

Christian Wolff - image from **Keyboard Miscellany**

**Duo for violins** is one of a group of relatively short pieces, written between 1950 and 1952, which are minimalist in the sense that they use a very small number of pitches, in this case, three pitches spanning a whole tone. The texture of the music was thought of as melodic-monophonic, the elements of the melody being pitches sounding alone, simultaneously, and overlapped.

#### **Keyboard Miscellany** (1988 -)

A continually expanding collection of fragments for any keyboard instrument begun in 1988. Some miniatures are birthday dedications to friends Alvin Lucier, David Tudor, Bjorn Nillson, Howard Skempton, Charles Hamm, and the composer's wife Holly.

Christian Wolff was born in 1934 in Nice, France. He has lived mostly in the U.S. since 1941. He studied piano with Grete Sultan and composition, briefly, with John Cage. Though mostly self-taught as a composer, the work of John Cage, Morton Feldman, David Tudor, and Earle Brown have been important to him, as well as long associations with Merce Cunningham, Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, Cornelius Cardew, and Frederick Rzewski. A particular feature of his music is the various freedoms it allows performers at the time of performance, as well as the variable results possible for any one particular piece, for which various new notations have been invented. Underlying notions in the work are shared freedom, self-determination and democratically-spirited collaboration. He has received awards and grants from the American Academy and National Institute of Arts and Letters, the Ford Foundation, DAAD Berlin, the Asian Cultural Council, the Fromm Foundation, the Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts and the Mellon Foundation. He is a member of the Akademie der Künste in Berlin, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 2004 he received an honorary Doctor of Arts degree from the California Institute of the Arts. Academically trained as a classicist, Wolff was professor of classics and music at Dartmouth College from 1971 to 1999.

We spent time with this Viennese family - they were psychoanalysts - who had a summer place in Vermont. The Juilliard Quartet had just started to play Bartók quartets and the Viennese school, Schoenberg, Berg, Webern. And we went to this concert because the people were Viennese; they didn't like the music, but they went because it was Viennese. So I heard this concert of Schoenberg, Berg, Webern, and I was just absolutely taken with that; I really thought this was great, this was wonderful. Listening to all that music, I wanted to do something. So I started to compose, entirely on my own. When I heard this other music, I suddenly thought, yes, this is what I want to do; I want to do something that just doesn't sound like anything else. I didn't want to imitate just that music, but the whole idea of starting new, startling all over, that suddenly caught my fancy. So that's when I started. *You would have been about fourteen, fifteen?* I was about fifteen, sixteen, somewhere in there, yeah. (Conversation with Cole Gagne 1991)

**Angharad Davies** is a violinist based in London. She is an active performer in contemporary, improvisation and experimental music both as a soloist and within ensembles. Her classical background lead her to further violin study with Charles-André Linale in Dusseldorf, Germany and subsequently Howard Davis in London. Her studies with these two eminent violinists inspire her own teaching practice. Since making London her base in 2002 she has developed a specific approach to the violin, extending the sound possibilities of the instrument by attaching and applying objects to the strings or by sounding unexpected parts of the instrument's body. She is dedicated to exploring and expanding sound production on the violin. 2008 has seen Angharad perform a live radio broadcast with Apartment House for WDR Köln, and in June she took part in Tony Conrad's '*Unprojectable: Projection and Perspective*' which was specially conceived for the Turbine Hall, Tate Modern, London.



Manfred Werder was born in 1965. He lives in Zürich.

Manfred Werder - photo of complete score of **stück 1998**

**manfred werder - stück 1998** for any instruments consists of 160,000 time units. One time unit consists of 6 seconds of sound, followed by 6 seconds of silence. The sound is indicated by a pitch from a six octave range. Pitches which can't be played by instruments are to read in time nevertheless. The score is performed - in sections - in one succession. Total duration is 533 hours 20 minutes.

