

LANGBEIN STRING QUARTET

David Mellowy

Michael Milon

Deon Giese

Christopher Moore (Guest)

Quentin D. Grant

Julie Ezequielis

String Trio No 2

Susan Randall

Brenton Langbein

The Fields of Sorrow

Tessa Miller

Raymond Chapman Smith

String Trio No 2

Franz Schubert

String Trio in B-flat Major, D. 501

THE FIRM

SERIES 2002

LANGBEIN STRING QUARTET

Michael Milton	violin 1
Christopher Moore (guest)	violin 2
Juris Ezergailis	viola
Sarah Denbigh	cello
with	
Tessa Miller	soprano

MONDAY JULY 22, 2002

David Kotlowy

Moon, perse

Quentin S.D. Grant

String Trio No.3

Brenton Langbein

The Fields of Sorrow

Raymond Chapman Smith

String Trio No.2

Franz Schubert

String Trio in B-flat Major, D.581

David Kotlowy
Moon, perse

Although its light is wide and great, the moon is reflected even in a puddle an inch wide. The whole moon and the entire sky are reflected in dewdrops on the grass, or even in one drop of water. Each reflection manifests the vastness of the dewdrop, and realizes the limitlessness of the moonlight in the sky.
Eihei Dogen Kigen (b. 1200)

The usual Japanese character for moon is *tsuki*. In his writings, Dogen also writes the word with two characters, *tsu*, meaning 'entire' and *ki*, meaning 'possibility' or 'capacity'. So although it has the same pronunciation, the word may also mean something like 'undivided activity'.

It is clear that musical works have temporal structures, and that they also involve spatial elements that we perceive through pitch, timbre and density. Music not only possesses a 'currently ongoing time', but also another imaginative time, a 'narrative curve'. When this curve is large, time is linear, and music flows onward. If we probe the intimate rising and falling curve of our breath, time is circular and the eternal present gushes forth. We notice that the 'now' includes notated sounds as well as those unintended. We notice that mental and physical reactions come and go, "like clouds in the empty sky".

It is not licit to speak of the form of the moon or its color: its form and color are the moon. Neither can one speak of the mind's perceptions, inasmuch as the mind is nothing but a series of perceptions.
Jorge Luis Borges (b. 1899)

It is always now; there are as many different nows as there are people.

Quentin S.D. Grant
String Trio No.3

As I was reading works by Austrian expressionist poet Georg Trakl (1887-1914) during the writing of this darkly expressionist work a poem by him might serve as a good accompaniment.

De Profundis

It is a stubble field, where a black rain is falling.
It is a brown tree, that stands alone.
It is a hissing wind, that encircles empty houses.
How melancholy the evening is.

Beyond the village,
The soft orphan garners the sparse ears of corn.
Her eyes graze, round and golden, in the twilight
And her womb awaits the heavenly bridegroom.

On the way home
The shepherd found the sweet body
Decayed in a bush of thorns.

I am a shadow far from darkening villages.
I drank the silence of God
Out of the stream in the trees.

Cold metal walks on my forehead

Spiders search for my heart.
It is a light that goes out in my mouth.

At night, I found myself in a pasture,
Covered with rubbish and the dust of stars.
In a hazel thicket
Angels of crystal rang out once more.

(translated by James Wright)

Brenton Langbein The Fields of Sorrow

Medieval Latin Lyrics, Translated by Helen Wadell

Langbein was a young musician only recently settled in Zürich, Switzerland, when he wrote these song settings in 1955. Only one of the songs has been performed previously (in the piano version) making tonight's performance a world première.

Manuscript of Beauvais O lovely restless eyes

O lovely restless eyes
that speak in language's respite!
For there sits beauty,
and the little loves between them dwells delight.

Manuscript of St. Remy at Rheims

Young and goldhaired fair of face thou gav'st me
tender kisses in my sleep.
If waking I may never look upon thee,
O sleep I pray you, never let me wake.

The Fields of Sorrow

They wander in deep woods, in mournful light,
amid long reeds, and drowsy headed poppies,
And lakes where no wave laps,
And voiceless streams,
Upon whose banks in the dim light grow old,
flowers that were once bewailed names of Kings.

Raymond Chapman Smith
String Trio No.2

Largo - Moderato

Adagio

Vivace, ma non troppo

Largo - Allegro molto

String Trio No.2 was composed in 1998, partly in response to my first acquaintance with Hanns Eisler's remarkable, early chamber music and, to some degree, as an abreaction (a release of mental tension after an unpleasant experience) to my witnessing a performance of Brian Ferneyhough's recent, thirty minute utterance in this medium.

The six movements of my String Trio are played without a break and comprise four, very compact relatives of familiar, catalogued forms and a muted, relatively long, Largo which precedes the first and last movements. The work is around ten minutes in duration.

As to its content and/or meaning, I will take refuge in Kierkegaard's aphorism that "Music expresses the immediate in its immediacy".

Franz Schubert
String Trio in B-flat Major, D.581

Andante

Menuetto: Allegretto

Schubert's String Trio D. 581 was written in September, 1817, a year after his first surviving attempt at the form; a fragment, also in B flat. The divertimento character of this music is characteristic of the medium and also indicates that it was intended for the domestic performance environment that gave rise to many of Schubert's early chamber works.

On this occasion we hear the trio's central movements: a relaxed Andante which gives the violin a prominent role, and a Minuet that, as well as showing many signs of the composer's distinctive personal manner, features a trio section where the viola, Schubert's own chamber music instrument, takes centre stage.

The **Langbein String Quartet** is an invention of the Firm, in recognition of the late Brenton Langbein – violinist of international repute; friend and mentor to many South Australian composers and musicians, and a composer whose works we are just beginning to appreciate.

Brenton was a great advocate for new music and the Langbein Quartet will focus on the performance of recent compositions alongside quartets by some of Australia's senior composers and a necessary sprinkling of pieces from the broader repertoire.

The establishment of this ensemble is also an acknowledgment of the commitment and superb musicianship of the leading Adelaide Symphony Orchestra players with whom we have been privileged to work with in recent years.

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