

JONNY GREENWOOD

Jonny Greenwood (b. 1971) is best known as the lead guitarist of the band Radiohead whom he joined while still at school. He started to study psychology and music at Oxford Brookes University, but only finished his first term before leaving to sign a six-album deal with EMI, and start his recording career with Radiohead. Radiohead have realised phenomenal success over the past decade, with multi-platinum album sales and an ever growing worldwide following.



Greenwood is no stranger to classical music, though. Indeed, his early musical interests included Messiaen and Ligeti and he started out as a viola player. He plays several other instruments too, including piano, organ, banjo, glockenspiel and harmonica, and he has a particular love for the ondes martenot. To date Greenwood has penned three “classical” works. These compositions have been licensed to Faber Music: *smear* (two ondes martenots and ensemble), *Popcorn Superhet Receiver* (string orchestra) and *Doghouse* (string trio and orchestra).

smear, commissioned by the FuseLeeds festival, was premiered there in March 2004 by the London Sinfonietta. In March 2005 Greenwood was Featured Composer at the South Bank Centre’s cutting-edge Ether Festival, where the revised version of *smear* was performed by the London Sinfonietta in the Royal Festival Hall, one of its’ two sell-out concerts there. *smear* was later released on CD on the London Sinfonietta Label as part of their Jerwood Series.

In 2004, Greenwood was made Composer in Residence with the BBC Concert Orchestra. The first fruit of this association was *Popcorn Superhet Receiver*, a BBC commission, premiered by the BBC Concert Orchestra and Robert Ziegler in April 2005. The piece was inspired by radio static and the extended, dissonant chords of Polish composer Penderecki’s *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima*. *Popcorn Superhet Receiver* won the BBC Radio 3 Listeners’ Award at the 2006 British Composer Awards and, as part of the award, Greenwood received funding from the PRS Foundation towards the commission of a new orchestral work, *Doghouse*. In 2007 Greenwood wrote the score to Paul Thomas Anderson’s Oscar-winning film ‘There Will Be Blood’. The soundtrack, which included several excerpts from *Popcorn Superhet Receiver*, won him the Best Film Score award at the Evening Standard British Film Awards for 2007, and the Critics’ Choice Award for Best Composer by the Broadcast Film Critics Association of the USA. However, it was controversially declared ineligible for an Oscar as “the majority of the music was not composed specifically for the film.” The soundtrack is available from Nonesuch Records.

Doghouse is his Greenwood’s most substantial orchestral work to date and was premiered by the BBC Concert Orchestra and Robert Ziegler in February 2010 at the BBC Maida Vale Studios. At the same time, Greenwood announced that *Doghouse* would feed his latest film score, ‘Norwegian Wood’, based on the celebrated Japanese novel by Haruki Murakami. The film is being directed by French/Vietnamese director Tran Anh Hung and will be released in Japan in December this year.

May 2010

FABER *ff* MUSIC

Music
for Now
CONCERT · STAGE · WORLD · DANCE

LIST OF WORKS AVAILABLE FROM FABER MUSIC LTD

ORCHESTRAL

Doghouse (2010)

string trio and large orchestra

Duration 23 minutes

solo violin, viola, cello - 2222 - 4331 - perc(3) - harp - strings

Commissioned by the BBC

FP: 28.02.2010, Invitation concert, BBC Maida Vale Studios, London, UK: BBC Concert Orchestra, Robert Ziegler

Score and parts for hire

Popcorn Superhet Receiver (2005)

string orchestra

Duration 18 minutes

18 vln.6 vla.6 vlc.4 db

Commissioned by the BBC

FP: 23.4.05, Jerwood Hall, LSO St. Luke's, London, UK:

BBC Concert Orchestra/Robert Ziegler

Score 0-571-52204-1 on sale, parts for hire

CHAMBER

smear (2004)

2 ondes martenot & chamber ensemble of 9 players

Duration 10 minutes

2 ondes martenot - cl.hrn - perc(1): - vib/tam-t - harp -

2 vln.vla.vlc.db

FP: March 2004, FuseLeeds festival, Leeds, UK:

London Sinfonietta

Score and parts for hire

PRESS COMMENTS

smear

'smear reveals an ear for timbre, a gift for musical elaboration and a more sophisticated palette than anyone might have guessed. Greenwood is clearly a composer in the making.'

