

WIGMORE HALL

Saturday 30 November 2024

DANIEL KIDANE FOCUS DAY

11.30 am

Daniel Kidane composer
Leonore Piano Trio
Benjamin Nabarro violin
Gemma Rosefield cello
Tim Horton piano

Gary Carpenter (b.1951)

Piano Trio (2011)

Daniel Kidane (b.1986)

Flux and Stasis (2010)

Frank Bridge (1879-1941)

Phantasie Piano Trio in C minor (1907)

*Allegro moderato ma con fuoco - Andante con
molta espressione - Allegro scherzoso -
Andante - Allegro moderato - Con anima*

Daniel Kidane

Lux Perpetua

Commissioned by Wigmore Hall (2024)

Dmitry Shostakovich (1906-1975)

Piano Trio No. 1 in C minor Op. 8 (1923)

CLASSIC *fm* Wigmore Hall £5 tickets for Under 35s supported by Media Partner Classic FM



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My Piano Trio (2011) was written for the Fournier Trio who gave the first performance at Wigmore Hall, London on 17 October 2011. It is a compact, single movement work in two distinct sections; the first being an ethereal and largely reflective meditation rich in piano resonance and string harmonics, the second a fast, driving jig-like dance that makes great play with aggressive pizzicato 'power' chords and privileges a darker, more 'secco' sound world. Both sections share the same musical material and together contain the components that might under other circumstances form a conventional classical trio i.e. 'sonata form', 'lento', 'scherzo' and 'allegro-finale' and both include an interrelated, piano-led lyrical intervention. The transition to the second segment – which comes about one third of the way through the piece – is signposted by a series of repeated violin pizzicato chords handed over to the cello at what is revealed to be the much faster dance tempo.

On the very day I was putting the finishing touches to this piece (22 August 2011), the death of two great pioneering American songwriters was announced and this led to an unplanned and unexpected transformation of one of the trio's prevalent motifs (based on the interval of an augmented fourth) into a small and I hope not irreverent memorial coda. This work was shortlisted for a Royal Philharmonic Society Award in the Chamber Composition Category, 2012.

© Gary Carpenter 2012

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During the summer of 2009 I travelled to Eritrea, East Africa, to collect and record tribal music. On my travels to a place called Massawa, on the coast of the Red Sea, I encountered a mirage in a desolate yet beautiful place. *Flux and Stasis* is a reflection of that moment in time – the changing environment around me and my perception at the centre of it having lost a sense of time. Trying to capture the illusion with my camera I encountered many optical aberrations, which heightened the visual aura of my surroundings. In the distance I could hear bird song, coupled with the heat it began to warp in and out of clarity. With these elements in mind I began work – coupling what I had seen and heard with elements of horn call (called a melekhet) – prolific in the traditional music of the largest ethnic group in Eritrea, the Tigrinya people. The final passage of the trio is a reminiscence of an earlier visit of mine to Eritrea, in my youth – when I couldn't practice Paganini's 9th *Caprice* due to the sweltering heat, which in turn gave me time to work on my first ever composition.

Set across three movements, *Lux Perpetua* (Latin for 'Eternal Light') follows in the footsteps of works such as

Pieces of Light, where a luminous calmness imbues the work. However, in *Lux Perpetua* the calmness is juxtaposed with an energy that progresses and escalates through the movements, urged on by the presence of the piano. One can think of the overall arc of the work as a gradual emergence into light.

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Having discussed the programme with Daniel Kidane some time ago, and before his new work had been completed, we all liked the idea of pairing the new and recent works with pieces written at different times, but which show a kind of context and can be followed through as part of the continuing evolution of compositions for piano trio. Both the Frank Bridge and Shostakovich are remarkable and important works, representing early contributions from both composers.

The Phantasie Trio by **Bridge** was written in 1907 for the prestigious Cobbett Competition, sponsored by the English businessman and music patron, Walter Willson Cobbett. Cobbett had specified the particular musical form, a 'Phantasy', which is through-composed with different sections running seamlessly throughout. Bridge's work uses sonata form exposition and recapitulation, but with a 'slow movement' and scherzo in between. His success in winning the competition was highly significant in terms of Bridge's reputation as a young composer, as well as his musical and stylistic development.

Sixteen years later, the 16-year old **Dmitry Shostakovich** wrote his first piano trio, originally entitled 'Poème'. The work's romantic style is atypical of his eventual maturity, though trademark characteristics are there nonetheless; sudden changes of rhythm, energy and acerbic wit give way to romantic lyricism and powerful climaxes. The opening three-note chromatic motive inspires all of the themes, and, like the Bridge, the piece is written in through-composed form. After an initial private performance at the time, the piece was not published until some six decades later, after the composer's death. Some of the piano part was missing from the various surviving manuscripts, and was added by his pupil Boris Tishchenko. Shostakovich was 45 when Gary Carpenter was born in 1951. The prolific output from both composers includes several notable film scores.

