

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS

W. A. CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC

Contemporary Music Series

Gary D. France, Anthony L. Maydwell

Directors

Conservatorium Percussion Ensemble

Conservatorium Contemporary Choir

Stirling String Quartet

24 / 25 October, 1990 8:00 pm

Music Auditorium

2 Bradford Street
Mount Lawley W.A.6050



Programme

RAIN-TREE 1981

TORU TAKEMITSU

For Three Percussion Players

*Tim White, +Gary France, Neil Craig

FOUR PIECES FOR STRING QUARTET 1971

DON BANKS

1 Moderato

2 Allegro

3 Adagio

4 Allegro

+Stirling String Quartet

Pal Eder, Erika Toth, Alan Bonds, Suzanne Wisjman

AGNUS DEI 1981

KRZYSZTOF PENDERECKI

Conservatorium Contemporary Choir, Anthony Maydwell, Director

IONIZATION 1931

EDGARD VARESE

Conservatorium Percussion Ensemble, Gary France Conductor

Neil Craig, Alison Eddington, Chris Tarr, Paul Edsall, Owen Smythe, Thane Mandin,
Brian Nicholls, Gavin Darby, Tony Gorgone, Michael Pigneguy, Simon Treadwell,
Evan Jenkins, Chris Wood, Sandy Moor

Interval

There will be one 20 minute interval to reset the stage.

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

BALLET MECANIQUE SCORE 1924 / 1952-1953

GEORGE ANTHEIL

BALLET MECANIQUE FILM 1924 / 1989

FERNAND LEGER

Images: Dudley Murphy
Man Ray
Fernand Lèger

Cast: Dudley Murphy
Katherine Murphy
Kiki de Montparnasse
Man Ray

Editing: Dudley Murphy
Fernand Lèger

Restoration:
1987 - 1988 William Moritz

Conservatorium Percussion Ensemble, Gary France, Conductor

Neil Craig, Alison Eddington, Chris Tarr, Paul Edsall, Simon Treadwell, Michael Pigneguy, Evan Jenkins

Special Guest Artist: +Dr. Jean Roberts, +Cathie Travers, Su Yon Kim, Katrina Ross,
Anthony Maydwell

+ Lecturer, W.A. Conservatorium of Music

* Courtesy of Western Australian Symphony Orchestra

PROGRAMME NOTES

RAIN- TREE

Takemitsu's Rain-Tree for three percussionists was completed in 1981. It forms one part of his *Waterscape* series of works for different ensembles all on water related topics. This piece is dedicated to the writer Kenzaburo OÉ and the celebrated percussion virtuoso Sylvio Gualda.

" The Tree is called the "rain-tree", because its lush foliage still sprinkles the previous night's drops of rain onto the ground in the following afternoon. Its hundreds of thousands of finger-like leaves store moisture, though other trees dry out in an instant. A clever tree, you must admit."

IONIZATION

Ionization, Varèse's best known work, stands as a landmark in twentieth-century music as being the first western work written solely for percussion. Ionization consists of four distinct sections and a coda. Each section contains a wealth of innovative ideas and sounds. As Varèse stated, "***Don't call me a composer. Call me an engineer of rhythms, resonances, and timbres.***" Ionization was begun in 1929 and completed on November 13, 1931. The first performance was on March 6, 1933 with Nicolas Slonimsky conducting. The critic from the Musical Courier wrote:

Varèse's latest effort (played twice) contains almost nothing of traditional tonal quality being scored for various Gatling gun species of percussion, a dolorous and quaintly modulated siren, sleigh bells and an ingenious instrument that imitated the voice of an anguished bull."

The title refers to atomic fission and scientists reported that they listened to a recording of the piece at Oak Ridge while at work on the atomic bomb. I have always enjoyed performing and listening to Ionization. Each encounter finds new challenges and hidden treasures.

Gary France

AGNUS DEI

Penderecki is without doubt the most significant composer to emerge from Poland since Chopin. He has composed extensively and has had little dross in his output.

His significance as a composer internationally begins in 1960 with the performance of *Dimensions of Time and Space*; *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima* and *Anaklasis*. These works and most since were recorded by ensembles outside Poland soon after composition and have been well received by international audiences.

Penderecki has succeeded in composing in a style that is at once fully contemporary in idiom yet at the same time accessible to the uninitiated listener. He has succeeded through a style which is founded in a Romantic spirit which communicates strong emotions. His referential approach and his disciplined scoring help to mould the music into a potent vehicle for his spiritual, philosophical, psychological and political outpourings.

