

# NEW MUS DUB

## IN FORMATION

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25th April 2024, 10pm | Kevin Barry Recital Room, National Concert Hall, Dublin

**Úna Monaghan** *In Formation* (2023) (Irish premiere)

**Karen Power** *can you hear me now???* (2019)

**Cat Hope** *Landay Sequenzas* (2022) (Irish premiere)

**Brian Irvine** *A Call To Arms* (2024) (world premiere)

**Nicole Lizée** *Peril Earrings* (2023) (Irish premiere)

### Stone Drawn Circles

**Lina Andonovska** flute • **Nathan Sherman** viola • **Michelle O'Rourke** voice •

**Alex Petcu** percussion • **Caimin Gilmore** double bass •

**Úna Monaghan** harp / sound design

## PROGRAMME NOTES

Heralded as a 'supergroup within new music circles in Ireland' by Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, Stone Drawn Circles inhabits a new space in Irish contemporary music. In their relatively short existence as a group, the ensemble's debut performance season includes performances at prestigious festivals including HCMF, New Music Dublin and a PRS Beyond Borders tour of the UK. The players believe in rich composer/performer dialogues and in the bending of traditional performance dynamics, which is evident in their debut season offering. Breathing life into three new world premieres and a specially arranged work, the ensemble explores new modes of communication – between themselves as a collective and their audiences.

Responding to the environments that they find themselves in, a form of sonic activism takes place through works by Cat Hope and Karen Power. Stone Drawn Circles musician Úna Monaghan investigates collaborative dynamics and shifting paradigms. 'Brilliant musical scientist' Nicole Lizée offers a slice of her unique compositional language. The programme navigates through various genres and forms of contemporary sound art, performed by some of Ireland's leading contemporary players. The programme is complete with a new work by Brian Irvine, commissioned by the Contemporary Music Centre for Stone Drawn Circles with funds from PRS Foundation Beyond Borders funding. The work magnifies contemporary greed, and the way this manifests within society.

### **Úna Monaghan** *In Formation* (2023)

A piece investigating at least three things at once: how a musician comes to be, what we carry with us, band dynamics and humour.

At the start, try to be like others. Take on feedback and norms, criticism, teaching and invitations. Try to fit in. Then try to strike out. Do a job while building a team. How does a new ensemble form? How can they learn to fly in formation? The reviews and the output keep scrolling. You are the pilot and the plane. Is it possible to be light-hearted, to be curious and to laugh, flying in this red sky? While the information rushes past?

— Úna Monaghan, with Emily DeDakis and Stone Drawn Circles

### **Karen Power** *can you hear me now???* (2019)

*can you hear me now???* was commissioned by ensemble mosaik as part of their UpToThree Series and premiered on 8th December, 2019 by Ernst Surburg, Mathis Mayr and Ute Wassermann. The theme for this series was 'text und sprache' and this piece is a continuing exploration into language as a necessity of pure communication that aligns more directly with its origins in nature and in animal calls. This piece explores the sound, shape, gesture, tone and contour of communication calls in nature and develops a new language between the players and the recorded environment. *can you hear me now???* also continues to employ my aural scores and parts, as alternate methods of communication with performers within the context of working with sounds/materials from outside of the Western Art Tradition. Specifically, this approach allows performers and environmental sounds/places to come together, so as to temporarily alter the shared performance/listening environment.

— Karen Power

### **Cat Hope** *Landay Sequenzas* (2022)

This piece consists of five English translations of Afghan Landays set to music. The Landay is an Afghan form of poetry consisting of a single couplet in Pashto, one of two national languages of Afghanistan. Commonly shared orally amongst Pashtan women, they are sung aloud, sometimes with the beat of a hand drum. They typically address themes of love, grief, homeland, war and separation. Like all music, they were banned by the Taliban from 1996-2001, and likely again now given the recent Taliban takeover of Afghanistan. Landays are rebellious and powerful, belying the notion of Afghan women as submissive or defeated. They are strong, resilient, political, creative and rebellious.

The graphic scores are made by tracing over a photograph of Afghan women under an aircraft, from a photograph by Seamus Murphy. The work explores the potential of graphic notation to reflect or 'contain' certain aural (oral) traditions that may evolve of time. The Landays are translated into English by Eliza Griswold.

— Cat Hope

### **Brian Irvine** *A Call To Arms* (2024)

At the height of the Covid Pandemic, UK Conservative peer Michelle Mone together with her financial investor husband Doug Barrowman set up a company called PPE MEDPRO in order to claim £202 million worth of contracts to supply the government with masks and gowns. The contract came about through Mone's personal connections with the lead minister in the cabinet office Michael Gove. Baroness Mone (as she was then known) continuously denied having any connection with PPE MEDPRO but later admitted to repeatedly lying to the press and to the government about her involvement. The pair personally pocketed over £60 million in profit from the contract with £29 million being deposited directly into Mone's personal account. The majority of items supplied by PPE MEDPRO proved to be unusable and were destroyed.

*A Call To Arms* is one of a series of works that explores aspects of contemporary greed. The text is a transcription of a television interview Mone gave with Barrowman and BBC journalist Laura Kuenssberg in which she protests: 'I don't honestly see there's a case to answer. I can't see what we've done wrong.' Michelle Mone was recently stripped of her Baroness title.

— Brian Irvine

### **Nicole Lizée** *Peril Earrings* (2023)

Ill-defined. A decrepit stream-of-consciousness hymnal with redacted or erased pages. Hook rug art made of existential crises. Sing-along choruses with intrusive thoughts. Jellied salads made of curious dread. Mania. Doom. Doldrums. Side 1 of Kate Bush's *The Dreaming*. The opening verse of Love's *The Red Telephone*. The entirety of Lars von Trier's *Melancholia*. Demons. Reapers. It's fine.  
'We let the weirdness in.'

