

IAN PACE – Piano

Recital at City Summer Sounds Festival

Monday 13 May 2019, 6:30 pm

HOWARD SKEMPTON	<i>One for Molly</i> (1972) <i>Campanella 3</i> (1982)
MICHAEL FINNISSY	‘Love is here to stay’ from <i>Gershwin Arrangements</i> (1976-88) (3’) <i>Grace through everlasting days</i> (2018-19) [World Premiere]
JAMES ERBER	<i>Malkhut</i> (2018) [World Premiere]
YUJI TAKAHASHI	<i>Alamkāra</i> (2019) [World Premiere]
ANDREW TOOVEY	<i>Tactile Sensibility</i> (2019) [World Premiere]
MARK R. TAYLOR	<i>Idyll</i> (2018) [World Premiere]
IAN PACE	<i>Thirty for Grace</i> (2019) [World Premiere]
ERMIS THEODORAKIS	<i>Three Etudes on High Volatility, No. 1</i> (2019) [World Premiere]
HYUN-MOOK LIM	<i>stuttering</i> (2018) [World Premiere]
MORGAN HAYES	<i>Grace</i> (2019) [World Premiere]
JAMES W. IMAN	<i>Pieces for Interpolation</i> (2019) [World Premiere]
NIGEL MCBRIDE	<i>reckon the spurious coin of my own make</i> (2019) [World Premiere]
GILBERT AMY	<i>Eclairs – Accords – Echos</i> (2019) [World Premiere]
PAUL BEAUDOIN	<i>this one and all the others</i> (2019) [World Premiere]
KYLE BARTLETT	<i>Chrysalis</i> (2009)

VOLKER HEYN *Grace's Muzik – b-day pieces* (2019)

BETSY JOLAS *Postlude* (2005)

Tango Si (1984)

GEORGE ANTHEIL *Mechanisms* (1923)

INTERVAL

RICHARD BARRETT *filament* (2015-18) [World Premiere]

EVAN JOHNSON *mon petit pleurant* (2019) [World Premiere]

SAM HAYDEN *Becomings (Das Werden) I-VII* (2016-18)
[World Premiere]

This concert brings together two major contributions. The first is a set of 16 new short piano pieces, all commissioned by pianist, composer and piano buff extraordinaire William A.P.M. for the 30th birthday of his partner Grace Hom, for which I was delighted to be invited to give the premieres. In the second half, there is also the world premiere of Sam Hayden's major piano cycle *Becomings (Das Werden) I-VII*, which was an exciting discovery when I received a copy of the score last year. Alongside both of these are some other piano pieces of Betsy Jolas (following my performance of her *B for Sonata* and *Calling E.C.* a year ago in this festival), Kyle Bartlett, and George Antheil (continuing a theme in several concerts of playing 'objectivist' works from the interwar period).

HOWARD SKEMPTON, *One for Molly* (1972); *Campanella 3* (1982)

Howard Skempton as throughout his career written a substantial series of short, piano pieces which crystallise a particular type of sensation, emotion, or atmosphere. Both of these pieces were chosen as favourites of Grace Hom. *One for Molly* is a warm piece written for the first birthday of Molly Nyman, daughter of composer Michael Nyman. *Campanella 3* is a more melancholy piece, encircling but also returning to an elaborated arpeggiated F-minor triad.

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MICHAEL FINNISSY, 'Love is here to stay' from *Gershwin Arrangements* (1976-88); *Grace through everlasting days* (2018-19)

Finnissy's 'Love is here to stay' is also chosen as a favourite of Grace Hom. Finnissy wrote the following about his cycles of Gershwin Arrangements:

I've known Gershwin's music since I was a child (like Jerome Kern, Cole Porter, Richard Rogers and Gilbert and Sullivan) it was music my parents, and other close family, played on the gramophone. This is what most people in the 1940s did.

These show-tunes were also what most people wanted to hear in the 1960s, and so what I played at gatherings, parties, bars, jazz-dance classes. I had crib-sheets for the half-dozen GG songs I used, and I worked one or two of them up over the three or four years I was doing this kind of work. I only made one 'more elaborate' version (Love is here to stay) and worked this over again when I decided to offer it (as a suitable concert 'encore') to the Five Centuries Ensemble, whom I had heard play at Royan in 1974, and who had asked me to send them stuff. They shortly asked me to compose a piece for them (Commedia dell' Incomprensibile Potere...), and the ensemble encore (for soprano, counter-tenor, 'cello and harpsichord) was put on one side. It was too blatantly 'atonal' to match the other piece when I actually started writing the set of GG 'Arrangements'.

