

# NEW MUSIC DUBLIN 2026

*A festival of new music  
for curious minds*

15th-19th  
April

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PROGRAMME

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# “ *Fáilte chroíúil romhaibh chuig* New Music Dublin 2026! ”

This, somewhat astonishingly, is my ninth time at the helm of New Music Dublin, and - despite the wild and highly-pressured wintertime race that my wonderful Festival team always endure to get the programme finalised and tickets on sale - I find myself quietly delighted once again that NMD is a festival that takes place in springtime. Just as with springtime, the making of something new - whether music or anything else - is fundamentally an act of hopefulness. Right now, for what reason other than hope would anyone create anything new and send it out in to the world, given these uncertain, difficult and destructive times? Making new music now is more than ever a brave and bold thing to do, an act that is to be celebrated and treasured - and I am once again both emboldened and reassured that NMD is accompanied by nature alongside us doing what nature does, namely the hope-filled springtime making and presenting of new things, year upon year. Amongst all of the celebrating and treasuring in this year's diverse and multi-faceted programme, we are delighted in particular to be able to mark the 100th Anniversary of the founding of RTÉ, whose support for, and championing of, new music in all its forms has played such a fundamental role in nurturing the astonishing musical creativity to be found across Ireland. With this, and many other delights, we look forward enormously to welcoming you to Dublin once again this April for this annual celebration of new ideas in musical form from across the whole island of Ireland and around the world”



**John Harris**  
**Festival Director**

Our heartfelt thanks to Aisling Agnew / Mary Amond O'Brien / Louise Barker / James Bingham / Lesley Bishop / Michael Bölter / Beth Brown / Luke Clancy / Matthew Corrigan / Aisling Coyle / Francine Cunningham / Joe Csibi / Siân Cunningham / Karen Dervan / Niall Doyle / Trisha Doyle / Keith Farrell / Caroline Feehily / Evonne Ferguson / Nigel Flegg / Patricia Flynn / Kerry FitzGerald / Jonathan Grimes / Karen Halpin / Gail Henry / Majella Hollywood / Paul Hunt / Matthew Jacobson / Marjie Kaley / Molly Keane / Robert Kearns / Catherine Kirby / Mary Kilduff / Karlin Lillington / Judy Hegarty Lovett / Naoimh Ní Mhaolagáin / Joanna Mattrey and the Valiant Members of the Totally Made Up Orchestra / Harry Martin / Pieter Matthyssens / Ian McGlynn / Graham McKenzie / Kayla Milmine / Phoebe Nevins / Derek O'Connor / John O'Kane / Jennifer Phillips / Jonathan Pearson / Toner Quinn / Megan Riordan / Nick Roth / Mary Sexton / Gary Sheehan / Avril Slevin / Kevin Sommerville / Andrew Smith / Ian Smith / Declan Smyth / Cathy Stokes / Joanne Taaffe / Lauren Tennyson / Kieran Tobin / Lila Van Remortel / Veerte Vervoort / Rosita Wolfe / Frances Wilde / Sinéad Wyldé / Amy Wilford / Mareike Winter / All the composers / All the performers / All the technicians / Chamber Choir Ireland / Crash Ensemble / Diatribe Records / Ensemble Musikfabrik / Gare St Lazare Ireland / Hard Rain Soloist Ensemble / Het Collectief / Nadar Ensemble / National Symphony Orchestra Ireland / NCH Cór na nÓg / RTÉ Concert Orchestra / RTÉ Culture / RTÉ lyric fm / RTÉ Radio 1 / Soundstreams / Alliance Française / James Joyce Centre / Everyone at the Contemporary Music Centre / Everyone at the National Concert Hall / Everyone at Project Arts Centre / Everyone at Windmill QTR / Everyone in every department at the Arts Council and everyone else who has made this festival possible.

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2026

# *Diatribes Stage*

*Sophie Cooper & Eimear Reidy // Strider*

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**Wednesday 15th April 2026 - 7:30pm**

The Cube, Project Arts Centre

**Sophie Cooper:** *Echoes and Reclamation*

**Strider:** *Tongues*

**Sophie Cooper** trombone, installation

**Eimear Reidy** cello

**Joanna Mattrey** (Strider) viola, objects, cello

**Steve Long** (Strider) synth, objects

## **Programme Notes**

Sophie Cooper reimagines her installation work *Echoes and Reclamation* for live performance at New Music Dublin 2026, in collaboration with cellist Eimear Reidy. Originally written for a brass quintet and shaped by ideas of recycling, reuse and field recording, the work transforms chopped and elongated musical material into an echoing sound landscape rooted in place. During a visit to the legendary Rath's Trombones in Huddersfield, Sophie spotted a

trombone so broken and bashed that it looked to be almost melting over the edge of a high shelf and it made her question – in a world where overconsumption is rife and common, is there a possibility to make instruments like this have one final blast at sounding again?

The composition *Echoes and Reclamation* was written for a brass quintet formed from the Milnrow band. The town of Milnrow is referenced directly in its main melody line which follows its cartographical boundary, and through the use of field recordings.

This event marks the European debut of **Strider**, the long-running duo of violist Joanna Mattrey and artist Steven Long. Their alchemical procedures fuse field recordings, found objects, derelict instruments, keyboards and bowed strings to create ambient soundscapes in miniature.

## Biographies

### Sophie Cooper

Sophie Cooper is a sound artist who has been described by Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival as 'a crucial member of Yorkshire's far-reaching experimental music scene'. In recent years, Sophie has been working on the production of long term, collaborative project-based works that are positioned in community facing locations. Working across composition, sound design, spatialized sound, music education and performance, Sophie creates emotional and thought provoking experiences that always take into consideration a real connection to audiences. She uses literature and site-specific narratives to inspire new works, often in collaboration with visual artists.

She has had work exhibited at The John Rylands Research Institute and Library, Wordsworth Grasmere Museum, Bury Art Gallery, Hereford Courtyard Art Centre and Gallery Frank as well as music venues including Cafe Oto and hcmf//. Sophie is currently studying a part-time MRes Music at the University of Huddersfield and her supervisor is Monty Adkins.

### Eimear Reidy

Eimear Reidy is a cellist with a diverse musical practice ranging from Historical Performance Practice to Sound Art. A keen improviser, she has performed with musicians such as The Quiet Club, Strange Attractor and Laura Hyland as well as solo performances in The Guest House, Plugd Records, Zolala, Sonic Vigil, Féile na Gréine, The Dock Arts Centre, Spike Cello festival and the Kat Laughs festival. Eimear has written music for a variety of settings including theatre, art instillation and dance performances. In 2018 Eimear wrote *This Island* in collaboration with Robert Curgenvin. This piece was for solo cello and field recordings from Heir Island. It was performed at The Sirius Arts Centre and as part of Skibbereen Arts Festival.

In 2020/21, her duo with Natalia Beylis, *Whose Woods These Are*, performed at Cairde Festival,

Hunters Moon, Echoes at The Castle and Test Site and released their debut album on Nyahh Records in 2021. Eimear also released her debut solo album *Things That Happened at Sea* on Nyahh Records in the same year.

## Joanna Mattrey

Joanna Mattrey is a violist, composer, improviser, and multimedia artist, whose works blend installation, video, sound, and movement, and are often site-specific. Her compositions use multimedia elements to create visual and sonic environments that convey the themes of transformation, memory, politics, social connection, loss, and spiritual journeys. Working in free improvisation, new music, and classical music, she uses extended techniques, modern compositional approaches, and electronic alterations to challenge conventions in sound. Mattrey has performed with icons Tyshawn Sorey, Henry Threadgill, Marc Ribot, John Zorn, Billy Martin, Elliott Sharp, Miya Masaoka, and Crash Ensemble, the International Contemporary Ensemble and Irish National Opera.

Festivals include Newport Jazz Festival, NYC Jazz Fest, Jazzwerkstatt, ArtActs, Tomeka Reid's Chicago Jazz String Summit, Dis(obedience) Fest, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, November Music, Kilkenny Festival, KollektivRabazzz, Visual Sound Outdoor Festival and Dara Festival. Her recent solo works include *Soulcaster* (Notice Recordings, 2023), *Dirge* (Dear Life Recs, 2021), *Veiled* (Relative Pitch Records, 2020) and she has undertaken residencies at Roulette, ISSUE Project Room, Watermill, Banff's Creative Gesture, 14th Street Y, Wild Project, and MoMa PS1's ALLGOLD.

## Steve Long

Steve Long is an artist and organiser working with sound, language and space. His interest in music began at age 11 when a derelict piece of furniture, formerly known as a piano, was moved into his family's home. He studied composition at the Manhattan School of Music before receiving his BA in linguistics from the American University of Rome. He received an MMA in contemporary improvisation from the New England Conservatory of Music. For him, creative work as a composer or curator is an act of facilitation. To this end, he constructs situations that allow collaborators to push out into corners and luxuriate in both physical and metaphysical space. His work organises collective imagined futures unencumbered by incessant categorisation. Recordings of his solo and collaborative work have been released on NotArt Records, Biophilia Records, Tripticks Tapes, Astral Spirits and Relative Pitch Records among others.

**Supported by**  
**RTÉ/NCH/Arts Council Ireland**

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2026

*What's Next?*  
*Nadar Summer School*

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Thursday 16th April 2026 - 1:00pm

The Studio, National Concert Hall

**Eveline Vervliet** *The silence that sounds in its absence* [Irish Premiere]

**Paul Scully** *Personal Best* [Irish Premiere]

**Nina Fukuoka** *Yuggoth* [Irish Premiere]

**Matthew Grouse** *To put words in my mouth* [Irish Premiere]

**Mar Berendsen** violin

**Nico Couck** electric guitar

**Yves Goemaere** percussion

**Elisa Medinilla** piano

**Pieter Matthynssens** cello, artistic director

**Thomas Moore** trombone

**Bertel Schollaert** saxophone

**Dries Tack** clarinet

**Stefan Prins** artistic director

**Veerle Vervoort** production manager

**Wannes Gonnissen** sound

*This concert is a co-production between Gaudeamus Festival, New Music Dublin, Contemporary Music Centre Ireland, Transit Festival & Warsaw Autumn.*

**Nina Fukuoka is supported by the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage**

## Programme Notes

**Eveline Vervliet** *The silence that sounds in its absence*

*“A pianist contemplates an electronic toy from their childhood and their ambivalent relationship with their instrument. Driven by a desire to hear what does not sound, they try to erase the sound of their instrument. Each performance of the work is an attempt at this, and at the same time a memory of all previous attempts, which, faded and distorted, interrupt the present.”*

- Eveline Vervliet

**Paul Scully** *Personal Best*

*“Personal Best is a multimedia piece in which the composer must run faster than he has ever run in his life. He is 3km away from the venue but the ensemble has already started playing. Will he make it to the piano in time?”*

*This high-stakes piece – using the composer’s heart rate, breath, steps, and GPS location in real-time – captures the feelings that are intrinsic to watching and competing in competitive sport. Sport is a mode of individual and collective human experience that is exceptional in its visceral appeal and emotional intensity but have playfulness and spontaneity suffered at the hands of rules, efficiency, and record times?”*

- Paul Scully

**Nina Fukuoka** *Yuggoth*

*“Yuggoth belongs to a series of three pieces inspired by survival horror computer games and horror fiction, as well as my internal need to understand what it means that “contemporary music sounds like horror music,” a statement I’ve heard in reaction to people’s first encounters with modernist-era music. In this piece, the relationship between sound and gesture is deconstructed, reattached, and looped into new “Frankenstein” constructs. The performers, their instruments, and their alter egos on the screen resemble mannequins that emerge from their frozen state to let out bone-chilling sounds. Yuggoth for three instrumentalists, electronics and video is part of the Horror Project - audiovisual environmental theatre with a guide. “*

- Nina Fukuoka

**Matthew Grouse** *To put words in my mouth*

*"In this piece for Mar (violin), Bertel (saxophone), Nico (guitar) and Yves (percussion), I have been diving into speech transcription as the basis for instrumental material. I'm embracing an interplay of music and language cobbled together from recorded conversations between myself and the members of NADAR, primarily from the first time we spoke to each other on a video call.*

*By carefully selecting and composing with these conversational snippets, I showcase facets of the performers' individual musical and off-stage personalities, whilst repeatedly raising the question, "who's talking?"*

*The piece meditates on the notion that all compositional prescriptions, whether pitches and rhythms, expression markings or prompts for performativity, carry with them the potential to recast the performer as an altered version of themselves. By working with this reality, the composer has a potential to become a narrator of sorts.*

*In To put words in my mouth, as the performers' words, mouth movements (visemes) and instrumental sounds intertwine, the latent musicality in their speech is revealed while the line between reality and absurdity becomes blurry. Questions are raised surrounding agency, creative control and authenticity."*

- Matthew Grouse

## Biographies

### Eveline Vervliet

Vervliet is a Belgian composer based in Germany. In her work, she explores the interplay between musicians and technology, and between humans and non-human animals. Her current practice revolves around memory, erasure and composing with transience - works that change and fade over time. Her projects encompass different formats like concert music, sound walks and installations. In 2026, she receives the STIP-5 scholarship from Musikfonds to continue her artistic exploration of artificial intelligence. She is the founder and manager of WebSoundArt, a platform for web-based sound art. She codes and occasionally performs electronic music.

Eveline completed a bachelor's degree in composition at the Fontys School of Fine and Performing Arts in Tilburg (NL) with Kees van den Bergh and Anthony Fiumara and a Master's degree in composition at the HMDK Stuttgart (DE) with Luxa Mart\* in Schüttler. Her commissions have come from a.o. Transit for Nadar Ensemble, Ensemble Proton, Felix Nagl, De Link, UAN duo and deSingel Internationale Kunstcampus. From 2017 – 2022 she was part of Collectief Publiek Geluid, a Belgian collective for the creation of sound in public space, supported by Musica.

## Paul Scully

The Contemporary Music Centre's "Emerging Composer" for 2022–2023, Scully was subsequently commissioned by the Contemporary Music Centre and New Music Dublin in partnership with Nadar Ensemble, to develop a new work for the ensemble at the 2025 Nadar Summer School (an international summer school for young composers and sound artists at, and in collaboration with DE SINGEL). Scully's work is multidisciplinary, utilising both acoustic and electronic instruments, and combines performance art with theatrical elements to produce work that can be humorous, chaotic, and ambitious. Much of his work is site-specific and considers the full gamut of an audiences' experience.

His recent works *Will we Give it a Bash?* and *Everything's Left That's Worth Defence* – both premiered in 2022 – seek to subvert the assumptions of the audience through playful means. Often Scully's subversive work attempts to exist on the boundaries of dialogue rather than within and can therefore be ever-evolving depending on the context in which it is performed. Scully uses speech and language in his music as well as other extra-musical elements, which he describes himself as 'expanded composition', that is, pertaining to an extension or expansion of composition rather than a transposition of music composition into another field.

## Nina Fukuoka

Fukuoka is a Japanese and Polish composer and performer based in New York City. She makes instrumental and computer music and uses various media and technologies to express extramusical meaning. Her works are focused on the contemporary world through the lens of horror aesthetics, video games and feminist scholarship.

Fukuoka's works have been premiered at Musica Privata festival in Łódź, Poland; Klangwerkstatt in Berlin, Germany; Musica Polonica Nova and Musica Electronica Nova festivals in Wrocław, Poland; MINU Festival in Copenhagen, Denmark; Sonic Matter Festival in Zürich, Switzerland, Festival of Premieres in Katowice, Poland; MATA festival in New York City; and have been performed by ensembles including Hashtag Ensemble, Ensemble Garage, Ensemble Adapter, Ekmeles Vocal Ensemble, Distractfold, International Contemporary Ensemble, Mivos Quartet, Spółdzielnia Muzyczna Contemporary Ensemble, Talea Ensemble, Orkiestra Muzyki Nowej, TILT Brass, and Nadar Ensemble. She won the Hildegard Commission for music for a short film, which premiered in March 2025 at the National Sawdust in Brooklyn, New York. Her recent piece for a large ensemble and live animation, commissioned by the National Polish Radio Orchestra in Katowice, Poland, also premiered in March. She holds positions in the John Hopkins Peabody Institute (composition) and as a Lecturer in the Discipline of Music at Columbia University.

## Matthew Grouse

A composer, performer and organiser from Yorkshire, Grouse often works at an intersection

between music for instruments and voices, electronic sound, text, video, and performance. His music regularly engages with a re-contextualisation of everyday sounds, objects, and automatic, repetitive behaviours to reveal the latently musical in the banal and familiar. In recent years, a number of his works have centred on audience participation and interactivity. He was chosen as the winner of the Gaudeamus Award 2025. He has twice been nominated for an Ivor Novello Award, most recently in the 2024 Best Stage Works category, for his evening-length music-theatre work *Calls to this number are being diverted*. In 2018, his chamber work *10 seconds* won the Dorico Award at the Scottish Awards for New Music.

He graduated from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in 2018, where he studied composition with David Fennessy. He continued his education at the Royal Academy of Music, Aarhus, where he studied with Niels Rønsholdt, Juliana Hodkinson, and Simon Steen-Andersen. Recent commissions have come from Klang Festival, Aarhus Chamber Orchestra, SPOR Festival, Riot Ensemble / Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, The Night With..., Hebrides Ensemble / Edinburgh Book Festival, The Cumnock Tryst and Cryptic Glasgow.

## **Nadar Ensemble**

Nadar Ensemble was founded in 2006 by a group of young musicians sharing a mutual interest and passion for contemporary music. The name for the ensemble was chosen as a reference to the real Nadar: the pseudonym of Gaspard-Félix Tournachon (1820-1910), whose multi-disciplinary-ism and adventurous spirit the ensemble wishes to portray. The historical Nadar was a well-known photographer and balloonist, and also quite accomplished as a caricaturist, a spy, an art critic and much more. Since our 21st century is more and more inhabited by transmedia, digital natives and a networked generation, Nadar is not only fascinated by contemporary music but also by film, the visual arts, performance, theatre, installation art, and all that is contained – or not – by these categories. Nadar wishes to develop forms of musical presentation that reflect this world, in an attempt to anchor new music more strongly in the present. The group has performed at the Darmstadt International Ferienkurse für Neue Musik, Donaueschinger Musiktage, Tzlil Meudcan (Tel Aviv), Ultima (Oslo), Musica (Strasbourg), Platforma (Moscow), Holland Festival, Opera Göteborg, Tfnm (Zürich), San Martin (Buenos Aires), Acht Brücken (Cologne), reMusik (Saint-Petersburg), Tampere Biennale, Gogolfest (Kiev), Cité de la musique (Paris) and Harvard University (Boston) and has been a guest curator at SPOR festival (Århus, Denmark). Although Nadar is Artist in Residence at DE SINGEL (Antwerp), its hometown is Sint-Niklaas – known for its famous hot air balloon festival!

### **Supported by**

**RTÉ/NCH/Arts Council Ireland/CMC/Gaudeamus Festival/Transit Festival/Warsaw Autumn**

***Nina Fukuoka is supported by the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage***

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2026

*Ensemble Musikfabrik*  
*‘It Breathes’*

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Thursday 16th April 2026 - 4:00pm

The Studio, National Concert Hall

**Jānis Petraškevičs** *Slēptā gaisma (Hidden Light)* [Irish Premiere]

**Camila Agosto** *Shimmer Furnace* [Irish Premiere]

**Ailís Ní Ríain** *and still it breathes...* [Irish Premiere]

**Christine Chapman** horn

**Marco Blaauw** trumpet

**Stephen Menotti** trombone

**Maxime Morel** tuba

## Programme Notes

**Jānis Petraškevičs** *Slēptā gaisma (Hidden Light)*

*“The prototype of this piece is an outdoor sonic situation, a soundscape where diverse sources of sound converge. In “Slēptā gaisma” (Hidden Light), the line of each instrument moves as if it had its own tempo and seemingly subordinate elements eventually come into frontline. The parameter of*

time is the key character who writes the narrative. The piece is dedicated to the Musikfabrik Brass Quartet.” - Jānis Petraškevič

### **Camila Agosto** *Shimmer Furnace*

*“Shimmer Furnace is inspired by an inscription I read recently by an unknown author, “Even a fingerprint will allow light to escape”. It was referring to the way light bends through glass surfaces disturbed by oil and water—how the smallest disruptions create fissures where something hidden begins to shimmer through. In my Light Leak series, I’m interested in light not just as a visual phenomenon but as an energetic force that can exist in dimensions we can’t always see. Darkness isn’t absence but presence from another angle. The shimmer isn’t decoration, but rather what happens when pressure and resonance crack open sound, revealing something multi-dimensional underneath. Shimmer Furnace explores this fragile, volatile energy within the brass quartet itself. The ensemble becomes a kind of furnace—not in temperature, but in compression and intensity. Like panes of glass vibrating too close together, the voices press against one another, threatening to break apart while never quite unifying. What emerges through these cracks are glints, pulses, shifting resonances and something molten trying to escape. Each voice shifts in and out of unity and individuality, operating as both a distinct presence and part of a synchronized collective texture. Shimmer Furnace is the third piece in my Light Leak series, an ongoing exploration of the visual phenomenon of light distortion through fractured surfaces. Across these projects, I delve into resonant liminality, afterimages, whisper impressions, and the artifacts of light and sound that exist at thresholds. ” - Camila Agosto*

### **Ailís Ní Ríain** *and still it breathes...*

*“Breath control is the cornerstone of brass playing: the foundation for producing optimal tone, pitch, range, volume, clarity and endurance. Inhalation, exhalation, airflow consistency and air pressure management are key elements of breath support. Breathing Pattern Disorder refers to a group of breathing disorders where there is an alteration in the normal patterns of breathing that can result in chronic respiratory symptoms. While studying the visual representations of these patterns, I became interested in how they might be applied in a creative capacity. and still it breathes... is an imagined ‘fantasy’ of breath, sound and utterance. The musicians, as an analogous group, play and produce vocal effects such as singing, hiccups, oral cavity alteration and utterance.”*

-Ailís Ní Ríain

## **Biographies**

### **Jānis Petraškevičs**

Jānis Petraškevičs is a Latvian composer, based in Rīga. He studied composition at the Emīls Dārziņš Music School in Rīga with Ģederts Ramans and later with Pēteris Plakidis at the Jāzeps

Vītols Latvian Academy of Music in Rīga. His postgraduate studies in composition were with Ole Lützow-Holm at University of Gothenburg and at the Latvian Academy of Music in 2014, under the guidance of Prof. Jeļena Lebedeva.

His music has been performed throughout Europe and in Japan, including at the Centre Pompidou, the Biennale di Venezia, Wigmore Hall and at festivals such as Warsaw Autumn, Ultraschall Berlin and Archipel. He has been featured composer at the festival AFEKT in Estonia (in 2023). He has received commissions from Ensemble Intercontemporain, Nieuw Ensemble, Ensemble Modern, Wigmore Hall and SWR among others. His works have been performed by Ensemble Modern, ensemble unitedberlin, Ensemble Intercontemporain, Ensemble SurPlus, Ex Novo Ensemble, Estonian National Symphony Orchestra, Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, Ictus Ensemble, Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, Latvian Radio Choir Group, Musikfabrik Brass Quartet, Nieuw Ensemble, Nouvel Ensemble Moderne, Ostrobothnian Chamber Orchestra, SWR Symphonieorchester, Sinfonietta Rīga and Ukho Ensemble Kyiv among others.

## **Camila Agosto**

Camilla Agosto is a composer, interdisciplinary artist and educator. Her recent work and research are inspired by linked concepts of memory, perception, psychoacoustics, and somatic experience. Her electroacoustic music examines how we perceive sound and vibration, exploring their physiological, mental, and emotional impacts. Her projects encompass acoustic and electroacoustic concert works, interdisciplinary collaborations with visual media and dance, installations, and fixed media creations. Storytelling and sharing histories are integral to her work, helping to construct worlds and soundscapes that explore complex concepts and create spaces for healing. Agosto was the youngest fellow to be accepted to the American Academy in Berlin and is a recipient of the Fall 2023 Berlin Prize and Deutsche Bank Fellowship in Music Composition from the Academy. She was featured in a portrait concert in Berlin this past Fall which included the world premiere of three new works. Her music has also been featured by Lincoln Center, Miller Theatre at Columbia University, Banff Center for Arts and Creativity, DiMenna Center for Classical Music, and KINDL-Zentrum für zeitgenössische Kunst, and has been commissioned and performed by leading artists including the International Contemporary Ensemble, Quartet121, Semiosis Quartet, Berrow Duo, Ensemble Échappé, to name a few.

## **Ailís Ní Ríain**

Ailís Ní Ríain is an Irish composer and writer, who works broadly in the areas of concert music, music installation, electroacoustic and music-theatre. Her interdisciplinary approach has led to numerous collaborations with writers, dancers, performers, visual, and theatre artists. Her musical work has been commissioned, performed and broadcast worldwide. She has been awarded the prestigious Paul Hamlyn Award for Composers and Portrait album of her work was released by NMC Recordings in 2023 receiving many favourable reviews.

She has worked with the BBC Philharmonic, Ulster Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra Ireland, RTÉ Concert Orchestra, London Sinfonietta, Evelyn Glennie and the New London

Chamber Ensemble, the Mornington Singers, ConTempo String Quartet, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Unlimited and the Royal Academy of Music.

Ní Ríain is deaf/hard of hearing. She is a passionate advocate for better diversity and inclusion in the arts and has worked with Arts & Disability Ireland, Unlimited and DaDafest. She sits on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee of the Musician's Union and is a Trustee of Disability Arts Online. She has been awarded international fellowships, residencies and been an associate artist at Yaddo Artist Colony, USA, Bogliasco in Italy, Ragdale in Illinois, ACA in Florida, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts and MusicOMI, New York State. In 2017 she was awarded the Contemporary Music Centre/Irish Cultural Centre Paris Composer Residency. She has also been awarded the prestigious Paul Hamlyn Foundation Award for Artists, the largest single artist award in Europe. She is a Board Director of the Ivors Academy and a board member of Disability Arts Online. Ailís Ní Ríain is also a published playwright. She is published by Methuen Drama (Bloomsbury), Nick Hern Books and L'arche [in French translation]

## **Ensemble Musikfabrik**

Since its foundation in 1990, Ensemble Musikfabrik (Landesensemble NRW) has had the reputation of being one of the leading ensembles for contemporary music. In keeping with the literal meaning of its name, Ensemble Musikfabrik is particularly concerned with commissioning and producing new works, often in close collaboration with composers. The results of their extensive endeavours are performed by the international Cologne-based soloist ensemble in numerous concerts in Germany and abroad, at festivals, in the self-organized concert series "Musikfabrik im WDR" and "Montagskonzerte" (often with live broadcasts), and in audio and video productions.

Exploring forms of modern communication and new possibilities for expression in music and theatre are a focal point. Interdisciplinary projects that include live electronics, dance, theatre, live video, and visual art expand the conventional form of the conducted ensemble concert. Thanks to its extraordinary profile and its superb artistic quality, the Ensemble Musikfabrik is sought after world wide and is a trusted partner of renowned composers and conductors.

Ensemble Musikfabrik has set itself the task of promoting the younger generation of performers and composers. Central initiatives are "Studio Musikfabrik" (Youth Ensemble for New Music of the Landesmusikrat NRW) and "Adventure", which since 2019 has been developing projects by composition students of the Cologne University of Music and Dance and presenting them in four annual concert phases.

Ensemble Musikfabrik is supported by the state of North Rhine-Westphalia and the City of Cologne. Ensemble Musikfabrik is registered as a not-for-profit organization under German law ("eingetragener Verein"). Major artistic and business decisions are made by the members.

### **Supported by**

**RTÉ/NCH/Arts Council Ireland**

NEW  
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2026

*Ensemble Musikfabrik*  
*‘NO SALT’*

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Thursday 16th April 2026 - 7:00pm

Main Stage, National Concert Hall

**Ailís Ní Ríain** *and still it breathes...*

**Georges Aperghis** *Heart Blowing* [Irish Premiere]

**Jessie Marino** *NO SALT* (Version for 5 strings) [World Premiere]

**Christine Chapman** horn

**Marco Blaauw** trumpet

**Lucy Humphris** trumpet

**Stephen Menotti** trombone

**Maxime Morel** tuba

**Hannah Weirich** violin

**Sara Cubarsi** violin

**Axel Porath** viola

**Dirk Wietheger** cello

**Florentin Ginot** double bass

**Thomas Wegner** sound direction

## Programme Notes

### Jessie Marino *NO SALT*

*"This piece, written for the legendary string section of Ensemble Musikfabrik, uses distortion to amplify the difference tones of Just-Tuned intervals. Rather than adhering to a strict system of tuning, the piece follows the harmonic form of two different Sacred Harp Hymns ( SH161, Harvest Hymn, and SH222 A Funeral Hymn) which are overlaid and stretched apart. The sound world that emerges has a very strong mental image for me - an absolutely enormous block of Carrara marble, freshly extracted from the side of a mountain. This dense, rich sound world is deeply inspired by the incredible string pieces from the 1960's by Tony Conrad, who's work I'm still trying to get a better grasp of!"*

- Jessie Marino

### Georges Aperghis *Heart Blowing*

*"Magnetic fields develop around a consonant and banal chord, influencing the harmony and polyphonic leading of the piece. This forms a single musical body: the five instruments complement each other create sonic textures- coloured surfaces that seem to generate waves, as if breathing from a common breath. Then monologues emerge, intimate moments, confessions, solos, duets, complicity, forming like musical characters and suddenly appearing in these ripples of sound."*

- Georges Aperghis

### Ailís Ní Ríain *and still it breathes...*

*"Breath control is the cornerstone of brass playing: the foundation for producing optimal tone, pitch, range, volume, clarity and endurance. Inhalation, exhalation, airflow consistency and air pressure management are key elements of breath support. Breathing Pattern Disorder refers to a group of breathing disorders where there is an alteration in the normal patterns of breathing that can result in chronic respiratory symptoms. While studying the visual representations of these patterns, I became interested in how they might be applied in a creative capacity. and still it breathes... is an imagined 'fantasy' of breath, sound and utterance. The musicians as an analogous group, play and produce vocal effects such as singing, hiccups, oral cavity alteration and utterance."*

- Ailís Ní Ríain

## Biographies

### Ailís Ní Ríain

Ní Ríain is an Irish composer and writer, who works broadly in the areas of concert music, music installation, electroacoustic and music-theatre. Her inter-disciplinary approach has led to numerous collaborations with writers, dancers, performers, visual and theatre artists. Her musical work has been commissioned, performed and broadcast worldwide. She has been awarded the prestigious Paul Hamlyn Award for Composers and Portrait album of her work was released by NMC Recordings in 2023 receiving many favourable reviews.

She has worked with the BBC Philharmonic, Ulster Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, RTE Concert Orchestra, London Sinfonietta, Evelyn Glennie and the New London Chamber Ensemble, the Mornington Singers, Con Tempo String Quartet, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Unlimited and the Royal Academy of Music.

Ní Ríain is deaf/hard of hearing. She is a passionate advocate for better diversity and inclusion in the arts and has worked with Arts & Disability Ireland, Unlimited, DaDafest. She sits on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee of the Musician's Union and is a Trustee of Disability Arts Online. She has been awarded international fellowships, residencies and been an associate artist at Yaddo Artist Colony, USA, Bogliasco in Italy, Ragdale in Illinois, ACA in Florida, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts and MusicOMI, New York State. In 2017 she was awarded the Contemporary Music Centre/Irish Cultural Centre Paris Composer Residency. She has also been awarded the prestigious Paul Hamlyn Foundation Award for Artists, the largest single artist award in Europe. She is a Board Director of the Ivors Academy and a board member of Disability Arts Online.

Ailís Ní Ríain is also a published playwright. She is published by Methuen Drama (Bloomsbury), Nick Hern Books and L'arche [in French translation].

