

840: New Music for String Quartet. 06/05/2017

St James' Church, Islington

The Manon Quartet

Richard Glover – *Build-a-Chord Workshop* (2017)

In the *Build-a-Chord Workshop*, a group of players perform the same task which results in them finding notes, one by one, which are sustained in some way until a chord is built. Once two chords have been built in the same way, the players can choose which combinations of the chord notes they prefer.

Here, the string quartet are performing gradual glissandi until two players match their pitches at an octave, which signals that a chord note has been found. The final note for each chord is chosen by the concluding player.

richardglover.wordpress.com

Alex Nikiporenko – *Stop, Locomotive!* (2015)

Stop, Locomotive! is a string quartet that explores the concept of train-stopping by drawing on two sources – a Russian chanson song *Постой паровоз!* (*Postoi parovoz!* - Stop, Locomotive!) and a common trait of all trains – stopping according to a timetable.

The material is an original arrangement of the chanson that is split into nine equal segments numbered 1 to 9. The train timetable (Ockley to London) is then articulated using these segments. A zero is translated into a 4-second pause.

www.alexnikiporenko.com

Martin Arnold – *Slew & Hop* (2000-07)

"Slew" means to awkwardly twist or slide sideways; "hop" can be a verb or a noun. I've written elsewhere that I think all my music is dance music; this might be true of *Slew & Hop*. But it's certainly a couple of songs as well.

soundcloud.com/martinarnold

Seán Clancy – *Neue Kraft Fühlend* (2013)

Neue Kraft Fühlend is one of the many performance directions found in the *Heiliger Dankgesang* of Beethoven's Op. 132 String Quartet; upon which, my piece is an artistic intervention. For this work, I have taken the exact structure of Beethoven's movement and created a negative image of it. As with any negative image, the lightest areas of the subject appear darkest and the darkest areas appear lightest.

seanclancy.wordpress.com

15-minute interval

**Scott Mc Laughlin –
*The Careful Plaiting of Weak Ties (2017)***

Two spectral worlds of the bowed string, the harmonic and inharmonic, connected by 'A'.

"Strength does not come from concentration, purity and unity, but from dissemination, heterogeneity and the careful plaiting of [...] ties that are weak by themselves, and that each tie, no matter how strong, is itself woven out of still weaker threads" - Bruno Latour

www.lutins.co.uk

Nicholas Peters – *Scattered Polaroids (2007)*

Scattered Polaroids is primarily concerned with exploring in sound the idea of reflection, essentially the mirroring of material in separate pitch bands to create a pitch void in between the two.

www.nicholaspeters.com

Naomi Pinnock – *String Quartet (2010)*

luminis ('a light, an opening'), *lucere* ('shine') or *lux* ('light')

As I was composing, I often thought about this image of light: an intense light source and, further away, a light that was much softer and paler. The piece gradually became a set of three slow, luminous but fragile variations around a fiery core.

www.naomipinnock.co.uk

**John Stafford Smith, arr. Lawrence Dunn –
*The Star-Spangled Banner (2015-17)***

When Alex Nikiporenko asked for a piano trio in late 2014 for an 840 concert, the piece that emerged included a paraphrase of Auld Lang Syne. In the process of writing (and fiddling with anthems etc.) I ended up making a harmonisation of the Star-Spangled Banner. Thinking about what to contribute to another 840 concert (spring 2017) the harmonisation felt somehow apt. This present arrangement casts it for string quartet.

www.lawrencedunn.co.uk

The Manon Quartet

Ren Jian, Naomi Watson – violins; Morag Robertson – viola; Deni Teo – cello

The Manon Quartet was formed in 2013 by musicians from the Royal College of Music in London. Shortly after forming, they were first prize winners at both the Royal College of Music Helen Just & Susan Connell String Quartet Competition and the CAVATINA Intercollegiate String Quartet Competition in 2014. Since then, they have performed at many venues across the UK, including the Wigmore Hall and the Elgar Room at the Royal Albert Hall. The quartet are committed to performing contemporary music, collaborating with Australian composer Brett Dean in 2014, and performing in the ddmmy series in January 2017. Back in January 2015, the Manon Quartet presented the first ever 840 programme.

www.manonquartet.com

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840

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