

LEGACIES 10
AMADINDA
Percussion Group



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AMADINDA PERCUSSION GROUP

Zoltán Rácz, Aurél Holló 1-7

Zoltán Váczi, Károly Bojtos 1-4, 6-7

guests:

Emese Mali, József Balog – piano (5)

Tamás Schlanger – percussion (1, 3)

László Tömösközi – percussion (2)

Mátyás Sirokai – percussion (6)

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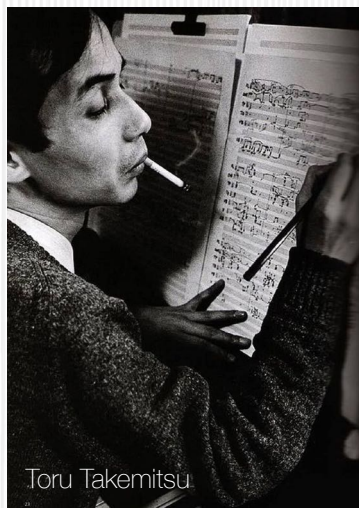
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Toru Takemitsu: Wings (1982)
arranged by Bob Becker

This arrangement of Takemitsu's nostalgic song was originally made for NEXUS in April, 2001. It is part of a group project to arrange a number of the composer's many "pop songs" which then may be performed either singly or in various combinations.



Takemitsu himself arranged Wings for mixed chorus, and the harmonization he used there is the basis for this arrangement, which is scored for marimbas and vibraphone. [The version of the arrangement for NEXUS and string quartet was created in order to take advantage of a collaboration with the Kronos quartet in January, 2002. The colours and effects used in the string writing are a kind of homage to Takemitsu, whose approach to orchestration was both masterful and unique.]

Takemitsu composed Wings in 1982 for a staging of Arthur L. Kopit's play of the same name at the Seibu Theatre in Tokyo. The lyrics of the song were also written by the composer, here translated into English by Ella Louise Rutledge and Kirsti Kaldro:

Oh wind, oh clouds, oh sunlight!
You're the wings that carry my dreams,
You write across a distant sky
Words of inspiration.

So did people once travel in dreams,
floating out across the sky,

Oh wind, oh clouds, oh sunlight!
You're the wings that carry my dreams,
You write across a distant sky
Words of freedom and liberty.

Bob Becker: Mudra (1990)



Mudra consists of music which was originally composed to accompany the dance *UrbhanaMudra* by choreographer Joan Phillips. Commissioned by INDE '90 and premiered in Toronto in March, 1990 as part of the DuMaurier Quay Works series, *UrbhanaMudra* was awarded the National Arts Centre Award for best collaboration between composer and choreographer. The music was subsequently edited and reorchestrated as a concert piece for Nexus during May, 1990. Mudra is scored for marimba, vibraphone, songbells, glockenspiel, crotales, muffled drum and bass drum. *UrbhanaMudra* was created, for the most part, using the "dance first" approach, in which the music is composed to fit pre-existing choreography. Thus, the rhythmic structure and overall form reflect the episodic and gestural character of the original choreography, which dealt with the conflict of

traditional and modern issues in a multicultural urban society. The term *mudra* refers in general to the narrative use of torso, facial and hand and arm gestures in many Indian dance forms.

The instrumental ensemble in the original piece had a role similar to that found in traditional Indian dance concerts, where a solo drum is the principal voice. However, western instruments were not used to imitate an "Indian" sound. In response to the choreographic approach, classical Indian musical structures were allowed to influence the formal, rhythmic and harmonic aspects of the music. The interval relationships of the raga *Chandrakauns* (tonic, minor third, fourth, minor sixth, major seventh) were used to determine both the melodic and harmonic content of this piece. Rhythmically, *Mudra* is based on two important and common structures found throughout North Indian music: 1) motivic development (*palta*) and 2) rhythmic cadence formulas (*ti hai*). These structural devices are used most systematically in the final drum solo section of the piece in which rhythmic, rather than harmonic cadencing is used to create tension and, ultimately, accord.

