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Simon BAINBRIDGE

(1952-2021)



Photo credit: Andrew Palmer

Simon Bainbridge, 1952-2021, was born in London. He studied composition with John Lambert at the Royal College of Music and with Gunther Schuller at Tanglewood. The success of Bainbridge's *Spirogyra* at the 1971 Aldeburgh Festival led to a string quartet being written for the legendary Yale Quartet, commissioned by André Previn for the 1972 South Bank Summer Music Festival.

A series of large-scale works followed during the 1980s and 90s, including *Fantasia for Double Orchestra* (1983), *Double Concerto* (1990), *Toccata for Orchestra* (1992), the horn concerto *Landscape and Memory* (1995) and *Three Pieces for*

Orchestra (1998). In 1997 Bainbridge won the Grawemeyer Award for *Ad Ora Incerta* (1994), an orchestral song cycle for mezzo-soprano and bassoon on poems by Primo Levi. The composer returned to the writer's work in 1996 in his *Four Primo Levi Settings* composed for the Nash Ensemble. Both works were recorded by NMC Records.

Chant, a re-working of *Hildegard of Bingen* for 12 amplified voices and orchestra, was given its premiere in York Minster by the BBC Singers and BBC Philharmonic in 1999. In celebration of its seventieth anniversary in 2000, the BBC Symphony Orchestra commissioned *Scherzi*. The piece was subsequently performed at the Last Night of the BBC Proms in 2005 and by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra in 2007, conducted by Oliver Knussen. *Voiles* (2002), for solo bassoon and 12 strings, was commissioned by Radio France for soloist Pascal Gallois, and performed by him in France and the UK. *Orpheus*, a short song setting the poetry of WH Auden, was premiered at the 2006 Aldeburgh Festival.

In February 2007 the BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by David Robertson gave the first performance of *Diptych*, a thirty-minute work described by the Independent as "music that fascinates by its quietly mutating colours and almost heroic restraint". In 2007 Bainbridge completed *Music Space Reflection*, a work for 28 players inspired by and intended to be performed inside buildings designed by architect Daniel Libeskind. Following its premiere at the Imperial War Museum in Manchester the piece was performed in Copenhagen, London and Toronto. Bainbridge's later works included a piano trio for the US-based Gramercy Trio, *Two Trios* for the thirtieth anniversary of the

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Endymion Ensemble, *Tenebrae*, a setting of Paul Celan premiered by the Hilliard Ensemble and Arditti Quartet, *Concerti Grossi* for Northern Sinfonia and *The Garden of Earthly Delights* commissioned for performance at the BBC Proms 2012.

Simon Bainbridge received a Professorship from the University of London in 2001. He was Head of Composition from 1999-2007 and continued as a Senior Professor in Composition. He taught and lectured at the Juilliard School in New York, the Boston Conservatory of Music, Yale University and the New England Conservatory of Music. In 2009, he had a residency at Yonsei University in Seoul, South Korea. Autumn 2015 saw the world premiere of his new String Quartet and in late November, the first performance of a new double bass concerto for the famous jazz bassist Eddie Gomez and the Britten Sinfonia was performed at the Barbican as part of the London Jazz Festival.

PRESS QUOTES

"... some of the most ambitious and daring British works of recent times."

Matthew Rye – *The Telegraph*

"What always makes this composer's works so rewarding is the clarity of texture, the purposefulness of direction. He selects material that remains recognisable throughout the work. There's not a hint of intellectual showing-off, just an inexorable sense of logic enhanced by unabashed lyricism."

Annette Morreau – *The Independent*

LIST OF WORKS

LARGE ENSEMBLE

"Counterpoints" (2015)

16'

for solo jazz double bass and ensemble
solo double bass, fl. 1 (=picc.=a.fl.), fl. 2 (=a.fl.=b.fl.), ob.
(=c.a.=ob.d'a.) cl. 1 (=b.cl.) cl. 2 (=b.cl.), bsn. (=cbsn.) / hrn.,
2 tpt., tbn. (=b.tbn.) / hp., pf., 2 perc. / 2.2.2.0
first performance: Eddie Gomez (double bass), Britten
Sinfonia, cond. Kristjan Järvi, Milton Court, London, 18th
November 2015.

ISMN M 57036 672 9

score: £20.95

ISMN M 57036 673 6

performance materials for hire

CHOIR, ACCOMPANIED

Psalm 23 (2013)

9'

for SATB soli, SATB choir and marimba
first performance: Platinum Consort, Calum Huggan
(marimba), Scott Inglis-Kidger (director), Holy Trinity
Church, Sloane Square, London, 27th September 2014.

ISMN M 57036 674 3

choral score: £2.95

ISMN M 57036 675 0

marimba part: £5.95