

new sounds from manchester

quatuor daniel

john asken | philip grange | camden reeves | richard whalley
music for string quartet

msv 28546

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Camden Reeves (b.1974)

1 Fireworks Physonect Siphonophore (String Quartet No. 1) 5:23

Richard Whalley (b.1974)

2 Interlocking Melodies 6:52

Camden Reeves (b.1974)

Dactylozoid Complex (String Quartet No. 2) 11:09

3 I 1:14

4 II 3:30

5 III 6:25

John Casken (b.1949)

6 Choses en moi 7:34

Philip Grange (b.1956)

Ghosts of Great Violence 29:53

7 I 11:38

8 II 3:41

9 III 4:15

10 IV 10:19

total duration 60:55

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Marc Danel and Gilles Millet (violins)
Vlad Bogdanas (viola) | Guy Danel ('cello)

Since their foundation in 1991, the Quatuor Danel have been at the forefront of the international music scene, with important concert performances worldwide and a series of ground-breaking CD recordings winning many prestigious awards. The Quartet have become renowned for combining their bold, concentrated interpretations of the quartet cycles of Haydn, Beethoven, Schubert, Shostakovich and Weinberg with an uncompromising commitment to the most progressive music of our own time.

The Quartet first became a part of the music scene in Manchester in 2005, when they succeeded the Lindsays as Quartet-in Residence at the University of Manchester. Their arrival in Manchester was something of a cultural atom bomb. As well as their masterful interpretation of the classics, they bombarded the Manchester audience with Xenakis, Ligeti, Lachenmann, Dusapin, Mantovani, Rihm and beyond. The audience in Manchester loved it, and for its composers this was an inspiration – sparking an outpouring of new quartets from the region. This disc provides a snapshot of the ongoing and intense collaboration between Manchester composers and this most exceptional of quartets.



Camden Reeves

Fireworks Physonect Siphonophore (String Quartet No.1)

My first quartet, *Fireworks Physonect Siphonophore*, was written for the Quatuor Danel in 2009. The title refers to a species of siphonophore of the same name. Siphonophores are bizarre, yet very beautiful aquatic animals related to jellyfish. What interests me about siphonophores is that whilst in many ways they behave like one organism (they move and feed as one), in others they do not. Groups of cells are so highly specialized and segmented (for things like feeding, stinging and locomotion) that they can actually migrate between colonies. This state of being is in some respects analogous to a string quartet. One entity, four individuals: together, yet free.

The score is dedicated to my friend and colleague Richard Whalley, whose own quartet *Interlocking Melodies* provided the challenge for me to write one of my own.

Richard Whalley

Interlocking Melodies

Interlocking Melodies was composed in 2007 for the Quatuor Danel, and is a tribute to György Ligeti. In the search for a source of inspiration offering an interesting perspective on Ligeti's music, I was drawn to the late painting by the artist Willem de Kooning, *Untitled XIII*. This image consists of large curvy shapes in yellow, green, red and white, which serenely float in some kind of intriguing weightless balance. I felt this to be analogous to the illusion of infinite space and defiance of gravity in Ligeti's music.

This quartet is built from interlocking melodies, all of which use the whole-tone scale. I chose that particular scale because it also seems to defy gravity, as a result of its intervals being equal, thus its pitches being of equal weight. As this is a quartet, four complimentary whole-tone scales are used, a quarter-tone apart from each other.

Camden Reeves

Dactylozoid Complex (String Quartet No.2)

- I *Molto allegro – Molto adagio*
- II *Molto allegro – Molto adagio*
- III *Molto allegro – Molto adagio*

Dactylozoid Complex (2011), forms a sort of sequel to my first quartet *Fireworks Physonect Siphonophore*. Dactylozooids are the long defensive tentacles (polyps) armed with deadly stinging cells that form part of colonial sea invertebrates such as jellyfish, siphonophores and milleporina. My second quartet comprises three musical colonies. Each is formed from the same simple musical material. The broad outline of each is the same, but their sizes and temporal strategies are vastly different.

John Casken

Choses en moi

It was Prokofiev's *Choses en soi* (1928 piano pieces) – “things in themselves” – that suggested my title – “things in me”, and *Choses en moi* quotes from or alludes to earlier works of mine.

The idea of motoric material bursting into something more impassioned informs the whole piece except in the central episode where it withdraws into quieter, singing music.

The work was written for The Lindsays for their first concert in the new Martin Harris Centre for Music and Drama at The University of Manchester in 2003, and in celebration of the new Cosmo Rodewald Concert Hall, named after the generous benefactor of the University over many years whose name is embedded in the title.

Philip Grange

Ghosts of Great Violence

This work was inspired by visits to WWI Somme battlefield sites, where I felt that the land itself had absorbed the horrors of 1916 and was imbued with a deep sadness. The solos that occur in each movement also reflect Ford Maddox Ford's use of interior monologue in his WWI tetralogy *Parade's End*.

In the elegiac first movement reflective cello solos lead the ensemble through a number of episodes, some anticipating movement three. In movement two both violin I and viola play solos against a stumbling pizzicato inspired by the painting *Gassed* by John Singer Sargent. The fast third movement follows without a break and at one point features an anxious monologue for violin II, while the other players recede into the background. In the fourth movement, subtitled 'Spectral Colloquies/Interior Monologues', this foreground/background idea dominates with the climax of the work approached by means of a tutti colloquy which, as it recedes, increasingly references the opening of movement one.

I invented the title 'Ghosts of Great Violence' to suggest a certain ambiguity; that the ghosts were both the result of violence but also felt violent because of what they had been made to suffer.

Music Publishers

Reeves *Quartets*: Edition Peters

Whalley *Interlocking Melodies*: Composers' Edition

Casken *Choses en Moi*: Schott Music

Grange *Ghosts of Great Violence*: Edition Peters



Philip Grange



John Casken



Camden Reeves



Richard Whalley

the composers

John Casken was Professor of Music at Manchester from 1992-2008. His works have been recognised with major awards: First Britten Prize for *Golem* in 1990; Prince Pierre de Monaco Prize for *Still Mine* in 1993; British Academy Award for *The Dream of the Rood* in 2009 – toured in The Netherlands in 2014 with the Hilliard Ensemble and ASKO/Schoenberg Ensemble.

Camden Reeves is Head of Music and Senior Lecturer in Composition at the University of Manchester. His music has been performed and broadcast all over the world. He is particularly known for his large corpus of solo piano music.

Philip Grange is currently Professor of Composition at Manchester University. His compositions have been performed and broadcast throughout the world, most recently in Mexico, the USA, Taiwan, Europe and South Korea. He has received commissions from organisations such as the BBC and in 2010 he won a BASCA award for his wind piece *Cloud Atlas*.

Richard Whalley is a lecturer in composition at Manchester University, and teaches and performs on the piano each summer at the ARAM-Poitou Summer School in France. His music has been performed at home and abroad, and was featured in the ISCM World Music Days in Flanders in 2012. As a pianist, he has premiered new works by numerous composers.

the recording

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Programme notes by the composers

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