### Georges Aperghis

Georges Aperghis was born in 1945 in Athens, Greece. *La Tragique Histoire du nécromancien Hiéronimo et de son miroir*, his first musical theater composition, was written in 1971. The tight link between music, text, and stage that featured in this work is one he has continued exploring in his pursuit of original forms of musical narrative. In 1976, Aperghis founded ATEM (Atelier Théâtre et Musique), a musical theatre company housed first in Bagnolet and then at the Théâtre des Amandiers in Nanterre. He returned to composing, which, as he puts it, must "make music of everything," while continuing to invent new approaches to his work, which includes musicians and singers alongside actors and visual artists. His works mix vocals, instrumentals, movement, narrative, and scenography in a uniquely expressive environment. He has composed a total of eight lyric works, including *Avis de Tempête* (2004), which premiered at the Opéra de Lille and received the Grand Prix de la Critique in 2005.

He has also composed numerous instrumental, chamber, vocal, and orchestral pieces. In 2012 and 2014, he wrote a series of *Six Études* for large orchestra (commissioned by the Westdeutscher Rundfunk and the Musica Festival Strasbourg), and in 2016, his *Concerto pour accordéon* premiered at Musica Viva, performed by the Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, conducted by Emilio Pomarico.

Georges Aperghis was awarded the Mauricio Kagel Music Prize 2011, a Venice Biennale Golden Lion in 2015, and the BBVA Foundation Frontiers of Knowledge Award in Contemporary Music in 2016.

## Jessie Marino

Marino is a Berlin-based composer, performer, and media artist. Her compositions and performances abstract ideas drawn from all stripes of popular culture and political discourse, girded by a definitively humanistic sensibility rife with equal doses of wit and pathos. She has recently been commissioned by Ensemble Musikfabrik, Ensemble Mozaik (DE) Lucerne Festival, BBC Radio 3, Jane in Ether, Wittener Tage für Neue Musik (DE), The Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center (NY), Ensemble Proton, (CH), Plus Minus (UK), and Donaueschingen Musiktage (DE).

Her work has made recent appearances at the Minu Festival for Expanded Music (DK), ECLAT Festival, Festival für Immaterielle Kunst (DE), Ultima Festival (NO), SPOR Festival (DK), Borealis Festival (NO), G((o))ng Tomorrow Festival (DK), Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival (UK), Transit Festival (BE), and Look/Listen Festival (NYC). She was an artist-in residence during the 2023-2024 Season at the Experimental Media and Performing Art Center (EMPAC). In 2020 Marino received the Fromm Composition Prize from Harvard University, and in 2018 she was a fellow in music composition at the American Academy in Rome. She has been an artist in residence at the Villa Sträuli (CH), Headlands Center for the Arts (CA), and the Avaloch Farm Music Institute (NH). Jessie has performed internationally as a solo artist as well as a member of Ensemble Pamplemousse (co-artistic director and member from 2006-2019).

## Ensemble Musikfabrik

Since its foundation in 1990, Ensemble Musikfabrik (Landesensemble NRW) has had the reputation of being one of the leading ensembles for contemporary music. In keeping with the literal meaning of its name, Ensemble Musikfabrik is particularly concerned with commissioning and producing new works, often in close collaboration with composers. The results of their extensive endeavors, are performed by the international Cologne-based soloist ensemble in numerous concerts in Germany and abroad, at festivals, in the self-organised concert series "Musikfabrik im WDR" and "Montagskonzerte" (often with live broadcasts), and in audio and video productions.

Exploring forms of modern communication and new possibilities for expression in music and theatre are a focal point. Interdisciplinary projects that include live electronics, dance, theatre,

live video, and visual art expand the conventional form of the conducted ensemble concert. Thanks to its extraordinary profile and its superb artistic quality, the Ensemble Musikfabrik is sought after world wide and is a trusted partner of renowned composers and conductors.

Ensemble Musikfabrik has set itself the task of promoting the younger generation of performers and composers. Central initiatives are “Studio Musikfabrik” (Youth Ensemble for New Music of the Landesmusikrat NRW) and “Adventure”, which since 2019 has been developing projects by composition students of the Cologne University of Music and Dance and presenting them in four annual concert phases.

Ensemble Musikfabrik is supported by the state of North Rhine-Westphalia and the City of Cologne. Ensemble Musikfabrik is registered as a not-for-profit organisation under German law (“eingetragener Verein”). All major artistic and business decisions are made by the members.

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NEW  
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# *Diatribes Stage*

## *Wind Songs // Sky Rivers*

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**Thursday 16th April 2026 - 9:30pm**

The Cube, Project Arts Centre

**Garth Knox** *Pocket Concerto*

**Garth Knox** *Wind Songs*

**Garth Knox** *Still Points*

**Garth Knox** *Stranger*

**Garth Knox** *Passacaille*

**Chen-hui Jen** *River without shore (Mirage Islands, Abyss, Sea of Clouds)*

**Sky Rivers** *Improvisations*

### **Wind Songs**

**Zoë Conway** voice

**Garth Knox** viola / viola d'amore

**Ruth Gibson** viola

**Martin Moriarty** viola

**Sinéad O'Halloran** cello

### **Sky Rivers**

**Li-chin Li** sheng

**Lina Andonovska** flutes

**Nick Roth** saxophones

## Programme Notes

**Garth Knox's *Wind Songs***, sung by Zoë Conway accompanied on viola by the composer, bring together Irish poetic texts from the 9th Century, traditional ballads, and contemporary haiku by Gabriel Rosenstock. The songs are interspersed with new works for viola, viola d'amore and cello, featuring Knox in duo with three of Ireland's most exciting string players, Ruth Gibson and Martin Moriarty on viola and Sinéad O'Halloran on cello, in pieces inspired by Irish traditional material that has been reworked and revisited in the composer's inimitable, intriguing and playful contemporary style. The collection will be released on Diatribe Records in 2026.

Comprising Li-chin Li (sheng), Lina Andonovska (flutes) and Nick Roth (saxophones) and inspired by artist Elise Hunchuk's essay '*Prologue to the Sky River*' (Avery Review) **Sky Rivers** form an instrumental trifecta representing the three families of the winds - the aerophones, woodwinds and free-reeds. This performance at New Music Dublin 2026 marks the group's debut appearance, and includes the world premiere of Taiwanese composer Chen-hui Jen's suite *River Without Shore* (2025).

## Biographies

### Garth Knox

Garth Knox was born in Ireland and spent his childhood in Scotland. He studied with Frederic Riddle at the Royal College of Music in London where he won several prizes for viola and for chamber music. Thereafter he played with most of the leading groups in London in a mixture of all repertoires, from baroque to contemporary music. In 1983 he was invited by Pierre Boulez to become a member of the Ensemble InterContemporain in Paris, which involved regular solo playing, including concertos directed by Pierre Boulez, and chamber music, touring widely and playing in international festivals.

In 1990 Garth Knox joined the Arditti String Quartet, which led him to play in all the major concert halls of the world, working closely with and giving first performances of pieces by most of today's leading composers including Ligeti, Kurtág, Berio, Xenakis, Lachenmann, Cage, Feldman and Stockhausen (the famous "Helicopter Quartet"). Since leaving the quartet in 1998, to concentrate on his solo career, he has given premieres by Ligeti, Schnittke, George Benjamin and many others, including pieces which were especially written for him by composers like Henze, Haas, Saariaho, James Dillon. He also collaborates regularly in theatre and dance projects, and has written and performed a one-man show for children.

He has recently become a pioneer of the viola d'amore, exploring its possibilities in new music, with and without electronics, and is in the process of creating a new repertoire for this

instrument. Garth Knox now lives in Paris, where he enjoys a full time solo career, giving recitals, concertos and chamber music concerts all over Europe, the USA and Japan. He is also an active composer, and his «Viola Spaces », the first phase of an on-going series of concert studies for strings (published in 2010 by Schott) combines ground-breaking innovation in string technique with joyous pleasure in the act of music making. The pieces have been adopted and performed by young string players all over the world.

Garth Knox is Visiting Professor of viola at the Royal Academy of Music in London.

### **Zoë Conway**

Irish fiddle player Zoë Conway is a prodigious talent, equally at home in both traditional Irish and classical styles. Zoë has performed across the globe, both as a solo artist and with international acts such as Riverdance, Damien Rice, Rodrigo y Gabriela, Lisa Hannigan, Nick Cave and Lou Reed among others. She is a holder of the much coveted All-Ireland Senior Fiddle Champion title, winning the prestigious competition in 2001. She was voted Best Traditional Female of the Year in Irish Music Magazine and she is also a featured musician on the current Leaving Certificate music syllabus in Ireland. Zoë is increasingly in demand as a tutor, regularly giving workshops and lectures on the merits of classical and traditional music on the violin. She has performed at festivals such as Glastonbury, L'Orient, Tønder and Womad and has also performed in some of the most prestigious concert halls in the world.

### **Ruth Gibson**

Ruth Gibson has appeared at the world's leading concert halls, including Wigmore Hall, Het Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Queen Elizabeth Hall in London, Auditorio Sony in Madrid and Berlin Konzerthaus. She regularly performs with internationally renowned Irish pianist Barry Douglas, and as a member of the Finzi Quartet, was a Prize Winner of the 2010 Royal Over Seas League Competition and the 5th Trondheim International String Quartet Competition in Norway, winning a Park Lane Group Award in 2015 performing viola works of Penderecki at the Purcell Room in London. Ruth is a tutor in Viola at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester and is also the founder and artistic director of the String Quartet Collective, currently in residence at the Royal College of Music in London.

### **Martin Moriarty**

Violist Martin Moriarty is one of Ireland's foremost musicians and enjoys an active career as a soloist and chamber musician internationally. Martin has received multiple prizes including the Amsterdam Viola Festival Competition, Flax Trust Award at the Clondeboye Chamber Music Festival and the Peter Pirazzi Stiftung. He gave the Czech premiere of James MacMillan's Viola Concerto with the Karlovy Vary Symphony Orchestra under Marc Kissoczy in April 2022. He has premiered works by Garth Knox, Gabriel Prokofiev, Helena Winkelman, Sam Perkin, Seán

Doherty, Raymond Dean, John Kinsella, Oene Van Geel, Sebastian Fagerlund and Thomas Beijer. Martin was the first Irish musician to be accepted into the Verbier Festival Academy as a soloist in 2018. He has worked with world renowned musicians including Tabea Zimmermann, Antoine Tamestit, Ferenc Rados, Gábor Takács-Nagy, András Keller and Pamela Frank. He was the first Irish musician to be Stipendiat of the Villa Musica Foundation in Germany.

### **Sinéad O Halloran**

Sinéad O'Halloran is cellist of the award-winning Marmen Quartet, and has performed at the Berlin Philharmonie, Boulez-Saal, BBC Proms, Lucerne Festival & Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Festival. Upcoming highlights include performances at Wigmore Hall, Lofoten and West Cork Chamber Music Festivals, Amsterdam String Quartet Biennale, as well as extensive tours across Europe and the US. Winner of the prestigious RNCM Gold Medal 2021, Sinéad is also a graduate of Southern Methodist University (Dallas, Texas) and the Robert Schumann Hochschule (Düsseldorf, Germany), where she graduated with a first class honours BMus and MMus. As Principal Cellist of the European Union Youth Orchestra she led the section at numerous high profile events, including the BBC Proms and The Armistice Day 100 Years Anniversary Ceremony. At the invitation of Maestro Iván Fischer, she is a regular guest with the Budapest Festival Orchestra, touring extensively and performing in some of the world's finest concert halls, including Carnegie Hall, Philharmonie de Paris, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg and Het Concertgebouw.

### **Li-chin Li**

Li-chin Li is one of the world's most innovative performers of the sheng - a 2000-year old traditional Chinese instrument - who strives to express her musical creativity beyond auditory stimuli. In her performance, she wants the audience to enter a world to experience the unknown.

### **Lina Andonovska**

Lina Andonovska is a leading performer of her generation, a dynamic and fearless interpreter of new music who is equally at ease with interpreting notated scores, collected sounds and spontaneous improvisation. She has performed with some of the world's most important voices in art music and is flautist with four-time Grammy Award-winning ensemble Eighth Blackbird (USA). She has collaborated with ensembles including Ensemble Modern, Ensemble Recherche, Crash Ensemble, Deutsches Kammerorchester, stargaze and Southern Cross Soloists.

### **Nick Roth**

Nick Roth is a saxophonist, composer and producer. A curious predisposition and a steadfast refusal to accept the existence of boundaries between the real and the imaginary has led to collaborations with an array of performers, composers, choreographers, visual artists, poets, sculptors, directors, festivals and ensembles around the world. He has served as artist-in-residence at institutions including the European Space Agency, California Academy of Sciences, Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris, Porto's Casa da Arquitectura and the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA).

### **Chen- Hui Jen**

Chen-Hui Jen is a composer, poet and pianist whose music presents an imaginative, spiritual, and poetic space with subtlety and sophistication. She writes concert music for diverse instrumentation, including orchestra, chorus, solo and chamber music for western and Asian instruments, as well as electronics. Chen-Hui Jen's musical works reflect an angle of contemporary art music and often evoke a captivating atmosphere that integrates time, sound, color, and poetry. She earned a Ph.D. degree in music at the University of California, San Diego. Being one of the awardees of League of American Orchestras Women Composers' Reading and Commission Project and the Copland House Residency, Chen-Hui Jen's music works have been performed at multiple prestigious new music festivals and concerts, including the ISCM World Music Days, SEAMUS, ICMC, Visiones Sonoras, Acanthes Music Festival, ACL Music Festival, EarShot San Diego, ISCM New Music Miami Season, People Inside Electronics series, Taipei International New Music Festival, WOCMAT, ACDA, and Taiwan Contemporary Sizhu Music Festival.

She has received commissions by multiple ensembles including the Ensemble 20° dans le Noir, Hinge Quartet, Diatribe Records, Aurora Borealis Duo, Accordant Commons, Astralis Duo, The Living Earth Show, Palimpsest Ensemble, Ensemble ISCM-Taiwan, Little Giant Chinese Chamber Orchestra, PIPA-Ensemble, Taipei Chamber Singers, Müller Chamber Choir, Ching-Yun Chorus, and Kaohsiung Chamber Choir, as well as multiple grants from the Taipei Department of Cultural Affairs, and the Taiwan National and Arts Foundation.

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*Het Collectief*  
*For Morton Feldman*

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Friday 17th April 2026 - 1:00pm

The Studio, National Concert Hall

**Morton Feldman** *Why Patterns?*

**Jean-Luc Fafchamps** *For Morton Feldman* [Irish premiere]

**David Fennessy** *Bones* [Irish premiere]

**Het Collectief**

**Thomas Dieltjens** piano

**Toon Fret** flutes

**Anita Cappuccinelli** vibraphone, glockenspiel, tam-tam

**Klaas Verpoest** video

## Programme Notes

### **Morton Feldman:** *Why Patterns?*

Composed in 1978, this work is written as an uncoordinated score, a technique typical of Feldman's early music, especially from the 1950s. Musicians start together but proceed independently, each focusing on repetition and permutations of pattern material, both intervallic and durational, reconvening again at the end of the piece. Feldman responds to the unusual instrumentation of flute, piano and glockenspiel by assigning characteristic motifs to each of the musicians. Paradoxically enough, we hear these totally emancipated patterns merge into a harmonious sounding, psychedelic sound universe. The way in which Feldman deals with time also contributes to this alienating atmosphere. Even though the individual voices are rhythmically very accurately notated, they are uncoordinated, except in the final phase of the work. In this free temporal space, the voices only meet by chance.

### **Jean-Luc Fafchamps:** *For Morton Feldman*

*"I have often played Morton Feldman's music at the piano, and each time I found myself enveloped in a profound, meditative delight. Yet again and again, I felt that his singular style admitted no true continuation. In one of his late works, "Philip Guston" (1984), for piano/celeste, flute(s) and percussion, a work of typically, at the time, vast duration, whispering softness and quiet relentlessness, I sensed a fissure, a breach, an opening, an invitation to respond. The backstory to the work centres around a rift with Feldman's erstwhile friend, the artist Philip Guston (1913–1980), once a towering figure of New York abstraction, who turned back to figurative painting in 1970. Feldman, a passionate devotee of abstraction, felt betrayed and severed ties for good with Guston. Feldman's 1984 work is a musical gesture of reconciliation across death. My calling in this work, "For Morton Feldman" was to respond by applying to the composer's writing that figurative, narrative, committed awakening which Philip Guston had dared in his painting in 1970. Imagine this: material that Feldman himself might not have disowned — major sevenths and minor ninths, borrowed from Webern, placed with meticulous care, pianissimo, a basic figure bathed in resonance, its appearances broken by pauses of varying length.*

*But what if those six tones were not treated as the endless pattern of a carpet — endlessly repeated with only artisanal deformations — but allowed instead to wander, to be disrupted, to be reshaped by foreign forces, as though carrying a story within? For Morton Feldman is a mirror within a mirror: a reply to an old friend, refracted through Guston, with an ensemble reminiscent of that which bound them together in memory."*

-Jean-Luc Fafchamps

## David Fennessy: *Bones*

### I. Paddy Moloney

### II. *Bones*

*"Bones is related to another recent work of mine, Blood, in so much as it utilises an existing performance of a piece of music which I then stretch on the computer to draw out the harmonic and melodic implications. In this case, the starting point was a performance of the tune 'The Lark in the Clear Air' on tin whistle by the legendary Paddy Moloney. The joy, energy and blinding, bright light of that performance is reflected in the short first movement of Bones.*

*The second movement, three times as long as the first, is a decay or deconstruction or perhaps even a coda to the first. Basic tones on flute, piano and percussion are split, like an atom and their tiny intricacies examined, under the microscope as it were. Underpinning it all is a stretched out single cadence from a very old choral work of my own. The text being sung is the word 'dreosite' in Irish, meaning 'dry' or 'withered'."*

-David Fennessy

## Biographies

### Morton Feldman

Feldman was an influential American composer born in 1926 in New York City, known for his distinct approach to music composition. He began his musical education with piano lessons and composition studies, later becoming associated with avant-garde figures like John Cage and prominent artists such as Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko. Feldman's music is characterized by its abstractness, lack of conventional narrative, and a focus on harmony rather than melody, often employing extremely soft dynamics which create a delicate listening experience. His works, like "Rothko Chapel" and "Why Patterns?", reflect his fascination with visual art and handmade objects, showcasing intricate sound patterns and a meditative quality. Feldman's later compositions highlight his interest in long, slowly unfolding musical ideas that invite listeners to engage deeply with the sound. His legacy is marked by an ability to challenge traditional listening habits, offering a beautiful yet complex auditory experience that encourages reflection on the nature of sound itself. He passed away in 1987, leaving behind a rich body of work that continues to provoke thought among musicians and audiences alike.

## Jean-Luc Fafchamps

Jean-Luc Fafchamps was born in Belgium in 1960. He studied piano and chamber music at the Conservatoire Royal de Mons and economics at the Université Catholique de Louvain. He is the founder of Musica Libera, an organisation that promotes contemporary music, and of the performers' collective Le Bureau des Pianistes. He is the pianist for the ensemble Ictus and teaches analysis and music theory at the Conservatoire royal de Mons (now a part of the École Supérieure des Arts, ARTS<sup>2</sup>). He began composing for small formations in which piano plays a central role but his interest in timbre and untempered harmony led him to explore other configurations. He then turned his attention to working on pieces for larger formations using electronics, notably for *Les lettres Soufies*, a cycle inspired by a Sufi painting that links a system of symbolic interconnections to the twenty-eight letters of the Arabic alphabet, which he began writing in 2000. His goal is to compose twenty-eight pieces corresponding to the letters in this mystical alphabet that will form their own conceptual whole. The cycle is a richly interrelated system in which each piece can be played alone but is linked to all the others, similar to the way single letters can come together to form words. Fafchamps has been commissioned by the Ars Musica Festival, Festival Transit Festival Présences and the Palais des Beaux-Arts de Bruxelles. His compositions have been performed by ensembles such as Wooden Mind, Musiques Nouvelles, Spectra Ensemble, Ictus Ensemble, Ensemble Intercontemporain, Calefax Quintet, Danel Quartet as well as the Orchestre Philharmonique Royal de Liège. The Fuga Libera and Sub Rosa labels have each released several monographic recordings of his work.

## David Fennessy

David Fennessy began his musical life as the guitarist of his school rock band but had no formal musical training until the age of fifteen when he decided to study classical guitar. His interest in composition grew whilst studying for his undergraduate degree at the Dublin College of Music. In 1998 Fennessy moved to Glasgow for a Masters Degree at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama to study with James MacMillan. He was later invited to join the composition faculty and has held a teaching post there since 2005. He was shortlisted for the Gaudeamus Music Prize in Amsterdam in both 2000 and 2006 and was a finalist for the Philharmonia's composition prize in 2004. In addition, his music has been chosen to represent Ireland at the International Rostrum of Composers. In 2006/2007 Ensemble Modern awarded Fennessy a scholarship to study at their prestigious International Academy in Frankfurt. A Dewar Arts Award (Scotland) funded his 12 month stay in Germany where he penned several works in close collaboration with the musicians of the Academy.

He is a recipient of the prestigious Paul Hamlyn Foundation Award. This British award, providing significant financial support over three years, aims to give artists the freedom to develop their creative ideas and contribute towards their personal and professional growth. In 2010/2011 Fennessy became a Fellow of the Akademie Schloss Solitude in Stuttgart and in the same year he signed a major agreement with Universal Edition for his main catalogue of works. His music has been performed both nationally and internationally by many known names, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Ensemble Modern, Hebrides Ensemble, London Sinfonietta, RTE National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland and the RTE Concert Orchestra among them.

## **Het Collectief**

Het Collectief was founded in 1998 in Brussels. Working consistently from a solid nucleus of five musicians, the group has created an intriguing and idiosyncratic sound, achieved by an unfamiliar mix of strings, wind instruments and piano. In its repertoire, Het Collectief returns to the Second Viennese School, the roots of modernism. Starting from this solid basis, it explores important twentieth century repertoire, including the very latest experimental trends. The group also creates a furore with daring crossovers between the contemporary and the traditional repertoire and with adaptations of ancient music. Next to the many concert venues in Belgium, Het Collectief regularly brings its productions to concert halls abroad, including the Netherlands, France, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Germany, Poland, Austria, Spain, Malta, Cyprus, Lithuania, Latvia, Ukraine and in South America (Peru, Brazil) and in Asia (Hong Kong).

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*Hard Rain Soloist Ensemble*  
*Ghost Trance Music*

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Friday 17th April 2026 - 3:30pm

Kevin Barry Recital Room, National Concert Hall

**Sarah Watts** *From Under The Sky The Sound Rises* (2024)

**Ioana Petcu-Colan** *Tesseractae (a graphic score in G minor)* (2026)

**Anthony Braxton** *Ghost Trance Music (Composition 245)*

**Aisling Agnew** flutes

**Sarah Watts** contrabass clarinet

**Ioana Petcu-Colan** violin

**David McCann** cello

**Alexander Hawkins** piano

**Stephen David** drums

**Matt Wright** electronics

**Brian Irvine** director

## Programme Notes

**Sarah Watts** *From Under The Sky The Sound Rises*

*From Under The Sky The Sound Rises* was written for and about Canada House in Sheffield, UK. Canada House is a Grade II Listed building that was originally built as offices for the Sheffield United Gas Light Company in 1875. In recent years the building has been vacant and been at risk of degradation. Harmony Works purchased the building in 2024 and has plans in place that will enable Canada House to be fully renovated and become a hub of musical life and activity in the city.

*"I first visited Canada House in 2023, and was struck not only by its potential, but also the power of the building and the acoustic possibilities. In 2024 following the commission of this work as part of a project for Festival of The Mind (University of Sheffield) I knew I wanted to write a work for contrabass clarinet that was all about the acoustics of the main room. Sitting down with my instrument in the main hall under the massive glass ceiling dome, I started to play and quite simply the acoustics led the way in a series of improvisations. These improvisations and this session have influenced this piece"*

-Sarah Watts (Sept 2024)

**Ioana Petcu-Colan** *Tesserae (a graphic score in G minor)*

*"Tesserae (a graphic score in G minor) is a visual mosaic of musical fragments and references, both overt and oblique. Holding echoes of past performances, Hard Rain cellist David McCann's previously-played strings and my own discarded violin bow hair add narrative, while subtle inversions of light, shadow and depth of field encourage reflection on perspective and interpretation. Free to hang the five panels of Tesserae any way they wish, players can respond uniquely to different venues and environments, creating a new mosaic with each performance."*

-Ioana Petcu-Colan (2026)

**Anthony Braxton** *Ghost Trance Music (Composition 245)*

The Ghost Trance Music series is a set of roughly 150 pieces written between 1995 and 2006. Scores such as this *Composition 245* highlight the conceptual genius behind this body of work. One context in which to examine Braxton's process of unification of Ghost Trance Music (or GTM) is the description of compositions specifically designed to function as pathways between Braxton's various musical systems. One can think of GTM as a musical super-highway - a META-ROAD - designed to put the player in the driver's seat, drawing his or her intentions into the navigation of the performance, determining the structure of the performance itself. This performance by Hard Rain is directed by percussionist/composer Stephen Davis,

alongside guest musicians, pianist Alexander Hawkins, turntablist and electronic artist Matthew Wright and composer/conductor Brian Irvine.

## Biographies

### Sarah Watts

Dr Sarah Watts (1978) is a British clarinettist and lecturer at the University of Sheffield. Sarah has published *Spectral Immersions; A Comprehensive Guide To The Theory And Practice Of Bass Clarinet Multiphonics*, and *Multiphonic Miniatures*, and released many recordings. She plays with Hard Rain Soloist Ensemble, rarescale and SCAW. She is a Henri Selmer Paris Clarinet artist, a Vandoren artist, a Silverstein Pro artist and Associate of the Royal Academy of Music, London.

### Ioana Petcu-Colan

Well-known to Irish audiences as violinist, collaborator, educator and Leader of the Ulster Orchestra, Ioana's 25/26 performance highlights include touring Ireland with Lumiere Quartet on period instruments, presenting new music in Chile with the Hard Rain Soloist Ensemble, guest-leading Irish National Opera in Smetana's Bartered Bride, and joining the Ulster Orchestra as soloist for The Lark Ascending.

In recent years, Ioana's creative curiosity has also opened new doors. An emerging visual artist, her drawing has featured in both the RUA Belfast and RHA Dublin Annual Exhibitions, and she looks forward to her first solo exhibition this coming summer. Meanwhile, Ioana also explores the relationships between sound and image in collaborative improvisation through her violin. *Fingerprints*, an 'interdisciplinary, immersive performance experience', premiered at the MAC in Belfast last month, with a fresh iteration heading to the Cork Midsummer Festival in June.

### Anthony Braxton

The Chicago-born composer and multi-instrumentalist Anthony Braxton (b.1945) is recognised as one of the most influential musicians, educators, and creative thinkers of the past 50 years. His vast output offers everything from experimental compositional techniques, graphic and non-specific notation, serialism, electronic, and improvisation, while employing vast knowledge of the jazz tradition. Braxton was awarded a MacArthur "genius" grant in 1994, and is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Doris Duke Performing Artist Award and a National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Masters fellowship.

Through his long membership in the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians

(AACM), the better part of three decades spent in academia, and his prolific, often dense writing, Anthony Braxton is highly esteemed for the revolutionary quality of his work and for the mentorship and inspiration he has provided to generations of musicians worldwide.

## **Hard Rain Soloist Ensemble**

Northern Ireland's cutting-edge contemporary music group and well known for their daring approach to programming and immersive performances, Hard Rain features a world-class group of unique musicians specialising in modern music. The group has performed at major festivals such as Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, Beijing Modern Music Festival, Musicahora Festival (Chile), and Classical:NEXT in Berlin as well as closer to home at New Music Dublin, Sonorities Festival, Walled City Music and Belfast International Festival.

Having made their London debut at Southbank Centre in July, 2025/26 will see them perform extensively at home and abroad, on international stages across Europe, South America and Asia. The group was founded by composer Greg Caffrey in 2013. They have given multiple premieres and through extensive commissioning (around 90 works to date), have developed a dedicated following for new music in their home city of Belfast and beyond. They feature on several successful recordings, including *Up By the Roots* (Delphian), *The Tyndall Effect* (Métier), *GLOW* (NMC), and their debut double CD *A Terrible Beauty* (Diatribes).

As Ensemble-in-Residence at Queen's University Belfast, Hard Rain are dedicated industry professionals and work closely with students throughout the various stages and aspects of their music development. Other outreach and talent development initiatives include Cityside Sessions (an inner city residency), NI Film Scoring School (with Dumbworld), Composer workshops (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Ulster University and St Andrew's University), Belfast Conducting Workshop (with International Conducting Academy), Drake Music collaborations (VR instruments for musicians with additional needs), Ulster Touring Opera (performances and workshops), Ink Still Wet (Composer Talent Development programme with PRSf), and their long-standing association with Ulster Youth Orchestra. Hard Rain are proud to support a wide range of Northern Irish creatives, composers and performers.

Hard Rain's mission is to give a platform and visibility to the vibrant community of creative musicians in Northern Ireland, imaginatively performing local composers' works alongside the leading exponents of contemporary music worldwide. The ensemble's repertoire ranges from virtuosic solo and chamber pieces, multimedia music, graphic scores and improvisatory works, contemporary opera and more. They frequently explore cross collaboration with other artistic organisations including dance, visual arts and the written word. They are passionate about bringing innovative Irish music to wider audiences on a worldwide platform and are looking forward to collaborations with other ground-breaking ensembles: Third Angle New Music (USA) in 2026, and Paramirabo (Canada) in 2027. The ensemble is excited to explore the possibilities of meaningful exchange and co-curation with other artistic organisations worldwide.

### **Supported by**

**RTÉ/NCH/Arts Council Ireland/Arts Council Northern Ireland/Queen's University Belfast**

NEW  
MUSIC  
DUBLIN  
2026

*National Symphony  
Orchestra Ireland*

*Gerald Barry's Salome*

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**Friday 17th April 2026 - 7:30pm**

Main Stage, National Concert Hall

**Gerald Barry:** *Salome*

**Jérôme Kuhn** conductor

**Alison Scherzer** soprano (Salome)

**Amy Ní Fhearraigh** soprano (The Queen)

**Timur** tenor (King Herod)

**Vincent Casagrande** baritone The Prisoner

**Stefan Sevenich** bass-baritone (The Young Syrian)

**David Howes** bass-baritone (Soldier)

## Programme Notes

*"The opera is based on Oscar Wilde's play Salome, with deviations from the original. I had already written another Wilde opera as surreal as Salome, The Importance of Being Earnest. Salome also belongs to the fantastical world of my opera Alice's Adventures Under Ground, based on the Lewis Carroll text. Both operas share madness, ecstasy, humour, and murder.*

*Salome is an opera of voyeurism, the moon, French, God, punishment of sin, misunderstanding, sex, the metronome, suicide, hysteria, hunger, blood, typing, speaking correctly, sterility, The Blue Danube, the wind, fever, art, Wilde, dreaming, beheading, Frankenstein, kissing.*

*Salome is a typist and Herod dictates to her Oscar Wilde's letter "De Profundis," written while he was imprisoned."*

- Gerald Barry

### **Synopsis:**

It begins with two soldiers, one a young Syrian in love with Salome, and the other warning that something terrible will come from this love. They say the moon has a strange look, like a woman who's dead.

The Prisoner cries out from below ground: "After me will come another mightier. The eyes and ears of the blind and deaf will be opened." As he speaks only French, no one understands him.

Salome appears and wonders why The King, her stepfather, looks at her. She says the moon is cold like a virgin and a little piece of money.

