

Michael Vaughan - Biography

Mike Vaughan, born in London 1954, studied music at Dartington college of arts and at Nottingham university where he holds a Ph.D. in composition.

His work consists of both instrumental and electroacoustic pieces a number of which have been commissioned by soloists, ensembles and organisations including *Lontano* and *EMAS(Sonic Arts Network)*. Various works have received recognition in the form of prizes, broadcasts or programming in international events. Recent projects include *Fracture Zones*, an ensemble work for 10 players, *Ensphered* for soprano saxophone and tape and *Darkening Horizons* for shakuhachi and koto.

Mike Vaughan is currently living in Cheshire working as a composer and lecturer at the university of Keele.

Crosscurrents (for harpsichord and tape) - description of artistic concept

Crosscurrents uses the idea of a concerto as a model, with the tape providing expansions and extensions of the harpsichord material using different combinations of synthesized and recorded sounds. These were created using various electroacoustic techniques of sound generation and manipulation including computer synthesis, MIDI and the traditional techniques of *musique concrète*.

The piece deals with various extremes of interaction between the harpsichord and tape arising from different characteristics of the sound world produced by the instrument. These include the 'noise' aspects of the harpsichord mechanism, the tonal aspects of the harpsichord part and a more general continuity associated with music of the baroque period. In the first large section of the piece the tape and harpsichord combine to produce a form of 'meta-instrument'. As this section progresses the general tendency is for the tape to become progressively more independent of the harpsichord culminating in a tape 'solo'. A harpsichord 'cadenza' follows this section with the remainder of the work working towards a further fusion of the two parts thereby creating a cyclic form.

Most of the tape part was created by using a sequenced version of sections of the harpsichord part to drive various synthesized and sampled sounds in order to retain similar gestural profiles throughout the work. The gradual evolution of texture and register in the harpsichord part is composed using algorithmic techniques.

Crosscurrents is dedicated to Jane Chapman and was realised at the electronic music studios of Birmingham university. It was commissioned by Nottingham New Music 1990 with funds provided by East Midlands Arts.