



## PROGRAMME

**Omphalo Centric Lecture**

NIGEL WESTLAKE  
1986

**Third Construction**

JOHN CAGE  
1941

## INTERVAL

**Et Expecto Rurrectionem Mortuorum**

OLIVIER MESSIAEN

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## PROGRAMME NOTES

*Omphalo Centric Lecture* 1986  
Nigel Westlake

Gary France      Paul Edsall  
Chris Mallory    Michael Pigneguy

Originally written for Synergy, *Omphalo Centric Lecture* deals with the basic principles of repeated rhythm, melodic fragments and multi-metrics. The Conservatorium Percussion Quartet has adapted this 4 marimba arrangement for two marimbas.

*Third Construction* 1941  
John Cage

Gary France      Chris Tarr  
Neil Craig        Chris Mallory

The writing of music is an affirmation of life, not an attempt to bring order out of chaos nor to suggest improvement in creation but simply a way of waking up to the very life we're living which is so excellent once one gets one's mind and one's desire out of the way and let's it act of it's own accord.

John Cage

During the late 1930's a group of composers gravitated around Henry Cowell and his New Music Editions. Working together, to exchange ideas on percussion writing and techniques, these composers, later known as the Pacific Coast Group, were to irretrievably change the shape and boundaries of the conception of musical composition. the major figure from this group to emerge was John Cage.

From 1935 to 1937, Cage studied composition with Arnold Shoenberg. Cage adapted the 12 tone theory, 'No sound any more important than any other...', and produced works using strict 12 tone technique, notably *Metamorphosis*, and proceeded to compose music for percussion.

*Third Construction* for 4 percussion players perhaps best demonstrates Cage's Percussion Theory. This composition displays Cage's fascination with non conventional sounds. Each player performs on 5 graduated tin cans, 3 graduated drums, claves and some type of rattle; *Tin Can with Tacks*, *North West Indian Rattle*, *Wooden Rattle* and *Indo-Chinese Rattle*. Also employed are separate and unique sounds; *Lions Roar*, *Conch Shell*, *Quijadas*, *Teponaxtle* and *Cricket Callers*. The notation is quite precise making great use of polyrhythms. However, Cage seemed interested with disguising the obvious. Often throughout this composition simple lines and duets compete with highly complex individual statements. Throughout this quartet Cage is obsessed with the control of pulse. This could well be his fascination with the rise of popular dance music during the late 1930's and early 1940's, or his interest in rhythmic counterpoint, nevertheless, one cannot possibly perform this music without dancing.

Gary France

*Et Expecto Rurrectionem Mortuorum*  
Olivier Messiaen (b.1908)

I-Des profondeurs de l'abîme, je crie vers toi, Seigneur; Seigneur, écoute ma voix! ("Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice.") (Psalm 130:1,2)

II-Le Christ, ressuscité des morts, ne meurt plus; la mort n'a plus sur lui

d'empire. ("Christ being raised from the dead dies no more; death has no more dominion over him.")(Romans 6:9)

III-L'Heure vient où les morts entendront la voix du Fils de Dieu. ("The hour is coming when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God.")(John 5:25)

IV-Ils ressusciteront, glorieux, avec un nom nouveau dans le concert joyeux des étoiles et les acclamations des fils du ciel. ("They shall be raised in glory, with a new name, when the morning stars sing together, and all the sons of God shout for joy.")(1 Corinthians 15:43; Revelation 2:17; Job 38:7)

V-Et j'entendis la voix d'une foule immense... ("And I heard the voice of a great multitude.")(Revelation 19:6)

This work was commissioned by André Malraux. It was composed and orchestrated in 1964. Its instrumentation destines it for vast spaces: churches, cathedrals and even performances in the open air and on mountain heights...

It is perhaps useful to recall that at the time the composer was writing the score he gladly surrounded himself with strong and simple symbols - of the stepped pyramids of Mexico, the temples and statues of Ancient Egypt, Romanesque and Gothic churches; he re-read the texts of Thomas Aquinas on "The Resurrection" and "The World of the Resuscitated"; that he worked in the high Alps, facing those powerful landscapes that are his true homeland.

The first performance took place on May 7, 1965 in private at the Sainte-Chapelle. An ideal setting for the work as it married the colors of the instrumental timbres with the resplendent blues, reds, gold and purples and the resonances of the encircling stained glass windows.

