

NEW  
MUS  
DUB

# DELIVERANCE

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1st May 2022, 7:30pm | Main Stage, National Concert Hall, Dublin

**Garrett Sholdice** *Prelude No.12* (World Premiere)

**Andrew Synnott** *Waiting for Elvira* (Live Premiere)

**Ailís Ní Ríain** *Flower Scar Road* (World Premiere)

**Stephen Gardner** *Deliverance* (World Premiere)

**RTÉ Concert Orchestra**

**Gavin Maloney** conductor

**Michael McHale** piano

## PROGRAMME NOTES

'... and with one bound, they were free!'

The orchestral premieres in tonight's concert were conceived and commissioned either before or during lockdown, and all have waited, patiently, until they could be let free tonight! They test the virtuosity of the orchestra - the ability of this astonishing musical creature, made of so many different people, to think as though with one mind, and to move as one, and yet retain their individuality and self-expression.

Before we let the orchestral works out in to the world we suspend time for the simple, haunting single line of Garrett Sholdice's Piano Prelude No. 12, played by Michael McHale, before he launches in to Andrew Synnott's sparkling *Waiting for Elvira* with the orchestra.

### **Garrett Sholdice** Prelude No. 12

Prelude No. 12 was composed in 2017. It's the twelfth in a series of solo piano 'preludes'. These pieces make for a rather unbalanced set: they vary from the very aphoristic to the rather prosaic; there's no unifying scheme, and they have all been written for diverse occasions and with different motivations. But, individually, they perhaps relate, in their own oblique ways, to the kind of singular technical focus so characteristic of the historical keyboard prelude tradition (e.g., Scheidt, Bach, Chopin, Scriabin etc.) – hence the descriptor 'prelude', which is usually a sub-title. Prelude No. 12, for example, is all about a single unbroken line. Prelude No. 12 is what the American poet Frank O'Hara might have called a 'personal' piece. When I wrote it, I prefaced the score with these lines from his poem, 'To Gottfried Benn': 'Poetry is not instruments / that work at times / then walk out on you / laugh at you old / get drunk on you young / poetry's part of yourself'.

—Garrett Sholdice

### **Andrew Synnott** *Waiting for Elvira*

*Waiting For Elvira* was written in January 2021 as a partner piece for Mozart's concerto No. 21 in C, widely known as the *Elvira Madigan*. It was the brain-child of tonight's pianist, Michael McHale, who introduced me to the idea of pairing Mozart concertos with new partner works. The music is very roughly in an ABA form. The A section mixes a 12/8 theme with thematic material derived from the first movement of the Mozart. The B section is slower but integrates the same Mozart theme with the new material. The repeat of the A references the '*Elvira Madigan*' theme from the concerto's 2<sup>nd</sup> movement. The orchestra used is the same as in the concerto, tying *Waiting For Elvira* even more tightly to the Mozart. It can be played as a prelude to the concerto or as a stand-alone piece. *Waiting For Elvira* was commissioned by Joseph Martin and is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Gertrude Ronan-Martin.

— Andrew Synnott

## **Ailís Ní Ríain** *Flower Scar Road*

*Flower Scar Road* is my first orchestral work. The title comes from the name of a road local to where I live in rural Lancashire, Northern England. I walk this road most days of the week through all weathers. *Flower Scar Road* itself is a Bronze Age highway which stretches across the Pennine moorlands. It is rough under foot, extremely exposed and only rarely do I meet another person along it. The name arrested me when I first discovered it; such a curious name and so redolent of my own thoughts while travelling along it. For me, the title refers to life's journey itself.

—Ailís Ní Ríain

## **Stephen Gardner** *Deliverance*

I was delighted to be asked to write for the RTÉ Concert Orchestra. I have written for them before, and love their committed approach to contemporary music. Due to the ever changing dynamics of the Covid restrictions, this piece had several versions, with different permutations. The final version is a refined orchestration.

