PESTOVA/MEYER Piano Duo

The MANTRA formula by Karlheinz Stockhausen

http://xeniapestova.com/mantra.html
Why MANTRA?

The composer Karlheinz Stockhausen passed away on the 5th of December 2007, only months before his 80th birthday. As a tribute to one of the most important musical innovators of the Twentieth Century, the Pestova/Meyer Piano Duo are presenting his rarely-performed masterpiece MANTRA (1970) for two pianos and live electronics in the 2008–2009 concert season.

This project is made possible with funding from the Luxembourg Ministry of Culture and Creative New Zealand Arts Council, and was featured at the Philharmonie Luxembourg, Festival Archipel (Geneva), McGill University (Montreal), and Cork School of Music (Ireland) in 2008. Upcoming engagements include appearances at the Christchurch Arts Festival (New Zealand), Festival Voix Nouvelles in Royaumont (France) and Festival Musikhøst (Denmark) in 2009.

MANTRA is an exciting and highly virtuosic work that calls for an unconventional approach to piano playing. The pianists are required to strike antique cymbals and woodblocks, as well as use their voices. The two grand pianos are processed electronically in real-time to create two “super-instruments” with scintillating sonorities that approach the exotic sound worlds of the prepared piano of John Cage, high-energy electric guitar distortion, and Morse-code radio signals.

Our approach to this piece is original due to the fact that we will be using digital technology for the electronic processing, resulting in a contemporary reinterpretation of a classic piece on the verge of technological obsolescence with a simple set-up and superior sound quality. The hardware and software for our version of this piece was especially designed by Mark Marshall (McGill University) and Jacob Sudol (UCSD). This equipment was tested with Stockhausen’s former sound projectionist and assistant Jan Panis in Luxembourg in 2008.
The Duo

Brillant hommage à Stockhausen: Les pianistes Pascal Meyer et Xenia Pestova créent un MANTRA dynamique... (Brilliant tribute to Stockhausen: The pianists Pascal Meyer and Xenia Pestova create a dynamic MANTRA)
-Isabelle Trüb, Luxemburger Wort, 26 January 2008

Äußerst sensibel und dennoch deutlich... (Extremely sensitive, yet clear...)
-Martin Möller, Triersche Volksfreund, 28 January 2008

Magnifiques de clarté et d'intelligence, Pascal Meyer et Xenia Pestova entremêlent leurs touchers et leurs tempéraments avec une rare cohésion. (Magnificently clear and intelligent, Pascal Meyer and Xenia Pestova blend their touch and temperaments with a rare cohesion.)

The Pestova/Meyer Piano Duo was formed in Amsterdam in 2003, when the two pianists were studying at the Conservatory of Amsterdam in the class of Håkon Austbø. Both musicians share a strong interest in contemporary music and are committed to programming new and non-standard works in their critically acclaimed recitals. Their most recent collaboration features Magnus Lindberg's explosive work Related Rocks for two pianos, percussion and electronics with United Instruments of Lucilin in Luxembourg and Riga. Upcoming engagements include the two-piano concerto Dialoge by Bernd Alois Zimmermann with the Luxembourg Philharmonic Orchestra, further ensemble collaborations and performances of MANTRA in the 2008–2009 concert season.
Luxembourg pianist Pascal Meyer studied at the Conservatory of Luxemburg with Jean Hilger, at the Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory in St. Petersburg with Leonid Tamulevich and obtained his Master's Degree at the Conservatory of Amsterdam, where he studied with Jan Marisse Huizing, Håkon Austbø and Jan Wijn. During masterclasses, he has worked with other masters such as Benjamin Rawitz, Evgeny Mogulevsky, Ton Hartsuiker, Robert Nasveld, Nicole Henriot, Bernhard Wambach, Claude Helffer, Pavel Gililov, György Nádor, and Lazar Berman.

Pascal was a Prizewinner of the Luxemburgish National Competition For Young Soloists in 1997 and 1999, each time winning the gold medal with the unanimity of the jury. He was also a finalist of the Silvio Bengali Piano Prize in Italy in 2001 and was awarded the Fonds Stelmes Prize in 2004.

Pascal has performed recitals in Europe, Tunisia, Japan, Singapore and North America both as a soloist and chamber musician. He has also appeared with various orchestras such as the Luxembourg Philharmonic Orchestra, and as a member of the acclaimed contemporary music ensemble United Instruments of Lucilin.

Xenia Pestova is a pianist with a special interest in presenting contemporary works alongside traditional repertoire. Following childhood music education in piano and composition in Russia, Xenia moved to New Zealand with her family. She continued her studies in the UK, the Netherlands, France and Canada. Among her teachers are Håkon Austbø, Louise Bessette, Judith Clark, Sara Laimon, Philip Mead and Yvonne Loriod-Messiaen in piano, and Ross Harris and John Young in instrumental and electroacoustic composition.

