:
Destroys life matter

CANTOR:
I daydream about coral reefs

DEATH:
Daydreams
Sticks to his painful memories

CANTOR:
I am killing Jesus

DEATH:
But he hates anti-Semitic pamphlets

CANTOR:
I recall events from the Book of Genesis

DEATH:
Questions why one is damned
and the other isn't

CANTOR:
I feel repulsion
instead of gratitude

DEATH:
He can't understand his father
in a simple way

CANTOR:
I am disappointed in faith, wandering

DEATH:
He loves marginal types

CANTOR:
I bury myself under memories

DEATH:
He is looking for some ethereal quality in a nightmarish world
Disgusting! Unsound!

DEATH:
"He realizes that memories
Smoke, steam, dream, fog - are nothing"

CANTOR:
I consider myself a loser

DEATH:
And what now?
He confesses his fear,
grief, impotence

DEATH:
He seeks mystical unity of the world

CANTOR:
I want to abolish common sense

DEATH:
But he has sympathy for a mentally
ill man

CANTOR:
I have... I have sympathy for a man
worn out by alcohol

DEATH:
He wants to witness the perishing
of a living dead

CANTOR:
I don't know how to take care of my wife and children

DEATH:
He dreams that a Black Lady,
in fact a young woman, wants him...

CANTOR:
But it won't happen,
the crowd is looking at us with disapproval

DEATH:
And then, he tries to resolve
this dream in an erotic way

CANTOR:
I imagine I am a Biblical prophet

DEATH:
He says the Apocalypse is here ...

CANTOR:
I am wandering ...

DEATH:
He feels it here, here,
in his heart

CANTOR:
Everyone will perish
the rich, the poor
and especially the chosen

Electric rumbling
Documentary sequence: a mix of voices

GUIDE:
They were painted in 1474. The Dance of Death is up there, and all the social strata of people are presented here ... It's a wheel of fortune ...

Banging on the door
Mix of old women's voices in Istrian
Laughter
Diple quiver

GUIDE:
The church is Gothic, Romanesque ...

Door
Music, strong thumps

DEATH:
Let glass break
Let blood sputter

Music

CANTOR:
God, God!
Is all this true?

Electronic music growing

DEATH:
Yes. They are waiting for me
just me
Death!

Music, continues

DEATH:
Here they are! Skeletons are coming out to get the living
The Apocalypse is here ...

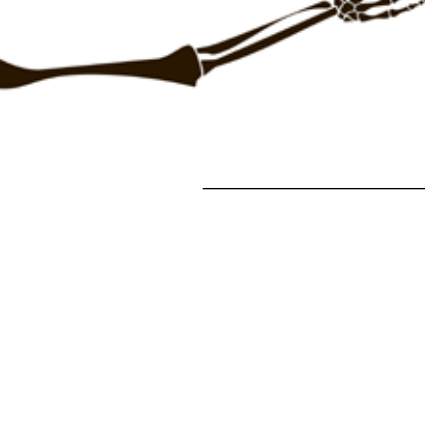
CANTOR:
And Death will welcome them evangelically
with brandy and wine

Diple

CANTOR:
The Dance of the Dead is starting

All the instruments join in the carnival of death
Electronic music rumbles on, until it disintegrates

The End



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