The Prisoner cries out: "The Lord has come!"

Salome says she's heard that The King is afraid of The Prisoner and that he says terrible things about her mother, The Queen. She commands to meet him.

The Prisoner gives Salome a singing lesson and corrects her faulty interpretation. He adds that Salome's mother, The Queen, is a whore.

The Soldier says the moon looks strange.

The Orchestra notes The Prisoner's nastiness.

Salome says The Prisoner's eyes are like black holes and thinks he is as chaste as the moon. She wants his body, hair, and mouth. She wants to kiss his mouth. The Prisoner refuses. The soldiers also want to kiss his mouth.

Unable to bear Salome's obsession with The Prisoner, The Young Syrian kills himself but recovers to sing.

The Orchestra says it wants to kiss The Prisoner's mouth.

The King and Queen appear. The King slips on The Young Syrian's blood and says the moon looks strange. He is fearful of the wind, that it is like the beating of wings, and that Salome looks sick. He offers Salome wine and fruit and wants to see the mark of her teeth in the fruit.

The Prisoner foretells the coming of the Lord God. The Queen says he is always vomiting insults at her and accuses The King of being afraid of him. "You have a dreamer's look. You mustn't dream. Only sick people dream."

They all sing a chorale, "Sensual Gratification," from an entry in Beethoven's diary.

The Prisoner says, "The sun will become black like hair, the moon like blood, all kings will be afraid."

The King repeatedly begs Salome to type for him but she refuses.

The Prisoner says The King will be eaten by worms, but The King says he is happy.

They all sing The Blue Danube.

The King speaks, choosing different speeds on his metronome. He is cold and terrified of the wind and a huge, hovering black bird.

He again begs Salome to type for him and swears he will give her whatever she wants if she agrees.

The Soldiers tutor him in speaking.

Salome agrees to type, and The King is ecstatic. He's worried that she types with naked feet because of blood on the ground and says the moon is red like blood.

The King dictates to Salome a letter from Oscar Wilde.

She types.

All enter a Dada dream state.

The King is in a fever and fears that the "Finger of God" has touched The Prisoner, that if he dies "something awful might happen to me." The Orchestra exclaims at his distress.

As a reward for typing, Salome asks for The Prisoner's head.

There follows a "Body Parts" scene from Mary Shelley's Frankenstein.

Salome and the Soldiers type, reminding The Prisoner that his refusal to kiss their mouths must have consequences, Salome saying: "I'm hungry for your body. Hungry. What shall I do?"

The King says, "Hide the moon."

All join in a triumphant "I have kissed your mouth" chorale.

## Biographies

### Gerald Barry

Gerald Barry was born in Clarehill, Clarecastle, County Clare, Ireland in 1952 and studied with Stockhausen and Kagel. His early music from 1979 included "\_\_\_\_\_" for ensemble, of which Kagel wrote: 'Gerald Barry is always sober, but might as well always be drunk. His piece "\_\_\_\_\_" is, on the contrary, not rectilinear, but 'a very wiggly line'. Also from 1979 is  $\emptyset$  for two pianos in which both pianos play identical music simultaneously.

Barry's substantial catalogue includes a number of works for orchestra. *Chevaux-de-frise* for the 1988 BBC Proms, *The Conquest of Ireland* (1996), *Day* (2005/14), *The Eternal Recurrence* (2000), a setting of Nietzsche for voice and orchestra, and *Hard D* (1995) for the Orkest de Volharding, were all commissioned by the BBC. *No other people* was presented at the 2013 Proms with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and Ilan Volkov. *Canada* (2017), a short work for voice and orchestra, was premiered by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and tenor Allan Clayton under Mira Gražinytė-Tyla at the 2017 BBC Proms. *Canada* received its US premiere at the 2019 Tanglewood Music Festival. *Humiliated and Insulted* (2016) for chorus and orchestra was co-commissioned by Raidió Teilifís Éireann and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra.

Amongst his orchestral works is a growing body of concertos. Barry's Piano Concerto (2012), written for Nicolas Hodges and co-commissioned by Musica Viva and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, was premiered in Munich in 2013 with subsequent performances by the CBSO, Avanti! Chamber Orchestra, Britten Sinfonia, RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra and at the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music conducted by Cristian Măcelaru. Commissioned by the CBSO, London's Southbank Centre and RTÉ, his Organ Concerto (2018) received its world premiere in March 2018 with the CBSO, followed by performances by the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the RTÉ NSO. The Organ Concerto received its German premiere in Cologne during autumn 2019 with the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen conducted by Duncan Ward and also in 2019 was the premiere of Barry's Viola Concerto (2018-19), commissioned by Lawrence Power and performed with the Britten Sinfonia and Thomas Adès. As part of Cellissimo 2022, a fourth concerto for cello was premiered by soloist Adrian Brophy and the RTÉ Concert Orchestra before his most recent concerto, *Aus Die bitteren Tranen der Petra von Kant* written for double bassist Matthew MacDonald and the Berlin Philharmonic, was premiered in June 2022 to rave reviews.

Several ensemble works have been written for Birmingham Contemporary Music Group (BCMG) including *Wiener Blut* (2000), *Dead March* (2007) and *Beethoven* (2008). London's Southbank Centre commissioned *God Save The Queen* (2001) for choir and chamber ensemble for the London Sinfonietta as part of the Royal Festival Hall's 50th birthday celebrations. *Le Vieux*

*Sourd* (2008) for piano was written for Betty Freeman, *Feldman's Six-Penny Editions* (2008/9) was commissioned by London Sinfonietta and Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and *No people* (2013) was written for ensemble 7Bridges.

Barry is well known for his contribution to the opera repertoire. His first opera *The Intelligence Park* (1981–88), released as a recording on NMC in 2002, was commissioned by the ICA and first performed at the 1990 Almeida Festival. A new production by Music Theatre Wales opened at Covent Garden in September 2019, followed by performances around the UK throughout the autumn. A second opera, *The Triumph of Beauty and Deceit* (1991), written for Channel 4 Television, opened the 2002 Aldeburgh Festival, followed by performances in London and the BerlinerFestwochen conducted by Thomas Adès. A new staging took place in 2013 at the Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe. *The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant* (2001–4) was premiered in 2005 in Dublin with subsequent performances at English National Opera that year and at Theater Basel in 2008. The RTÉ NSO recording has been re-released on the Discovery label. *La Plus Forte* (2007), a one-act opera, was commissioned by Radio France for the 2007 Festival Présences. It was premiered by Barbara Hannigan in Paris, and toured to Amsterdam, London, Dublin, Miami, Toronto and Porvoo, Finland. In 2019, Barry created an English version of the work, which was performed by the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and Thomas Adès.

Barry's fifth opera, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (2009–10), was jointly commissioned by the LA Philharmonic and the Barbican in London and received its world premiere staging at Opéra national de Lorraine – Nancy in 2013. The opera has received a number of new productions notably including at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in 2013 (since revived in London and given a US premiere at Lincoln Center with the New York Philharmonic and Ilan Volkov) and by Northern Ireland Opera. *Earnest* received a 2013 RPS Award for Large-Scale Composition and the recording, released on NMC, was nominated for a 2016 Grammy Award. A new production by the Nouvel Opéra Fribourg opened in Fribourg and Paris in May 2019. *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* (2014–15), premiered in concert in November 2016 with Thomas Adès conducting the LA Phil New Music Group and Barbara Hannigan in the title role. Adès conducted the same cast in the European premiere, with Britten Sinfonia at London's Barbican Centre. The world premiere staging was given at Covent Garden in February 2020 in a production by Antony McDonald to high acclaim. A new production took place in Magdeburg, Germany in 2023.

## Jérôme Kuhn

Jérôme Kuhn is a conductor of eclectic range and energy, known for seamlessly navigating between traditional repertoire, contemporary works, and film and television recordings. Artistic Director of the Prague Symphonic Ensemble, Ensemble Vocal de Villars-sur-Glâne and Nouvel Opéra Fribourg (2022–2025), he takes up the role of Associate Conductor of the BBC Concert Orchestra in January 2026.

Recent seasons have seen Jérôme at the forefront of new music. He recorded Barry's *La Plus Forte* with the BBC Concert Orchestra (broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and released on Legendis in 2026), conducted premieres of two new operas by David Buckley and Richard Harvey, and returned to Theater Magdeburg for the world premiere of Barry's *Salomé*. In parallel, he

collaborated with the Academy of Ancient Music in performances of Händel's *Messiah*, Mozart's *Great Mass in C minor*, and Bach's *St John Passion*.

A passionate advocate for contemporary opera, Jérôme has earned widespread acclaim for his bold interpretations of works by Thomas Adès and Gerald Barry. He led the Paris premieres of Adès' *Powder Her Face* (praised by *Le Monde*, *Télérama*, and *France Info*) and Barry's *The Importance of Being Earnest*, the latter broadcast internationally on OperaVision. Other highlights include the Paris premiere of Shostakovich's satirical operetta *Moscow Paradise* at Théâtre de l'Athénée Louis-Jouvet, and the Swiss premiere of Marius Felix Lange's *Snow White*.

In 2025–26, Jérôme continues to expand his international profile, conducting the BBC Concert Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra Ireland and the Prague Symphonic Ensemble. His conducting has brought him to podiums across Europe, working with ensembles such as the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir, Prague Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestre de Chambre Fribourgeois, Nouvel Ensemble Contemporain NEC, and the BBC Concert Orchestra. He is also an in-demand conductor for film and television, having recorded scores for Netflix and HBO at AIR Studios in London, La Seine Musicale in Paris and Smecky Music Studios in Prague.

## Alison Scherzer

Praised for her “high, sweet coloratura” and “nuanced performance,” soprano Alison Scherzer is a dynamic and versatile artist whose work spans opera, musical theatre, concert, operetta, theatre, and film. A graduate of Barbara Hannigan's Equilibrium Young Artists Program, Scherzer is particularly noted for her commitment to contemporary vocal music.

Upcoming projects for the 2025/26 season include, among others, the title role in Gerald Barry's *Salome* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic under the baton of Thomas Adès, as well as a concert performance of *Salome* at the New Music Dublin Festival. She will also create the role of Sarai in the world premiere of *Hagar* by Jan Peter de Graaf with the Nederlandse Reisopera, and perform as the Wife in Schnittke's *Life with an Idiot* at Theater Magdeburg. In addition, she will appear in the BBC's *Friday Night is Music Night* concert with the BBC Concert Orchestra.

Highlights of her 2024/25 season included the world-premiere recording of Gerald Barry's one-woman opera *La Plus Forte*, in which she performed the role of Madame X. This landmark project—co-produced by the BBC Concert Orchestra and Nouvel Opéra Fribourg—was recorded at Alexandra Palace in London and will be accompanied by a documentary film. Concert and staged performances of *La Plus Forte* also took place in Switzerland. Scherzer continued her collaboration with Nouvel Opéra Fribourg in the premiere of a new short opera by British composer David Buckley. She returned to the title role in Gerald Barry's *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* at the Grand Théâtre de Genève, and is set to originate the title role in the world premiere of Barry's *Salome* at Theater Magdeburg. In partnership with Eden River Records, she also released two film recordings this year: Kaija Saariaho's *From the Grammar of Dreams* and George Crumb's *Apparition*.

Scherzer made her house debut at the Nederlandse Reisopera during the 23/24 season as Maid in Thomas Adès's *Powder Her Face*. Previously, she reprised her role as Maid in *Powder*

*Her Face*, in a co-production with Nouvel Opéra Fribourg and Athénée Théâtre Louis-Jouvet in Paris, where she previously sang Cecily Cardew in Gerald Barry's *The Importance of Being Earnest*. She has performed as a soloist at Theater Görlitz-Zittau, where she sang Franziska Cagliari in *Wiener Blut*, Ulla in *The Producers*, Chava in *Fiddler on the Roof* and Stella/Ella in *Frau Luna*. Other roles performed include Gretel in *Hänsel und Gretel*, Blonde in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, Zerbinetta and Najade in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Dalinda in *Ariodante*, Mrs. Nordstrom in Sondheim's *A Little Night Music*, Curley's Wife in Carlisle Floyd's *Of Mice and Men*, Mabel in *Pirates of Penzance*, and Maria in *The Sound of Music*.

Scherzer's concert and oratorio experience include the soprano solos in Fauré's *Requiem*, Poulenc's *Gloria*, Mondonville's *Dominus Regnavit*, Mozart's *Mass in C Minor*, *Exultate Jubilate* and *Vesperae solennes de confessore*, Saint-Saëns' *Christmas Oratorio*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Brahms' *Deutsches Requiem* and *Liebeslieder Walzer*, Bach's *Weihnachtsoratorium*, *Johannespassion*, and as Lieschen in the *Kaffee Kantate*.

Scherzer studied at the prestigious University of Cincinnati – College Conservatory of Music (CCM) for her Master of Music degree, as well as an Artist Diploma directed towards incorporating different art forms and performance practices within contemporary art song recital.

## Amy Ní Fhearraigh

Amy is delighted to return to the National Concert Hall with New Music Dublin to reprise the role of The Queen in *Salomé* by Gerald Barry, a role which she debuted in its world premiere last season at the Theater Magdeburg. Alongside her debut as The Queen, she joined the Theater Magdeburg house ensemble for the 2024/25 season where she also debuted the roles of Micaëla (*Carmen*, Bizet), Liù (*Turandot*, Puccini) and sang with the Magdeburgische Philharmonie in their annual commemoration concert performing Beethoven's *Symphony No.9* under Anna Skryleva. Her German debut as La Contessa Almaviva in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* with the theatre marked the beginning of her relationship with Theater Magdeburg.

Equally at home in both traditional and contemporary repertoire, Amy made her Royal Ballet & Opera debut at the Linbury Theatre in 2023 with Irish National Opera as Rosemary in their production of *Least Like the Other, The Search for Rosemary Kennedy*, composed by Brian Irvine and directed by Netia Jones. The Arts Desk described her as "totally finessed" and "a young rising star." The production was subsequently nominated for Best New Opera Production at the 2023 Olivier Awards. She looks forward to starting a world tour of *The Curing Line*, a new opera by Irish composer Michael Gallen which was awarded the Opera Prize 2025 from the renowned Fedora Platform. The piece makes its world premiere this August as part of the Kilkenny Arts Festival. She began her 2025/26 season as Mařenka in Smetana's *The Bartered Bride* with Irish National Opera. She is currently mid-tour with Theater Orchester Biel Solothurn playing the role of Mimì in Puccini's *La Bohème* including 18 performances across Switzerland, all marking her role, theatre and Swiss debut. Soon she returns to the Blackwater Valley Opera Festival as Donna Anna in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* directed by Tom Creed and conducted by Peter Whelan with the Irish Baroque Orchestra.

## Timur

“Extravagantly transgressive tenor” with “stratospheric voice” (Mark Swed, LA TIMES), Timur is a Qazaq-American opera singer of contemporary and cross-cultural music. He has made solo appearances with the LA Philharmonic, Bang on a Can All-Stars, Theater Magdeburg, Santa Cecilia Academy, PROTOTYPE, Palace of the Arts Budapest (MUPA), LA Opera, and The Industry LA, among many others. Profiled in LA Weekly’s special edition of BEST OF LA PEOPLE, Timur premiered operas by many of today’s celebrated contemporary composers, including David Lang, Thomas Adès, Ellen Reid, Tod Machover, Michael Gordon, Louis Andriessen, Evan Ziporyn, Silvano Bussotti, Leonid Desyatnikov, Anne LeBaron.

Recent engagements include Vova in Schnittke’s *Life With An Idiot* at Theater Magdeburg, the title-role *Kafka’s Letter To His Father* at Prague National Theatre, John Worthing in Gerald Barry’s *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Young Man in Péter Eötvös’ *The Golden Dragon* for Comédie de Genève, the Electrician in *Powder Her Face* for Nouvel Opera Fribourg, Haydn Fondazione and Théâtre de l’Athénée.

Timur’s voice, described by THE NEW YORK TIMES as “a marvel of expressive inflections,” is reflected in his glam band Timur and the Dime Museum and their solo productions with long-time collaborator Beth Morrison Projects include *Collapse*, a post-punk requiem at BAM Next Wave Festival and O. Festival Rotterdam, *Black Lodge* at Opera Philadelphia, PROTOTYPE, Folkoperan Stockholm and Malmö Opera, and *The Great Soviet Bucket* at Miami Light Project.

Timur’s critically-acclaimed performance and recording of *Black Lodge* by David T. Little and legendary beatnik poet Anne Waldman received a GRAMMY Award-nomination for Best Opera Recording and the Music Theater NOW 2024 Award. His voice can be heard on Searchlight Pictures’ *Ruby Sparks*, Nickelodeon’s *Santiago And The Seven Seas* with “Weird Al” Yankovic, Hulu’s *The Great*, and on recordings by Deutsche Grammophon, Naxos, -ANTI, innova, and Milan Records. He is a film producer of *Clemency*, a Sundance Grand-Jury Prize winner, and he is developing animation genre content through Powers Be Productions.

## Vincent Casagrande

Swiss baritone Vincent Casagrande studied at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna with Peter Edelmann and Florian Boesch, following earlier training with Janet Williams in Berlin and Jörg Dürmüller in Lausanne. In 2019, he received support from the Friedl Wald Foundation, followed by the Leenaards Cultural Grant in 2020.

Recent operatic engagements include Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, Marcello in *La Bohème*, Ramiro in *L’heure espagnole* in Béatrice Lachaussée’s production for Opera Zuid, and Pelléas in *Pelléas et Mélisande* at Théâtre de l’Athénée in Paris. He also performed Korolev in *Laika, the Space Dog* in Fribourg and at Opéra-Comique, the Prisoner in Gerald Barry’s *Salome* at Theater Magdeburg, and the Marchese in *La Traviata*.

In concert, he recently sang Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony with the Magdeburg Philharmonic, Simon in Haydn’s *Die Jahreszeiten* in Vienna, Brahms’ *Ein deutsches Requiem* in Fribourg, Bach’s

*Magnificat*, and, most recently, reprised the role of the Prisoner in Gerald Barry's *Salome* under Thomas Adès with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at Walt Disney Concert Hall.

Since the 2025–2026 season, Vincent has been a member of the ensemble at Theater Magdeburg, where he appears as Marcel Proust in Schnittke's *Leben mit einem Idioten*, Juan Perón in *Evita*, and Caudillo/Diaz in Nico Dostal's *Clivia*. Upcoming engagements include Marullo in *Rigoletto* at Opéra de Lausanne in Switzerland and Enrico in Haydn's *L'isola disabitata*.

## Stefan Sevenich

German bass-baritone Stefan Sevenich, born in Neuwied am Rhein, received his vocal training at the State University of Music in Cologne tutored by Prof. Claudio Nicolai, and in various masterclasses with renowned artists such as KS Walter Berry and Helmut Deutsch.

An accomplished performer in opera and concert, Stefan Sevenich has appeared at leading houses including the Bavarian State Opera Munich, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Hamburg State Opera, Theater Basel, Komische Oper Berlin, Semperoper Dresden, and Grand Théâtre de Genève. Festival appearances include the Ludwigsburg FesBval, Schwetzingen FesBval, and Styriarte Graz, where he sang Bartolo/LE NOZZE DI FIGARO under the baton of Michael Hofstetter.

From 2003 to 2007, he was an ensemble member of Theater Augsburg, followed by five successful years as Spielbass at Staatstheater am Gärtnerplatz in Munich. Between 2012 and 2015, he was in the ensemble at the Komische Oper Berlin, where he sang major roles such as Leporello/*Don Giovanni*, Don Alfonso/*Così fan tutte*, Trinity Moses/*Aufstieg Und Fall Der Stadt Mahagonny*, Bottom/*A Midsummer's Night Dream* and Calchas in Barrie Kosky's acclaimed production of *La Belle Hélène*.

Now working as a freelance artist, Stefan Sevenich is a sought-after guest at major German and international opera houses. Recent and upcoming engagements include appearances at Oper Leipzig, Cologne Opera, National Theatre Mannheim, Theater Magdeburg, Kiel Opera, Grand Théâtre de Genève and others. Renowned for his compelling stage presence, vocal versatility, and great comic talent, Sevenich is equally at home in Mozart, Rossini, Offenbach, and 20th-century repertoire.

## David Howes

David Howes is a bass-baritone from Limerick, where he began his studies with Olive Cowpar. He graduated with a Bachelor of Music at the DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama, and is now a member of the ensemble at Theater Magdeburg, Germany. David was previously a member of the ensemble at Oper Köln, and is a graduate of The International Opera Studio at Oper Köln, Irish National Opera's Opera Studio, and the inaugural Wexford Factory at Wexford Festival Opera.

Oratorio performances include: Craig Hella Johnson's *Considering Matthew Shephard* (Westdeustcher Rundfunkhausorchester, Köln), Verdi's *Requiem* and Beethoven's 9th Symphony (Co-Orch, Dublin), He has also performed the *Requiems* Mozart, Faure, and Brahms,

Haydn's *The Creation* and Handel's *Messiah* (Dun Laoghaire Choral Society, and Limerick Choral Union).

Performances with Theater Magdeburg include *Dottore Bartolo / Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Dottore Grenvil / La Traviata*, *Lazar Wolf / Anatevka (Fiddler on the Roof)*, *Soldier* in the world premiere of Gerald Barry's *Salome*, and *Reinmar von Zweter / Tannhäuser*. In 2025, David made his house debut with the Staatsoper Hannover as *Polizei Kommissar* in *der Rosenkavalier*. Opera performances with Irish National Opera include *Krušina / The Bartered Bride*, *Count Ceprano / Rigoletto*, *Polizei Kommissar / der Rosenkavalier*, and *Don Fernando / Fidelio*. With Oper Köln: *William Parkinson* in the world premiere of Frank Pesci's *The Strangers*, *Sciarrone / Tosca*, *Fiorello / Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Premier Soldat Troyen & Un grand Prêtre de Pluton / les Troyens*, *Roland Angeler* in the German premiere of *Der Gesang Der Zauberinsel* (Marius Felix Lange), *Deninskin / Der Meister und Margarita* (York Höller), and *Gottfried Klepperbein / Pünktchen und Anton* (Ivan Eröd). With Theater Aachen: *Envy & Ismeron / The Indian Queen* (Purcell), and *Abbot & Ferryman / Curlew River* (Britten). Other opera roles include *Badger & Parson / The Cunning Little Vixen* (Longborough Festival Opera), *Count Ceprano / Rigoletto* (Opera Theater Company), *Title Role in Brundibar* (Hans Krasa) (Killaloe Chamber Music Festival), *Marchese d'Obigny / La traviata* (Lyric Opera, Dublin), *Figaro / le nozze di Figaro* (Zerere Arts Festival, Portugal), *The Colour Green* by Robert Coleman (INO's 20 Shots of Opera), *Father Truelove / The Rake's Progress*, and *Quince / A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Role debuts in the coming seasons include: *Don Alfonso / Così fan tutte*, and *Colline / La Bohème*.

## National Symphony Orchestra Ireland

National Symphony Orchestra Ireland has been at the centre of Ireland's cultural life for over 75 years. Formerly the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, it was founded in 1948 as the Raidió Éireann Symphony Orchestra. In 2022, the Orchestra transferred from RTÉ to the remit of the National Concert Hall.

Resident orchestra of the National Concert Hall since its opening in 1981, it is a leading force in Irish musical life through year-long programmes of live music – ranging from symphonic, choral and operatic to music from stage and screen, popular and traditional music, and new commissions – alongside recordings, broadcasts on RTÉ and internationally through the European Broadcasting Union. Schools concerts, family events, initiatives for emerging artists and composers, collaborations with partner promoters and organisations extend the orchestra's reach.

As a central part of the National Concert Hall's Autumn/Winter 2025 Season, NSOI collaborated with acclaimed artists, conductors, ensembles and composers. Repertoire ranges from masterpieces from the symphonic, choral and operatic repertoire, world premieres by Rhona Clarke, Bryce Dessner and Bill Whelan, and Irish premieres including *Bád ón Alltar* by Fedora Prize 2025 winner Michael Gallen, to events for film fans, families and students, as well as Composer Lab in partnership with the Contemporary Music Centre and in association with RTÉ lyric fm.

Milestone events included the NCH Lifetime Achievement Award for composer Jane O'Leary;

the 40th anniversary of National Symphony Chorus Ireland; and a concert celebrating Bill Whelan's 75th birthday.

Other highlights included Leonard Slatkin conducting *Ein Heldenleben*, and Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 20 with David Fray as soloist; Anja Bihlmaier conducting Bruckner's Ninth Symphony and Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 15 with Boris Giltburg as soloist; David Brophy conducting a Culture Night celebration featuring the Irish/Persian ensemble, Nava, and the Irish premiere of Michael Gallen's timely and topical *Bád ón Alltar*; Jessica Cottis conducting Bizet's opera *Carmen* in a concert performance; María Dueñas performing Beethoven's Violin Concerto; Anastasia Kobekina performing the world premiere of *Trembling Earth* for cello and orchestra by Bryce Dessner; Michelle Cann performing Florence Price's virtuosic Piano Concerto as part of a programme which also includes Sofia Gubaidulina's *Fairytale Poem*; the world premiere of Rhona Clarke's uplifting, nature-inspired *Points of Light* on the occasion of National Symphony Chorus Ireland's 40th anniversary; and an orchestral world premiere by Bill Whelan on the occasion of his 75th birthday.

Jessie Grimes continues as the National Concert Hall's Artist-in-Residence, leading explorations of iconic works: Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* and Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker*, as part of the ISL-interpreted and ASD-friendly family series, Symphony Shorts. Additional family events have included a screening of the much-loved children's classics *The Highway Rat* and *Zog*, based on the books by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler, and Music in the Classroom returns with a guide to Leaving Certificate Music.

Events for film fans include Alfred Hitchcock's classic Hollywood horror film, *Psycho*, in concert with the iconic score performed live to picture, and the screening of the holiday favourite, *Home Alone*, with John Williams' score performed live.

Spring/Summer 2026 sees Principal Conductor Designate Alexander Shelley conduct Schumann's *Das Paradies und die Peri* with National Symphony Chorus Ireland and soloists; John Adams' *Short Ride in a Fast Machine*; Rachmaninov's Third Piano Concerto with Jaeden Izik-Dzurko as soloist; and Stravinsky's *The Firebird* performed together with new visuals. Artistic Partner Peter Whelan conducts works including Mozart's Third Violin Concerto with Ellinor D'Melon as soloist; Mendelssohn's 'Scottish' Symphony; Weber's First Clarinet Concerto with Carlos Ferreira as soloist; and Brahms' Fourth Symphony. Programme highlights include the world premieres of *Canto* by Siobhán Cleary, and *Hostile Summits* by Anselm McDonnell; the Irish concert premiere of *Salome* by Gerald Barry; specially designed performances, led by NCH Discover Artist-in-Residence Jessie Grimes, exploring great orchestral works; a Masterclass with Maxim Vengerov; and live screenings in concert of *Room on the Broom* and *The Snail and the Whale*.

Distinguished performers include conductors Anna Sułkowska-Migoń, Stephanie Childress, Jessica Cottis, Lina Gonzáles-Granados and Dennis Russell Davies; violinists Maxim Vengerov and Baiba Skride; pianists Barry Douglas, Louis Lortie, John O'Connor and Maki Namekawa; singers Celine Byrne, Angélique Kidjo, Robin Tritschler and Nardus Williams.

**First Violin**

Katerina Nazarova  
Marie Schreer  
Sebastian Liebig (*Principal*)  
Orla Ní Bhraoin (*String Sub-Principal*)  
Ting Zhong Deng  
Anne Harte  
Sylvia Roberts  
Claudie Driesen  
Karl Sweeney  
Molly O'Shea

**Second Violin**

Siobhan Doyle (*Section Leader*)  
Elizabeth McLaren (*Associate Principal*)  
Joanne Fleming Campbell (*String Sub-Principal*)  
Paul Fanning  
Dara O'Connell  
Melanie Cull  
Elena Quinn  
Matthew Wylie

**Viola**

Alex Koustas (*Section Leader*)  
Francis Harte (*String Sub-Principal*)  
Jenny Ames  
Cliona O'Riordan  
Nathan Sherman  
Anthony Mulholland

**Cello**

Karen Stephenson  
Violetta-Valerie Muth (*String Sub-Principal*)  
Paul Grennan  
Filip Szkopek

**Double Bass**

Owen Nicolaou (*Guest Principal*)  
Helen Morgan

**Flute/Alto Flute**

Ríona Ó Duinnín (*Associate Principal*)  
Sinéad Farrell (*Principal*)

**Piccolo**

Sinéad Farrell (*Principal*)

**Oboe**

Matthew Manning (*Section Leader*)  
Deborah Clifford (*Principal*)

**Clarinet**

Matthew Billing (*Section Leader*)

**Bass Clarinet**

Fintan Sutton (*Principal*)

**Bassoon**

Sinéad Frost (*Associate Principal*)  
Hilary Sheil (*Principal*)

**Contrabassoon**

Hilary Sheil (*Principal*)

**Horn**

Elliot Howley  
Peter Ryan  
Peter Mullen

**Trumpet**

Pamela Stainer (*Principal*)  
Sarah Campbell  
Oscar Whight

**Bass Trombone**

Josiah Walters (*Principal*)

**Tuba**

Francis Magee (*Section Leader*)

**Timpani**

Brian Dungan

**Percussion**

Rebecca Celebuski (*Section Leader*)

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# *Diatribes Stage*

*Lucia Joyce // Premonition*

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**Friday 17th April 2026 - 9:30pm**

The Cube, Project Arts Centre

**Patrick Zimmerli** *Lucia Joyce*

**Satoshi Takeishi** *Premonition*

**Megan O'Neill** soprano

**Leanne Fitzgerald** mezzo-soprano

**Patrick Zimmerli** soprano saxophone

**Nick Roth** soprano, alto, tenor saxophones

**Jeff Cohen** piano

**Derek Whyte** 5-string electric bass

**Satoshi Takeishi** drums/percussion

**Mirabelle Ordinaire** director

## Programme Notes

**Patrick Zimmerli** *Lucia Joyce*

"When she reaches her full capacity for rhythmic dancing, James Joyce may yet be known as his daughter's father." **The Paris Review**

Carol Loeb Schloss' biography *To Dance in the Wake* credits Lucia Joyce with much of the language and texture of her father James' *Finnegans Wake*. But the real truth of Lucia's story will likely be forever unknown. *Lucia Joyce*, the new opera by saxophonist / composer Patrick Zimmerli treats that not-knowing dramatically, reading the burning of her letters as a final act of silencing. Zimmerli's sweeping operatic score is inflected of Gaetano Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* and 1920's Parisian jazz, whilst creating new spaces for improvisation and intricate melodic interweave between voices and saxophones.

### **Satoshi Takeishi** *Premonition*

*"A few years ago, a friend of mine, a film director, told me he was working on a new script based on Franz Kafka's novel The Trial. He already had a short draft and asked me to compose music for it. After reading the novel, I was deeply struck by the disturbing world it depicted and its eerie resonance with the times we live in today, even though it was written over a century ago. Since creating the album "Premonition", I have become increasingly curious about the sense of spiritual loss experienced by humanity during that period and its connection to the birth of electronic music. My new solo work is a continuation of this theme."*

- Satoshi Takeishi

## **Biographies**

### **Patrick Zimmerli**

Patrick Zimmerli is a New York and Paris-based composer, producer and saxophonist. He was recently awarded a Copland Fund grant to support the 2025 release of his new album *Messages*, leading to the creation of an entirely new label, EMP (Emergence Music Productions), whose first release in May 2025 was Zimmerli's *Songs of Innocence*, featuring Kevin Hays and Satoshi Takeishi.