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DANIEL KIDANE FOCUS DAY

3.00pm

Daniel Kidane composer

Gabriella Teychenné conductor

Birmingham Contemporary Music Group

Helen Benson flute

Anthony Howe trombone

Georgia Hannant violin

Melinda Maxwell oboe

Kyle Horch tenor saxophone

Chris Yates viola

Oliver Janes clarinet

John Reid piano

Arthur Boutillier violoncello

Jonathan Bareham horn

Julian Warburton percussion

Julian Atkinson double bass

Ryan Linham trumpet

Colette Overdijk violin

Elgan Llŷr Thomas tenor

Pétur Jónasson guitar

Daniel Kidane

Winged (2019)

Pulsing (2016)

Rebecca Saunders (b.1967)

a visible trace (2006)

Daniel Kidane

Cradle Song (2023)

Primitive Blaze (2022)

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Winged draws inspiration from startling murmurations – the flocking together of birds to create a magical ballet in the sky. I have wanted to write this piece for quite some time, but I always knew that it would require resonance to capture the fluttering sound world I had swirling around in my mind's ear. The type of resonance produced by amplified string instruments was what I was after, harnessing the natural decay of sound when a bowed instrument is played. Coupled with the resonant string quartet, an instrument that sounds only through amplification – the electric guitar. The cumulative ensemble seeks to recreate the expanse of the sky, where the coming together of these birds happens.

Pulsing explores the idea of migration and evokes the energy and drive behind such a move. A topic that is close to my own existence in the UK and also a relevant subject to today's happenings across Europe. Throughout the work, energetic instrumental passages are coupled with vocal interludes – the text taken from a poem by Zimbabwean poet Zodwa Nyoni, titled *Blessing at Dawn*. The flux between visceral and pensive sections, throughout the piece, acts to heighten the turbulent nature and instability brought on by shifts that lead to upheaval.

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Daniel's pieces, *Winged* and *Primitive Blaze*, very much have a natural flow, playing around with various subdivisions of the metre; so to achieve sound as well as rhythmical effect. The same can be said of **Rebecca Saunders's** a *visible trace*, though she's obviously coming from a different angle: in her music, which Daniel likes a lot, and therefore is included, the rhythmic expressivity

flows from, and out of, sound, and, so to speak, particles of sound, from a slightly darker and perhaps more mysterious place. Visuality plays a role in this, not only in the titles of the works.

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Named after William Blake's poem *Cradle Song*, my work, at its heart, is a lullaby. The poem is part of Blake's *Songs of Innocence*. My initial idea was to juxtapose the word 'innocence' to reflect the tempestuous sleep that babies have and that I've experienced in the last couple of years of being a father and so the work alternates between active and dulcet, replicating the ups and downs of a night.

Primitive Blaze is named after and inspired by Bridget Riley's artwork that goes by the same name. I was immediately drawn in and captivated by the bold geometric monochrome chevrons in Riley's work that to me conjure visions of a raucous and roaring inferno. I immediately started to think of an audio equivalent of the visual and what that may sound like. I knew I wanted the soundworld to be grungy and bold. The boldness is delivered through relentless doubling, especially in the matching saxophone and electric guitar solo parts. The idea was to create a hybrid sounding instrument, by splicing the two instruments together. The grunginess comes from the constant movement and interplay between the instruments, which seeks to capture the playfulness of the flames.

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Daniel Kidane (b.1986)

Pulsing (2016)

Zodwa Nyoni

The morning we were bound
For that ocean crossing umcolo happened ...

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Daniel Kidane

Cradle Song (2023)

William Blake

When He was an infant small.
Wept for me, for thee, for all,
Weave thy brows an infant crown!
Thy Maker lay, and wept for me:
Thou His image ever see,
Sweet smiles, mother's smiles,
Sweet smiles, in the night
Sweet Sleep, with soft down
Sweet Sleep, angel mild,
Sweet moans, sweeter smiles,
Sweet moans, dovelike sighs,
Sweet dreams, form a shade
Sweet dreams of pleasant streams,
Sweet babe, once like thee
While o'er thee thy mother weep.
Sweet babe, in thy face
Sleep, sleep, happy sleep,
Sleep, sleep, happy child!
O'er my lovely infant's head,
Infant smiles are His own smiles;
Hover over my delight!
Hover o'er my happy child!
Holy image I can trace;
Heavenly face that smiles on thee!
Heaven and earth to peace beguiles.
Chase not slumber from thy eyes!
By happy, silent, moony beams!
All the livelong night beguiles.
All the dovelike moans beguiles.
All creation slept and smiled.
Smiles on thee, on me, on all,
Who became an infant small;

