

City Pierrot Ensemble

with City University Experimental Ensemble

Decennials

**A celebration of Alwynne Pritchard and Ian Pace at
50, Kunsu Shim at 60, Gwyn Pritchard at 70, and
Hans-Joachim Hespos at 80**

Concert at City University, London

Tuesday 27 November 2018, 7:00 pm

Ian Pace, piano
Alwynne Pritchard, voice
Stephen Cottrell, saxophones/clarinets
Tullis Rennie, trombone
Shirley Smart, cello
Neil Varley, accordion
Saule Boguzaitė, facial performer

**With members of City University Experimental
Ensemble (Luca Taylor, saxophone; Jonathan Ellis,
percussion, Brandon Sands, cello and piano; Jade
Bailey, ukulele; Philip Shaw, electric guitar; Luke
Matthews, bass guitar; Kirthan Ethirajulu Kalaivani
and Morten Vamplew, electronics)**

HANS-JOACHIM HESPOS (b. 1938), *point* (1971) for clarinet, trombone, cello and piano

Stephen Cottrell, clarinet; Tullis Rennie, trombone;
Shirley Smart, cello; Ian Pace, piano

KUNSU SHIM (b. 1958), *Zwei Halbmonde* (2016), for two players, Teil I

Tullis Rennie, trombone; Luca Taylor, saxophone

ALWYNNE PRITCHARD (b. 1968), *50 is a magic number* (2018) for piano

Ian Pace, piano

IAN PACE (b. 1968), *Das hat Rrrrass* (2018, based in part on sketches from 2005) for speaker/actor and piano [World Premiere]

Alwynne Pritchard, speaker/actor; Ian Pace, piano

PATRÍCIA SUÇENA DE ALMEIDA (b. 1972), *Desperatio (Piano Piece No. 5)* (2017-18) with film by **DANIEL ANTERO** [World Premiere of completed version]

Ian Pace, piano

KUNSU SHIM, *Das (Un)klare* (2018) [UK premiere]

Tullis Rennie, trombone; Luca Taylor, saxophone; Brandon Sands, piano; Jonathan Ellis, percussion; Jade Bailey, ukulele; Luke Matthews, bass guitar; Kirthan Ethirajulu Kalaivani, Morton Vamplew, electronics

GERHARD STÄBLER (b. 1949), *PRÄSENTE – PRESENTS* (2018), a compositionally edited collection of musical contributions:

Peter Androsch, *Nomenklatur für Kollegen*; **Christian Banasik**, *Für Kunsu zum 60. Geburtstag*; **Huiyeon Bang**, *A partial of "Out of some moment"*; **Laurence Crane**, untitled; **Chaya Czernowin**, **Peter Edwards**, untitled; **Nomi Epstein**, *for generations*; **Gudmundur Steinn Gunnarsson**, untitled; **Alec Hall**, *„Presents“ for Alwynne*; **Elisabeth Harnik**, *toppings*; **Sam Hayden**, *Senza Misura*; **Johannes Hildebrandt**, *Präsent*; **Geir Johnson**, *Sound Poem for Kunsu*; **Bohyun Kim**, untitled; **Arnold Marinissen**, *Akkorde für Kunsu*; **Harald Muenz**, *Dekaden*; **Dorone Paris**, *»For Kunsu«*; **Bernd Preinfalk**, *šumava*; **Trond Reinholdtsen**, untitled; **Arne Sanders**, *60 coincidences*; **Martin Tchiba**, *birthday music*; **Lukas Tobiassen**, *viel glück und viel-gestaltigkeit*; **Chaoming Tung**, untitled; **Markus Trunk**, *5 Klänge für 5 Jubilare*; **Knut Vaage**, *Transit fragment*; **Amnon Wolman**, *Invoke the sounds of chains*; and **Helmut Zapf**, *LUV*.