Since winning the Thelonious Monk Composers Competition in 1993, he has written numerous works and released 15 albums of his own music. A specialist in large-scale pieces, Zimmerli wrote *Children of Bronzeville*, a 60-minute song cycle based on poems of Gwendolyn Brooks, in 2022. Other large-scale pieces include *Clockworks*, a suite for jazz quartet, premiered and released as a CD in 2018; *Alan Seeger: Instrument of Destiny*, a 90-minute oratorio premiered at the Cathedrale des Invalides in Paris in 2017; *Aspects of Darkness and Light*, an evening-length piece for Joshua Redman and the string quartet Brooklyn Rider; and two four-movement Piano Concertos with jazz percussion for Metamorphosen Chamber Orchestra, featuring pianists Ethan Iverson and Sonia Rubinsky.

Zimmerli's music has been performed at Carnegie Hall and Town Hall in New York, Wigmore Hall in London, Salle Pleyel in Paris, Sala São Paulo in Brazil, the Vienna Konzerthaus Grosser

Saal, the SF Jazz Center, and the Centre Pompidou, on NPR and WQXR. It has been recorded on Naxos, Blue Note, Arabesque, Songlines, Naïve, Nonesuch, and EMP.

## Satoshi Takeishi

Satoshi Takeishi, a drummer, percussionist, and arranger is a native of Mito, Japan. He studied music at Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts. Whether behind a drum set, a hybrid percussion set or computer-based electronics, Japanese-born musician/ improviser Satoshi Takeishi strives to "connect contrasting elements beyond genre in quest of the essence" in his performances. After attending Berklee College of Music, he lived in Colombia, South America, and Miami, FL before arriving in NYC in 1991. He has performed and recorded in a vast variety of genres, displaying styles such as jazz, rock, contemporary classical, avant-garde, experimental electronic, and world music. Takeishi continues to move among a wide range of musical environments and constantly strives to integrate his diverse musical experience and knowledge.

## Megan O'Neill

Megan O'Neill is a soprano from County Kerry. She has most recently completed the Doctor in Music Performance Degree at the Royal Irish Academy of Music and is a past member of the Irish National Opera Studio. She made her National Symphony Orchestra Ireland debut at the National Concert Hall in June 2024, conducted by Samy Rachid. Megan made her National Opera House debut, playing the titular role of Cinderella, an opera by Alma Deutscher, at Wexford Festival Opera in November 2022. In the 2022 Feis Ceoil, Megan was the winner of the Gervase Elwes Memorial Cup. She was also awarded the 2022 RDS Music Bursary and the 2023 RDS Collins Memorial Award. In association with 'Cardiff Singer of the World', The Scorched Earth Trilogy was played in venues across Wales in June 2023.

## Leanne Fitzgerald

Leanne Fitzgerald is a mezzo-soprano and a graduate of the TUD Conservatoire, where she earned a Master of Music in Vocal Performance, studying under Stephen Wallace and répétiteur Aoife O'Sullivan. She is a current member of the Irish National Opera Studio for the 2024/25 season, and sings with the company chorus. This season, she will perform the role of Giovanna in *Rigoletto* (Verdi) and cover Prince Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus* (J. Strauss). Leanne also enjoys a diverse career in contemporary opera. She was also a member of Sestina for Opera Collective Ireland's production of *Semele* (Handel), which won the 2022 Irish Times Theatre Award for Best Opera. Leanne is also a passionate ensemble singer, both in Ireland and internationally. From 2017 to 2022, she was a regular member of Chamber Choir Ireland, conducted by Paul Hillier.

## Nick Roth

Nick Roth is a saxophonist, composer, producer and educator. His work seeks the liberation of improvisation from composition, the poetic syntax of philosophical enquiry, and the function of music as translative epistemology. A curious predisposition and a steadfast refusal to accept the existence of boundaries between the real and the imaginary has led to collaborations with an array of artists, festivals and ensembles around the world. Fascinated by emergent behaviour, his work is an investigation into how we can *come to know* through the art of music, often in conversation with scientists from such diverse fields as mathematical biology, astrophysics, forest canopy ecology, evolutionary genetics, or neuroscience. Simultaneously subsumed by an insatiable appetite for literature, his settings interrogate the resonant symbiosis of language as sound and symbol. He has served as artist-in-residence at institutions including the European Space Agency, California Academy of Sciences, Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris, Porto's Casa da Arquitectura and the Irish Museum of Modern Art.

## Jeff Cohen

Born in Baltimore, Jeff Cohen won first prizes in piano and chamber music at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris before continuing his training with Leon Fleisher in the United States and Peter Feuchtwanger in England. Currently a professor at the Conservatoire de Paris, he has served as coach at La Monnaie in Brussels, musical director at the Théâtre du Châtelet, and advisor to the Bibliothèque nationale de France for a concert series devoted to French *mélodie*. He has performed with many artists, including Roberto Alagna, June Anderson, Cecilia Bartoli, Yann Beuron, Jean-Paul Fouchécourt, Véronique Gens, Ivry Gitlis, Ida Haendel, Sumi Jo, Steve Lacy, Noël Lee, Ute Lemper, Pierre Lénert, Vincent Le Texier, Mady Mesplé, and Didier Sandre. He composes for stage and film and created and hosted a children's television program, *Jeff d'orchestre*, for French television. Jeff Cohen was named Chevalier of the Order of Arts and Letters in 2006 and promoted to Commander in 2019.

## Derek Whyte

Derek Whyte is a prominent electric and double bassist on the Dublin jazz scene. He works mainly within improvised music, however, he also collaborates with many artists and groups in numerous diverse genres, including classical, pop/rock and world music. He has a BA in Jazz performance from Newpark Music Centre and holds an MA in music from Dublin City University. He has been lecturing in jazz performance since 2008. His approach to improvisation and composition is influenced by modern contemporary jazz improvisers/composers, such as Tim Berne, Steve Coleman and Dave Holland. He performs regularly across the country and has recorded with many established improvising ensembles, such as Redivider, The Dirty Jazz Club and Joe O Callaghan's 'Sankara'.

## Mirabelle Ordinaire

Mirabelle Ordinaire is a French director, librettist and translator based in Paris and New York. She joined the Metropolitan Opera Stage Directors in 2018, and was the revival director of Zeffirelli's iconic *La Bohème* production there for the past four seasons. Productions she has created include *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* at the Opéra de Dijon and *Don Pasquale* at the Opéra Royal de Wallonie in Liège, Belgium. She is currently working on *La Rivière*, an original creation around Britten's *Curlew River*, at the Opéra de Nancy, as well as on Britten's *Golden Vanity* with the Choeur des Enfants de l'Orchestre de Paris at the Philharmonie de Paris (June 2026). Recent directing credits include Poulenc's *Carmélites* (Fondation Eugène Napoléon, Paris; Septembre Musical de l'Orne), *La directrice de théâtre*, which she wrote based on Mozart's *Der Schauspieldirektor* (Philharmonie de Paris), Dai Fujikura's *The Goldbug* and Rossini's *Il Signor Bruschino*, both with the Orchestre National d'Ile de France.

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# *Totally Made Up Orchestra*

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**Saturday 18th April 2026 - 12:00pm**

Kevin Barry Recital Room, National Concert Hall

**The Totally Made Up  
Orchestra Members of the Public (YOU!)**  
Joanna Mattrey director

A recurring highlight of the New Music Dublin programme, The Totally Made Up Orchestra is unlike anything else. Composition collides with improvisation. Words meet sounds, clothing, objects, gestures, movement, noise, humour and the occasional moment of head-scratching. The result is always unpredictable and always compelling.

This year, the Totally Made Up Orchestra returns home to the National Concert Hall, bringing with it more ideas, more sounds and more of everything.

Led by composer/director Joanna Mattrey, you are encouraged to join in with this '*beautiful monster music machine phenomenon*', the only requirements being a willingness to be heard, a curiosity for making music with others, an open mind and a generous creative spirit.

## Totally Made Up Orchestra

The Totally Made Up Orchestra is in an exciting project that invites children, young people and adults to collaborate in creating ambitious new musical works. The orchestra breaks down barriers and embraces creativity in all its forms. The Totally Made Up Orchestra is all about blending composition, improvisation and sheer fun. From composing new pieces to performing them, participants experience the transformative power of music first-hand. But it's not just about the music. Through collaboration and creativity, this project fosters social cohesion, understanding and wellbeing. It's a chance to redefine what music means and who gets to make it.

## Joanna Mattrey

Joanna Mattrey is a violist, composer, improviser, and multimedia artist, whose works blend installation, video, sound, and movement, and are often site-specific. Her compositions use multimedia elements to create visual and sonic environments that convey the themes of transformation, memory, politics, social connection, loss, and spiritual journeys. Working in free improvisation, new music, and classical music, she uses extended techniques, modern compositional approaches, and electronic alterations to challenge conventions in sound. Mattrey has performed with icons Tyshawn Sorey, Henry Threadgill, Marc Ribot, John Zorn, Billy Martin, Elliott Sharp, Miya Masaoka, and Crash Ensemble, the International Contemporary Ensemble, and Irish National Opera.

Festivals include Newport Jazz Festival, NYC Jazz Fest, Jazzwerkstatt, ArtActs, Tomeka Reid's Chicago Jazz String Summit, Dis(obedience) Fest, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, November Music, Kilkenny Festival, KollektivRabazzz, Visual Sound Outdoor Festival and Dara Festival. Her recent solo works include Soulcaster (Notice Recordings 2023), Dirge (Dear Life Recs 2021), Veiled (Relative Pitch Records, 2020) and she has undertaken residencies at Roulette, ISSUE Project Room, Watermill, Banff's Creative Gesture, 14th Street Y, Wild Project, and MoMa PS1's ALLGOLD.

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# *Soundstreams*

## *I Want To Tell You Everything*

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**Saturday 18th April 2026 - 1:00pm**

The Studio, National Concert Hall

**Claude Vivier** *Love Songs*

**Claude Vivier** *Shiraz*

**Nicole Lizée** *Karappo Okesutura Vol. III (Want Want Want, Ironic Butterfly, Break-Up Music)*

**Thierry Tidrow** *I Want To Tell You Everything*

**Ana Sokolović** *Dring! Dring!*

### **Soundstreams**

**Vania Chan** soprano

**Carla Huhtanen** soprano

**Lindsay McIntyre** soprano

**Robin Dann** mezzo- soprano

**Bud Roach** tenor

**Keith Lam** baritone

**Alex Samaras** baritone

**Gregory Oh** piano

**Noam Bierstone** percussion

**David Fallis** music director

## Programme Notes

### **Claude Vivier** *Love Songs, Shiraz*

The brilliant and strikingly original Canadian genius that was Claude Vivier (1948 - 1983) composed a surprising amount of music in his 35 years. Much of Vivier's output continues to be performed in concerts throughout the world, due to the unique and individual creative voice it represents. This presentation pivots on two of his major compositions, reminding us of Vivier's signature sound and also revealing ways in which it continues to influence music being composed in our present time.

Vivier's solo piano work *Shiraz* was composed in 1977, in response to a request from Montreal pianist Louis-Philippe Pelletier, who had asked for, "a brilliant, virtuosic piano piece featuring double notes, in the style of Schumann's *Toccata*." Vivier had recently returned from a long trip to the Middle and Far East, and he drew inspiration for the requested piano work from a memory of the Iranian city of Shiraz, as Vivier called it, "a real pearl of a city, a diamond vigorously cut."

He continued to say, "this piano work that was itself also cut according to an idea: hand movements on the piano. The strict four-part writing (two parts for each hand) remains constantly homophonic in its directions, slowly allowing the emergence of a two-part counterpoint. Following a return to these abrupt figures, the work concludes with a chorale. The work is dedicated to the wonderful pianist Louis-Philippe Pelletier, and is indirectly dedicated to two blind singers whom I followed for hours in the marketplace of Shiraz."

That same year, Vivier composed *Love Songs* for seven voices. Vivier had much to say about the work, one in which he aspired to create new modes of performance. In his notes to the members of the ensemble he explained that the work was:

*"To be staged or not. To be felt not understood. Let tones from the others inspire your own. Let the music flow out of you as if you were a kid. Notation is only a reminder for certain states—never follow the signs but only their spirit. In this score you do what is appropriate for you to do and let the rest to the others. Always be in love!"*

Soundstreams' music director David Fallis observed, "*Vivier's Love Songs is full of musical ideas which are quite specific, and open-ended at the same time. The performers have to bring a great deal of themselves in order to realize the ideas which he has written. It is quintessential Vivier—full of playfulness, even a slightly campy extravagance, and at the same time heartfelt emotions.*"

- notes by David Jaeger

### **Nicole Lizée** *Karappo Okesutura Vol. III (Want Want Want, Ironic Butterfly, Break-Up Music)*

Soundstreams introduced Saskatchewan born and Montreal based composer Nicole Lizée to the Australian Art Orchestra (AAO) some years ago, and the connection has proven to be a productive one. The AAO commissioned Lizée to compose her full-length work, *Karappo Okesutura Vol. III*, which was produced by Soundstreams in 2020. From that multi movement

work Lizée has arranged three sections for this presentation. The three movements are, as Lizée has said, “songs that reference love in their own unique way.”

Lizée writes: “*Karappo Okesutura Vol. III is the latest installment in a collection of works that explore the phenomenon of karaoke. About 20 years ago I started collecting and subsequently manipulating karaoke tapes. Initial experiments were on a Tascam 4-track and soon I was delving into other formats. I was drawn to the obscured details that are revealed once the primary identifiers for a song (the lead melody and lyrics—often the first thing that the listener’s ear gravitates towards in a pop context) are removed. Hand claps, bass lines, synth textures and particularly, the backing vocals take on a surreal urgency and prominence.*

*Once the less obvious details and colours are exposed these are woven together to create a sonic landscape over which the karaoke singer performs the new version of the song. This skeletal rendition is a perfect opportunity to contort a song without completely losing all identification or traces of the original.*

*Volume 3 focuses on Canadian and Australian pop music and culture. The two countries seem to share similar qualities, perhaps shaped by their physical realities as large landmasses within the Commonwealth. Both produced pop music with a recognisable character of its own, which may have emerged from their distinct vantage point within the broader landscape of global culture. At any rate, while I was obsessed with Canadian pop I was considerably enthralled with Australian music.”*

### **Thierry Tidrow** *I Want To Tell You Everything*

*“This work, commissioned by Soundstreams for this programme, serves as a contemporary answer to Claude Vivier’s Love Songs. It dissects timeless themes of love, friendship, and society through the lens of everyday vernacular North American English. Just as my German operatic works of the last decade tackle the neuroses of the German language and culture, I Want to Tell You Everything probes English small-talk and turns of phrases to reveal the inherent melody of the language and the idiosyncratic “agreeableness” of Anglo-Saxon social codes. Peppered with filler words like “yeah”, “ok”, and “totally”, the work explores the subtext behind banality to expose the lovable absurdity of human connexion, or the longing thereof.*

*The singers onstage represent a metaphorical circle of friends, a private space where they reveal their shifting feelings toward romance. Each performer, in turn, offers a personal confession that varies in gravity, vulnerability, and earnestness. These revelations are met with a spectrum of collective reactions—from casual disinterest and jealous hostility to genuine moral support. Ultimately, the work is as much an exploration of the musicality and theatrics of group-friend behavior as it is a study of love itself.”*

- Thierry Tidrow

### **Ana Sokolović** *Dring! Dring!*

Concerning her work, *Dring, dring*, for seven voices, glockenspiel and seven cell' phones,

Montreal composer Ana Sokolović writes:

*“This short music theatre piece was inspired by the telephone and the ways we use it. Using four different languages, I tried to explore its mechanics and the different ways in which we interact with it. The piece is comprised of four sections: dialing, answering, lullaby and goodbye.”*

The work was commissioned by Soundstreams in 2010 and is dedicated to their founding artistic director, Lawrence Cherney.

## Biographies

### Claude Vivier (1948-1983)

Claude Vivier was a visionary Canadian composer whose intensely personal music blends spectral sonorities, ritualistic structures, and invented languages. Born in Montreal and raised in orphanages, his search for identity profoundly shaped his work. After studies at the Conservatoire de musique du Québec, he traveled widely in Europe and Asia, absorbing influences from Balinese gamelan and Eastern spirituality.

Vivier’s music is marked by luminous timbres, lyrical melodies, and a fascination with the human voice as a spiritual medium. Works such as *Lonely Child*, *Zipangu*, and his final, unfinished opera *Kopernikus* reveal a unique sound world that is both intimate and transcendent.

He was associated with the avant-garde circles of Karlheinz Stockhausen in Cologne yet developed a highly individual style. Vivier’s life was cut short when he was murdered in Paris at age 34, leaving behind a small but influential body of work that continues to resonate internationally.

### Nicole Lizée (b.1973)

Nicole Lizée is an award-winning Canadian composer and video artist described as “a brilliant musical scientist” (CBC) and “breathtakingly inventive” (Sydney Times Herald). Her work draws on influences ranging from early MTV, turntablism, and rave culture to filmmakers like Alfred Hitchcock and Stanley Kubrick, fashion designer Alexander McQueen, and early video game culture. Central to her practice is a fascination with technological glitches, which she captures and integrates into live performance.

Her compositions range from orchestral works to pieces for turntablist and unconventional instruments, including vintage electronics and gaming devices. Across her work, she explores themes of malfunction, obsolescence, and the creative potential of imperfection.

Lizée’s honours include the 2024 JUNO Award for Classical Composition of the Year, the 2023

Music Critics Association of North America Award for Best New Opera, and the 2022 Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding New Opera. She has also received the Prix Opus for Composer of the Year and the Canada Council Jules Léger Prize. She was mentored by Howard Shore through the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards program. She composed the 2017 logo music for the National Film Board of Canada, and her work *This Will Not Be Televised* was named a Top 10 selection at the UNESCO International Rostrum of Composers. A graduate of McGill University, she has received over 60 commissions, and her music is performed worldwide by leading ensembles and orchestras.

### **Thierry Tidrow (b.1986)**

Thierry Tidrow is an award-winning Canadian composer of instrumental and vocal music, with a predilection for opera. His music has been described as “*embracing many musical worlds, in which explorations of noise, expressionist lyricism, pastiche and parody form a discursive and richly detailed whole.*” (ECM+ Generations Jury 2018) This audacious synthesis of styles gives rise to a chiaroscuro of meaning, often playful, but where the humorous can quickly turn to horrific or tragic and back. His studied approach to text and sound reveals hidden meanings and erects new ones, and his dramatic instinct leads to an intrinsically narrative mode of expression packed with surprise and intrigue.

Born in Ottawa in 1986, Thierry's musical education began with choral and vocal music, followed by studies in composition, music theory and early music performance at McGill University (B. Mus. 2009). As a Fondation Ricard and Canada Arts Council Fellow, he received his Masters degree in composition from the Conservatorium van Amsterdam in 2011 under Richard Ayres, followed by an Advanced Studies diploma at the Hochschule für Musik Freiburg in 2013, under Brice Pauset.

Thierry has collaborated with many performers across Europe and North America, including the Asko-Schönberg Ensemble, Ensemble Modern, the Bozzini String Quartet, Continuum, hand werk, Ensemble Proton, Sarah Maria Sun, Johannes Fischer, Brian Archinal, Heather Roche and many others. He has been featured at the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, Heidelberger Frühling, Musikfestspiele Potsdam Sanssouci, Cluster New Music and Integrated Arts Festival, the Festival Radio-France de Montpellier, Gaudeamus Muziekweek, and the Zagreb Music Biennale.

Thierry has written several operas, including *My Corporate Identity* (2017, libretto by Uta Bierbaum) for the Deutsche Oper Berlin, *Prothesen der Autonomie* (2018, libretto by Franziska vom Heede) for the Neuköllner Oper (Berliner Opernpreis 2018), and *Nils Karlsson Däumling* (2019, libretto by Manfred Weiß based on Astrid Lindgren) for Deutsche Oper am Rhein. He is currently composer-in-residence at Oper Dortmund, for which he is currently working on several operatic projects.

### **Ana Sokolović (b. 1968)**

A key figure in contemporary music, composer Ana Sokolović was born in Belgrade, Serbia and

is based in Montreal since 1992. With a background in the rhythmic universe of Balkan folklore, her music is coloured with playful images and inspired by differing artistic disciplines.

Her vast repertoire is regularly performed both in Canada and internationally. Fourth most performed female opera composer in the world in the last decade (according to Operabase), Sokolović's works are performed throughout Europe and North America. Her opera, *Svadba*, which "seems to invent a universal phonetics of the human heart" (Le Monde), has been performed more than fifty times. Her career as a composer has been marked by numerous awards and recognitions, including two consecutive JUNOs in the category "Classical Composition of the Year". Sokolović's works have been recorded on more than twenty discs.

In 2020, she joined the prestigious publishing house Boosey & Hawkes. The following year, she was appointed composer-in-residence at the Montreal Symphony Orchestra for three seasons. In 2022, Ana Sokolović was awarded the first Canada Research Chair in Opera Creation at l'Université de Montréal where she is also a professor of composition.

## Soundstreams

Soundstreams is celebrating its 43rd season under the leadership of Founding Artistic Director Lawrence Cherney. Since 1982, Soundstreams has evolved to become the largest global producer of new Canadian music and one of the world's leading companies fostering the music of our time.

A dedicated Soundstreams team led by Executive Director Beth Brown realizes a broad spectrum of activities, with a focus on innovative thematic and experiential programming to create a legacy for Canadian music. Soundstreams serves a broad community of music lovers through our Main Stage ticketed subscription series, as well as our free TD Encounters outreach event series and our education programs which include the New Voices curator mentorship program and the Bridges Emerging Composers Program. By intention, Soundstreams has no resident ensemble, leaving us free to prioritise telling stories that speak to diverse Canadian identities and perspectives. Rooted in significant themes like social justice, these diverse outlooks enable us to produce programming that resonates regionally, nationally, and internationally, making Soundstreams uniquely qualified to bring this programming to the world stage. These opportunities have garnered us increased recognition from the national and international press. In previous seasons, we have received high praise from The Guardian, The New York Times, The Financial Times, The Wall Street Journal and The Los Angeles Times. In May 2022, Soundstreams was the linchpin in a major festival at London's prestigious Southbank Centre, enhancing the profile of Canadian music by presenting the work of Québec's legendary late composer Claude Vivier.

Soundstreams' continued success on the national and international stage is a result of our efforts to promote cultural exchange, creating a global network and enabling artists to tell their stories to our audiences. Over the last 30 years, Soundstreams has brought nearly 1,500 international artists to Toronto to perform music written by Canadian composers and/ or perform alongside Canadian artists. These connections have been forged with Latin America, East Asia, Europe, the USA, and Australia, attracting significantly broader audiences.

### **Vania Chan, soprano**

Vania Lizbeth Chan is a versatile artist, active in the fields of vocal performance, academia and education. She enjoys collaborating with fellow artists to create new and exciting projects that inspire and educate a wide-ranging audience. A lyric coloratura soprano, Chan sings in a variety of styles, from Baroque to musical theatre, pop and jazz. Her voice has been described as “*gently shimmering*” by Opera News, NY. She made her Carnegie Hall debut, claiming first prize in the Barry Alexander International Competition, NY.

### **Carla Huhtanen, soprano**

Canadian soprano Carla Huhtanen is acclaimed for her “*vivid...coloratura*” (Independent) and “*gorgeous...flexibility*” (Globe and Mail). Recent highlights include Konstanze in *The Abduction* from the Seraglio (Opera Columbus), appearances with Opera Atelier and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and a Bernstein tribute with the RTÉ Concert Orchestra in Dublin.

She has performed widely across Europe, debuting at Venice’s La Fenice and appearing with companies such as Garsington Opera and festivals in France. Career highlights include Cunégonde in *Candide*, concerts with the Royal Philharmonic, and collaborations with the Israel Philharmonic. A frequent collaborator with Opera Atelier, Huhtanen also specialises in contemporary music, performing with ensembles including Soundstreams and Tapestry Opera, and working closely with composers to premiere new works.

### **Lindsay McIntyre, soprano**

Lindsay McIntyre is a Canadian vocal artist whose work lies at the intersection of technical precision and the magic of mindful experience. Awed by the natural world, Lindsay believes music making is a form of transfiguration: creating moments out of thin air. A scholar of the voice, body, and meditative practices, Lindsay is particularly passionate about using her instrument as a vessel for contemporary music. Lindsay is a versatile singer, celebrated for her crystalline extension, grounded presence, and captivating vocal colour.

Lindsay has held residencies at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, the Lunenburg Academy of Music Performance, and the Canadian Music Centre, and is an alumna of the Bang on a Can and Yellow Barn music festivals. Recent performance highlights include Reich’s “*Drumming*” with Sō Percussion and Nathalie Joachim, and “*La vie, la mort, les desserts*” with the SAT and Opéra de Montréal. Lindsay’s self-produced performance of Morton Feldman’s “*Three Voices*” was featured on a list of Toronto’s best concerts of 2025.

### **Robin Dann, mezzo-soprano**

Robin Dann is a singer and musician based in Toronto. She is most interested in laughter, empathy, and working with song as a social tool. Her twice-Polaris-nominated band Bernice tours internationally and releases music with Canadian label Telephone Explosion Records.

Robin's interest in using the voice and song to generally feel better continues to lead her in many directions including several collaborations with, and commissions for the Toronto Dance Theatre, Soundstreams, ongoing work with older adults living with memory loss at the Bitove Method and the Toronto Alzheimer Society, as well as a busy freelance performing career. Robin was named a finalist for the Johanna Metcalf Performing Arts Prize in 2019 and has received generous government support for numerous projects. In 2019 she was the recipient of an Ontario Arts Council's Chalmers Fellowship, allowing her to travel to the Arctic Circle, and to continue her research in song as an empathetic, community-building practice. Robin is set to pursue a Masters Diploma in Music Therapy in Autumn 2027 from Concordia University.

### **Bud Roach, tenor**

Tenor Bud Roach maintains an active performance schedule spanning Baroque to contemporary repertoire. His Musica Omnia recordings have earned international recognition for historically informed performance, with Early Music Today praising him as "*marvellous throughout...five stars.*" Recent highlights include touring staged works of Claude Vivier in Berlin and London (Soundstreams Canada, 2022), and appearances with leading ensembles such as La Chapelle de Québec, the Hamilton Philharmonic, the Toronto Consort, and the Toronto Masque Theatre.

In 2009, he founded the vocal quartet Capella Intima, whose recordings have received critical acclaim across North America and Europe. He has also premiered works by composers including Jeffrey Ryan, Andrew Staniland, and Melissa Hui.

Originally trained as an orchestral oboist, Roach studied at the University of Western Ontario and Yale University, performing with major ensembles including the Canadian Opera Company and National Ballet of Canada before transitioning to singing in 2005. He has since performed with groups such as the Elmer Iseler Singers, La Chapelle de Québec, and Soundstreams' Choir 21. Deeply committed to his Hamilton community, he is the founder and artistic director of HAMMER BAROQUE. Roach is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts at the University of Toronto, focusing on self-accompanied performance and digital media in historical practice.

### **Keith Lam, baritone**

"A *suave, fine-grained baritone*" (Boston Globe), Hong Kong born, Toronto-based singer Keith Lam (he/him) most recently made his Canadian Opera Company role debut in Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* as the official registrar. You can also hear him in a new animated short called "*The Piece Atop his Pate*" paired with a song written by Jocelyn Morlock about the infamous hockey player Bobby Hull, a collaboration with the Canadian Art Song Project, available on Youtube. He toured with Jeremy Dutcher's sophomore album *Motewolonuwok* which won the prestigious Polaris Music Prize 2024. He has also appeared in the film adaptation of the a cappella opera *Sweat*, reviving the role of the Boss, which had its premiere at the Kingston Canadian Film Festival 2023 and received the 2024 Award for Digital Excellence in Opera at Opera America.

He has worked with other companies such as Tafelmusik, Tapestry Opera, Opera Five, Bicycle Opera Project and Jeunesse Musicales. He was the audience prizewinner at the Classical Music

Consort Handel Competition, finalist at the 2013 Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra Competition, and placed third in the 2014 NYCO Mozart Vocal Competition. He is an alumnus of the Aspen Opera Theater, Banff Centre's Opera as Theatre program, Opera NUOVA, Highlands Opera Studio, and the Tafelmusik Baroque Institute. Keith has been a proud member of the Canadian Opera Company Chorus since 2012.

### **Alex Samaras, baritone**

Alex Samaras is a singing artist. Alex is a regular collaborator with Tafelmusik, Jeremy Dutcher and is a founding member of the Queer Songbook Orchestra. He originated roles in *The Cave* (Tomson Highway/John Millard) and *Universal Childcare* (Quote/Unquote Collective), the latter earning him a Dora nomination for music direction. His most recent and exciting collaborations have been with composers Cecilia Livingston, Madeleine Ertel and Allison Au who have all worked closely with Alex on large scale works written specifically for his voice and unique performance style. His latest record "*Alex Samaras Meets Judy Garland*" was nominated for a 2026 Juno Award for Best Vocal Jazz Album of the year. Alex is currently music director for Beverly Glenn Copeland's world tours, playing piano and putting choirs together around the world to join Glenn on stage at their shows. He also produced and arranged Glenn's 2026 critically acclaimed record "*Laughter in Summer*."

Alex writes his own music under the name Tryal and has released 3 records of original music since 2017. His vocal group Grex, inspired by his work in NYC with Meredith Monk, explores the extremes of the human voice and the body/voice connection.

### **Gregory Oh, piano**

Gregory Oh tends to wander the genres, appearing in places from the legendary Berlin techno club Berghain to Lincoln Centre. Recently he conducted *RUR A Torrent of Light* (Nicole Lizée/Nic Billon) for which he received the 2022 Dora Mavor Moore award for Outstanding Musical Direction, as well as *The Cave* (Tomson Highway/John Millard) and *Bearing* (Michael Greyeyes/Signal Theatre) for the Luminato Festival, and the recording *Ride the Wind* with Roscoe Mitchell and the Montreal-Toronto Jazz Orchestra. On piano he premiered Scott Good's *Hands of Orlac* with the London Symphonia and Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, toured Rwanda and the UK with Neema Bickersteth and Century Song (Volcano), and was featured as conductor and pianist at the Shanghai New Music Festival. He has worked with hundreds of composers including Steve Reich, Phillip Glass, Kaija Saariaho and Jörg Widmann. He teaches at the University of Toronto and NYO Canada and programs Summer Music in the Garden at Harbourfront Centre.

### **Noam Bierstone, percussion**

Noam Bierstone is a Canadian percussionist, improviser, curator, and producer dedicated to modern and experimental music performance. Committed to the creation and development of new music, Noam's primary artistic ventures include the Montreal concert series and

performance collective NO HAY BANDA, the saxophone and percussion duo scapegoat, the Montreal-based percussion quartet Architek, and the Rimouski-based trio Bascaille. Noam pursues ongoing collaborations with various composers and artists, with a particular interest in works that expand the notion of percussion playing through new techniques, hybrid instruments, theatrical and choreographic elements, and performative electronics. Noam is regularly invited to perform at international festivals, and his discography includes releases on No Hay Discos, KAIROS, New Focus Recordings, Ambiances Magnétiques, NMC, and Cantaloupe Music. NO HAY BANDA was recently awarded the prestigious Ernst von Siemens Music Foundation Ensemble Prize '26.

### **David Fallis, music director**

Conductor David Fallis is one of Canada's leading interpreters of operatic and choral/orchestral repertoire, known especially for his work both in contemporary music, and in the Baroque and Classical periods. He has conducted across Canada and around the world, including for the Luminato Festival, the Glimmerglass Festival, the Singapore Festival, the Royal Opera House in Versailles, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Festival Vancouver, Houston Grand Opera, and the Seoul Arts Centre.

