



Contemporary Performance Ensemble

Premieres & Classics

5 World Premiers, plus

George Crumb's acclaimed *Voice of the Whale*

Eric Satie – *Three Nocturnes*

And David Downes brilliant, short multimedia piece *Noise*



Contemporary Performance Ensemble

Te Hau Kuri (dog's Breath)

**Hirini Melbourne
Richard Nunns**

(From Sonic Art III)

Every valley, every place, has a special wind. This piece results from a long association and fascination with the chilling south wind that blows down Ruatoki valley. It is known locally as the wind of Okiwa, which emanates from the breath of Mariko, a dog that belonged to the high Priest Taneatua of the waka (canoe) *Mataatua* that landed at Whakatane around 1350AD. After Mariko died, his spirit became the guardian of a pond in the upper reaches of Te Urewera that bears its name. When stirred, the dog would rise to the surface and bark. The wind from Mariko's breath causes the Okiwa wind to rush down the valley, accompanied by misty. The wind saves the crops in the valley from destruction by frost.

Quintro

Daniel Stabler

For 5 basses

Daniel Stabler, Matthias Erdrich, Denise Hui, Evgeni Lanchtchikov, John Middleton

Quintro was conceived as an electroacoustic, real-time performance work using standard composition for the five double basses along with the MAX computer program for electroacoustic enhancement. Either electroacoustic enhancement or a performance with straight and unprocessed sound can be employed at the performers' discretion. 'Quintro' is designed to showcase spatialisation and different aspects in sound production for the Double Bass.

The three movements are titled:

1. Smooth flow
2. Ebb
3. Return

'Smooth Flow' begins the musical voyage in a stately, unhurried, somewhat lugubrious manner with a constant quaver flow spread through the ensemble. The structure includes a retrograde in the solo from mid-way to the end.

'Ebb' is largely abstract, with eerie glissando harmonics and low pedal drones. The solo conveys a sense of experimental improvisation in comparison to the steady cross-rhythms, structure and harmony of the outer movements. 'Return' picks up the pace for a steady and secure journey home.

David Stabler is currently a Master of Music Composition student at the University of Waikato. He previously received BMus(Hons) at Waikato. He is a professional Double Bassist in the Auckland Philharmonia and has performed in numerous American orchestras, having studied at Julliard School, Manhattan School of Music, Tanglewood and Northwestern University.

Waikaremoana Images

David Griffiths

Flute: Catherine Bowie

- | | | |
|----|----------------|----------------------|
| 1. | Fern Path | Te Ara Rauruhe |
| 2. | Bush and Water | Te Ngahere me Te wai |
| 3. | Fantail | Te Tiwaiwaka |

Each piece seeks to paint the scenes with mood setting colouration employing various flute techniques.

The first is as a first time walk in the remarkable, lush and fragrant track to the lake. The architecture of the surroundings, the occasional glimpse of sky and that unmistakable smell of damp vegetation predominates. The second piece employs the mouth piece of the flute only. Here we have the evocative sound of the Maori nose flute, the scuttle of winged and earth bound creatures and the pristine waters of the lake. The third piece evokes the familiar and quixotic flight of a fantail as it flits, hiding, fluttering and diving through the bush.

'Waikaremoana Images' was written in December 2002 and dedicated to Elizabeth Farrell.

Noise

David Downes

David Downes is a Wellington-based composer who has pursued an individual path of creative musical work, most of it using electronic technology and frequently linked with dance. His collaborations include works with choreographers such as Michael Parmenter and Daniel Belton as well as several dance companies and training schools. He has also worked with other composers and a number of notable performers, and has won acclaim internationally as a film maker. Conceptually linked to Len Lye's sound-generating kinetic sculptures, *Noise* is short, highly concentrated and superbly crafted multimedia work subtitled 'theme and variations'. Both images and sounds in *Noise* were created as an inseparable whole by the composer, resulting in a remarkably unity of vision and sound. Tonight's version is a projection of a VHS tape.

