

Christopher Best

Isorhythms

for string quartet

Violoncello

1981

NOTES ON NOTATION

Given the highly chromatic nature of this music, I have adopted the following conventions for the notation of accidentals. Accidentals apply throughout a bar, however they are repeated as a precaution in brackets unless they reoccur within a single beamed grouping. An accidental applies *only* to a given pitch, not to the octave above or below, but again a reminder of this is shown in brackets. Cautionary cancelling accidentals (again in brackets) are also liberally used in the successive bar to ensure clarity.

First performed in March 1982, in the Great Hall, University of Lancaster, by students of the music department, conducted by the composer.

DURATION

6 to 7 minutes.

Violoncello

Isorhythms

for string quartet

Christopher Best

Allegro ♩ = c.138

Measures 1-5: *f*, *piùf*, *f*

Measures 6-10: *ff*

Measures 11-15: *mp*, *espress*

Measures 16-19: *p subito*, *mp*, *pesante*

Measures 20-24: *ff*, *pesante*, *arco*

Measures 25-29: *ff*, *p*

Measures 30-33: *arco*, *mf*, *p*, *mf*, *mp*

Measures 34-36: *f*

Measures 37-40: *mf*, *ff*, *mp*

A **Con Fuoco**

Violoncello

41 pizz. *f* *cresc.* arco *ff* *mp* V

B Più mosso ♩ = c.156

45 *p subito* *fff* *mf* tr

50 *mf* tr V

54 *sfz* *f* tr

57 *mf* *f* tr

61 *cresc.* tr

64 *f* *cresc.* *mf* spiccato *rall.* V

C Tempo primo ♩ = c.138

67 *V* *pizz.* *arco* *sul pont.* *normale*
ff *fp* *mp* *f*

74 *V*
pp cresc. *f* *p* *ff*

79 *rall.* *A tempo*
sul pont. *normale* *pizz.* *arco*
p *pp* *mp* *sfz*

D ♩ = c.104

85 *V*
p *mf* *marcato*

90 *V*
mp espress. *mp* *p*

95 *V*
sfz *mp espress.* *mp*

100 *V*
mp ma marcato *mf espress.*

E Tempo primo ♩ = c.138

104 *pizz.*
f *f*

F *pizz.*

110 *arco* *pizz.*
mp *p subito* *f* *mp*

Violoncello

arco sul tasto

116

mf *mp*

126

mp *fp* *cresc.*

131

f *ffp* *p* *mf* *p subito*

139

mf *f*

149

piuf *ffp* *mfp* *mp* *p*

G Andante tranquillo ♩ = c.84

159

pp

H Tempo primo ♩ = c.138

163

mf *ppp* *f* *p* *mf*

167

f *ff* *mf* *f* *ff*

...**'How Great, How Fall'n'** created a lot of interest from both audience and performers alike. [It] was exactly the type of new music that JAM prides itself on supporting...

Edward Armitage, Chairman John Armitage Memorial Concert Series 2004

...An idiosyncratic blend of stylistic types- Gamelan/folk...the music comes across vividly...

SPNM Reading panel '**Dolya Nash Krai**'

...**'How Great, How Fall'n'** created a lot of interest from both audience and performers alike. [It] was exactly the type of new music that JAM prides itself on supporting...

Edward Armitage, Chairman John Armitage Memorial Concert Series 2004

...An idiosyncratic blend of stylistic types- Gamelan/folk...the music comes across vividly...

SPNM Reading panel '**Dolya Nash Krai**'

...**'Playfall'** is a mature and powerful work, able to portray the dark shadows of loss that can unexpectedly creep into even the most joyful moments in life...

Dance Europe

...**'Night Walking'** impressed me because it combined lightness and warmth. Here was proof that contemporary music can succeed on all fronts; it required concentration but was also exhilarating...

Artistic Director SPNM 1997

...**'Another Kind of Air'** is courageous in its simplicity and deserves to be heard...The sharp focus of the thematic material combines with the transparent medium to make for a piece that proclaims an unambiguous space...

SPNM Reading panel

...This is lovely music for dance and it develops in a delightful way... I particularly liked the pizzicato section...

(composer Howard Skempton) '**Life Before Birth**'

...The piano command is impressive... the pieces make a satisfying arch in terms of mood...

SPNM Reading panel, '**Then Again...**'

...**'Triphony'** showed competence in the handling of a difficult medium... the climax to the third movement was highly effective...

Cambridge Evening Telegraph

...Best has previously written, with verve, for traditional forces... [**'Cue-Play-Review'**] seemed so clearly bound up with human responses... but the finale to this concert was his electronic tape '**From Steel to Stone**'. In the darkened studio, its shifting layers made a shapely and animating effect.

Nottingham Evening Post

Christopher Best is a freelance composer based in the South West of England. Major works have been commissioned by '*Emilyn Claid and Co*', '*Scottish Dance Theatre*', '*Bimba Dance Theatre*', '*Jamaican National Dance*' and the '*SPNM*'. Works have been especially written for ensembles including '*Aquarius*', '*Jane's Minstrels*', '*Kokoro*', the choir of Selwyn College Cambridge and '*Onyx Brass*', plus a host of distinguished soloists. His compositions have received considerable critical acclaim and been performed all over the world.

Recent output includes; '*Terra al Sol*' for voices, string trio and accordion (commissioned by the Fisarchi Ensemble of Florence), '*How Great, How Fall'n*' (orchestral version premiered by the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra in 2011 at the Teatru Manoel, Valletta, original version for brass, voices and organ given by JAM in 2004), '*Echoes of a Lost Music*' for electric guitar (UK tour 2011-12, New Zealand tour 2009), '*Still Beating*' for Clarsach harp (premiered by Ruth Wall in 2007 at Wapping Power Station, London) and '*Panaura*' for orchestra (premiered by the Kokoro ensemble in 2006 at Dartington Hall).

Since 2010, Chris has held a senior lectureship in music composition at Falmouth University, having formerly been Reader in music composition at Dartington College of Arts in Devon. He has taught extensively abroad, and co-directed residential music and dance exchanges in Devon, London and Madrid.

Further information, scores, parts and recordings of music by Christopher Best can be obtained from the composer.

Christopher Best
Penty-An-Vre
Bissoe
Cornwall
TR4 8RH
t: (01872) 870266
e: chrisbestmusic@aol.com
www.christopherbest.net