Kate Bush: *Leave it Open, The Dreaming*

— Nicole Lizée

# BIOGRAPHY

## Stone Drawn Circles

Fearless interpreters of new music, Stone Drawn Circles are newcomers to the burgeoning Irish contemporary music scene. The group brings together six trailblazing artists that hold exploratory music at the heart of their practice. Each member is fervently active in the performance and dissemination of new music. Artist-led, the ensemble features players from groups including Eighth Blackbird, stargaze, Crash Ensemble and Ergodos Musicians. Equally at ease with complexity as they are in graphic scoring and improvisation, Stone Drawn Circles are a collective of risk-takers and sonic explorers. They have already drawn international attention, with Graham McKenzie, Director of Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, noting them in his 'Hidden Gems' of the 2023 festival, describing Stone Drawn Circles as 'a bit of a supergroup within new music circles in Ireland. One look at the repertoire they serve up here gives credence to that viewpoint...' [stonedrawncircles.com](http://stonedrawncircles.com)

Stone Drawn Circles is supported by the Arts Council of Ireland.

Stone Drawn Circles: In Formation tour is project-managed by the Contemporary Music Centre, Ireland, supported by PRS Foundation Beyond Borders funding.

*In Formation* and *Landay Sequences* were created with the financial assistance of Commission Awards, funded by the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon.

*A Call to Arms* was commissioned by the Contemporary Music Centre for Stone Drawn Circles with funds from PRS Foundation Beyond Borders funding.



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# NEW MUSIC DUBLIN 2024

Welcome back to New Music Dublin 2024!

In four days this April, NMD 2024 travels through more than 23 events: from the main-stage ambient music mastery of A Winged Victory for the Sullen all the way to Mariam Rezaei's virtuoso turntablism; from Aoife Ní Bhriain and Liam Byrne's ancient music reborn in *The Harmonic Labyrinth* to *ADVERT*, Laura Bowler's right-up-to-date exploration of the contemporary self; from the youthful voices of Cór Linn and Cór na nÓg in *Everyday Wonders* to Ann Cleare's exploration of deep time with Crash Ensemble in *TERRARIUM*; and it stops off at many many places in-between.

NMD 2024 is – as always – jam-packed.  
It is also – as ever – wildly eclectic.

My long-suffering team here at New Music Dublin wonder where both my preference for putting together an insanely hectic programme and my general delight in eclecticism come from, and I guess they both come from the same place. The only criterion I have when I ask artists to make new works for NMD is that I shouldn't be able to imagine in advance what they're going to make, because for me, surprise and enchantment in the new is the very essence of creativity – the delight in making something that has not been thought of before. And because the number of people making genuinely creative new work here in Ireland is far, far more than can be fitted in to one festival, the festival schedule is crazy-packed with as many new things as possible (I have already apologised to the team!)

You'll also notice that I also like to throw in the occasional reminder of good things that we may have missed the first time around, to provide a bit of context and extra depth. However – fundamentally – we are here for the new adventures, the experiences we don't know of, the ideas that we've not come across before and the challenges that we didn't know we might want to accept.

Here, there is something new for everyone, and everyone is very welcome at New Music Dublin 2024!

**John Harris**

Festival Director, New Music Dublin

## NEW MUSIC DUBLIN

*Thursday 25 April 2024*

**THERE WILL BE NO SILENCE:**

David Downes, Diatribe Stage

**THE HARMONIC LABYRINTH:**

Aoife Ní Bhriain & Liam Byrne, Diatribe Stage

**THE MONOCHROME PROJECT**

**DEANE, GRIBBIN & SAARIAHO:**

RTÉ Concert Orchestra

**ADVERT:** Laura Bowler & Decoder Ensemble

**IN FORMATION:** Stone Drawn Circles

*Friday 26 April 2024*

**GERALD BARRY IN FOCUS:**

Darragh Morgan & Mary Dullea

**YOU HEARD IT FIRST:** Crash Ensemble

**FESTIVAL RECEPTION / MONOCHROME  
PROJECT FANFARE**

**HAIGH, BUCKLEY & DENNEHY:**

National Symphony Orchestra

**THE ARCHETYPES PROJECT:**

Nathan Sherman & Alex Petcu, Diatribe Stage

**AWAY:** Anne La Berge & Diamanda La Berge  
Dramm, Diatribe Stage

*Saturday 27 April 2024*

**TRUMPETS:** Monochrome Project

**A 15 MINUTE WALK:**

The Totally Made Up Orchestra

**THE DANCERS INHERIT THE PARTY:**

Chamber Choir Ireland

**AROUND HERE, THE BIRDS PLANT THE**

**TREES:** Natalia Beylis

**AMBIENT / SYMPHONY:** A Winged Victory  
for the Sullen & National Symphony Orchestra

**CHANGING STATES:** Crash Ensemble

*Sunday 28 April 2024*

**EARTHRISE:** Musici Ireland

**EVERYDAY WONDERS:**

Cór Linn & Cór na nÓg

**BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO SLOW TRAVEL:**

Kirkos

**TALAMH:** Evlana Sinfonietta

**TERRARIUM:** Crash Ensemble

**IL RITORNO DEL ANGELO & MARIAM**

**REZAEI:** Diatribe Stage

*Throughout the festival:*

**THANKS – AN INSTALLATION:**

Diamanda La Berge Dramm

**INVISIBLE THREADS** installation:

Scott McLaughlin

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

New Music Dublin is a partnership between:

**RTÉ**

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