

ORCIM FESTIVAL 2010 SCHEDULE

Wednesday 15 September 2010

20.15 CONCERT @Handelsbeurs: 'Unexpected Variations'

Ludwig VAN BEETHOVEN – from Veränderungen, op.120 über einen Walzer (A.Diabelli)

Thema
Var. I
Var.II
Var.III
Var.IV
Var.V
Var.VI

Paulo de Assis, piano, with the collaboration of: Mieko Kanno, violin; Tania Lisboa, violoncello; Alessandro Cervino, piano

Henrik FRISK– Repetition repeats all other repetitions

Stefan Östersjö, guitar

Edward JESSEN– Chamber 119

Catherine Laws, piano, toy piano, voice and recorded backing track

Ludwig VAN BEETHOVEN – from op.120

Var.XIII

Paulo de Assis, piano

Edward JESSEN – Chamber 119

Film version

Ludwig VAN BEETHOVEN – from op.120

Var.XX
Var.XXI
Var.XXII
Var.XXIII
Var.XXIV
Var.XXVIII

Paulo de Assis, piano with the collaboration of Bill Brooks, voice, Alessandro Cervino, piano and Juan Parra Cancino, electronics

Anton WEBERN– Pieces op.11 for cello and piano

Tania Lisboa, violoncello and Alessandro Cervino, piano

Morton FELDMAN – King of Denmark

Juan Parra Cancino, electronics

Ludwig VAN BEETHOVEN – from op.120

Var. XXXI
Var.XXXII
Var.XXXIII

Paulo de Assis, piano

Thursday 16 September 2010

9.00 – 9.15 **Welcome**

9.15 – 9.30 **Introduction**

9.30 – 10.35 AROUND THE CONCERTS 1 (Host: Jeremy Cox)

9.30 – 9.50 **Paulo de Assis** **'Deleuzabelli' variations**

Drawing upon the Deleuzian concepts of 'becoming', 'encounters' and 'lines of flight', this presentation proposes a view of Beethoven's 'Diabelli Variations' as a path of mutation and continuous metamorphosis, precipitated through the actualisation of connections among sound bodies of the utmost disparate origins, situated both in the past and the future. By considering the single variations not as closed, static substances, but as escaping doors from a temporary state of being; and by focussing upon them in terms of unfolding forces, of bodies affecting and being affected by other bodies, a dialogue on identity and difference will be proposed.

9.50 – 10.10 **Alessandro Cervino**
Towards a performance of Alfred Schnittke's Second Piano Sonata

This lecture focuses on those sound aspects of this post-tonal composition that are underdetermined by the score, namely: attack, articulation, dynamics and timbre. Is it possible to find and verbalize criteria which help performers to settle these parameters? Is such an articulation useful to an efficient practice? Criteria can be inferred by reflecting on, and trying to make sense of, the different sound results that can be produced. Since natural language is inadequate to capture their characteristics, an alternative might be to describe the means necessary to produce them, instead of the results themselves. Furthermore, an account of the physical movements employed for playing a composition can help in the generation of a description of the work's shape from a performer's perspective.

10.10 – 10.35 **Response and discussion** (respondent: Janet Ritterman)

10.50–12.45 AROUND THE CONCERTS 2 (Host: Luk Vaes)

10.50 – 11.10 **Stefan Östersjö**
Richard Karpen's 'Strandlines': a study of different modalities of listening in musical practice

This paper reports on my ongoing research project on the musician's listening, as exemplified in both the composer's and the performer's practice. Drawing on the concept of 'thinking-through' (Maharaj, 2005; Östersjö, 2008) – dealing with the non-verbal processes of listening and performing – this study further explores the concepts of 'thinking-through-performing' and 'thinking-through-hearing'. The aim is to identify different modalities of listening, specifically in two different contexts: listening to the space in a concert hall, and listening (and re-listening) in the context of mixing and editing in a recording studio.

11.10 – 11.30 **Juan Parra Cancino**
On KVSwalk

'KVSwalk' aims to research the possibilities and limitations of physicality and 'embodied musicality' in computer music performance. The musical structure is centred on the metaphoric imaginary, as well as on sonic derivatives of the Karman Vortex Street phenomena. For its ensemble version, a set of 'high-order parameters' were defined for each performer, favouring timbre variation and texture density control over variety of pitch and articulation. This presentation aims to shed some light on the technical and musical challenges encountered throughout the process of creating the piece, presenting excerpts of the different stages

(experiments) that preceded the version you will here at the ORCiM festival.

11.30 – 11.55 Response and discussion (respondent: Frans De Ruiter)

12.00 – 12.45 Lecture–recital (Host: Catherine Laws)

William Brooks Test and experiment

Composers and performers both test alternatives and experiment with processes. A careful distinction between ‘test’ and ‘experiment’ can illuminate some of the ways in which research in–and–through musical practice differs from research in other domains. This presentation will be illustrated by live performances of ‘Small talk’ and ‘Medley’, two of my own compositions, the former heard at this time and the latter presented in the evening concert.