Stephen Cottrell, clarinets/saxophones; Tullis Rennie, trombone; Shirley Smart, cello; Neil Varley, accordion; Ian Pace, piano

INTERVAL

GWYN PRITCHARD (b. 1948), Quintet (2018) for soprano/alto saxophone, trombone, cello, accordion and piano [UK Premiere]

Stephen Cottrell, saxophones; Tullis Rennie, trombone; Shirley Smart, cello; Neil Varley, accordion; Ian Pace, piano

KUNSU SHIM, *Zwei Halbmonde*, Teil II

Tullis Rennie, trombone; Luca Taylor, saxophone

HANS-JOACHIM HESPOS, *Weißschatten* (2017) for piano and soprano

Alwynne Pritchard, soprano; Ian Pace, piano

EVAN JOHNSON (b. 1980), *qu'en joye on vous demaine* (2017) for piano

Ian Pace, piano

GWYN PRITCHARD, *Micropus 1-6* (2002-9) for piano [UK Premiere]

Ian Pace, piano

KUNSU SHIM, *Zwei Halbmonde*, Teil III

Tullis Rennie, trombone; Luca Taylor, saxophone

ALWYNNE PRITCHARD, *Vitality Forms 2* (2015), for free ensemble

Alwynne Pritchard and Saule Boguzaitė, vocal performers; Stephen Cottrell, bass clarinet; Luca Taylor, saxophone; Tullis Rennie, trombone; Jonathan Ellis, percussion; Shirley Smart, Brandon Sands, cello; Jade Bailey, ukulele; Philip Shaw, electric guitar; Luke Matthews, bass guitar; Kirthan Ethirajulu Kalavani, Morton Vamplew, electronics

PROGRAMME NOTES

Hans-Joachim Hespös, *point* (1971) for clarinet, trombone, cello and piano; *Weißschatten* (2017) for piano and soprano.

The music of Hans-Joachim Hespös inhabits a late expressionist world informed by the thought of Antonin Artaud, Theodor Adorno and others. Over a long career and a substantial output, relatively consistent in nature, he has developed an extremely distinctive musical language, generally characterised by a high degree of volatility, instability, reckless violence, but equally moments of extreme stasis, as if frozen in time, and other forms of dislocation. Generally avoiding any type of a regular metre, and regularly employing a special set of notational symbols (many for the widest range of extended techniques) and an elaborate series of verbal instructions including some neologisms, most of his pieces also make extreme demands upon the performers, required not only to take their instruments or voices to the limits, but also

navigate frenetic and constantly changing material. Some pieces also place the performers in contorted and painful physical situations.

The two pieces in this concert epitomise Hespos's pure instrumental/vocal music. The short *point* features flurries of wild, unhinged (but still very carefully gradated and refined) material in the four instruments punctuated by harsh simultaneous attacks, the presumably 'points' of the title. The longer and more recent *Weißschatten*, written for the British performers Claire and David Lesser (who premiered it in Abu Dhabi, where they now reside) is somewhat more sparse and even playful in places (as the two performers chase each other's material), exploring pure phonemes and types of primal, archetypal utterances for both musicians.

Poetry is a dissociating and anarchic force which through analogy, associations and imagery, thrives on the destruction of known relationships. Antonin Artaud.

© Ian Pace 2018.

Kunsu Shim, *Zwei Halbmonde* (2016), for two players

early works of kunsu shim are known as music with its slow-breathing architectural character. but the new works such as *zwei halbmonde* and *das (un)klare* are more about flowing, interplaying and short-breathing, while most of the sounds are almost unadvisedly soft, lively and short. shim is interested in music, which has no tangible outlines. he calls his new works "contemplative busyness".

© Kunsu Shim 2018.

Alwynne Pritchard, *50 is a magic number* (2018) for piano

I composed *50 is a magic number* in 2018 for Ian Pace's 50th birthday. It was put together using a five by five magic square, the numbers of which (of course) add up to...

© Alwynne Pritchard 2018.