The theme of this work is based on the notion of escape and deliverance from the pandemic. I wanted to make it energetic and positive. It is in four continuous sections, with the 3rd being a more reflective consideration. In this slower section a feeling of being blue, and green shoots lying ahead is conjured up. The last section is the longest. The core note throughout the work is a B-natural, and this is articulated by the oboe, and others, often. This represents the individual amidst the struggle. The players are well tested, and hopefully this makes for a propulsive and edgy piece.

This work was commissioned by the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, in association with New Music Dublin.

—Stephen Gardner

## **BIOGRAPHIES**

### **Stephen Gardner**

Stephen Gardner studied music at the Universities of Ulster and Wales from 1984-1990. His first commission was *Wanting, not wanting*, for the Ulster Orchestra, in 1992 (this showed an early desire to express his response to the conflict in the North). Since then, his works have been played by orchestras and ensembles worldwide, with recent performances by mezzo soprano Carolyn Dobbin, Crash Ensemble, Hard Rain Soloist Ensemble and the Te Deum Adoramus Choir, Sofia.

In the past few years he has taken an interest in collaborative works, where he is the overall composer, and pieces are developed with ensembles over a period of several months. His collaborative work *Crossing The Threshold* (based on the poem by Paula Meehan) will take place in June 2022, delayed from last year. The following month will see another collaborative project (also using poems by Paula Meehan), resulting in 2 performances at Smock Alley Theatre. He has just completed a work for the Norwegian Ensemble KK, to be premiered in the autumn.

He was elected to *Aosdana*, Ireland's state-sponsored academy of artists, in 2003. He lives in Dublin.

## **Ailís Ní Ríain**

Ailís Ní Ríain composes in a variety of forms including music-theatre, concert music and site-responsive installation projects. She was awarded the Paul Hamlyn Award for Artists in 2016. Her music has been performed at London's Purcell Room, The Royal Festival Hall, The National Concert Hall in Dublin, Carnegie Hall in New York, throughout Europe and in the USA as well as featured on BBC Radio 3, BBC Radio 4, RTÉ lyric FM and RTÉ Television. Forthcoming work includes a commission for Evelyn Glennie, a new work for London Sinfonietta, the Mornington Singers, ConTempo String Quartet and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. *Wired*, a large-scale dance theatre production for New York's Kinetic Light Dance company opens in Chicago in 2022. A portrait album of her music will be released by NMC Recordings London in 2022. She is hearing impaired and an advocate of diversity and inclusion in the arts. She is a board member of Disability Arts Online and the Ivors Academy.

## **Garrett Sholdice**

Garrett Sholdice is an Irish composer based in Dublin. His music has been described as possessing an 'exquisite delicacy' (The Irish Times). His music has been recorded by pianist Michael McHale, Maya Homburger & Barry Guy duo, Ergodos Musicians, and Trio Scordatura, amongst others. Notable commissions include works for the Irish Chamber Orchestra, Crash Ensemble, Ficino Ensemble, and the '840' concert series in London. Sholdice is a co-director of Ergodos, a Dublin-based record label and audio production company co-founded with composer Benedict Schlepper-Connolly in 2006. In 2020, he signed with Phantom Limb Music Publishing. He has lectured in composition, composition for visual media, orchestration, and score analysis at several Irish third level institutions. [soundcloud.com/garrett-sholdice](https://soundcloud.com/garrett-sholdice)

## **Andrew Synnott**

Andrew Synnott is a composer, arranger and conductor based in Dublin. He has conducted operas for Irish National Opera, Wexford Festival Opera, Opera Theatre Company and the Royal Irish Academy of Music. He has conducted and been musical director for opera productions at the Buxton Opera Festival, the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival and in Australia, Portugal and France. He is a former artistic director and conductor of Crash Ensemble, a group he co-founded in 1997. Notable recent conducting of new music includes recordings of *Possibly Human* by Brian Irvine for Dumbworld and *Lenguas de Fuego* by Kevin Volans for the Louth Contemporary Music Society. He has conducted many orchestras and choirs, including Chamber Choir Ireland, the National Symphony Orchestra of 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 followed in 2019 by *La cucina*, the first opera by a living Irish composer to be presented on the main stage at Wexford Festival Opera. He has written two further operas for the Wexford festival, *What Happened To Lucrece* (2020), and *The Forty-Seventh Saturday* (2021). His latest work for flute and string quartet, *I follow, I follow..* will be premiered in Dundalk on June 17<sup>th</sup> during the LCMS festival.