Grace through everlasting days takes its derives from the hymn 'Grace! 'tis a charming sound!' published in *The Sacred Harp* (1860) (the fifth verse of which begins 'Grace all the work shall crown; Through everlasting days'). Finnissey's piece is a setting of the melody from this hymn, which appears three times, harmonised in free short variations/fantasias, alternating modal and chromatic writing as in the manner of Bach's chorale-preludes.

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JAMES ERBER, *Malkhut* (2018)

In Kaballah, Malkhut is the last of the ten sefirot. In the second table of Sephirotic Coefficients in *Kelalei Hatchalat ha-Hokhmah*, Aaron Meyer Altshuler notes that the reward of Malkhut is grace.

Malkhut was written between 24th September and 12th November 2018 in San Vito lo Capo (TP) and London. It is dedicated "to Grace, on her 30th birthday". The score is prefaced with the following two quotations:

"[Mehahem] Recanati combined the transcendental vision of R. Azriel with the Nahmanidean theory that [Malkhut,] the last sefirah was an intermediary between the divine and the created."

Moshe Idel, *The Kabbalah in Italy 1280-1510*, p.120

"The Kabbalists say that every limb of a man's body has a spiritual power corresponding to it in the sefirah Malkhut. ...When a man performs one of the commandments by one of his corporeal limbs, that limb is readied to become a seat and home for the supernal power that is its likeness... Our patriarch Abraham [Abulafia] was the first to discover this wondrous science..."

Yohanan Alemanno, *Shir ha-Ma'alot*, quoted in *ibid.*, p.185

© James Erber 2019.

YUJI TAKAHASHI, *Alamkāra* (2019)

Alamkāra means diadem, necklace with gem stones, or a mobile suspended from a canopy. It was written for WAMP as a present to Grace Hom.

© Yuji Takahashi 2019.

ANDREW TOOVEY, *Tactile Sensibility* (2019)

Tactile sensibility (2019) for solo piano is a short, very fast and quiet work that was written for Grace and commissioned by William Alberto Penafiel Miranda.

© Andrew Toovey 2019.

MARK R. TAYLOR, *Idyll* (2018)

The title of the *Idyll* continues my meta-ironic appropriation of Romantic genre designations. The reference is in particular to Glazunov's *Idylle*, op. 103 (a favourite piece), though there is no direct quotation from that work; the actual allusion in play, if any, is to Grieg's accompaniment to the scene of Åse's Death in *Peer Gynt* (of personal relevance to my coming to terms with my mother's passing). The *Idyll* imagines redeeming the material, attempting to exorcise its sadness by turning it to use in a joyful context.

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IAN PACE, *Thirty for Grace* (2019)

Thirty for Grace, which was written to celebrate Grace Hom's 30th birthday, is a direct response to Skempton's *One for Molly*, which I knew through William A.P.M. was one of Grace's favourite pieces, alongside *Campanella 3*, Finnissy's arrangement of 'Love is here to stay', and Pascal Dusapin's Sixth *Étude* for piano. Permutations, re-arrangements and mutations of the pitch material in the Skempton pieces are used to generate a basic 'thread' which runs through the piece, during which the pianist also counts from 0 to 30 in Cantonese, Grace's language and a homage to Walter Zimmermann's *When I'm Eighty-Four*, which employs a similar strategy in Japanese. Part of the piece also configures some of this material in the manner of the verse of the Finnissy (with 'inserts' derived from potent moments in the chorus), together with some rather urgent overlays alluding to Dusapin.

Happy Birthday Grace – I hope you enjoy this!

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ERMIS THEODORAKIS, *Three Etudes on High Volatility*, No. 1 (2019)

Diagrams of high volatility tend usually to amorphous, especially when being observed for shorter periods; observation for a longer period may lead to assessment of some tendency, which though is fragile and could change at any moment.

These Etudes are a derivative (or parergon) of the larger work Whipsaw for piano and chamber ensemble. The third Etude is identical to the final cadenza of the piece, which shows itself a high degree of fragmentation. For the first two Etudes the solo piano part (which already has a complex form) is being once more fragmented and recomposed by means of stochastic processes; these define the length and sequence of the fragments. Moreover extreme tempo fluctuations are added in order to create immense differences of density and character.

© Ermis Theodorakis 2019.

