

The Natural World

A series of concerts of electronic

performed by members of the
Electro-acoustic Ensemble

Nigel Bartram; 'cello
John Stead: electronics

Programme

Part 1:

Colours at Dawn - Nigel Bartram (2021)

Elementa - Jean-Claude Risset (1998)

Dream Signal - John Stead (2022)*

Part 2:

Song of Songs - Karen Tanaka (1996)

Wast and Yordas II - John Stead (2021- 22)*

Chikhai and Sidpa bardo - John Stead (2018 - 20)

(*) - first performance

Times: Withernsea: 13.30 - 14.30 & 19.00 - 20.00

Humbleton: 18.30 - 19.30 & 19.50 - 20.50

Welwick: 13.30 - 14.30 & 19.00 - 20.00

Colours at Dawn.

This piece was composed in response to a walk around Warter, East Yorkshire between 4.30 and 6.30.am. Birdsong and the gradual changing of light and colour at this time are the main components of the piece. The piano and cello mimic and echo the colours and birdsong with the aid of electronics, which add delays, reverberation and ring modulation as well as spatialising the sounds around the listener.

The piece is written to accompany a film of the gradual transitions of colour and light made during the dawn recordings of the birdsong, but can also be as in this case, performed as a concert work without the film. The film and sound can be watched and listened to on YouTube at : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ahiFI7ma1RM>.

(23.30mins.)

Elementa.

This piece is regarded by many in the field of acousmatic music as one of the greatest examples. Jean-Claude Rissett takes us on a complex and stunningly beautiful journey through the elements: Water, Fire, Air and Earth. The sounds are extended and transformed using musique concrete techniques including speed changes, close and distant recording, layering, reverberation and spatialisation etc.. You can see Jean-Claude Risset perform this piece outside in Athens in 2014 at : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pr_ybSVgusM

(22.32mins.)

Dream Signal.

After a rather arduous and often difficult time composing Bardo Visions, I needed a break and decided to compose lighter work exploring and enjoying the sounds of the Japanese Shakuhachi flute. Using the sound shaping technology of GRM, the flute is the only sound source apart from a brief appearance of a small bell sound at 1.08. All the components of the flute are used - the harmonics, various playing techniques - at points the flute sounds flutter around the audience, gradually coming to rest in a sound space of very high and very low sounds. The title is inspired by Toru Takemitsu's work of 1987 - 'Signals from Heaven I and II'.

(6.36mins.)

Song of Songs.

The title comes from the Song of Solomon. It is a beautiful song of love, which here is presented as a piece for solo 'cello and electronics. The composer states that she has attempted to project this sensual song of love onto the sound of the 'cello and computer, with the intention to weave colour and scent into the sound while blending the ancient story and today's technology. This refers to a heightened awareness of how the electronics she employs, adds to and enhances the sound of the 'cello throughout this electro-acoustic piece.

(8.00mins.)

Wast and Yordas II

These two pieces are part of a larger group of pieces called 'Natural Histories' in which various sounds in nature are explored, meditated upon and presented utilising musique concrete techniques. Both pieces are explorations of the water sounds, environments and colours in two differing locations - outside at Wast Water and inside the Yordas cave at Ingleton.

(16.43mins.)

Chikhai and Sidpa bardo

This work explores and meditates on the bardo thodol (The Tibetan Book of the Dead). The term bardo refers to an intermediate state and in this performance part 1 and part 3 are performed - the chikhai bardo (the moment of death) and the sidpa bardo (the bardo of becoming). The processes of sound transformation in the piece act as metaphors for the journey from the known to the unknown. It begins with the magnified sound of the powerful 'dung chen' - this iconic Tibetan horn up to 15 feet in length is used in ceremonies to herald important rituals or events. Part 3, the sidpa bardo, begins quietly building into a complex of sounds, previously heard in part 2 (the chonyi bardo), ending in single small, pitched sounds - the vision is of quantum particles dancing on the horizon of a new reality ...

(25.14mins.)

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a series of concerts at
churches in Holderness

given by the

Electro Acoustic Ensemble



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