## **Gavin Maloney (conductor)**

Gavin Maloney received his training at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester and the Mozarteum, Salzburg. At the age of 21 he successfully competed for the position of Assistant Conductor of the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra. 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.

He has conducted all the leading orchestras and ensembles in Ireland. He 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’Conor, Chloë Hanslip and Hugh Tinney. In 2017, he featured for the first time in the International Concert Series of Dublin’s National Concert Hall, appearing with Maxim Vengerov, who has described him as ‘a great maestro’.

His recordings, on the NMC and lyric fm labels, have earned critical acclaim, including that of *Gramophone* magazine. His live recording of Nicola LeFanu’s *Threnody* (NMC) was recently released. He 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 Ireland’s national ballet company. His concerts have been broadcast by the BBC, RTÉ, the European Broadcasting Union, Shanghai East Radio, and radio stations in North America and Australia.

## **Michael McHale (piano)**

Belfast-born Michael McHale has established himself as one of Ireland's leading pianists and has developed a busy international career as a solo recitalist, concerto soloist and chamber musician.

He has performed and recorded as a soloist with the Minnesota and Hallé Orchestras, the BBC, BBC Scottish, Moscow and London Symphony Orchestras, City of London Sinfonia, London Mozart Players and all five of the major Irish orchestras, and performed at the Tanglewood, BBC Proms and Tokyo Spring Festivals.

His discography of over twenty-five albums includes releases on Delos, Champs Hill, Ergodos, RTÉ lyric fm and Chandos. The debut album of the McGill/McHale Trio Portraits on Cedille featuring narrations by Oscar-winner Mahershala Ali was released in 2017 and immediately entered the Top 25 US Billboard Classical Chart. Upcoming releases in 2022 include a chamber music album for BIS featuring trios by Mozart, Schumann, Bruch and Stravinsky.

Michael’s regular chamber music partners include Michael Collins, Sir James Galway, Camerata Pacifica, the Vanbrugh and the Wigmore Soloists. A commitment to new music has seen Michael give first performances and recordings of music by composers including Valentin Silvestrov, Valerie Coleman, John Tavener, Arvo Pärt, Tyshawn Sorey, Abbie Betinis, Bill Whelan, Siobhán Cleary, Jennifer Walshe and Linda Buckley, and concerto premières by Irish composers Garrett Sholdice and Philip Hammond.

In 2018 Michael was appointed as a lecturer in piano for undergraduate and postgraduate students at the MTU Cork School of Music in Ireland. [michaelmchale.com](http://michaelmchale.com)

# RTÉ Concert Orchestra



## **First violins**

Mia Cooper *leader*  
Bróna Cahill  
Hugh Murray  
Clíodhna Ryan  
Brigid Leman  
Christopher Quaid  
Natalie Box  
Feilimídh Nunan

## **Second violins**

Elizabeth Leonard  
Anne Phelan  
Carol Quigley  
Siúbhán Ní Ghríofa  
Camille Farrar  
Cillian Ó Breacháin

