

Sonata (1926)

Béla Bartók (1881-1945)

'Art is entitled to be rooted in another, preceding art. What is more, it is not merely entitled: it must have roots.' This statement sounds far too conventional to have issued from one of the most influential composers of the 20th century, Béla Bartók. But whereas figures such as Schoenberg and Stravinsky, though rooted in the Western tradition, set out to furnish art with completely new premises, Bartók planted his music in the past in an even more organic sense. Authentic folk music was for Bartók a means of getting away from the strictures of major-minor tonality. He personally collected most of his authentic material on field trips all over Europe.

Elements of folk music are found in the only piano sonata by Bartók. The Sonata's architecture is clearly in the Western tradition but lacks the logical frame provided by the accustomed approach to tonality. The tonal centres of the themes do not stand in any particular relationship to each other. The thematic events of the *Allegro moderato* are brief, and the movement is held together by its persistent rhythms rather than its motif structure. The middle movement, *Sostenuto e pesante*, is a heart-rending lament. The *Allegro molto finale* is by contrast an apotheosis of rhythm in the manner of Stravinsky.

YTA II (1985)

Esa-Pekka Salonen (b.1958)

Esa-Pekka Salonen says that this series of solo pieces (YTA I for alto flute, YTA II for piano/harpsichord and YTA III for cello) was written early in the 1980s as a protest by a practical man against the strict post-serial mainstream. 'Yta' is Swedish for 'surface', and in these pieces the entire material unfolds before the listener; the form is audible throughout on the 'surface' instead of being buried in the deep structure. The music has one transparent plane that is constantly in motion.

In 'YTA II' this surface plane consists of lightning flashes: nervous virtuoso gestures totally lacking in melody. The piece has no programme, but Salonen points out that the 'surface' is reminiscent of snow or ice, a sparkling and sometimes even blinding substance. The music is a series of processes that fall into five categories or musical ideas: a trill, an arpeggio, a cluster, a repeated C and a scale.

'YTA II' was for the most part composed at Näs Manor owned by Count Silfverstolpe near Stockholm in Sweden and, according to Salonen, it appears to have caught something of the daintiness of the Rococo Manor.

Dichotomie (2000)

Esa-Pekka Salonen

'Dichotomie' was originally to have been a brief encore piece for a concert of music by Salonen in Los Angeles in January 2000. It nevertheless grew and grew, and was not completed in time. Whereas 'YTA II' is a miniature painted with a little brush, the expansive 'Dichotomie' is awash with brilliant, ecstatic timbres propelled by strong, pulsing rhythms.

The first movement, *Mécanisme*, is evocative of a machine; not a cold, precision machine but one with human features, moods and natural imperfection. The second movement, *Organisme*, is likewise divided into sections, but this time the sections organically overlap. According to Salonen, *Organisme* is reminiscent of a tree, a supple willow that sways in the wind but always returns to its original shape. As if thumbing their nose at the traditional, pompous closing gesture, both movements in 'Dichotomie' end on a pianissimo whisper.

Programme notes by Lotta Emanuelsson

Translation: Susan Sinisalo

Juho Pohjonen

Pohjonen's studies began in 1989 when he entered the Junior Academy of the Sibelius Academy, Helsinki. He has studied with Meri Louhos and Hui-Ying Liu and is currently completing work on his Master's degree. In addition Pohjonen has participated in several master classes with world-class pianists, such as Andras Schiff and Barry Douglas.

Some of the many prizes Juho has won in both Finnish and international competitions include First Prizes at the 2004 Nordic Piano Competition in Nyborg, Denmark and the International Young Artists 2000 Concerto Competition in Stockholm, and the Prokofiev Prize at the AXA Dublin International Piano Competition 2003.

Of his debut recital at New York's Carnegie Hall, the New York Times said: 'If we needed proof that exciting new talent is in the pipeline, there was the marvellous American debut of Juho Pohjonen at [Carnegie's] Weill Recital Hall. Mr Pohjonen offered a formidable mixed program, topped by thrilling accounts of two fiendishly difficult works by a fellow Finn, Esa-Pekka Salonen'.

Sponsor Friends of the Festival

**Concert supported by The Embassy of Finland
and the Finnish Cultural Institute**

SEICENTO

Ricardo Simian, recorder

Vincenzo Onida, curtal

Eduardo Figueroa, lute

9.45pm Yarrow Gallery, Oundle School

Upon Tenors, Madrigals and Chansons

Upon 'Ut, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La'

Capriccio Ut, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Vincenzo Ruffo (c.1508-1587)

Upon 'Doulce Memoire'

- Doulce memoire Antonio Gardane (1509-1569)

- Doulce memoire Petrus Sandrin (c.1490-c.1561)

- Recercada prima Diego Ortiz (1510-1570)

Upon 'Hélas! mon Dieu'

- Hélas! mon Dieu Pierre de Villiers

- Hélas! mon Dieu Adrian le Roy (c.1520-1598)

Upon 'La Gamba'

- Al di dolce ben mio Filippo Azzaiolo (c.1530/40-after 1569)

- Gagliarda Anonymous

- Recercada quarta Diego Ortiz

- Capriccio La gamba in tenor Vincenzo Ruffo

Upon 'O Felici Occhi Mie'

- Capriccio O felici occhi miei Vincenzo Ruffo

- Recercada segunda Diego Ortiz

- O felici occhi miei Christoforo Da Lito

- Recercada quarta Diego Ortiz

Upon 'Susanne un Jour'

- Susanne un jour Didier le Blanc

- Susanne un jour Simone Molinaro (c.1565-1615)

- Diminution Giovanni Bassano (c.1558-1617)

Upon the 'Pass'e Mezzo Antico'

- Pass'e mezzo Simone Molinaro

- Les bouffons Pierre Phalèse (c.1510-c.1573)

- Recercada primera Diego Ortiz

- Boffons J Jacob van Eyck (c.1590-1657)



Writing upon pre-existing music is a practice almost as old as written music history. To the early polyphonists who were involved with church music, the art of composing over tenors (fixed, given melodies, usually presented in the tenor range) and *cantus firmus* represented the only way to have the freedom of composing new lines while preserving the tradition represented by the original sources. The development of the polyphonic language, which started from the practice of writing upon pre-existing material, dominated the musical language of its time, influencing deeply even popular music expressions, and setting the bases of composition for centuries to come. Even the young Mozart was trained in the art of writing upon tenors during his childhood.

The use of *cantus firmus* and tenors provided an almost architectonically balanced structure to music, as well as a key reference for the listener, who could otherwise easily get lost in the middle of an intricate polyphonic piece. Late composers of this period, having exhausted virtually every traditional source, would even use profane songs as *cantus firmus* before proceeding to completely freely inspired music. Having material that would work as a skeleton for their music was essential.

This practice opened up an infinite chain of quotations, imitations and re-elaborations of well known pieces of medieval and renaissance times. Voices were added, deleted or replaced by new ones; adaptations for all kinds of instruments and ensembles were made; ornamentations were added and every imaginable