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### **Soundstreams is supported by:**

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NEW  
MUSIC  
DUBLIN  
2026

# *Chamber Choir Ireland*

## *Come To The Edge*

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**Saturday 18th April 2026 - 4:00pm**

Windmill QTR

**Ben Nobuto** *BLIP*

**Jennifer Walshe** *The White Noisery*

**Phoebe Savage** *Time of Roses*

**Cecilie Ore** *Come to the Edge!*

**Chamber Choir Ireland**

**David Young** conductor

# Programme Notes

## **Ben Nobuto** *BLIP*

*"BLIP is about different ideas relating to time. Thinking about the Greenwich Time Signal or "the pips" became an excuse to think about time generally and the idea of standardised time, how we impose precision onto something fluid and subjective, or in music how we quantize notes to a grid or share the same feeling of a downbeat.*

*It's also about radio, about lots of information happening simultaneously, what Marshall McLuhan called the "all-at-onceness" of digital media. Fragments of St. Augustine's writings on time are mixed in with adverts, Radio 4 programs, Bible verses, the shipping forecast and overheard conversations. Against all this, I imagined the pips as a kind of lighthouse in the storm, an antidote to the chaos, cutting through the noise with something simple and pure."*

-Ben Nobuto

## **Jennifer Walshe** *The White Noisery*

**Commissioned by Chamber Choir Ireland with funds from The Arts Council/An Comhairle Ealaíon**

*The White Noisery is a piece about the tension between urgency and meaning. It is a piece about the subway prophet who grabs you by the lapels to shout a strange truth into your face; the cult who spent 40 years digging an underground cavern dedicated to destroying rock music; fragments of text found on obscure internet discussion boards lovingly transcribed in an empty office building in an abandoned Manhattan. It explores utterances at the edge of sense, from a vast array of human vocal and gestural languages through the voices of dolphins learning to speak and the chord by chord analysis of barbershop quartets. The choir function virtuosically—singing, chanting, speaking, whispering, playing recorders and other gadgets, acting out silent military drills and psychic experiments. (Thank you to Paul McGuire)*

-Jennifer Walshe

### **1. Rolling Stones**

### **2. There Can Be No More**

There can be no more  
Texting until 4 o'clock in the morning  
complaining about your skin condition in public  
typing "who made babby" into Google  
searching his garage for bottles  
reconvening of the UN High Commission  
endpoints available from the endpoint mapper

researching Drew's tattoos on Wikipedia  
surprises in the tree in To Kill an Mockingbird  
writing One Direction fan fiction  
lying about the purpose of your trip  
space for the virtual disk error message  
emergency visits to cardiologists  
looking at pictures of Ethan on Facebook  
unethical treatment of the elephants  
reassuring her he will really move  
ordering discontinued makeup over the internet  
file errors in Windows 7  
real facial expressions on Jersey Shore  
white horses or pretty ladies at my door

### **3. Lughnovena**

#### **4. And It Was Cold**

And it was cold, and it was full of ice and it was long before I heard it, long before I heard it,  
and the night was long, and the ground was dead, the trees were dead, the ground was long long dead, the leaves were long long dead, the stones were long long dead, the dirt was long long dead

I reached out my hand and he took it, I reached out my hair and he took it, I reached out my tongue and the wind took it, and it was stone - the wind turned her to stone, the sky became stone, and the wind became stone and the ground was long long dead, and the trees were long long dead

Trees ripped at my eyes, flowers grew from my mouth, and the ground was long long dead, the leaves were long long dead, and the stones were long long dead, and the dirt was long long dead,  
twenty five horses rode out thirty six horses rode out, forty nine horses rode out, bones came through the ground in the dead of night and there was blood, a spear grew through the back of a lion through the eye of a dog and there was blood, a train roared in his ears and smashed through his brain and there was blood, and it was cold, and it was full of ice - and it was long before I heard it, long before I heard it, and the night was long, and the ground was dead, the trees were dead, the sky was dead, their love was dead, and the ground was long long dead, the leaves were long long dead, the stones were long long dead, the dirt was long long dead, I reached out my hand and he took it, I reached out my hair and he took it, I reached out my tongue and the wind took it, and it was stone - the wind turned her to stone, the sky became stone, and the wind became stone, and the ground was long long dead, and the trees were long long dead, and the leaves were long long dead, and the stones were long long dead, and the dirt was long long dead.

### **5. Silent Drill**

#### **6. Paleo-Contact**

What they were doing up there I could not see but they kept pointing at my French window! I made my preparations for the night and made sure that my feet were spotlessly clean! But indeed I had passed through a thousand hells and been injured more than enough! Black as a spectre and decorated with fantastic shapes and

dragons! A forest of chimneys topping ancient half-hidden houses and in the distance the tower!

My uneasiness was increased by the visible alterations that had been made in the room next to mine! A length of cloth had been stretched across a rope evidently with the intention of concealing something! I tried to pull her off with an affectionate embrace but she could not understand my excuse!

## **7. Ship of Blankens**

The time has come to see our destiny planet as a cherished and precious paradise portal and integral model for the starport design of tomorrow inside this Galaxy.

Starseed ....yes you ... Awaken to the task of a millennium of excellence, for the genius of life force living fills all of your memories and all the best civilized social architecture resides within the memory of your respective star soul's history. Bring yourself to the place wherein you can see the magnificence of the sacred opulence that is your respective heritage. Each of us awakening starseed are blessed and obliged to find the core of that deeply seeded experience. It has been our experience to know these designs in a distant future way and bring them back into the original classic embodiment of the paradise origins we can build anew. Yes back to the future to re-coalesce the magic of another extended exploration into excellence. For as we have all breathed out with our exploration we can now breathe in with the best moments and link them in bejeweled cities and magic village settings.

Enter your dream state. Find the genius at hand in the many lives you have undertaken. Take time to carefully select the experiences that moved you most. Sift over your finest dreams and bring them into form and substance again. You will be awakening with other scouts who have also been to states of excellence each of which had their own magic. Gather that magic! Bring it to your new communities. And celebrate together inside the creative range of play and adventure that call you back.

Nature will yet have her finest day as the organic genius of eons will appear again before us and yes with our own hands come again to its fullness like only a paradise portal and new civilization nexus can become. The core wisdom of thousands of experiments on thousands of stars will begin back-weaving the essential social inventions together like a necklace of wonder. That is the gift of a Universe embedded with beauty and love. That is the inheritance that we naturally are born to gravitate to.

Come back home with the most treasured games you have discovered. Light up our next world with the magic moments possible to those who trust the deepest instincts of a paradise plan that is our natural inheritance as navigators of deep experience inside lush sanctuaries slathered with joyful sounds, colours, and touch.

Make your bed in the divine sanctuaries of time. Let them organise the original excellence seeded into the primal intelligent muse that appears when the name of "paradise" is called out. Be awakened to the notion that each starseed carries precious cargo that will be shaped into a paradise world experience unlike any heretofore imagined. Our days will be filled with wonder and our experience carried by the wave

of love that like an ocean envelops all things. Our embedded sense of creativity will usher forth the new earth a beacon of promise for the worlds that surround us. We accumulate release do not cling release.

## **8. Cyclobia**

### **9. We are Participating**

We are participating.

### **10. Tread Softly**

I dreamt of the System (hold fast hold fast hold fast hold fast)

I dreamt of the Field (hold fast hold fast)

If you dream if a blanket (it's nothing)

If you dream of a party (it's nothing)

If you dream a computer (it's nothing)

If you dream of a glove (it is nothing)

I dreamt of the System (hold fast hold fast hold fast hold fast)

I dreamt of the Field (hold fast hold fast)

If you dream of a horse (there is nothing to see)

If you dream of a clock (there is nothing to see)

If you dream of a freeway (there's nothing to see)

If you dream of a hand (there is nothing to see)

I dreamt of the System (hold fast hold fast hold fast hold fast)

I dreamt of the Field (hold fast hold fast)

If you dream of a mirror (it's nothing)

If you dream of a robot (it's nothing)

If you dream a guitar (it is nothing)

If you dream of a rabbit (it's nothing)

I dreamt of the System (hold fast hold fast hold fast hold fast)

I dreamt of the Field (hold fast hold fast)

If you dream of a beard (there is nothing to see)

If you dream of a grave (there is nothing to see)

If you dream of a ticket (there's nothing to see)

If you dream of a phone (there is nothing to see)  
I dreamt of the System (hold fast hold fast hold fast hold fast)  
I dreamt of the Field (hold fast hold fast)  
If you dream of a river (it's nothing)  
If you dream of a TV (it's nothing)  
If you dream of a wasteland (it's nothing)  
If you dream of a letter (it's nothing)  
If you dream of a tiger (it's nothing)  
If you dream of a spaceship (it's nothing)  
If you dream of an apple (it's nothing)  
If you dream of a fist fight (it's nothing).

### **Phoebe Savage** *Time of Roses*

*"Thomas Hood's 'Time of Roses' celebrates the idyllic beauty and innocent joy of young love. It is set against the backdrop of a vibrant, flower-filled world where the singer and his beloved pluck roses as they walk, symbolising a perfect, untroubled time, though the poem hints at the inevitable fading of such youthful bliss and the contrast with adult disillusionment."*

-Phoebe Savage

### **Cecilie Ore** *Come to the Edge!*

*"Freedom of speech is a fundamental premise in the development of any democratic society and the entire text in Come to the Edge! evolves around this central theme."*

*Quotes on freedom of speech by George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, Abraham Lincoln, St. Catherine of Siena, Maggie Kuhn, Susan Jeffers, Lenny Bruce, Ernesto "Che" Guevara, William Shakespeare, Harry Belafonte and Pussy Riot constitute the main body of the text. In addition excerpts from the trial against Pussy Riot in Moscow 2012 are included. The poster-poem Come to the Edge! by Christopher Logue creates an overall form holding all the text fragments together.*

*The piece is dedicated to the brave members of Pussy Riot."*

- Cecilie Ore

*"Come to the edge.*

*We might fall.*

*Come to the edge.*

*It's too high!*

*COME TO THE EDGE!"*

(Christopher Logue, poster poem for Guillaume Apollinaire exhibition)

*"If freedom of speech is taken away, then dumb and silent we may be led, like sheep to the slaughter."*

(George Washington)

*"He who stands for nothing will fall for anything."*

(Alexander Hamilton)

*"To sin by silence, when they should protest, makes cowards of men."*

(Abraham Lincoln)

*"Silence in court! Accusation: You have shown disrespect towards society! Maria Alyokhina, step forward!"*

(Moscow Court)

*"I am not afraid of you. I am not afraid of falsehood and fictitiousness, of sloppily disguised deception, in the verdict of this 'so-called' court, this 'so-called' trial. All you can deprive me of is 'so-called' freedom. But nobody can take away my inner freedom. This freedom goes on living with every person who is not indifferent."*

(Pussy Riot member Maria Alyokhina, excerpt from Closing Statement)

*"Come to the edge.*

*We might fall.*

*Come to the edge!"*

(Christopher Logue)

*"Proclaim the truth and do not be silent through fear."*

(St. Catherine of Siena)

*"Speak your mind, even if your voice shakes."*

(Maggie Kuhn)

*"Feel the fear and do it anyway!"*

(Susan Jeffers)

*"Silence in court! Accusation: You have committed a grave violation of public order! Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, step forward!"*

(Moscow Court)

*"We have stopped weeping. We have lost our ability to cry, we have desperately shouted with all our might, but now, our voices have been taken away."*

(Pussy Riot member Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, excerpt from the Closing Statement)

*"Come to the edge.*

*We might fall.*

*Come to the edge!"*

(Christopher Logue)

*"Take away the right to say 'fuck' and you take away the right to say 'fuck the government!'"*

(Lenny Bruce)

*"We cannot be sure of having something to live for unless we are willing to die for it."*

(Ernesto 'Che' Guevara)

*"Cowards die many times before the deaths.*

*The valiant never taste of death but once."*

(William Shakespeare)

*"Silence in court! Conviction: Guilty! You are sentenced to two years in prison for hooliganism motivated by religious hatred! Yekaterina Samutsevich, step forward!"*

(Moscow Court)

*"We expected a guilty verdict. We are nobodies, and we have lost. On the other hand, we have won. The system cannot conceal the representative nature of this trial. The entire world can now see that this criminal case has been fabricated. That is all. Thank you."*

(Pussy Riot member Yekaterina Samutsevich, excerpt from the Closing Statement)

*"COME TO THE EDGE!*

*And they came.*

*And he pushed.*

*And they flew."*

(Christopher Logue)

*"You can cage the singer but not the song."*

(Harry Belafonte)

*"Open all the doors, tear off your epaulets. Come, taste freedom with us."*

(Pussy Riot protest song.)

Reconstruction of texts: Bibbi Moslet and Cecilie Ore

# Biographies

## Jennifer Walshe (b.1974)

Composer and performer Jennifer Walshe was born in Dublin, Ireland. Her music has been commissioned, broadcast and performed all over the world. She has been the recipient of fellowships and prizes from the Foundation for Contemporary Arts, New York, the DAAD Berliner Künstlerprogramm, the Internationales Musikinstitut, Darmstadt and Akademie Schloss Solitude among others.

Recent projects include *TIME TIME TIME*, an opera written in collaboration with the philosopher Timothy Morton, and *THE SITE OF AN INVESTIGATION*, a 30-minute epic for Walshe's voice and orchestra, commissioned by National Symphony Orchestra Ireland. Walshe has worked extensively with AI. *ULTRACHUNK*, made in collaboration with Memo Akten in 2018, features an AI-generated version of Walshe. *A Late Anthology of Early Music Vol. 1: Ancient to Renaissance*, her third solo album, released on Tetbind in 2020, uses AI to rework canonical works from early Western music history. *A Late Anthology* was chosen as an album of the year in *The Irish Times*, *The Wire* and *The Quietus*.

## Ben Nobuto (b. 1996)

Ben Nobuto is a British/Japanese composer, pianist and producer based in London. With a style described as "utterly contemporary" (Manchester Collective) and "sonically dazzling" (RPS Awards), his music explores themes of attention and fragmentation, drawing from internet culture and popular idioms in a playful, ironic and surreal manner. Often combining acoustic and electronic sounds, his interest lies in how processes from one can be applied to the other, and the relationship between the 'human' and 'non-human' in the context of a live performance. Previous commissions include works for the BBC Proms, Manchester Collective, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, National Youth Choir, Colin Currie Quartet and BBC Singers. He was recently awarded an Ivors Classical Award for his choral work *Sol*, a Royal Philharmonic Society Award for *SERENITY 2.0* and an RPS nomination for *Hallelujah Sim*.

## Cecilie Ore (b. 1954)

Cecilie Ore was born in Oslo, Norway, and studied piano at the Norwegian Academy of Music and in Paris (1974-81). After these studies she subsequently turned to studying composition at the Institute of Sonology in Utrecht and with Ton de Leeuw at the Sweelinck Conservatory in Amsterdam (1981-86). She has received many prizes for her works, both internationally and in Norway, like the Norwegian Society of Composers' Composition of the Year award for her orchestra piece *Porphyre*, the Norwegian State Guarantee Income for Artists, the Arne Nordheim Composers Price (2004), the Lindeman Prize (2015), the Edvard Prize (2019) for *WaterWorks*, and the Norwegian Publisher Award (2023) for the *H2O*-trilogy.

## Phoebe Savage

Phoebe Savage is a young composer from Carrickfergus, Co. Antrim. She composed *Time of Roses* as a participant in Chamber Choir Ireland's *Composers in the Classroom* programme 2025/26, for which she was selected as the winner of the inaugural Colin Mawby Composition Prize. The prize is named in honour of the founder of Chamber Choir Ireland.

*Composers in the Classroom* is an annual outreach educational programme, delivered in partnership with the Contemporary Music Centre, which gives secondary school students across Ireland the opportunity to compose their own choral music. Applications for the next round of *Composers in the Classroom* will open later this spring, and music teachers are encouraged to apply on behalf of their students for the 2026/27 intake. *Composers in the Classroom* is made possible by funding from The Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon, and additional support from Arts Council of Northern Ireland and Dublin City Council Arts Office.

## David Young

David Young is a choral and orchestral conductor with an unusually diverse portfolio, working with a range of ensembles both vocal and instrumental, professional and amateur. He is Chorus Director with National Symphony Chorus Ireland, Musical Director of Cambridge University Symphony Chorus, and works regularly with BBC Symphony Chorus and Cambridge University Chamber Choir. His past appointments include Royal Scottish National Orchestra Chorus, Musarc, and the Yehudi Menuhin School.

He has prepared choirs for conductors including Edward Gardner, Anja Bihlmaier, Ludovic Morlot, Nicholas Collon, Jessica Cottis, Omer Meir Wellber and Jules Buckley, working in the process with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra and BBC Singers. Conducting highlights have included Vaughan Williams *A Sea Symphony* (Ely Cathedral/Philharmonia), Bach *St Matthew Passion* (National Concert Hall/National Symphony Orchestra Ireland), *The Hamilton Scores Live* (NCH/RTÉ Concert Orchestra), Elgar *The Dream of Gerontius* (Lichfield Cathedral/The Brayside Orchestra) and Handel *Messiah* (St David's Hall/Réjouissance).

David is passionate about contemporary and interdisciplinary work, and his past projects have included gallery installations, recordings and concert performances with artists including Holly Herndon, Jon Hopkins, Jennifer Walshe, and Oliver Beer, at venues such as the Institute of Contemporary Arts, Serpentine Galleries and the Font de Gaume caves in Dordogne, France. In 2020 he made the premiere recording of Paul Frost's suite *The Burning of Cork* with the RTÉ Concert Orchestra.

He returns to Chamber Choir Ireland following successful work preparing the group for the Irish premiere of James MacMillan's *St John Passion* with NSOI/David Hill, discs of Fauré's choral/orchestral music with NSOI/Jean-Luc Tingaud for Naxos and leading the culmination of the 2025/26 edition of *Composers in the Classroom* this January. Previously for New Music Dublin, he prepared the NSCI for the world premiere of Ann Cleare's *Midhe* under the baton of David Brophy.

## Chamber Choir Ireland

As the country's national chamber choir, Chamber Choir Ireland holds a unique place in the cultural life of Ireland. Through broadcasts, streaming and live performances, they bring the joy of world-class choral music to over a million listeners each year.

Chamber Choir Ireland has built a stellar reputation as Ireland's premier professional choral ensemble, with awe-inspiring performances at home and abroad, described as "*a fine reminder of the power and beauty that voices alone can achieve.*" (Goldenplec, 2022).

CCI's programming is as diverse as it is daring, rediscovering rarely heard treasures of early music like Andrea Gabrieli's *Edipo Tiranno*, performing choral masterworks like Rachmaninov's *All Night Vigil*, and championing leading Irish and international composers through commissions and premieres. Recent commissions include exciting new works by Caroline Shaw, John Luther Adams, Gabriel Jackson, Cassandra Miller, David Fennessy, and Stephen McNeff. CCI's recordings are consistently met with critical acclaim, with releases on Harmonia Mundi, Orchid Classics, Naxos, and RTÉ lyric fm labels. Their 2020 release, *Letters*, received a 5-star review from the Irish Times and was the recipient of a New Music Scotland Award. Their 2023 release, *Folks' Music* (LCMS), was featured in the *New Yorker's* Notable Classical Recordings of the year.

Based at Ireland's National Concert Hall, the choir tours extensively throughout the island of Ireland including annual performances at Kilkenny Arts Festival, New Music Dublin and Cork International Choral Festival. Internationally, CCI has toured to the USA, UK, Belgium, Estonia, Russia, Germany, and South America.

Beyond the concert stage, CCI is deeply committed to working closely with communities across Ireland through its Learning and Participation activities. Whether inspiring young composers in schools, or supporting amateur and community choirs nationwide, CCI is passionate about making the reach of choral music in Ireland inclusive and accessible to all. CCI believes in ensuring the future of choral music, providing professional development programmes for composers in partnership with the Contemporary Music Centre, and training the next generation of professional choral singers in the CCI Studio.

Chamber Choir Ireland receives principal funding from the Arts Council/an Chomhairle Ealaíon, and support from Dublin City Council and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland through its National Lottery Fund. CCI is a resident ensemble at the National Concert Hall of Ireland, Associate Artists to Dublin City University, and a member of TENSIO, the network of professional chamber choirs in Europe.

### Supported by

**RTÉ/NCH/Arts Council Ire/Arts Council Northern Ireland/DCU/Tenso/CMC/National Lottery**

NEW  
MUSIC  
DUBLIN  
2026

*Caoimhín Ó Raghallaigh/Seán  
Mac Erlaine*

*Crash Ensemble*

*Land of Winter*

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**Saturday 18th April 2026 - 7:00pm**

Main Stage, National Concert Hall

**Caoimhín Ó Raghallaigh & Seán Mac Erlaine:** *Old Segotia*

**Donnacha Dennehy** *Land of Winter*

**Conductor** Ryan McAdams  
**Crash Ensemble**

**Larissa O'Grady** violin  
**Maria Ryan** violin  
**Lisa Dowdall** viola  
**Kate Ellis** cello  
**Caimin Gilmore** double bass  
**Alex Petcu** percussion  
**Caitriona Frost** percussion  
**Susan Doyle** flute/piccolo

**Rebecca Halliday** oboe/cor anglais  
**Leonie Bluett** clarinet/bass clarinet  
**Macdara Ó Seireadáin** clarinet  
**Cliona Warren** bassoon/contrabassoon  
**Andrew Zolinsky** piano/celeste  
**Erick Castillo Mora** trumpet  
**Dewi Jones** horn  
**Roddy O'Keeffe** trombone

**Francesca De Buyl** Production Manager  
**John Murphy** FOH Sound  
**Jonathan Nangle** Audio Producer  
**Matt Burke** Lighting Designer

## Programme Notes

### **Caoimhín Ó Raghallaigh & Seán Mac Erlaine:** *Old Segotia*

This distinctive duo of Irish musicians tonight perform music from their recently released album, *Old Segotia*. (Ergodos label). From the opening notes – arriving as if in mid-air – to its final, cheerful burblings, it is an album about friendship: both musical and human, the product of two distinctive musicians visiting each other's worlds with a sense of veneration, and a sense of joyful wonder.

Here, Mac Erlaine (This is How We Fly, Quiet Music Ensemble) and Ó Raghallaigh (The Gloaming, This is How We Fly) meet on common ground developed over 20 years of playing together, with Mac Erlaine's musical language rooted in jazz and sonic experimentation, and Ó Raghallaigh emerging from an Irish traditional music that he has shaped and reshaped in a deeply personal way. In this place, Mac Erlaine and Ó Raghallaigh's music is profoundly integrated and emotionally textured: at times bursting with explosive energy, at times almost sighing into life, but always searching.

The palette of instruments speaks to the album's feeling of abundance, with Mac Erlaine performing on clarinets, chalumeau d'amore, three different flutes, car hooter, percussion, live electronics, Wurlitzer, synthesiser, vocals and alto saxophone; and with Ó Raghallaigh bringing his signature hardanger d'amore sound plus a turn on the flute and live electronics, too. With the title echoing a well-worn Dublinese expression for "friend", *Old Segotia* plays out with 'Oiche Crua Sna Sleibhte' (A Hard Night in the Mountains), with ornithologist Seán Ronayne's field recordings of birdsong rising out of the musicians' playful explorations, offering a taste of life echoing music, echoing life.

## **Donnacha Dennehy:** *Land of Winter*

*Land of Winter* has already garnered international recognition, earning a Grammy nomination for *Best Contemporary Classical Composition*, and winning a 2026 Grammy award for Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble performance with *Alarm Will Sound*.

Rooted in Dennehy's ongoing fascination with time, light, and cyclical process, *Land of Winter* draws on Ireland's Roman name, *Hibernia*, to explore seasonal recurrence, historical memory, and renewal across 12 movements, each representing a month of the year.

### **Sections**

- i. December
- ii. January
- iii. February
- iv. March
- v. April
- vi. May
- vii. June
- viii. July
- ix. August
- x. September
- xi. October
- xii. November

*"The Latin name for Ireland was Hibernia, which translates as "land of winter." I suppose the country seemed cold to the Romans. It seems cold to many, especially in July. In a way it is the quality of light that demarcates the seasons, from the shorter days of grey or piercing light in the winter to the much longer, warmer but mercurial light of summer. I like this play between light and time, and it inspires the connection between expanding and contracting temporal processes and harmony, often overtone-hued, in the piece. Occasionally the resonance of the term "land of winter" — something perennially stuck in its last cycle — engenders a terrifying force in the piece (the linear push towards death perhaps or even a kind of climate endgame). Comfort and re-generation are found in the circular recurrences and variations.*

*Structurally, the piece is divided into twelve sections (which I consider as months) connecting to each other continuously. The piece starts in December, and culminates at the end of November, ready to start all over again in winter as it were. An advent chorale by Bach lurks behind the surface occasionally, influencing the larger harmonic motions, and sometimes working as a generator of upper partials that remain on the musical surface after the chorale itself is erased. In the final movement, November, the chorale itself is gradually revealed in looping windows that create a new, slowly evolving modal harmony out of its re-constituted chronology.*

*The composition of this piece was supported by a Guggenheim Fellowship awarded in 2021, and is dedicated to Alan Pierson."*

- Donnacha Dennehy

# Biographies

## Donnacha Dennehy

Called “thrilling” by the Guardian, and “arrestingly beautiful” by the New Yorker, Donnacha Dennehy’s music has featured in festivals and venues such as the Edinburgh International Festival; Carnegie Hall, New York; Barbican, London; Muziekgebouw, Amsterdam; Wigmore Hall, London; Royal Opera House, London; BAM, New York; St. Ann’s Warehouse; Tanglewood Festival; Holland Festival; Kennedy Center; Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival; Dublin Theatre Festival; ISCM World Music Days; Bang On A Can; Ultima Festival, Oslo; Musica Viva, Lisbon; Saarbrücken Festival; and the Schleswig-Holstein Festival.

His music has been premiered and commissioned by groups and soloists including Alarm Will Sound, Augustin Hadelich, Bang On A Can, Contact, Crash Ensemble, Dawn Upshaw, Doric String Quartet (Carnegie/Wigmore co-commission), Fidelio Trio, Joanna MacGregor, Kronos Quartet, Icebreaker, Nadia Sirota, National Symphony Orchestra Ireland, Oregon Symphony, Orkest de Volharding, Percussion Group of the Hague, philharmonie zuidnederland, San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, So Percussion (Carnegie/Cork Opera House co-commission), St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Third Coast Percussion, Ulster Orchestra (BBC), and United Instruments of Lucilin (Luxembourg). Collaborations include pieces with the writers Colm Tóibín (The Dark Places), the director Tom Creed (The Hunger, stage version) and Enda Walsh (a trilogy of operas).

Returning to Ireland after studies abroad, principally at the University of Illinois, Dennehy founded Crash Ensemble, Ireland’s now-renowned new music group, in 1997. Alongside the singers Dawn Upshaw and Iarla O’Lionáird, Crash Ensemble features on the debut 2011 Nonesuch release of Dennehy’s music, entitled Grá agus Bás. Other releases include a second portrait disc by Nonesuch (The Hunger, 2019), a number by NMC Records in London, Bedroom Community in Reykjavik and New Amsterdam and Cantaloupe in New York.

In recent years, Dennehy has concentrated especially on large-scale musico-dramatic works. He has now completed a trilogy of operas with the writer/director Enda Walsh: *The Last Hotel* (2015), *The Second Violinist* (2017) and *The First Child* (2021). Other recent large-scale pieces include the docu-cantata *The Hunger* (2012-16, concert version 2019), originally co-produced by Alarm Will Sound and Opera Theatre St. Louis; *Surface Tension* for Third Coast Percussion (commissioned by the Metropolitan Museum and Notre Dame University); *Overcasting* (2019), commissioned by the LA Philharmonic (for their new music group), and *Tessellatum*, an epic piece for viola (Nadia Sirota) and microtonally adjusted viols (originally multitracked by Liam Byrne in the Bedroom Community recording, but now arranged for various ensembles, including a string orchestra of modern instruments in a new version of 2020). The last couple of years has seen a flurry of orchestral pieces: *Brink* (2020) for Indianapolis Symphony, *Memoria* (2021) for the National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland (to be given its US premiere by the Dallas Symphony in May, 2022) and *Violin Concerto* (2021), co-commissioned by the Oregon Symphony, Aspen Music Festival and philharmonie zuidnederland for Augustin Hadelich.

Dennehy’s single-movement orchestral piece *Crane* was ‘recommended’ by the International Rostrum of Composers (2010). In 2017, he won the FEDORA-Generali Prize for Opera (Salzburg/Paris), and in 2021 he was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship. At present, he is writing a large-scale work for Alarm Will Sound, *Land of Winter*, to be premiered at the

Beethovenfest in Germany in September 2022. Dennehy now lives in America and is a professor at Princeton University. His music is published by G. Schirmer in New York.

## Ryan McAdams

Ryan McAdams has established himself as one of the most versatile conductors, communicators and collaborators of his generation. Equally prized in symphonic, operatic, and contemporary repertoire, he made a highly successful subscription European debut in February, 2010 with the orchestra of the Maggio Musicale in Florence, where he has returned many times for operas and concerts. A Fulbright scholar, he previously served as Apprentice Conductor of the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, assisting then-Chief Conductor Alan Gilbert. Mr. McAdams was the first-ever recipient of both the Sir Georg Solti Emerging Conductor Award and the Aspen-Glimmerglass Award for Opera Conducting.

Notable recent appearances include Gounod's "Faust" with Opernhaus Zürich, opening the 2024 Ludwigsburg Schlossfestspiele with the German premiere of Cassandra Miller's "I cannot love without trembling" with violist Lawrence Power and Berlioz's "Symphonie Fantastique," a collaboration with Wynton Marsalis and the Lincoln Center Jazz with the Phoenix Symphony, an Italian tour with Mikhail Pletnev and I Pomeriggi Musicali, and Berlioz's "Beatrice et Benedict" for Irish National Opera with actress Fiona Shaw. The recording of Donnacha Dennehy and Enda Walsh's opera "The First Child" with Crash Ensemble and Irish National Opera was released this year on Signum Records.

The 2025/26 season sees Ryan with Welsh National Opera for Bernstein's "Candide," Ulster Orchestra, Atlanta Opera for Philip Glass' "La Belle et la Bête," National Symphony Orchestra Ireland for a recording project and a subscription concert, multiple concerts with the I Pomeriggi Musicali, BBC Orchestra of Wales, Stuttgarter Philharmoniker, the orchestra of the Teatro Lirico in Cagliari, Istanbul State Symphony, and a Gala Concert with Rolando Villazón and Paula Murrihy for Irish National Opera.

McAdams has also appeared with the Orchestre national d'Île-de-France in Paris at the Philharmonie, BBC Philharmonic, Belgian National Orchestra, Moscow Philharmonic, Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra, Teatro Comunale in Bologna, National Symphony in Washington DC, Kansas City Symphony, Louisiana Philharmonic, Vancouver Symphony, Santa Fe Symphony, Louisville Orchestra, Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Orchestre symphonique et lyrique de Nancy, Columbus Symphony, the Ravello Festival, Princeton Symphony, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, L'Orchestra de Chambre de Geneve, Juilliard Opera Center, Westchester Philharmonic, New York City Opera, Talea Ensemble, New York City Ballet, Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI, Indianapolis Symphony, CityMusic Cleveland, Tanglewood Music Festival, Aspen Music Festival, New Jersey Symphony, Glimmerglass Opera, and the Juilliard FOCUS! Festival.