The *Agnus Dei*, composed in 1981 for a Radio Choir and recorded by this ensemble in the same year represents much of Penderecki's style. It also alerts us to some of the stronger influences upon his style.

This choral work is firmly rooted in 16th century polyphonic style and observes some of the conventions regarding the use of dissonance typical of that period whose purest evocation is the work of Palestrina.

Simultaneously the newness of this composition lies in its controlled use of tonal clustering at its climax and (intentionally or otherwise) refers to some of the more moving moments of Wagner's *Prelude and Liebestod* from *Tristan und Isolde* in the dense textural approach to that moment. There also appear elements of Baroque affection in some of the intervallic uses of word-painting especially the weeping descending minor 2nd. The text follows the conventions of the First Vatican Council (Trent, 16th century) in that the text is audibly unhindered by the music yet breaks the rules by its incessant repetition and eventual breakdown of the sense of the short Latin text used

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi
dona eis requiem sempiternam*

*(Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the World grant us rest for
evermore).*

The text is part of the Requiem Mass but there is no reference by Penderecki to any recently deceased individual and one can only assume that the incomplete usage of text from the Requiem Mass was solely a powerful vehicle for his musical imagination.

Structurally the composition follows a classical musical arch with the dissonant movement punctuated by major or minor chords. The work commences with a strong sense of F minor; moves with the first rendition of the word 'mundi' to A minor completing the text to 'dona eis' back on F minor. The piece recommences with an obligato-like additional line and gradually becomes more dense until the climactic rendition of the word *peccata* ('sins') a cluster of 20 pitches followed by silence. The words 'dona eis' as a minor ascending second in the basses lead to the descending *As, g, f* of the beginning finally reduced to a single bass line with the words 'dona eis requiem'. The material from this moment to the end becomes more reflective utilising no new musical material until the final open fifth chord on F. The harmonic base suggests Penderecki's obsessive use of cluster as the final harmonic gambit where logical extensions of tonal harmony become less relevant or less capable of serving his purposes. Nevertheless the clusters have set pitches and do contribute to the harmonic sensitivities of the total fabric of the composition.

Anthony Maydwell

FOUR PIECES FOR STRING QUARTET

Don Banks was one of the most distinguished and skilful of Australia's composers, and one of its most thoroughly trained musical craftsmen. Born in Melbourne, he received his basic musical education there and later studied overseas with some of Europe's leading composers. In 1950 he moved to London where his first teacher was Matyas Seiber. During this period he helped to organise the Australian Musical Association and in 1952 was awarded the Edwin Evans Memorial Prize for composition. He studied with Luigi Dallapiccola in Florence, before returning to London in late 1953. In 1959 he was awarded the Sir Arnold Bax Society's Medal for services as a composer of the Commonwealth.

During the 1960s he worked as a professional composer in England where he was commissioned by organisations such as the Cheltenham Festival, Edinburgh Festival Society, London Symphony Orchestra and the BBC. Among his works are concertos for horn and violin (the latter for the 1968 Promenade Concerts), as well as a large amount of chamber music including the widely-performed Horn Trio (1962) and the String Quartet (1975).

In 1972, Don Banks returned to Australia as Creative Arts Fellow at the Australian National University in Canberra. He was instrumental in establishing the Music Board of the Australia Council, and was Head of the Composition Department of the Canberra School of Music and NSW State Conservatorium of Music. His untimely death in 1980 was widely mourned by the Australian music community.

The Four pieces for string quartet were commissioned by the Music Department of University College, Cardiff, and are dedicated to the Welsh composer Alun Hoddinott. The first piece (*Moderato*) is concerned with contrast, and entails development based on a single chord and a short melodic fragment. The second piece (*Allegro*) is built entirely on its 8-bar opening motive, and its development is based on 'phase' technique, whereby the four instruments play the same motive together but at varying speeds so that note relationships are always changing. The composer was also interested in varying harmonic structures produced by, for instance, each instrument playing simultaneously the same 8-note figure but starting on a different note in each case. The third piece (*Adagio*) is slow and lyrical, while the last piece (*Allegro*) acts as a [blues influenced] *scherzo*-finale.