Xenia's awards include an unanimous First Prize at the 2004 Xavier Montsalvatge International Piano Competition in Girona, Spain, a Special Mention at the 2003 Messiaen International Piano Competition in Paris, and Second Prize at the 2000 KeriKeri National Piano Competition (NZ).

Xenia has commissioned, premiered and broadcast many new pieces and worked with composers including Cornelis de Bondt, Denys Bouliane, Chris Paul Harman, Toshio Hosokawa, Tristan Murail, Ichiro Nodaira and Hans Tutschku. Xenia is currently a Doctoral Candidate in piano performance at the McGill University Schulich School of Music in Montreal. She is also a Performance Research Assistant in the CIRMMT McGill Digital Orchestra Project, and holds a Doctoral Fellowship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.
Curriculum Vitae

XENIA PESTOVA

xenia (at) xeniapesto.com
www.xeniapesto.com

Competitions and Awards

2007-2009 SSHRC Doctoral Research Fellowship (Canada)
2007-2008 CIRMMT Student Award, McGill University (Canada)
2007 Creative New Zealand Arts Council Grant
2005-2007 Schulich Scholarship, McGill University
2004 First Prize, Xavier Montsalvatge International Piano Competition, Girona (Spain)
2003 Special Mention, Olivier Messiaen International Piano Competition, Paris (France)
2000-2003 Sir Henry Cooper Memorial Scholarship in Music (New Zealand)
                           Creative New Zealand Jack McGill Scholarship
                           Jacques Vonk Grant (the Netherlands)
2000 The Countess of Munster Musical Trust Grant (UK)

Professional Training

2005-2009 Doctoral Candidate in Piano Performance, McGill University (Canada)
2004-2005 Stage de Perfectionnement, Conservatoire de Musique de Montreal (Canada)
2001-2003 Postgraduate Performance Diploma, Conservatorium van Amsterdam (the Netherlands)
2001-2002 Centre Acanthes Contemporary Music Courses (France)
2000-2001 Master of Music with Distinction, London College of Music, TVU (UK)
1996-1999 Bachelor of Music with First Class Honours, VUW (New Zealand)

Teachers

Håkon Austbø (Norway)
Louise Bessette, Kyoko Hashimoto, Sara Laimon (Canada)
Judith Clark (New Zealand)
Philip Mead, Ian Pace (UK)
Yvonne Loriod-Messiaen (France)

Employment and Significant Performances

2008-2009 Piano Instructor, Schulich School of Music, McGill University (CA)
2008 Stockhausen: Mantra. Philharmonie Luxembourg (L), Festival Archipel (CH), McGill
                          University (CA), Cork School of Music (IRL)
                          Messiaen: Catalogue d’oiseaux extracts Le Festival de Lanaudière, Joliette (CA)
                          Performances with Digital Musical Instruments: MusiMars, Montreal (CA)
2007 Carte blanche Ichiro Nodaira with United Instruments of Lucilin. Philharmonie (L),
                          Neues Mozarteum Salzburg (A)
                          Portrait Magnus Lindberg with Pascal Meyer and United Instruments of Lucilin,
                          Festival Arena (Latvia)
2006-2007 Performance Research Assistant, CIRMMT McGill Digital Orchestra Project (CA)
                          Pianist/synthesizer player with the McGill Contemporary Music Ensemble (CA)
2006-
                          Pianist and Artistic Director, Contemporary Keyboard Society (CA)
Curriculum vitae

PASCAL MEYER

mail (at) pascalmeyer.com
www.pascalmeyer.com

Professional Training

2004 Master of Music, Conservatory of Amsterdam (the Netherlands)
2002 Bachelor of Music, Conservatory of Amsterdam
1999 *Prix Supérieur* Piano Conservatoire de Musique de la Ville de Luxembourg
1998 Study at the Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory, St. Petersburg (Russia)
1997 1st Prix Piano, (CML)

Teachers

Jean Hilger (Luxembourg)
Leonid Feliksovich Tamulevich (Russia)
Jan Huizing (Netherlands)
Alexandre Hrisanide (Romania)
Jan Wijn (Netherlands)
Håkon Austbø (Norway)

Competitions and Awards

2004 Fonds Stelmes Prize 2004
2001 Finalist in the *Silvio Bengali Piano Prize* competition (Italy)
1999, 1997 National Competition for Young Soloists of Luxemburg
2 x gold medal with the unanimity of the jury

