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In Search of a Lost Language: Performing in Early-Recorded Style in Viola and String Quartet Repertoires

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Curriculum Vitae

Violist Emlyn Stam (born 1984 in Calgary, Canada) is active as a chamber musician, soloist, conductor, pedagogue and performance researcher in the Netherlands and internationally. Since 2014 he has been artistic director of the New European Ensemble an international ensemble for contemporary and 20th-century music.

As a soloist Emlyn made numerous appearances for Dutch radio and television. He performed concertos with the Amsterdam Symphony Orchestra, Orquestra d'Espinho (Portugal) and the Schönberg Ensemble (NL). He also performed at numerous festivals such as Festival Vlaanderen, Kuhmo Festival (Finland), Beijing Contemporary Music Festival, Shanghai New Music Week, Sound of Stockholm, Connect Festival, Giverny Chamber Music Festival, International Chamber Music Festival Utrecht and Grachtenfestival Amsterdam. His many chamber music performances have included concerts with the Parkanyi Quartet and regular appearances with the Ysaÿe Trio of which he is a founding member. The trio released two CDs for the Dutch Record Company.

As a teacher Emlyn regularly gives masterclasses in both viola playing and chamber music. He gave masterclasses at numerous conservatories in the Netherlands, Estonia, China and Sweden. Emlyn is an active music researcher, focusing on late 19th and early-20th-century performance practices. He gave lectures on his research at the University of Leeds, the Hochschule der Künste in Bern, Codarts Rotterdam, the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague and for Juventus Lyrica in Buenos Aires. He is currently coordinator of the research program for the Master of Music at Fontys University for the Arts in Tilburg.

Emlyn obtained his Bachelor's degree in 2006 and his Master's degree in 2008 at the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague. His teachers were Ferdinand Erblich and Vladimir Mendelssohn. Further studies included masterclasses with Pinchas Zukerman, Michael Tree, Yuri Bashmet, Roberto Diaz, Tabea Zimmerman, Kim Kashkashian and Gerald Stanick. His doctoral research was conducted at Leiden University as part of the docARTES programme.

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My thanks go out to fellow spirit and all-round musician Joan Berkhemer who taught me, after 20 years of playing, how to hold the viola properly. Not only did he turn in wonderful performances as part of my recorded portfolio, he spent hours with me discussing early recordings, style change over time and other wild ideas over a few glasses of red wine with a side of kaasstengels. To this day, I have never heard a violinist turn a phrase in quite the same way Joan does. Thanks too to my promoter Frans de Ruiter whose reflective wisdom encouraged me to keep re-thinking my work for the better throughout the process. From our initial conversations on the nature of artistic research through deeper discourse on performance practice, he encouraged me to look at music from all angles and to see things not only in a linear fashion but also backwards and upside down.

I cannot thank Shuann Chai enough for her dedicated collaboration with me at the piano. Her intuitive, spirited and flexible approach allowed me to go as far as I could in copying recordings and I found her playing truly inspiring. I look forward to our future performances together. My dear friend Geoffrey Miles was truly central to this work. His innovative, lo-fi approach to recording and his personal, sensitive and dedicated attitude to the process helped create a recording environment unlike any other I have experienced. Geoff taught me more than I cared to know about recording technique, recording psychology and Jonathan Swift with the help of a few glasses of scotch.

I would like to thank Tully Potter for his erudite correspondence and for providing me with rare, unreleased recordings. Thanks also to Rolf den Otter for providing me with recordings and information on the Haagsche Toonkunstkwartet. Many thanks go out to

my friend and collaborative colleague Hernán Schvartzmann. Together we put some of my findings into practice in opera productions and masterclasses for singers, in what I hope was the first step on the road to future discoveries. Thanks to Job Ter Haar not only for his critical feedback and for informing me about the latest in 19th-century performance studies but especially for his inspired playing during our concerts together. Many thanks to my dear friend Stefan Petrovic who has shared many wonderful insights about research and music-making with me over the years. Thanks also to Bobby Mitchell for commiserating with me about PhD life and for teaching me RATS and everything I know about pinot noir. I would also like to acknowledge my former viola teacher Ferdinand Erblisch who sadly passed away this year. His committed, fervent style of performance made me the musician I am today.

Thanks to my brother Willem who delivered dedicated performances for the recorded portfolio and never missed an opportunity to ask if the work was done. Special thanks to my parents Hank and Lorraine, not only for their steadfast psychological support, but also for their timely feedback on my writing at a critical time in the process. Their scholarly approach to theory and history in their own fields subliminally informed my own research by giving me a taste for both the critical and the historical. As such things go, I now realize I take after my parents in more ways than I wanted to.

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