



Patron: Dame Gillian Whitehead DNZM, MNZM, Arts Laureate 2000

Artistic Directors: Martin Lodge and Michael Williams

Okta is the specialist contemporary music ensemble of the University of Waikato Music Programme. It was founded in 2001 by composers Martin Lodge and Michael Williams, with the inaugural concert taking place in May 2002. Okta's home is the Gallagher Concert Chamber in the WEL Academy of Performing Arts. Okta takes its name from an old transliteration of the Greek word for eight. In traditional numerology, the number seven signifies completeness, including the four elements plus the three spiritual essences. Number eight – Okta - consequently signifies a new beginning but also an embracing of the past. Okta presents a wide spectrum of artistic styles and approaches in its concert events and its programming deliberately encompasses divergent aesthetic positions. Repertoire performed ranges from established twentieth century classics to very recent work, with a special emphasis on the inclusion of multimedia pieces and work involving computer technology.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Performance - Music Programme staff and students, guest performers and composers

Venue- Academy staff

Administration- Kim Johnson

Technical support - Luke Jacobs and Academy staff

FOR YOUR DIARY

Friday 7 September 6.30pm **Santiago Cañón Valencia**

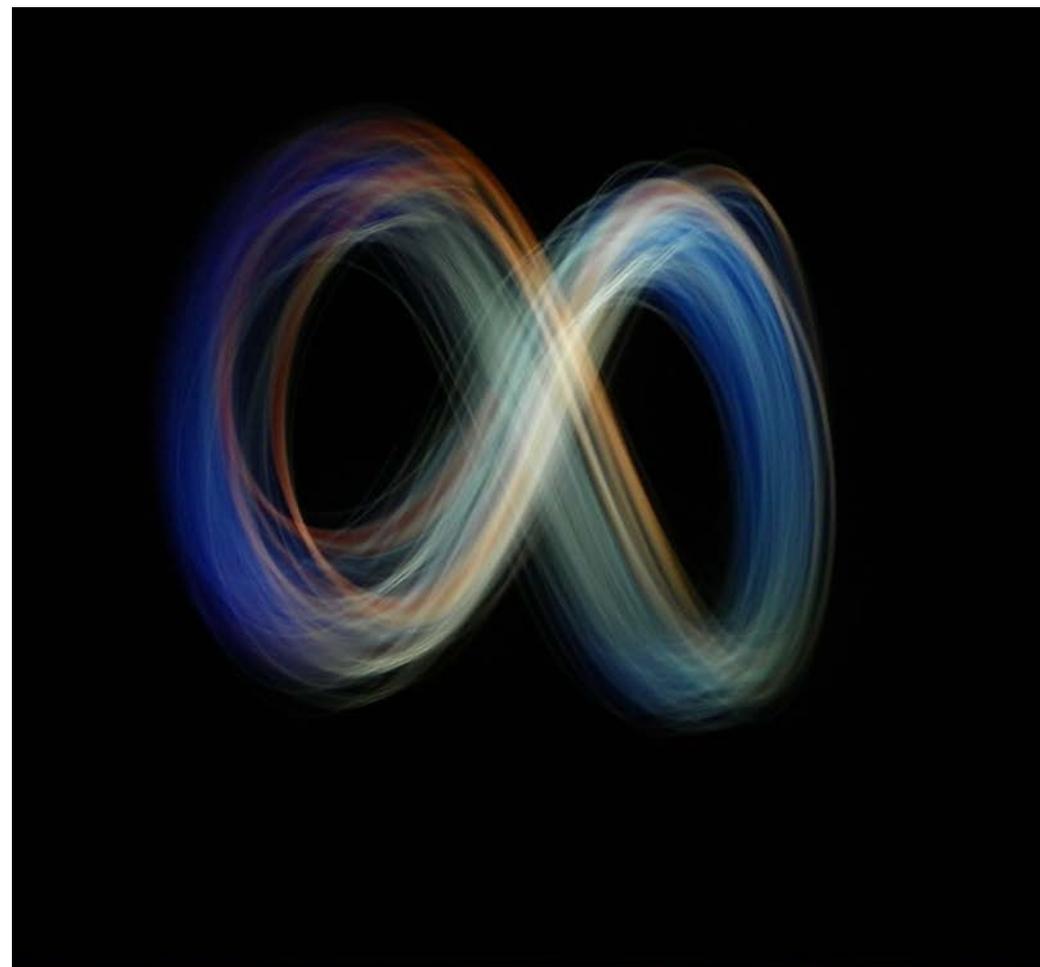
Don't miss this benefit concert for cellist Santiago Cañón Valencia (top prize-winner of the Beijing International Cello Competition 2010, and currently studying at the University of Waikato). The opportunities for New Zealanders to hear the sublime performances of this young Colombian prodigy will become increasingly rare. And hearing him perform in the intimate surroundings of a house concert will be even rarer.

Morandini House, Cambridge

Bookings: www.morandini.co.nz / 07-823 5071

The University of Waikato Music Programme welcomes donations or bequests to support any of our activities including scholarships, student and staff development, concerts and special events, publications, specialist resources, and contributions to a long-term endowment fund. All donations and bequests will be acknowledged. To discuss making a donation or bequest please contact us at music@waikato.ac.nz or 07 838 4380.

