

MAURICIO KAGEL 24th December 1931 (Buenos Aires, Argentina) -
18th September 2008 (Cologne, Germany)



Trio in Three Movements, for violin, cello and piano (1985)

This is Kagel's first piece for a classic chamber music line-up since the String Quartet I/II from 1967. In contrast to the latter, it does not rebel against the traditions of the genre, but interprets them mostly positively. In terms of scale, structural complexity, craftsmanship and technical difficulty, it is very much a 'serious' composition, which would not be out of place in a traditional recital. Despite a connection of recycled music from a previous stage work, *Trahison*, it is also one of Kagel's first pieces which has to be understood as absolute music: there is no theatrical, narrative or other conceptual idea to guide one's perceptions. The largely traditional order of movements with definite 'characters' for each, the references to textural models from the nineteenth century, and

the goal-directed formal frameworks betray the extent to which Kagel felt ready to engage with the classical-romantic tradition.

Kagel's ideal was "composition as means of intellectual inquiry." And thereby a means of commenting on society and culture. The ostentatious artificiality of Kagel's creations prevents them being manipulated by the rhetoric of authenticity. It is in such elements that Kagel stays true to the ideal of composition as intellectual analysis and enlightenment.

(Adapted from) Björn Heile

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music we'd like to hear

NEW ROMANTICS - Music from 1980s Cologne

St Mary at Hill, London EC3R 8EE

3rd July 2015

Aisha Orazbayeva - violin

Alice Purton - cello

Mark Knoop - piano

Violinist and musician **Aisha Orazbayeva** is in demand with a repertoire extending from Bach and Telemann to Lachenmann and Nono. Recent performances include Sergei Prokofiev's Violin Concerto no.1 with the Kazakh Symphony Orchestra, Morton Feldman's For John Cage with Mark Knoop, Late Junction session with Tim Etchells for BBC Radio 3, and solo violin recital at the Reykjavik Arts Festival. As a soloist she has performed at the Aldeburgh, Radio France and Latitude festivals, and venues including Carnegie Hall in New York, Superdeluxe in Tokyo and La Maison de Radio France in Paris. Her two solo albums "Outside" on Nonclassical and "The Hand Gallery" on PRAH recordings have been critically acclaimed. Aisha has worked with groups including LA Dance Project, the London Sinfonietta and Ensemble Modern, and has performed live on BBC, National Icelandic Radio, Resonance FM, France Musique and Kazakh National TV.

Alice Purton is a London based cellist who is much in demand as a chamber musician, contemporary music performer, and improviser. She completed her Masters in Performance at the RCM with Melissa Phelps. A graduate of the prestigious Manchester Joint Course, previous teachers include Karine Georgian, Raphael Wallfisch and Leonid Gorokhov. She has also studied contemporary performance with Anssi Karttunen at the 2010 Acanthes International Summer School. Alice is a founder member of Distractfold, an ensemble that enjoy success performing around the world, with recent concerts in Poland, Spain, Switzerland, France, Germany and the USA. In 2014 they were selected to attend the 47th International Summer School for New Music in Darmstadt, where they were awarded the Kranichsteiner Music Prize, becoming the first UK ensemble ever to hold the award. Alice is the cellist with the Chagall Piano Quartet, who were recent finalists in the St. Martin-in-the-Fields chamber music competition. She is also a member of Trio Atem, a Manchester based ensemble who have been commissioning works for cello, voice and flute since 2007.

London based pianist and conductor **Mark Knoop** is known for his fearless performances and individual interpretations. He has commissioned and premiered countless new works and worked with many respected composers including Michael Finnissy, Joanna Bailie, Bryn Harrison, Johannes Kreidler, Matthew Shlomowitz, and Steven Kazuo Takasugi. His versatile technique and virtuosity also brings fresh approaches to the standard and 20th-century repertoire. Mark performs regularly at festivals including Transit (Leuven), Ultima (Oslo), Huddersfield, London Contemporary Music Festival, Borealis (Bergen), Spor (Århus), Athelas (Copenhagen) and Lucerne. He is currently Turner Sims Fellow at the University of Southampton. Recently released recordings include works by Matthew Shlomowitz, Peter Ablinger, Karlheinz Stockhausen and Richard Beaudoin.