A contemporary music advocate, Mr. McAdams has been the Principal Conductor of Crash Ensemble since 2021, having led the world premieres of Donnacha Dennehy and Enda Walsh's opera "The Second Violinist" in Dublin and London at the Barbican, and their follow-up opera "The First Child." He was the conductor for Elliott Carter's 103rd Birthday Celebration at New York's 92Y with Nicholas Phan - a concert that was named one of the Best Classical Music

Events of 2011 by Anthony Tommasini in the New York Times. Recent projects include premiering Jonathan Dawe's new opera "Cracked Orlando" with Anthony Roth Costanzo at the Italian Academy at Columbia University, and leading the world premiere of William Basinski's "The Disintegration Loops" with the Wordless Music Orchestra at the Temple of Dendur in the Metropolitan Museum for the 10th Anniversary of Sept. 11th.

Ryan lives in East Sussex with his wife, dancer/performer Laura Careless (www.shewolvesproject.com) and their son Owain. For more information: www.ryan-mcadams.com.

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Crash Ensemble is a not-for-profit organisation supported by the Arts Council of Ireland and Dublin City Council with international touring supported by Culture Ireland. They are ensemble-in-residence at the National Concert Hall, Dublin, and Kilkenny Arts Festival.

### **CRASH30: COMMISSIONING FOR CRASH'S FUTURE**

In 2027, Crash turns 30. To mark three decades of bold, boundary-pushing music, we are running a fundraising campaign to commission new work for our anniversary programme and to invest directly in the next chapter of contemporary music in Ireland.

Our goal is simple: **raise €3,000 to commission 3 pieces of new music for Crash's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.** Find out how you can be involved at: <https://donorbox.org/crash30>

**Supported by**  
**RTÉ/NCH/Arts Council Ireland/Dublin City Council**

NEW  
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2026

# *Diatribes Stage*

*Lucia Joyce // Premonition*

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**Saturday 18th April 2026 - 9:45pm**

The Cube, Project Arts Centre

**Shelta**

**Helen Hutchinson** voice / poetry

**Mickey Dunne** uilleann pipes

**Mariam Rezaei** turntables

**Terry McInerney** sculpture

**Insufficient Funs**

**Sam Comerford** bass saxophone

**Matthew Jacobson** drums

## Shelta

Commissioned by Diatribe Records, Shelta explores the parallels between the aural traditions of Traveller / Mincéir uilleann piping traditions and experimental turntablism through the spoken verse of **Helen Hutchinson**. A founding member of Pavee Point, a groundbreaking group set up in 1985 as a collective community development approach to fighting for Traveller and Roma human rights, Helen Hutchinson is a poet with a lifetime of activism and community building.

Awarding the UL President's Medal to **Mickey Dunne** in 2025, Shane Kilcommins stated that *"as one of the last living links to the Traveller musicians' tradition, uilleann piper Mickey Dunne's lived experience is invaluable to the traditional music community and crucial to understanding Ireland's cultural heritage. His contributions help to preserve not just a style of music but a way of life that is rapidly disappearing"*

Described as *"ancient cave music from the future"* by saxophonist Tim Berne, **Jack Dempsey** is a two-time world champion turntablist on a quest to explore new musical ideas while still paying respect to the traditional influences that inspire him, most recently accompanying Lankum on their 2025 tour of the UK.

**Mariam Rezaei** is a multi-award-winning composer, turntablist and performer working across experimental new music, free improvisation, mutant club music and hip-hop, and described by The Wire as *"one of the most technically adept and creatively daring artists to use the turntable as a musical instrument."* In addition to her mastery of classic turntablist skills, Rezaei has pioneered several techniques of her own, including free juggling, turntable sines, needle dripping and needle weaving.

## Insufficient Funs

Sam Comerford (bass saxophone) and Matthew Jacobson (drums) – two preeminent figures in Ireland's creative/improvised music scene – have been cavorting around Europe together since early 2016. Their duo 'Insufficient Funs' has been described as "Ed Blackwell and Don Cherry meets Autechre" (composer/performer Matthew Noone), "like a slow-burning Nirvana" (All About Jazz) and "adventures at the outer reaches of music" (The Irish Times), with performances at 12 Points Festival (Saint Sebastian), Jazzycolors (Paris) and Another Love Story (Meath). Their 2016 eponymous debut EP was hailed as "delightfully unhinged from expectation" by Nialler9. This performance at New Music Dublin 2026 marks the launch of their debut album 'Chunk' on Diatribe Records. Expect revelry.

**Matthew Jacobson** is a drummer, improviser and composer. As well as composing for and performing/recording with his own groups ReDiviDeR and Insufficient Funs, Matthew also co-leads Roamer, contemporary piano trio Origin Story and Swiss-based hyperlynx. Matthew is co-director of Diatribe Records, Ireland's leading independent record label for new sounds and between 2011- 2020 was the Irish producer of European exchange tour and event network Match&Fuse. He is also a full-time Jazz Lecturer in Dublin City University – specialising in drum

skills, ensembles, free improvisation and music business. He received a Fulbright Scholar Award in 2013 to spend a nine-month period in New York developing compositional and improvisational skills. He was also selected as Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown's inaugural Musician-in-Residence in October 2015. He received a BA in Jazz Performance at Newpark Music Centre, Dublin, an MA in Music Performance from Lucerne University, Switzerland and completed a practice-based PhD at Ulster University, exploring improvisational approaches to motivic compositions.

**Sam Comerford** is a musician and composer from Dublin, Ireland, living in Brussels, Belgium. He composes for and leads the trio Thunderblender, whose critically acclaimed debut album *Stillorgan* (WERF records, 2020) was described by RTE lyric fm as "*the estrangement of the familiar*". He has a Masters in Jazz Saxophone from the Royal Conservatory of Brussels (KCB), and a BA in Jazz Performance from Newpark Music Centre (now DCU) in Dublin. He has been awarded the Toots Thielemans Award from the KCB, the "Best Soloist" prize from the Concours Tremplin d'Avignon, and has been supported by the Arts Council of Ireland, Music Network, and the Vlaamse Overheid. He has played at Jazz Middelheim, Handelsbeurs, De Bijloke, Flagey, Theatre National Bruxelles, KVS, Gaume Jazz Festival, (BE) 12 Points Festival (IE), Jazzdor (DE and FR), Schaffhauser Jazzfestival (CH), Match&Fuse festivals (IE and CH), Vilnius, Belgrade, Cork, Dublin, Manchester and Galway jazz festivals, Fat Cat Jazz Club Mongolia, Southbank Centre, Vortex Jazz club, Café OTO (UK), Meeting Jazz club (CN), Blue Frog, Mumbai (IN), and Sappho Jazz club (TW).

**Supported by**

**RTÉ/NCH/Arts Council Ireland**

NEW  
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2026

*Crash Works III (Open Workshop)*

*'You Heard It First'*

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**Sunday 19th April 2026 - 10:30am**

The Studio, National Concert Hall

**Crash Works Creators:**

**Niamh Dalton**  
**Sofia Féria**  
**Peter Joyce**  
**Joanna Mattrey**  
**Michael Sullivan**

**Larissa O'Grady** violin  
**Lisa Dowdall** viola  
**Kate Ellis** cello  
**Malachy Robinson** double bass  
**Susan Doyle** flute

**Leonie Bluett** clarinet  
**Barry O'Halpin** electric guitar  
**Alex Petcu** percussion  
**Máire Carroll** piano  
**Casey Trowel** trombone

**Francesca De Buyl** Production Manager  
**Olga Barry**, host

## Programme Notes

Crash Works III 'You Heard It First' open workshop offers audiences a rare opportunity to step inside the creative process and encounter new music at its point of emergence. Curious ears are invited to join Crash Ensemble and their five Crash Works creators for an open session showcasing musical sketches and early ideas, a first glimpse of works that will continue to evolve over the coming year... You heard it first.

This presentation forms part of Crash Works III (2026–2027), a two-year commission and development hub for music creators at pivotal stages of their careers. Selected through an open call in autumn 2025, the five creators are: Niamh Dalton, Sofia Féria, Peter Joyce, Joanna Mattrey and Michael Sullivan. Each creator will ultimately write a 10-minute piece, to be premiered at New Music Dublin 2027. This work-in-progress presentation at New Music Dublin 2026 offers a unique insight into how these ideas take shape.

Crash Works is delivered by Crash in partnership with New Music Dublin and is supported by the Deborah Crowley fund for creative music makers.

## Biographies

### Niamh Dalton

Niamh Dalton is a multi-instrumentalist based in Cork City, Ireland. Fiddle being her main instrument, she sits within the Irish and Old-Time fiddle traditions as well as exploring extended technique, improvisation and experimenting with pedals and cross tunings.

Operating under the name Ana Palindrome, her main project alongside bandmates Sara Leslie and Ruairi de Búrca, combines fiddle, singing, electronics and rhythm section to create experimental, wonky pop tunes. She is a longstanding member of nine-piece collective Trá Pháidín. Her practice as a composer aims to investigate ways of borrowing rhythmic bowing techniques found in old-time fiddle music and adapting them to create hypnotic drones and textures more at home in the worlds of ambient or modern experimental music than that of traditional song. She collaborates with Irish artists including Elaine Howley, David Murphy and Trick Mist.

### Sofia Féria

Sofia Féria is a Portuguese composer and performer based in Dublin, Ireland. She is currently doing her Bachelor's Degree in Composition and Cello at the Royal Irish Academy of Music (RIAM), under the tutelage of Jonathan Nangle and Peggy Nolan, respectively. Her work encompasses various fields, including electro-acoustic soundscapes, notated ensemble works,

choral works, spatially distributed electronics, and acoustic performances with live electronics.

She has had her works performed on different occasions, most recently at the Whyte Recital Hall and Unit 44 (Kirkos Ensemble), having been performed by herself and musicians from the RIAM. Sofia relishes in exploring sound worlds extensively, and enjoys collaborating with other art creators, having more than once collaborated with film creatives and different visual / performative artists. As a performer, Sofia is an active member of the Trinity College Chapel Choir, Outside the Lines Collective and RIAM Chamber Orchestra.

## Peter Joyce

Winner of the 1st Prize and Orchestra Prize of the 2023 Irish National “Feis Ceoil” Conducting Competition, Peter Joyce has worked in symphonic, musical theatre, opera and choral settings including his debut in the Golden Hall of Vienna’s Musikverein with the Akademische Philharmonie Vienna. Recently he has performed again in the Musikverein with the ORF Radio Symphony Orchestra and in the Vienna Konzerthaus with the Wiener Symphoniker. Other highlights include performing and working with the Sofia National Philharmonic, the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, the Szolnok Symphony Orchestra. Podlasie Opera and Philharmonic, Pro-Arte Orchestra Vienna, Orchestra of the Technical University Vienna, Max Brand Ensemble, Ensemble Ars Nova, the Webern Ensemble and the Webern Chamber Choir, and with the ORF as a musical assistant for live broadcasts from the Vienna State Opera. In May 2024 Peter made his opera debut conducting ‘Radames’ Peter Eötvös at the Max Reinhardt Seminar in Vienna and returned there in June 2025 to conduct the Austrian premiere of Ethel Smyth’s opera The Boatswain’s Mate. Since the 2024/25 season Peter has been assistant conductor and studio member with Irish National Opera and in 2025 was selected as an Opera Europa Next Generation artist as part of the worldwide streaming of INO’s The Flying Dutchman on OperaVision.

A champion of new music, Peter has performed and conducted premieres of many new works by Irish and international composers. As a composer Peter’s own works have been performed throughout Europe by groups such as the Arditti Quartet, Quartetto Prometeo, the Kandinsky Quartet, the Webern Ensemble, Platypus Ensemble and at festivals such as Wien Modern. In 2020 he was the winner of the Feis Ceoil IMRO Composition Award and was finalist in the 2025 International Mauricio Kagel Composition Competition.

Peter is a music graduate of Trinity College Dublin where he began composing, arranging and conducting, later studying conducting with Dr. Geoffrey Spratt. Peter continued his musical education by studying conducting with Mark Stringer and composition with Detlev Müller-Siemens at the renowned University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna from where he graduated with honours in June 2024.

## Joanna Mattrey

Joanna Mattrey is a violist, composer, improviser, and multimedia artist, whose works blend installation, video, sound, and movement, and are often site-specific. Her compositions use multimedia elements to create visual and sonic environments that convey the themes of transformation, memory, politics, social connection, loss, and spiritual journeys. Working in free improvisation, new music, and classical music, she uses extended techniques, modern compositional approaches, and electronic alterations to challenge conventions in sound. Mattrey has performed with icons Tyshawn Sorey, Henry Threadgill, Marc Ribot, John Zorn, Billy Martin, Elliott Sharp, Miya Masaoka, and Crash Ensemble, the International Contemporary Ensemble, and Irish National Opera.

Festivals include Newport Jazz Festival, NYC Jazz Fest, Jazzwerkstatt, ArtActs, Tomeka Reid's Chicago Jazz String Summit, Dis(obedience) Fest, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, November Music, Kilkenny Festival, KollektivRabazzz, Visual Sound Outdoor Festival and Dara Festival. Her recent solo works include *Soulcaster* (Notice Recordings 2023), *Dirge* (Dear Life Recs 2021), *Veiled* (Relative Pitch Records, 2020) and she has undertaken residencies at Roulette, ISSUE Project Room, Watermill, Banff's Creative Gesture, 14th Street Y, Wild Project, and MoMa PS1's ALLGOLD.

## Michael Sullivan

Michael Sullivan is a composer, writer and performer from Galway. In 2019, he graduated from Maynooth University with a BA in Music and Mathematical Physics. As part of an elective year studying electro-acoustics in Montreal, he regularly performed with the Concordia University Laptop Orchestra. In recent years, Michael has worked as a sound designer and composer for various theatrical productions and podcasts. Notable projects include *The Bootsy Boys' Blackbird* (Best Fiction - Winner - 2022 Irish Podcast Awards) and *Chiron: A One Centaur Show* (Spirit of Wit - Nominee - 2023 Dublin Fringe).

In 2024, he was commissioned by Crash Ensemble as part of their Postcards Project to compose a new piece *Through Worlds of Fog*, which debuted at the Kilkenny Arts Festival. Since 2018, he has also been involved in improvised theatre, performing in numerous festivals in Ireland and Europe, including Otherside Festival in Meath and the Edinburgh Fringe. In 2023, he wrote and performed in the absurdist play *The Lead-Pipe Pigeon Brigade* as part of the *Scene and Heard Festival* for new work. Musically and artistically, he is most interested in non-traditional instrumentation, feedback loops, surrealism, and the use of dream logic.

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#### **Supported by**

**RTÉ/NCH/Arts Council Ireland/Dublin City Council/Deborah Crowley Fund for Creative Music Makers**

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DUBLIN  
2026

# *NCH Cór na nÓg*

## *Love The Earth*

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**Sunday 19th April 2026 - 12:00pm**

Main Stage, National Concert Hall

### **Mother Earth**

*Ancient Mother, The Earth is our Mother* (Native American songs) arr. **Barbara Sletto**

**Nick Page** *Love The Earth*

### **Animals of the Earth**

**Marian Ingoldsby** *Gugalaí-Gug*

**Marian Ingoldsby** *Damhán Alla*

**Marian Ingoldsby** *The Caterpillar*

### **Birds of the Earth**

**Elaine Agnew** *A Conference of Birds* [World Premiere]

**Elaine Agnew** *The Swallow*

**Sue Furlong** *An Londubh*

### **Sounds of the Earth**

*Seeds of Hope* (EDEN Project song)

*Orde-e* (Madukayan Folk Song, arr. **Maria**

**Therese Vizconde-Roldan**

### **A Place We Once Called Earth**

**Robert S. Cohen** *Stardate 101*

**NCH Cór na nÓg**  
**Floating World & The Elders**  
**Mary Amond O'Brien** music director

**Aodh Quigley** music assistant  
**Carole O'Connor** accompanist  
**Nicky Bailey** percussion  
**Sinead Farrell** flute/piccolo

**Richard O'Donnell** vibraphone  
**Bernard Reilly** glockenspiel  
**Daniel Byrne** keyboard

## Programme Notes

Love The Earth - the concert title chosen by NCH Cór na nÓg singers and a piece on the programme by Nick Page, aims to awaken, and reawaken, a much-needed awareness among them and their intergenerational audience of the sacredness of the *living* Earth in today's world. In his programme notes, Nick Page recalls a Cherokee woman saying, "*We are all indigenous to the planet Earth.*" He also reflects that his study of many Native American traditions led him to capitalise the word 'Earth' as a mark of respect.

Divided into five sections - *Mother Earth, Animals of the Earth, Birds of the Earth, Sounds of the Earth, and A Place We Once Called Earth* - the programme features works by Irish composers Elaine Agnew, Sue Furlong, and Marian Ingoldsby, alongside American composers Robert Cohen, Nick Page and Barbara Sletto. Robert Cohen's new treble arrangement of *Stardate 101* will receive its world-premiere performance. The song *Seeds of Hope*, is a song created by a children's choir in collaboration with curator Mike Roberts after being asked "What if trees could sing?" It is part of the internationally renowned EDEN project.

The title and theme of this year's programme were inspired by an intergenerational project undertaken by NCH Cór na nÓg in 2025 with Floating World and The Elders, titled *A Conference of Birds*, which highlighted red-listed bird species in Ireland and for which Elaine Agnew was commissioned to write a song of the same name. This work will be presented to a public audience for the first time as part of NMD 2026.

# Biographies

## Marian Ingoldsby

Dr Marian Ingoldsby is a native of Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary. She began her composition study with Gerald Barry at University College, Cork, graduating with an MA in Composition and winning the Fleischmann Prize in 1995 for her outstanding contribution to music. In 2000 she graduated with a PhD in Composition from the University of York, having been awarded the first Elizabeth Maconchy Fellowship to study there. She is currently a lecturer in the Department of Creative and Performing Arts in SETU, formerly Waterford Institute of Technology, and is active as composer, pianist and répétiteur.

She has composed in excess of 50 works to date, ranging from choral, piano, vocal, chamber and orchestral, to opera and music theatre. Commissions include an opera by Opera Theatre Company, *Hot Food with Strangers* (premiered in 1991 in Dublin, and in 1992 at Covent Garden), the NSO, Cork International Choral Festival, the AXA Dublin International Piano Competition, and by the Ulster Orchestra who premiered her *Heron By the Weir* in 2008.

She has written several works for young performers, notably, *Lily's Labyrinth*, a children's opera, *Ivan Biddycup's Ballet*, for the Cork Pops Orchestra, a Lyric FM commission for RTÉ *Cor na nOg*, entitled *This Is The Key*, (2004), and her *Creative Use of Classroom Singing*, widely used by choirs of all age groups. Recent performances include *Winter Sun* by the RTÉ Symphony Orchestra, June 2022, music to the film *The Reburial of Jackie Brett* shown at the Butler Gallery as part of Kilkenny Heritage Week in August 2021, *The Light that frightens us* for solo piano, premiered by Finghin Collins in Canada and Ireland in 2023, and most recently *Parlour Pieces* commissioned by Mount Congreve Chamber Music Festival in 2025.

## Elaine Agnew

Elaine Agnew's widely commissioned body of work ranges from opera, games/animated graphic novels and contemporary dance to orchestras and choirs, reaching audiences across the world from the BBC Proms and gamers to outreach workshop participants.

Orchestras including Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Cuba, Magogo Kamerosrkest, Ulster and RTÉ Concert Orchestras and the Irish and Scottish Chamber Orchestras have all championed her work under eminent conductors including Jane Glover, Kenneth Montgomery, JoAnn Falletta, Jac Van Steen, Jaime Martín and Andrew Litton as well as ensembles such as the Škampa and ConTempo Quartets, Concorde, Ensemble Antipodes, Hard Rain Soloist Ensemble and Brass Band Oberösterreich. Elaine's substantial list of choral works include those for the Boston Children's Chorus, Chamber Choir Ireland, Kaunas Chamber Choir, New Dublin Voices, Cappella Caeciliana, Ghostlight Chorus NY and Choral Scholars of UCD, working closely with directors James Grossmith, Lynsey Callaghan, Mary Amond O'Brien, David Hill and Desmond

Earley. Soloists who have championed her work include pianists Iain Burnside, Simon Lepper, Finghin Collins and Angela Hewitt, violinists Isabelle Faust and Katherine Hunka and singers Jane Manning and Ben McAteer.

Her music has featured at the London BMIC Cutting Edge Series, the Spitalfields and Slovenian Unicum Festivals, RTÉ Composing the Island and Horizons Series, Is Arti Festival Lithuania, Barossa Music Festival Australia, Tilberg Festival, Charles Wood Festival, FairPlay Chamber Music, Valdres Sommersymfoni and Piano Biennale as well as Berlin's Classical:NEXT and performed in prestigious venues such as New York's Carnegie Hall and Czech Centre, London's South Bank Centre, Wigmore and Royal Albert Halls and the Konzerthaus Berlin.

Collaborators include playwrights Veronica Coburn and Deirdre Kinahan, choreographers Jennifer Rooney and Fiona Quilligan as well as poets Michael Longley, Ciaran Carson and Jessica Traynor, who created the libretto for Paper Boat, an opera commissioned by Music for Galway and conducted by Sinead Hayes. With Vienna-based Game Developers Causa Creations, Elaine created the soundtrack for Songs of Travel (iOS and Android), her works feature on 18 discs including Signum, Metiér, Lorelt, Doyen, Hibernian Music, Diatribe, Black Box and RTÉ lyric fm labels and her choral music is published by Boosey & Hawkes, Cailíno Music and Seolta Music.

Upcoming premieres include a song-cycle at the Oxford International Song Festival as well as commissions from New Music Dublin, National Symphony Orchestra Ireland and the Californian girls choir iSing Silicon Valley. Recent premieres include The Offing by the Belfast Philharmonic Choirs with a specially commissioned text by Sinéad Morrissey.

A member of Aosdána, Ireland's state-sponsored body of creative artists, and former Composer in Residence with RTÉ lyric fm, Elaine's 2012 BBC Proms commission Dark Hedges was premiered by Ulster Youth and Ulster Orchestras with international flautist Sir James Galway in London's Royal Albert Hall and described by one London reviewer as 'compelling from beginning to end'.

## Sue Furlong

Sue Furlong was one of the most important contributors to the Irish choral scene during her lifetime. With over 40 works published internationally, her compositions and arrangements are regularly performed in churches, schools and concert halls worldwide.

Born in Waterford, Sue spent most of her working life in Wexford. Her musical career spanned the fields of composition, education, performance and conducting. Large-scale works include The Dancing Master (a cantata for equal voices and instrumental ensemble), The Voice Thief (a musical for children's choir and symphony orchestra) premiered at Birmingham Symphony Hall in 2010 and Come the Sails (an anthem for massed choirs and orchestra) premiered to a 5,000 strong audience for the opening of the 2011 Waterford Tall-Ships Festival.

Sue's early output as a composer focused mainly on sacred music. Her Mass of Thanksgiving

won first prize in the 2001 RTÉ National Church Music Competition. An extensive period of composition for children followed, during which she was commissioned by prestigious choirs such as County Wexford Children's Choir, Aspiro and Appalachian Children's Chorus. Three volumes of children's Irish language songs D'Aon Ghuth (With One Voice) are published by Boosey & Hawkes along. Her catalogue of works also includes commissioned work for Boosey's Singing Sherlock series, many arrangements of popular music and Irish folk songs for adult choirs and instrumental compositions. Sue was the conductor of Wexford Festival Singers from 1998 - 2006 and founded the multi award-winning mixed-voice choir Vocaré in 2007. Sue sadly passed away in 2018.

### **Nick Page**

Nick Page is a Boston based composer, conductor and author who is best known for his song leading. In the 1980s he was a conductor with the Emmy Award winning Chicago Children's Choir. Since 1990, he has led Boston's Mystic Chorale and guest conducted around the world including at three of the four Carnegie Halls (Pittsburgh, New York, and Scotland). His choral works have premiered everywhere from Lincoln Center to humble school cafeteriums. He is the author of three books and has close to one hundred published choral pieces.

### **Robert S. Cohen**

Robert S. Cohen has written music for chorus, orchestra, chamber ensemble, dance and theatre and has been the recipient of awards and commissions, including a New Jersey State Council on the Arts Fellowship, Hong Kong Children's Choir's International Composition competition, several commissions from the Philadelphia Boys Choir & Chorale, an American Music Center Grant, Meet the Composer Awards, New York Composer's Circle Award and various other several grants and awards. His works have been performed in such prestigious venues as Carnegie Hall, Severance Hall, Berlin's Kammermusiksaal, the Kimmel Center, Symphony Space, Bargemusic, the Sofia Opera House, Melbourne Concert Hall and the Beijing National Center for the Performing Arts. *Alzheimer's Stories* for soloists, chorus and large ensemble, with a libretto by Grammy winning librettist Herschel Garfein, is one of the most performed large-scale choral works in the U.S and was the featured work at the 2019 ACDA National Conference. Other major works include *Genesis* for soloists, chorus, brass & percussion, *Eternity Considered as a Closed System* for soloists, chorus and orchestra and *Edison Invents* for baritone and orchestra. His extensive catalogue of choral works includes: Sleep, Little Baby, Sleep, Stardate 101, Stay in Time, The Road Back, The Beauty of Life, Night Cadence, Sprig of Lilac, Peter Quince at the Clavier, Wind and Spirit of the Winding Water.

### **Mary Amond O'Brien**

Mary Amond O'Brien is a highly respected conductor-animateur, music educator, song leader,

and composer known for her dynamic leadership, inspiring programming and strong belief in the singing potential of all. Widely recognised for her work with children’s, youth and community choirs, she has studied extensively and worked alongside internationally renowned conductor and educator Dr. Doreen Rao. Mary has directed numerous ensembles, including Aspiro (Carlow), which she founded in 1997 and led to national and international recognition, as well as Cór na nÓg, Cór Linn and Sing Out at the National Concert Hall, Carlow Community Choir, SiNG SYNC, and enCÓRe (Carlow). In addition to her conducting work, she has composed music used in schools and church settings, including the much-loved “*Sing Alleluia*,” also known as “*This Is the Day*” (“*Seo é an Lá*”). Through her work as a conductor, composer and educator, Mary has played a significant role in shaping youth and community choral singing in Ireland and in encouraging participation in group singing at all ages. Mary is thrilled to be back for her and Cór na nÓg’s seventh New Music Dublin appearance.

## NCH Cór na nÓg

NCH Cór na nÓg is one of Ireland’s premier children’s choirs, offering high-quality vocal training and performance opportunities to young singers aged 9 to 14. In a fun, friendly, and supportive environment, members develop their musical skills while forming lasting friendships. The choir was established in 1987 by RTÉ’s Choral Director, Colin Mawby, and has been under the baton of acclaimed conductor Mary Amond O’Brien since 2011.

In January 2022, Cór na nÓg, transferred with Cór Linn youth choir and the National Symphony Chorus Ireland to the National Concert Hall. The choir maintains a vibrant and varied performance calendar, with recent performances including the Pan Celtic Festival in Carlow (April) and an upcoming theatre project in The Mill, Dundrum highlighting the plight of endangered birds (May).

Many former members go on to join NCH Cór Linn or the NSCI, with some returning as mentors or staff, helping to keep the NCH choral community thriving across generations.

Auditions for the NCH Cór na nÓg Training Choir are held each February. For more information, please contact [nchchoirs@nch.ie](mailto:nchchoirs@nch.ie)

Abby O’Halloran	Eleanor O’Cathain	Lara Duke
Aisling Browne	Elena Galvin	Leon Manschot
Alannah Cousins	Ellen Graham	Maeve Hynes
Amelia Rowan	Emilia Ward	Maeve Farrelly
Aoibhinn Galvin	Emma Elliott	Mary Solyakov
Aoife Kenny	Eva White	Masha Khalikova
Arabella McGuinness	Freya Cosgrove	Max O’Sullivan
Bella Kinsella	Hannah Tessie Hoey	Maximilian White
Caoimhe Doyle	Holly Keane	Oisín Murphy
Cara Fortune	Hugo Manschot	Paul Manschot

Catherine McGarry  
Cathy Owens  
Chaanrouy Nangsha  
Ciara Ní Almhain  
Ciara James  
Clara Ferguson  
Clíodhna Walsh

Isabel O'Cathain  
Iseult O'Neill  
Isobel Owens  
Jean O'Connor  
Joni Scott-Mulcahy  
Juliette Ní Mhurchú  
Kiara Vrishti Sumroo

Rosa Tottenham  
Rose Pritchard Melvin  
Sally Griffin  
Sarah McParland  
Sarah Power  
Sibéal McCarthy  
Yeukai Cadden-Doyle

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NEW  
MUSIC  
DUBLIN  
2026

# *Gare St Lazare Ireland*

## *The Last Tape*

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**Sunday 19th April 2026 - 3:30pm**

Kevin Barry Recital Room, National Concert Hall

**Marcel Mihalovici** composer

**Samuel Beckett** writer/libretto

**Andrew Synnott** composer/arranger

**Judy Hegarty Lovett** director

**Mark Padmore** singer

**Conor Lovett** actor

**Morgan Dunne** sound engineer

**Kelly Jehano** stage manager

**Elaine Kelly** conductor

**Alex Petcu** percussion

**Izumi Kimura** piano

**Ellen Jansson** piano

**Mel Mercier** sound design

**Megan Riordan** line producer

**Maura O'Keeffe** associate producer

## About 'The Last Tape'

*"The Last Tape is an opportunity to experience Beckett's language through song. Music as the primary language of expression offers us access to a different emotional register than that offered by the original play Krapp's Last Tape. Combining both works in this hybrid performance offers us another register combining the listening sound-worlds of the spoken and the sung.*

*Allowing that Beckett's written language is already a musical event whereby repetition, imagery and rhythm are important elements to his storytelling we are now privileged, through the collaboration of writer and composer, with a new approach and understanding of this character, Krapp. We are surfing mediums and realising the work on several dimensions at once. This version has the potential to deliver a kaleidoscopic view of Beckett's masterpiece.*

*While the stakes are often higher in the operatic version the silences of the original play are generally filled with music here. There are some moments of suspension of sound however, when the two versions are blended, we have a way of re-inserting the silences and thereby hearing the music differently. The music literally becomes a character commenting and narrating as well as accompanying, it holds up like a shattering mirror to the character's past and present selves. A desire to unravel the many selves locked inside this work is some of what I as director am interested in. Krapp's older and younger self sit side by side and are commenting inwardly in both a past and present. The past and present blending through song and word, actor and singer is multifaceted, intricate and possibly gives way to a more diversified way of experiencing the work. And of course an opportunity to deconstruct the play and the opera are part of what arises when we combine both. By taking apart how the meaning is built in to both mediums we have the possibility of seeing its opposites, its hidden qualities, its contradictions in a newly constructed way. I find this liberating and inspiring and gives me another way of seeing and hearing this work."*

- Judy Hegarty Lovett (director)

## Biographies

### Marcel Mihalovici

Marcel Mihalovici (1919-1985) was a French composer born in Romania. He was discovered by George Enescu in Bucharest. He moved to Paris in 1919 aged 21 to study under Vincent d'Indy. His works include his *Sonata number 1 for violin and piano* (1920), *Mélusine* opera (1920, libretto by Yvan Goll), his *1st string quartet* (1923), *2nd string quartet* (1931), *Sonata number 2 for violin and piano* (1941), *Sonata for violin and cello* (1944), *Phèdre* opera (1949), *Étude in two parts for piano and instrumental ensemble* (1951) and *Esercizio per archi* (1960). Many of his piano works were first performed by his wife, the concert pianist Monique Haas.

Mihalovici was the original composer for the music of Samuel Beckett's radio play *Cascando*

(1962). His *Fifth Symphony* features a soprano singing a setting of a Beckett poem. A strong proponent of neoclassicism during his career, Mihalovici embraced a variety of contemporary styles, with a harmonic language ranging from chromaticism to serialism. Romanian folk music influenced his unconventional use of rhythmic variation and instrumental colour.

