

Ensemble Proton + Schola Heidelberg: James Dillon // Naomi Pinnock

Friday 20 November, 6pm
St Paul's Hall

Ensemble Proton Bern:

Bettina Berger flute
Martin Bliggenstorfer oboe
Richard Elliot Haynes clarinet
Elise Jacoberger bassoon
Maximilian Haft violin
Jan-Filip Ťupa cello
Coco Schwarz piano / electronics

Vera Schnider harp
Stephen Menotti harp
Rebecca Lawrence double bass

Schola Heidelberg:
Sarah M. Newman soprano
Dorothea Jakob soprano
Ingvill Statle Skjørten alto
Barbara Ostertag alto
Stephen Matthews tenor
Clemens Liese tenor
Luciano Lodi bass
Florian Drexel bass

Ekkehard Windrich conductor
Benjamin Miller sound design

Naomi Pinnock (UK, 1979)
broken place, opening (2026) 25' **UK Premiere**

"Last day of birdsong; salt rain in the trees…"

John Burnside, *As if from the end times*

gap *n.* broken place, opening

Chambers Dictionary of Etymology

First: thinking about sinkholes. How slow, incremental downward erosion can develop over time, creating chasms that can disintegrate to the point that they appear to suck everything on the surface suddenly and violently into a hole, a void.

But it isn't the devastating drama happening up top that interests me, it is the slow, gradual, excavating change underground that is fascinating, the gnawing at solid materials and the forming of a new space, an opening.

There are also intentional, human-made openings. Allison Cobb, in her book *Plastic, an Autobiography,* writes in-depth about how the island Elugelab in the Marshall Islands was completely eradicated by nuclear bomb testing in 1952.
In its place, a crater. How is this possible?

I read John Burnside's poem most days at the moment. It's eerie and calm, full of lamplights and shadows.

I wonder if this is what the space in-between *feels* like, the space where something *was* ?

© **Naomi Pinnock**

James Dillon (UK, 1950)
Lamentations : (2026) 70' **UK Premiere**

For the musicians of Ensemble Proton Bern and Schola Heidelberg and to the innocents caught between the war machines.

> Lamentation (n.) from Latin, '*Lamentatio*' ; derives from the Greek *threnos* a dirge (or 'lament') which is thought to be derived from the root *dher* to 'drone' or 'murmur' itself from the Greek *tenthrene* a kind of wasp.

The earliest known 'lamentations' date back to the 2nd millennium BCE and are traceable to the development of urbanism most notably with Sumer and its complex urban organisation which began around the 5th millennium BCE; and the transition from hunter-gatherer to agricultural communities. These early mostly incomplete lamentation texts often mourned the destruction of their cities, or temples for example the 'Lamentation over the Destruction of Ur'. Later in the Hebrew Bible we have the 'Book of Lamentations' a collection of laments for the destruction of Jerusalem composed sometime around 585 BCE. These '*city laments*' speak of destruction, whether through an act of war or from natural disasters; are invariably seen as punishment from the god(s). As the people are abandoned and or punished, the lamentation allows for a ritual of communal grief.

Today the lament exists in many folk cultures where it still plays an important role in the expression of sorrow or grief for the deceased, or as social or political protest. In Scots and

Irish gaelic for ex. the *caoineadh* is more than simply the high-pitched moaning known as 'keening' in English; rather it is a highly articulate tradition of woman's oral poetry. The lament as musical (instrumental) expression is also central to the ancient Highland Bagpipe tradition known as piobaireachd, a highly virtuosic, often mournful art music. Many of the Scottish laments (cumha) were written at a time of the Highland clearances, as the local crofters were displaced and exiled from their land by rich, often absent landlords. The present work, is written against a backdrop of modern displacements, whether that be populations forced to flee the industrial war machines, the cruel destruction by Israeli settlers in Palestine or the victims of planetary suicide. In no way do I claim 'voice' for the displaced, only a response which re-calls the mournful protest of Scots piping laments like '*Is fhada mae seo tha sinn*' ('too long in this condition'), or perhaps Marvin Gaye's 'What's Going On'.

