

Jenkins, Hayley (2020) I hear you, Mr Blackbird. [Composition]

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H.A.Jenkins

I hear you, Mr Blackbird

Written for Duncan Honeybourne and the Contemporary Soundbites Series

When lockdown was announced on March 23rd, 2020 in an emergency response to the COVID-19 epidemic, no one quite anticipated how our everyday lives would change. Some things changed for the worse. Small businesses, freelance workers like musicians, were left with huge uncertainties about finance and key workers were doing their best to hold emergency services together with limited resources; often at a great risk to their own health and their families.

However, some things changed for the better. Namely nature reclaiming the space that consumerism and busy 50hr work weeks left behind. The air quality improved, people started to value outdoor recreation and exercise and for many, birdsong returned to the soundscape of their world.

I, for one, am very lucky. I have a garden and regularly enjoy the sound of my resident blackbird singing his little song. However, I realise, for some, this is the first time they have heard his joyous efforts and had the time to acknowledge how this has always been his stage. We just weren't listening.

The piece is in two parts;

1. Before March 23rd, 2020

This captures the hectic sonic chaos of everyday lives before Lockdown was announced. There is no space here for Mr Blackbird's song to be heard or appreciated and our ears are left ringing with the hustle and bustle of the day's activities.

2. After March 23rd, 2020

Here Mr Blackbird's sonorous song comes to us and our lives finally join the song of nature. The piece unravels to form a duet between human and blackbird, as he finally introduces us to the joy of spring and its beauty.

Hayley Jenkins, 2020

I hear you, Mr Blackbird

1. Before March 23rd 2020

H. A. Jenkins





























