

Composer Notes – The Night With

Jane Stanley *Glow* (2019)

Glow features three distinct sections through which there is a build towards the flute, clarinet and vibraphone playing together. The piece opens sparsely with the flute playing agile and intricate bird-like gestures, complemented by claves and finger cymbals. All three players also sing at various points during the opening, producing faint chant-like utterances. *Glow* evolved from ideas originating in an earlier piece of mine entitled *D-re-A-mi-N-gl-Y* (2015/2018) for mezzo soprano, piano and percussion. The journey in composing *Glow* is something of a departure from my usual working method. Ensemble Offspring played an integral role in helping to shape it. They created an improvisation based on ideas from *D-re-A-mi-N-gl-Y*, and their realisation served as a key reference point for *Glow*.

Jane Stanley (1976) is a UK-based, Australian-born composer. She specialises in composing chamber and orchestral music. Her music has been performed and broadcast throughout the world, having featured at festivals and conferences including Tanglewood, ISCM World Music Days, and Gaudeamus Music Week. Jane received her PhD from the University of Sydney and in 2004-5 she was a Visiting Fellow at Harvard University. She is a Senior Lecturer in Music at the University of

Glasgow. Her music is published by Composers Edition in the UK and the Australian Music Centre.

Thomas Meadowcroft *Medieval Rococo* (2016)

Medieval Rococo is an oxymoron for our time - how is it possible to generate an abundance of wealth, ornamentation and redundancy on the back of an impoverished idea? The terms 'medieval' and 'rococo' are not used to reference periods of European art history but are used in the populist sense of the words. 'Medieval' denotes music crude and backward, 'rococo' denotes music garish and arty. The piece is dedicated to Ensemble Offspring, for whom the piece was written.

Thomas Meadowcroft is a freelance Australian composer, musician and arranger based in Berlin. His music has been described as 'reaching an inexpressible purity' (Le Monde), 'nerve torture' (Süddeutsche Zeitung) and 'dreamy post-rock' (The New York Times). He has worked with a variety of artists, ensembles and institutions including Oliver Pohl and the German Film Orchestra, Dirk Von Lowtzow, Brett Dean and the BBC Symphony Orchestra, ABC Creative Audio Unit, Speak Percussion.

Composer Notes – The Night With

Kate Moore *Blackbird Song* (2018)

Blackbird Song is an expansive melody written in response to the early morning cantillation of a merel. In the earliest twilight hours of the morning, before the sunrise chorus of birds, a tiny unassuming blackbird clad in shiny jet-black feathers, perches upon a high post and sings with all its might an epic melancholic tale of adventure and fantasy with its yellow beak pointed toward the heavens. Without knowing it the bird has captivated the imagination of the listener, who, despite being unable to understand the vocabulary and grammar of its language, is taken along on a journey of the blackbird's worldly and otherworldly experiences. *Blackbird Song* was commissioned by Ensemble Offspring.

Kate Moore is an Australian composer based in The Netherlands. In 2017 she was awarded the prestigious Matthijs Vermeulen Prize. Her works are performed by among others Asko|Schönberg, Slagwerk Den Haag, Ensemble Offspring, The Australian String Quartet and The Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra. In 2018/ 19 she was Zielsverwanten composer in residence at The Muziekgebouw aan 'Ij.

Matthew Whiteside *Rama* (2019)

Rama is a reference to Arthur C. Clarke's book "Rendezvous with Rama". Matthew Whiteside admits that he often struggles to name new compositions, but this reference floated into his head toward the end of the composition process and it seemed to fit the form of the work. It is not meant as an overt programmatic reference or listening instructions, just a small nod to the work of an author which asks big questions in interesting ways. *Rama* was written for Ensemble Offspring for this tour and will be performed at the Melbourne Recital Centre and City Recital Hall (Sydney) in 2020.

Matthew Whiteside is a composer and concert producer based in Glasgow, named 'One to Watch' in the Herald's Culture Awards 2017 and winner of the Light Moves Innovative Use of Sound Award for his work Entangled with Marisa Zanotti. Recent work has also included a short opera Little Black Lies commissioned by Scottish Opera Connect, with libretto by Helene Grøn and running The Night With.

Composer Notes – The Night With

Paul Mac (arr. Jessica Wells) *Mesmerism*
(2019)

Mesmerism began as a sequential pattern of modes created as the result of a simple task undertaken when attempting to learn the programme Max/MSP. As a part of this process, the composer also used a "word of the day" app to suggest song titles as creative starting points. In *Mesmerism* the pattern of modes begins as a kind of musical scaffolding to suggest harmonic progressions and melodies. It was then applied to drum samples to explore implied rhythms, in an effort to find satisfying answers to the questions raised by the process.

The piece started its life as an electronic track on Paul's 2019 album 'Mesmerism' and Ensemble Offspring's artistic director Claire Edwardes suggested it be arranged for quartet and backing track for their 2019 European Tour. Thanks to the amazing Jessica Wells for notating the work and thanks to the members of Ensemble Offspring who were integral in perfecting the arrangement.

Paul Mac is one of the leading figures in Australian electronic music. He is a composer, songwriter, musician and producer. Paul is a multi-ARIA Award winner for his work with underground dance pioneers Itch-E & Scratch-E and for his own solo work. The list of artists

with whom he's collaborated over recent years includes Sia, Daniel Johns, George Michael and Ngaiire.

Andrea Keller *Love In Solitude* (2017)

Love in Solitude is a meditation on the eloquent thoughts presented in *Letters to a Young Poet* by Rainer Maria Rilke. Alongside the live ensemble, the work features a backing track consisting of pre-recorded, highly manipulated sounds made by the performers of Ensemble Offspring on stage, in-studio. Jem Savage was an important collaborator on this soundscape and the voice of Miroslav Bukovsky (a Canberra based trumpet player) recites the text. This substantial work moves through numerous moods as depicted in Rilke's thoughts, beginning with solitude as an essential state for any artist, sadness and pain and their inevitability, and finally patience, love and optimism, of paramount importance. The work was written for Ensemble Offspring for the 2017 Merlyn Myer Commission. Watch the 'Offspring Bites 2' video by Peter Humble here: <https://vimeo.com/339485871>

Composer Notes – The Night With

Andrea Keller

Andrea Keller (b.1973) has received three ARIA Awards, six Australian Jazz 'Bell' Awards, two Art Music Awards, an APRA Professional Development Award, the Melbourne Recital Centre/Merlyn Myer Composing Women's Commission, and fellowships from the MCA/Freedman Foundation and the Australia Council. She holds a Bachelor of Music in Improvisation (Honours) from the Victorian College of the Arts (2001) and a Master of Arts (Research) from Queensland University of Technology (2011) and is on staff at the University of Melbourne.