In her essay Black Sun, the French writer Julia Kristeva binds 'lamentations' to melancholy. However, at the heart of many lament lyrics lies a message beyond grief, or mourning, it is one of defiance and protest; often aimed at avenging god(s) or at an act of human injustice. In this regard fundamentally little has changed in the last 5000 years; the melancholy that arises between 'existence' as we experience it, injustice and an indifferent cosmos, remains, continues to haunt.

> "*La beauté peut-elle être triste ? La beauté est-elle indissociable de l'éphémère, et donc du deuil ? Ou bien l'objet beau est-il celui qui, inlassablement, revient après les destructions et les*

guerres pour témoigner qu'il y a une survie après la mort, que l'immortalité est possible?" — Julia Kristeva; Soleil noir (1969)

FORM:

Arranged as 3 movements of approximately equal duration, each movement is divided into 4 parts defined by line, texture or mass.

I - A B C D
II - A B C D
III - A B C D

TEXTS:

Texts were chosen primarily, if not exclusively for their sonic potential, are dissevered, mixed and folded into each other, this separating-out and re-combining of text may involve jumps of texture, zig-zagging between texts, or to move fluidly between phonemes, syllables and phrases, here phonetics takes precedent over semantics, over 'poetics'. Essentially it is the 'phonological' combinations and a certain unpredictability, the result of overlaying text onto line, that drives the assemblage. Of course, each individual text has its own poetic atmosphere, which here hover around notions of existence, movement and indeterminacy; "*at an uncertain time . . . in uncertain places*" as Lucretius put it. He also speaks of the "*sorrows and darkness*" of which the world has been plunged; distinct from vocalise there remains an echo, a

phantom layer, ‘fluid’ not ‘set’, ‘moving’ not ‘static’. Sonically the use of Latin texts has a secondary if somewhat personal resonance, invoking as it does childhood memories of St. Columbkilles, Rutherglen, of confirmation, communion and the thrills and terror of the Catholic rites.

“*Therefore do I weep, and my eyes run down with water: because the comforter, the relief of my soul, is far from me: my children are desolate because the enemy hath prevailed*.”

Hebrew Bible : Lamentations of Jeremiah 1-16

3.31-7

Et quoniam docui, cunctarum exordia rerum
Qualia sint et quam variis disatantia formis
Sponte sua volitent aeterno percita motu
Quove modo possint res ex his cre creari,
Hasce secundum res animi natura videtur
Atque animae claranda meis iam versibus esse
et metus ille foras praeceps Acheruntis agendus : Lucretius ; De rerum natura

*And since I have shown how the whole material body of nature is woven
Together into all things, and how, differing in their various shapes
They fly around on their own, stirred up by eternal motion,
And how from all things it appears that the nature of the mind
And soul must now be made clear in my verses
And the fear of Acheron must be thrown violently out of the door.

3.59-64

Denique avarities et honorum caeca cupido,
Quae miseros homines cogunt transcendere fines
Iuris et inter dum socios scelerum atque ministros
Noctes atque dies niti praestante labore
Ad summas emergere opes, haec vulnera vitae
Non minimam partem mortis formidine aluntur : Lucretius ; de rerum natura

*So too, greed and blind burning after the elected office,
Which coerce wretched people to go beyond the boundaries
Of what is right, and at time as allies in crime and accomplices
They exert themselves night and day with outstanding effort
To rise to the level of the greatest wealth – these lacerations of life
Are nourishes in no small way by the fear of death.

5.235-247

Principio quoniam terrain corpus et umor aurarumque leves animae calidique vaporese quibus haec rerum consistere summa videtur, omnia nativo ae mortali corpore constant, debet codem omnis mundi natura putari. Quippe etenim quorum partis et membra videmus Corpore nativo ae mortalibus esse figuris, Haec cadem ferme mortalis cernimus esse Et nativa simul. Quapropter maxima mundi Cum videam membra ac partis consumpta regigni Seire licet caeli quoque item terraeque fuisse Principale aliqued tempus clademque futuram. : Lucretius ; De rerum natura

*In the first place, since the earth's mass and the water, the

wind's light breezes, and burning heat, which are seen to compose the sum of things, all consist of a body that is born and dies, we must consider the whole world to be of the same structure. For certainly whenever we see the parts and the Members of creatures to be made of body that has birth along with the parts. Therefore when I see the grand parts of the world being consumed and born again, I may be sure that heaven and earth also once had their time of beginning and will have their destruction.