Fratres

Arvo Pärt

University String Orchestra

Fratres is an excellent example of Pärt's use of his simple but highly expressive style of composition which he calls tintinnabulation. In his own words:

"Tintinnabulation is an area I sometimes wander into when I am searching for answers – in my life, my music, my work. In my dark hours, I have the certain feeling that everything outside this one thing has no meaning. The complex and many-faceted only confuses me, and I must search for unity. What is it, this one thing, and how do I find my way to it? Traces of this perfect thing appear in many guises – and everything that is unimportant falls away. Tintinnabulation is like this. Here I am alone with silence. I have discovered that it is enough when a single note is beautifully played. This one note, or a silent beat, or a moment of silence, comforts me. I work with very few elements – with one voice, with two voices. I build with the most primitive materials – with the triad, with one specific tonality. The three notes of the triad are like bells. And that is why I call it tintinnabulation."

Intermission

Vox Ballaenae

George Crumb

Lorna Wright (Flute); Rosalind Hill (Cello); Monica Chang (Piano)

The composer writes of this score, composed in 1971 for the New York Camerata, "The work was inspired by the singing of the humpback whale. Each of the three performers is required to wear a black half-mask. The masks, by effacing the sense of human projection, are intended to represent, symbolically, the powerful impersonal force of nature (i.e. nature dehumanised).

Voice of the Whale consists of a prologue (*Vocalise*), a set of variations named after geological eras (*Sea-Theme*, *Proterzoic*, *Paleozoic*, *Mesozoic*, *Cenozoic*) and an epilogue (*Sea-Nocturne*).

The opening *Vocalise* ("wildly fantastic, grotesque") requires the flautist to simultaneously play and sing creating an eerie, surreal timbre, not unlike the sounds of a humpback whale.

During the variations a number of tools are used by the pianist – a chisel, glass rod and a paper clip. The cello uses a variety of glissandi, pizzicato and harmonics that create vivid images of the ocean.

The final *Sea-Nocturne* is an elaboration of the *Sea-Theme* and is loosely based around B Major. In this movement the cellist and the flautist are required to whistle and play crotales. Crumb used a wide variety of colour across the three instruments to create a moving and theoretical work."

Kasumi

Ian Whalley

(From Sonic Art III)

“Over spring field, floats the mist, a lonely feeling, through in the twilight, a warbler sings. In *Kasumi* (for instrument(s)/voice and tape) the original sounds provided the basis for the electroacoustic manipulation and integration of the work. Based on the text, the composition is constructed using parallel narratives like a folk tale, juxtaposing simple binary elements. My thanks to Chikako Komaki for the Japanese reading and translation, and to Richard Nunns for the sound samples and explanations.”

Nocturnes nos. 1, 2 & 5

Erik Satie

Nocturne no.1 Monica Chang

Nocturne no.2 Yan Zhu

Nocturne no.5 Ray Yen

One of music's greatest satirists and ironists, Satie's life of calculated eccentricity in Paris (he dressed always in a series of identical grey suits and collected dozens of umbrellas, for instance) has become as well known as his compositions. He was a mentor and friend to Debussy and other leading figures, but tended to feel overshadowed by them. His musical aesthetic is closely aligned in spirit to the Surrealists, resulting in many of his pieces having bizarre titles and performance instructions.

His series of nocturnes for piano, however, possess a timeless beauty. They are elegant but also convey a nostalgic tranquillity and calm.

Nyx

Rachael Morgan

Nyx was written for Lorna Wright on solo flute. It incorporates a range of 20th century techniques including quarter-tones, pitch-bending and also singing and playing simultaneously. The melodic material is based on a synthetic E-centred scale with an open-ended feel. *Nyx* is a single movement work in three sections. The opening is slow and free. The contrasting middle section is rhythmic and energetic, building to a climax before returning to the opening idea. The title comes from Greek mythology in which Nyx is the goddess of night. However this need not influence the mood of the piece which at times has the feel of a Maori lament.

Improvisation

Peter Scholes Clarinet

James Tennant Cello

Acknowledgments as follows:

Kim Walker Technical Direction
Ian Whalley
James Tennant
Peter Scholes
Anke Spry
Jay Shattock

OKTA

Artistic Directors

Martin Lodge
Michael Williams

Music Department
University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton
e-mail: okta@waikato.ac.nz