



mMf

MOSTLY MODERN FESTIVAL

THE NETHERLANDS

PROGRAM NOTES

All program notes by the composers
unless otherwise indicated.



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In Partnership With

**MUZIEK
SCHOOL
ZEELAND**

HARP TRIO CONCERT

- **David Carlton Adams (b. 1983) - Tear (2022) (8')**

My wife, Zarina, is Uzbek-Ukrainian-Russian-American.

It's a hard time.

This piece seeks to process some of the horror.

- **Orkun Agir**

Preludio di Quintetto per viola solo.

- **Elise Arancio (b. 2000) - Sun In Your Eyes (2022) (8')**

Sun in Your Eyes attempts to capture the image of dappled sunlight through trees.

Some spots are brighter than others, and some rays are so bright that they're

blinding. A quote that illustrates the piece best is: "Light staggers through the trees.

Every moment is filled with other moments." - Richard Jackson

- **Sabien Canton,**

Five Bagatelles.

- **Robert Paterson (b. 1970) - Embracing The Wind (1999) (10')**

My original inspiration for Embracing the Wind was the image of an Olympic athlete running against the wind. The process of writing this work eventually shifted me to more abstract thoughts, such as the concept of creating music that sounds flexible and has wind-like, ebb-and-flow qualities. I try to achieve this by creating musical zephyrs from repeated motives and smooth phrases that utilize gradual dynamic swells and subtle tempo fluctuations. In this sense, Embracing the Wind is perhaps more minimal and Romantic than many of my other pieces: minimal in that cells that are repeated over and over again as textural background, Romantic in that the form is intentionally less severe and also has a narrative, structural quality.

TOTAL TIME: 68'

Performed by: Elma Meijer (flutist), Sabien Canton (harpist) and Michelle Pritchard (alt violinist).

PIANO TRIO CONCERT

- **Zach Davis (b. 1991) - Prism (2022) (8')**

When a ray of light illuminates a prism, it is dispersed into a spectrum of color. In a similar manner, Prism takes the listener on a kaleidoscopic journey of transformation. Beginning as an austere whisper, the work's core elements are presented in simple fashion: Sustained lines, rapid interjections, and a plain, almost naïve-sounding ostinato devoid of harmonic complexity. As this 'color crescendo' unfolds, new harmonic hues are introduced, providing a semblance of transformation and connectivity until the final bars of dispersed color dissolve into silence.

- **Ryan McWilliams (b. 1992) - Trio Contraptions (2022) (8')**

With Trio Contraptions I wanted to write dense miniatures that pushed my own intuitions about what a short piece of music should do. These three movements are at times internally haphazard, constantly moving forward through various materials in order to challenge the norms of directness, clarity, process, and simplicity that I associate with miniatures as a form. A 'contraption,' as defined by the New Oxford American Dictionary, is a device or machine that appears strange or unnecessarily complicated. It amuses me to think about these (un)necessarily complicated miniatures as wonky little devices—as gizmos or curios—that shine in their tiny uniquenesses.

After composing works in the early 1950's that were in graphic notation and left most of the musical parameters (pitch, duration, timbre, event occurrence) to the discretion of the performers, Feldman became dissatisfied with the result because although this manner of composing freed the sounds, it also freed the kind of subjective expression of the performers that could not create the kind of pure sound-making that Feldman envisioned.

Four Instruments has coordinated events (chords or verticalities) and sequences of single events in which a performer must enter before the previous event from another performer has died away, forming a pure modal continuity, a surface. The tempo is slow, and the overall dynamic is quiet and peaceful. Yet the astonishing variety of the timbral combinations may imply shifting imagery to the listener. Or, for another listener, the joy may simply be in sheer richness of the sonic experience, for the sounds themselves.

