

14 September 2015

PRESS RELEASE

**New Music Players:
150 years of Alice in Wonderland and 5 world premieres**

Thursday 24 September 2015 at 7pm

Meeting House, University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton BN1 9RH

Friday 25 September 2015 at 7.30pm

The Warehouse, 13 Theed Street, Waterloo, London SE1 8ST

Tickets on the door £10, concession £6 (free for under 16)
All tickets half price for University of Sussex students and staff

New Music Players mark 150 years since the publication of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* with two concerts of new music for very early silent film by founder and artistic director Ed Hughes plus four new works for ensemble by postgraduate composers at the University of Sussex.

- World premiere of Ed Hughes's *Alice in Wonderland* and *Voyage to the Moon* at University of Sussex on 24 September 2015
- Four new works by University of Sussex postgraduate composers Danny Bright, Barnaby Hollington, Tom Reid and Lee Westwood
- London premiere of Ed Hughes's *Night Music* with pianist Richard Casey

Ed Hughes's work over the last decade has been influenced by music and the moving image, and in particular responses to silent film. Two new works extend this interest to very early and iconic films from England and France, Cecil Hepworth and Percy Stow's 'Alice and Wonderland' (1903) and George Méliès's 'Voyage to the Moon' (1902) which both in different ways explore ideas of fantasy and the dreamworld, also common to Ed Hughes's recent opera 'When the Flame Dies'.

In Hughes's *Night Music*, for solo piano and live electronics, the virtuoso and often dissonant soundworld of the piano is counterpointed with pure electronic sounds, and archive film from the aerial campaign conducted by the allies in the second world war: the intention is to revisit these difficult images in order to obtain a nuanced and reflective appreciation of their moral complexity, through the use of music and silent film.

Danny Bright's Branch Lines is one of a number of works that explore notions of 'sonic ghosting' in relation to place, memory, and temporality. The composition responds to the experience of visiting Causey Arch, near Tanfield in County Durham, and its subsequent echoes, semblances and apparitions.

Barnaby Hollington's Nevermore explores the boundary between tonality and so-called 'atonality' or 'post-tonality'. The primary focus is melodic and harmonic.

New Music Players

3 Morley Close, Lewes, E Sussex BN7 1NQ tel/fax: 01273 470068

info@newmusicplayers.org.uk www.newmusicplayers.org.uk

Registered Charity No.1052457



the new music players

In that regard, there are numerous, disparate, very specific technical influences: Gesualdo, Mozart, Milhaud, Krenek, Messiaen, Boulez, Donatoni, Benjamin...

Tom Reid's *The Hammer Revisited* derives harmonic and melodic material from the first three bars of *Avant L'Artisanat Furieux* ('Before the Furious Craftsmanship'), from *Le Marteau sans Maître* ('The Hammer Unleashed') by Pierre Boulez. The rhythmic ideas were conceived independently, with syncopated gestures and dotted dance rhythms especially prominent. In the middle section, two pulsating melodic patterns emerge - one improvisatory, the other more premeditated - and unfold at conflicting speeds. The slow pedal bass implies a third tempo, creating further disruption.

Lee Westwood writes about his **...and the stars were like pinpricks in the black fabric of night...** : According to Medieval scholars, the stars were believed to be holes in the firmament, through which could be seen an all-encompassing fire. This firmament formed the last of the seven celestial orbs, a static outer layer, the remaining six rotating at different rates and distances around the Earth, carrying with them what appeared as the Sun, Moon and planets. The voices in this work could be viewed as a musical metaphor for those holes through which light is let through, flickering at different rates/speeds/distances as they encircle the listener: 8 of the pitches are fixed, 4 are 'in orbit', those larger heavenly bodies often shining brighter than the rest. Through this process I have tried to endow the music with, if not timelessness, then a certain temporal elasticity, weightless, as if suspended in space outside of normal time.

