CONCERTO FOR EIGHTEEN PLAYERS

PAUL ROBINSON (1994/5)

INSTRUMENTATION:

Flute doubling Piccolo
Oboe
Clarinet in B flat,A and E flat
Alto saxophone doubling Bass Clarinet
Bassoon
Trumpet
Horn in F
Trombone
Percussion One: Vibraphone
Whip
2 Congas
2 Wood Blocks
4 Coconut Shells
Snare Drum
2 Timbales
Bass Drum with pedal
Percussion Two: Hi Hat
Cowbell
2 Wood Blocks
Snare Drum
2 Timbales
Bass Drum with pedal

Synthesiser: with harpsichord voice and amplitude pedal(damper) -amplification through reasonable combo amp in direct vicinity of player.
Pianoforte

Bass Guitar: (with option of using synth with good bass sound eg. a Korg M1 'Fretless Bass' voice)

Violin
Violin
Viola
Cello
Double Bass

Preview File Only

Concerto for Eighteen Players Performance note

This piece is related to two other works of mine-'Sleep Hath no Geography' for flute,cello and piano written for the Phoenix Trio and 'Dark Song of the Night' for two pianos to be premiered by Andrew Ball and Catherine Edwards in March 1995.

Broadly speaking all of these pieces are reflections on solitude and bring together the experiences of a variety of celebrated prisoners, both political prisoners and prisoners of conscience. However, it was not the circumstances of an individuals incarceration that was of interest to me but the means in which their imaginations adapted themselves to deprivation. Here a very rich tapestry of ideas was to be found that dispelled the potentially gloomy nature of such subject matter.

A starting point for this cycle of pieces was a chance comment overheard during a visit to Berlin that Albert Speer - the architect of Nazi Germany - 'walked around the world' during his extended imprisonment following the war,pacing round his cell and plotting distances walked on a map.

Other subject matter was more conjectural,particularly the use of various pieces from the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book (used also in this piece). The conjecture here was that the copyist of the book, Francis Tregian, who was himself a long term prisoner, copied the manuscript as a means of waging war against empty days. In 'Dark Song of the Night' this conjecture is used to suggest a dream sequence where extracts from the music he has been copying visit him in his sleep.

Preview File Only

The direct stimulation for this piece was a passage from Brian Keenan's 'An Evil Cradling' cited overleaf.

From the sporadic splutterings of a motor generator amplified through a ventilation shaft to his cell (depicted throughout the piece by figurations on a hi hat cymbal) Keenan imagines all the music he has ever heard and enters a kind of delirium as one rhythmic pattern gives way to another. Following an extended duet for sax and bassoon, continuous pulse elements assert themselves as do references to divergent styles of music, in particular- a 'soupy' Hollywood string and sax passage over staccato piano and bass guitar figurations and the gradual and eventually triumphant emergence of a passage from Giles Farnaby's 'The King's Hunt' from the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book.

Following a cadenza for piano and trumpet the work closes in a 'whirling dervish' flurry of activity driven by percussion around the image projected in the Keenan passage overleaf of the lone naked figure dancing around his cell in candlelight to non existent music.

I knew they had a motor-generator to light the prison at night whilst bringing in new prisoners. On one occasion the generator was running, though there was no light, and the ventilation pipe was blowing in dusty hot air as usual. I could not see the dust falling. I wasn't bothered by it. But I remember listening to the noise of the machine and the air as it passed through this long vent of piping. My mind seemed to be pulled into the noise until the noise became music. And I listened entranced in the dark to the music that was coming from this pipe. I knew that there was no music and yet I heard it. And flowing out melodiously was all the music that I had ever loved or half remembered. All at once, all simultaneously playing especially for me. It seemed I sat alone in a great concert hall in which this music was being played for me alone. I heard the ethnic music of Africa. The rhythmic music of bone on skin. I heard the swirl and squeal of bagpipes. I heard voices chanting in a tribal chant; great orchestras of violins; and flutes filling the air like bird flight, while quiet voices sang some ancient Gregorian chant. All the music of the world was there, playing incessantly into my cell. I lay at first smiling and listening and enjoying this aural feast. I kept telling myself 'There is no music Brian, it's in your head.' But still I heard it and the music played on and on ever-changing, ever-colourful. I heard the uileann pipes' lilting drone. I heard fingers strum and pluck a classical flamenco. I heard ancient musics of ancient civilizations coming all at once to fill my cell and from simply smiling and laughing I fell into a musical delirium and began to tap and dance and beat softly upon the walls the different rhythms offered to me.

