

WIGMORE HALL

Friday 28 June 2024
10.00pm

GBSR Duo

George Barton percussion
Siwan Rhys piano, keyboards

Oliver Leith (b.1990)

good day good day bad day bad day (2018)

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good day good day bad day bad day is a 40-minute work for piano, keyboard and percussion, commissioned by GBSR Duo in 2018. It is a look at the strange things we do to console ourselves in our everyday lives and the rituals and routines that lap through that mundanity. I started to think about this piece after recurring conversations with friends about their heads and how they balm them. More or less all minds filled with the same strange clouds of nerves, love, contradictions, ceremonies, violence, horror, anxieties, illogicalities and crushing dullness. The music, like a line you might repeat to yourself, repeats in and out of meaning or sense. Confusing feelings of comfort and vertigo, in bed on the edge of a cliff.

It unfolds as a murmur of domestic and accidental magic. At the time of writing the piece, Siwan and George lived in this great and compact flat in Homerton - instruments everywhere - we would work together across a bedroom, a vibraphone squeezed in beside cupboards and duets rehearsed in different rooms and across floors. It was always funny to be so close to this sort of music making, to move a lamp out of the way to see a note, to hear musicians this fastidious play amongst their clutter and interior lives. A friendly thing. Sounds are drawn from piles on the floor and accidental noises are absorbed into music. I have always wanted the piece to feel like home; it has always sat on rugs, stagings of home - there was once an instruction that a TV set might sit idly on. On the rug are a saw, pipettes, bottles, water, a waterphone, blown bottles, whistling, an orchestra warming up, a vibraphone, timpanis, swanee whistles, crotales, cymbals, a grand piano, a keyboard, glockenspiel clusters and flexatones. I'm pleased that it finally gets to happen in the most homely and most carpeted house, Wigmore Hall.

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