For further press information and images please contact:
Liz Webb Management
Email: lizwebbmanagement@gmail.com
Tel: 01273 470068 or 07952 007837
www.lizwebb.org.uk

Notes to Editors

Links to films:

Alice in Wonderland: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zeIXfdogJbA>
Voyage to the Moon: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BNLZntSdyKE>

Listings

Thursday 24 September 2015 at 7pm

Meeting House, University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton BN1 9RH
Tickets: £10 (students £6) available on the door

Friday 25 September 2015 at 7.30pm

The Warehouse, 13 Theed Street, Waterloo, London SE1 8ST
Tickets: £10 (students and under 16s £6) available
<http://www.wegotickets.com/newmusicplayers> or on the door

New Music Players

3 Morley Close, Lewes, E Sussex BN7 1NQ tel/fax: 01273 470068
info@newmusicplayers.org.uk www.newmusicplayers.org.uk
Registered Charity No.1052457



the new music players

Performers:

Rowland Sutherland, flute
Fiona Cross, clarinet
Katie Stillman, violin
Joe Giddey, cello
Richard Casey, piano

Programme:

Ed Hughes	Night Music (25 September: London premiere)
Ed Hughes	Alice in Wonderland (world premiere)
Barnaby Hollington	Nevermore (world premiere)
Danny Bright	Branch Lines (world premiere)
Tom Reid	The Hammer Revisited (world premiere)
Lee Westwood	...and the stars were like pinpricks in the black fabric of night... (world premiere)
Ed Hughes	Voyage to the Moon (world premiere)

Biographies

New Music Players was founded by Ed Hughes in 1990. The ensemble has presented concerts in the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, the Brighton Festival and other prestigious concert series, held residencies at York, Bristol and Nottingham Universities and broadcast regularly on BBC Radio 3.

The ensemble features some of the UK's finest musicians; core members are also members of the BBC Symphony Orchestra; Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden; Manchester Camerata; the English Chamber Orchestra; Psappha; and a wide variety of early music ensembles and jazz bands.

Projects have included UK tours featuring Ed Hughes's scores for Eisenstein's silent films *Battleship Potemkin* and *Strike* and an event at Kings Place exploring music and photography with three world and one UK premiere and a collaboration with the Imperial War Museum. Events in 2015 include a UK and European tour with Richard Casey and Joseph Houston, pianists, and Ed Hughes, electronics featuring works by Ligeti, Hughes and Harvey, and concerts and workshops as part of the University of Oxford's New Music Week.

New Music Players feature on several recordings including a world première recording of five New Music Players commissions on the London Independent Records label, a disc of works by Jo Kondo and two discs of music by Ed Hughes on Metier: 'Dark Formations' and his opera 'When the Flame Dies'. They perform Ed Hughes's scores for Eisenstein's films *Battleship Potemkin* and *Strike* on a DVD box set released by Tartan Video, and on several silent films by Japanese director Ozu as part of a series released by the BFI featuring new scores by Ed Hughes.

Ed Hughes (born Bristol, UK, 1968) studied at Cambridge University with Robin Holloway and Alexander Goehr, and at Southampton University with Michael Finnissy. His work has been described as 'polyphonic, clear and unique' (Richard Casey, pianist). Commissions include City of London Festival (an opera to a libretto by Glyn Maxwell, [The Birds](#), for The Opera Group), Brighton Festival, I

New Music Players

3 Morley Close, Lewes, E Sussex BN7 1NQ tel/fax: 01273 470068

info@newmusicplayers.org.uk www.newmusicplayers.org.uk

Registered Charity No.1052457

Fagiolini, Glyndebourne, Tacet Ensemble and London Sinfonietta. Performances include City of London Festival, Buxton Opera House, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Linbury Studio Theatre, Jerusalem Music Centre, Salamanca Festival, Sydney Festival, BBC Singers and a number of BBC Radio 3 broadcasts. His 'Chaconne for Jonathan Harvey' won a British Composer Award in the Liturgical category in 2014.