I started working on **stück 1998** in autumn 1997, and performed the pages 1-3 in December 1997 in Sucre, Bolivia. Over the course of 1998, I found the concept of both the ongoing writing project and its one successive and intermittent performance. However, the pages of that year's performances still had been selected by chance operation. In March 1999, the performance restarted at page 95. In 2001, reaching page 4000, I stopped writing. The entire score has been exhibited twice, in Aarau in May 2004, and in Berlin in September 2005. (Manfred Werder)

In her performances **Sara Hubrich** combines music with mixed-media arts, literature, dance and theatre. Originally a classical violinist and violist she has done collaborations with artists in site-specific locations and performed at Festivals all over Europe. She has worked with Swiss music-theatre composer and director Ruedi Häusermann with the string quartet 'Lautlos' Silent. Her performance "We lay safe and sound in free fall" has been featured by the spnm (Society for the promotion of New Music). This performance interconnected the performance of a Rock Band with classical improvisations of a string trio. Sara was born in Bergisch-Gladbach, Germany. She studied music in Hanover, Glasgow and London at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. She was a member of the independent Ensemble for Music Theatre 'A Rose Is', which received several prizes.

**Mark Knoop** is a pianist and conductor living in London, UK. He studied piano with Stephen McIntyre at the Victorian College of the Arts and in Europe with various mentors including Herbert Henck, James Avery and Peter Feuchtwanger. He studied conducting in Melbourne with Robert Rosen and is co-artistic director of the Libra Ensemble. Mark has appeared throughout Europe, the United Kingdom and Australia and in New Zealand, South Korea, Mongolia, United States of America, Canada and at festivals including the Huddersfield, Spitalfields, Borealis, Lucerne, Melbourne, and Adelaide Festivals, the Sydney Spring Festival, and the 1997 ISCM World Music Days.

He performs with such groups as plus-minus (London/Brussels), Ensemble Exposé (London), ELISION Ensemble (Brisbane), Ensemble Modern (Frankfurt), 175 East (Auckland), musikFabrik (K'oln), WDR Rundfunkchor K'oln, Ensemble Offspring (Sydney) and Ensemble Laboratorium (Europe).



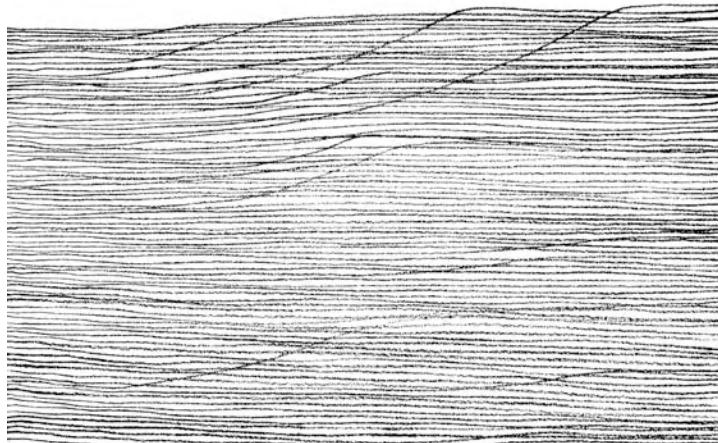
Chris Newman (born 1958 in London, lives in Berlin) is a contemporary composer, painter, author and performance artist. From 1976 to 1979 he studied music at King's College London, taking a Bachelor of Music. During this time he met the Russian poet Eugene Dubnov and started to translate Russian poets (Osip Mandelstam, Velimir Khlebnikov), this process of translating proving important for his later work (e.g. from one medium to another / from life to art). Started writing own poems in 1979. Moved to Cologne, Germany, in 1980 to study with Mauricio Kagel (New Music, Theatre / Video) at the Hochschule für Musik Köln. First public performance singing own songs in 1982. Founded chamber-punk rock band Janet Smith in 1983; met Morton Feldman in 1984. First concerts and video showings: Institute of Contemporary Arts, London; Theater am Turm, Frankfurt; Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne; Cooper Union, New York. Started to paint in 1989, which led (from 1994) to the two medium installations; in recent years presented paintings in a more sculptural and installed manner, cutting the canvas and rearranging the parts to form a new relationship within the painting. These installations have been presented at (among other places): Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen, Düsseldorf, (1994); Nationalgalerie im Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, (1999); Diözesan Museum, Cologne, Donaueschinger Musiktage; Limelight Kortrijk; Musée d'Art Moderne, Strasbourg, Arp Museum Rolandseck, Goethe-Institut Budapest. His paintings and drawings are represented in the Diözesan Museum, Cologne, Neue Museum, Nuremberg, as well as in the Neue Museum Weserburg, Bremen, and Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin. Since the beginning of the 80's Newman's music pieces have been performed at concerts and festivals and recorded for radio productions (also orchestral commissions). These include songs, piano pieces and two piano concertos, the most recent of which Piano concerto No. 2 - Part 2, was premiered at the Donaueschinger Musiktage in 2006. He has published books of poetry and prose and issued a number of CDs. After the first phase in Cologne, he lived in Paris, London, again in Cologne and now in Berlin. From 2001 to 2002 he was professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Stuttgart.

