

Thesis Abstract

Portfolio of Compositions and ‘Local Harmonic Procedures in Thomas Adès’s *Traced Overhead*’ – Jake Willson

The works presented in this portfolio represent ongoing explorations of intervallic techniques that have been informed by my investigation into the music of Thomas Adès. The accompanying commentaries outline the various ways in which techniques are used within selected works, and give an account of the development of their usage in light of their relationship with my broader artistic goals. Together, the pieces and their commentaries demonstrate a through-line of aesthetic development in the use of intervallic techniques as a means of restricting harmonic materials in the interest of supporting narrative cohesion.

The analytical study included in this thesis on Thomas Adès’s *Traced Overhead* (1995-6) aims to overturn aspects of prior understanding with regard to the composer’s use of ‘strands’ via the discovery of identical processes in the work’s outer movements. Building upon existing knowledge, the study provides new insights into the composer’s use of (and mechanisms behind) concurrent intervallic processes (‘conceptual layers’), pitch-class streams and cyclical tertian harmony.