Beat Furrer

in conversation with Dr Edward Nesbit

Tuesday 8 November 2016, 18:15
Room 349, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU
Admission free

Beat Furrer was born in Schaffhausen (Switzerland) in 1954 and received his first musical training on piano at the Music School there. After moving to Vienna in 1975, he studied conducting with Otmar Suitner and composition with Roman Haubenstock Ramati at the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst. In 1985 he founded the Klangforum Wien, which he directed until 1992, and with which he is still associated as conductor. Commissioned by the Vienna State Opera, he composed his first opera Die Blinden. His second opera Narcissus was premiered in 1994 as part of the Festival “steirischer herbst” at the Graz Opera. In 1996 he was composer-in-residence at the Lucerne Festival. His music theatre work Begehren was premiered in Graz in 2001, the opera invocation in Zürich in 1996 and the sound theatre piece FAMA in Donaueschingen in 2005. In autumn 1991 Furrer became a full professor of composition at the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Graz. He has been guest professor in composition at the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Frankfurt 2006–2009. Together with violinist Ernst Kovacic he founded “impuls”, a International Ensemble and Composers Academy for Contemporary Music. In 2004 he was awarded the Music Prize of the City of Vienna, and in 2005 became a member of the Academy of Arts in Berlin. He was awarded the Golden Lion at the Venice Biennale in 2006 for his work FAMA. In 2010 his music theatre Wüstenbuch was premiered in Basel. In 2014 he was awarded with Great Austrian State Prize. His latest opera La Bianca Notte (Violet Snow) based on texts by Dino Campana, was premiered in Hamburg in spring 2015. He is currently working on his new opera Violetter Schnee (Violet Snow) based on a Libretto by Vladimir Sorokin. Since the 1980s Beat Furrer has composed a wide range of works, from solo and ensemble music to orchestral and choral works and opera. He is well known for his nuanced exploration of the human voice and its relationship to instrumental sound.

London Sinfonietta will perform Furrer’s FAMA at St John’s Smith Square, London on Friday 11 November at 19:30.
Tickets: Concession price £5. Tel: 020 7960 4200
http://www.londonsinfonietta.org.uk/fama

A further performance of FAMA will take place at Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival on Sunday 20 November at 22:00.
http://hcmf.co.uk