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CAGE CONCERT
for piano and orchestra

New interactive apps and website bring John Cage's music to life

Musicians at the Universities of Huddersfield and Leeds have this month launched **cageconcert.org** - a website and two new apps bringing to life a key musical work by experimental composer John Cage.

The *Concert for Piano and Orchestra* (1957–58) by John Cage is widely regarded as a seminal work within twentieth-century music and techniques.

However, how the work might be understood and performed remains a puzzle. As well as the innovations in notations, formally - as a set of parts without score, to be performed in any combination and relationship, including with other works - it throws open the notions of open form and the open work to a far greater degree than any earlier work by any twentieth-century composer.

The new cageconcert.org website demystifies the *Concert* for a wide range of audiences: advancing how the work is viewed and understood and providing insights and a range of performing possibilities for musicians. It includes a series of documentary films made with musicians from acclaimed new music ensemble Apartment House about performing the *Concert*, and provides a rich resource that enables users to better understand the techniques and processes explored by Cage in this remarkable work.

Two new interactive apps can be found on the website, which enable users to engage with the notations and with audio samples and recordings, to create their own realisations and new audio versions of the work. They are:

- the *Solo for Piano* app, which allows users to interact with notations from the piano part to create their own notated realisations; and
- the *Concert Player* app, with which users can combine sound recordings of the individual solos in various ways to produce variable aural versions of the piece.

App users can register for a free account in order to save and download their own versions of the *Concert* for use in performance or study.

Cageconcert is a joint AHRC-funded venture between researchers at the University of Huddersfield and the University of Leeds. It is led by Professors Philip Thomas and Martin Iddon, who are joined by Dr Christopher Melen and Dr Emily Payne. The project explores the historical context of the work, undertakes close analytical examination of the notations, and takes in approaches to performance, both historical and contemporary.

Continued overleaf

Philip Thomas *'Whether you're a professional musician, or just starting to get to know the music of John Cage, this set of resources will enable you to hear Cage's music in unique ways, and to explore it in ways that reveal its possibilities for performance. It provides a fascinating new perspective into Cage's techniques of chance and indeterminacy and allows you to get under the skin of how Cage's music works.'*

The project's outputs and activities also includes a major book publication, under contract with Oxford University Press, performances and a CD recording, and an international conference, in addition to numerous conference presentations and several associated publications.

<http://cageconcert.org>

@Cageconcert

For more information:

Prof Philip Thomas, University of Huddersfield

Email: cage@hud.ac.uk

Tel: +44 (0)1484 471336

Editors notes:

Philip Thomas is a Professor of Performance, having joined the University of Huddersfield in 2005. He specialises in performing and writing about new and experimental music, including both notated and improvised music. He places much emphasis on each concert being a unique event, designing imaginative programmes that provoke and suggest connections. You can find out more about Philip's work and forthcoming events [here](#)

Martin Iddon is a composer and musicologist. He joined the staff at Leeds in December 2009, having previously lectured at University College Cork and Lancaster University. He studied composition and musicology at the Universities of Durham and Cambridge, and has also studied composition privately with Steve Martland, Chaya Czernowin, and Steven Kazuo Takasugi. His musicological research has largely focussed on post-war music in Germany and the United States of America. His books *New Music at Darmstadt* and *John Cage and David Tudor* are both published by Cambridge University Press.