

# PROGRAMME



7.45PM, PURCELL ROOM AT THE QEH, LONDON

25.05.2008

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We look forward to seeing you again soon.

# PROGRAMME

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**RADIUS: PURCELL ROOM AT THE QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL  
SUNDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2008, 7.45PM**

Sir Harrison Birtwistle	<i>Lied</i> (2006)
Tim Benjamin:	<i>A Guess-Me-Knot</i> (2008) *
George Crumb:	<i>Eleven Echoes of Autumn, 1965</i> (1966)

– Interval, 20 minutes –

Tim Benjamin:	<i>The Rosenhan Experiment</i> (2008) *
Thomas Adès:	<i>Catch</i> (1991)

\* - world premiere

Countertenor:	<i>Robert Ogden</i>
Violin:	<i>Alexandra Wood</i>
Cello:	<i>Oliver Coates</i>
Flute:	<i>Jennifer George</i>
Clarinet:	<i>Charys Green</i>
Piano:	<i>John Reid</i>

**Please ensure that your mobile phone is switched off.**

**Please stifle coughing as much as possible and ensure that watch alarms and any other electronic devices which may become audible are switched off.**

**When turning pages during the performance, please do so as quietly as possible.**

Wie soll ich meine Seele halten, daß  
sie nicht an deine rührt? Wie soll ich sie  
hinheben über dich zu andern Dingen?  
Ach gerne möchte ich sie bei irgendetwas  
Verlorenem im Dunkel unterbringen  
an einer fremden stillen Stelle, die  
nicht weiterschwingt, wenn diene Tiefen schwingen.  
Doch alles, was uns anrührt, dich und mich,  
nimmt uns zusammen wie ein Bogenstrich,  
die aus zwei Saiten eine Stimme zieht.  
Auf welches Instrument sind wir gespannt?  
Und welcher Geiger hat uns in der Hand?  
O süßes Lied.

*How shall I hold on to my soul, so that  
it does not touch yours? How shall I lift  
it gently up over you on to other things?  
I would so very much like to tuck it away  
among long lost objects in the dark,  
in some quiet, unknown place, somewhere  
which remains motionless when your depths resound.  
And yet everything which touches us, you and me,  
takes us together like a single bow,  
drawing out from two strings but one voice.  
On which instrument are we strung?  
And which violinist holds us in his hand?  
O sweetest of songs.*

Rainer Maria Rilke (1907)

# LIED (2006)

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## SIR HARRISON BIRTWISTLE

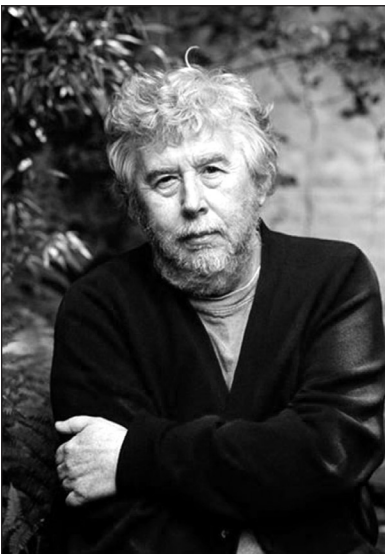
*Lied* was commissioned by the Ruhr Piano Festival for Alfred Brendel's 75th birthday. The world premiere took place on the 9th August, 2006, with Adrian Brendel (cello) and Till Fellner (piano), at Wuppertal, Historische Stadthalle, Germany.

The work is a sensuous and mysterious duet for cello and piano. The title refers to the poem *Liebeslied* (c.1906), by Rainer Marie Rilke. Although we have reproduced the complete poem opposite, Birtwistle directly quotes just the following two lines in his score:

Auf welches Instrument sind wir gespannt?  
Und welcher Geiger hat uns in der Hand?