## Samuel Beckett

One of the great Irish artists and certainly a major figure in theatre and literature, Samuel Beckett was born in Dublin and spent most of his life in Paris. Best known for his seminal play *Waiting for Godot* which arguably had the most profound influence of any 20<sup>th</sup> century play, his work has been translated and performed worldwide. He studied at Trinity College Dublin and at the École Supérieur in Paris, and he met and became friends with James Joyce whom he cited as a huge influence.

Although he had written 6 novels before *Waiting For Godot*, the latter's success drew him into the theatre and from there came many invitations to write also for radio, film and tv as well as opportunities to collaborate with other artists. A keen piano player and lover of the music of Franz Schubert, among others, he collaborated only on two operas, *The Last Tape* and *Neither* with American composer Morton Feldman.

## Andrew Synnott

Andrew Synnott is a composer and conductor based in Dublin. He has conducted operas for Irish National Opera, Wexford Festival Opera, Opera Collective Ireland, Opera Theatre Company and the Royal Irish Academy of Music. He is a former artistic director and conductor of Crash Ensemble, a group he co-founded in 1997. He has conducted many orchestras and choirs, including Chamber Choir Ireland, National Symphony Orchestra Ireland and the RTÉ Concert Orchestra. In January 2015 he conducted the premiere of his first opera, *Breakdown*, in the NCH in Dublin. His second opera, *Dubliners*, was premiered at Wexford Festival Opera in 2017 and was nominated for an Irish Times Theatre Award in the Best Opera category. His opera, *La cucina*, commissioned by Wexford Festival Opera in 2019 became the first by a living Irish composer to be performed on the main stage at the festival. He has had three further operas staged at the Wexford Festival—*What Happened To Lucrece*, *The Fortyseventh Saturday* and *The Main Street*. *Waiting For Elvira* for piano and orchestra was premiered at NMD in 2022.

## Judy Hegarty Lovett

Judy is the director of 30 productions for Gare St Lazare Ireland. Among them the Beckett titles *Molloy*, *Malone Dies*, *The Unnamable*, *Lessness*, *Enough*, *Worstward Ho*, *Texts For Nothing*, *First Love*, *The End*, *The Calmative*, *Ill Seen Ill Said*, *How It Is*, *Here All Night*, *Waiting for Godot (3)* and *Rockaby*. In 2006 she directed all seven of Samuel Beckett's radio plays - *All That Fall*, *Embers*, *The Old Tune*, *Cascando*, *Words & Music*, *Rough for Radio 1*, and *Rough for Radio 2* - in a Gare St

Lazare/RTE Radio One co-production to mark the centenary of the writer's birth.

In 2024 she directed *Waiting for Godot* at Geffen Playhouse, Los Angeles, in association with Gare St Lazare Ireland. In 2022 Judy directed *The Realistic Joneses* by Will Eno for Gare St Lazare in a co-production with Rubicon Theatre and Laguna Playhouse. In 2012 she directed *Copenhagen* by Michael Frayn at Rubicon Theatre, Ventura, CA. In 2021 Judy directed the 6 hour, 17 minute film of Beckett's novel *How It Is*, based on her staging of the production for Gare St Lazare Ireland. The production will receive its live world premiere at Palazzo Diedo in Venice in June 2026. Also in 2021 Judy was awarded a PhD for her doctoral research on the staging of Beckett's prose at University of Reading, UK. She has a post-graduate degree in Dramatherapy from University of Hertfordshire UK and a degree in Fine Art (Performance art/mixed media) from Crawford College of Art & Design in Cork Ireland.

Judy won the Best Director award at The Irish Times Theatre Awards 2022 for her production of *The Realistic Jones* by Will Eno and was nominated for Best Director at The Irish Times Theatre Awards for *How It Is (Part 2)* in 2019 and for Best Production for *How It Is (Part 1)* in 2018. The latter also won Best Soundscape for Mel Mercier and Best Lighting Design for Kris Stone at the Irish Times Awards. *Waiting for Godot* at Geffen Playhouse was nominated for Best Sound Design (by Mel Mercier). In August 2026 Judy will direct *The Last Tape*, in a full production at Kilkenny Arts Festival.

## Mark Padmore

Mark Padmore is one of the most highly respected performers of his generation and has established an international career at the highest level in opera, concert and recital.

Having worked at leading opera houses worldwide recent productions have included the title role in a new production of Monteverdi's *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* conducted by Fabio Biondi at the Grand Théâtre de Genève, a new production of Britten's *Death in Venice* at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden described as a "tour de force", Captain Vere in Britten's *Billy Budd* and Evangelist in a staging of St. Matthew Passion for the Glyndebourne Festival, and leading roles in Harrison Birtwistle's *The Corridor and the Cure* at the Aldeburgh Festival.

In concert Mark has performed with the world's leading orchestras. He was Artist-in-Residence for the 2017/18 season with the Berlin Philharmonic and held a similar position with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra in 2016/17. Recent and future engagements include performances with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Turku Philharmonic Orchestra, a tour of Japan appearing at Le Pont International Music Festival, Orchestra of La Scala, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and the Freiburg Chamber Orchestra.

Mark gives recitals at leading venues and festivals arounds the world including the Concertgebouw, Carnegie Hall, Musikverein and the Wigmore Hall where he was Artist-in-Residence in 2021/22. He collaborates regularly with acclaimed pianists such as Mitsuko Uchida, Paul Lewis and Imogen Cooper with whom he tours China in 2026.

He has made numerous award-winning recordings including Schumann *Dichterliebe* with

Kristian Bezuidenhout and Schubert song cycles with Paul Lewis, both for Harmonia Mundi.

Mark was Artistic Director of the St. Endellion Summer Music Festival in Cornwall from 2012-2022, voted 2016 Vocalist of the Year by Musical America and appointed CBE in the 2019 Queens' Birthday Honours List. He lives in London with his family.

## Conor Lovett

Conor is joint artistic director of Gare St Lazare Ireland. He has performed over 24 Beckett roles including *Molloy*, *Malone Dies*, *The Unnamable*, *Lessness*, *Texts For Nothing*, *First Love*, *The End*, *The Calmative*, *How It Is*, *Here All Night*, five productions of *Waiting for Godot*, and *A Piece of Monologue* as well as the radio plays *All That Fall*, *Embers*, *Cascando*, *Words & Music*, *Rough for Radio 1*, and *Rough for Radio 2*. He has also worked with Druid, Fabulous Beast, Corcadorca and The Gate Theatre, Dublin. He has performed Beckett's work in over 85 cities around the world. He has collaborated on 4 plays by Will Eno including *Title and Deed* and *The Realistic Joneses*. He performed *Title and Deed* at Kilkenny, New York and in Edinburgh where he won The Stage Award for Acting Excellence. Other new plays include *Leaves* by Lucy Caldwell at The Royal Court, *The Bull* with Fabulous Beast (now Teac Damhsa) and *An Oak Tree* with Tim Crouch at the National Theatre, London. Since 2015 he has worked with actor Stephen Dillane, composer/sound designer Mel Mercier and director Judy Hegarty Lovett on the staging of Beckett's novel *How It Is*, which will have its world premiere in Venice in June this year. Recent film and TV work includes *Versailles*, *Endeavour*, *Marie Antoinette*, *The Three Urns*, *The Man in the Hat*, *Charles de Gaulle* (2026) and *De Gaulle* (2022). He also appeared in *Father Ted*.

## Elaine Kelly

Two-time GRAMMY-nominated Irish conductor Elaine Kelly is recognised for performances of striking clarity, warmth, and expressive insight, bridging the operatic canon with today's most adventurous contemporary music. The Los Angeles Times described her as "a discovery, tracing the musical lines with exactitude."

Former Resident Conductor of Irish National Opera, Kelly shaped productions across both standard repertoire and newly commissioned works. A leading advocate for contemporary opera, she has conducted and premiered music by Irish composers including Emma O'Halloran, Jennifer Walshe, Donnacha Dennehy, Tom Lane, David Coonan, Amanda Feery, Evangelia Rigaki, and Anna Mullarkey.

Her world-premiere double bill *TRADE / Mary Motorhead* (Emma O'Halloran) debuted at New York's PROTOTYPE Festival and later appeared with LA Opera, the Australian Contemporary Opera Company and at home in Ireland. The live recording received a five-star review in BBC Music Magazine and earned a 2026 GRAMMY nomination. Her recording of Benedict Sheehan's *Akathist*, premiered at Trinity Church Wall Street, also received a 2025 GRAMMY nomination.

Equally at home in the core repertoire, Kelly has conducted *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Faust*, *Così fan*

*tutte*, and *Hänsel und Gretel*, and collaborated with orchestras including National Symphony Orchestra Ireland, RTÉ Concert Orchestra, and Mozarteumorchester Salzburg. She previously won First Prize at the ESB Feis Ceoil Orchestral Conducting Competition.

## Ellen Jansson

Hailed as "a major talent" after her Carnegie Hall debut with Prokofiev's Third Piano Concerto, Irish pianist Ellen Jansson is quickly establishing herself as one of Ireland's most versatile and exciting young musicians. She has appeared as soloist with the National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine, and New York Concerti Sinfonietta, as well as giving solo and chamber performances throughout Europe.

Under Mary Beattie at Cork School of Music, Ellen graduated first in her class in 2020 before studying with Barbara Moser at the University of Music and Performing Arts, Vienna. Her accolades include winning the Chetham's Yamaha Piano Competition, the Flax Trust Bursary at Clondeboye Festival, and the COS Emerging Artist Award. An avid chamber musician, she has performed with the ConTempo String Quartet and Irish Chamber Orchestra, and at festivals throughout Ireland, including New Ross Piano Festival and Westport Chamber Music Festival. In 2024 she spent a month in residence at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity Interplay programme, where she performed with José Franch-Ballester and Beverley Johnston.

A passionate advocate for the performance and promotion of music written by women, she has appeared several times at the 'Finding a Voice' Festival since its launch in 2018, including giving the first complete Irish performance of Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel's *Das Jahr* in 2021, and curating and performing a concert of solo and chamber works by Canadian composer Alexina Louie in 2019. She performs regularly with flautist Miriam Kaczor, and their performance at the Castleconnell Autumn Concert Series 2022 was recorded for national broadcast by RTÉ lyric fm.

Ellen currently studies with Hugh Tinney on the Doctor in Music Performance programme at the Royal Irish Academy of Music and Trinity College Dublin, where she is an 1848 Scholar and recipient of the SALT Bursary. Since 2020, she is répétiteur to the MA in Classical String Performance at the Irish World Academy of Music, University of Limerick.

## Izumi Kimura

Pianist Izumi Kimura has an extensive performance background in classical, contemporary classical, jazz and improvised music. In recent years, she has focused primarily on spontaneous composition, the interpretation of new music, and the intersections of these areas with other art forms. She has worked with many leading artists and ensembles, including RTÉ Orchestras, Crash Ensemble, Hard Rain Ensemble, Ioana Petcu-Colan, Ken Edge, and Benjamin Dwyer from the classical music scene, and collaborated with jazz and contemporary improvisers such as Barry Guy, Gerry Hemingway, Mark Dresser, Michael Moore, Ramón López, Dominique Pifarély, Oki Itaru, Benoît Delbecq, Tommy Halferty, Ronan Guilfoyle, Joe

O'Callaghan, Marco Colonna, Cora Venus Lunny, Lina Andonovska, among many others.

Izumi draws inspiration from her collaborations with visual artists, and has ongoing projects with Irish artists Jaki Irvine, Anthony Wigglesworth, and Helen O'Connell.

## Alex Petcu

An Irish musician of Romanian origin, Alex has established himself both nationally and internationally as a percussionist of the finest calibre. His debut album, *Alex Petcu: In Time*, released on the RTÉ lyric fm label, showcases both seminal works and new contributions to the percussion repertoire. Alex performs in a wide variety of settings with a multitude of orchestras, ensembles and groups, however, his main specialty lies in solo and chamber music. As a soloist, recent appearances include performances at the West Cork Chamber Music Festival, Kilruddery House and the National Concert Hall to name a few. He has performed as a soloist with both the RTÉ Concert Orchestra and the Irish Chamber Orchestra, and had successes in major national and international competitions such as the Irish Freemasons Young Musician of the Year, Tromp and A.R.D International competitions.

Alex enjoys being involved in the creation of new music for percussion and regularly collaborates with composers. Examples of recent projects include "Beats, Bells and Bridges" and the Abbey Theatre's production of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, both collaborations with composer Tom Lane. "A Most Peculiar Wintry Thing", a children's show jointly commissioned by The Ark and Music Network with music composed by Brian Irvine and "Invitation to a Journey", a dance/theatre/music collaboration with music by Deirdre Gribbin. He is a regular performer with the Crash and Hard Rain ensembles and a founding member of the Bangers and Crash Percussion Group. He is a regular extra player for National Symphony Orchestra Ireland, RTÉ Concert Orchestra, Irish Chamber Orchestra, Irish Baroque Orchestra and Ulster Orchestra.

Alex teaches at the MTU Cork School of Music and has given lecture recitals and workshops at Ireland's universities, West Cork Music, Music Network, the ESB and more. He holds an MA in music performance from the MTU Cork School of Music and an MSc and BSc in Physics from University College Cork.

## Mel Mercier

Mel Mercier is a Tony-nominated, multi-award-winning artist with an international reputation as a composer, performer, and sound designer. Mel collaborated as a traditional percussionist with pianist-composer Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin for 40 years and performed alongside his father, Peadar Mercier, with John Cage and the Merce Cunningham Dance Company throughout the 1980s.

Mel has created music for theatre and dance internationally for 25 years, working regularly with renowned artists, including Fiona Shaw, Deborah Warner, Phyllida Lloyd, Gare St Lazare Ireland, Philip Connaughton Dance, and John Scott/Irish Modern Dance Theatre.

Mel is director of the Irish Gamelan Orchestra and PULSUS, the first Irish traditional percussion ensemble. Mel received an MFA in World Music Percussion from CALARTS and a PhD from the University of Limerick, Ireland. Mel was Lecturer/Professor of Music at University College Cork (1991-2016) and Professor/Chair of Performing Arts at the Irish World Academy, UL (2016-2023)

Recent projects: *First Conviction* (Soundtrack Album/RTÉ Radio/TV); *A Giant at My Shoulder* (RTÉ Radio One); *Rebellious Hope* (Dance Film with Philip Connaughton); *Begin Anywhere* (with John Scott/IMDT), Irish Arts Centre New York 2025. *Waiting For Godot* (with Gare St Lazare Ireland), Geffen Playhouse, LA 2024; *Earth SONNET* (song cycle), Dublin Fringe Festival 2024.

**Supported by**

**RTÉ/NCH/Arts Council Ireland**

NEW  
MUSIC  
DUBLIN  
2026

# *RTÉ Concert Orchestra*

*O'Leary & O'Connell*

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**Sunday 19th April 2026 - 7:30pm**

Main Stage, National Concert Hall

**Jane O'Leary:** *Fanfare: From 2RN to RTÉ – Celebrating 100 Years*

**Kevin O'Connell:** *Paradiso*

**RTÉ Concert Orchestra**

**Gavin Maloney** conductor

**Aoife Miskelly** soprano

**Seán Boylan** baritone

**Garth Knox** viola

**New Dublin Voices**

## Programme Notes

### **Jane O'Leary:** *Fanfare: From 2RN to RTÉ – Celebrating 100 Years*

*"Written as a celebration of the centenary of Ireland's national broadcasting station, the fanfare references fragments from the signature tune chosen in 1936 and heard on the radio as the station's identity over many years - the traditional tune O'Donnell Abú. Music and voices reach out across the air waves, connecting people throughout Ireland and on across the world."*

- Jane O Leary, 2026

### **Kevin O'Connell:** *Paradiso*

*"Dante was everywhere in 2021. It was, to be sure, a centenary year (he died in 1321). But his pervasiveness set me thinking. I have never found him an easy poet. He is learned, philosophical and argumentative to the point of captiousness. Taking down my copy of the Temple Classics edition I was drawn to the Paradiso. It is the least loved of the three cantiche, or so we are constantly assured. But if the Commedia is a journey—second only to that of Odysseus, the most famous journey in western literature—the Paradiso is surely its culmination and fulfilment, and not in other-worldly terms only. For the Commedia is among many other things a love poem, and Paradiso celebrates Dante's union with Beatrice, now his heavenly guide.*

*For musical setting I have chosen eight episodes interwoven with several Latin chant texts cited by Dante. Here is a brief summary of the work's 10 movements:*

#### **1. Diverse voci.**

*The mingling of voices is likened to the heavenly order. Dante gives evidence of considerable musical knowledge and this short verse is one of the earliest descriptions of polyphony in European literature. This chorus echoes at the end of the work.*

#### **2. O luce eterna.**

*God's perfection is compared to eternal light.*

#### **3. Non sai tu.**

*Beatrice reminds Dante that he is in heaven.*

#### **4. O ben ferace.**

*Into the mouth of Thomas Aquinas Dante puts this celebration of the life of Francis of Assisi. In Dante's portrayal, Francis takes Poverty as his bride and on his deathbed commends her to the care of his followers. He receives the stigmata.*

## **5. Venite benedicti.**

*The blessed shall inherit the kingdom.*

## **6. Primum Mobile.**

*An orchestral evocation of the entity which is the container of all being and the origin of motion and of time itself (canti 28 and 29).*

## **7. La circolata melodia.**

*Dante has a vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary accompanied by the Angel Gabriel descending through Heaven towards him. These verses are replete with images of spirals and vortices.*

## **8. Sperent in te.**

*Our hope is in the Lord who does not neglect the prayers of the poor.*

## **9. Tu se' si presso.**

*Urging Dante onwards, Beatrice reminds him of the distance he has already come. The choir sings a Sanctus.*

## **10. Noi siamo uscite fore.**

*Beatrice describes the heaven of pure light, filled with every sweetness, while Dante, his will and desire finally united, evokes the ultimate bliss in images of light and stars.*

*I have set the poetry in Italian. This seemed to me no less or more of a challenge than translating it, musical setting after all being a species of translation. The Italian language has one Dante. English, at a recent estimation, has some 300, ranging from Shelley to Heaney and beyond. I have leaned gratefully on several of them, but felt no reservations about my final decision. I was not going to travel this distance with the great poet for the sake of a translation. It had to be Dante's Tuscan or nothing. To this end the internet put copious resources at my disposal, and I acknowledge in particular the Dante sites of Columbia University and the University of Virginia.*

*Above all, one can now readily hear Dante recited by Italian speakers, and my subtitle is no mere nod in their direction. When the astounding compression of Dante's imagery is given due praise, the auditory faculty perhaps brings us closest to the secrets of 'la dolce sinfonia di paradiso.'*

*This work is a record of the time I have spent listening my way into Dante.*

- Kevin O'Connell 2026

## Biographies

### Jane O'Leary

Jane was the recipient of the National Concert Hall's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2025. Born in Hartford, Connecticut, Jane O'Leary has been resident in Ireland since 1972. A founding member of Aosdána, Ireland's state-sponsored academy of creative artists, she is a graduate of Vassar College and holds a PhD in composition from Princeton University, where she studied with Milton Babbitt among others. She was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Music Degree by the National University of Ireland in 2007. As artistic director and pianist of Concorde ensemble, Jane O'Leary has been nurturing the development of new music in Ireland and promoting its performance worldwide since 1976. She was a founding member of Music for Galway and also The Galway Music Residency.

O'Leary's music has been selected on several occasions for performance at the ISCM World New Music Days and has been performed at prestigious international festivals and venues, including the Kennedy Center, Washington DC; the Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall, NY; the Chicago Cultural Center; Kings Place, London; Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris; West Cork Chamber Music Festival. National Symphony Orchestra Ireland featured her music on their debut tour of the USA in 2003.

Following international competition, her music has been selected for performance in New York at the MISE-EN Music Festival, Risuonanze in Udine (Italy), Encontro Internacional de Cordas, Limeira (S.P.) Brazil. Recent performances worldwide have also included Madrid, Hong Kong, Paris, New York, Denmark, Japan, Rome, Switzerland, California. She was the featured composer in the 2018-19 season of Hard Rain Soloist Ensemble, Belfast.

National Symphony Orchestra Ireland premiered *Triptych*, for string quartet and orchestra, in 2020 with Ligeti Quartet and Ryan McAdams, and unfolding soundscapes for piano and orchestra in 2022 with Finghin Collins and Kenneth Montgomery. Their recording of *From Sea-Grey Shores* was released on the Navona label in 2021.

Recent recordings also include *No. 19* with Wendy Case (violin) (Blue Griffin Recording), *Murmurs and Echoes* with Carlos Cordeiro (clarinet) and Dorothy Chan (piano) (Petrichor), *Silenzio della Terra* with Anna Lisa Pisanu (flute) and Filippo Lattanzi, (percussion) (DAD Records), *Beneath The Dark Blue Waves* with Hard Rain Soloist Ensemble (Diatrube), *Sunshowers* with Palomar Ensemble (ACM Chicago) and *Echoing Voices* with Iwona Glinka (alto flute) (Phasma Music).

## Kevin O'Connell

Since his first BBC Radio 3 commission at the age of 25 (Concertino for 12 players) Kevin O'Connell has written a continuous series of works that have been performed around the world. His output embraces opera, orchestral, chamber and vocal music. His first opera *Sensational!* toured Ireland and Britain in 1992. Two further operas followed in quick succession: *The Fireking* (1995) and *My Love My Umbrella* (1998), touring Ireland, Britain, the USA and Germany.

His orchestral works include *From The Besieged City* (Ulster Orchestra), *North* (BBC Radio 3), *Four Orchestral Pieces* (RTÉ) and *Symphony no. 1* (RTÉ). His chamber works have been performed by some of Europe's leading musicians: Cello Sonata (Raphael Wallfisch), Piano Trio no. 1 (Lontano), String Quartet (Lotus Quartet of Stuttgart), *A Battuta* (Hard Rain Soloist Ensemble), Piano Trio no. 2 (Kungsbacka Trio) and *Still Crying Voice* (Ficino Ensemble).

His choral works include *All The Livelong Way* after a text by Samuel Beckett (National Chamber Choir), *Fáilte Don Éan* (Cork Choral Festival; winner of Seán Ó'Riada prize) and two mass settings for the Palestrina Choir, including one in Irish. Other collaborations include *Measures and Inventions* for piano (Tiffany Qiu), *The Nothing Rhymes* (Michelle O'Rourke, soprano) and *Early Music* (National Symphony Orchestra Ireland), which is his tribute to favorite pieces from the lute and harpsichord repertoire. His Piano Etude no. 1 has been performed by David Adams, Tiffany Qiu, Joanna MacGregor and Rolf Hind, among others.

In 2024 his fourth opera *DreamCatcher* (2019) became the first Irish opera to be premiered as a film (Dublin International Film Festival, 2024) and later at the Messina Opera Film Festival in Sicily in December 2025.

From 2021-2025 O'Connell worked on one of his largest-scale projects, *Paradiso* for soloists, chorus and orchestra, based on selected passages from Dante's poem. (tonight's work)

A CD of O'Connell's orchestral works has been recorded by National Symphony Orchestra Ireland as volume 8 of RTÉ lyric fm's series of Irish composers. Kevin O'Connell is a member of Aosdána, Ireland's academy of creative artists.

## Aoife Miskelly

Aoife Miskelly began her career at Oper Köln. Working with conductors including Julia Jones, Laurence Cummings, Matthew Halls, Tomáš Hanus, Rafael Payare, Raphaël Pichon, Essa-Pekka Salonen, Yutako Sado, Markus Stenz and Peter Whelan, she has performed with Britten Sinfonia, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, Royal Northern Sinfonia, Irish Baroque Orchestra, Irish Chamber Orchestra, RTÉ Concert Orchestra and National Symphony Orchestra Ireland, Ensemble Pygmalion, Gürzenich Orchester Köln and NDR Radio Philharmonie. Her recordings include the Gramophone Award Nominated recording of Eccles' *Semele* with Academy of Ancient Music (role: Ino) and the Olivier Award Winning production of Vivaldi's *Bajazet* (role: Idapse) presented in collaboration by Irish National Opera and The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Recent engagements have included the role of Miss Wordsworth

in Albert Herring for English National Opera, of Helena in A Midsummer Night's Dream for Opéra de Lausanne and Teatro de la Maestranza, Seville, of Vixen Sharp-Ears in The Cunning Little Vixen and Musetta in La Bohème for Welsh National Opera, Euridice in L'Orfeo for Longborough Festival Opera, Donna Elvira in Don Giovanni at Teatro Manzoni Pistoia, Bird in Blond Eckbert for Potsdamer Winteroper, St Matthew Passion with the RIAS Kammerchor, Handel's Laudate Pueri with the Akademie für Alte Musik and Messiah with the Ulster Orchestra.

## Seán Boylan

With a voice described as 'rich and sonorous', Irish baritone Seán Boylan is one of the most exciting emerging talents of today. In 2025-26, Seán returns to Opera North as Schaunard (La bohème) and sings Algernon Moncrieff (The Importance of Being Earnest) for Garsington. Recent operatic highlights include Alcandro (L'Olimpiade) with Irish National Opera and the Irish Baroque Orchestra, he Royal Ballet & Opera, the Nouvel Opéra Fribourg, and the Teatro Tino di Lorenzo in Noto, Sicily; Guglielmo (Così fan tutte) at Garsington and Opera North; Tarquinius (The Rape of Lucretia) at Potsdam Winteroper; Moralès (Carmen), Marullo (Rigoletto), Frank (Die Fledermaus) with Irish National Opera; and the title role in Don Giovanni at Nevill Holt Opera.

In concert in the 25/26 season, Seán recently joined National Symphony Orchestra Ireland to celebrate the presidency of Michael D Higgins, and his wife Sabina, followed by performances of Messiah with the Irish Baroque Orchestra and Ulster Orchestra, and in the Philharmonia Orchestra's Carmina Burana. Seán has also previously performed at Galway Cathedral, the Drogheda Classical Music Series, and in a live broadcast with Irish National Opera at Kilkenny Castle. He has collaborated with pianist Iain Burnside on "Drums & Guns", a project commemorating the centenary of World War I and the Dublin Easter 1916 Rising, which was performed in Dublin, London and New York.

## Garth Knox

Garth Knox was born in Ireland and spent his childhood in Scotland. He studied with Frederic Riddle at the Royal College of Music in London where he won several prizes for viola and for chamber music. Thereafter he played with most of the leading groups in London in a mixture of all repertoires, from baroque to contemporary music. In 1983 he was invited by Pierre Boulez to become a member of the Ensemble InterContemporain in Paris, which involved regular solo playing, including concertos directed by Pierre Boulez, and chamber music, touring widely and playing in international festivals.

In 1990 Garth Knox joined the Arditti String Quartet, which led him to play in all the major concert halls of the world, working closely with and giving first performances of pieces by most of today's leading composers including Ligeti, Kurtág, Berio, Xenakis, Lachenmann, Cage, Feldman and Stockhausen (the famous "Helicopter Quartet"). Since leaving the quartet in 1998,

to concentrate on his solo career, he has given premieres by Ligeti, Schnittke, George Benjamin and many others, including pieces which were especially written for him by composers like Henze, Haas, Saariaho, James Dillon. He also collaborates regularly in theatre and dance projects, and has written and performed a one-man show for children.

He has recently become a pioneer of the viola d'amore, exploring its possibilities in new music, with and without electronics, and is in the process of creating a new repertoire for this instrument. Garth Knox now lives in Paris, where he enjoys a full time solo career, giving recitals, concertos and chamber music concerts all over Europe, the USA and Japan. He is also an active composer, and his «Viola Spaces », the first phase of an on-going series of concert studies for strings (published in 2010 by Schott) combines ground-breaking innovation in string technique with joyous pleasure in the act of music making. The pieces have been adopted and performed by young string players all over the world. Garth Knox is Visiting Professor of viola at the Royal Academy of Music in London.

### **Gavin Maloney**

Gavin Maloney is one of Ireland's foremost musicians. He has long-standing relationships with the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra Ireland and NCH Choirs, with whom he has worked on a great variety of concerts, recordings and education projects. He received his training at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester and the Mozarteum, Salzburg. At the age of 21 he was granted the position of Assistant Conductor of National Symphony Orchestra Ireland. He was the inaugural beneficiary of the Bryden Thomson Trust, through whose support he studied at the Danish National Opera and the Lucerne Festival Academy of Pierre Boulez. Gavin has also conducted in Germany, France, Italy and the UK. He has made many distinguished collaborations with artists including Gabriela Montero, Tara Erraught, Sir James Galway, Ailish Tynan, John O'Connor, Chloë Hanslip and Hugh Tinney. In 2017 Gavin featured for the first time in the NCH International Concert Series, appearing with Maxim Vengerov, who has described him as 'a great maestro'. His recordings, on the NMC and RTÉ Lyric FM labels, have earned critical acclaim, including that of Gramophone magazine. His live recording of Nicola LeFanu's Threnody (NMC) was recently released. Gavin has worked closely with Crash Ensemble and the EQ Ensemble, and for three years he directed the RTÉ NSO's signature contemporary music series, Horizons. His ballet credits include Swan Lake with Ballet Ireland. His concerts have been broadcast by the BBC, RTÉ, the European Broadcasting Union, Shanghai East Radio, and radio stations in North America and Australia.

### **New Dublin Voices**

Acclaimed for a "choral effect... simply breathtaking... in its refined beauty" (The Sunday Business Post), New Dublin Voices is a leading Irish chamber choir. It has given the world premieres of more than 80 works, capping a vast repertoire that spans the centuries with a pre-eminent and joyous commitment to the music of living composers.

Founded by its international award-winning conductor Bernie Sherlock, the choir is renowned for concert programming that strives to captivate, surprise and reward its audiences. New Dublin Voices leads the way in premiering, performing and disseminating choral music written by Irish composers, both in Ireland and abroad, and in introducing music from outside Ireland to audiences at home. International composers who have written for the choir include Ēriks Ešvalds, Paweł Łukaszewski, Roxanna Panufnik, Jaakko Mäntyjärvi and Sarah Quartel, very often with settings of Irish poetry.

The choir receives regular invitations to prestigious international festivals and has presented concert tours in many countries including France, Germany, Spain, Switzerland, the UK and the USA. New Dublin Voices was the first Irish choir invited to perform at the triennial World Symposium on Choral Music. The choir also has a long track record of success at international competitions, winning multiple prizes at competitions in France, Italy, Hungary, Germany, Finland, Belgium, Spain, England, Northern Ireland, Slovenia, Latvia, Wales, Poland and Bulgaria. Alongside numerous prizes in various classes, the choir has won the overall Grand Prix on many occasions, most recently in Poland at the 13th International Krakow Choir Festival Cracovia Cantans in 2024. It won the Grand Prix in Latvia at the 2nd International Baltic Sea Choir Competition in 2017, in Italy at the 61st Concorso Polifonico Internazionale Guido d'Arezzo in 2013, and in Hungary at the 12th Budapest International Choir Competition in 2009. In Ireland New Dublin Voices was awarded first prize at the 7th City of Derry International Choir Festival in 2019, and first prize in the Fleischmann International Trophy Competition at the 61st Cork International Choral Festival in 2015.

