

THOMAS MEADOWCROFT

Biography

Thomas Meadowcroft is a composer, performer and arranger. He makes orchestral and chamber music for the concert hall, as well as music for theater, film and radio. His work has been described as 'reaching an inexpressible purity' (*Le Monde*), 'dreamy post-rock' (*New York Times*), 'never-ending, sugar-sweet' (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*), 'motorized nostalgia' (*The Scotsman, Glasgow*) and 'between academic schmaltz and avantgarde-pop' (*Zitty Magazine, Berlin*). His music and/or arrangements have been released on Skirl, Mikroton, Telos, Popmuzik and Vertigo/Universal labels.

His music for concert hall has been performed by various orchestras and ensembles including the BBC Symphony Orchestra (conductor Brett Dean), Either/Or Ensemble, Eklekto Percussion Collective, ensemble Mosaik, Ensemble Offspring, ensemble recherche, ensemble XII, Klangforum Wien, KNM Berlin, Line Upon Line Percussion, Les Percussions de Strasbourg, the Philharmonic Orchestra State Theater Cottbus (conductor Evan Christ), Quartett PLUS 1, Speak Percussion, SWR Vocal Ensemble, SWR Symphony Orchestra (conductor Ilan Volkov), Grammy Award winning Third Coast Percussion and YARN/WIRE. He has also collaborated with a variety of individual artists including Alexandre Babel, Anthony Burr, Zoé Cartier, Claire Chase, Christian Dierstein, Robin Hayward, Hilary Jeffery, Eugene Ughetti and Alex Waterman.

His work has been presented at various international festivals and concert series including Acara Festival Salihara (Jakarta, Indonesia), Audio Poverty (Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin), Bavarian Festspiel Plus (Munich), La Batie Festival (Geneva), Berlin in Lights (Carnegie Hall, NYC), Donaueschinger Musiktage, Festival Présences (Paris), Hawler International Theater Festival (Erbil, Iraq), Label Suisse (Lausanne), Lucerne Festival, Monday Evening Concerts (Los Angeles, USA), Rainy Days (Luxembourg), and Ultima Festival (Oslo, Norway).

As performer, Thomas Meadowcroft has performed at various international festivals and venues including Holland Festival, IGNM Bern, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival (UK), Issue Project Room (Brooklyn, USA), KW Berlin and Maerzmusik Berlin. His incidental music for theater has accompanied productions in Germany's leading houses including HAU Berlin, Volksbühne Berlin and Münchner Kammerspiele. Notably, Meadowcroft collaborated with Dirk Von Lowtzow on the music for *Von einem der auszog, weil er sich die Miete nicht mehr leisten konnte* (dir. René Pollesch), arranging and orchestrating von Lowtzow's music for the German Film Orchestra Babelsberg (conductor Oliver Pohl).

Australian by birth, Thomas Meadowcroft has been based in Berlin since 1998. To cite Paul Griffiths, 'it is the resulting distance of the country of his birth that informs several of his projects, in which memory is coming at us from several different removes'. The 2016 radiophonic work, *Moving Homes* which was selected in the final round of the 2016 'Prix Italia' radio prize, was commissioned by Deutschlandradio Kultur and the Australian Broadcasting Commission, and is set on an imaginary tropical Australian coastline prone to cyclones. The 2013 radiophonic work, *Song Buslines* also commissioned by Deutschlandradio Kultur,

describes the routes of long-haul bus trips along the east coast of Australia, employing an array of virtual acoustic spaces and musical styles to capture the gentle tedium of long-haul travel. Similarly, the engine of a Holden Monaro belonging to Meadowcroft's cousin is the featured sound source in the 2008 installation, *Monaro Eden*, which was commissioned by QAGOMA for the 2008 exhibition 'Optimism', and subsequently exhibited at Radial System Berlin and the Fremantle Arts Centre, Australia.

Aside from examining cultural memory in early 21st century Australia, much of Meadowcroft's work also addresses the social and political economies of music as part of each work's realization. The 2017 work for symphony orchestra, 'The News in Music' examines TV news music and orchestral media in the service of power, and was a 'Succès de scandale' at Europe's premiere contemporary music festival, 'Donauessinger Musiktage'. In *Eremozoic Age Lovers* (2014), for choir, organ and narrator, texts on extinction by biologist Edward O Wilson are juxtaposed with the sweet nothings of anonymous lovers, where as *Opera Abstract*, a three-minute-opera-on-a-loop premiered at the Münchner Biennale in 2012, is a marketing pitch for funding an opera in outer space. Meadowcroft's solo performances, or 'Alleinunterhaltung' (trans. 'entertaining alone') employ combinations of drum machines, organ, analogue tape loops and synthesizers to engage with "the thorny issue of political economy of music via its endless proliferation".

Meadowcroft's works for percussion have been featured in portrait concerts in Melbourne, Geneva, Berlin and San Diego. *Discount Minimal* (2017) for Revox tape machine, electronics and eight percussionists is a concert-installation featuring the work of the Swiss artist Florian Bach and the Eklekto Percussion Collective, Geneva. *Walkman Antiquarian* (2013), written for NYC ensemble, Yarn/Wire, features samples from the record collection of the father's composer. *The Great Knot* (2011), written for Speak Percussion, is a poetic response to the migratory patterns of the bird, the great knot.

Thomas Meadowcroft has undertaken artist residencies at Villa Aurora Los Angeles (courtesy of the German Foreign Office), Cité des arts Paris (courtesy of the Berlin Senate for Cultural Affairs), and the Peggy Glanville-Hicks Composers' House, Sydney. After completing his Bachelor of Music (Hons) with University Medal at the University of Queensland in 1993, Thomas was awarded a Queen's Trust Award and a William Penn Fellowship in 1994, and attained his PhD at the University of Pennsylvania under the supervision of American composer, George Crumb in 1998.