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Encyclopedia of Music in Ireland: Rob Canning

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Canning, Rob. (b Dublin, 9 November 1974) Irish composer. He studied with Anthony Powers at the University of Wales where he graduated with a Bmus and in 1999 he obtained an M.Litt in Composition from UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN where he studied with SEÓIRSE BODLEY. He has been the recipient of a number of awards including the composer’s class of the RTÉ Musician of the Future competition (1998), first prize in the international section of the New Music for Sligo Composition Competition (1999) and the Macaulay Fellowship (2001). He has lectured in the composition department of TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN and is currently pursuing doctoral studies at Goldsmiths College London.

Canning’s compositional technique mediates between a systems based approach, which uses various mathematical models and computer assisted strategies to generate and structure material, and an intuitive approach which allows for a greater range of improvisational freedom on the part of the performer. For example Melencholia (2007) for string quartet and live electronics uses a magic square of musical fragments to control the work’s temporal parameters but allows its performers the freedom to predetermine their own path through the grid. He has also completed a number of sound installations and multi-channel electronic works.

Selected Compositions

…and turn the mirror to the wall, 2000 (Dublin 2000). afl., bcl., pf., vn, vc.
Bunraku, 2001. 2 perc.
Mantra, 1999. pf.
5!, 2009. perc.
Ave Maria, 2004 (Belfast 2004). satb [div].
Continuum, 2000 (Galway 2000). bcl., el-ac.
Room Full of Mirrors, 2001 (Galway 2002). pf., el-ac.
Costruzione Illegittima, 2001 (Galway 2001). cl., el-ac.
Soundshapes I-IV, 2002 (Galway 2002). fl.+glasses, cl.+glasses, el-ac.
Clints & Grikes, 2004 (Canada 2004). fl., pf., zither, el-ac.
Discography
Contemporary Music Centre: *Contemporary Music from Ireland, Volume 4* (Susan Doyle (fl.), Síle Daly (ob.), Deirdre Doyle (cl.), Ian Dakin (hn), Richard O’ Donnell (perc), Rhian McLeod (perc): CD, CMC CD04, 2004)

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Word Count (with Work List etc.): 452

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Bodley, Seóirse
Goldsmiths College London
ISCM World Music Days
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University of Wales
University College Dublin