Ian Pace, *Das hat Rrrrasss* (2018, based in part upon some early sketches from 2005)

The idea for *Das hat Rrrrasss* first came to me in the early 2000s, after reading a passage reproduced in David Hirst's history of the Arab-Israeli conflict, *The Gun and the Olive Branch* (first published in 1984), a remarkable open letter written by right-wing Israeli satirist Ephraim Kishon to King Hussein of Jordan, and published in the *Jerusalem Post* on 16 June 1967, thus just six days after the Six-Day War of 5-10 June. The letter was a satirical account of the events leading up to the war, essentially parodying the idea that the whole situation had been engineered by the State of Israel so as to appear as if they were fighting a defensive war against the belligerent states of Egypt, Jordan and Syria, when in reality it was a calculated war of expansion to allow Israel to take control of the whole city of Jerusalem. Hirst and others believe that this satire actually gives an essentially accurate rendition of events.

A work of music-theatre such as this is not the place for a serious and sober historical engagement with the causes of and responsibilities for the Six-Day War. I

was more interested to explore the very audacity embodied in this open letter (reinforced after reading more of Kishon's work), mocking a view in order actually to assert it, in the knowledge that the one to whom the letter is addressed has no real response to make, as they only look foolish as a result. The mentality behind this letter seemed to me to lie somewhere in that realm where arrogant flaunting of privilege and high theatrical camp intersect, an issue which has long fascinated me.

The text set is my own, not Kishon's, but takes some inspiration from the latter, though is much more pared-down and abstracted form. Essentially I wished to create a short and rather malicious mini-cabaret act based upon this type of model. During composition, I immediately linked what I saw in Kishon to two numbers from Lehár's *Die lustige Witwe*, specifically the aria 'Da geh'ich zu Maxim' from near the beginning of the opera, in which Count Danilo Danilovitsch, first secretary of the Paris embassy of a Balkan principality, Pontevedro (based on Montenegro) sings quite shamelessly of how he does little work and mostly just hangs around his favourite club, Maxim's, to watch the dancing girls there. The other is aria (with chorus) of Hannah, the Pontevedrian widow of the title, 'Ein flotter Ebestand soll's sein', from the Finale to Act 2. In this, she taunts Danilo (who has been set up by others to marry Hanna in order that her wealth will not leave his poverty-stricken country) by announcing her engagement to French aristocrat Camille de Rosillon. However, she sings about how they will on the surface being a respectable married couple, but will really both have plenty of affairs on the side, in the 'Parisian style', leading to the chorus 'Das hat Rrrrass' (not really translatable, but may be comparable to the English phrase 'that's got style' or 'that has class' to describe something outrageous).

I use heavily modified, perhaps unrecognisable, renditions of these two arias in the second and fifth sections of this piece, superimposed with freer post-tonal material and also some further allusions, to the 'Tanz der sieben Schleier' from Richard Strauss's *Salome*, to Wagner's *Tannhäuser* (the opera to which Theodor Herzl listened and gained inspiration when writing his 1896 book *Der Judenstaat*), and to another act of musical outrage, the section in the 'Intermezzo Interrotto' in Béla Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra in which the composer savagely parodies a theme from the first movement of Shostakovich's Seventh Symphony. A wider influence is a type of artwork which conveys a sense of immanent events which are implied rather than stated, whether in the paintings of Giorgio de Chirico, the opening of the 'crop-dusting' scene in Hitchcock's *North by Northwest*, or many pieces by Salvatore Sciarrino.

The piece as a whole aims to say something about the power of artifice, of appearing to lie in order to tell the truth (there is at the end of the first section a musical 'sneeze', as used by Zoltán Kodály at the beginning of *Háry János*, which according to Hungarian folklore indicated the speaker was telling the truth), and Old World privilege expressed in the most naked and brazen fashion, including that expressed by those of one people who think that very fact gives them the right to usurp the land and property of others.

© Ian Pace 2018.

Patrícia Suçena de Almeida, with film by Daniel Antero, *Desperatio* (Piano Piece No. 5) (2017-18)

Desperatio is my 5th piece for piano, developed from a miniature with the same title and written for the aforementioned instrument and film. It was written for Ian Pace,

not only as a pianist who not only uses his fingers on the keyboard but is also a complete performer, changing his way of playing as the score asks.

Like earlier pieces, this work involved a collaboration with the film artist, Daniel Antero. The two mediums used, music and film, are intertwined in such a way that they need to co-exist at the same time and place.