Host: Darla Crispin

14.00 – 15.30 Keynote Speech: William Kinderman

From parody to transfiguration: Beethoven’s ‘Diabelli Variations’

There is no better example of a great musical work rooted in commonplace experience than Beethoven’s ‘Diabelli Variations’, his longest composition for piano. Hans von Bülow dubbed the thirty–three variations ‘a microcosm of Beethoven’s art’, yet this enormous musical edifice was built from a trivial waltz that the composer reportedly dismissed as ‘a cobbler’s patch’ on account of its mechanical sequences! Not only does Beethoven ennoble Diabelli’s theme by transforming it into a variety of shapes and characters but he also subjects it to critique, poking fun at its primitive aspects. The ‘Diabelli Variations’ are Beethoven’s most paradoxical composition, and present a uniquely coherent design of vast dimensions. This lecture–recital will be illustrated by fresh discoveries from Beethoven’s sketchbooks and his newly–available autograph score, which has just joined the holdings of the ‘Beethoven–Haus’ at Bonn.

15.45–16.45 THOUGHTS AND CONCEPTS 1 (Host: William Brooks)

15.40 – 16.00 Kathleen Coessens

The artist’s body: mapping the interface of performance

In this presentation, the musician will be considered as the dynamic interface between artistic material and artistic manifestations, actualizing the internal potentialities of artistic material in a unique way. The investment of the body is a rich source of meaning: intention as well as ‘in tension’, incorporation as well as ex–corporation. How can we map the bodily expression of explicit or implicit coded signs of different kinds, conveying emotional and aesthetic messages? By blurring times and spaces, body and mind, signification is continuously experienced and unfolded, endlessly created and imagined.

16.00 – 16.20 Paulo de Assis

Gilles Deleuze meets Helmut Lachenmann: the conditions of creation and the haecceity of musical material

Helmut Lachenmann articulated a series of thesis and typologies around the conditions of musical material, an ‘aesthetical apparatus’ with vast conceptual implications. Lachenmann envisaged the concrete practice of composing as more than a closed system of contemporary aesthetics, defining his own route and giving insights into his ‘musique concrète instrumentale’: music that seeks to liberate the energetic potential of concrete sounds and processes. This

suggests an idea of radical immanence of the musical material that approaches some key concepts of Deleuze. Bringing together Deleuze's ideas on creation and the haecceity of the material and Lachenmann's theoretical output, this presentation offers an unexpected encounter.

16.20 – 16.45 Response and discussion (respondent: Jeremy Cox)

17.00–17.30 Intermezzo (Host: Catherine Laws)

Michael Schwab & Gerhard Eckel

Presentation of the collaborative piece 'Re:Bodyscapes' Gerhard Eckel (music), Michael Schwab (visuals), David Pirrò (software), Valentina Moar (dance)

'Re:Bodyscapes' is a video installation in which the captured motion of a dancer is transformed into a dynamic drawing that, in turn, feeds a musical composition. The installation will show sets of experimental variations that explore the dance movements, the drawing algorithms and the musical structures in an attempt to create aesthetic resonances and convergences. The work investigates how structured creative processes can transpose, rather than represent, the dancer's movements.

17.45–18.50 THOUGHTS AND CONCEPTS 2 (Host: Luk Vaes)

17.45 – 18.05 Mieko Kanno
What I'm playing is better than the piece!

Starting with this occasional remark by musicians, the paper examines the relationship between the singularity of a musical work and its varied forms of identity. First, the concept of mimesis is explored with regard to the formation of identity of musical works in contemporary music. Second, the discussion leads to a model in which authorship and ownership constantly merge and separate in the process of identity formation. Finally, the speaker proposes that the continuous re-drawing of the boundary between authorship and ownership can be a significant strategic component in the practice of contemporary music.

18.05 – 18.25 Darla Crispin
Critical variations: new languages, new forms

Susan Sontag's 1964 landmark essay, 'Against interpretation', provides a surprisingly timely call to action, in its appeal for a criticism that 'shows how art is what it is, even that it is what it is, rather than to show what it means'. The new kinds of language – and even non-language – that such a criticism entails in its interrogation of tacit, embodied knowledge, is the domain of artist-researchers. Their understandings come first from the lived experience of artistic creation and performance, and only secondarily in the form of language. They need to find vocabularies that have a fidelity to this lived experience. In this presentation, Sontag's ideas will be tested through encounters with Anton Webern's Piano Variations Op. 27 to illuminate aspects of both.

18.25 – 18.50 Response and discussion (respondent: Stephen Emmerson)

20.45 **Concert @Orpheus Institute: 'Unexpected Variations II'**

Alfred Schnittke – Piano Sonata Nr.2

Gyorgy Kurtag – Jatekok

William Brooks – Medley, for soprano and piano

Richard Karpen – Strand Lines

Juan Parra Cancino – KVSwalk, for (networked) ensemble and electronics.

