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RACHEL KOBLYAKOV

PROGRAMME



8TH NOV 8^{PM}_{:00}

GLASGOW CATHEDRAL



CASTLE ST,
GLASGOW, G4 0QZ

9TH NOV 6^{PM}_{:30}

THE ANATOMY ROOMS



MARISCHAL COLLEGE
ABERDEEN, AB10 1AP

Kaija Saariaho - Fraises
JS Bach - Chaconne

-interval-

Pierre Boulez - Anthèmes II

-interval-

Ursula Mamlok – Aphorisms
Timothy Cooper - Shimmering
Orlando Bass – Terra

Frises (2011)

Kaija Saariaho

“Frises was born of violinist Richard Schmoucler’s request who told me his idea of combining different works around Bach’s second partita for solo violin, particularly in relation to the last part, the Chaconne. He asked me to compose a piece to be performed after Bach’s Chaconne and start it with the note that ends this second partita movement, the D.

My piece has four parts. I focused in each of them on the idea of one historical ostinato variation form, using as starting point carillon, passacaglia, ground bass and chaconne. There are four variations around a theme, a harmonic process or other musical parameter.

To expand the ideas and possibilities of the instrument, I added an electronic dimension to the work. According to its character, each part has a different processing. In general and in accordance with the score, prepared sound materials are set off by the musician during the piece. These materials are completed by real-time transformations of the violin sounds.

My aim in composing this piece was to create a rich work for violin with four very different and independent parts. The first part, “Frise jaune”, is a prelude, a flexible improvisation around a constant D, coloured by harmonics and the electronic part consisting of bell sounds. This part is also inspired by the idea of « carillon », a continuous melodic variation.

The second part, “Frise de fleurs”, is based on a harmony created on a ground bass. Sequences of successive chords are gradually enriched before opening to achieve a more free and lyrical development.

The third part, “Pavage” is inspired by transformations of a source material by a mathematical process where a frieze is a filling of a line or a band by a geometric figure without holes or overflow, like the paving . But I do not work in the sense of perfect symmetry - as with the cobblestones of a patterned ground - rather to create continual metamorphosis, in the spirit of some MC Escher’s images, though less consistently.

The last part, “Frise grise”, is like a strange procession, solemn, fragile, but at the same time solved. The idea of passacaglia is here realized with slow triplets, the constant accompaniment of the left hand pizzicati on three strings, while the melody is evolving on the fourth which is not part of the accompaniment. The thematic material evolves descending slowly from E - the highest string - to G - the fourth string. The music finally reaches the initial D in double stop which take us back to the beginning of the piece.

The titles are inspired by the mathematical ideas mentioned above but also by Odilon Redon's painted friezes which I saw recently in an exhibition dedicated to his work; especially the Yellow Frieze, Frieze of Flowers and Gray Frieze.

Frises was composed for and dedicated to Richard Schmoucler, and commissioned by the Borusan Art Centre, Istanbul.”
(Kaija Saariaho)

Chaconne, from Partita n. 2 in d minor BWV 1004

JS Bach

The Partita in D minor for solo violin, BWV1004, by Johann Sebastian Bach, was written between 1717 and 1720. It is a part of his compositional cycle called Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin.

The Chaconne is the final movement of the partita, which is a suite of dances. The movement is often performed stand-alone, without the rest of the Partita. Perhaps this tradition is what inspired many violinists to perform the Chaconne written by Bela Bartok, which opens his solo violin sonata, as a stand-alone movement as well.

Bach's Chaconne takes the form of a theme and variations, which he transforms significantly, crafting a kind of journey through rhythmic and harmonic tension, only to bring us back in the end to the home theme - yet now it is the listener who is, perhaps, transformed, hearing this theme in a new light.

