

Bas Wiegiers

A conductor's view on Saunders, Poppe, Lachenmann

In his talk Bas Wiegiers will discuss following questions:

- Understanding the language of a composer
- How important it is to work personally with composers
- What the music of Poppe, Lachenmann, Saunders means to me
- How to work with musicians to make them understand the music

Mark Barden

Noise and Fragility in the works of Lachenmann, Poppe, and Saunders

An investigation into aesthetic similarities and contrasts in the approach to quiet, fragile sounds. We begin by identifying some fundamental characteristics of Lachenmann's *musique concrète instrumentale* and trace these concerns and their development in recent works by Enno Poppe and Rebecca Saunders, two leading exponents of New Music in Germany.

Helmut Lachenmann

The role of art, superfluous and indispensable (Die Rolle der Kunst, überflüssig und unverzichtbar)

Perhaps the composer, suffused with creative impulses, should be spared an intellectual examination either of what exactly he does when he “does” composition; or of what he brings about, or what he brings into being. To impute to him a preoccupation (from an external viewpoint) with the details and principles of his thinking - both in regards to the stylistic but also the social situation in which he is working - may have a paralysing effect. Especially as it may threaten to degenerate into philosophical dilettantism.

However, set against these concerns is the observation that the creative process, and the social rôle of the composer in the discourse of everyday cultural life, are made to seem (quite misleadingly) trivial and mysterious. And this seems calamitous to me. Calamitous in particular where music defies the expectations of a cultural sector (despite any claims to openmindedness) which is largely focused on and dominated by commerce. It seems that this music needs to justify both its own existence and that of those institutions which serve as its intermediaries. These institutions cost money; and as soon as economic conditions endanger them, they have to fight for their own preservation - while the composers concerned look on, as if in a dream.

Mark Barden

Recent Compositions

A look at the role of the Body in the performance, audition, and composition of recent works for ensemble, strings, and piano. In *aMass* we will look at a personal noise aesthetic that uses objects on metal music stands and extremely slow bowing on amplified strings. In *cleft* for violin and cello, a near-constant sublayer of virtually inaudible pitches is perforated with virtuosic outbursts that explore the threshold between unisono and quasi unisono writing, and



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the inherent disturbances of this particular physical relationship. *Études 1–3* are equally studies in composition and pianistic technique that call on Barden's history as a concert pianist. A special concern of the first two works is the precisely mirrored choreography of the hands, which has specific harmonic and technical implications.