The main inspiration was the text by André Breton, 'Je connais le désespoir dans ses grandes lignes', but the work was informed by other individuals including Alfred Hitchcock, Fritz Lang, Salvador Dali and Man Ray among others, who have inspired various of my works.

The main gesture used for the film/music is the nervous flickering of a closed human eye, which symbolizes the *despair* of a being. At a certain point it opens, but we never know when, as the pupil and iris, at a certain point, are transformed into a pearl (among other 'actions') which arises metaphorically from Breton's text 'Un collier de perles pour lequel on ne saurait trouver de fermoir et dont l'existence ne tient pas même à un fil, voilà le désespoir.'

Je connais le désespoir dans ses grandes lignes. Une forme très petite, délimitée par un bijou de cheveux. C'est le désespoir. Un collier de perles pour lequel on ne saurait trouver de fermoir et dont l'existence ne tient pas même à un fil, voilà le désespoir. Le reste, nous n'en parlons pas. Nous n'avons pas fini de désespérer, si nous commençons (...) Dans ses grandes lignes le désespoir n'a pas d'importance. C'est une corvée d'arbres qui va encore faire une forêt, c'est une corvée d'étoiles qui va encore faire un jour de moins, c'est une corvée de jours de moins qui va encore faire ma vie. André Breton.

© Patrícia Suçena de Almeida 2018.



Kunsu Shim, *Das (Un)klare* (2018).

See programme note above.

Gerhard Stäbler, *PRÄSENTE – PRESENTS* (2018), a compositionally edited collection of musical contributions by **Peter Androsch, Christian Banasik, Huiyeon Bang, Laurence Crane, Chaya Czernowin, Peter Edwards, Nomi Epstein, Gudmundur Steinn Gunnarsson, Alec Hall, Elisabeth Harnik, Sam Hayden, Johannes Hildebrandt, Geir Johnson, Bohyun Kim, Arnold Marinissen, Harald Muenz, Dorone Paris, Bernd Preinfalk, Trond Reinholdtsen, Arne Sanders, Martin Tchiba, Lukas Tobiassen, Chaoming Tung, Markus Trunk, Knut Vaage, Amnon Wolman und Helmut Zapf**.

This piece is a realisation of a set of pieces by the above-mentioned composers, all tributes to the various composers being celebrated in this concert (and also Juan Allende-Blin, 90 this year), which were collected, and from which a set of rules were devised by Gerhard Stäbler for a collective work, from which I have devised tonight's version. This includes the world premiere of the contribution from Chaya Czernowin, not yet written at the time of three earlier performances of another realisation of the cycle by members of the Crash Ensemble in Duisburg, Essen and Cologne.

The piece is in six large continuous sections, lasting from 45" to 4'. Some description of the sequence of events and instruments involved in this realisation may facilitate listening, though the individual contributions are intended to be heard as part of a relatively coherent whole rather than simply as distinct pieces. These involve different modes of juxtaposition, superimposition, or intercutting, of the different contributions. The basic material for the first section is the collections of pitches devised by Peter Androsch, derived from the five composers' names, around which the players play freely. On top of this, the pianist plays the sustained chords by Christian Banasik, the saxophone and trombone play the short lyrical piece by Lukas Tobiassen, the accordion the humorous, jaunty fragment from Gudmundur Steinn Gunnarsson, the saxophone, accordion and piano the angular gestures of Chaoming Tung, the cello and piano the aphoristic gesture from Huiyeon Bang, and the piano the few notes of Bohyun Kim.

The material from the first section coalesces into a three-note chord which opens the Edwards, which occupies the entirety of the second section. Gradually the three pitches are distorted to create what the composer calls a 'murky layer', and the material disappears into an ascending scalic figure. This leads towards the piece by Laurence Crane, which opens the third section, in this version extremely loud and raucous repeated chords and more sustained ones from the players singing, together with a saxophone solo. Then, following a short fermata, all proceed with the Nomi Epstein piece, consisting simply of lists of numbers for each player, for which they devise sounds for each year of the life of the composer in question.