ORCiM Ensemble

Friday 17 September 2010

9.15 – 10.15 Lecture-recital (Host: William Brooks)

Luk Vaes

For prepared pianist: meeting the challenge of programming Cage's prepared piano pieces

John Cage's pieces for prepared piano are among the most cherished in the piano repertoire of the last fifty years, not least in terms of the high number of recordings that have been made with them. On the concert stage, such love for this particular music is hard to discern, however: except for the Sonatas and interludes and the Concerto, these compositions are very rarely performed. The main reason for this discrepancy lies in some unique problems that are presented when programming music for prepared piano. Having researched the music, its performing practice as well as the programming of this repertoire, Luk Vaes will explain the problems, show solutions and demonstrate his findings.

10.30–11.55 BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE (Host: Alessandro Cervino)

10.30 – 10.50

William Brooks & Catherine Laws

Co-creative practices

A number of ORCiM Fellows are exploring processes of co-creative collaboration, usually between composers and performers but also across art forms. This presentation will examine some of the key questions arising from such projects. They include: consideration of the different ways in which musical material is generated, analysed, developed and refined in such processes; the defining and negotiating of roles; the subsequent implications for the locus of creativity, authority and ownership; the relationship between process and product; the role of notation; the life of the work beyond the collaboration; and interdisciplinary and non-Western perspectives.

10.50 – 11.10

Tania Lisboa

Expert learning and problem solving: connecting the artist's musical

thoughts and behaviour

The noted pianist and pedagogue, Heinrich Neuhaus, suggests that when a great musician first approaches a new piece 'an instantaneous and subconscious process of work at the artistic image takes place'. This is an important characteristic of expert problem solving. But how do expert musicians approach a new piece and acquire an artistic image whilst dealing with demands on solving technical problems? The experience and insights of a musician studying her own practice and her thoughts during the learning process will be described, relating these to theories of problem solving and expertise.

11.10 – 11.30

**Tido Dejan
Variations and archetypes**

This presentation explores the fact that, from Beethoven on, ‘variations’, far from just constituting the hitherto assumed ‘simple suites’ or ‘sequences of variations on a theme’, are often conceived as an organic whole. Notable examples are illustrated with works by Beethoven (the ‘Ninth’), Brahms (‘Haydn Variations’), Richard Strauss (Sinfonia domestica), Lutoslawski (Concerto for orchestra). Through Constantin Bugeanu’s analytical methodology, which stems from ‘Gestalt’ psychology, the performer can go beyond the usually taught and practiced ‘one-after-the-other approach’, and perceive these variations as logical and unified structures. He can thus embody an overall shape, a clearly graspable form identified through the formal archetypes first acknowledged by Alfred Lorenz.

11.30 – 11.55

Response and discussion (respondent: Janet Ritterman)

Host: Darla Crispin

13.15 – 14.15

Keynote speaker: Stephen Emmerson

Remixing Modernism: Re-imagining Schoenberg and Bartók in our time

This presentation will outline the rationale and methodology behind a new and provocative recording of piano music from Schoenberg and Bartók (Move Records, 2010). Developing in various unanticipated directions from Glenn Gould’s concept of ‘acoustic choreography’, these recordings were the result of a close artistic collaboration between performer and sound producer with a background in popular music production. Beyond aiming merely to capture a performer’s interpretation, the recordings unashamedly exploit the potential of contemporary digital technologies to manipulate the various parameters of recorded piano sound in order to enhance the bold contrasts of space, timbre and texture embedded in the original compositions.

14.30–15.30 MORE UNEXPECTED VARIATIONS (Host: Juan Parra Cancino)

14.30 – 15.00

Paul Craenen

On Alvin Lucier’s I am sitting in a room

Alvin Lucier’s I am sitting in a room (1968) is a classic that is located on the boundaries between sound art, sound poetry and music. The attractiveness of this work seems to be rooted in a tight connection between conceptuality, situatedness and the experience of variation. In a short lecture I will examine how Lucier achieves a multilayered performativity, starting from minimal means. As a comment I will perform a feedback study that exhibits similar characteristics, although Lucier’s words are replaced by human movements.

15.00 – 15.30

Kathleen Coessens & Anne Douglas

Experiential knowledge and improvisation: variations on movement, motion, and emotion

The body and its movement, essential in human practices and experiences, are the expressive media of artistic action and creation. The body encounters the world and establishes patterns of action and interaction. These patterns are simply flexible means of variation, always containing elements of improvisation. The body encounters the unexpected, the unknown, the resisting – and, at the same time, appealing – world. Starting from everyday life, we will move on to examples of both visual art and music that sustain this thesis of the dynamics of experiential artistic knowledge.

15.30 – 16.30

Round Table

Closing remarks by William Kinderman and

(Hosts: Juan Parra Cancino and Alessandro Cervino)

.30

Afterglow