*On which instrument are we strung?  
And which violinist holds us in his hand?*

Jemima Bannit



Sir Harrison Birtwistle  
Photo: Hanya Chlala

# A GUESS-ME-KNOT (2008)

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**TIM BENJAMIN** (WORLD PREMIERE)

*Due to unforeseeable circumstances, the advertised work (Gesso, by Ian Vine) has been replaced by this work. Gesso will be performed by Radius at a later date. We apologise for any inconvenience caused.*

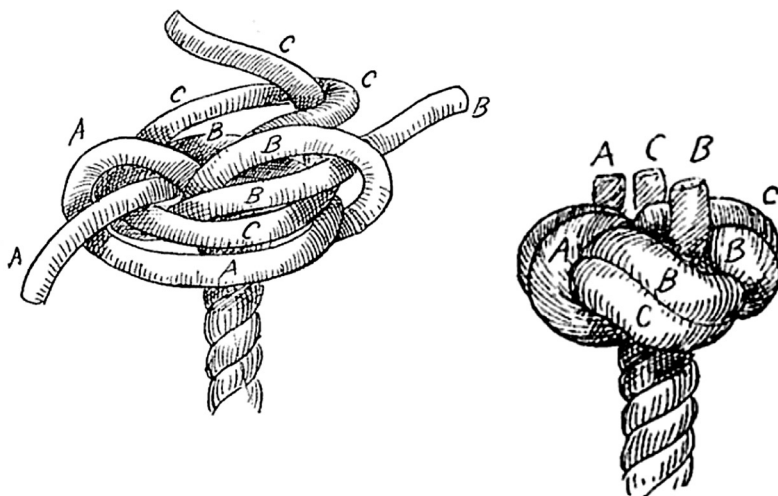
Lever in 1808 speaks of “Matthew Walker’s Knot”. His familiar expression suggests that he may have known the inventor, who was possibly a master rigger in one of the British naval dockyards. Many myths have grown up around Matthew Walker, “the only man ever to have a knot named for him.” Dr. Frederic Lucas, of the American Museum of Natural History, once told me the following story of the origin of the knot, which he had heard off the Chincha Islands while loading guano in 1869. A sailor, having been sentenced to death by a judge who in earlier life had been a sailor himself, was reprieved by the judge because of their common fellowship of the sea. The judge offered the sailor a full pardon if he could show him a knot that he, the judge, could neither tie nor untie. The sailor called for ten fathoms of rope and, having retired to the privacy of his cell, unlaid the rope halfway, put in a MATTHEW WALKER KNOT, and then laid up the rope again to the end. So Matthew Walker secured his pardon, and the world gained an excellent knot.

*from The Ashley Book of Knots*

*A Guess-Me-Knot* is a musical account of this wonderful tale. Imagine that each line of music you hear is a strand of rope. At first we hear only one such “strand”: the music does not work against itself. Then after a short time, the music splits into two, and you will hear what is referred to in the score as a “Two-Strand Knot”. The parts then re-unite, only to split again, this time into a more complicated “Four-Strand Knot”. Finally, the music is reunited with itself.

As a musical representation of the “Matthew Walker Knot”, I have devised a contrapuntal technique which closely mirrors the direction and orientation of each strand of rope before, during, and after the successful execution of this tricky knot. The strand is initially the “right way up”; it then loops back upon itself; it then turns back again and ducks behind the other strands, and then loops through itself (which I have represented as a form of melodic inversion). The result, I hope, is an interesting and humorous journey in musical counterpoint!

Tim Benjamin



The Matthew Walker knot, loose (left) and complete (right).  
Reproduced from *Knots, Splices and Rope Work*, by Alpheus Hyatt Verrill.

## TIM BENJAMIN (b.1975)

Tim Benjamin has studied with Anthony Gilbert at the Royal Northern College of Music, privately with Steve Martland, and with Robert Saxton at Oxford University. He is the founder and Director of the critically acclaimed contemporary music group Radius.

Tim Benjamin was winner of the BBC Young Musician of the Year Composer's Award in 1993, at the age of 17, with his work *Antagony*. He also won the Stephen Oliver Trust's Prize for Contemporary Opera, for his first opera *The Bridge*. Benjamin's music has been widely performed, by groups including the London Sinfonietta, the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, and at the BOC Covent Garden Festival, and broadcast on BBC 2 and BBC Radio 3.

Past commissioners include the European Community Chamber Orchestra (*Möbius*), the Segovia Trio (*Hypocrisy*), the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra (*Un Jeu de Tarot*), and the London Design Festival (his second opera, *The Corley Conspiracy*). Tim Benjamin lives and works in London, and also plays the trombone.