Music@WAIKATO: New Zealand's No.1 Music Programme
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OKTA

 CONTEMPORARY PERFORMANCE ENSEMBLE

THURSDAY 23RD AUGUST 2012

7.30PM

DR JOHN GALLAGHER CONCERT CHAMBER
GALLAGHER ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO



www.waikato.ac.nz/music music@waikato.ac.nz

PROGRAMME

The Auction – opening scene **World premiere**

Janet Jennings

Five of the nine characters in this comic opera are introduced in this opening scene. The action takes place at the on-site auction (mortgagee sale) of a two-bedroom flat in Glen Innes. The stage and auditorium represent a room in the flat and all audience members are “potential buyers”. Reference to local hazards such as the auction process, mortgagee sales, pushy real estate agents, leaky buildings, and property “sharks” will be familiar to most New Zealanders.

We hope to produce a performance of the whole opera before the end of this year. Look out for the production if you want to know who buys the flat!

Carolyn - Oriana Kershaw: Carolyn is the confident, impatient, power-dressed real estate agent (representing “Quickstep Real Estate”) in charge of the sale of this property.

Jane - Blair White: Jane attends the auction with her young husband, Brian.

Brian - Timothy Burrell: Brian is a nervous but well-intentioned young man, very much in love with Jane.

Mrs Peterson - Teresa Connors: Mrs Peterson is an elderly widowed lady who has had to sell her leaky home at a loss. She attends auctions with the intent of buying an inexpensive home, but has never actually made a bid.

John Scott - David Griffiths: John Scott, of “John Scott Finance”, has built his property portfolio on “strong foundations”. He attends this mortgagee sale in the hopes of acquiring cheap property.

Piano duet - Francis Cowan and Melanie Lina

Libretto and Music - Janet Jennings

Janet has worked in education (in schools and as Senior Adviser Arts for the Ministry of Education) for over 20 years, in addition to working actively in the community as a composer and performer. She majored in organ and harpsichord studies at Auckland University, later completing post-graduate research focused on a performance of Tate/Purcell’s Dido and Aeneas. Her PhD studies in composition were assisted by a doctoral scholarship from the University of Waikato and a Fulbright scholarship allowing for travel and study in the United States. Janet’s work is characterised by a keen awareness of text and by her desire to produce music for the enjoyment of both performers and audiences. Janet recently resigned from her position as Deputy Principal at an Auckland secondary school. This chamber opera, *The Auction*, is the first work she has completed as a “full time” composer.

Cello Sonata **World premiere**

David Griffiths

James Tennant – cello, Katherine Austin - piano

The cello sonata - first movement - was written in Dec 2010 for James Tennant and Katherine Austin. It uses material first started when the composer was 18. The work could be described as 'The Cage' – the protagonist always attempting but never quite escaping the entrapment of his prison. The music is most expressive with the piano and cello engaging in tort struggles both with one another and individually answering to each other’s pleas. The Sonata is dedicated to James and Katherine.

Interiors for String Quartet **World premiere**

Rachael Morgan

Ngaru Martin – violin, Jin Kim – violin, Adam Maha – viola, Tamsin Kreymborg - cello

Influenced by the sonorist works of Italian composer Giacinto Scelsi, *Interiors* explores the inner richness of concentrated sounds. The work focuses on timbre, avoiding traditional melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic content. Beginning with a single note the music organically moves through a series of transformations. This process happens very slowly and quietly, encouraging close listening – drawing attention to minute details.

Terroir **World premiere**

Visuals - Shannon Harris, Sonic Composition - Teresa Connors

Terroir, which comes from the French word terre (“land”) and loosely translates as “a sense of place,” is an abstract portrait of personal geography as well as a formal investigation of digital media. Captured entirely on an old cell phone, the raw data used to create *Terroir* was collected by Canadian filmmaker Shannon Harris over a two-year period while commuting across Canada for various jobs. The camera records a landscape in constant motion but due to the rudimentary technology of the old cell phone the image fractures and oscillates between figurative and abstraction. Married to the painterly visuals is a sonic composition generated solely from the personal voice messages left during this time period. From this data, an allegory emerges based on the notion of communication and distance, technology and intimacy, an innate human need for community and love, and the contemporary means by which it is achieved. It is a personal journey and geography of modern life, in which people seem to be constantly “on the move,” filtered through the technology of the cell phone. Shannon is a Canadian filmmaker originally from Vancouver B.C. presently obtaining her Masters of Fine Arts at Concordia University in Montreal. Teresa is a Canadian composer originally from Newfoundland presently pursuing a Masters of Music degree in composition at Waikato University.

Cello Sonata

Alfred Schnittke (1834-1998)

Santiago Cañón Valencia – cello, Katherine Austin – piano

In Cello Sonata of 1976, Schnittke takes two of the most basic building-blocks of tonal music—the major/minor third and the perfect cadence—and subjects them to extreme magnification. In the opening *Largo*, the effect is gently melancholic, circling around C major/minor but evading the resolution of an identifiable chord. The furious *Scherzo* is firmly in the Shostakovich mould: a whirlwind *Presto* constructed on rigorously contrapuntal lines. Here, Schnittke continues to explore the major/minor third oscillations of the *Largo*, transformed into multiple characters: winding chromatic thirds, the piano’s menacing bass tread and its rumbling bass quavers; the weird, slithering cello fifths and pizzicato chords over the piano’s climactic arm-cluster. The same major/minor third idea also shapes the piano’s gothic-horror-style diminished seventh chords, grotesquely suggestive of a leaden waltz. To use this chord at all by 1978 was as startling as inserting a C major triad into an atonal piece: once again, Schnittke’s treatment of over-familiar musical material is questioning and subversive. Just as he constantly undermines the major/minor triad, the diminished seventh is over-inflated and made both absurd and sinister. Underpinning it all is a carefully wrought canonic structure based on the cello’s opening material and subjected to ingenious processes of repetition and augmentation.

Notes from <http://www.hyperion-records.co.uk/al.asp?al=CDA67534>