

STEVEN SCHICK RESIDENCY #3: LIFE

SATURDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 7PM

ROSINA AUDITORIUM, ABBOTSFORD CONVENT

Michael PISARO (b. 1961) <i>Ricefall</i> (2004)	18'
Olivier MESSIAEN (1908-1992) <i>Couleurs de la cité céleste</i> (1963)	15'
INTERVAL	20'
Anna THORVALDSDOTTIR (b. 1977) <i>Aequilibria</i> (2014)	14'
Igor STRAVINSKY (1882-1971) arr. COLNOT <i>Le sacre du printemps</i> (1911-1913)	35'
<i>Part I: L'adoration de la Terre</i>	<i>Part II. Le Sacrifice</i>
<i>i. Introduction</i>	<i>i. Introduction</i>
<i>ii. Les Augures printaniers</i>	<i>ii. Cercles mystérieux des adolescentes</i>
<i>iii. Jeu du rapt</i>	<i>iii. Glorification de l'élue</i>
<i>iv. Rondes printanières</i>	<i>iv. Évocation des ancêtres</i>
<i>v. Jeux des cités rivales</i>	<i>v. Action rituelle des ancêtres</i>
<i>vi. Cortège du sage - Le Sage</i>	<i>vi. Danse sacrée (L'Élue)</i>
<i>vii. Danse de la terre</i>	

Steven Schick conductor and percussion

ANAM Musicians

Approximate duration: 1 hour and 45 minutes with one 20-minute interval

ABOUT STEVEN SCHICK

Percussionist, conductor, and author Steven Schick was born in Iowa and raised in a farming family. Hailed by Alex Ross in the *New Yorker* as, "one of our supreme living virtuosos, not just of percussion but of any instrument," he has championed contemporary percussion music by commissioning or premiering more than one hundred-fifty new works. The most important of these have become core repertory for solo percussion. Schick was inducted into the Percussive Arts Society Hall of Fame in 2014.

Steven Schick's Artistic Residency at ANAM is supported by Peter Jopling AM KC & Richard Parker and the Estate of the late Vivienne Ritchie AM.

Peter Neville's position at ANAM is supported by Kerry Landman.

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ANAM respectfully acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands spread across Australia on which we work and live. We uphold and honour their continued relationship to these sites, we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

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MESSIAEN

Clarinet

Josephine Daniel * (QLD)
Karen Chen * (NSW)
Jamilla Lamb (guest musician)

Horn

Oliver Harris * (NSW)
Emma John * (WA)

Trumpet

Koominka * (NSW)
Lewis Grey * (NZ)
Elizabeth Dawson * (NSW)
Stephen Mosa'ati * (NZ)

Trombone

Toby Sward * (TAS)
Max Gregg (NSW)
Harrison Steele-Holmes (VIC)
Angus Pace * (VIC)

Percussion

Steven Bryer * (QLD)
Jamie Willson * (TAS)
Caleb Goldsmith * (NZ)
Jonathan Parker * (WA)
Peter Neville (ANAM Faculty,
Head of Percussion)
Aditya Bhat (alum 2024)

Piano

Po Goh * (VIC)

THORVALDSDOTTIR

Violin

Shannon Rhodes * (WA)
Noah Coyne * (VIC)

Viola

Daniel Casey * (VIC)

Cello

Heesoo Kim * (QLD)

Double Bass

Damien Eckersley
(Deputy Artistic Director,
Faculty, Double Bass)

Flute

Braden Simm * (QLD)

Bass Clarinet

Josephine Daniel * (QLD)

Bassoon

Shelby MacRae * (NSW)

Horn

Emily Miers * (NSW)

Trombone

Toby Sward * (TAS)

Piano

Sarah Chick * (TAS)

PISARO

Rice

Lachlan MacLaren * (VIC)
Olivia Kowalik * (NSW)
Mattea Osenk * (SA)
Heesoo Kim * (QLD)
Maria Zhdanovich * (SA)
Josephine Daniel * (QLD)

Shelby MacRae * (NSW)
Lewis Grey * (NZ)
Elizabeth Dawson * (NSW)
Oliver Harris * (NSW)
Emma John * (WA)

Toby Sward * (TAS)
Max Gregg (NSW)
Caleb Goldsmith * (NZ)
Jonathan Parker * (WA)
Jamie Willson * (TAS)
Sarah Chick * (TAS)

STRAVINSKY arr. COLNOT

Violin

Lachlan MacLaren * (VIC)

Viola

Mattea Osenk * (SA)

Cello

Ariel Volovelsky * (NSW)

Double Bass

Damien Eckersley
(Deputy Artistic Director,
Faculty, Double Bass)

