

JAMES MACMILLAN**Biographical Sketch:**

- Scottish composer (born July 16, 1959)
 - two if not three generations after Stravinsky
- Earned doctoral degree from Durham University (1987)
 - studied with John Casken (a student of Lutosławski)
- Appointed composer and conductor of the BBC Philharmonic in 2000
- Awarded a CBE (Commander of the British Empire) in 2004

Compositional History (with key works):

- 143 works available through Boosey & Hawkes (some are rearrangements)
 - 8 concertos
 - over 30 orchestral works (including 3 symphonies)
 - over 40 works including chorus or voice
- 34 unique titles available on recordings
- Underwent stylistic transformation in 1987
 - abandoned his early serial and aleatoric style
- Achieved early acclaim with *The Confession of Isobel Gowdie* (1990)
 - requiem for a "witch" executed in the 17th century
- Most performed piece is *Veni, Veni, Emmanuel* (1992)
 - written for fellow Scot, Evelyn Glennie
 - concerto for percussion and orchestra
 - more than 300 performances thus far
- *Seven Last Words from the Cross* (1993), a cantata for choir and strings
- *The Quickenings* (1998), for soloists (ATTB), children's choir, mixed choir, & orch.
- Wrote a cello concerto and symphony on the request of Rostropovich

Some Personal Parallels to Stravinsky:

- Strong national identity (Scotland)
 - latent feeling of "second-bestness" perhaps
- Interest in traditional & folk music (Scottish)
- Many pieces have religious inspirations (Catholicism)
- Interest in the concept of "Ritual"

Comparison of compositional dates for works under discussion:

Igor Stravinsky (b. 1882)			James MacMillan (b. 1959)		
work	year	age	work	year	age
<i>The Firebird</i>	1910	28	<i>The Berserking</i>	1989	30
<i>Petrushka</i>	1911	29	<i>The Confession of Isobel Gowdie</i>	1990	31
<i>The Rite of Spring</i>	1913	31	<i>Veni, Veni, Emmanuel</i>	1992	33
<i>The Wedding</i>	1914-1923	32-41	<i>Epiclesis</i>	1993	34

STYLISTIC SYMPATHIES with STRAVINSKY**General:**

- Virtuosity
 - highly complex rhythmic patterns
 - explores extreme ranges of instruments
- Expanded role of percussion
- Stylistic "catholicism"
 - freely floats between stylistic boundaries

Form:

- Accumulation vs. Dissipation
 - increase in number of pitch classes or rhythmic activity
 - related to timelessness
 - arch forms
- Juxtaposition vs. Superimposition
 - block forms
 - variation forms

Rhythm:

- "Immobile" Ostinato
 - as pedal point
 - as related to block forms
 - stasis vs. change
- Timelessness
 - strong pulse vs. absence of pulse
- Metric irregularity
 - "non-periodic" rhythms
 - constantly changing meters
 - shifting rhythmic ostinati
 - two vs. three (switchback effect)

Harmony:

- Coloristic (sense of fantasy)
 - use of special effects
- Patches of tonality and modality
 - as a result of borrowed tunes
 - often set in non-tonal environments
- Centricity
 - major/minor mode ambivalence/confluence
- Bitonality/Polytonality
- Heterophony

SCORES

MacMillan, James. *The Berserking: A Concerto for Piano and Orchestra*. London: Universal Edition, 1990 [1989].

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