# ELEVEN ECHOES OF AUTUMN

## (1966)

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### GEORGE CRUMB

*Eleven Echoes of Autumn*, 1965 was composed during the spring of 1966 for the Aeolian Chamber Players (on commission from Bowdoin College). The eleven pieces constituting the work are performed without interruption:

Eco 1.	Fantastico
Eco 2.	Languidamente, quasi lontano (“hauntingly”)
Eco 3.	Prestissimo
Eco 4.	Con bravura
Eco 5.	Cadenza I (for Alto Flute)
Eco 6.	Cadenza II (for Violin)
Eco 7.	Cadenza III (for Clarinet)
Eco 8.	Feroce, violento
Eco 9.	Serenamente, quasi lontano (“hauntingly”)
Eco 10.	Senza misura (“gently undulating”)
Eco 11.	Adagio (“like a prayer”)

Each of the *echi* exploits certain timbral possibilities of the instruments. For example, *eco 1* (for piano alone) is based entirely on the 5th partial harmonic, *eco 2* on violin harmonics in combination with 7th partial harmonics produced on the piano (by drawing a piece of hard rubber along the strings). A delicate aura of sympathetic vibrations emerges in *echi 3* and *4*, produced in the latter case by alto flute and clarinet playing into the piano strings. At the conclusion of the work the violinist achieves a mournful, fragile timbre by playing with the bow hair completely slack.

The most important generative element of *Eleven Echoes* is the “bell motif” - a quintuplet figure based on the whole-tone interval - which is heard at the beginning of the work. This diatonic figure appears in a variety of rhythmic guises, and frequently in a highly chromatic context.

Each of the eleven pieces has its own expressive character, at times overlaid by quasi-obbligato music of contrasting character, e.g., the “wind music” of the alto flute and clarinet in *eco 2* or the “distant mandolin music” of the violin in *eco 3*. The larger expressive curve of the work is arch-like: a gradual growth of intensity to a climactic point (*eco 8*) followed by a gradual collapse.



George Crumb

George Crumb's hand-drawn scores are famous for both their beauty and their initially confusing appearance - as in, for example, this extract from his *Eleven Echoes of Autumn*, 1965.

Interval: 20 minutes

# THE ROSENHAN EXPERIMENT (2008)

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**TIM BENJAMIN** (WORLD PREMIERE)

The “Rosenhan Experiment” was a famous experiment into the validity of psychiatric diagnosis conducted by David Rosenhan in 1972. It was published in the journal *Science* under the title “On being sane in insane places.”

Rosenhan’s study consisted of two parts. The first involved the use of healthy associates or “pseudopatients,” who briefly simulated auditory hallucinations in an attempt to gain admission to twelve different psychiatric hospitals in five states in various locations in the United States. The second involved asking staff at a psychiatric hospital to detect non-existent “fake” patients. In the first case hospital staff failed to detect a single pseudopatient, in the second the staff falsely detected large numbers of genuine patients as impostors. The study is considered an important and influential criticism of psychiatric diagnosis.

The study concluded, “It is clear that we cannot distinguish the sane from the insane in psychiatric hospitals” and also illustrated the dangers of depersonalisation and labelling in psychiatric institutions. It suggested that the use of community mental health facilities which concentrated on specific problems and behaviours rather than psychiatric labels might be a solution and recommended education to make psychiatric workers more aware of the social psychology of their facilities.

Benjamin’s *The Rosenhan Experiment* takes as a starting point Rosenhan’s famous paper: all the words in this piece are taken directly from the paper, which has been substantially abridged, although no words have been changed.

The work – which is designed to be staged – takes the form of fourteen songs for counter-tenor and piano: the work could therefore be billed as a “song cycle”, but is intended by the composer to be described as “music theatre”, in the tradition of Stravinsky’s *The Soldier’s Tale* and Maxwell Davies’ *Eight Songs for a Mad King*.

The counter-tenor is required to act both the parts of Rosenhan, and one of his patients, and to speak, as well as to sing. Whenever he speaks, his voice is the voice of Rosenhan, and whenever he sings (using the vocal

technique of *sprechgesang* virtually throughout), the voice is “The Patient”. Musically, Benjamin has treated both “parts” differently, to highlight the sharp difference between the two. Although he is the only named character, Rosenhan represents the institution, the impersonal, and the “inhuman”. The Patient is the complete opposite: he is not named; he represents the institutionalised, the depersonalised, but also the “human”. We discover aspects of The Patient’s life and his experiences, whereas we discover little about Rosenhan except through his sharp and often amusing prose.