For how long I did this, I cannot tell, but then suddenly I was fearful. This music that was not there but that I heard had taken hold of me and would not let me go. I could not silence it. It was carrying me away. I called for it to stop. I pressed my hands over my ears foolishly trying to block out a music that was already thumping in my head and it would not go away. I could not end this or silence it. The more I tried the louder it swirled about me, the more it filled the room. And in its loudness I was gripped with a fear that was new to me. I did not know how to contain myself or how to end this thing. My fight against it was defeating me. It was crushing out every part of me and filling me with itself. I could not bear it.

I fumbled under my mattress to find the stubs of candles that I had squirrelled away. I took out one candle and lit it in the hope that light would dispel the music that filled the room, but it did not. With my mind only half conscious, I lit another and another candle until I had filled the cell with candlelight, bright, dazzling, soft, alluring light. But still the music played around me. Everywhere the bright burning of the small candles and me waiting and hoping that this imagined music would stop. And then I remembered again you do not overcome by fighting, you only concede the victory to the madness within. You overcome by going beyond it.

Like a somnambulist, I got up from my mattress and in that tiny cell, naked and wet with sweat, I began to dance. Slowly, slowly at first then going with the music, faster I danced and faster until I went beyond, and beyond the music's hold on me. I danced every dance I knew and dances unknown to me. I danced and danced until the music had to keep up with me, I was a dancing dervish. I was the master of this music and I danced and danced. The sweat rolled off me and I bathed myself in the luxury of it. I felt myself alive and unfearful. I was the pied piper who was calling the tune. A tiny cell, a dozen candle stubs and a madman dancing naked. I was laughing. The laughter was part of the music around me. Not the laugh of hysteria, but the laugh of self-possession, the laugh that comes with the moment of victory. Every part of me, every limb, every muscle energized in this dance. For how long I danced or how long I laughed I cannot tell. But it seemed that I would be dancing forever.

Preview File Only

Picc

Ob

Eb Clt

Alto Sax

Bsn

Tpt — muted

Hn — muted

Tbn — muted

Perc 1 — ff TUTTI — WHIP

Perc 2 — ♩ = 128

Synth — Harpsichord voice

Pfte — 8VA — loco — PED

Bs Guit

V I

V II

Vla

VcL

Bs.

Preview File Only

Perc 2

Hi Hat

Viola

H/H

V

H/H

V

H/H

V

Vla

H/H

V 1

V 2

Vla

Vc

Bs

mp

Con sord

Sfzp

Con sord

Sfzp

Sfzp

Con sord

pizz

Preview File Only

H/Hat

Vl

f

mf (tutti)

Vl2

Vla

Vcl

Bs

H/Hat

Vl

Vl2

Vla

Vcl

Bs

Preview File Only

H/Hat

Vl

V2

Vla

Vcl

Bs

CRESC POCO A POCO ...

pizz

arco

Preview File Only

Picc
Ob
Eb Cl
Alto Sx
Bsn
Tpt
Hn
Tbn
P1.
P2.
Synth
Pfte
Bs Guit
Vl
Vl2
Vla.
Vcl
Bs

TO VIBES

Preview File Only

Flt
TO C FLUTE
mp
Ob
CH
TO 'A' CLARINET
Sx
Bsn
Tpt
Hn
Tbn
P1
P2.
Synth
Pfte
L Ped
mp
Bs Gt
VI
VII
Vla
Vcl
Bs