HYUN-MOOK LIM, *stuttering* (2018)

It's a little stuttering to say some magical words of love. It starts with some syllables, with consonants and vowels. Mumbling and murmuring on and on. It's like "I – I... - I...l – I...lov – I...love y...." and so on. And finally, whole phrases of saying love is spoken, with a familiar melody for Grace

MORGAN HAYES, *Grace* (2019)

Takes as a starting point the number 30 (first section has 30 bars, there are three sections in total) and the name of the dedicatee: Grace notes, Grazioso tempo indication and the pitches which can be derived from the name. Although self-sufficient, this piece is also designed to be played with other birthday tribute pieces I've composed recently, including *Comparison* for Ian Pace.

© Morgan Hayes 2019.

JAMES W. IMAN, *Pieces for Interpolation* (2019)

The creative process was in two parts. First, conceiving a row I found interesting. Second, allowing the row (and a few of its transformations) to prompt a series of short improvisations.

© James W. Iman 2019.

NIGEL MCBRIDE, *reckon the spurious coin of my own make* (2019)

Sometimes writing music is about writing spaces - the metaphorical space that connects people. Other than providing the space, I'm only a passive participant. This space celebrates Grace Hom's 30th birthday. My thanks to William Alberto Penafiel

Miranda for inviting me to take part in the celebrations, and my thanks to Ian Pace for delivering the gift. Happy birthday Grace!

© Nigel McBride 2019.

GILBERT AMY, *Eclairs – Accords – Echos* (2019)

Eclairs means « Light », *Accords* suggests « Colours », *Echos* refers to « fading sounds »,

All this material is part of my intimacy with music!

Incidentally, this miniature piece is part of a sketch for ...*Après les fêtes*, hommage to Claude Debussy (2012).

© Gilbert Amy 2019.

PAUL BEAUDOIN, *this one and all the others* (2019)

Composing is a kind of alchemy – an arena where ideas and preconceptions become twisted, reconfigured, and reimagined. It is a window that opens onto the landscape of the composer – is it Steely Dan or Alanis Morissette? Is it Milton Babbitt or Franco Donatoni? *this one and all the others* is my contribution celebrating Grace Hom on her 30th birthday at the request of William Alberto Penafiel Miranda.

Paul Beaudoin is an American expat composer and visual artist living in Tallinn, Estonia.

© Paul Beaudoin 2019.

KYLE BARTLETT, *Chrysalis* (2009)

VOLKER HEYN, *Grace's Muzik – b-day pieces* (2019)

83 bars of nice piano sounds to make a girl happy on her birthday.

Happy Birthday Grace

Volker

© Volker Heyn 2019.

BETSY JOLAS, *Postlude* (2005); *Tango Si* (1984)

GEORGE ANTHEIL, *Mechanisms* (1923)

George Antheil's *Mechanisms* was written during the composer's important trip to Europe in 1922-23, where he settled in Berlin for a while before moving to Paris. Antheil met Stravinsky in Berlin and came to engage deeply with the Russian composer's achievements in a range of uncompromising works for the time, which would in turn be highly influential on German composers associated with the *Neue Sachlichkeit* and the young German critic Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt, who became one of his major champions. Originally written for pianola, *Mechanisms* was for a long time believed lost, but a copy of the autograph score eventually surfaced. Like many of Antheil's works from the period, it involves static blocks of material whose elements are permuted but do not really develop – close-packed chords in both hands; a chordal melody with various types of accompaniments; monophonic melodies accompanied by a single repeated note, or a meandering, melancholy slow processional passage in both hands.

© Ian Pace 2019.

RICHARD BARRETT, *filament* (2015-18)

filament for piano is identical with the piano solo passage which occupies the final two minutes of *wake* for three instrumental trios and electronics, although it was in fact written before the rest of *wake*. The two hands are placed in a 5:6 rhythmical relationship, and each cycles with systematically changing distortions and ornamentations through a twelve-tone series spread over three octaves, with every fifth pitch doubled at the octave; every fifth pitch of the left-hand series reproduces the right-hand series and *vice versa*. This process could be continued and varied indefinitely, and perhaps in the future it will be, but for now it stands as a brief excerpt from an imagined infinity.

© Richard Barrett 2019.

EVAN JOHNSON, *mon petit pleurant* (2019)

"mon petit pleurant" is a tiny sketch, an offshoot, of a longer piano work to come, which will be entitled "Mes pleurants": a collage of sorts, an overlapping forest of responses to and variously distanced fragments from the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century vocal repertoire. Behind this small, freely floating fragment, for instance, is Dufay's four-voice "Ave regina caelorum," at the moment where the bass comes in.

