

The process of becoming: Roger Redgate's *Genoi Hoios Essi*

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Abstract

During the 1980s, the Darmstadt Summer Course for composition gave rise to a body of works engaged with the topic of complexity, often referred to under the label "New Complexity." This complexity is comprised of many aspects, the most observable of which comes from the notation. These scores, often replete with intricately woven rhythmic strands, abrupt dynamic changes, and spectacular shifts in pitch register present a plethora of technical and interpretational challenges for the performer and an equally daunting perceptive task for the listener. Roger Redgate has suffered under this epithet more than others included in this group. The musicologist Richard Taruskin boldly claims that in their compositions "the notational detail was significant, even if the music was not; for its intricacy set a benchmark that is never likely to be equaled, let alone surpassed" (Taruskin 2009, 457-476). Yet in Roger Redgate's *Genoi Hoios Essi*, moments of complexly weaving rhythmic strands give way to perceptual transparency -an approach that is not the product of some eclectic notational strategy. Rather, the struggle between these two extremes lies at the heart of the narrative of *Genoi*, building an awareness of "things becoming themselves," the translation of the title. Friedrich Nietzsche originally intended to use the title for the work now known as *Ecce Homo*. The rhetorical function of this title within the work is significant, for as well as asserting a struggle in the way various things attempt to "become" in Redgate's music, Nietzsche's ultimate rejection of the title suggests that such an attempt will never bear fruit. Awareness of this aesthetic will inform an analysis of the perceptually salient moments in the work, and contrary to Taruskin, allow us to move beyond a superficial examination of the notes-per-inch towards the overall process of "things becoming themselves."

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Stuart Paul Duncan received his PhD in composition at Cornell University - thesis entitled "The concept of New Complexity: Notation, Interpretation and Analysis,". Previously, Stuart received a first-class honors Bachelor's Degree in 2004 from Canterbury Christ Church University as well as the Canterbury Festival Composition Award. In 2006, he received a distinction Master's Degree in composition from Goldsmiths College, University of London, under the guidance of Roger Redgate. At Cornell, Stuart has studied composition with Steven Stucky and Kevin Ernste and organ studies with Annette Richards. During his time at Cornell, Stuart's music has been performed by Cornell's Festival Chamber Orchestra, Wind Ensemble and Wind Symphony.