BALLET MECANIQUE (the music)

"Interpretively speaking, Ballet Mècanique was never intended to demonstrate (as has been erroneously said) "the beauty and precision of machines". Rather it was to experiment with and thus, to demonstrate a new principle in music construction, that of "Time Space", or in which the time principle, rather than the tonal principle is held of main importance."1

Ballet Mècanique , written in 1924 - 1925, was originally intended for a film by Fernand Lèger, but actually the film and the music were independently conceived. There are conflicting accounts as to the music's origins. One account states "the piece was originally scored for 16 player pianos linked to a central piano but proved impossible to coordinate". Another states that " He worked on the orchestral score, which originally included eight grand pianos one piano player and a huge percussion ensemble with a bass drum played by four people simultaneously, a tam tam, two electric bells, three propellers and three xylophones. Tonights version is the version commissioned by Australian composer Peggy Glanville-Hicks for an all percussion concert at the New York Museum of Modern Art. Antheil States:

"...I have confined this editing mostly to cutting. Repetitious measures, intended to synchronize only with the film, have been cut out abundantly, reducing the playing time from the original of more than a half hour to less than eighteen minutes. The player piano has been deleted entirely, its role given to the pianos. The eight original pianos have been cut down to four: the four original xylophones to two, etc. But its basic character has, I hope, remained. It has merely been made more concise."1.

BALLET MECANIQUE (the film)

Ballet Mècanique is credited as being the first abstract motion picture. Whether surrealist or avant-garde, film-makers of the 1920's had an aversion to using sub titles in the traditional way, as representations of speech. Fernand Lèger's Ballet Mècanique has very few intertitles; however, one can easily find interesting scenarios: the first visual and intertitle of the film are both homages to Chaplin: the visual of the stick man in Chaplin's bowler hat and his famous cane, disconnected every-where yet forming a coherent comedian in cubist form; the intertitle explaining the tribute behind the film; "CHARLOT PRESENTE LE BALLET MECANIQUE" . Lèger later builds an entire scenario around the intertitle "ON A VOLE UN COLLIER DE PERLES DE 5 MILLIONS" , the theft, and the worth all through the manipulation of the image.

Ezra Pound can be credited with bringing Fernand Lèger, Man Ray, Dudley Murphy, (who later would become famous for his film *Emperor Jones*), and Antheil together. Murphy was responsible for most of the editing. Yet the Ballet Mècanique which Lèger screened in late September 1924, at the opening night of the International Exhibition of New Theatre Technique in Vienna, was something different. This performance was done without the music and edited by Viennese film censors.

Ballet Mècanique as shown tonight is a copy of a version restored as faithfully as possible to the original idea. It revives Man Ray's considerable contribution, in terms of footage and, more important, in terms of Dada's irony, irreverent wit, and sarcasm. The restoration was completed by California Institute of the Arts faculty member, Dr. William Moritz in 1989. Tonight is the Australian Premiere of this version.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

The Western Australian Conservatorium of Music, Percussion Ensemble contains from 2 to 19 players. Students from both jazz and classical studies combine to explore, workshop, and perform percussion literature and world musics. The W.A. Conservatorium Percussion Ensemble has performed many Australian premiers and is currently planning a tour of the USA in 1991 where it will perform at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention in Anaheim California. The ensemble is highly sought after for school concerts and workshops. Recent performances include the York Winter Festival, The Festival of Perth, and the 1990 EVOS Contemporary Music Series which included a national broadcast on ABC FM.

GARY DOUGLAS FRANCE

Gary is a Native of Syracuse New York, U.S.A. Mr France performs in both the Classical and Jazz genres. He received his Bachelor degree in Music Education, in 1979, from the State University of New York. He completed his Masters degree in Performance in 1987 at North Texas State University where he became the first drummer to direct one of the prestigious Jazz lab Bands. Mr France has performed many world and national premiers including Peter Brook's La Tragedie de Carmen and Sir Michael Tippett's New Years Suite with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra. Gary has performed in The Peoples Republic of China (1986), India, for Musica Viva (1989), Australia and New Zealand (1987), for Yamaha International, and the United States 59 City Tour, 1985. Gary has performed with many Jazz Greats including James Morrison, Richie Cole, Nat Adderly, Mark Murphey, Frank Sinatra Jr., Ricky May, Jim McNeeley, Urbie Green, Clifford Jordon and Joanne Brakeen. Mr France is President of the Percussive Arts Society International, Australian Chapter.

