

Rearranging Janáček's quartets as trios.

This presentation will explore various issues relating to the author's reworking of Janáček's two string quartets in versions for clarinet, cello and piano/keyboard. Particularly it will explore the general question of how justifiable (or not) it is to impose, not just different instrumentation (with its textural implications), but a new dramaturgy upon a composer's work. The rationale underlying the arrangements and the processes of preparing the them for performance will be articulated. The presentation will be illustrated with recorded extracts from performances by the author with his colleagues in the *Endeavour Trio*. In both cases, the process of developing the arrangements involved extensive workshopping in rehearsals, as well as public performances. As such, the reworking of the composer's material involved collaborative work that was informed, indeed led, by the experiences of music-making.

The arrangement of Janacek's first quartet for trio has some precedents and historical justification given the suggestive evidence that the composer reworked significant material for the quartet (1923) from an earlier piano trio (1909) - a work of which he subsequently buried virtually all traces. Though the quartet has been previously arranged for piano trio with violin, the substitution of a clarinet adds a different set of possibilities and challenges notably in moving from the homogenous sounds of string instruments to a mixed ensemble of a woodwind, string and percussion instrument. The arrangement (2017) exploits this to develop a set of relationships between the instrumentalists - almost as distinct dramatis personae - that give Janáček's work a new sense of dynamic interaction and development. This in turn suggests a myriad of new interpretative decisions to preparing for performance.

There is no comparable historical justification or precedent of reimagining the second quartet for trio. As such, its rationale and artistic outcome is deliberately more provocative. Apart from irresistible desire to follow up the experience of reworking the first quartet, its premise grew from observing, and wishing to underline, some underlying oppositions inherent in the nature of the work itself. The arrangement deliberately makes the confrontations between these opposing elements more overt, thereby drawing out an aspect of the work that is more implicit/less evident in the original quartet. As in the first quartet, the trio version presents a different form of dramaturgy between the instruments and, with that, a new way of hearing and experiencing the work.



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Professor Stephen Emmerson has been on the teaching staff of Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University since the 1990s. In addition to undergraduate classes, he has been increasingly involved in the teaching and guidance of postgraduate research and has convened Masters and Doctoral research program there over many years. He also currently convenes the Master of Music Research program delivered at the Australian National Academy of Music in Melbourne. His work in recent years has been deeply involved with developments in artistic research through research supervision and reflections on his own performance projects. He has Masters and Doctoral degrees from Oxford University and is a founding member of the Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre where he is co-leader of its Music and Creativities area. He maintains an active career as a pianist both as soloist and in various chamber ensembles (notably the *Griffith Trio*, the *Endeavour Trio*, *Dean-Emmerson-Dean* and the *Lunaire Collective*) regularly performing around Australia and beyond.