– allmusic.com

PIANO TRIO CONCERT

- **Lera Auerbach (b. 1973) Pianortrio nr. 2 (2012) (24')**

- I. Prelude (Left Exterior Panel). Moderato libero
- II. First Unfolding (Left Interior Panel). Allegro appassionato
- III. Second Unfolding (Right Interior Panel). Libero
- IV. Tell'em What You See (Three Faces – Center Panel). Allegro assai
- V. Folding – Postlude (Right Interior Panel). Adagio nostalgico

I like the idea of exploring the dramatic, ritualistic side of music. In The Mirror With Three Faces, one can look at three different faces or roles of the same person or at three distinct personalities – each with its own face. Each character (i.e. instrument) may be isolated, in conflict, or in harmony with others and itself. This trio explores individuality and ensemble, harmony and conflict, one in three or three in one – that is the ambiguous nature of this work, structured in the form of a triptych. Lera Auerbach on Tryptych

Nothing is quite what it seems in Auerbach's music as is apparent in this Trio, but she also aims to find beauty in unexpected places. She loves to tell a story, as dramatically as possible, thus the powerful opening chords that announce Tryptych. The main part of the movement creates a dreamlike atmosphere as the strings weave in and out of the tolling patterns in the piano creating fractured images in the mirror. The First Unfolding is a complete contrast, brief and sudden with grand gestures and an explosion of notes that leads attacca into the pizzicato opening of the Second Unfolding. This becomes a Schnittke-inflected waltz that fractures the mirror even more. As it slides to a halt the main movement bursts in manically.

Tell'em what you see is the movement title and the breakdown of images now seems complete – wild phrases, dissonant piano gestures, string glissandi and, at the end, delicate string phrases.

This leads attacca into the final Adagio nostalgico that gradually disintegrates into a simple sentimental melody. As the theme repeats the musicians are instructed to imitate an old record and the lamenting glissandi bring this strange music to a close, the images in the mirror distorted beyond repair.

– Francis Humphrys

TOTAL TIME: 53'

Performed by: Arjan Kik (violinist), Matthias Naegelle (cellist), Rien Balkenende (pianist) and Mattijs Roelen (alt violinist).

STRING QUARTET CONCERT

- **Christian Blaha (1972) – A small selection from the songcycle: Een Koud bad -24 liederen onder water (A Cold Bath – 24 songs below water) (2009) (15') for voice and quartet**

Nr. 11 Onbekende Jongen in Zijpe

Nr. 6 Pieter (43) uit Kruiningen

Nr.13 Leendert (69) uit Burgh Haamstede

Nr.12 Onbekend Meisje in Zijpe

Lyricist Peter Swanborn tells us about the work:

“Een Koud Bad, was commissioned by the poetic society ‘Zeeland Slibreeks’ and consists of 24 songs about drowned Zeelanders. Every poem describes another personage; every title consists of the first name, the age and the residence. The first half of the bundle contains poems about fictitious victims from the terrifying Flooddisaster of 1953, the second half is about people who somehow drowned: an accident in a swimming pool, suicide on the high seas, coma drinking in a village pub.”

- **Daan Manneke (b. 1939) – Arc I – Part II: Syrinx (1994) (7') for string quartet**

Arc I by was written by the famous Dutch composer and former professor of composition of the Amsterdam Conservatoire Daan Manneke. The piece was commissioned by the Society ‘Nieuwe Muziek Brabant’ on request of the Weidler Quartet. The second part of the quartet ‘Syrinx’ is played on this concert.

- **Nathan Kelly (b. 1988) - God of Mercies (2022) (8')**
- **Martijn Padding (b. 1956) – Things that fall apart (2012) (7') for string quartet and piano**

Things that fall apart by Martijn Padding - professor and current head of the composition department of the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague (Holland) - was written for the famous Dutch pianist Gerard Bouwhuis and the Doelen Quartet.

STRING QUARTET CONCERT

- **Robert Paterson (b. 1970) - String Quartet No. 2 (2019-2020) (20')**

I. Colored Fields

III. Dolente

V. Collage

In some ways, String Quartet No. 2 is similar to my String Quartet No. 1: the five movements are stylistically diverse, I use a few snippets of pre-existing music, and the music, while idiomatic, is technically demanding. This evening, the quartet will perform three movements from this quartet.

The first movement, Colored Fields, is inspired by abstract expressionist painters such as Mark Rothko, Kenneth Noland, and Barnett Newman, but also pointillist painters such as Georges Seurat and Paul Signac. There are textures that emerge and submerge using articulations that gradually shift from soft to loud, or short to long, and there are a few transitions that utilize a technique I call pitch phasing or phase modulation, as opposed to tempo phasing.