The counter-tenor, then, is effectively required to portray a split personality, and the staging itself is designed to reflect this dichotomy. It is simple: one chair and one small table, piled with magazines. This could be Rosenhan’s study, with his journals ready for reference, or it could be the purgatorial ward-room of the psychiatric hospital, with outdated dog-eared magazines of the variety one only ever finds at medical institutions.

## **“Can the sane be distinguished from the insane?”**

Benjamin’s *The Rosenhan Experiment* gives us pause to reflect on the true nature of “insanity”. Are the insane merely those unfortunate souls that society deems fit only for the asylum? Is the psychiatrist our new priest, the ward-room our new confessional, and “therapy” no more use than a few Hail Marys? Psychiatric diagnosis and treatment has moved on significantly since Rosenhan’s seminal paper, but with today’s policies of “care in the community”, ever tighter budgets at the hospital, and an increasingly bizarre and depersonalised world, one can well imagine insisting “no, really, I am not mad!” to incredulous strangers. On the other hand, is our secular society, built on the rational, now one in which everyone is “mad” – or at least suffering from the latest “mental illness”: the treatment for which is the latest wonder-pill from Big Pharma?

Jemima Bannitt

## **ARNE MUUS (DIRECTOR, THE ROSENHAN EXPERIMENT)**

Born in Germany, Arne Muus studied Musicology, German Literature and Modern History at Freiburg and Bristol. He has held positions as an opera dramaturg and assistant director, and is currently reading for a doctorate at the University of Oxford. Past productions include *The Masque of Alfred* (Thomas Arne), *The Mahagonny Songplay* (Brecht / Weill), *The Cunning Little Vixen* (Janáček), and Mozart’s *Così fan tutte*.

# CATCH (1991)

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## THOMAS ADÈS

Thomas Adès was born in London in 1971. His most well-known works are *Asyla*, *Living Toys*, *Arcadiana*, and the opera *Powder Her Face*, televised by Channel 4. His music has been programmed by many international orchestras and ensembles in over a dozen countries world-wide. He has received commissions from the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, the Hallé, the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, Ensemble Modern and the London Sinfonietta, as well as Glyndebourne and The Royal Opera, Covent Garden. A focus on his music at the 1999 Helsinki Music Nova (in which seventeen of his works were played) appeared in a London Weekend Television Profile, relayed on Channel 4 in December 1999. Adès has been Artistic Director of the Aldeburgh since 1999. In 2000 he became the youngest-ever winner of the prestigious Grawemeyer Prize, for *Asyla*.

Catch (1991) is a good introduction to his deftness, his fancy, his ear. Onstage, a violin, cello, and piano lure a clarinet to join them. The clarinet, attracted, thrice walks in from offstage, twice escapes their cajolements, but at last, with expressive music at first soft, then jubilant, is caught, and in the final bar takes a seat amidst them.

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“An enviable assortment of gifted young players ... this concert was brilliantly executed and conceived.”

*(SPNM/New Notes on Radius's debut at Wigmore Hall, April 2007)*

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To donate to Radius, or to get in touch with us for any reason, please contact our Director, Tim Benjamin, at:

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We hope that you enjoy this evening's performance as much as we have enjoyed bringing it to you, and we look forward to seeing you again soon!

**Tim Benjamin**

Founder and Director, Radius

## RADIUS WOULD LIKE TO THANK ...

Christ Church, Oxford  
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Christopher Benjamin

Mark Elliott  
John Simmons  
Desmond & Elizabeth Vine  
Elaine Windus

# ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

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## **ROBERT OGDEN (COUNTERTENOR)**

Robert Ogden read music as a choral scholar at King's College, Cambridge and studied at the Royal Northern College of Music and the Netherlands Opera Studio in Amsterdam. He was a finalist in the Elizabeth Harwood Memorial Competition, the Royal Overseas League Competition and the Great Elm Competition and was awarded the prestigious Curtis Gold Medal for Singing.

Robert has performed with Stadttheater Bern (Kreon, *Medea*), Scottish Opera (Andronico, *Tamerlano*), Washington Opera (Page, *Sly*; Shepherd, *Tosca*), Norwegian National Opera (Nireno, *Giulio Cesare*), Stadttheater Klagenfurt (Delfa, *Giasone*), the Handel Opera Society (Ptolomeo, *Giulio Cesare*), and Opera North (Oberon, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; Radamisto). He studies with Michael Chance and Dinah Harris.