During this, the saxophonist shifts to the long virtuosic solo piece by Helmut Zapf, gradually moving out of the space midway through and performing the remainder outside a door. A short while later, the trombonist, accordionist and cellist shift to the 'Sound Poem' by Geir Johnson, mixing sounds played on the bodies of their instruments with somewhat absurd speech about silence and sound. This segues into the fourth section, in which this material is overlaid with quite, blurred chords from Arnold Marinissen played by the pianist. The cellist interrupts the Johnson to

play five chords from Martin Tchiba, while the accordionist and pianist play just a sustained chord and single note from Dorone Paris.

After the saxophonist re-enters the space, the fifth and longest section begins. The saxophonist, accordionist and trombonist play a series of chords from a large selection provided by Arne Sanders, while the cellist and pianist play the piece by Elisabeth Harnik, in which they combine quiet sustained sounds and glissandi on the cello with those on the keys using a variety of objects from the pianist. This shifts straight to the more extroverted glissandi writing of Alec Hall, for which they are soon afterwards joined by the other players. All of this leads to a stopping point, after which all resume with hushed and dense chords from Sam Hayden, interspersed with sparser ones from Markus Trunk. By contrast, Johannes K. Hildebrant's piece is a short series of incessant repeated chords and gestures in rhythmic unison, while Harald Muenz's features periodic repeated notes at different speeds. Then the latest addition to the collection, by Chaya Czernowin, uses just a small few pitches, but which the players are to imbue with the widest range of emotion, even articulating words representing their corresponding feelings. Then the rapt piece by Brend Preinfalk for clarinet and piano serves as a brief interlude before the sixth section, in which the fragment by Kurt Vaage builds to a shouting climax, culminating in the wild assault on the whole piano by all players.

© Ian Pace 2018.

Gwyn Pritchard, *Quintet* (2018) for soprano/alto saxophone, trombone, cello, accordion and piano

Quintet was composed in the summer of 2018 for the Berlin-based ensemble LUX:NM. Its premiere was on November 17th, at the Pyramidale Festival. The piece does not have a descriptive or evocative title, and the reason is simple: this is music that is entirely about itself - what you hear is all there is to it - nothing more and nothing less; there are no 'extra-musical' references. The request to compose a piece for such an unusual ensemble meant finding new solutions to some familiar musical issues: form and contrast, instrumental colour and balance, etc, etc. So in some respects this piece is unlike other pieces of mine, in other respects it reflects consistent, ongoing interests.

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Hans-Joachim Hespos, *Weißschatten* (2017) for soprano and piano

See programme note above.

Evan Johnson, *qu'en joye on vous demaine* (2017).

As celebrations go this is a bit of a strange one: intensely quiet and fragmented, private, reserved. But it has an inner glow: those repeated notes, those fourths and fifths, are thanks to Guillaume Dufay's rondeau "Bon jour, bon mois, bon an, et bonne estraine" -- "qu'en joye on vous demaine," that you may be joyfully held.

© Evan Johnson 2018.

Gwyn Pritchard, *Micropus 1-6* (2002-9) for piano

The six tiny piece entitled *Micropus* were all composed between 2002 and 2008 without a commission and mostly without a performance in mind. They each look at a single, simple compositional idea and stop as soon as it is exhausted. There is no development of an idea, hence the brevity. The player is instructed to play without expression and to be as precise as possible with respect to the notation. That way the compositional idea remains foremost, not blurred or obscured by interpretive decisions. The pieces may be performed in any order.

© Gwyn Pritchard 2018.

Alwynne Pritchard, *Vitality Forms 2* (2015) for free ensemble

Composed in 2015, this is part of an ongoing series of pieces (most of them solos which I perform myself) looking at relationships between sound, music and the human body. In *Vitality Forms 2*, the human face is treated as a score which is followed by the musicians and mimicked by the physical performers. What appear to be facial expressions are in fact either forms of guided investigation or close imitation.

© Alwynne Pritchard 2018.

