

# Benjamin Dwyer

(b. 1965)

“In art there is only one thing that counts: the bit that can't be explained.”

(Georges Braque)



Benjamin Dwyer is a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, the Royal Academy of Music, London and Queen's University, Belfast. Equally known as a guitarist and composer, he has performed with the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, the Neubrandenburg Philharmonic Orchestra, the Irish Chamber Orchestra, the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, the

Vogler Quartet and new music ensemble Vox21.

As a composer, Dwyer has received commissions from the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, RTÉ lyric fm, Ensemble Madrid, Bradyworks from Canada, Music Network and the Instituto Cervantes among others. He has recently composed a number of important large-scale works including *Scenes from Crow* (2002), a major work for large ensemble, tape and video by visual artist David Farrell and based on the Crow poems of Ted Hughes, *Rajas, Sattva, Tamas*, a concerto for percussion and orchestra, *Twelve Études* and a second guitar concerto, which he wrote for the renowned Brazilian guitarist Fabio Zanon.

Benjamin Dwyer has made a vast contribution to new music in Ireland. He founded the Mostly Modern series in 1990 and is also a founder-member of the new music ensemble Vox21. He has appeared regularly on Irish national television and radio as a performer and commentator. He has written extensively on contemporary music for many journals including the Journal of Music in Ireland and the Musical Times. In 2006 he was elected a member of Aosdána, Ireland's state-sponsored academy of creative artists.

## Selected Works

### ORCHESTRAL

#### **Rajas, Sattva, Tamas (2000)**

perc-solo, 3343 4231 timp hrp str

MS 22'

Commissioned by RTÉ.

Premiere: 24 April 2001. National Concert Hall, Dublin. Richard O'Donnell (perc), National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, conductor Nicholas Kok.

#### **Concerto for Guitar and Strings (1998 rev. 1999)**

MS 20'

Premiere: 11 October 1998. Royal Hospital Kilmainham, Dublin. Benjamin Dwyer (gui), Irish Chamber Orchestra. Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

#### **Rajas (1998)**

3222 3431 timp 3 perc str

MS 9'

### ENSEMBLE

#### **Afterjoyce I (2004)**

fl [amplified], perc [amplified]

MS 3'

Commissioned by the Contemporary Music Centre, Temple Bar Properties Ltd and the Association of Irish Composers with funding from the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism through the 'ReJoyce Dublin 2004 – Celebrating Bloomsday 100' festival. Premiere: 20 June 2004. 'ReJoyce Dublin – Celebrating Bloomsday 100' festival 2004, Meeting House Square, Temple Bar, Dublin. Susan Doyle (fl), Richard O'Donnell (perc).

Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

#### **Quintet (2003)**

2 vn, va, vc, gui

MS

Premiere: 9 October 2003. 'Mostly Modern' series, Bank of Ireland Arts Centre, Dublin. Vox 21.

#### **String Quartet (1996 rev. 1999)**

MS 17'

Premiere: 10 December 1998. 'Mostly Modern' series, Bank of Ireland Arts Centre, Dublin. Topologies: Darragh Morgan (vn), Looby Wilkinson (vn), Reiad Chibah (va), James Bush (vc).

Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

#### **Parallaxis (1996)**

ssax, asax

MS 8'

Premiere: 12 January 1997. Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art. Kenneth Edge (ssax + asax).

Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

**Trio 1 (1995)**

Quasi una Fantasia  
cl vn pf  
MS 14'  
Premiere: 15 July 1995. John Field Room, National Concert Hall, Dublin. Ruth Hickey (cl), Louise Higgins (vn), David Brophy (pf).  
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

**Sonata (1994 rev. 1997)**

ob gui  
MS 13'  
Premiere: 9 September 1994. John Field Room, National Concert Hall, Dublin. Matthew Manning (ob), Benjamin Dwyer (gui).  
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

**Tiento (1994)**

ssax, pf  
MS 13'  
Premiere: 19 June 1994. Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin. Kenneth Edge (sax), Danusia Oslizlok (pf). Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

**Omeros (1994)**

4 gui [opt. amplified]  
MS 13'  
Premiere: 11 March 1995. John Field Room, National Concert Hall, Dublin. Tirando Guitar Quartet.  
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

**Toccata (1993 rev. 1994)**

ob, cl, asax, bn  
MS 12'  
Premiere: 12 November 1993. St Stephen's Church, Mount Street Crescent, Dublin. Irish Reed Quartet: Matthew Manning (ob), Fintan Sutton (cl), Kenneth Edge (asax), Mike Jones (bn).  
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

**Kaivalya Ratri (1990)**

ssax, gui  
MS 68'  
Premiere: 14 November 1990. John Field Room, National Concert Hall, Dublin. Kenneth Edge (ssax), Benjamin Dwyer (gui).  
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

## SOLO INSTRUMENTAL

**Voces Criticas (2004)**

gui  
MS 10'  
Commissioned by RTÉ Lyric FM and Music Network, with funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.  
Premiere: 2 November 2004. Coach House, Dublin. Craig Ogden.

**Twelve Études (2003)**

gui  
MS 45'

**Apuntes (2002)**

pf  
MS 7'

**Cancion y Tango (1995-2003)**

gui  
MS 12'

**Three Pieces for Piano (1997)**

pf  
MS 13'  
Commissioned by Anthony Byrne with funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.  
Premiere: 13 May 1997. 'Mostly Modern' series, Bank of Ireland Arts Centre, Dublin. Anthony Byrne.  
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

**Song for Her (1995)**

gui  
MS 2'  
Premiere: 16 February 1996. John Field Room, National Concert Hall, Dublin. Benjamin Dwyer (gui).

**Prakriti (1993 rev. 1995)**

asax  
MS 15'  
Premiere: May 1993. Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin. Kenneth Edge (asax).  
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

## VOCAL AND CHORAL

**Winter Psalms (1995 rev. 1997)**

satb, ssax  
Text: Benjamin Dwyer  
MS 17'  
Premiere: 22 January 1998. 'Mostly Modern' series, Bank of Ireland Arts Centre, Dublin. Gerard McChrystal (sax), National Chamber Choir, conductor Colin Mawby.  
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

**In Memoriam (1995)**

ssaa  
Text: Benjamin Dwyer  
MS 4'

**Two Songs (1994 rev. 1995)**

high voice, vc  
Text: Derek Mahon.  
MS 7'  
Premiere: 4 May 1995. United Arts Club, Dublin. Aylish Kerrigan (Mez-solo), David James (vc).

**November Cloud (1994 rev. 1995)**

S-solo, satb, 2121 1000 3 perc xyl str, speaker [girl aged 10 - 12]  
Text: Brendan Kennelly.  
MS 20'

## ELECTRO-ACOUSTIC AND MIXED MEDIA

**Crow (1999)**

Recorder and tape or flute and tape  
MS 13'  
Commissioned by Peter Wells with funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.  
Premiere: 1 February 1999. Morrison Memorial Theatre, Hamilton, New Zealand. Peter Wells (trec).  
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.