The third movement, Dolente, is sad, lush, and mournful. The only request I had when writing this quartet was to incorporate a Norwegian fiddle tune or theme by Edvard Grieg, so I chose themes from Grieg's String Quartet No. 1. The form of this movement mimics the form of a song by Edvard Grieg's entitled Spillemaend (Minstrels, or Fiddlers).

The final movement, Collage, is similar to the first movement in that it is inspired by the visual arts, and specifically, collage painting and works by surrealists. Many themes from the first four movements are brought together in this odd-metered movement.

String Quartet No. 2 commissioned by J. K. Billman and is written for and dedicated to the Euclid Quartet.

TOTAL TIME: 57'

Performed by: Arjan Kik (violinist), Melanie van Overbeeke (alt violinist), Paulus van Kruyssen (violinist) and Alejandro Sanchez (cellist).

PERCUSSION QUARTET CONCERT

- **Stephen Cabell (b. 1984) - Han (2016) (10')**

Beginning in the sound world of traditional Korean drumming and concluding in a metaphorical Gothic cathedral, HAN is a celebratory ode to an exuberant and righteous spirit. Han is scored for percussion trio: three tom-toms, fifteen tuned pipes [handmade by the composer], three resonant metals, and three water chimes.

- **Vincent Houdijk (b. 1981) - Mapa for Solo Vibraphone (2007) (5')**

Mapa is a dedication to my dear parents (Mama & Papa) who are the most incredible supporters of my music. I composed it somewhere between 2005 and 2007 during my jazz vibraphone studies at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague. Like many of my compositions, Mapa started as a framework and was always performed by me, by heart and with flexibility in choices and improvisation. I didn't write down the notes until percussion artist Dominique Vleeshouwers asked me to write down the music for him to perform this work at the opening concert of the TROMP International Percussion Competition in 2018. A huge honor for me and a 'kick on my butt' from my former student to finally make a version of Mapa that others can perform as well.

- **Robert Paterson (b. 1970) - Helter Skelter (1984) (5')**

Helter Skelter was written in 1984 for myself and three other percussionists, and it is my first piece for multiple players. At the time, I couldn't find an appropriate percussion quartet to perform at a school recital that was easy, fun to play, and used the instruments we had at the school, so I decided to compose my own piece. It is basically an organized improvisation, and relies on spontaneous reactions from the players. The parts are written in such a way as to give the players the choice of which phrases to play or not play, and how long to play them. If performed correctly, the piece should never sound the same twice. Helter Skelter requires the performers to listen carefully to each other in order for the piece to be played well.

The title Helter Skelter is inspired by the definition of the phrase, which means disorder or confusion. The fact that there are many other pieces and books named "Helter Skelter" is, for the most part, coincidental. This composition has nothing to do with any of these works, such as the song by The Beatles, although there is a subtle allusion to the Charles Manson murders which took place in Death Valley, California in 1969

Premiered on July 1st, 1988 in Rome by its dedicatee, Sylvio Gualda, Rebonds has become a staple in multi-percussion literature and pushes the boundaries of what is technically possible to play on percussion instruments. The exact setup is left to the performer, allowing each player to figure out how to 'make it work'. Rebonds is one long metric accelerando, beginning with huge amounts of space and continually adding faster notes and phrases to fill the gaps. This piece played entirely on drums, and places a heavy reliance on the dramatic abilities of the player.

– Michael Dooley

PERCUSSION QUARTET CONCERT

- **David John Roche (b. 1990) – Brightest Softest Hearts (2022) (8')**

Brightest Softest Hearts is a glittering and joyful piece, born out of a desire for warmer, happier times. I like that such a small number of instruments can produce such a rich, lasting sound. It is important to remember that small, compact relationships can radiate something so strongly and so positively.

- **John Cage (1912-1992) - Percussion Quartet (1935) (20')**

1. Moderate
2. Axial Asymmetry
3. Fast

Starting out in the mid-1930s, John Cage was a pioneer in the world of percussion music. His pieces for percussion ensemble, like the Percussion Quartet, liberated the genre from its two most clichéd roles: supporting the activity of other instruments in orchestral settings, and acting as rhythmical backdrop in popular music, which, by the time Cage was composing this piece, was already canonized in jazz. In the mid-1930s, when Cage first sought to establish a percussion band, he could not even interest trained percussionists; his early ensembles consisted of dancers and bookbinders.

