
Concert 'E' aggravates the collision of cultures. Its underlying theme is the role of ritual in music for the concert hall but there is little agreement, from piece to piece, about what 'ritual' actually means. Berio's classic **Sequenza V**, homage to the great clown Grock, delineates the tragi-comic ritual of the circus. Scelsi, the most interesting product of musical post-modernism's passion for grandfather-figures, invokes the heartbeat of the earth. A mixture of Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty (a Ritual Theatre par excellence) and the frozen intensity of Beckett's novels informs Richard Barrett's **Earth**, while Takemitsu's **Stanza II** enacts a ritual coupling of 'live' music-making and the technological capture of the past. But improvisation, the spontaneous creation of the unforeseen, also has a certain ritual function as the denial of our social mechanisation: here, the officiant will be the brilliant young Australian bassist Lloyd Swanton.

In other contexts, a final concert could aim to have a summarising, synthetic function. Where the New Music is concerned, the overall picture is simply too complex, too ramified, too beset with internal contradictions, for a single concert to hope to sum it up. Rather, **Concert 'F'** is a celebration of diverse, but internally convincing 'partis pris'. If the three works have a common preoccupation, it's the role of the composer in providing new models of artistic freedom. Conyngham's **Through Clouds** is an early assertion of computer music's right of access to poetic as well as technical substance, Takemitsu's **Corona** allows the sympathetic interpreter a modest affirmation of personality, of self, within an essentially Cage/Zen-inspired framework, while Rolf Gehlhaar's **Diagonal Flying** insists that, within the new technology, there is ample room for intelligence to co-exist with - believe it or not - fun.



Richard Toop
Artistic Adviser

There is a primeval law that produces specific forms. It comes into play, above all, at that point when, as a formative spirit, one is not at odds with oneself and can help the form to emerge, as I always say, as purely as possible - in other words, one simply listens and is party to the formulation, until one has the feeling: there, now it's done.

(Karlheinz Stockhausen, 1984)