Bob Becker: Unseen Child (2002)

based on the song *Mienai Kodomo* by Toru Takemitsu

In this piece Takemitsu's original melody has been very freely altered, particularly its rhythm. The approach to harmony is also completely divorced from the pop-style chord progressions of the original song and is rigorously based on a system of four nontransposable nine tone scales that I have been using in my own compositions for the

past ten years. The piece, written in March, 2002, is scored for glockenspiel, songbells, vibraphone, marimba and suspended cymbals.

Takemitsu 's *Mienai Kodomo* (Unseen Child) was the theme song for the 1963 Iwanami film *Kanogo to Kare* (She and He), directed by Susumu Hani. The lyrics to the original song are by Shuntaro Tanikawa, here translated into English by Ella Louise Rutledge and Kirsti Kaldro:

Unseen, a little child, someone's child,
hidden within, not yet born,
laughing in the morning, laughing in the sun,
when morning light arrives outside the window.

Unseen, a tiny walnut in its shell,
green like the spring, not yet ripe,
trembling as the night falls, trembling in the woods,
when dark of night arrives, deep in the forest.

Unseen, a little child, my own child,
who no longer will be born,
singing in the morning, singing in the dawn,
when morning light arrives, she flies across the sky.

Bob Becker

Steve Reich: Mallet Quartet (2009)



Steve Reich with Amadinda

Mallet Quartet is scored for two vibraphones and two five octave marimbas. I had never written for five octave marimbas extending down to cello C. On the one hand I was delighted to have the possibility of a low bass and on the other hand apprehensive since just slightly too hard a mallet that low can produce noise instead of pitch. Eventually, after a bit of experimentation, this was well worked out.

The piece is in three movements, fast, slow, fast. In the two outer fast movements the marimbas set the harmonic background which remains rather static compared to recent pieces of mine like *Double Sextet* (2007). The marimbas interlock in canon, also a procedure I have used in many other works. The vibes present the melodic material first solo and then in canon. However, in the central slow movement the texture changes into a thinner more transparent one with very spare use of notes, particularly in the marimbas. I was originally concerned this movement might just be 'too thin', but I think it ends up being the most striking, and certainly the least expected, of the piece.

Mallet Quartet is about 15 minutes in duration. It was co-commissioned by the Amadinda

Quartet in Budapest, on the occasion of its 25th Anniversary, Nexus in Toronto, So Percussion in New York, Synergy Percussion in Australia, and Soundstreams in Canada. The world Premiere was given by the Amadinda Quartet in Bela Bartók National Concert Hall on December 6, 2009. The American Premiere was given by So Percussion at Stanford University Lively Arts in California on January 9, 2010

Steve Reich: Quartet (2013)

Quartet, when mentioned in the context of concert music, is generally assumed to mean string quartet. In my case, the quartet that has played a central role in many of my pieces (besides the string quartet) is that of two pianos and two percussion. It appears like that or in expanded form with more pianos or more percussion in *The Desert Music*, *Sextet*, *Three Movements*, *The Four Sections*, *The Cave*, *Dance Patterns*, *Three Tales*, *You Are (Variations)*, *Variations for Vibes, Pianos and Strings*, *Daniel Variations*, *Double Sextet*, and *Radio Rewrite*. In *Quartet*, there is just this group alone: two vibes and two pianos.

The piece is one of the more complex I have composed. It frequently changes key and often breaks off continuity to pause or take up new material. Though the parts are not unduly difficult, it calls for a high level of ensemble virtuosity.

The form is one familiar throughout history: fast, slow, fast, played without pause. The slow movement introduces harmonies not usually found in my music.

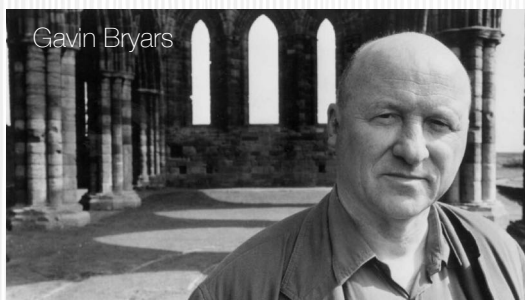
The piece is dedicated to Colin Currie, a percussionist who has broken the mold by maintaining his solo career with orchestras and recitals and also, quite amazingly, by founding the Colin Currie Group which plays whatever ensemble music he believes in. I salute him and hope others will take note.