The City Pierrot Ensemble was formed in 2017 from a group of musicians working at the Music Department of City, University of London, some of them having previously worked in the earlier ensembles, The Pierrot Players, and The Fires of London. They are resident at the department, and made their debut concert in 2017 with performances of works of Roger Redgate, Michael Finnissy and Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire* with guest soloists Alwynne Pritchard and Adam de la Cour. The group's Artistic Director is Ian Pace.

Alwynne Pritchard is a British composer, performer, artist and curator, based in Bergen, Norway. In her music and performances, Alwynne explores relationships between musical expression and the human voice and body. She has appeared as an actor, vocalist and physical performer in a number of stage productions, as well as directing and developing choreography for her work. In 2015, she formed the music-theatre company **Neither Nor** with her partner Thorolf Thuestad. Alwynne has composed for, and performed with, leading musicians and ensembles across the globe. Her work *Decoy*, created at the Heinrich Strobel Stiftung in Freiburg in 2006, for the Donaueschingen Musiktage, was awarded the special prize given by the Foundation Ton Bruynèl, STEIM and the Foundation GAUDEAMUS. In 2016, Alwynne was awarded the commission to create a fanfare or 'marker' to celebrate the opening of Snøhetta's building for the University of Bergen's newly created Department of Art, Music and Design, for which she created the book of text scores, *up without an insistent casting away*.

Alwynne's professional life has also included stints as a writer and presenter for BBC Radio, a composition teacher at Trinity College of Music in London and as Artistic Director of both the Borealis festival and BIT20 Ensemble. Her music is published by Verlag Neue Musik and she is Managed by Maestro Arts.

Ian Pace is a pianist and musicologist, Senior Lecturer and Head of Performance at City, University of London. He has premiered over 300 piano works, played in almost 30 countries, and made over 30 CDs. He studied at Chetham's School of Music, The Queen's College, Oxford, The Juilliard School, New York, and Cardiff University, where his PhD was on the development of new music and its infrastructure from Weimar to post-war Germany. He has also published widely on many areas of nineteenth- and twentieth-century music, performance studies and issues of critical musicology. He is especially associated with the music of Michael Finnissy, whose complete works he played in 1996 and then (at over twice the length) in 2016, and he premiered the five-and-a-half-hour cycle *The History of Photography in Sound*, which he later recorded for Divine Art and about which he wrote a monograph.

Stephen Cottrell is Professor of Music at City, University of London, and Associate Dean (Postgraduate Research) for the School of Arts and Social Sciences. He studied at the University of East Anglia, the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and the Paris Conservatoire. During a freelance musical career spanning nearly two decades he earned an international reputation as a saxophonist performing contemporary music, particularly as leader of the Delta Saxophone Quartet.

Before joining City in 2010 he was a Senior Lecturer, and Head of the Department of Music, at Goldsmiths College, London. From 2010-15 he was Head of the conjoint Departments of Music and Culture & Creative Industries at City, and from 2013-15 also Associate Dean (International). He has also held positions at Middlesex and Thames Valley Universities.

Tullis Rennie is a composer, improvising trombonist, electronic musician, and field recordist. His work encompasses sound installation, community-engaged participative projects, multi-channel concert works, video, mixed media and live/improvised performances. He is co-founder of *Walls On Walls* with visual artist Laurie Nouchka, and a founder member of *Insectotròpics*, an audio-visual collective based in Barcelona. Tullis is a member of a number of large improvising ensembles: Cath Robert's *Favourite Animals*; Anton Hunter's *Article XI* and Moss Freed's *Union Division*. He features on recent recordings released by the Luminous label, ZeroWave and Efpi Records and multi.modal - the label recently founded with Claudia Molitor. His work has been presented at concerts and festivals in 18 countries, alongside national broadcasts on BBC Radio 3 and Resonance FM. He is a Lecturer in Music at City, University of London.

Neil Varley studied at Chetham's School of Music in Manchester before going on to the Royal Academy of Music in London, where he was the first classical accordion student. After spending a postgraduate year at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, he

returned to the UK to pursue a busy teaching and performing career, working on the concert platform and in the theatre. For the last 20 years he has worked for the BBC and he is currently Senior Producer of the BBC Concert Orchestra.