Cage's early percussion pieces are not technically difficult regarding tempo and choreography, but they are quite complex from a rhythmic standpoint. While many works by other composers, even to this day, often focus on pulse, and meter with the goal of stimulating an emotional response from the listener, Cage's works are more concerned with the interplay of subtle rhythmic elements and timbral variety. "There's none of this boom, boom, boom business in my music," Cage wrote. For Cage, a measure was literally a unit of time, "not a one two three four - which I fill with various sounds." Arguably, this permits some leeway with tempo, away from metronomic precision, toward a more relaxed, breathed sense of time. In this sense Cage's work may be seen as a precursor to works composed and performed by ensembles such as So Percussion, Kroumata, and Third Coast Percussion.

–Frederick Fairchild & Robert Paterson

TOTAL TIME: 56'

Performed by: Albert-John Vervorst (percussionist), Vincent Houdijk (percussionist), Cora Dellebeke (timpanist) and Joao Brito (percussionist).

SURPRISE CONCERT

A surprise concert performed by Robert Vroegindeweij (flutist), Victoria Paterson (violinist) and Matthias Naegele (cellist).

MATINEE CONCERT CHAMBRE ORCHESTRA

Vulnerability and Loss

- **Robert Paterson (b. 1970) - I See You (2016) (11')**

I See You is inspired by a week I spent at my father's side in a hospital. Having never spent much time in hospitals, I was unaccustomed to hearing the myriad of sounds, particularly in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU), where my father lay incapacitated, in critical condition. It was incredibly sad: I could see him, but because he was so sedated, he was barely aware I was even in the room with him. Despite this, there was something strangely soothing and almost musical about the constant pattern of beeps and noises emanating from the machines. To pass the time, I would imagine an orchestra playing, with the litany of noises as accompaniment.

I See You consists of three connected sections. The first section entitled Tranquillo is calm and soothing, almost like a lullaby, with long melodic lines. The second, entitled Storn und drang ("storm and stress") is more rhythmic and stressful, incorporating a cacophony of ICU sounds. The final section, entitled Return, is more like the first, perhaps a bit darker, but with rays of optimism toward the end. Throughout the entire work, I incorporate sounds one might hear in an ICU, manipulated and mixed with recordings of heartbeats, breathing and the sounds of children playing. The piece ends with the overlapping patterns of my own heartbeat, my father's heartbeat, and my son's heartbeat, and even my son's heartbeat when he was in my wife's womb, creating an intimate, multi-generational, rhythmic tapestry.

- **Presentation and concert MMF-Youthcomposers: 1 Minute piece for young composers**

- **Robert Paterson (b. 1970) Closet Full of Demons (2001) (7')**

As a child, I remember being very afraid of my closet at night. I was sure that scary things were hiding in the back corner and that my closet was really a nighttime portal to a world of demons and monsters. A bracing, horrible dream I had one night as an adult reminded me of these childhood fears and hastened my writing this piece.

What kinds of sounds do demons and monsters make? What would they sound like crammed together in a gargantuan, pitch black, closet at night? I envisioned screaming, chaos, and violent infighting between the creatures. Sometimes these hellish monsters fight amongst themselves, as I would imagine they would do in a sort of morbid, eternal "monster hell," but once in a blue moon they burst out of the closet and start flying around the bedroom in a chaotic free-for-all, cackling and laughing and spitting and drooling, banging into walls and furniture like a bunch of loose, demonic bats. Technically, this work is a vehicle for exploring a variety of exotic sound possibilities within a large chamber group. I imagine monsters of different shapes and sizes, similar to characters you might find in the paintings of Hieronymus Bosch (the right wings of The Hay Wain and the Garden of Delights

MATINEE CONCERT CHAMBRE ORCHESTRA

Vulnerability and Loss

trptychs would be good examples), but much more abstract, cubist and multi-shaped, such as the images found in the cubist works by Pablo Picasso (i.e., the Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler painting or the Head of a Woman sculpture). If you took Picasso's cubist people and "morphed" them with Bosch's un-earthly creatures, or filtered Bosch's creatures through a cubist filter and airbrushed the final images with hell, then that would be my goal.