## **Violas**

Lisanne Melchior  
Elizabeth O'Neill  
David Kenny  
Anthony Mulholland

## **Cellos**

Alessandro Sanguineti  
Delia Lynch  
Yue Tang  
Aoife Burke

## **Double basses**

Seamus Doyle  
Liam Wylie

## **Flutes**

Silvija Ščerbavičiūtė  
Marie Comiskey

## **Oboes**

Suzie Thorn  
Rebecca Halliday

## **Clarinets**

Michael Seaver  
Macdara Ó Seireadáin

## **Bassoons**

John Leonard  
Ian Forbes

## **Horns**

Cormac Ó hAodáin  
Declan McCarthy  
Brian Daly

## **Trumpets**

Shaun Hooke  
Eamonn Nolan

## **Trombone**

Stephen Mathieson

## **Bass trombone**

Christopher Nery

## **Timpani**

Oliver Taylor

## **Percussion**

Patrick Nolan  
Stephen Kelly

## **Kit**

Stephen Kelly

**Stephen Bell** Principal Guest Conductor • **Guy Barker** Associate Artist • **Proinnsias Ó Duinn** Conductor Laureate

**Joe Csibi** General Manager • **Andrew Smith** Orchestra Manager • **Mary Sexton** Planning & Event Co-ordinator • **Angela Rohan** Marketing & PR Executive • **Mary Adams** Librarian • **Marguerite Sheridan** Operations Assistant • **John Nugent** Senior Orchestral Assistant • **Gavin O'Sullivan** Orchestral Assistant

Introducing orchestral music to new audiences since 1948, the RTÉ Concert Orchestra has built a strong connection with the public that saw it voted the World's Favourite Orchestra 2015. Eclectic programming sees the RTÉ CO perform with artists including Pavarotti, Lang Lang, Lalo Schifrin, Marvin Hamlisch and Cleo Laine. Performances with Irish artists include Declan O'Rourke, Sinéad O'Connor, Imelda May, Eleanor McEvoy, Wallis Bird, Maura O'Connell, Lisa Hannigan, Mick Flannery, James Vincent McMorrow, Faye O'Rourke, Andrea Corr and Jerry Fish. A hugely successful collaboration with RTÉ 2fm and DJ Jenny Greene won the IMRO Outstanding Achievement Award 2018, and early in 2020 *A Woman's Heart Orchestrated* and a Leonard Cohen tribute made a strong impact both as live events and as TV and radio broadcasts.

The RTÉ CO performed in seven Eurovision Song Contests, including the famous *Riverdance* interval act. Film credits include Stephen Rennicks' score to *Room* and Brian Byrne's Golden Globe-nominated score to *Albert Nobbs*. Recordings include Korngold's Violin Concerto with Andrew Haveron conducted by John Wilson, Howard Shore's *A Palace Upon the Ruins* and Niall Horan's *Flicker*.

Opera, ballet and choral performances include collaborations with Irish National Opera, English National Ballet and Our Lady's Choral Society. Films performed with live score include the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, the world premiere of *Vertigo*, the Irish premiere of *A Nightmare Before Christmas* performed with Danny Elfman and *Mise Éire*. The RTÉ CO has appeared as the 'house orchestra' on *The Late Late Show*, on *Dancing with the Stars*, in the Centenary concert, in *Instrumental*, *The High Hopes Choir* and *Shine*. Recent collaborations with top talent including Villagers, Zoë Conway and Moving Hearts have been aired on Bank Holidays on RTÉ Radio 1.

During the Covid-19 pandemic the RTÉ CO has continued to produce a wide range of high-quality work. The orchestra featured on *The Den* and *Home School Hub*, filmed for Pride, for Comic Relief and for charity, and collaborated with Irish National Opera on *20 Shots of Opera*. Acclaimed projects from this period include performances with Dermot Kennedy and Denise Chaila for RTÉ TV, the chart-topping single 'N17' with Tolú Makay, recording and performing new jazz arrangements by Guy Barker and Cormac McCarthy, an award-winning John Lennon tribute, a 50th anniversary celebration of Clannad, and a TV tribute to David Bowie with an international line-up including members of Bowie's own band. [www.rte.ie/co](http://www.rte.ie/co)

# NEW MUSIC DUBLIN 2022

Welcome one and welcome all to New Music Dublin 2022. It's so good to see you!

I very well remember just after the end of the last live, in-person festival in March 2020, standing at the bus stop on what was the day of the first confirmed Covid case in Ireland, wondering how long it would be before we were all together again: a few months at most, I reckoned. Certainly not later than the 2021 Festival?

And yet ... here we all are, 2 years and one fully-digital 2021 lockdown New Music Dublin later - finally together, Back in the Room. I'm not feeling the need to add to the screeds and reams that have been written and will be written about the pandemic; suffice to say, I suspect very few of us right now are able to say exactly how we feel about what just happened to us for the past 2 years.