DANIEL KIDANE FOCUS DAY

7.30pm

Daniel Kidane composer

Manchester Camerata

Caroline Pether violin I	Gemma Bass violin II	Hannah Roberts cello
Tom Aldren violin I	Coco Inman violin II	Chris Murray cello
Sophie McQueen violin I	Edward Pether violin II	Graham Morris cello
Joy Becker violin I	Alex Mitchell viola	Diane Clark double bass
Roman Lytwyniw violin I	Alistair Vennart viola	Janet Fulton percussion
William Newell violin II	Rebecca Stubbs viola	Charlotte Turner harpsichord

Mahan Esfahani harpsichord
Jonian Ilias Kadesha violin

Daniel Kidane

Sublime Light (2020)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Towards Resolution (2009)

Concerto in A minor for violin, strings and continuo BWV1041 (c.1730)

I. • II. Andante • III. Allegro assai

Daniel Kidane

Movements (2021)

I. As if emerging from a haze • II. With drive and energy • III. Meditatively • IV. Lively

Breathe (2022)

Interval

Daniel Kidane

Veiled Light (2020)

Johann Sebastian Bach

Foreign Tongues (2015)

Fantasia from *Fantasia and Fugue in C minor* BWV906

Concerto in E for violin, strings and continuo BWV1042 (by 1730)

I. Allegro • II. Adagio • III. Allegro assai

Daniel Kidane

Be Still (2020)

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Daniel is an artist who is part of our Camerata family and someone we have worked with for over a decade. Watching his incredible skill and craft grow has been a complete pleasure.

We first worked with Daniel back in 2009 whilst he was studying at the RNCM, commissioning his piece *Towards Resolution*, which was inspired by the opening of Henry Purcell's first three-part *Fantasia*. Subsequently, almost 10 years later during the COVID-19 pandemic, we commissioned Daniel again to write for us. This time, the result was *Be Still*, a piece written in direct response to the passing of time during the months in which the nation was under lockdown. *Be Still* has been performed by Manchester Camerata across the UK, and internationally in Tallinn, Estonia, to great critical acclaim.

This concert is a fantastic weaving of old and new. Daniel has always had a love for Baroque music, with many pieces in this concert being influenced by this period. In his own words: 'JS Bach also happens to be one of my favourite composers with his level of invention and mastery bringing me back to him time and time again... Plus, as a former violinist, I very much enjoyed playing JS Bach, so this is a sound world that I grew up loving'. You can definitely hear these influences in Daniel's work today.

He recently sat on the interview panel for our Camerata 360 Fellowship – helping the next generation of musicians and composers, as we had the opportunity to do for Daniel many moons ago. It's an honour to be celebrating Daniel's work with you today at Wigmore Hall, and I look forward to many more years of working with Daniel.

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Kidane's three *Pieces of Light*, which include *Sublime Light* and *Veiled Light*, were all written in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown period. *Sublime Light* for solo violin is an adaptation of the longer *Dappled Light* for two violins which aims to represent light coming through after a dark period of time. *Veiled Light* for solo violin is a musical postcard from Seattle, a city which, due to travel restrictions at the time of composing the work, Kidane was unable to visit. It is inspired by the Hudson River School painters and their style of landscape painting.

Movements for harpsichord and strings consists of four contrasting movements, purposely blending old and new ideas that reflect the harpsichord's versatility as an instrument through the ages. The first movement has hints of a 16th-century fantasia, which then moves to the

second movement that has more of a minimalistic flavour. The hushed, more introverted third movement sets the stage for a more extrovert final movement, which nods at the *folia* musical theme.

Breathe invites you to immerse yourself in an effortlessly still sound world, willing the listener to perhaps pause and reflect, breaking from the fast-paced world we live in today. 'As if emerging from a haze', Kidane writes at the start of the score; even then, *Breathe* takes a while to emerge from its slumber. When it eventually shudders into life, something surprising comes into view: a host of carefully interwoven melodies, bathed in light, harking back to a bygone time.

Foreign Tongues explores a different way of looking at the standard string quartet setup. Envisaged as a work where the cello is pitted against the rest of the string players, the piece aims to explore the idea of different languages communicating and interacting with each other, sometimes at the same time. This idea stems from my own multilingual and multicultural background and seeks to look at these interactions I experienced growing up. In a more general sense, the piece also acts to highlight the importance of multiculturalism and the need for open-mindedness towards other cultures.

Written towards the end of 2020, *Be Still* is a reflective piece on the year gone by. In a year where lockdowns became a thing, the idea of time became more apparent to me as everyday markers, such as meeting with friends and family, travelling or attending concerts, vanished. Whilst writing *Be Still* the opening lines of TS Eliot's *Burnt Norton*, the first of his *Four Quartets*, came to mind:

*Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future
And time future contained in time past.
If all time is eternally present
All time is unredeemable.*

And as I look back at the year and attempt to fix in my mind events, they slither away from my grasp – like clouds passing by in the sky.

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