INTERNATIONAL ENSEMBLE MODERN ACADEMY
GEORGE BENJAMIN – COMPOSER IN RESIDENCE
04.09. – 16.09.2011
The International Ensemble Modern Academy (IEMA) represents a continuation of what has been Ensemble Modern’s main goal for 30 years – supreme quality, joy of performing, interdisciplinary projects and international orientation. The ensemble has been committed to close interaction with artists and their works. By gaining extensive and highly diversified knowledge of 20th/21st century music, it has become a “memory of modern music”.

Thanks to funding from the German Federal Cultural Foundation, Kunststiftung NRW, the Arts Foundation of North Rhine-Westphalia and Allianz Kulturstiftung, IEMA is able to offer a variety of programmes that focus on an arts-driven and arts-inspired dialogue between highly qualified students and distinguished personalities from the fields of art and culture. Since its formation, IEMA extends study grants to young musicians, composers, conductors and sound engineers, which allow them to work with members of Ensemble Modern for two semesters. Every year, the results of this work are presented in 20 concerts, which are also the result of artistic cooperations, eg. with the Frankfurt University of Music and Performing Arts, the Centre for Art and Media Karlsruhe and the Institute for Applies Theatre Studies in Giessen.

Furthermore, important and formative figures such as Friedrich Cerha, Peter Eötvös, Heiner Goebbels, Heinz Holliger, Helmut Lachenmann, Wolfgang Rihm, and Hans Zender are regular guests at IEMA. Since 2003, master classes of the International Ensemble Modern Academy are held at Paxos Spring Festival (Greece) and at Festival KLANGSPUREN Schwaz (Austria). After successful courses in Japan and Korea in 2005, this work was continued in Japan in 2008 and 2010. In Beijing (China), the IEMA realised a master class-project “contempo primo” in co-operation with Ernst von Siemens music foundation.

www.internationale-em-akademie.de
Since its foundation in 1993 the festival KLANGSPUREN Schwaz has developed remarkably. Launched as a festival for contemporary music, KLANGSPUREN today stands for a multifaceted understanding and mediation of contemporary culture. Acting within a broad network of international co-operations, KLANGSPUREN receives appreciation of decisive music foundations and shows an undaunted enthusiasm to emphasize the fundamental role of contemporary music again and yet again.

The festival presents the diverse scenes of New Music with annual focuses on different countries. It is accompanied by mediation and education programmes such as Klangspuren lautstark, Klangspuren mobil, Klangspuren stufenlos or Klangspuren barfuss, which have become a mainstay of the festival. The International Ensemble Modern Academy has a very special position: selected young talents from all over the world visit the festival to meet extraordinary personalities of the scene of contemporary music and members of the Ensemble Modern, to work on and discover contemporary music with all its facets.

www.klangspuren.at

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS 2011

In 2011, the International Ensemble Modern Academy will take place for the 8th time within the framework of the festival KLANGSPUREN Schwaz Tirol and remains one of the most successful projects of the festival. Year after year, the participation of such outstanding figures as György Kurtág, Helmut Lachenmann, Steve Reich, Benedict Mason, Wolfgang Rihm Martin Matalon, Johannes Maria Staud or Heinz Holliger as composers-in-residence as well as the participation of members of Ensemble Modern guarantees the complex and first-hand conveyance of key works of contemporary music.

The call for applications is specifically targeted toward young musicians in the final stages of their training, who take up the challenge presented by the music of the 20th and 21st century.

Together with the Ensemble Modern teachers, conductor Franck Ollu and George Benjamin, this year’s composer-in-residence, the pieces listed below will be rehearsed during the master class and performed in two concerts at the festival.
INSPIRATION RARELY COMES OUT OF THE BLUE

George Benjamin interviewed by Max Nyffeler on his teacher Olivier Messiaen, the irrational in music and the impact of scientific thought on composing.*

(...)

Max Nyffeler: Messiaen weaves a complex web of rational and irrational elements into his work. What role does the irrational play in your own composing?

George Benjamin: I try to concentrate on the rational side of things and trust that the irrational or emotional dimension will emerge naturally if I do my job properly. The inner strength that binds a piece of music together and drives it forwards is ultimately very hard to grasp intellectually. There are moments when it just happens. Inexplicably.

The process we often loosely refer to as inspiration?

Yes. Inspiration is enormously important. I couldn’t write at all without it. And it seems to have two sides to it. You have the rapid – and all too rare! – intuitive flashes that give momentum, wholeness and energy to a work; then you have the barely perceptible “light” that burns away dimly in the background, underpinning and guiding the slow growth of the final composition. But inspiration rarely comes out of the blue, out of the void. It is induced by study, research and hard work. I am convinced it has as much to do with artists’ attempts to solve aesthetic and technical problems as it does with romantic, other-worldly visions of an unfettered imagination.

