

# 840 x NME: New Music for Voices and Strings

10/12/2016

## St James' Church, Islington

### Tom Johnson - *Eggs and Baskets* (1987)

*Eggs and Baskets* was written in 1987 at the invitation of friends in upstate New York who wanted something for the school concerts they were doing. We thought this piece, perhaps with a couple of baskets and a few eggs as visual aids, would be perfect for children, but we were wrong. The kids didn't understand anything and lost interest after a short time, but the parents loved the piece. So it has been a piece for adults ever since.

[www.editions75.com](http://www.editions75.com)

### Georgia Rodgers - *Masking Set* (2016)

This piece was written for 840 and the NME. It is composed from five combinations of pitches and rhythms, stitched together to make one unfolding form in which groups of notes are covered and uncovered in turn. This process of covering up sounds led me to thinking about the phenomenon of auditory masking, whereby the perception of one sound is altered by another which occurs simultaneously (or very soon before/after). Auditory masking can affect the nature of sounds we hear in various ways, particularly when those sounds are already closely related in pitch or timbre.

[www.polarpatterns.wordpress.com](http://www.polarpatterns.wordpress.com)

### Nicholas Peters - *HarM* (2016)

*HarM* explores ideas that I first encountered in Kerry Tribe's double projection of a single 16mm film called *H.M.* (2009) that was recently on display at The Wellcome Collection, London. Tribe's film explores the true story of Henry Molaison, an amnesiac man, identified simply as "Patient H.M.", who underwent "frankly experimental" surgery to cure his debilitating epilepsy in 1953. An unintended outcome of the surgery was that Molaison was unable to form new long term memories although his short term recall, for around 20 seconds, remained intact. I was struck by Tribe's exploration of this short term recall through the use of a 20 second delay between two adjacent film projections to evoke the duration and loss of memory experienced by Molaison. In my piece I have also set up the same 20 second delay between two adjacent duet performances. Furthermore I have explored two types of material, one whereby the singer is trapped by their inability to create more long term memories and the other whereby the singer re-enacts in sound the scientific mirror drawing experiments Molaison was put through after his surgery.

[www.nicholasrpeters.com](http://www.nicholasrpeters.com)

### Rodrigo B. Camacho - *Twenty-nine thousand one hundred twenty thoughts about good company* (2016)

We are both standing in a room, looking at the walls and stuff. Someone comes in and shouts "SOLO!!!" and stands there like a prick. I mean, like a statue. Not so much in shock, we are nevertheless intrigued by this strange event. I look at you [fast and precise, with a slightly angry face] and, in response, you look back at me [slower, with a calmly elevated left eye brow]. We both nod affirmatively. Once, twice, three times [we should have stopped here] four times, five, six, seven, eight, nine [this is totally going too far] ten times... We believe there is complicity in our understanding of what "SOLO!!!" means, but in every nod lives a different thought about good company.

[www.rodri gobcamacho.com](http://www.rodri gobcamacho.com)

## 15-minute interval

### Tom Johnson – *Counting Duets* (1982)

The many formalistic, religious, arithmetic, psychological, linguistic, and musical implications of counting have come to interest me a great deal, and since I have a special love for patterns and numbers anyway, I have focused much of my work in this direction. I count strings on a psaltery, count keys on a piano, count in duets, count in different languages, and keep finding new ways to do pieces about counting.

### Mark Barden – *Chamber* (2006/07)

Mark Barden's work represents a staging of the failures that occur just before and just beyond the limits of what the body can hear and what it can enact, but where the failure itself is always palpable. The sounds of this music are, by turns, dense, visceral, and febrile; the tangibility of the performer's loss of precise physical control is mirrored in the listening experience.

### Sara Rodrigues – *In the Name of God* (2016)

*In the Name of God* is a compilation of speeches and interviews by various world leaders, mainly Prime Ministers and Presidents of nations that in the last two decades have been involved in an international conflict. There are both direct and oblique connections between each of the statements, being that all are bound together by their comparable use of religion in matters tightly linked to political power and control.

[www.sara-rodrigues.com](http://www.sara-rodrigues.com)

### Alex Nikiporenko – *Traditional Turkey Song* (2016)

Waitrose's *Traditional roast turkey recipe* is converted into music in this joyous and festive celebration of British cuisine. This conversion is implemented through a series of processes, the main one assigning a chord to each of the 12 vowels of the English phonology.

[www.alexnikiporenko.com](http://www.alexnikiporenko.com)

### NME – New Music Ensemble

Roxanna Albayati, Rodrigo B. Camacho, Sara Rodrigues, Nicole Trotman and Julia Vaughan

The NME came together in late 2014 as a laboratory for experimentation with various forms of new music and performance art. It welcomes and brings together individuals of different cultural and educational backgrounds, assuming difference as richness rather than threatening otherness. The development of a sharp sociopolitical consciousness, both in terms of content and form, is a prime concern for the NME, permanently reconsidering the implications of treating music as art and questioning its role in contemporary societies and communities.

The NME has performed in many venues around London, including Southbank Centre, Rich Mix and I'Klectik Art Lab and has participated in the international conference "Compositional Aesthetics and the Political" held at Goldsmiths, University of London. More recently, it was funded by the AHRC for its work as resident ensemble in PLACE, an international interdisciplinary creation-research project, which concentrates on space-place dynamics and on how these influence the construction and perception of sociocultural identity.

[www.nmensemble.com](http://www.nmensemble.com)

840 wish to thank St James Church, especially vicar John Burniston, for hosting our concert.

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