Preview File Only

FH
Ob
A CH
Cx
Bsn
Tpt
Hn
Tbn
Vib
P2
Syn
Pfte
Bs Gt
Vl
V2
Vla
Vcl
Bs

pp
da niente
5
3
LED
PED
pizz
pizz

Preview File Only

Fl

Ob

Cl

Hn

Vib

Pz

Pfte

Vl

Vll

Vla

Vcl

Bs

tr

sfzp

ACCEL . . . . .

pizz

pizz

Preview File Only

Fl
Ob
Cl
Tpt
(con sord.)
Hn
muted
Vib
Pz
RIT to TEMPO PRIMO
Pfte
Bs
arco

Preview File Only

Fl

Ob

Cl

Tpt

Hn

Vib

P2

Pfte

Vla

Vcl

Bs

Preview File Only

Flt

mp

Ob

5

sfz

mp

Clt

5

sfz

Tpt

sfz

Vib

sec

sfz

P2

ACCEL . . . . . .

RIT TO TEMPO . .

Pfte

9

sfz

mp

V1

5

mp

V2

Vla

Vcl

Bs

Preview File Only

Flt

Ob

Clt

Tpt

P2

Synth

Pfte

VI

VL2

VLA

VCL

BS

8va

pizz

pizz

Preview File Only

P2

Synth

Pfte

ALTO SAX

(very breathy subtone)

mp

mf

mp

A SAX

P2

SAX

mf

P2

Woo Block

P1

P2

(H/HAT)

SAX

mp

Pfte

Preview File Only

Order Ref. No. 12717

CLARINET IN A

This part should be barely audible until later. Breathe when necessary.

ppp

P1

P2

SAX

3

CLT

P1

P2

SAX

WOOD BLOCK

Middle Eastern 'Keening'

f

'free' bar

CLT

P1

BOWED VIBRAPHONE

P2.

WOOD BLOCK

SAX

PFTE

Preview File Only

CLT

PERC 1 e 2

P2

WOOD BLOCK

P1

SAX

(♩=♩)

CLT

P2

BOWED VIBES

SAX

CLT

P1

BOWED VIBES

p

f

CLT

P1

P2

(full bow)

SAX

mf

PFTE

Preview File Only

CLT

P2

SAX

CLT

PERC 1

(WOODBLKS)

P1

SAX

BASSOON

BSN

VCL

BS

CLT

SAX

mf

BSN

P1

(BOWED VIBES)

P2

CELLO

BASS

Preview File Only

CLT

P1

(BOWED VIBES)

P2

(W/O BUK)

SAX

BSN

VCL

(Sounding)

BS

CLT

P1

P2

SAX

BSN

VCL

mf

BS

Preview File Only

Clr

Pl

P2

WOOD BLK

SAX

BSN

PERC

VCL

BS

CLR

Pl

(BOWED VIB)

P2

HI/HAT

SAX

BSN

VCL

BS

Preview File Only

CLT

P1

P2

SAX

BSN

VCL

BS

CRESC PIU A PIU ....

Preview File Only

20

Clt

(Solo)

mf

P1

P2

Sax

Bsn

Vcl

Bs

Clt

f

mf

P1

P2

Sax

mf

Bsn

mf

Vcl

Bs.

Preview File Only

CLT

P1

(WOOD BLKS)

P2

SAX

BSN

VCL

BS

CLT

P1

(BOWED VIBES)

P2

SAX

BSN

VCL

arco

BS

Preview File Only

CLT

P1

P2

SAX

BSN

VCL

BS

BOWED VIBES

pizz

pizz

CLT

SAX

BSN

TPT

TRUMPET

muted

mf

HN

HORN

muted

mf

TBN

TROMBONE

muted

P1

Bowed Vibes

P2

Hi/Hat

Wood Blks

Synth

(Harpsichord voice)

Pft

PIANO

VCL

BS

f

LP...

arco

Preview File Only

Order Ref. No. 12717

CLT

mf 'floated'

SAX

mf

BSN

mf

TPT

HN

(3+3+2)

TBN

P1

P2

Synth

Pft

p

Vcl

pizz

BS

pizz

Preview File Only

CLT

SAX

BSN

TPT

HN

TBN

3/8 4/8 7/16

P1

P2

Synth

Flte

Vcl

Bs.