Other images in particular provided inspiration, such as the famous painting *The Nightmare* by the Swiss-English artist Henry Fuseli. In this work, an ugly demon is seated on the dreamer's chest and a frightening white horse with glowing eyes is in the background. My work is further inspired by the diverse collage works—digital or not—being created by contemporary visual artists.

- **Christian Blaha (b. 1972) - Controleer uw Maatregelen (Check Your Measures) (2010) (14')**

Composed in 2010 in memory of 70 years of bombardment of the city of Middelburg.

Lyricist Peter Swanborn tells us about the structure of the work:

"The text is based on the emotional letters whom my grandmother from Middelburg sent a few days after the bombardment to my mother who stayed elsewhere in the country with relatives. In contrast are texts originating from the regulations from the Air-Defense-Service from 1940. The baritone interprets the perspective before. The soprano describes the events afterwards. They come together in their statements about whether or not to close windows and doors."

TOTAL TIME: 54'

Performed by: Arjan Kik (violinist), Paulus van Kruyssen (violinist), Francesco Vulcano (violinist), Violeta Adamova (violinist), Bert van Laethem (violinist), Camille Rabot (violinist), Nina Zuure (violinist), Melanie van Overbeeke (alt violinist), Michelle Pritchen (alt violinist), Mattijs Roelen (alt violinist), Matthias Naegelle (cellist), Alejandro Sanchez (cellist), Alejandra Rony (contrabassist), Elma Meijer (flutist), Antoine Jansen (bassoonist), Bram Kreeftmeijer (oboist), Thea Rosmulder (clarinetist), Tiny van de Wijdeven (trumpeter), Bart van Gorp (trombonist), Lindy Karreman (hornist), Albert-John Vervorst (percussionist), Cora Dellebeke (percussionist), Vincent Houdijk (percussionist), Rien Balkenende (pianist) and Christian Blaha (conductor).

Manon Clement

'You' as the word

Manon Clement (1997, BE) is a visual artist. She studied Textile Design at the Luca School of Arts in Ghent and obtained her Master's degree. Clement mainly works with the techniques jacquard weaving, industrial knitting and screen printing.

Her work always starts from the word and develops further in the space of textiles. Poetic words are always looking for a tangibility, for a place where they create meaning. By adding words to a material, she involves her viewers in the conceptual meaning of her work. In this way an attempt at dialogue arises.

The ephemeral is a theme that Manon shares with the Food Curators, in which the ephemeral nature of food is explored down to its banality. In this way food is seen as a context to view and purify the material in a different way. There is also a nice connection with the music present, just like words build up a meaning, word by word, music also creates a meaning note by note. The evanescence of sounds are brought together and demarcated in a kind of eternal space that plays with our senses.

Clement's work is mainly about the loss of a word, the loss of a touch, but also the loss of a certain 'you'. This 'you' stands for her father whom she lost a few years ago. In a way, she always tries to include her father in the works. The 'you' in all different senses of the word. 'You' as a supernatural reality. 'You' as an elusive dimension. 'You' as thoughts. 'You' as the word. 'You' as work. 'You' as matter. You as you.

Words connect with textiles and become intertwined in the context and the connotations that textiles have to offer. The word always needs a surface, a space, so as not to get lost in its transience. The materials make words visible and tangible. Words get an existence, they get a space. Without that space, words are lost in their multiplicity and transience. Textiles give space to lost words. Written or printed words acquire an existence. Words are trapped in a defined place from which they cannot escape.

Words and images want to free themselves from transience. These images come from Clement's personal image archive, by making them unrecognizable she can create a distance in the work. The images are also mirrored, this way she can create an eternal place where her words and father can live forever.

The presentation of 'You' as the word as part of the Mostly Modern Festival 2022 will take place in the Music School Zeeland in the Kuiperspoort and in the Oostkerk in Middelburg. For information about the artist and the works mail h.jenkins@centrumkce.nl.