

KONZERT, FREITAG, 20.9.2019: BIOGRAFISCHE ANGABEN

HOWARD SKEMPTON was born in Chester in 1947, and has worked as a composer, accordionist, and music publisher. He studied in London with Cornelius Cardew from 1967 and Cardew helped him to discover a musical language of great simplicity. Since then he has continued to write undeflected by compositional trends, producing a corpus of more than 300 works - many pieces being miniatures for solo piano or accordion. Skempton calls these pieces "the central nervous system" of his work.

Skempton's catalogue of works is also as diverse as it is long, ranging from pieces for solo cello (*Six Figures*, 1998), and guitar (*Five Preludes*, 1999), to the Chamber Concerto for fifteen players, the *Concerto for Hurdy-Gurdy and Percussion*, and *Lento*, premièred by the BBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA at the BARBICAN in 1991, and performed by the BBC SCOTTISH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, conducted by Ilan Volkov at the 2010 BBC PROMS.

In May 2005 Skempton's *Tendrils for string quartet* was awarded the prize for 'best chamber-scale composition' by the ROYAL PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY, and in December 2005 it won in the chamber music category at the annual BRITISH COMPOSER AWARDS. Skempton won a second BRITISH COMPOSER AWARD in 2008 for *The Moon is Flashing*, a song cycle for tenor and orchestra commissioned by the BBC which was premièred by BBC NOW and James Gilchrist at the Vale of Glamorgan Festival in September 2007 and broadcasted on BBC Radio 3.

Many of Skempton's compositions have been recorded, including the hugely successful *Lento* for orchestra on the NMC label by the BBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, the piano works performed by JOHN TILBURY on the SONY CLASSICAL LABEL, and *Shiftwork* by Ensemble Bash, also on SONY CLASSICAL. 2001 saw the release of *Guild of The Flight of Song*, an acclaimed choral collection performed by the CHOIR OF QUEENS COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE under JAMES WEEKS. Vocal group EXAUDI released a disc of Skempton's choral music in September 2007, also on the NMC label. The recording, entitled *Ben Somewhen*, also featured chamber works performed by the BIRMINGHAM CONTEMPORARY MUSIC GROUP. *The Cloths of Heaven*, a recording of Skempton's choral music by the EXON SINGERS, was released on DELPHIAN RECORDS in June 2008, and in 2011 MODE RECORDS released *Bolt from the Blue* a disc featuring Skempton's piano and choral works. More recent recordings include *Only the Sound Remains* and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, on NMC in 2017.

Works have been commissioned and performed by leading artists including the BBC, KATHRYN TICKELL, NEW NOISE, BIRMINGHAM CONTEMPORARY MUSIC GROUP, and the ROYAL LIVERPOOL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA'S, ENSEMBLE 10/10'. A work for the BIRMINGHAM CONTEMPORARY MUSIC GROUP, *Only the Sound Remains*, for viola and ensemble, was premièred in 2010 in a Skempton portrait concert. Other recent commissions include a choral work, *Song's Eternity* for the 2010 ALDEBURGH FESTIVAL, and Skempton is taking part in the NEW MUSIC 20*12 CULTURAL OLYMPIAD PROJECT - He wrote a piece for eight church bells for the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers which was performed to mark the opening of SPITALFIELDS FESTIVAL at Christ Church, London, in June 2012 (premièred Kingston-upon-Thames.)

More recent work includes a setting of Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (premiered by the BCMG in 2015) and a setting of DH Lawrence's *Man and Bat* (premiered by Ensemble360 in Sheffield, 2017), both written for baritone RODERICK WILLIAMS. Skempton has also written a *Piano Concerto*, commissioned by the BBC SCOTTISH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA and premiered by JOHN TILBURY at the 2016 TECTONICS FESTIVAL in Glasgow; and a new string quartet *Moving On*, written for the BRODSKY QUARTET and premiered at the HARROGATE MUSIC FESTIVAL in 2016. His recent choral works include a new setting of *Ave Maria* for the CHOIR OF NOTTINGHAM CATHEDRAL and a set of *Preces & Responses* to be premiered at NEW MUSIC WELLS by WELLS CATHEDRAL CHOIR in October 2017.

(Oxford University Press <https://global.oup.com/academic/category/arts-and-humanities/sheet-music/composers/skemptonh/?lang=en&cc=des>,)

HOWARD SKEMPTON at 7hours HAUS 19, Berlin, Germany: 2006, 2016 ("The Daddy Long-legs and the Fly" for trombone and viola, premièred by ANDREW DIGBY & NIKOLAUS SCHLIERF) and 2019 with two first performances.

JOHN CAGE

I once asked Aragon, the historian, how history was written. He said, "You have to invent it." When I wish as now to tell of critical incidents, persons, and events that have influenced my life and work, the true answer is all of the incidents were critical, all of the people influenced me, everything that happened and that is still happening influences me.

https://johncage.org/autobiographical_statement.html

in full JOHN MILTON CAGE, Jr., (born September 5, 1912, Los Angeles, California, U.S.—died August 12, 1992, New York, New York), American avant-garde composer whose inventive compositions and unorthodox ideas profoundly influenced mid-20th-century music.

The son of an inventor, Cage briefly attended Pomona College and then traveled in Europe for a time. Returning to the United States in 1931, he studied music with Richard Buhlig, Arnold Schoenberg, Adolph Weiss, and Henry Cowell. While teaching in Seattle (1938–40), Cage organized percussion ensembles to perform his compositions. He also experimented with works for dance, and his subsequent collaborations with the choreographer and dancer Merce Cunningham sparked a long creative and romantic partnership.

