



## 14., 17., 21. März 2021, 20 Uhr British Composers – Ensemble Modern On Air

**Harrison Birtwistle:** Carmen Arcadiae Mechanicae Perpetuum (1977/78)

**Helen Grime:** Piano Concerto for piano and ensemble (2016–17)

**Laurence Osborn:** Automaton für Cembalo und Ensemble (2019)

**Oliver Knussen:** Songs without Voices op. 26 (1991–92)

**George Benjamin:** Three Inventions for Chamber Orchestra (1993–95)

### Ensemble Modern

**Jonathan Stockhammer** Dirigent / *conductor*

**Felix Schauen** Dirigent (Grime: Piano Concerto) / *conductor*

**Hermann Kretzschmar** Klavier / *piano*

**Ueli Wiget** Cembalo / *cembalo*

**Hessischer Rundfunk** Videoproduktion, Streaming / *video production, streaming*

Am 14.03.2021 wird das Konzert live aus dem hr-Sendesaal gestreamt.

Am 17.03.2021 und 21.03.2021 wird die Aufzeichnung als Wiederholung gezeigt.

*The concert will be streamed live on 14.03.2021 from hr-Sendesaal.*

*On 17.03.2021 and 21.03.2021 the recording will be shown as a replay.*

*Gefördert durch die Deutsche Bank Stiftung. Die Mitwirkung von Studierenden der IEMA wird ermöglicht durch die Friedrich Stiftung. Mit freundlicher Unterstützung der Patronatsgesellschaft des Ensemble Modern e.V.*

### Ensemble Modern

**Dietmar Wiesner** Flöte / *flute*

**Jaume Darbra Fa** Flöte / *flute*

**Christian Hommel** Oboe / *oboe*

**Jaan Bossier** Klarinette / *clarinet*

**Hugo Queirós** Klarinette / *clarinet*

**Riccardo Acciarino** Klarinette / *clarinet*

**Johannes Schwarz** Fagott / *bassoon*

**Saar Berger** Horn / *horn*

**Ona Ramos Tintó** Horn / *horn*

**Sava Stoianov** Trompete / *trumpet*

**Uwe Dierksen** Posaune / *trombone*

**Ueli Wiget** Klavier, Cembalo / *piano, cembalo*

**Hermann Kretzschmar** Klavier / *piano*

**David Haller** Schlagzeug / *percussion*

**Rumi Ogawa** Schlagzeug / *percussion*

**Anne-Sophie Bertrand** Harfe / *harp*

**Jagdish Mistry**, Violine / *violin*

**Giorgos Panagiotidis**, Violine / *violin*

**Veronika Paleeva** Violine / *violin*

**Megumi Kasakawa** Viola / *viola*

**Flora Geißelbrecht** Viola / *viola*

**Eva Böcker** Violoncello / *cello*

**Michael Maria Kasper** Violoncello / *cello*

**Paul Cannon** Kontrabass / *double bass*

**Zacharias Fasshauer** Kontrabass / *double bass*

**Hessischer Rundfunk** Videoproduktion und Stream / *video production and streaming*

**Regina Busch** Bildregie / *video director*

**Philipp Knop** Tonmeister / *recording producer*

**Harrison Birtwistle:** Carmen Arcadiae Mechanicae Perpetuum (1977/78)

Harrison Birtwistle composed this piece for the London Sinfonietta; he also conducted its first performance. It has become a standard work in the ensemble repertoire everywhere in the decades since then – and no wonder; it is highly appealing, playful and diversified instrumental theatre music (similar to “Secret Theatre”), in which “mechanisms,” i.e. groups behaving like mechanical devices, declare hostilities against one another in various rhythmic patterns and registers.

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**Helen Grime:** Piano Concerto for piano and ensemble (2016–17)

Scored for solo piano and duos of flute and clarinet and violin and cello with harp and percussion, my intention was to create an intimate piece which is as much about chamber music as moments of great virtuosity and stillness.

The piece is also a sort of mini homage to Elliott Carter and Pierre Boulez. Two works that are very close to my heart are Carter’s “Triple Duo” and “Sur Incises” by Boulez. Consequently, the flute and clarinet and violin and cello are always treated as separate duos and the music each duo plays is often in contrast to the other in mood, speed, texture or gesture. Used sparingly throughout, these strands collide and interact at various points and in a range of ways throughout the piece. The percussion and harp, inspired by “Sur Incises”, scored for three pianos, three harps, and three percussion, act as a kind of extension to the piano, often expanding on, amplifying or echoing it. The piece is cast in three movements; the second and third movements transform and reflect on the material in the opening movement in different ways.