5.780-782

Nunc redeo ad mundi novitatem et mollia terrae
Arva, novo fetu quid primum in luminis oras
Tollere et incertis crerint committere ventis : Lucretius ; De rerum natura

*Now I return to the beginning of the world and the pliant fields of the earth, and what first with new births they resolved to lift onto the shores of light and to entrust to indeterminate winds.

* English trans. (from Latin); W.H.D. Rouse, 1924

"*... mundus in ruinis, , Nam rectum an falsum loca mutantur; ubique. Tot bella, tot formae scelerum Nos opponun*" - Virgil ; The Georgics

"... a world in ruins , , For right or wrong change places; everywhere. So many wars, so many shapes of crime Confront us;" - Virgil ; The Georgics

"*... phantasma eam. Per digitos meos filtrans, Levis ut ventus, celer*

ut somnium in volatu"

". . her phantom sifting through my fingers, Light as wind, quick as a dream in flight" - Virgil ; Aeneid

English trans. (from Latin); H.R. Fairclough 1916

"Bitter lament I utter. I cease not to weep. Night and day within her wailing is made. Bitter sighing I utter, tears I pour out. Oh sing to the lyre, he that speaks the songs of wailing. A whirlwind upon their lands thou sendest. By the storm god they were ... accursed. By the storm winds they were brought to woe. Thy foot hastens restless in the street. Upon the lyre of weeping they utter lamentation. and the people wail. At that time the spirit of wrath descended upon the Land and the people wail. Weeping and sighing where shall I find rest? Weeping for the sacred forest, where shall I repose? The heavens tremble of themselves, the earth of itself quakes" - Sumerian ; A Wailing Liturgy [2nd Millennium BCE] *

"*e-en-šú KaK-RU er a nir šag PA-I-BAD-a*
en-šu bar be--íb ... ùl
i-lu-gíg im me" - Sumerian ; Weeping Lament [2nd millennium BCE]

"How long shall loud crying, weeping and wailing distress the heart?
How long shall the soul be terrified?
Bitter lament I utter" - Sumerian ; Weeping Lament [2nd millennium BCE] *

* English trans. (from Sumerian) ; Stephen Langdon, 1919

Und leise tönen im Rohr die dunkeln Flöten des Herbstes O stolzere Trauer! Iher ehernen Altäre Die heiße Flamme des Geistets nährt heute gewaltiger Schmerz Die ungebornen Enkel. : Georg Trakl ; Grodek

And softly the dark pipes of autumn sound in the reeds. O prouder sorrow! You brazen altars,
The spirit's ardent flame today is fed by mighty grief, The unborn generations :

Georg Trakl ; Grodek * [Engl. Trans. Alexander Stillmark]

Lamentation for the Trees

I

Summoned from salt.
Yet fading on tidal air
like some washed up moonlight.
The sky turgid . . . turns mineral,
and squalls, (a) wake . .

II

Rooted,
amongst shrub,
then seeded . . amongst rock,
. . shadow

beholden!

III

The moon may yearn for the heavens,

but if the land is hit hard,
roots echo!
. . . trembling;

. . . even the raven is uncertain.

Tears hang mirrors from the olive tree

“*the only thing left in my arms*” *

- fruit turns -
rot aches, stone lays asunder.

IV

Remember this stench,
wrested in folds
. . . it scatters!

V

Cruel’s the swoop,
where gesture blinds
a gusting wind.

What’s destiny !

. . . Who lives?

VI

Never have such looks,
such cold mornings,
pushed agony’s dawn to terror.

Stitched with fearsome thread,
measured in strung-out light,

... hell's gates are open.

"*Lasciate ogne speranza, voi ch'intrate*" Dante : [Canto III, Inferno)

* Mahfouza Shtayyeh (Palestinian olive farmer)

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