How would you say composing is different from other artistic activities?

Music is unquestionably the most abstract, least earthed of all art forms and has a unique range and potential. Composers are confronted with questions that take them into a huge array of fields including architecture, logic, psychology, and technology, to name but a few. Yet, when all is said and done, composing is a process of shaping, a craft. Compositions are structured entities and our methodology is far more important for the final outcome than many people think. Only when all of the elements relate to one another harmoniously does the music “elevate” us, touch our souls ...

Do you see parallels between art and science?

Art and science have quite different goals and motivations. Science can certainly enrich art – I am thinking of instrumentation, for instance, where precise analyses of the harmonic spectra can be very useful, or new technologies, or the use of computers to design certain structures. Science can tell us a great deal about the physiognomy of the ear and the way we perceive sound. But all the talk about similarities and relationships between art and science is ultimately metaphorical. Science is all about arriving at objectively correct answers and facts; music is about illuminating our inner life and stirring human emotions.

Can that horribly overused term “Progress” be applied to music in the same way as to science?

Grand theories about progress and historical inevitability – historicism – were dreamt up in the 19th century. Personally, I dislike monolithic thinking, attempts to impose uniformity on complex phenomena. Progress is a concept that can logically be used in science and technology but it makes little sense in the realm of art. Despite this, composers naturally always aspire to create something fresh, unique and unspoilt. But this is another kind of progress altogether. It’s about much more than merely getting from A to B and is crucial to a composer’s artistic journey.
Have you ever been inspired by scientific research or insights?


Ever since I was a schoolboy, I have had a strong interest in science and have read many books on mathematics and other scientific subjects. But I wouldn’t say I have been directly inspired by them. “Chaos theory”, which gave me a new, exciting and relatively straightforward introduction to the relationship between order and chaos in the late eighties and early nineties, was an exception. This had artistic ramifications and influenced my approach to structure and rhythm for a time. For instance, it influenced my understanding of how regular and random beats interact; and it influenced my views on the way large structures unfold and change, how even a minor underlying instability can shape the overall course of a composition. But I am much less interested in this today. Even back then, my interest in these topics was fundamentally poetic in nature; I didn’t – and still don’t – aspire to be in any way scientific in my work. We all know that some fields, such as research into harmonic relationships and degrees of change, share a certain common logic with mathematics. But there is nothing new or original about this observation. It’s widely known. I would like to emphasise that my decisions always stem from non-rational, subjective impulses, not from an urge to discover some kind of ultimate objectivity.

Let’s return briefly to Olivier Messiaen. In your 1992 obituary of the composer in Le Monde you wrote that his artistic quest was like the unveiling of eternal beauty. What did you mean by this?


That was quite some time ago, and I don’t recall the exact wording. But I remember that he was constantly searching for something new, something completely different from what had gone before. When I was studying with him, researching beauty in a way was not en vogue, but his interest in it never waned. The English poet Keats wrote “A thing of beauty is a joy forever”, a phrase Messiaen loved to quote. I believe beauty is something that is not specific to the period in history in which one lives; human beings’ need for beauty is fundamentally the same today as it was in the time of Pérotin. Messiaen passionately encouraged an almost naive quest for beauty in his students – but it was a beauty shaped by the most demanding critical and technical standards. But in doing this he was a source of inspiration for generation after generation of grateful students, myself included.
PROGRAMME

The final programme of the master class and the concerts will be scheduled after the applications have been sighted, on the basis of the following pieces:

PROGRAMME I – CONCERT 13 SEPTEMBER 2011

Pierre Boulez: Mémoriale (...)explsante - fixe ... Original (1985)
Flute solo, 2 horns, 3 violins, 2 violas, violoncello

1 flute, 1 clarinet, 1 violin, 1 violoncello

György Ligeti: 10 pieces for wind quintet (1968)
1 flute, 1 oboe, 1 clarinet, 1 bassoon, 1 horn

Oliver Knussen: Cantata (1977)
1 oboe, 1 violin, 1 viola, 1 violoncello

Clarinet, horn, violoncello

2 horns

George Benjamin: Three Miniatures (2001)
Violin solo

George Benjamin: Viola, Viola (1997)
2 violas

George Benjamin: Transcription of Purcell’s Fantasia VII (1995)
1 clarinet, 1 celesta, 1 violin, 1 violoncello

George Benjamin: Flight, flute solo (1979)

PROGRAMME II – CONCERT 15 SEPTEMBER 2011

George Benjamin: Three Inventions for Chamber Orchestra (1993 – 95)
2 flutes (a. Picc, a. Alt-Fl.), 1 oboe (a. Ehn), 3 clarinets (a. Bkl, Kbkl), 1 bassoon (a. Kfl), 2 horns, 1 trumpet (a. flugelhorn), 1 euphonium, 1 piano, 2 percussions, 1 harp, 3 violins (3. vl a. viola!), 2 violas, 2 violoncelli, 2 double bass