Auditorium (2007) for Glyndebourne and Photoworks, an orchestral and electronics score arising from a collaboration with visual artist Sophy Rickett, was performed live at Glyndebourne in November 2007, and continues to tour internationally. Compositions for the New Music Players, the ensemble he founded and directs, include **Chamber Concerto** (2010) at Kings Place London (Out Hear series). He has written several ensemble scores for iconic silent films of the early twentieth century including Ivens's **Regen**, Eisenstein's **Battleship Potemkin** and **Strike** (Tartan Video 2007) and a series of scores for the BFI's Ozu Collection. He has been shortlisted twice for the British Composer Awards (categories New Media 2005; and Sonic Art 2008). His choral work, **A Buried Flame** (2010), was commissioned by the Bath Camerata for Wells Cathedral with the support of PRS Foundation. It was selected for performance at the 2012 ISCM World Music Days in Antwerp by Aquarius Chamber Choir. A CD, **Dark Formations**, was released in 2012 in the USA on the Metier label. **When The Flame Dies**, a chamber opera, was given its concert premiere at the 2012 Canterbury Festival by Sounds New, and released on CD/DVD by Metier in 2013. His music is published by University of York Music Press. He is Head of Music Department at the University of Sussex.

"This is a valuable survey of a composer whose unorthodox and resourceful music deserves to be better known; his reputation has unquestionably been enhanced by this release."

Paul Conway, Tempo 1 August 2013 on Dark Formations CD [Metier msv28530]

www.edhughes.org.uk

Danny Bright is a composer and sonic manipulator working across the fields of music, performance, installation, theatre, and media. His work has appeared at the Hatton Gallery, Prague Quadrennial, New York City Electroacoustic Music Festival, V&A, and toured the UK, Europe, Australia and the USA. Commissions and supporting organisations include: Catalyst Arts, Arts Council England, Heritage Lottery Fund, and the AHRC as funder of his doctoral research in Music at the University of Sussex.

Barnaby Hollington was born in Norwich, UK in 1975. He grew up mainly in Australia and France, but returned to Britain in 1993 to study music at New College, Oxford and then composition at the Royal College of Music. Current projects include *Velvet Revolution* for large ensemble, written through Sound and Music's 'Next Wave' project. *Velvet Revolution* has recently been recorded by the London Sinfonietta, and is due to be released by NMC Recordings soon. He is studying for a PhD in composition with Martin Butler at University of Sussex.

Tom Reid has had commissions from The Riot Ensemble and the Heath String Quartet, amongst others. His main areas of interest are experimental film/media composition and integrating rock/pop materials into classical structures. He is

New Music Players

3 Morley Close, Lewes, E Sussex BN7 1NQ tel/fax: 01273 470068

info@newmusicplayers.org.uk www.newmusicplayers.org.uk

Registered Charity No.1052457

studying for a PhD in musical composition with Ed Hughes and Nicholas Till at University of Sussex.

Described by the Musician's Union as "one of the UK's most exciting and versatile musicians", **Lee Westwood** is a guitarist and composer whose wide-ranging output stems from a long-term tenacity for musical exploration. His works range from the multimedia Music-Geometry exhibition 'A Hidden Order', to a vast back-catalogue of intimate works for solo guitar; from headlining festivals with Hip-Hop and Prog/Folk groups, to commissions from some of the UK's leading ensembles and choirs.

Hughes recordings on Metier:

Ed Hughes Dark Formations (Metier msv 28530)

'a valuable survey of a composer whose unorthodox and resourceful music deserves to be better known' Paul Conway *Tempo*
'a contemporary British contrapuntalist of unique originality and instrumental flair... irresistible' *Musical Pointers*
<http://www.divine-art.co.uk/CD/28530info.htm>

Ed Hughes When the Flame Dies (Metier msv 77203)

'Hughes's music fizzes with invention, deriving maximum colour from his small band. There is a Stravinskian sparkle and athleticism to the writing' Leo Chadburn *Tempo*
'one of the more arresting and distinctive chamber operas to have emerged in the UK over recent years' Richard Whitehouse *International Record Review*
<http://www.divine-art.co.uk/CD/77203info.htm>

New Music Players

3 Morley Close, Lewes, E Sussex BN7 1NQ tel/fax: 01273 470068

info@newmusicplayers.org.uk www.newmusicplayers.org.uk

Registered Charity No.1052457