Quartet was co-commissioned by Southbank Centre, Carnegie Hall, The Juilliard School, Cité de la musique, and Kölner Philharmonie / KölnMusik, and is approximately 17 minutes in duration.

Steve Reich

Gavin Bryars: One last bar then Joe can sing (1994)

A Homage to Deagan



Commissioned by the Arts Council of Great Britain for the virtuoso percussion quintet Nexus, this piece is a reflection on aspects of percussion history, both personal and musical. The members of Nexus are my friends (I played in the Steve Reich Ensemble along with Russ Hartenberger, for example, in 1972 – the year after Nexus was formed) and I have known their playing as an ensemble for almost 20 years. The piece exploits not only the tremendous virtuosity of Nexus but rather more their wonderful musicality and subtlety. The piece starts from the

last bar at the end of the first part of my first opera Medea, a very short coda for a quintet of untuned percussion instruments. In my new piece, however, this one apparently innocuous bar is progressively fragmented until it is taken over, little by little, by the addition of tuned percussion instruments. Eventually two metal tuned instruments (crotales and songbells) play aria-like material with bows, occasionally joined by the xylophone, and accompanied by marimba and xylophone ostinati. The piece ends with a coda in which phrases are passed from bowed vibraphone to bowed crotales to bowed songbells, supported by tremolos on two marimbas. The rare 3-octave songbells which Nexus owns is one of the great American instrument maker J. C. Deagan's particularly fine instruments and the piece is effectively a kind of homage to Deagan – the Stradivarius of the tuned percussion family. Deagan was a close collaborator with Percy Grainger in the development of tuned percussion music between the wars and I have always admired Grainger's imaginative and audacious use of percussion. The family of keyboard percussion is, for me, as important a group as, say, the string family and equally capable of expressive playing. Indeed in Medea not only does the orchestra have no violins (the strings are from violas downwards) but the percussion section replaces, in effect, the more conventionally important first violins and my knowledge of the music of Nexus was a major factor in this decision.

Gavin Bryars

Elliot Cole: Postludes - No.6 & 8 (2012)

for bowed vibraphone / four players



Elliot Cole

Postludes is a book of eight pieces for a familiar instrument played in a new way. Four players, with eight double-bass bows, play interlocking lines on a single vibraphone. The interplay of bows and hands tapping, muting and touching harmonics, weaves an intimate and intricate counterpoint that is as beautiful to watch as it is to hear: fragile, tender and haunting.

Elliot Cole

Amadinda Percussion Group gave its first performance at the Liszt Academy Budapest in 1984.

In 1985 the group won the first prize at Gaudeamus Contemporary Music Competition in Rotterdam. During the past decades Amadinda became one of the most renowned percussion groups all over the world performing in 35 countries of 4 continents. The group appeared at many prestigious festivals in Europe such as Paris Autumn, Sidney Spring Festival, Prague Spring, Zagreb Biennale, Warsaw Autumn, Tampere Biennale, Bath Festival, Huddersfield Contemporary Festival, BBC Proms, Berlin Biennale and Wiener Festwochen. Amadinda performed also at Carnegie Hall and Meyerson Hall in the USA, Japan, Mexico City, China, Lebanon, Armenia and four times in Taiwan at Taipei International Percussion Convention. Amadinda has recorded more than ten CD-

s for Hungaroton, including the complete percussion works of John Cage. Additional recordings were made for TELDEC (The Ligeti Project) and for Tzadik, New York.



John Cage dedicated his 72 minutes long composition *Four⁴* to Amadinda. The piece was premiered in Tokyo during the group's first tour in Japan in 1992. In 2000, they performed the world premiere of György Ligeti's new piece *Síppal, dobbal, nádihegedűvel* for mezzo-soprano and percussion, composed for the group as well. In 2009, Steve Reich, one of the greatest living composers composed and dedicated a new piece for the ensemble - *Mallet Quartet* – on the occasion of Amadinda's 25th anniversary.

