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Marco Nikodijević (b.1980) String Quartet No. 2 (2019)

Introduzione

Ruvido ed animato (Rough & animated)

Tango Oscuro e minaccioso (Dark & menacing)

Vivace

Adagio mesto

[Here](#) is a 5-minute youtube video of Nikodijević talking about his music (in English).

This 13-minute work, which had its UK premiere last night in Chichester, is dedicated to the Armida Quartet. They gave its world premiere on July 2019 in Alfeld, Lower Saxony at the 29th Internationale Fredener Musiktage who had commissioned it with the financial assistance of the Foundation of Lower Saxony. Three years earlier, at the Barbican, the Armida had premiered Nikodijević's first string quartet "Tiefenrausch" (Deep Rapture) also dedicated to them.

Marko Nikodijević was born in Subotica, in the north of Serbia near to the border with Hungary. In his teens in Belgrade he not only studied composition with Zoran Eric but also attended courses in nonlinear mathematics and physics. He continued his music education in Stuttgart where he settled. His compositions have won many prizes including one from the Ernst von Siemens Music Foundation and a Deutscher Musikautorenpreis (German Composers' Prize) in the category Promoting New Talent.

He has written in a wide variety of forms, including two operas (one on '*The 7 deaths of Maria Callas*', the other dedicated to the murdered Canadian composer Claude Vivier) and orchestral works often with unusual instrumentation augmented with electronics. However, most of his works are for chamber ensembles again with unusual mixtures of instruments. His style is eclectic, on the one hand often taking the works of others as his starting point, but then drawing on computer techniques reflecting his maths background, or borrowing from techno and pop.

The following comments are based on the programme notes for the world premier in Germany. The first movement of Nikodijević's String Quartet No. 2 starts softly with the notes A-B-C-H in homage to Johann Sebastian Bach. Haydn's gift for misleading and surprising his listeners is echoed in a very fast fugal passage, which increases in speed, volume and pitch before abruptly breaking off. The heart of the quartet is a Tango in

which the original rhythm becomes increasingly complex. The fast fourth movement only really gets going on the third attempt.