© Evan Johnson 2019.

SAM HAYDEN, *Becomings (Das Werden) I-VII* (2016-18)

Becomings is the latest in of a cycle of my recent pieces that combine ideas related to 'spectral' traditions with algorithmic approaches to composition. The piece oscillates constantly between dense, energetic, hyper-virtuosic gestural materials and moments of relative clarity, but never settling one way or the other, in a tension that is never really resolved. The sonic surfaces constantly ebb and flow, coalesce and decompose in a state of flux, existing on an unstable continuum between computer-generated synthetic scales and quasi-spectral harmonic fields. My intention was to create a piece with the maximum surface diversity and proliferation of materials whilst maintaining an underlying formal coherence. The title deliberately refers to the philosophical sense of 'Becoming', dating back to Heraclitus who's idea of a world in constant change was in opposition to the idea of Being as an eternal, perfect and unchanging essence. The title is also plural because each movement could be said to represent a different attempt at musical becoming. Essential to the conception of the piece is the absence of clear pre-existing musical objects (or 'beings') as such: only musical 'becomings' where transformation itself is the very basis of the music.

1st movement functions something of a 'prelude', where many of the gestural tendencies that are developed in the other other movements have their origins. In particular a continuously transforming delicate polyphonic lattice, often embellished with trills and tremolos dominates the texture, occasionally interjected with short rapid filigree-like gestures and more vertical structures.

2nd movement is the most substantial of the 7 movements, within which the dichotomy of complex polyphony, across the full range of the piano, and chiming vertical structures hinted at previously, is much more apparent and dialectical. These two aspects often being superimposed during several cyclical waves of gradual crescendi, where chromatic polyphony evolves into quasi-spectral harmonies with clear fundamental pitches. Each 'wave' moves towards declamatory chordal interjections, as well as sudden appearances of highly compressed filigree-like textures, building towards some of the most dense and extreme music of the whole cycle.

The 3rd movement starts with a texture somewhat reminiscent of the very opening of movement 1. However, rather than the linear elaboration we had previously, this is a much more chaotic, fractured and fragmented form where the rapid filigree-like material again features, but is often interrupted by angular staccato writing in the low register, or chiming *sfz* chords in the upper register. These structural juxtapositions contrast formally with the large-scale directionality of the 2nd movement. This piece represents something of a transition from the epic scale of the 2nd movement to the more subtle lyricism of the 4th. Another feature of the movement is that the quasi-spectral harmonies are more identifiable within the polyphonic sections.

The 4th movement could be seen as something of a 'slow movement', beginning with the elaboration of a slow, upward moving line in the RH with chordal accompaniment, perhaps the most transparent music of the cycle. This upward moving line later appears in the low register with tremolo chords in the RH and is a recurring gesture in this movement. In actual fact, this material is just a very temporally stretched-out version of the filigree-like material, the piece being

something of an exploration of how the extreme augmentation or compression of the similar materials yields sonic results which are perceptually very different. What begins more as a process of linear elaboration, ends as the superimposition of several identifiable gestural types (filigree, chords, polyphony, tremolos, staccato bass-notes etc).

The 5th movement (once, a kind of 'finale' before I decided to write two further movements) is something of a continuation of the territory explored in the 2nd movement, except that the combination of staccato chords and rapid linear structures is a feature from the outset. The repeating cycles between chromatic and spectral harmonies is now much more transparent, mostly due to the increasing dominance of vertical structures as the piece progresses. The chordal close of the work is the most overt articulation of quasi-spectral harmonies thus far.

The 6th movement features some of the most rapid and continuous music of the cycle. A 'new' element is the use of multiple grace-note gestures acting either as quasi-upbeat gestures, either towards attack points within linear writing, or, towards chordal interjections and clusters. The music is generally less polyphonic, the textures being more starkly characterised according to particular gestural types, ending with a strike juxtaposition between rapid filigree textures and slowly evolving, widely-spaced chiming chords, perhaps almost representing a clarification of previous materials.

The opening of the 7th movement again refers to the very opening. The movement as a whole intentionally functions as a kind of coda where all the tendencies from the previous movements are hinted at. Yet there is always the sense of unfinished business, as the essential paradox of the piece remains - the music is in a continual sense of Becoming.