Chris Newman - Pity Sink (2004)

**Air Fool Agony Face** (2009) for accordion. Commissioned (requested) by Music We'd Like to Hear. Premiere

In this piece, written in the first part of 2009 for Mark Knoop, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony takes the strung-out pitches from a song from my cycle "Format" and registers them and rhythmicises them afresh. Beethoven "shapes" my pitches, my pitches "choose" Beethoven, they "pick up" Beethoven. This is a kind of pathway-piece in which the own and the official are welded together in a single line melted together in the making of the piece.

Chris Newman 25th June 2009



Chiyoko Szlavnics - many lines (2005)

Chiyoko Szlavnics was born in 1967 in Toronto. Her recent body of compositions are based on drawings which are translated into musical notation using the Just Intonation ratio system as a harmonic and microtonal basis. The resulting acoustical phenomena are surprising: through her particular choice of pitch material and extended glissandi, a transparent (glassy) surface of pure intervals is often set into motion by rippling beating, and surprising harmonic movements and harmonic perception occur. Her compositions feature clusters, beating, unexpected harmonies, as well other auditory experiences, such as difference tones, and what Szlavnics likes to call "audible harmonic nodes". All of these phenomena are structured by the forms and dynamics inherent in the original drawings. She studied composition with James Tenney from 1994-7, was in residence at the Akademie Schloss Solitude from 1997-8, and attended Walter Zimmermann's seminars at the HdK (now the UdK) in Berlin. Her compositions have been performed and presented by a variety of ensembles, venues, and on radio in Europe and North America.

**Cilia Tremble** was the name for a series of short works composed for a concert at Berlin's Haus 19, curated by Christiane Gruß. The evening featured a mixture of purely electronic pieces (sine tones), purely acoustic pieces for 2 violins and accordion, and a combination of the two. All compositions were based on line drawings, many dedicated to visual artists such as Agnes Martin, Eva Hesse, Chris Newman and Bruce Nauman. Some were dedicated to people who were especially close to me, such as my mother Aiko Suzuki, who had recently passed away, and James Tenney, my primary composition teacher.

These are seminal works, each neatly concentrating on specific intervals, pitch relationships, harmonic change, and pitch register.

"For BN" was named after Bruce Nauman's experiment with the idea of imagining you are sinking through the floor while lying on top of it. The resulting musical work, admittedly, sounds more like trucks idling, than human beings imagining they are sinking through a floor. But the drawing reminded me of Nauman's idea, and the pitch range was inspired by his description of his experiment.

"For CN" was inspired by the idea of high blood pressure.

Chiyoko Szlavnics, Berlin June 2009

music we'd like to hear  
8th july 2009

christian wolff duo for violins (1950)  
christian wolff selection from keyboard miscellany (1993-)  
manfred werder stück 1998  
chris newman air fool agony face (2009) premiere  
chiyoko szlavnics selection from Cilia Tremble (2006)

angharad davies, sara hubrich - violins  
mark knoop - accordion  
church of st anne and st agnes, gresham st, london ec2v

people we'd like to thank

the holst foundation, rvw trust and everyone who has most generously given their time towards  
the organisation and realisation of these concerts