The second performance took place in the Cathedral of Notre Dame at Chartres at the end of High Mass on Sunday, June 20, 1965 in the presence of the Bishop of Chartres, Monseigneur Michon and President of the Republic, Général Charles de Gaulle.

The third performance was given in Paris at a concert of the Domaine Musical, under Pierre Boulez.

The orchestra comprises three ensembles: woodwind, brass and metallic percussion instruments.

The five movements bear a text from Scripture. Their analysis is given below.

I-Des profondeurs de l'abîme, je crie vers toi, Seigneur; Seigneur, écoute ma voix! ("Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice.")(Psalm 130:1,2)

Theme of the depths in the lower brass -harmonization by the six horns in colored clusters -a cry from the Abyss!

II-Le Christ, ressuscité des morts, ne meurt plus; la mort n'a plus sur lui d'empire. ("Christ being raised from the dead dies no more; death has no more dominion over him.")(Romans 6:9)

A melody by default: the cessation of sounds gives it its outline. The cowbells and bells elaborate an Indian *decitâla* beneath a trumpet melody which causes colored woodwind clusters to spurt forth. A few silences, as important as the music. Conclusion by the solo clarinet and cor anglais.

III-L'Heure vient où les morts entendront la voix du Fils de Dieu. ("The hour is coming when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God.")(John 5:25)

This voice that will awaken the dead is thrice symbolized here. First symbol: given to the woodwind ensemble, the disjointed song, with its contrasted dynamics, of the Uirapura, a bird of the Amazon. Second symbol: the permutations of the bells. Third symbol: a long and powerful resonance of the tam-tam.

IV-Ils ressusciteront, glorieux, avec un nom nouveau dans le concert joyeux des étoiles et les acclamations des fils du ciel. ("They shall be raised in glory, with a new name, when the morning stars sing together, and all the sons of God shout for joy.")(1 Corinthians 15:43; Revelation 2:17; Job 38:7)

The three mysterious blows, the three resonances, the pianissimo or fortissimo sounds of the tam-tams that continually interrupt the musical discourse, symbolize at the same time the solemn moment of the resurrection and the distant melody of the stars. The *Paschal Introit* of the bells and cowbells, the *Alleluia* of the trumpets, with its halo of harmonics, symbolize the "Gift of Lucidity." The song of the Short-toed Lark (*Alouette de Calandre*), a bird of Greece and Spain, given to the flutes, oboes, clarinets and bassoons, symbolizes joy. The angels and stars and all the themes (even those of the first piece, played by the trombones) join in acclaiming the Risen in their glory-by superimposing four musical strains, four variations of color, and four complexes of sonority.

V-Et j'entendis la voix d'une foule immense... ("And I heard the voice of a great multitude.")(Revelation 19:6)

The orchestral tutti and the striking of the gongs are entrusted with this

# Messiaen Ensemble

## Piccolo

Wendy Clarke<sup>1</sup>  
Samantha Jones

## Flute

Dean Merlino  
Janet Rintoul  
Christina Steinbacher

## Oboe

Helen Brown  
Anne Gilby<sup>1</sup>  
Peter King

## Cor Anglais

Duncan Thorpe

## Clarinet in E flat

Pru Rollo

## Clarinet in B flat

Catherine McCorkill<sup>1</sup>  
Alice Cugley  
Nicole Nieuwendijk

## Bass Clarinet

Samantha Heath

## Bassoon

Elizabeth Jennings  
Sarah Warner  
Julie Gooch

## Contrabassoon

Kathryn Walpole

## Horn

Victoria Chatterley  
Alan Cressie  
Darryl Poulsen<sup>1</sup>  
James Ledger  
Wendy Minnett<sup>2</sup>  
Anton Leuten<sup>2</sup>

## Trumpet in D

Anthony Heinrichs

## Trumpet in B flat

Kirrily Morrison  
Clinton Powers  
Simon Lilly

## Trombone

Chris Grieve  
Michael Cartwright  
Brian Mann

## Bass Trombone

Jordan Murray

## Saxhorn

Grant Treen

## Tuba

Geoffrey Whitehead

## Gongs

Paul Edsall

## Tam-tams

Jenny Day

## Tubular Bells

Neil Craig

## Mexican Cow Bells

Michael Penegy  
Gary France<sup>1</sup>  
Chris Mallory

Direction  
Anthony Maydwell<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Staff members of the Western Australian Conservatorium of Music

<sup>2</sup> Courtesy of the University of Western Australia, Department of Music