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IAN PACE is a pianist of long-established reputation, specialising in the farthest reaches of musical modernism and transcendental virtuosity, as well as a writer and musicologist focusing on issues of performance, music and society and the avant-garde. He was born in Hartlepool, England in 1968, and studied at Chetham's School of Music, The Queen's College, Oxford and, as a Fulbright Scholar, at the Juilliard School in New York. His main teacher, and a major influence upon his work, was the Hungarian pianist György Sándor, a student of Bartók.

Based in London since 1993, he has pursued an active international career, performing in 24 countries and at most major European venues and festivals. His absolutely vast repertoire of all periods focuses particularly upon music of the 20th and 21st Century. He has given world premieres of over 250 piano works, including works by Patrícia de Almeida, Julian Anderson, Richard Barrett, Konrad Boehmer, Luc Brewaeys, Aaron Cassidy, James Clarke, James Dillon, Pascal Dusapin, Richard Emsley, James Erber, Brian Ferneyhough, Michael Finnissy (whose complete piano works he performed in a landmark 6-concert series in 1996, and then again in an 11-concert series in 2016-17), Christopher Fox, Volker Heyn, Wieland Hoban, Evan Johnson, Maxim Kolomiets, André Laporte, Hilda Paredes, Alwynne Pritchard,

Horatiu Radulescu, Lauren Redhead, Frederic Rzewski, Thoma Simaku, Howard Skempton, Gerhard Stäbler, Serge Verstockt, Hermann Vogt, Alistair Zaldua and Walter Zimmermann. He has presented cycles of works including Stockhausen's *Klavierstücke I-X*, and the piano works of Ferneyhough, Fox, Kagel, Ligeti, Lachenmann, Messiaen, Radulescu, Rihm, Rzewski and Skempton. He has played with orchestras including the Orchestre de Paris under Christoph Eschenbach (with whom he premiered and recorded Dusapin's piano concerto *À Quia*), the SWF Orchestra in Stuttgart under Rupert Huber, and the Dortmund Philharmonic under Bernhard Kontarsky (with whom he gave a series of very well-received performances of Ravel's Concerto for the Left Hand). He has recorded 34 CDs; his most recent recording of Michael Finnissy's five-and-a-half hour *The History of Photography in Sound* (of which he gave the world premiere in London in 2001) was released by Divine Art in October 2013 to rave reviews. Forthcoming recordings will include the piano works of Brian Ferneyhough, the Piano Sonatas of Pierre Boulez and John Cage's *The Music of Changes*. Recent concerts have included appearances in Lisbon, Zürich, Oslo, Prague, Kiev, and around the UK.

He is Senior Lecturer in Music and Head of Performance at City University, London, having previously held positions at the University of Southampton and Dartington College of Arts. His areas of academic expertise include 19th century performance practice (especially the work of Liszt and Brahms), issues of music and society (with particular reference to the work of Theodor Adorno, the Frankfurt School, and their followers), contemporary performance practice and issues, music and culture under fascism, and the post-1945 avant-garde, in particular in West Germany, upon which he is currently completing a large-scale research project. He co-edited and was a major contributor the volume *Uncommon Ground: The Music of Michael Finnissy*, which was published by Ashgate in 1998, and authored the monograph *Michael Finnissy's The History of Photography in Sound: A Study of Sources, Techniques and Interpretation*, published by Divine Art in 2013. He has also published many articles in *Music and Letters*, *Contemporary Music Review*, *TEMPO*, *The Musical Times*, *The Liszt Society Journal*, *International Piano*, *Musiktexte*, *Musik & Ästhetik*, *The Open Space Magazine*, as well as contributing chapters to *The Cambridge History of Musical Performance*, edited Colin Lawson and Robin Stowell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), *Collected Writings of the Orpheus Institute: Unfolding Time: Studies in Temporality in Twentieth-Century Music*, edited Darla Crispin (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2009), *The Modernist Legacy*, edited Björn Heile (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009), and *Beckett's Proust/Deleuze's Proust*, edited Mary Bryden and Margaret Topping (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). The volume *Critical Perspective on Michael Finnissy: Bright Futures, Dark Pasts*, co-edited with Nigel McBride, will appear in April 2019, and volumes on *Writing on Contemporary Musicians* and *Writing about Contemporary Artists in Theory and Practice*, both co-edited with Christopher Wiley, will appear in early 2020. Other forthcoming publications include a monographs on music in Weimar and post-war Germany, a book on Brahms Performance Practice, and a history of specialist musical education in Britain. He is also currently working on a film on avant-garde music in West and East Germany with renowned director Bettina Ehrhardt.