

York Höller



York Höller Photo © Thorsten Heidemann

SOLO INSTRUMENT(S) AND ORCHESTRA

Fanal

1989, rev.1996/97

18 min

for trumpet and small orchestra

2.2(II=corA).2(II=bcl).2(II=dbn)
-2.0.2.1-perc(2):glsp/vib/xylorimba/t.bells/2tam-t/5cym/3wdbl/5tom-t/SD/TD/BD-pft-synth(Yamaha DX7II)-harp-strings(3.0.2.2.1)

"The image of a flame, leaping high or slowly dying, lies behind the work, and John Wallace's account was a brilliant pyrotechnical display. The music of Höller – and this work in particular – deserves to be heard much more often." (Barry Millington, The Times, 14 May 1997)

9790060113741 **Study Score - Hawkes Pocket Score1364**

World Premiere: 17 Jun 1991

Auditorium des Halles, Paris, France

Jean-Jacques Gaudon, trumpet; Ensemble InterContemporain

Conductor: Hans Zender

Pensées

(Piano Concerto No.2)

1990–93

30 min

Requiem for piano, large orchestra and electronics

solo pft(MIDI grand);
3(III=picc).2.corA.2.bcl.2.dbn-4.3.3.1-timp.perc(5/6):xyl/marimba/vib/crot/glsp/gongs(different sizes)/6cym(different sizes)/3tam-t(different sizes)/2SD(snares on & snares off)/BD/t.bells/tom-t(lo)/wdbl(lo)/maracas/TD(snares off)/bell tree-harp-synth(Yamaha SY77 or SY99 with expander & 'Synthworks' software)-computer(Macintosh with 'Max' software)-4-channel tape with 4loudspeakers,mixing desk-strings(14.12.10.8.6)

World Premiere: 11 Jun 1993

Philharmonie, Köln, Germany

Pi-hsien Chen, piano; Kölner Rundfunk-Sinfonie-Orchester

Conductor: Hans Zender

SOLO INSTRUMENT(S) AND ORCHESTRA 1

Piano Concerto No.1

1983/84

18 min

2(II=picc).2.2(II=bcl).2(II=dbn)
-4.3.3.0-perc(3):timp/crot/glsp/t.bells/2vib/xylorimba/2wdbl/tgl/3cym(hi)/2tam-t-harp-cel-strings(12.10.8.8.6)

World Premiere: 03 Dec 1985

Royal Festival Hall, London, United Kingdom

Peter Donohoe, piano; BBC Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: Elgar Howarth

SOLO INSTRUMENT(S) AND ORCHESTRA 1

Widerspiel

1999

27 min

Concerto for two pianos and orchestra

3(III=picc).2.corA.2.bcl.2.dbn-4.3.3.1-timp.perc(3):3tam-t(sm,med,lg)/crot/3wdbl/3tom-t/marimba/xy/2bongo/vib/cym(lg)/claves/t.bells/SD/BD/TD/3bowed cym/tgl/sleigh bells/tamb-harp-strings

"The work, which was performed for the first time under the direction of James Conlon, has three movements, all of them rich in variation, and was developed out of one 'Klanggestalt', a series of 23 notes. Though strictly structured, the impression of this double concerto is dominated by its sensual sonic events; large parts of it even seem to have a narrative attitude: as though a group could be heard as the background against which individuals make more or less strongly marked utterances, passing on arguments or failing in an attempt to communicate, trying to interrupt and drown each other. Scenes with marginal groups (down to the double bassoon) and rhetorical intrigues. Tumultuous passages alternate with quiet discursive ones. From this musical political landscape emerge the twin peaks of two pianos that are continually drawn back into the tutti, only to come forward once again each time. Elena Bashkurova and Brigitte Engerer brilliantly battled their way through the tricky rhythmic structures and created the necessary clarity of the main lines.

Although York Höller did not have a set agenda and denies that his work is influenced by emotional associations or even landscape images, the score of Widerspiel seem to suggest a view out of an airplane window. The finer or more glaring nuances of colour and structural differences of the surfaces which are mostly clearly separated and hardly ever mingle into each other create basic patterns from which the dominant lineaments stand out sharply and piercingly. The rich variations in the linear movements, the counteractions and interplays, the sophisticated linkages of the two solo parts and the way they are embedded into an overall sound which is constantly brought into a different balance, all give intellectual pleasure. Höller said he wanted to write nothing but 'absolute music' though the term itself seemed obsolete to him.

Eventually, Widerspiel (the title being an allusion to Hugo von Hofmannsthal's invocation of 'something as marvellous as music or algebra') brings together what formerly was considered an indissoluble contradiction, whose sheer existence was denied by a part of modernism.

Now, however, that pluralism has generally been accepted, a sense of relaxation has come so that a work drawing upon despised serialist principles can prove so 'beautiful', strangely 'harmonic', that grey musical academics gravely shake their heads during the interval, wondering if such a work can 'still be really modern'. It is. In the sense, however, that it achieves a kind of integration that not only reflects the compositional techniques of Boulez, Stockhausen and Bernd Alois Zimmermann but uses and modifies – deliberately, though with or without awareness – various figures and structural characteristics of Classical-Romantic music-making – most obviously in the eruptions of the Largamente and in the transition from that deep, sweeping middle movement to the Energico finale."

(Frieder Reininghaus, FAZ, 19 May 2000)

World Premiere: 30 Apr 2000

Philharmonie, Köln, Germany

Brigitte Engerer & Elena Bashkurova, pianos; Gürzenich-Orchester Köln

Conductor: James Conlon