

A Hard Day's Night

For performer,
one or more guitarists
(or open instrumentation)
& Electronics

Commissioned by the
Ensemble Klang Foundation

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(- Revised 2018)

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Concept

In November 2016, I curated an evening of performances at Eastside Projects gallery in Digbeth, Birmingham, in collaboration with composer-performers Paul Norman and Andy Ingamells. The performances were presented at Digbeth First Friday, a monthly event of evening gallery openings in Birmingham. This event is primarily attended by visual arts audiences, and I therefore reflected on our position as musicians within this scene. This resulted in me questioning the etiquette of contemporary music concerts. A particular concert format has particular etiquette, such as being quiet during a performance and clapping at the end. The displacement of us as musicians (outsiders) performing in an Art Gallery, created the space for questioning and reinventing the etiquette; as well as taking the Art event etiquette into account. I did not question the etiquette in order to criticise, but primarily to make the audience aware of it and to break their usual routines.

A Contemporary Classical Music audience rarely shouts 'Woo!' out of appreciation for a performer, in contrast to a Rock concert where audiences are sometimes so loud that you are unable to hear the music. When this happens at Rock concerts it seems to me that the audience creates their own music with their shouting voices. Such events are documented in many concerts by The Beatles in the 1960s, and are also parodied in the movie *A Hard Day's Night*¹. During my compositional process I was reminded of this movie and decided to make direct reference to it.

In my work *A Hard Day's Night* a performer holds a large sign with 'Woo!' written on it in bold letters. In doing so, the performer insinuates that the audience should shout "Woo!" when he/she displays the sign. If the audience reacts and makes a sound, a self-built computer programme analyses the pitches they shout and relates the analysed sound to the most closely related pre-set chord. For example: When the C chord is recognized by the computer application, the computer will say: 'PITCH ANALYSIS: C-CHORD' and the performing band or solo guitarist will play a C-chord, just one time, one stroke.

¹ *A Hard Day's Night*. (1964). [film] Directed by R. Lester. UK: United Artists.

1. Performers and electronics

Option 1:

- 1 performer to hold a sign
- 1 electric guitarist
- Jack cable
- Guitar amplifier

Option 2:

- 1 performer to hold a sign
- **A group of electric guitarists/any instruments, minimum 6**
- Jack cables
- Guitar amplifiers

Electronics

- Laptop with sound analysis application
- Microphone
- XLR cable
- Loudspeakers

Other material

- Large piece of cloth or painting canvas
- Painting brush
- Red and black paint
- Glitter