Anthèmes 2 (1997)

Pierre Boulez

One movement, six linked sequences:

- Libre, then I. Très lent, avec beaucoup de fluidité
- II. Rapide, dynamique, très rythmique, rigide
- III. Lent, régulier
- IV. Agité, instable
- V. Très lent, avec beaucoup de flexibilité
- VI. I. Allant, assez serré dans le tempo, then 2. Calme, régulier, then 3. Calme, sans traîner, d'un mouvement très régulier

Premiered on 19 October 1997 in Donaueschingen by violinist Hae Sun Kang with electronics produced by Andrew Gerzso at Ircam (where the French premiere was performed two days later), *Anthèmes 2*, as is often the case with Pierre Boulez, developed out of an earlier work whose ramifications the composer wished to further explore. *Anthèmes I* is a short violin piece first composed in 1991 (then revised in 1992 and 1994) for the ninetieth birthday of Alfred Schlee, longstanding director of Boulez's music publishing company, Universal Edition, and then revived the following year as a qualifying piece for the Yehudi Menuhin Violin Competition in Paris. The work comprises some nine minutes of music, which Boulez set about expanding into *Anthèmes 2*, a work expanded not only in terms of duration (it lasts more than twenty minutes) but especially through its new sonic breadth, achieved through technological means. Like *Rituel* and *Mémoriale*, *Anthèmes I* and *2* belong to the ...explosante-fixe... family of works, being derived from a seven-note fragment of the violin part of one of the several successive versions of ...explosante-fixe..., originally an open-ended compositional schema composed to mark the death of Igor Stravinsky and included in a tribute dossier published by *Tempomagazine* (UK) in 1971. In keeping with the requirements of a competition piece, *Anthèmes I* features a panoply of violinistic techniques, from the most classical to so-called extended techniques. Both *Anthèmes* revolve around the polar note D, a note that can be played in a variety of ways on the violin (as open string, artificial or natural harmonic, in varied voicings, etc.).

The number seven plays a decisive role in the structure of *Anthèmes* (an artefact of the seven-note fragment of ...explosante-fixe...from which it proliferated), which is notably reflected in the abundance of groups of seven notes (septuplets) and its form that follows an introduction with six sections. The work also testifies to Boulez's renewed interest in thematic writing, the presence of recognizable musical figures being already suggested by the title, "anthèmes", recalling by homophony the expression "en thème", i.e., "in themes". As Boulez explained in a public lecture at the French premiere of *Anthèmes* 2, on 21 October, 1997 at Ircam:

In my youth, I thought that music could be athematic, completely devoid of themes. In the end, however, I am now convinced that music must be based on recognizable musical objects. These are not 'themes' in the classical sense, but rather entities which, even though they constantly change their form, have certain characteristics which are so identifiable that they cannot be confused with any other entity. [Boulez in Goldman, 2001, p. 117]

(Jonathon Goldman and Andrew Gerzso)

Aphorisms I [2009]

Ursula Mamlok

'Aphorisms I' was composed in 2009 and premiered by its dedicatee, Kolya Lessing, in Lucerne in February 2010. The five short movements develop, for the solo violin, into a small instrumental cosmos of character pieces which have evolved from contrapuntal thinking. The sound is determined not by atonal acrobatics, but by plastic phrases based on the possibilities of the instrument.

<https://www.mamlokstiftung.com/stiftung>

Shimmering [2012]

Timothy Cooper

The water ripples slowly, gently. You notice the light catch the tiny waves, the two combining in a rapid dance. These small movements draw your attention as each flash of light or wave of water shimmers creating a new and unique image forever changing, but at the same time, always the same.

I'd like to thank Eve Kennedy for her time, effort and advice through the composition of this piece.

Timothy Cooper

Terra (2025)

Orlando Bass

Non può per morte già chi qui mi serra
la beltà, c'al mortal mie largir volse,
renderla agli altri tutti a chi la tolse,
s'alfin com'ero de' rifarmi in terra.
(Michelangelo Buonarroti)

Death itself cannot compel the one who
holds me here
to give back to others the beauty
that she once bestowed upon my mortal
self,
if at last I am to be remade on earth as I
once was

When Cecchino Bracci, a young pupil of Michelangelo, died at the age of sixteen, his wealthy family commissioned him to design a sepulchre and compose an epitaph.