Significant Performances

2007-2008
− Stockhausen: *Mantra*. Philharmonie Luxembourg (L), Festival Archipel (CH), McGill University (CA), Cork School of Music (IRL)
− ’Tulles und sein Schatten’ with United Instruments of Lucilin, Philharmonie Luxembourg (L), De Doelen Rotterdam (NL)
− Solo Recitals: Conservatoire d’Esch/Alzette (L), Theater aan de Parade (NL), Kloster Springiersbach, Haus Beda (D), Adagio (F)
− Maggie’s Mom is a Pirate. Dancer: Dania Antinori, Music/Piano: Pascal Meyer. Rotonde 2 (L)
− Duo recitals with Anne-Marie Volten (violin), Hollandse Club in Singapore, Weilerbach, Herten (D), Muzieckentrum Frits Philips (NL), Diekirch, Luxembourg (L)
− *Alea* Piano Trio. Château de Wiltz (L), Bethanienklooster (NL), Martinu Hall (CZ)
− Children’s concerts: *Het Grote Baarsjes Avontuur, De Speeldoos*. Junikunstmaand07 (NL)
− Amstel Quartet&Lucilin. Philharmonie Luxembourg (L)
− Steve Reich’s *Music for 18 musicians*. United Instruments of Lucilin, CML (L)
− *Carte blanche Ichiro Nodaira* with United Instruments of Lucilin. Philharmonie (L), Neues Mozarteum Salzburg (A).
− *Portrait Magnus Lindberg* with Xenia Pestova and *United Instruments of Lucilin*, Festival Arena (Latvia)
1. **Technical Requirements**

**To be provided by the concert organizer:**

- Two equal Grand Pianos with lids removed (3 Pedals), placed 1-2 metres apart (see Routing Diagram)
- Two octaves of *crotales*, certain pitches doubled (see picture 1)
- Three percussion mallet stands with felt or black material
- Audio Interface (*MOTU 828, MOTU Traveler, RME Fireface* or equivalent)
- Four Speakers (*Meyer, D&B, LAcoustics*) hung at least 4 metres above the stage directly over the pianos to avoid feedback, slightly tilted downwards, the outside speakers facing directly forward and the inside speakers on a diagonal towards the audience (see pictures 2-4)
- Four *Neumann KM140/184* Microphones or equivalent with stands and cables, placed in a V-position, one pointed to middle-C and one to the top octave of each piano (see pictures 5-6)
- Two Subwoofers on either side of the stage
- Yamaha 01v96 Digital Mixing Desk or equivalent (minimum 9 inputs and 7 outputs) on a small table (1.5 x 0.7 x 0.5) in the middle of the hall along with extra power supply for the computer and audio interface. Also required in the middle of the hall: a chair for the sound projectionist, a music stand, and appropriate lighting for the mixing desk and the music stand
- Cables for connection, one Multi cable maximum 25 metres long, plus four premium quality XLR cables for the controllers (length to reach from the pianos to the middle of the hall)
- Technical personnel to set up the above prior to the arrival of the performers and the sound projectionist, and to be available to make modifications after the arrival of the performers and the sound projectionist

**To be provided by the performers:**

- Macintosh PowerBook Computer with Max MSP software and patch
- Two Hardware Controllers and custom interface for connection to the computer
- Mounting Planks and two low *crotales* (A-sharp and B)
- Two Woodblocks
- Mallets
- Sound projectionist¹

2. **Practical Requirements**

**To be provided by the concert organizer:**

- One full day of setting up and rehearsal in the concert hall with the sound projectionist the day before the concert (all gear to remain in place until the concert)
- On the day of the concert: dress rehearsal (concert hall must be available for the whole day)
- Performance fees for the two artists and sound projectionist
- Travel Expenses: per diems and travel costs for the two artists and the sound projectionist
- Accommodation: 3 hotel rooms for 2 nights (rehearsal day and concert)

¹ MANTRA requires the assistance of an expert sound projectionist who is familiar with the piece.
Picture 1: *Crotales required*

![Diagram of crotale setup with notes and pitch markings]

Pitches doubled

A#, B not required

Pictures 2-4: speaker and piano positions

(at Philharmonie Luxembourg)
(at Festival Archipel)

(At McGill University)
Pictures 5-6: microphone positions

(at Kuerten Summer Courses)

(at Philharmonie Luxembourg)
Routing Diagram

1. Send Output 4 from the Interface (Dry signal Piano 2)
2. Send Output 3 from the Interface (Dry signal Piano 1)

INPUTS
Mixer
OUTPUTS

Aux 2
Aux 1
G1
G2
G3
G4

Interface for controllers, XLR cables