## **ALEXANDRA WOOD (VIOLIN)**

Alexandra Wood has won major prizes at International Violin Competitions including Wieniawski, Tibor Varga, Lipizer and Yampolsky. She graduated from Selwyn College Cambridge, and the Royal College of Music, where she was President Emerita Scholar, and studied with Itzhak Rashkovksy.

Alexandra has performed concertos with the Philharmonia, City of London Sinfonia, and the OSJ, and worked with conductors including Pierre Boulez, Roger Norrington, Tom Adès, Oliver Knussen and Richard Hickox. Alexandra has won many prestigious awards including the Worshipful Company of Musicians Medal, Maisie Lewis Award, Wingate Scholarship, Hattori Award and Junior Fellowships at the Royal College of Music.

Associate Professor of Violin at Leeds College of Music, and also a teacher at Birmingham Conservatoire, she is currently compiling the ABRSM Spectrum for Violin volume.

## **OLIVER COATES (CELLO)**

He will tour as principal cello in the London Sinfonietta this summer and also plays in the Linden Trio and The House of Bedlam in addition to Radius. He is currently artistic director of Sounds Underground.

Oliver performs concertos and recitals around the world and has given three solo tours of Japan. He was a winner of the 2006 Philip & Dorothy Green Award for Young Concert Artists, awarded by Making Music and at the 2007 Kirckman Concert Society Auditions, which leads to his solo debut at the Wigmore Hall in March 2009. He has been awarded a Myra Hess Trust Award, and in both 2005 and 2004 he was given a 'Star Award' by the Countess of Munster Musical Trust.

He has written and improvised with Massive Attack and performs with Mira Calix on Warp Records. He has worked with Birtwistle, Adès, Gubaidulina, Harvey and

Lindberg on their music. New cello music is being written for him by Emily Hall and Larry Goves. He also collaborates with the pianist Sarah Nicolls and Sound Intermedia.

This season he appeared at the Southbank Centre, Wigmore Hall and Barbican, with the Endymion Ensemble, Radius and London Sinfonietta, and he is a soloist at the Aldeburgh, Faster than Sound, Corsham and Arundel Festivals.

## **JENNIFER GEORGE (FLUTE)**

Jennifer George has played with various orchestras in the UK and USA, including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Hallé Orchestra, Opera North, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Oregon Symphony. She has a keen interest in contemporary music and has performed as soloist and Principal Flute with Remix Ensemble (Portugal). Currently based in Manchester, Jennifer George grew up in Oregon, USA. She studied at Indiana University before coming to the UK to complete a Masters degree at Royal Northern College of Music. Jennifer is a flute tutor at University of Leeds.

## **CHARYS GREEN (CLARINET)**

In 2002 Charys received a distinction in postgraduate performance from the Royal Academy of Music after achieving a first class honours degree from the Royal College of Music in 2000. Charys has performed concertos with the Philharmonia, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, and the Aurelian Ensemble, and has performed at the Wigmore Hall, Royal Festival Hall, Purcell Room and live on BBC Radio 3.

She has been a finalist in the Yamaha Woodwind and Brass scholarships, a woodwind finalist in the BBC Young Musician of the Year and has represented Great Britain in the European Music for Youth in Weimar. In addition to her solo performances and Radius, Charys plays regularly with duo partner Graham Caskie at music societies around the country, and with The Zephyr Ensemble, co-founded by Charys at the Royal College of Music.

## **JOHN REID (PIANO)**

John Reid read music at Clare College, Cambridge, where he gained an MPhil in musicology before taking up a scholarship to study at the Royal Academy of Music with Michael Dussek. He has also taken lessons in song interpretation with Malcolm Martineau and, privately in Amsterdam, with Rudolf Jansen. His many awards include the 2003 Kathleen Ferrier, Maggie Teyte and English Song accompaniment prizes, the 2003 Birmingham Accompanist of the Year (joint winner) and the 2004 Gerald Moore Award, as well as the Scott Huxley, Flora Nielsen and Richard Lewis-Jean Shanks prizes at the Royal Academy of Music, in addition to which he was awarded the Queen's Commendation for excellence and appointed the Shinn Junior Fellow by the Academy. He was a founder member of the Royal Academy of Music Song Circle and is an alumnus of the Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme.