Michelangelo was probably deeply affected by Bracci's death, as he wrote not one, but forty-two epigrams. Some references to homosexuality in this collection of texts suggest that they may have been lovers. These lines were written when Michelangelo's bisexuality was not yet public knowledge. It is therefore not surprising that he vehemently rejected the prospect of publishing these verses, fearing dishonour.

Michelangelo was never fully accepted as an official poet: he enjoyed considerable freedom from the structural constraints of academic style. His poems express raw emotions into written form without being forced into the imposed framework of classical structure. These texts bear witness to his turbulent life.

The aforementioned text acts as the underlying foundation for this solo violin composition. It was conceived for violinist Rachel Koblyakov, who was simultaneously collaborating on a project with artist Goni Shifron involving a metaphorical journey along the border between Israel and Palestine. During an expressive moment, Rachel walked slowly on small, fragile fired clay bricks while playing an improvisation.

Six musical elements from this improvisation were isolated and a musical

declamation of Michelangelo's text was developed around each of these six elements.

Orlando Bass

Violinist **Rachel Koblyakov**

soloist, chamber musician, and guest concertmaster with various orchestras - enjoys making music on a variety of international stages in both the classical and contemporary music spheres.

She gave her solo concerto debut at the age of 12, and continued to solo with a number of orchestras and ensembles both in her native US and in Europe, among them, the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio-France.



An avid chamber musician, she founded Arborescences Sonores with cellist Florimond Dal Zotto in 2024. A chamber music concert series based in Paris, Arborescences Sonores is devoted to uniting world-class colleagues around lesser-heard classical repertoire in an intimate setting.

In the new music circle, she has often guested with Ensemble Modern (Frankfurt); she holds the post of first violin solo with the Ukho New Music Ensemble of Kyiv, Ukraine, since 2016, and is the violinist of Ensemble Ecoute (Paris) since 2022, acting also as co-artistic director from 2022-2024.

She holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees from The Juilliard School of Music, New York, and two Artist Diplomas from the Conservatoire Supérieur National de Musique de Paris - one focusing on classical violin repertoire, the other specializing in contemporary music.

On the front of musical education, she is co-founder and performer of the musical show "Tubalirum" for a young audience series, which had its premiere at the Pierre Boulez Saal, Berlin and subsequently at the Elbphilharmonie, Hamburg.

Violin Soliloquy, her debut solo album of unaccompanied violin works for Paladino Media - Orlando Records, was released in 2021.

<https://rachelkoblyakov.com/>

Timothy Cooper

Photo credit Robert Cooper

is a composer and performer of electroacoustic music. In his music he uses microphones as sonic microscopes and loudspeakers to amplify and heighten the qualities of the sounds he records.



Tim's work is often collaborative, working with musicians, artists, and poets amongst others.

Most of Tim's recent work is with Haptic, a group that performs contemporary music with an early music sensibility. Together we have made a concert length show exploring the life and music of English Renaissance composer John Dowland which has been release as an album titled *Shadows that in Darkness Dwell*.

In 2023 Tim was awarded his PhD from the University of St Andrews and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland supervised by Professor Alistair MacDonald and Dr Diana Salazar and in 2023-24 he was the Susan Manning Postdoctoral Fellow at the Institute for Advances Studies in the Humanities.

As a performer he has worked with Garth Knox, BBCSSO, Mieko Kanno, Tom Poulson, Danielle Price, Mark O'Keeffe, Red Note, Simon Johnson amongst others. He has performed a wide array of music by composers including Lisa Illean, Jonathan Harvey, Pierre Boulez, Kaija Saariaho, Diana Salazar and others.

He has also supported other composers, creating the electronics parts for music by James Dillon, David Fennessy and Colin Broom.

<https://timothy-cooper.co.uk/>



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