Cage's early compositions were written in the 12-tone method of his teacher Schoenberg, but by 1939 he had begun to experiment with increasingly unorthodox instruments such as the "prepared piano" (a piano modified by objects placed between its strings in order to produce percussive and otherworldly sound effects). Cage also experimented with tape recorders, record players, and radios in his effort to step outside the bounds of conventional Western music and its concepts of meaningful sound. The concert he gave with his percussion ensemble at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City in 1943 marked the first step in his emergence as a leader of the American musical avant-garde.

In the following years, Cage turned to Zen Buddhism and other Eastern philosophies and concluded that all the activities that make up music must be seen as part of a single natural process. He came to regard all kinds of sounds as potentially musical, and he encouraged audiences to take note of all sonic phenomena, rather than only those elements selected by a composer. To this end he cultivated the principle of indeterminism in his music. He used a number of devices to ensure randomness and thus eliminate any element of personal taste on the part of the performer: unspecified instruments and numbers of performers, freedom of duration of sounds and entire pieces, inexact notation, and sequences of events determined by random means such as by consultation with the Chinese *Yijing* (*I Ching*). In his later works he extended these freedoms over other media, so that a performance of *HPSCHD* (completed 1969) might include a light show, slide projections, and costumed performers, as well as the 7 harpsichord soloists and 51 tape machines for which it was scored.

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Among Cage's best-known works are *4'33"* (*Four Minutes and Thirty-three Seconds*, 1952), a piece in which the performer or performers remain utterly silent onstage for that amount of time (although the amount of time is left to the determination of the performer); *Imaginary Landscape No. 4* (1951), for 12 randomly tuned radios, 24 performers, and conductor; the *Sonatas and Interludes* (1946–48) for prepared piano; *Fontana Mix* (1958), a

piece based on a series of programmed transparent cards that, when superimposed, give a graph for the random selection of electronic sounds; *Cheap Imitation* (1969), an “impression” of the music of Erik Satie; and *Roaratorio* (1979), an electronic composition utilizing thousands of words found in James Joyce’s novel *Finnegans Wake*.

Cage published several books, including *Silence: Lectures and Writings* (1961) and *M: Writings '67-'72* (1973). His influence extended to such established composers as Earle Brown, Lejaren Hiller, Morton Feldman, and Christian Wolff. More broadly, his work was recognized as significant in the development of traditions ranging from minimalist and electronic music to performance art.

This article was most recently revised and updated by Robert Lewis, Assistant Editor.

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/John-Cage>

JONATHAN BENOIT CALMET, geboren 1997 in Berlin, lernte seit seinem siebten Lebensjahr bei Alexander Ramm Violine. Seit 2008 Kammerorchester Leo Kestenberg unter der Leitung von Alexander Ramm, Konzertmeister seit 2013. Das Repertoire umfasst Barock, Moder, Uraufführungen von Carlé Costa, Chico Mello, Chris Newman, Christian Wolff.

International Orchestra-Camp of ARTESONOVAUMARCUS, Schweiz (2008 u. 2009); internationaler Orchesteraustausche mit dem GIVATAYIM MUSIC CONSERVATORY in Tel Aviv (Israel) und dem BARRATT DUE MUSIKKINSTITUTT (Oslo); Orchesterkonzertreisen in Argentinien und Uruguay; Klaviertrio „Triotrijo“ 3. Preis (21 Punkte), Bundeswettbewerb „Jugend musiziert“ Wertung: Klavier-Kammermusik (2013). Unterricht bei Ulrich Matura, Ernst Kovacic und Peter Rainer, Kathrin ten Hagen (2018-2019), Meisterklasse in Halle bei Kathrin ten Hagen, seit 2019 Unterricht bei Wolf Bender. Solointerpretationen: suono sogno (para violin yvoz del interprete) Graciela Paraskevaidis, Herbst aus Vier Jahreszeiten, Tartini Violinkonzert u.a. Konzerte im Kammermusiksaal der Philharmonie, Konzerthaus Berlin, Georg-Neumann-Saal UdK, Schloss Bellevue, u.a. Ab Oktober 2019 Studium an der Hochschule für Musik und Theater „Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy“ in Leipzig.

ALEXANDER RAMM studierte an der Hochschule für Musik „Franz Liszt“ in Weimar. Seit 1994 lebt und arbeitet er in Berlin.

Alexander Ramm gründete mit Gleichgesinnten 1998 die Instrumental- und Kammermusik GbR und baute gemeinsam mit Christian Raudszus das Jugendorchester Prenzlauer Berg auf. 2014 wurde er künstlerischer Leiter und Dirigent des Sinfonischen Musikschulorchesters Sachsen-Anhalt. Er ist Dozent an der Leo Kestenberg Musikschule. Seit 2014 leitet er dort die Orchesterschule. Als Dirigent des langjährigen und erfolgreichen Orchesteraustauschprojektes der LKMS mit dem Givatayim Conservatory of Music, konzertiert er regelmäßig in Israel und Berlin. Im Rahmen der Städtepartnerschaft Berlin- Buenos Aires leitete er Orchesterprojekte in Argentinien. 2015 betreute er musikalisch eine Inszenierung am Berliner Ensemble unter der Regie von Claus Peymann. Alexander Ramm ist regelmäßig in verschiedenen Berliner Kammerorchestern tätig z.B. bei der Lautten Compagny, Concertino Berlin und Aris et Auris. Mit seinem **KAMMERORCHESTER DER Leo Kestenberg Musikschule** konzertierte er in Israel, Argentinien und Uruguay.