Which is probably the perfect state to be in for coming to this smorgasbord of a festival! Here you will find musical expression for a vast array of emotional states: joy, elation, confusion, melancholy, nostalgia, awe, contentment, despair, exasperation, bliss, relief, rapture, dismay, tenderness - and many others we don't really have words for, often all at the same time, and often all piled one on top of the other.

You'll also find an increasing variety and diversity of people writing and performing the music that you hear. This festival we are delighted to include world premieres by young composers for young performers in the Cór na nÓg and Cór Linn programme, thrilling new work from emerging under-represented voices in the NCH Creative Lab project, new work by and for young musicians in BrassFest, new work with sign language in George Higgs' ground-breaking new performance, and the up-and-coming compositional voices represented by the Irish Composers' Collective. Add to this work by a whole raft of Ireland's most garlanded, radical and highly-regarded professional composers and music creators, and - well - there's something by everyone, not just for everyone!

Our hope is that somewhere in amongst the 39 world premieres, 10 Irish premieres, multiple repeat listens and everything else that is going on in the 25 concerts this weekend, there are likely to be expressions for many things you have been feeling recently. Whether it's something massive and orchestral, or something choral, or something played by a solo musician, or something heard via a hidden loudspeaker somewhere, it may catch you unawares, just like that - and remind you, that although we have all been desperately separated from each other these past two years, someone somewhere, maybe quite a lot like you, also felt what you were going through back there. Although we went through it all by ourselves, we also, in no small measure, went through it all together.

And here we all are! Welcome back!!

**John Harris**

Festival Director, New Music Dublin

## NEW MUSIC DUBLIN

*Thursday 28 April 2022*

### MUSIC ALLIANCE IRELAND LAUNCH

**TOTEMIC:** Nathan Sherman and Alex Petcu  
presented by Ergodos

**CHORAL SKETCHES:** Chamber Choir Ireland

**ÉTUDES:** Kevin Volans and Jill Richards

**PERSONHOOD:** Oslo Sinfonietta and Andreas  
Borregaard

**TONNTA** presented by Ergodos

*Friday 29 April 2022*

**AMPLIFY LIVE** with Contemporary Music Centre

**CORCORAN AT NMD:** Hard Rain  
SoloistEnsemble

**YOU HEARD IT FIRST:** Crash Ensemble

### ICC ALBUM LAUNCH

**IN MEMORIAM / IN CELEBRATION:**  
National Symphony Orchestra and Ensemble  
Interforma

**AVENUE AZURE** presented by Ergodos

**SONGS FROM THE BRAIN BOOK:** Diatribe  
album launch with Diamanda La Berge Dramm

*Saturday 30 April 2022*

**BRASSFEST** in partnership with RIAM

**LANDSCAPE SERIES** presented by Diatribe

**MUSIC FOR 5 SILENT POEMS:** George Higgs

**PUTTING IT INTO MUSIC:** Crash Ensemble

**A BRIEF DESCENT INTO DEEP TIME:**  
Chamber Choir Ireland

### DIATRIBE – JAZZ TRIPLE BILL

*Sunday 1 May 2022*

### NARLI RECORD FAIR

**THINGS THAT NEVER DIE:** Cór na nÓg and  
Cór Linn

**NCH CREATIVE LAB FINALE**

**NARLI AGM 2022**

**ISABELLE O'CONNELL PIANO**

**DELIVERANCE:** RTÉ Concert Orchestra

**THE POSSIBILITIES FROM HERE ARE  
ENDLESS:** Crash X Diamanda Dramm

**COLM O'HARA 10TET** presented by Diatribe

*Throughout the festival:*

**ULYSSES JOURNEY 2022:** newly  
commissioned music and film works

**WINGFORM:** an installation of music and  
light

**REACTIONS** film screenings

**HAUNTOLOGY**

**NMDX** (hosted by The Contemporary Music  
Centre, Ireland and New Music Dublin)

New Music Dublin is a partnership between:

**RTÉ**

**NCH**

**NATIONAL  
CONCERT  
HALL / AN  
CEOLÁRAS  
NAISIÚNTA**



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