Helen Grime © www.wisemusicclassical.com

**Laurence Osborn:** Automaton für Cembalo und Ensemble (2019)

An automaton is a mechanical object designed to play the role of a human being. Unlike the robot or the computer, both of which attempt as best they can to disguise themselves as humans, an automaton keeps its artificiality on show. I’ve always found something endearing in this naive, mechanical representation of humanity. The sound of the harpsichord is perceptively inseparable from the mechanical means of its production: the instrument sounds like a machine because you can literally hear its mechanism in action. But it is also an instrument that enables an extraordinary degree of sensitivity, expression, and personality on behalf of the performer. When I hear the harpsichord, I feel like I am hearing a musical automaton: a sound that blurs the boundaries between the mechanical and the human. The music in “Automaton” is sometimes human, sometimes mechanical, and sometimes both.

Laurence Osborn © www.laurenceosborn.com

**Oliver Knussen:** Songs without Voices op. 26 (1991–92)

“Songs without Voices” is a collection of short, self-contained compositions for flute, cor anglais, clarinet, horn, violin, viola, cello and piano. Over the past few years I recovered an old enthusiasm for writing songs, and it occurred to me to try to apply this to the instrumental sphere. Three of the present pieces are, literally, songs without voice – that is, a complete poem is “set” syllable by syllable for instruments in the course of a movement; and one is from a more private lyrical impulse – a cor anglais melody written upon hearing of the death of Andrzej Panufnik, a person I much admired. I hope it won’t be thought coy if I allow the music to speak on its own terms apart from those few indications of stimulus. I began the composition in Aldeburgh in October 1991 and completed it in New

York in April 1992, when it was first performed by the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, which commissioned "Songs without Voices" as part of the Elise L. Stoeger Composer's Chair Award. It is doubly dedicated to Fred Sherry (cellist and then Artistic Director of the Society) and to Virgil Blackwell for his fiftieth birthday.

Oliver Knussen

### **George Benjamin:** Three Inventions for Chamber Orchestra (1993–95)

Commissioned by Betty Freeman for the 1995 Salzburg Festival, this work is scored for an ensemble of 24 players: 7 wind, 4 brass, harp, piano, 2 percussionists and 9 strings. The discrepancy in length and character of the three movements is intentional – two relatively short and light movements preceding a much longer and darker conclusion. In the first Invention, mainly serene and luminous in atmosphere, a brief introduction leads to a sustained flugel-horn solo whose melodic curves create constantly transforming harmonic implications. The second Invention is fast, loud and rhythmic. A virtuoso cor anglais solo announces what appears to be a conventional triple metre; however, within a very brief time all manner of irregular figuration and unexpected tempo juxtapositions contort this metre beyond recognition. Half-way through the texture launches into an energetic tutti; only at the very end is metrical regularity re-instated by an acrobatic clarinet solo. The final Invention mirrors the first in technical conception, but the tone is radically different. Antiphonal tuned gongs and bass drums surround a network of materials which weave through the whole ensemble: slow bass octaves, floating consonant harmonies, rushing filigree scales. As these materials rotate across the structure in ever changing combinations they encounter a variety of foreground melodic solos: initially a serpentine contra-bassoon, later a menacing euphonium and more florid violins and violas. As the movement progresses, harmony and rhythm mutate into constantly new territory, but the heavy, bass-dominated pulse which underpins the texture remains remorselessly regular until the very end.

George Benjamin © www.fabermusic.com

## **VORSCHAU**

**20., 23., 28. März 2021**

**Happy New Ears mit einem Porträt Simon Steen-Andersen – Ensemble Modern On Air**

**Simon Steen-Andersen:** Black Box Music (2012)

**Ensemble Modern**

**Simon Steen-Andersen** Live-Video, Live-Elektronik und Gesprächspartner

**Håkon Stene** Schlagzeug/Darsteller und Gesprächspartner

**Norbert Ommer** Klangregie | **Seehund Media** Videoproduktion und Streaming

Die Kompositionen des dänischen Komponisten und Installationskünstlers Simon Steen-Andersen sind immer auch eine Überraschung für die Augen! Denn mit seinem außergewöhnlichen Erfindungsgeist widmet er sich auf humorvolle, bisweilen surreale, Weise der Visualisierung von Klängen. Das Ensemble Modern stellt Simon Steen-Andersens Werk ›Black Box Music‹ (2012) ins Zentrum seines nächsten Happy New Ears-Konzerts.

Das Konzert wird vorab im Bockenheimer Depot aufgezeichnet und am 20., 23., und 28. März 2021 (jeweils 19.30 Uhr) als Videostream gesendet.

Tickets: <https://ensemble-modern.reservix.de/events>