Flute

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Clarinet

Karen Chen * (NSW)

Bassoon

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Steven Bryer * (QLD)

Piano

Liam Furey * (NZ)

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TOWARDS THE SPECTRUM'S EDGE

"I think the experience of opening the door on a rainy garden must be similar to that which a sighted person feels when opening the curtains and seeing the world outside. The rain presents the fullness of an entire situation all at once, not merely remembered, not in anticipation, but actually and now. If only rain could fall inside a room, it would help me to understand where things are in that room, to give a sense of being in the room, instead of sitting in a chair" —John Hull (1990) as quoted by Michael Pisaro (2004)

24 billion kilometres away, a gold-plated record carries grooves that we recognise as Beethoven. These grooves imprinted on a disk, translated into vibrations in the air, translated again into electrical impulses by tiny hairs, and interpreted by a bundle of neurons which, as far as we can tell, extrapolates meaning from these iterated translations of vibrations. No wonder some question how an extraterrestrial intelligence, so removed from the context of what a violin sounds like, or what Western functional harmony is, could possibly interpret what some laud as the pinnacle of human musical achievement. And yet, there's a magical beauty that, despite experience being so completely personal, we constantly use art to break through the barriers and communicate the incommunicable. We'll never truly know whether what I see as green is what you see as green, or whether what I hear as a major chord is what you hear as a major chord, but somewhere in these shared experiences there is a human unity and community.

Ricefall is one such piece that emphasises community and shared experience through the phenomena of translation. **Michael Pisaro** reflects on the above quote from John Hull, seeking to translate a space into a spectrum which Hull can experience, and by way of this translation, expand not only the sensory experience for all listeners but create a shared understanding and empathy of differing experience. Though anyone could perform in *Ricefall*, to follow the instructions and maintain a sound level appropriate to your fellow musicians takes a concentrated broadening beyond the self that brings yet more meaning to the simple act of dropping grains of rice. But perhaps the most meaningful moment comes not during the performance but after, as Pisaro writes in his performance notes, "perhaps, afterwards, [the rice] can be cleaned and cooked."

"The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone: jasper, sapphire, agate, emerald, onyx, ruby, chrysolite, beryl, topaz, turquoise, jacinth and amethyst. The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of gold, as pure as transparent glass" —Book of Revelations 21:19-21 (NIV, paraphrased)

In the internal interpretation of spectra, those who experience synaesthesia have their sensory inputs muddled. **Olivier Messiaen** was one such 'synesthetes' who saw colours when hearing sounds, those colours aligned to pitches and resonances. Far more than an F-sharp being purple or a major chord being green, complex resonances that map to Messiaen's 'modes of limited transposition' were what distinguished different sound-colour groups. *Couleurs de la cité céleste* combines Messiaen's colour theories with two other key fascinations of his: birdsong and plainchant. The musical material is a tapestry of motifs, helpfully labelled by the composer, all combining to portray the titular celestial city. Importantly, the colour choices are not abstract, as they line up with the twelve gemstones mentioned in Revelations 21:19-20, and the lighting states through this performance approximate these shifts in colour that Messiaen would have naturally seen.

In a sense, Messiaen's experience of visual phenomena is his brain "filling in" information it parses from heard stimuli. Whilst the synesthetes' experience is particularly unique, humans are uniquely talented and evolutionally adapted to fill in the gaps and synthesise a whole greater than the sum of parts presented to us.

Anna Thorvaldsdottir is a master of crafting these *gestalt* works in which she "explore[s] dimensions in the music by guiding the focus" across textures, layers and miniscule details. In *Aequilibria*, flourishes pass between instruments on top of a beguiling undulating chordal drone, shifting microtonally as if to find the most resonant tuning, constantly in search of an equilibrium where the twelve musicians can become a singular entity.

Our final gesture, though grand in scope, has an intimate spirit in this unusual chamber form. The late **Cliff Colnot** was a masterful arranger who worked closely with the International Contemporary Ensemble, at which Schick has been Artist in Residence since 2012. Taking after Arnold Schoenberg's Society for Private Music Performances, at which the Austrian and his *étudiants protégés* ambitiously arranged large scale works for chamber performance, a sense of community shines through the sharing of these works in new settings and the smaller, intrinsically more connected ensemble. In **Igor Stravinsky's** landmark *Rite of Spring*, merited for its orchestration, a reduction of forces to just twelve makes the performance an exhilarating tour de force of virtuosity from each performer, truly bringing everyone closer in the electric atmosphere of shared experience.

Words by Alex Owens, Music Librarian, Robert Salzer Foundation Library

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