CLARENCE BARLOW 27th December 1945, Calcutta, India



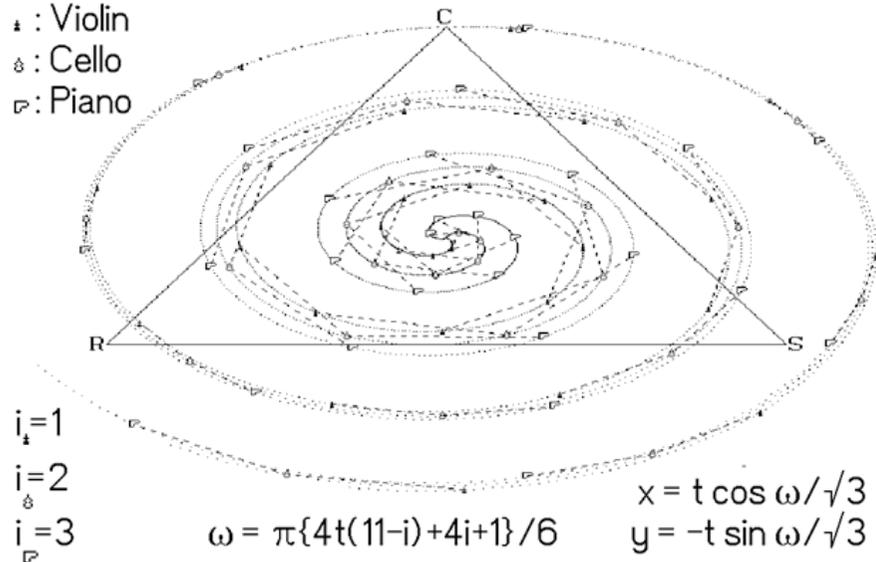
1981 for piano trio

The music for each of the three instruments has been statistically derived from the corresponding parts of the following three piano trios:

- La Chasse in C (1788) by Muzio Clementi
(in one movement)
- Trio No. 2 in F (1847) by Robert Schumann
(first movement)
- Trio in A minor (1914) by Maurice Ravel
(first movement)

The pieces begin simultaneously and - being of different lengths - end forty seconds apart in the above order. The statistical process involves the independent spiralic movement of the three instruments within a triangle symbolising the three composers at its apices; the closer an instrument is to an apex, the more of that composer's work is probabilistically present in the resulting piece. At the start, all three instruments are at the triangle's centre (=33% of each composer's work); the three spiral paths at once set off in different directions, 120 degrees apart. In the course of time, the three instruments wind outwards, bringing out the three composers ever more clearly. At the same time the instruments gradually catch up with each other, joining forces at the Clementi apex, just as that piece is ending. They move on, passing Schumann at the final cadence, with only Ravel left to finish with (see diagram). CB

♣ : Violin
♭ : Cello
♮ : Piano



WALTER ZIMMERMANN 15th April 1949, Schwabach, Germany

Ephemer for piano trio

Interlude from the cycle Vom Nutzen des Lassens (1981-84) after Meister Eckhart

In Bremen in 1982, when John Cage was asked what he recommended for the young German composer, he replied: "Read Meister Eckhart". This I did. I immediately understood Meister Eckhart as a bridge from Cage to Zen to Europe.

"Ephemeralisation; away from the earth into the air.
Or, on earth as it is in heaven" (John Cage)



The playing techniques assigned to the string instruments in the trio do not portray the dissolution of structure in any symbolic way but turn it into an almost insurmountable effort, which presents violinist and cellist with unfamiliar challenges.

The piece starts with double stops, making palpable the earthly entanglement: "on earth". A piano solo passage of paradoxical polyphony hints towards disentanglement; "away from the earth". The actual process of dissolution ensues; "into the air".

The string players are tasked with representing, in sound, structures both physical and ethereal, the cellist having already introduced each of the polar opposites individually. The *physical* structure is represented by ordinarily produced sounds, the *ethereal* structure by (artificial) harmonics.

To play both kinds of sound simultaneously requires the string players to constantly finger three notes at once, which results in the challenges referred to above. This technique could be described as an inaudible kind of "introverted virtuosity", because the transparent sounds provide only an inkling of the difficulty with which they are being achieved. Crucially, the piano acts as mediator and resonator for these sounds, and is the engine of the process of transcendentalisation.

The physical structure is eventually being surrendered. The piece resolves into pure harmonics: "as it is in heaven". WZ (trans. Markus Trunk)