George Benjamin: Olicantus (2002)
2 flutes, 2 clarinets (a. Bkl), 2 horns, Piano, 2 percussions, harp, 1 violin, viola, violoncello, double bass

Steve Potter: „that” for 15 players (2007)
1 flute, 1 oboe, 1 clarinet, 1 bassoon, 1 horn, 1 trumpet, 1 trombone, 1 piano, 1 percussion, 1 harp, 2 violins, 1 viola, 1 violoncello, 1 double bass

Anton Webern: 6 Stücke op. 6, (1909)
1 flute, 1 oboe, 1 clarinet, 2 pianoe, 4 percussione, 2 violins, 1 viola, 1 violoncello, 1 double bass

Luigi Dallapiccola: Piccola Musica Notturna (1961)
1 flute, 1 oboe, 1 clarinet, 1 piano, 1 harp, 1 violin, 1 viola, 1 violoncello

Iannis Xenakis: Anaktoria (1969)
clarinet, bassoon, horn, 2 violins, viola, violoncello, double bass

Franco Donatoni: Spirì (1977)
Flute, oboe, clarinet, bass clarinet, piano (celesta), percussion, 2 violins, viola, violoncello

PROGRAMME III – CHAMBER MUSIC WITHIN THE MASTER CLASS

Karlheinz Stockhausen: Adieu (1966)
Flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn

George Crumb: Eleven echos of automne (1966)
Alto flute, clarinet, piano, violin

flute, clarinet, piano, violin, violoncello

Nikos Skalkottas: Quartett Nr. 1 oder 2 (1943)
Oboe, bassoon, trumpet, piano

Guo Wenjing: Drama, Trio op. 26 (1995)
3 percussions

2 percussions

Charles Wuorinen: Trombone Trio (1985)
Trombone, percussion, piano

Alexander Goehr: since brass, nor stone (2008)
Percussion, 2 violins, viola, violoncello

Mark André: als... I (2001)
Bass clarinet, violoncello, piano

Harrison Birtwistle: Cortege (1990)
Flute, Oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, trumpet, bass trumpet, percussion, piano, 2 violins, viola, violoncello, double bass

Thierry de Mey: Musique de tables (1987)
3 percussions
WHEN – WHERE – COSTS

The IEMA 2011 will take place from 4 – 16 September 2011 in Igls/Vill.

SCHEDULE
SUN 4 Sept.  Arrival until 4 p.m.
THU 8 Sept.  Opening concert festival KLANGSPUREN Schwaz, cond. by Franck Ollu
FRI 9 Sept.  Concert Ensemble Modern, cond. by George Benjamin
SUN 11 Sept.  Workshop Concert (Grillhof, Igls/Vill)
TUE 13 Sept.  Concert programme I
THU 15 Sept.  Final concert (programme II)
FRI 16 Sept.  Departure

SCORES
Scores and sheet music will be provided by the organisers via the online platform.

CONCERTS
Academy participants receive free admission to all concerts of the festival KLANGSPUREN Schwaz Tirol, as well as two free tickets for the concerts of the academy.

VENUE
Tiroler Bildungs-Institut Grillhof, Grillhofweg 100, 6080 Igls-Vill, www.grillhof.at

COSTS
€ 180.- for catering expenses (including accommodation and full board at the Grillhof), expenses for individual arrival and departure to/from the venue have to be covered individually.

TRAVEL
Participants are exclusively responsible for arriving in time for the master class on 4 September and for arranging their departure on 16 September. For directions, please go to www.grillhof.at. More information will be made available to accepted participants on the IEMA online platform.
REQUIREMENTS – APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The following positions are covered in the repertoire:

APPLICATION PROCEDURE
To be submitted by interested students not later than by 29 April 2011:
- Legibly completed application form
- Detailed CV with picture
- List of contemporary music already performed
- CD featuring your work (contemporary music is desirable but not necessary)
- Conductors: DVD featuring you/your work

to the following address:
Festival Klangspuren Schwaz
Klangspurengasse 1/Ecke Franz-Ullreich-Str. 8a, 6130 Schwaz, Österreich

Deadline: 29 April 2011 (date of postmark), application documents will not be returned.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF ACCEPTANCE
Acceptance will be announced by end of May; a detailed timetable and the respective
repertoire will be published in June.
All applicants will be informed via Email and will receive an access code for the IEMA
online platform, where scores and further information will be available.

MORE INFORMATION
Festival KLANGSPUREN Schwaz Tirol
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