Lancaster, David (2015) Strike - for quintet. [Composition]

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Strike

For flute, bass clarinet, violin, cello and piano

David Lancaster
Strike (Stachka) was the first full-length feature film by Sergei Eisenstein, made in 1925.

The film depicts a strike in 1903 by the workers of a factory in pre-revolutionary Russia, and their subsequent suppression. The film is particularly remembered today for a vivid climactic sequence near the end in which the violent conclusion of the strike is cross-cut with footage of cattle being slaughtered. Eisenstein's influential essay, ‘Montage of Attractions’ (in which he first outlines the concept of montage in film making) was written between Strike's production and its premiere; in this he describes the art and technique of motion picture editing in which contrasting shots or sequences are alternated or immediately juxtaposed to affect emotional or intellectual responses, usually resulting in a quickening of pace or a heightening of dramatic tension in the film.

Much of the film is devoted to images of machines and the repetitive toil of heavy industry. Another theme is collectivism in opposition to individualism, which is reflected in the scoring of my piece in that the five instrumentalists play for almost the whole duration with few significant rests or solo passages. Although this music begins with an exposed passage for piccolo it is almost entirely a collective effort where none of the protagonists gain prominence for an extended period.

The music is in three main parts: an opening section which contrasts the individual against the collective and explores different types of transition, a softly pulsing second inner part, and an extended ‘montage’ leading to a coda which offers a ‘flashback’ of the opening.

‘Strike’ was composed in 2014 (the thirtieth anniversary of the miners’ strike in the UK), and was first performed by AMGA (Hong Kong) and Dark Inventions (York).

Flute (+picc.)
Bass clarinet
Violin
Cello
Piano

Duration: 10’30”
Strike

Ritmico $\frac{\text{d}}{\text{j}} = 108$

Piccolo

Bass Clarinet
in $\text{B}^\circ$

Violin

Violoncello

Ritmico $\frac{\text{d}}{\text{j}} = 108$

Piano

Score in $\text{C}$

David Lancaster
Fl. I
B. Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Pno.

I

Senza legg.
Rallentando
Ancora meno mosso \( \text{\textit{j}} = 72 \)

Picc.:

B. Cl.:

Vln.:

Vc.:

Pno.:

Rallentando
Ancora meno mosso \( \text{\textit{j}} = 72 \)

Piano sempre

Picc.:

B. Cl.:

Vln.:

Vc.:

Pno.:

8°