Financial Times (Andrew Clark), 5 March 2004

'...a ravishingly scored musical love-letter to the eerie allure of the ondes Martenot...'

The Independent (Paul Conway), 8 March 2004

Popcorn Superhet Receiver

'... it owns up to an influence from early Penderecki. But the substance of the music is something else altogether. A slow blur of impossibly rich chords starts to let through faint solo instruments, now tentative and now stronger. It is at its most captivating when big chords fade and wisps of inner detail are left floating. Unlike the rest of the programme, it paraded the primacy of feeling over guile, a stance that doesn't usually get people far in British music. Let's hope he has the strength of mind to protect this original voice.'

The Independent (Robert Maycock), 29 November 2006

'... this is a substantial piece in three main sections. Building through a juxtaposition of 'white noise' and chorale-like harmony, the first is a reminder of Greenwood's liking for the texture-music of early Penderecki, with the central episode employing pizzicato and col legno techniques in a menacing atmosphere. The final section then suggests Xenakis in its volatile dynamics and 'wide angle' glissandos, leading to a close on a

powerful emotional apex. A well-deserved revival that augurs well for Greenwood's next BBC CO commission.'

The Classical Source (Richard Whitehouse), November 2006

'... The gamble paid off. The church was packed, and the audience – not the usual faces seen at classical or even new-music concerts – sat in rapt silence through Mr. Greenwood's work... As it turned out, Mr. Greenwood's 20-minute work was by far the most viscerally exciting and intellectually engaging...

... has a consistently alluring shimmer and embraces everything from lush vibrato, glissandos and sudden dynamic shifts to slowly rising chromatic themes. Toward the end his clusters give way to a prismatic full-orchestra pizzicato section: imagine the scherzo of Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony on steroids, or acid, or both.'

The New York Times (Allan Kozinn), 18 January 2008

'... the piece possesses a solid architectural shape, with slow-moving, darkly meditative passages framing a kinetic, rock-tinged midsection. The writing for strings is idiomatic and inventive; at one point, Greenwood devises a buzzing barrage of "Bartók pizzicato" – sharply plucked sounds from violins cradled like ukuleles.

Lubman and his first-rate players made a persuasive case for Greenwood's score, revelling in its rich sonorities.

Despite the high-tech title, Popcorn has an elegiac air, as if the radio's white noise were carrying messages from a disintegrating world.'

The New Yorker (Alex Ross), 4 February 2008

'The piece is lushly expressive, or as elusive as the white noise it mimics, or as tribal in its pulse as Stravinsky – or "Weird Fishes", the Radiohead tune. And there's a deep structure to it... Overall, Popcorn Superhet Receiver sounds like a transmission from some futuristic mystery-zone...

It's opening chords are sensuous, threatening an unbinding of energy. It fades to white noise, grows icy and swarms. Seemingly, with distant radio signals, before unleashing what sounds like an extraterrestrial drum circle.

The Magik-Magik players unfurled a mad pizzicato attack to conjure that alarming effect, before lofting several last blooms of space-age lushness. There was a long silence, then a standing ovation. Somewhere in the crowd, Tilson Thomas must have been awfully glad to see it: a young audience cheering the latest news from the centuries-old tradition.'

The Mercury News (Richard Scheinin), 22 August 2008

'... a fascinating... exploration of the possibilities of a string orchestra... It would be hard to envision a more skilful approach to the goal of mixing up rock and contemporary classical audiences.

... evinces little patience for simple genre boundaries... (Greenwood) writes with a casual virtuosity that seems to take nothing for granted.

Out of a violin haze solo cellos emerge – one, two, three of them - singing heartfelt melodies. Later, a surge of emphatic downbows gets passed around the orchestra like a music version of the wave; later still, a flurry of pizzicatos takes hold and morphs into a wonderfully brittle Latin beat.'

San Francisco Chronicle (Joshua Kosman), 23 August 2008

Faber Music Ltd, Bloomsbury House, 74-77 Great Russell St,
London WC1B 3DA
Tel: +44 20 7908 5336, musicfornow@fabermusic.com