ANTHONY MAYDWELL

Anthony Maydwell's formal music education commenced at the age of five. He was a choral scholar through his pre-teens and with voice changes continued to perform falsetto and tenor in both Anglican and Catholic Cathedral choral traditions. He commenced harp tuition at the age of 10. His first professional engagement as a harpist was at the age of 12 and he was playing regularly with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra from the age of 16. He gave his concerto debut at a Musica Viva Spring Festival at the age of 17 and graduated as Student of the Year from the NSW Conservatorium at the age of 19. He gained a graduate diploma in education the following year. He graduated from the University of Western Australia in 1984 with a Master of Arts in 18th century performance practice specifically related to harp and keyboard music. Since then he has performed with most professional orchestras and contemporary music ensembles in Australia and joined many touring companies as harpist. His many talents are distilled in his position as Lecturer in Aural and Harmony. He also teaches the unit "Music and Technology", Chamber Music, Analysis and Concert Practice. He is a regular contributor to the Junior Exhibition Programme. His current research interests include Psychoacoustics, Sociology of Knowledge implications for musical practices and editing 'old' and 'new' music while his performing interests continue to extend the technical capabilities of the harp and further opportunities to direct performances of 20th century music.

DR. JEAN ROBERTS

Jean Roberts is an American pianist who studied at the Eastman and Yale University Schools of Music. She holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Texas at Austin. Since being in Perth, she has performed with the WASO and WAYCO, in ABC broadcast, and in Numerous chamber music concerts around Perth. She is presently on the part-time staff at the W.A. Conservatorium of Music.

CATHIE TRAVERS

West Australian pianist/composer Cathie Travers completed her B.Mus at the University of Western Australia in 1984 and during '85-'86 studied in the UK as and the USA with Roland Smith and David Burge. As a soloist she has appeared with the WASO and the MSO, and has given recitals for the Festival of Perth and the University of W.A. Cathie is a member of the contemporary group Nova Ensemble and currently holds a Creative Development Grant from the W.A. Department of the Arts.

TIM WHITE

Tim is originally from Canberra, and is currently Principal Percussionist of the WASO. He has played percussion with the ABC orchestras and has performed several percussion concerti with the WASO and the TSO. He is also a member of the contemporary music group "Nova Ensemble."

CHRIS MURDOCK

Soon after joining the Academy in March 1983 Chris became interested in the crafts of blacksmithing, welding, metal fabrication, woodturning and carpentry. In order to produce music, Gary France has commissioned various instruments for performance. In 1989 Mr Murdock created the first 3 chromatic octave set of Mexican Cowbells in Australia. Other instruments have ranged from Log Drums to tuned Claves. Tonight we here for the first time tuned alarm bells and air plane propellers.

The directors of the 1990 W.A. Conservatorium of Music Contemporary Series wish to acknowledge the following people for their support:

Bianca-Ester Willems / Stage Manager

Glen Truslove / Lighting Production

The Entire staff of Stage Management: John Toussaint, Steve Nolan, Peter Smith, Chris Murdock, Peter Cowan, Andy King, Murry/ Andrew/ and Nick in the workshop and the students in sound production and recording.

A Special Thanks to Thelma Boyle in Concert Promotions.

CONSERVATORIUM CONTEMPORARY CHOIR

SOPRANOS

Peta Gourlay
Emma Lysons
Fiona Lawson
Fiona Campbell
Katrina Ross

ALTOS

Kirsten Barry
Anna-Lisa Whiting
Cecilia Sun
Marica Colombini
Emily Lyons

BASSES

Anthony Heinrichs
Peter Ellis
Dean Merlino
Tom Woods
Roderick Prakhoff
Robert Rowlings
Richard Lynn
Jason Weston

TENORS

Peter King
Clinton Powers
Anthony Maydwell (Direction)

The WA Conservatorium wishes to thank Mr Mark Brown and Mr Don Ward of O'Donnell Gryphon Pty Ltd for the donation of electric alarm bells in the Ballet Mécanique.



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS

The Academy incorporating the Conservatorium of Music, is one of the few schools throughout the world that offers a comprehensive performing arts curriculum in Classical Music, Jazz, Dance, Theatre, Musical Theatre, Production and Design, Media Performance and Arts Management.

The Academy enjoys a national and international reputation which is dependent upon generous support it receives from the State and Commonwealth Governments, the Corporate Sector, the reputation of the performance staff it has engaged and the excellence of its graduates.

Board of Management

Chairman: Mr Michal Lewi

Executive Officer and Director: Dr Robert Vickery

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Dean of Conservatorium: Mr R Gill

Dean of School of Dramatic Arts: Dr G Gibbs