In 1988 Amadinda Percussion Group was awarded Franz Liszt Prize by the Hungarian government as well as the Order of the Merit of the Hungarian Republic by the President of Hungary in 1997. In 2004 Amadinda received the Kossuth Prize, the highest artistic prize of Hungary. In addition, they received a very prestigious prize in 2008, the Bartók Béla – Pásztory Ditta prize.

Amadinda has collaborated actively in the past decades with renowned artists like Zoltán Kocsis, András Schiff, Éva Marton, György Kurtág, Péter Eötvös, James Wood, Theatre of Voices and Paul Hillier, Eighth Blackbird, Iván Fischer and Budapest Festival Orchestra, Hungarian National Philharmonic Orchestra, András Keller and Concerto Budapest. Collaboration with such names has greatly contributed to the fact that informed international opinion holds Amadinda to be one of the most original and multifaceted percussion groups in the world.



Tamás Schlanger

The inspiration he received as a former student of Amadinda Percussion Group led him to be a member of the UMZE Ensemble, Quasars Ensemble and the Ostravska Banda.

László Tömösközi is pursuing a wide range of activities as a musician, educator and arranger, appearing at several major musical venues and festivals including BBC Proms, Schleswig-Holstein Festival, Lucerne Festival and Percussive Arts Society International Convention in Indianapolis.

He was born in Hungary, started his percussion studies following his father's example who was also a drummer. László has studied under the guidance of Aurél Holló (Amadinda Percussion Group), Zoltán Rácz (Amadinda Percussion Group), Klaus Schwärzler (Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich) and Rainer Seegers (Berlin Philharmonic).

As a chamber musician, he has appeared with, amongst others, Steve Reich, Pierre Boulez, Alvin Lucier and Toshio Hosokawa.

More than two decades close collaboration connects him with the Amadinda Percussion Group. László has performed with the following orchestras: Philharmonia Zurich, Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, Zurich Chamber Orchestra, Orchestra La Scintilla, Lucerne Symphony Orchestra, Musikkollegium Winterthur. A highlight of the last seasons was a guest performance with the Berlin Philharmonic.



József Balog is one of the most talented pianists of his generation, surrounded by the astonishing heritage of the internationally well-known Hungarian piano tradition established by Franz Liszt, Ernst von Dohnányi and Béla Bartók. He is praised and compared to Horowitz and Earl Wild by critics and acknowledged by the audience for his brilliant technic and very deep, sensitive musicianship. Along with the standard piano repertoire, he plays jazz-influenced classical compositions, contemporary music, and works written by rarely played composers as well. He

has also earned fame for premiering a large number of contemporary pieces and he regularly holds master courses at various prominent musical institutions. For the last 20 years, he has given more than 1000 concerts as a soloist and chamber musician in more than 25 countries across Europe, America, and Asia. He performed in well-known concert halls such as the Koch Theater (Lincoln Center) in New York, Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Philharmonic Hall in Saint Petersburg, the Kensington Palace in London, Konzerthaus in Wien and Béla Bartók National Concert Hall in Budapest. He also achieved great success at the following festivals: Shanghai China International Arts Festival, Bellagio and Lago Maggiore Festival, Chopin Festival in Mallorca, Tansman Festival, Lisztomanias in Chateauroux, Spring Festival in Russia, Budapest Spring Festival and, on more than one occasion the Festival Academy Budapest, Kaposfest and the Beethoven Nights staged in Martonvásár.

Emese Mali is one of the foremost young pianists in Hungary. She graduated from the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in 2004, she completed her doctorate there in 2011. She attended master classes with Ferenc Rados, György Sebők, Dimitri Baskirov, Jan Wijn, and András Schiff. Currently, Emese works with András Keller and the Concerto Budapest Symphonic Orchestra on a regular basis, so as she is playing chamber music events and orchestral concerts with Iván Fischer and the Budapest Festival Orchestra. Also, she performs with UMZE chamber ensemble. She is noted for presenting several contemporary Hungarian pieces. She has been a professor for chamber music and collaborative pianist at the Ferenc Liszt Music Academy since 2009. She is also a recurring pianist at the Tibor Varga Summer Academy in Sion as well as at the masterclasses of the International Musicians' Seminar Prussia Cove in England.



Máttyás Sirokai
(1982) Hungarian poet and musician, the beat's witness.