

Simon Belshaw has studied composition with Gavin Bryars, Andy Hugill and Nick Atkinson. He completed his PhD at the University of Hertfordshire with Gavin Bryars in 2005.

He has had pieces performed by the Schidlof Quartet, PM ensemble, Gemini, Double Image and 3 Orm (amongst others). His music has been used for the video 'Round and Round' which was shown on Channel 4, the film 'The Times Were Never So Bad: The Life of Andre Dubus' and in advertising.

He has had his own ensemble (the Belshaw band), which performed his music in both traditional and original settings, from concert halls to shopping centres, arts centres to open air festivals (including on three occasions the Bristol Community Festival at Ashton Court). The band ranged in size from an ensemble of five to one of fourteen players.

More recently he has produced multimedia installation works using sound, music and video. Two of these works, 'Palingenesis' and 'Transition', have been part of either the Exeter Autumn or Fringe Festival. He has also recorded music cds under the names Safe Harbour and the Wessex Melodica Orchestra and these have been featured on BBC Radio Bristol, BBC Radio Devon and PhonicFM.

From 1994-95 he was composer in residence at Prema Arts Centre in Gloucestershire.

He has previously been awarded funding from Exeter City Council, Exeter Arts Council as well as from the RVW trust for his Masters degree. He has twice been the recipient of financial awards from the Oppenheim John Downes Memorial Trust.

For the past couple of years he has been working on a project entitled Music Machines. These Music Machines are small computer programs that generate music, each machine explores a single idea, some are simple, some more complex. All are generated by the computer within established parameters, all run continuously until stopped by the listener and all are different each time they are played. For anyone keen on the Apollo space missions Music Machine 8 will be of great interest.

Music Machine 8 uses the short speech that Neil Armstrong made when stepping on to the surface of the moon.

'That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind'

The music machine takes each word of this sentence, along with both the pause that Armstrong left in the middle of the sentence and the beep sound that was a feature of the communications between the earth and the astronauts, and plays them in a random order. In looped mode the machine plays indefinitely until stopped by the user, in one shot mode the machine plays each event only once (there is therefore, an extremely small chance that the sentence will be played as it was originally spoken).

For Further Information:

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