Preview File Only

SAX

BSN

PFTE

VCL

BS

CLT

mf (graceful)

SAX

BSN

P2

Synth

mf

PFTE

VCL

BS

f

Preview File Only

Cl♭

Sax

Bsn

Tpt

Cl♭/Sax/Bsn from here form background resonance until re-entry on P32.

Hn

Tbn

P1

♩ = ♩ = 128

P2

Snare drum (snare off)

hi/hat

* sticks half with drum

mf

8va

Ppte

Allow strings to dominate until p. 32

mf

(Terse - clipped)

etc

V1

V11

Vla

Vcl

Bs

Preview File Only

CLT

SAX

BSN

VIBES

P1

P2

Pfte

VI

V2

VLA

VCL

BS

Preview File Only

Cls

Bsn

Bsn

P1

P2

(snare)

Hi/Hat

Pftc

f

Vl

Vl2

Vla

Vcl

Bs

Preview File Only

Order Ref. No. 12717

CLT

SAX

BSN

P1

P2

Pfte

L

VI

VI2

VLA

VCL

BS

Preview File Only

Order Ref. No. 12717

Cl

Sax

Bsn

Tpt

mf

mutes out

Hn

mf

mutes out

Timp

Perc

Secco

Vl

Vl2

Vla

Vcl

Bs

Preview File Only

Cht

Sax

Bsn

Tpt

Hn

P1

P2

Pfte

(secco)

Vl

Vl

Vla

Vcl

Bs

mf

mf

Ped.

Preview File Only

FLT
OB
CLT
SAX
BSN
TPT
HN
TBN
P1
P2
Pfte
VI
V2
VLA
VCL
BS

mf
BASS CLARINET
broadly
more out
f
secco

Preview File Only

Fl1
Ob
Cl1
Bsn
Tpt
Hn
Tbn
P1
P2
Pfte
Vl1
Vl2
Vla
Vcl
Bs

Preview File Only

Flt

Ob

Clt

B.Clt

BASS CLARINET

Bsn

Tpt

Hrn

Tbn

P1

P2

CRESC PIU A PIU .. (TUTTI) ...

Pfte

8VA

loco

loco

Vl

Vl2

Vla

Vcl

Bs

Preview File Only

Fl1

Ob

Clt

B.Clt

Bsn

Tpt

Hn

Tbn

P1

P2

Pft

(cresc) . . .

8va

Vl1

Vl2

Vla

Vlc

Bs

Preview File Only

Fl

Ob

Cl

B.Cl

Bsn

Tpt

Hn

Tbn

P1

P2

Pfte

Vl

Vl

Vla

Vcl

Bs

(CRESC)

8va

loco

8vb

loco

Preview File Only

Fl

Ob

Cl

B.Cl

Bsn

Tpt

Hn

Tbn

P1

P2

Pfte

loco

L8VB

Vl

Vl2

Vla

Vcl

Bs

Preview File Only

Flt

Ob

Clt

B.Clt

Bsn

Tpt

Hn

Tbn

P1

P2

Pfte

L Ped.

Secco

(heel)

Vl1

Vl2

Vla

Vcl

Bs

Preview File Only

Flt

Ob

Clt

B.Clt

Bsn

Hpt

Hn

Tbn

P1

P2

(CRESC.)

Pfte

Vl

Vl

Vla

Vcl

Cb

Preview File Only

Flt

Ob

Clt

B Clt

B♭t

Tpt

Hn

Tbn

Pf 1

Pf 2

Pfte

5

... (cresc) ...

8VB

Vl 1

Vl 2

Vla

Vcl

Bs

Preview File Only