## **RTÉ Concert Orchestra**

Founded in 1948, the RTÉ Concert Orchestra has a vibrant, eclectic repertoire encompassing popular, classical, jazz, traditional and more. It has performed with artists including Luciano Pavarotti, Lang Lang, Marvin Hamlisch, Lalo Schifrin and Sinéad O'Connor. A 90s dance music series with Jenny Greene won an IMRO Outstanding Achievement Award. The RTÉ CO has performed in seven Eurovision Song Contests; film credits include Stephen Rennicks' score to Room and Brian Byrne's Golden Globe-nominated score to Albert Nobbs. Other recordings include Howard Shore's A Palace upon the Ruins and Flicker with Niall Horan. Live to screen performances include the Ireland premiere of The Nightmare Before Christmas with Danny Elfman and the world premiere of Room with live score. Work during the pandemic included Guy Barker jazz arrangements, an award-winning John Lennon tribute, a 50th anniversary Clannad celebration, a chart-topping single and a TV tribute to David Bowie featuring members of his own band. The Bowie project developed into live concerts in 2024 and 2025. Other recent projects include Thin Lizzy Orchestrated, a rare combination of blues and orchestra in The Delta Blues Project, introduced by Morgan Freeman, and Max Richter's Recomposed with Mari Samuelsen. Irish live premieres in jazz include Guy Barker's Kind of Blue Orchestrated and the Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong Porgy and Bess album. The Callas and Puccini centenaries have been celebrated, as well as the centenary year of The Great Gatsby. Upcoming highlights include Marilyn Monroe 100 in the NCH, and the music of the Beach Boys in both the NCH Dublin and UCH Limerick as part of the Limerick Summer Proms.

**First violins**

Mia Cooper *Leader*  
 David McElroy  
 Eileen Comer  
 Hugh Murray  
 Lidia Jewloszewicz-Clarke  
 Jisun Min  
 Conor Masterson  
 Maebh Martin

**Second violins**

Elizabeth Leonard  
 Anne Phelan  
 Carol Quigley  
 Siúbhán Ní Ghríofa  
 Camille Farrar  
 Robyn Bell

**Violas**

Lisanne Melchior  
 David Kenny  
 Elizabeth O'Neill  
 Gawain Usher

**Cellos**

Martin Johnson  
 Margaret Doris  
 Delia Lynch  
 Sheelagh Harte

**Double basses**

Seamus Doyle  
 Liam Wylie  
 Aura Stone

**Flutes**

Silvija Ščerbavičiūtė  
 Emma Roche

**Piccolos**

Silvija Ščerbavičiūtė  
 Emma Roche

**Alto flute**

Emma Roche

**Oboes**

Suzie Thorn  
 Ben Gannon

**Cor Anglais**

Ben Gannon

**Clarinets**

Michael Seaver  
 Macdara Ó Seireadáin

**Bass Clarinet**

Macdara Ó Seireadáin

**Bassoons**

Francis Bushell  
 Ian Forbes

**Contrabassoon**

Ian Forbes

**Horns**

Cormac Ó hAodáin  
 Declan McCarthy  
 Liam Duffy  
 Brian Daly

**Trumpets**

Shaun Hooke  
 Eamonn Nolan  
 Charles Cavanagh

**Trombones**

Stephen Mathieson  
 Michael Marshall

**Bass trombone**

Christopher Nery

**Timpani**

Oliver Taylor

**Percussion**

James Dunne  
 Stephen Kelly

**Harp**

Geraldine O'Doherty

**General Manager**

Alex Walden

**Orchestra Manager**

Andrew Smith

**Planning & Event Co-ordinator**

Mary Sexton

**Marketing Executive**

Frances Wilde

**Admin & Operations Assistant**

Nataliia Nemkina

**Librarian**

Mary Adams

**Orchestra Management Assistant**

Conor Byrne

**Senior Orchestral Assistant**

Gavin O'Sullivan

**Orchestral Assistant**

Emma Nolan

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NEW  
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2026

# *Crash Ensemble*

## *JACK*

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**Sunday 19th April 2026 - 9:15pm**

The Studio, National Concert Hall

**David Fennessy** *Jack* [Live Premiere]

**Tansy Davies** *Lost Science* [Irish Premiere]

**Jonathan Nangle** *Sotto Voce* [Live Premiere]

**Hannah Kendall** *Building a Burning House* [World Premiere]

**Conductor** Ryan McAdams

**Crash Ensemble** (+ Kendall, ^ Davies, \*Fennessy & Nangle )

**Larissa O'Grady** violin + ^

**Lisa Dowdall** viola + ^

**Kate Ellis** cello + ^

**Caimin Gilmore** double bass + ^

**Susan Doyle** flute/piccolo + ^

**Leonie Bluett** clarinet + ^

**Alex Petcu** percussion + ^

**Barry O'Halpin** electric guitar, electronics ^ \*

**Tomás Ó Durcain** electric guitar \*

**Erick Castillo Mora** trumpet +

**Dewi Jones** horn +

**Roddy O'Keeffe** trombone +

**Aisling Ennis** harp +

**Francesca De Buyl** Production Manager  
**Dan Devine** FOH Sound  
**Matt Burke** Lighting Designer

## Programme Notes

### David Fennessy: Jack

*My piece is for two unplugged electric guitars. The idea was from two things really.*

*First, during the first lockdown I had to move my 'studio' back to the flat where we live and I'm actually set up in the corner of our bedroom and often find myself having to work extremely quietly because my youngest daughter is asleep in the room next door. Hence the guitar not plugged in. It led me to actually really listen to that sound as an end in itself. I wanted the final sound of the piece to be experienced really up close - I've talked to Adrian about the audience even listening through headphones (not sure where we are with that now).*

*The second was the occasional guitar 'lessons' I was giving to my teenage nephew Jack, over Zoom, throughout the lockdown. These were lovely moments of connection, albeit with the inevitable time lags and glitches, which is reflected in the close canons between the two guitars in my piece. They're playing more or less the same material throughout the whole piece, locked in but not quite together.*

*There was one little video I made though which was a kind of silent soundtrack the whole way through the composition. One night here at around 3 in the morning I was lying awake and my ears became focused on the extremely faint sound of a dripping tap downstairs, to the extent that I couldn't get back to sleep until I had gone down and turned it off. But once there, I picked up an electric guitar (unplugged of course) that was lying there and came up with the principle ideas for the piece.*

- David Fennessy

**Commissioned by Crash Ensemble with funds from the Arts Council of Ireland/An Chomhairle Ealaíon**

### Tansy Davies: Lost Science

*An imaginary journey into the Earth's interior, Lost Science dwells in a space between the Earth's surface as we know it and older geophysical layers. That space could be 40,000 years old and carved out by an ancient waterway or it could be a volcanic cave, 4 billion years away. These interior spaces speak to us in moans, groans, echoes and whispers; the voice of Earth: secrets of her 'deep time' structure, and of the pains of the transformation she is undertaking now, which we too are experiencing.*

*Going back in time, to civilisations with heightened awareness of animal and plant wisdom; to the dreams of early humans their knowledge of the world around us. And perhaps imagining advanced technologies, which we have somehow lost or been denied access to.*

*The electronics track is an ancient landscape. The live musicians explore it. There are 11 cycles which serve as (re)activations in the form of visions of Divine Feminine presences and inner-earth energies, who / which appear: melding, connecting and activating the landscape and explorers. They are as follows: Sophia, Green, Tara, 2 Marys I, 2 Marys II, Anagan I, White buffalo woman, Hathor, Anagan II, Isis, Anagan III, Quan Yin / Joan of Arc*

- Tansy Davies

**Commissioned by Red Note Ensemble, Sound Scotland, Crash Ensemble and Ensemble Offspring**

### **Jonathan Nangle:** *Sotto Voce*

*The term sotto voce, or 'undertone', means to intentionally lower one's voice for emphasis. In musical terms, it instructs the performer to alter their playing style to create a hushed tonal quality or a whisper-like tone. One might also speak sotto voce if they wanted to convey something privately to another person. When I was asked to participate in the REACTIONS series, I couldn't help but look back on the previous year (2020/21) and how the pandemic had impacted me and those around me. I am, by my nature, a private person. However, through this piece, I have attempted to express some of the emotions and events I experienced during 2020/2021, from feelings of confusion, anger and frustration through times of sadness and also moments of joy.*

*Then repeat and repeat again...and again.*

- Jonathan Nangle

**Commissioned by Crash Ensemble with funds from the Arts Council of Ireland/An Chomhairle Ealaíon**

### **Hannah Kendall:** *Building A Burning House*

*"I am about to set fire to you, and it will consume all your trees, both green and dry. The blazing flame will not be quenched, and every face from south to north will be scorched by it." Ezekiel 20:47 (NIV)*

*In the summer of 2023, the skies of New York turned a hazy amber as the city became engulfed by smoke from wildfires in Canada. I was in the throes of completing my doctoral dissertation on resisting the Plantation Machine, which is the term that Cuban writer Antonio Benítez-Rojo uses to describe the complex, repetitious workings of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. As part of my research, I had watched Prof. Dale Tomich's lecture entitled *The Slave Plantation: Environment, History and Cycles of Capital Accumulation*. The presentation was hosted as part of the John Hope Franklin Humanities Institute at Duke University's Entanglement Project, which says, "Climate catastrophe cannot be thought outside of the context of empire and the forms of racialization*

*central to global capitalism, including the degradation of peoples, ecosystems and lands facilitated by states in the global North.”*

*Benítez-Rojo asserts that the Plantation Machine is a system, first formed during the establishment of the plantations, which continues to repeat in renewed, yet interconnected, ways as part of an extensive framework. Indeed, as I sat in my apartment, unable to leave due to the acrid smog outside, I considered how the plantation system produced local climate changes through their fuel-intensive processes, effects now replicated on a much larger scale. However, I also wondered about the inevitability of our current global climate predicament. In other words, despite attempts to obstruct the Machine, has it always been primed, from the very beginning, to overpower such acts of resistance and to repeat continuously until it causes total collapse and combustion? After all, the plantation system was driven by meticulous planning, layout, and assembly designed to ensure optimal processing conditions and maximum output for a competitive market. This is why the phrase “building a burning house” stood out to me when reading Ocean Vuong’s poem Homewrecker.*

*My recent string quartet hounded earth (2025), inspired by Wangechi Mutu’s video The End of carrying All, aims to conjure an imagined soundscape of the Earth following its combustion, as explored in Mutu’s work. The strings of the violins, viola, and cello are bound with dreadlock cuffs, which are small metallic Afro hair accessories. The cuffs are used in a similar way in building a burning house, including the double bass. The sounds range from brittle and fragile, such as when the bows are drawn over the cuffs placed behind the bridge, to warm, throaty multiphonics when the cuffs placed over the fingerboard are played. Harsher timbral qualities are produced when the strings themselves are bowed. This sound world evokes the sense of heightened danger of the present, and what I imagine to be the sounds of a possible desolated future. The past creolised situation of the plantations is also represented: the blending together of the Euro and the Afro (the instruments and cuffs, respectively, in this case). Indeed, I aim to conjure the past, present and future at the same time through this method, in the same way that Benítez-Rojo describes the interconnected nature of the Plantation Machine across time and space.*

*Echoes of the plantations are brought to the piece through tiny bells. Those enslaved and working the land might very well have been wearing an iron collar with bells attached to deter escape. In building a burning house, some players wear wrist-bells that ring in a hauntingly distant, intermittent way in quieter moments, which becomes more feverish and agitated as the players work harder during fast-paced passages.*

*Also, five performers play whistling kettles. Consider the sound of five stove-top kettles collectively wailing at boiling point. The players recreate this sound by exhaling into and inhaling out of the kettles’ chambers, creating an urgent sense of alarm. However, it also symbolises an act of hope and invocation. According to John Minton’s book chapter “Turning the Pot Down” from Folk Music and Song in the WPA Ex-Slave Narratives, enslaved people “sang and prayed in pots” on the plantations, “they had to take a kettle and turn it down bottom upward and then old master couldn’t hear the singing and prayin’.” The sound of the kettles simultaneously represents despair and faith, and indeed, faith in spite of despair. In other words, even with the relentlessness of the Machine’s repetitions, or the inevitable collapse of the house from its very construction, it cannot and will not suppress the human need to sing and pray.*

- Hannah Kendall

## Biographies

### David Fennessy

David Fennessy began his musical life as the guitarist of his school rock band but had no formal musical training until the age of fifteen when he decided to study classical guitar. His interest in composition grew whilst studying for his undergraduate degree at the Dublin College of Music. In 1998 Fennessy moved to Glasgow for a Masters Degree at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama to study with James MacMillan. He was later invited to join the composition faculty and has held a teaching post there since 2005. He was shortlisted for the Gaudeamus Music Prize in Amsterdam in both 2000 and 2006 and was a finalist for the Philharmonia's composition prize in 2004. In addition, his music has been chosen to represent Ireland at the International Rostrum of Composers. In 2006/2007 Ensemble Modern awarded Fennessy a scholarship to study at their prestigious International Academy in Frankfurt. A Dewar Arts Award (Scotland) funded his 12 month stay in Germany where he penned several works in close collaboration with the musicians of the Academy.

He is a recipient of the prestigious Paul Hamlyn Foundation Award. This British award, providing significant financial support over three years, aims to give artists the freedom to develop their creative ideas and contribute towards their personal and professional growth. In 2010/2011 Fennessy became a Fellow of the Akademie Schloss Solitude in Stuttgart and in the same year he signed a major agreement with Universal Edition for his main catalogue of works. Fennessy's music has been performed both nationally and internationally by many known names, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Ensemble Modern, Hebrides Ensemble, London Sinfonietta, RTE National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland and the RTE Concert Orchestra among them.

### Tansy Davies

Tansy Davies writes music that is sleek, hot, earthy, physical. Her instruments glint and sigh and thrust. Her textures are lean and gleaming. Her rhythms are all punch and sinew. As a composer she is immensely herself: a woman of fearsome drive and rigour and self-knowledge, a woman who connects with body, spirituality and political convictions – and who conveys all that without without filter or apology. That's what makes her music so immediately and intoxicatingly her own. To hear it is beguiling, bracing, provocative, a rush of blood to the head, a soft breath to the skin, a reboot to the system.

There is no fleshiness here. A Tansy Davies score never sags. The music is taught as a drum, alert as a raptor, quick-reflexed and tactile as a cat. It's uncompromising and it's proud, cutting

razor-sharp forms through a concert hall. But it's never austere because there's deep sensuality, too, the kind of brazen sensuality that meets you with a clear gaze and quickens the breath and stirs parts of you that hardly ever stir where contemporary classical music is concerned.

Tansy Davies grew up playing in rock bands; she knows what it means to feel music in the body. And she always had an instinct to stretch and deepen and throw off-kilter. She absorbed the big beats of funk, the spangly pizzaz of disco, the jagged elbows of bebop, the outer wilds of alt-pop, the sculpted curves and sudden lushness of polyphony, the clean craft of post-war modernism. She played French horn and guitar, testing herself with long prog-rock solos and the limits of form, harmony and timbre without ever losing the groove. She discovered she could tread a line between sensual and cerebral better than anyone, so she kept treading that line.

Take a work like *neon* (2004): the music struts, poses, trips up, gets up. *salt box* (2005) is a wild ride and a sweet embrace. In the tiny song *Greenhouses* (2010), oily bass and nervy percussion twitch and swagger while a woman's voice intones an implacable plainchant with low alto flute as confidante. In the mighty concerto for four horns, *Forest* (2016), the orchestral writing grows in tendrils and tall thickets to make dappled light and dark spaces. It's music of glistening shadows and deep mysteries, music that speaks with an urgent voice about the solace and the vulnerability of nature.

There is a recurring shaman afoot – a conduit who flits between all aspects of Tansy's musical philosophy. He's there as mercurial solo saxophone in *Iris* (2004); he's there in Tansy's courageous first opera, *Between Worlds* (2014); he's there in her urgent and haunting second opera, *Cave* (2018). Maybe this shaman is simply an embodiment of what Tansy has been doing all along. Exploring the elemental mechanisms of the natural world, exploring the psychological devastation of global events, exploring the most intimate aspects of body and heart and head. Tansy's music lets us feel what it is to be multiform and nimble, intense and enlivened, confrontational and beautiful.

## Jonathan Nangle

Jonathan Nangle is a composer whose work explores many diverse fields ranging from notated acoustic and electro-acoustic composition, through live and spatially distributed electronics, to video, field recording, interactive sound installation and electronic improvisation.

A graduate of Trinity College Dublin, he studied composition under Donnacha Dennehy and Rob Canning and Electro-Acoustic composition with Roger Doyle. Since 2008 he has continued to study privately with composer Kevin Volans. His work has been commissioned and performed internationally by, amongst others, the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, Crash Ensemble, Ensemble Scratch the Surface, The Dublin Guitar Quartet, The Chatham Saxophone Quartet, Ergodos Orchestra, New Dublin Voices, Irish Youth Choir, the Spatial Music Collective, violinist Darragh Morgan and pianist Thérèse Fahy.

He has represented Ireland twice at the International Rostrum of Composers. First in 2009

where his work 'our headlights blew softly into the black, illuminating very little' was awarded a commendation and again in 2011 with his first orchestral piece now is night come quietly'. His work has been released by the Ergodos, Diatribe, RTÉ Lyric FM, Contemporary Music Centre Ireland and Metier Divine Art record labels, featured at numerous festivals, been choreographed for film and stage, and has been broadcast internationally both on radio and television. His debut album 'Pause' featuring works for combinations of strings and electronics, performed by Crash Ensemble, was released in July 2017 on the Ergodos label. Jonathan is a lecturer in Music Technology and Electro-Acoustic Composition at the Royal Irish Academy of Music.

## Hannah Kendall

Known for her attentive arrangements and immersive world-building, British composer Hannah Kendall's music looks beyond the boundaries of composition. Her work bridges gaps between different musical cultures, both honouring and questioning the contemporary tradition while telling new stories through it. Contrasting fine detail with limitless abandon, she has become renowned both as a composer and a storyteller, confronting our collective history with narratively-driven pieces centred on bold mission statements.

Marked by striking and often polarising dynamics, her large-scale work simmers on the surface, and is upturned by the briefest moments of bombast. Ensemble pieces subvert audience expectations of 'quiet and loud', 'still and moving'; scattering those musical opposites unexpectedly. Kendall's recent work has provided a meeting point for different types of music, carrying with it the weight of connected but unharmonised histories. Recently, she's achieved this by looking beyond the typical tools of composition, using auxiliary instruments that exist outside of the concert hall. In *Tuxedo: Vasco 'de' Gama*, she integrated the spiritual *Wade in the Water*, transcribing its melody into a delicate music box, contrasting the fragility of the instrument against the song's resounding place in history. *Tuxedo: Hot Summer No Water* (2020) for solo cello features an ACME Metropolitan whistle, placing a sonic timestamp on the piece; pointing to a year significantly defined by the police's presence in black communities.

Her *Tuxedo* series is named after an artwork by American artist Jean-Michel Basquiat. His eponymous piece provides one of many graphic scores that Kendall has used as inspiration throughout her career. Rather than create 'representations' of these images, she uses them to spark her writing process. Kendall's work has been widely celebrated. She has created pieces such as *Disillusioned Dreamer* (2018), which the San Francisco Chronicle praised for having a 'rich inner life', as well as *The Knife of Dawn* (2016), a chamber opera that received critical acclaim for its involving and claustrophobic representation of the incarceration of Guyanese political activist Martin Carter. A new production was presented on the Royal Opera House's main stage in 2020, a third will be staged at Dutch National Opera in 2026. Also, The New Statesman described *Where is the chariot of fire?* (2021) as 'searingly impactful'. Her work has been performed extensively, and across many platforms. She has worked with ensembles including London Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, LA Phil, New York Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Seattle Symphony Orchestra, The Hallé, Ensemble Intercontemporain, Ensemble Modern, International Contemporary Ensemble, Klangforum Wien, and London Sinfonietta, but you'll also find her collaborating with

choreographers, poets and art galleries; crossing over to different art-forms, and celebrating the impact these unique settings have on sound. Festival appearances include BBC Proms, Berliner Festspiele, Donaueschinger Musiktage, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, Lucerne Festival, Tanglewood Music Festival, Warsaw Autumn and Wien Modern. In 2022 she was the recipient of the Hindemith Prize for outstanding contemporary composers, and nominated for an Ivor Novello Award in the Small Chamber category. In 2023, Hannah won the Ivor Novello Award for Best Large Ensemble Composition for *shouting forever into the receiver*, and *Even sweetness can scratch the throat* was nominated for Best Chamber Ensemble Composition. *Tuxedo: Dust Bowl #3* was shortlisted for the Best Community and Participation Ivor Novello Award in 2024.

Hannah's debut portrait album *shouting forever into the receiver* was released in June 2025 on NMC Recordings. Born in London in 1984, Kendall read music at the University of Exeter before completing a master's in composition at the Royal College of Music and a doctorate at Columbia University in the City of New York. Her music is published by Ricordi (Berlin).

## Ryan McAdams

Ryan McAdams has established himself as one of the most versatile conductors, communicators and collaborators of his generation. Equally prized in symphonic, operatic, and contemporary repertoire, he made a highly successful subscription European debut in February 2010 with the orchestra of the Maggio Musicale in Florence, where he has returned many times for operas and concerts. A Fulbright scholar, he previously served as Apprentice Conductor of the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, assisting then-Chief Conductor Alan Gilbert. Mr. McAdams was the first-ever recipient of both the Sir Georg Solti Emerging Conductor Award and the Aspen-Glimmerglass Award for Opera Conducting.

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The 2025/26 season sees Ryan with Welsh National Opera for Bernstein's "Candide," Ulster Orchestra, Atlanta Opera for Philip Glass' "La Belle et la Bête," National Symphony Orchestra Ireland for a recording project and a subscription concert, multiple concerts with the I Pomeriggi Musicali, BBC Orchestra of Wales, Stuttgarter Philharmoniker, the orchestra of the Teatro Lirico in Cagliari, Istanbul State Symphony, and a Gala Concert with Rolando Villazón and Paula Murrihy for Irish National Opera.

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Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra, Teatro Communale in Bologna, National Symphony in Washington DC, Kansas City Symphony, Louisiana Philharmonic, Vancouver Symphony, Santa Fe Symphony, Louisville Orchestra, Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Orchestre symphonique et lyrique de Nancy, Columbus Symphony, the Ravello Festival, Princeton Symphony, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, L'Orchestra de Chambre de Geneve, Juilliard Opera Center, Westchester Philharmonic, New York City Opera, Talea Ensemble, New York City Ballet, Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI, Indianapolis Symphony, CityMusic Cleveland, Tanglewood Music Festival, Aspen Music Festival, New Jersey Symphony, Glimmerglass Opera, and the Juilliard FOCUS! Festival.

A contemporary music advocate, Mr. McAdams has been the Principal Conductor of Crash Ensemble since 2021, having led the world premieres of Donnacha Dennehy and Enda Walsh's opera "The Second Violinist" in Dublin and London at the Barbican, and their follow-up opera "The First Child." He was the conductor for Elliott Carter's 103rd Birthday Celebration at New York's 92Y with Nicholas Phan - a concert that was named one of the Best Classical Music Events of 2011 by Anthony Tommasini in the New York Times. Recent projects include premiering Jonathan Dawe's new opera "Cracked Orlando" with Anthony Roth Costanzo at the Italian Academy at Columbia University, and leading the world premiere of William Basinski's "The Disintegration Loops" with the Wordless Music Orchestra at the Temple of Dendur in the Metropolitan Museum for the 10th Anniversary of Sept. 11th.

Ryan lives in East Sussex with his wife, dancer/performer Laura Careless ([www.shewolvesproject.com](http://www.shewolvesproject.com)) and their son Owain. For more information: [www.ryan-mcadams.com](http://www.ryan-mcadams.com).

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Crash Ensemble is a not-for-profit organisation supported by the Arts Council of Ireland and Dublin City Council with international touring supported by Culture Ireland. They are ensemble-

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Our goal is simple: **raise €3,000 to commission 3 pieces of new music for Crash's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.** Find out how you can be involved at: <https://donorbox.org/crash30>

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NEW  
MUSIC  
DUBLIN  
2026

# *Children in the Universe* *(Screening)*

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Thursday 16th - Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2026

Foyer, National Concert Hall

**Laura Sheeran** *film*

**Sam Perkin** *music*

**Crash Ensemble** *audio recording*

**Diamanda La Berge Dramm** guide and solo violin

**Conductor** Ryan McAdams

**Crash Ensemble:**

**Larissa O'Grady** violin

**Cian Ó Dúill** viola

**Kate Ellis** cello

**Caimin Gilmore** double bass

**Susan Doyle** flute/piccolo

**Leonie Bluett** clarinet

**Roddy O'Keefe** trombone

**Alex Petcu** percussion

**Barry O'Halpin** guitar

**Eliza McCarthy** piano

*Audio Recording by Crash Ensemble (recorded at St. Nicholas' Church, Galway at Galway International Arts Festival 2022). Recorded by Ian Dowdall. Edited, Mixed and Mastered by Brian Bolger*

## About *Children in the Universe*

*Children in the Universe* is a hybrid symphony for Crash and Halo Track, with Diamanda La Berge Dramm as guide. The work was written during Sam's time as Composer-in-Residence with Crash Ensemble (2019-2023). The work was premiered by Crash Ensemble at New Music Dublin in 2022, recorded by the ensemble and released on Crash Records in 2023.

Building on the piece's evolving artistic life, Filmmaker-in-Residence with Crash Ensemble, Laura Sheeran, was commissioned to create a film set to *Children in the Universe*, extending the work into film form.

*"My first approach towards the video was to try and mirror in a way the structure and essence of the piece as Sam had composed it. I knew I wanted the video to be playful and vast while also remaining somewhat contained. Structurally, the composition contains a 'halo track', a synthesized sound bed which underlies everything played live by the ensemble. This layering was something I definitely wanted to incorporate in the visual side of things, and to create ambiguity with regard to what is visible and invisible at any one time as is the case when experiencing the piece being performed. I was grateful to film in the National Concert Hall, the home of the piece's premiere at the New Music Dublin festival in 2022, for which I had designed a live visual accompaniment. I wanted to incorporate some aspects of these visuals into the film too. The white room in the concert hall created the perfect container for playful experimentations with green screen elements. I worked with artist Kate Finegan to capture movement in the body, and finally, in post production, I embarked on lots and lots (and lots) of layering. I approached the editing process completely intuitively and followed the music where it was leading me. This is a common part of my process and for me works best when working with visuals and music together."*

- Laura Sheeran

*"Composed between 2020 and 2022, I have gone deep for this work. There are two years of life in here. Our Guide, Diamanda, will take us on a sacred journey to a place where only music can. She will act as a medium through which, with open ears, we can dream much needed counsel. Together, we can use this guidance to create the more beautiful world our hearts know is possible."*

- Sam Perkin

The film premiered at the inaugural Beta Festival in November 2023, and was subsequently screened at Kilkenny Arts Festival in 2024. Together, the live and filmed versions of *Children in the Universe* form a continuing artistic cycle, one that reflects Crash Ensemble's commitment to long-term collaboration, and cross-disciplinary creation.

# Biographies

## Laura Sheeran

Laura Sheeran is a multidisciplinary artist and director based in Ireland, working across film, theatre, music, and performance. She is Filmmaker in Residence with Crash Ensemble (2017–present), was Resident Director at the Abbey Theatre (2022), and an Associate Artist with Siamsa Tíre (2021).

Her work spans experimental and non-narrative film alongside bold, visually driven stage productions, and has been presented at festivals including Dublin Fringe, Galway International Arts Festival, and Kilkenny Arts Festival. Her films have screened internationally and received multiple awards, including Best Independent Feature at Silk Road Cannes for *Drone Bone Jetty* (2021). Theatre work includes *Gammy* by Kate Finegan, and *Translations* and *Grania*, both directed by Caitríona McLaughlin at the Abbey Theatre.

Supported by the Arts Council through multiple awards, Sheeran's practice is rooted in collaboration and experimentation. Her current project, *The Persona Project*, is an ongoing multidisciplinary work combining music, movement, and performance to explore archetypal identities.

## Sam Perkin

Based between France and Ireland, Sam Perkin composes music for leading musicians and ensembles in Ireland and abroad. His music has been performed in 20 countries. In the space between classical and experimental music, his artistic work has a particular focus on the exploration of wonder and awe. Sam has had fruitful collaborations with a vast array of performing artists such as The Irish Chamber Orchestra, Gábor Takács-Nagy, Luminosa Orchestra, RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, Vanbrugh Quartet, Marmen Quartet, Tchalik Quartet, Crash Ensemble, Explore Ensemble, Finghin Collins, Miranda Cuckson, Diamanda Dramm, James McVinnie, Fidelio Trio, Sitkovetsky Trio, Paddington Trio and Vicky Chow.

He has also successfully worked with festivals such as Musica Nova Festival (Helsinki), Network For New Music (Philadelphia), West Cork Chamber Music Festival, Das Haus (Belgium), Kilkenny Arts Festival, Alpenarte Festival (Austria), Louth Contemporary Music Festival, Buxton International Festival (UK), Sound Festival (Scotland), Gregynog Festival in (Wales), Festivalta (Norway) and La Cote Flute Festival (Switzerland).

His music has been performed in over 20 countries and he had a Wigmore Hall debut in 2023 with his *Piano Trio "Freakshow"*, which has now been performed over 40 times worldwide. Perkin's *Piano Trio "Freakshow"* was performed at Janine Jansen's International Chamber Music Festival in Utrecht last year is also programmed at Lucerne Chamber Music Society 2027. Commissioned for the Clara Haskil International Piano Competition, Switzerland, "*Le*

*Monde des Adultes*” will be performed by 26 pianists in August 2025. Notably, Perkin’s work “*Visualization*” was performed by Dejana Sekulič at the opening launch concert of the 33rd Music Biennale Zagreb 2025.

At the beginning of 2026, Sam Perkin completed a deeply personal and heartfelt new set of 12 Preludes for Solo Piano: “*12 Preludes for 12 Pianists - A Child’s Secret Treasure Chest*”. This set was composed over the course of two years and was supported by The Arts Council of Ireland Music Bursary Award. He holds degrees in Composition from the Cork School of Music, Ireland, and an Artist Diploma from Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Lyon, France, where he was awarded the Prix Salabert for Composition. Sam Perkin completed a residency in 2022 with Crash Ensemble, Ireland’s leading new music ensemble. He was awarded The Next Generation Award in 2018 by The Arts Council of Ireland and has conducted and composed for The Irish Chamber Orchestra.

## Diamanda La Berge Dramm

Diamanda La Berge Dramm is one of the leading contemporary classical music performers of her generation. In her own practice as a violinist, singer, and composer, she continuously aims to examine the dyad of voice and violin. In 2018, she became the first string soloist to win the Dutch Classical Talent Award. Other major recognitions include the John Cage Award (2015), the Deutschlandfunk Förderungspreis (2019), and the Willem Breukerprijs (2022). In 2020, NRC Handelsblad named her one of the 101 Talents for the Next Decade.

Together with Garth Knox, she released a new set of concert etudes focusing on extended techniques, *Violin Spaces*, which she teaches internationally. As part of her residency at the Muziekgebouw Eindhoven (2018-2020), Diamanda created a project around Charles Ives’ *Violin Sonata, No. 5*, which included a CD release and a corresponding website. In 2021, she released *Inside Out* on GENUIN Classics, with works by J.S. Bach and John Cage. Her longtime collaboration with UK poet SJ Fowler resulted in the EP *Beastings* (2019), and the album *Chimp* (2022). She regularly works with fashion house Maison the Faux. In 2022, Diamanda played the role of Einstein in *Einstein on the Beach* by Philip Glass, in a new production by Susanne Kennedy and Markus Selg. She is Artist in Residence with Crash Ensemble (IR) in 2022 and 2023.

As a Splendor Founder she plays and hosts concerts regularly. Splendor is a collective of 50 musicians, composers, and stage artists who transformed an old bathhouse in the heart of Amsterdam into a local cultural paradise.

Diamanda plays with an Andreas Grütter bow (2015) on an Andranik Gaybaryan violin (2014), purchased with the generous support of the Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds and the Stichting Eigen Muziekinstrumentenfonds. Other structural support has come from the Kersjes Fonds, Fonds voor de Podiumkunsten, and the Loyola Stichting.

## Ryan McAdams

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