

# NEW MUS DUB

## CHORAL SKETCHES

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28th April 2022 , 3pm | The Studio, National Concert Hall, Dublin

**David Bremner** *word-broth*

**Kerry Hagan** *Honky Tonk in Cleveland, Ohio*

**Peter Moran** *Mantra*

**Chamber Choir Ireland**

**Paul Hillier** conductor



The programme will run for approximately one hour with no interval  
No audio or visual recording permitted  
No flash photography  
Please switch off all mobile phones

In the culmination of a year of work as part of the Choral Sketches career development programme for composers, David Bremner, Kerry Hagan, & Peter Moran will have their completed pieces performed by Chamber Choir Ireland and Paul Hillier in this final read-through for New Music Dublin.

Throughout 2021, these three selected composers received mentoring from composer and Chamber Choir Ireland singer, Eoghan Desmond, as they worked on their sketches, workshopping their pieces with Guest Director Nils Schveckendiek last November, and bringing their finished pieces to an audience for the first time this April under Chamber Choir Ireland Artistic Director, Paul Hillier.

**Choral Sketches is delivered jointly by Chamber Choir Ireland and the Contemporary Music Centre.**

## PROGRAMME NOTES

### **David Bremner** *word-broth*

A broth of text in which intelligible fragments occasionally float to the surface. The only text ingredient is 'if only that the same can never be'; a single contour-pattern setting of this is applied to varying speeds, registers, and timbres.

### **Kerry Hagan** *Honky Tonk in Cleveland, Ohio*

When Carol Sandburg wrote the poem *Honky Tonk in Cleveland, Ohio*, the city was the 5th largest in the US. It had a thriving steel and construction industry and booming economy. As a result, there was an influx of immigrants and an increasing wealth gap. The US was under Prohibition laws, growing the black market for speakeasys, and making Cleveland, on the edge of Lake Erie, a major entry point for smuggled alcohol from Canada. Honky tonks were speakeasys where chippies (prostitutes) and jazz music (the kind white people could listen to without controversy) were mixed with illegal alcohol.

Sandburg was well aware of the wealth gap between the rich and poor, the class animosity between the upper and lower classes, poor working conditions, and racism in response to immigration. Sandburg was a progressive and activist for workers' rights, which emerged in his poetry. His poem expresses a veneer of manic jollity while underneath lies an ugliness of poverty, seediness and racism.

The setting of the words in this work tries to capture the poem's atmosphere by referring to extreme musical styles, for example, honky tonk jazz, word painting of 18th century religious music, and whitewashed blues, while interrupting it with awkward or unsettling vocal techniques and body percussion.

Sandburg also employs poetical devices such as onomatopoeia and alliteration to create a kind of spoken soundscape of the honky tonk. This setting emphasises those sounds to create a sound world for the poem in music.

It's a jazz affair, drum crashes and cornet razzes.  
The trombone pony neighs and the tuba jackass snorts.  
The banjo tickles and titters too awful.  
The chippies talk about the funnies in the papers.  
The cartoonists weep in their beer.  
Ship riveters talk with their feet  
To the feet of floozies under the tables.  
A quartet of white hopes mourn with interspersed  
snickers;  
"I got the blues.  
I got the blues.  
I got the blues."  
And ... as we said earlier:  
The cartoonists weep in their beer.

—Carl Sandburg (1878-1967),  
Honky Tonk in Cleveland, Ohio from *Smoke and steel*.  
Harcourt, Brace and Howe, 1920

### **Peter Moran** (b. 1981) *Mantra*

A mantra is a prayer that is recited repeatedly in order to quiet the mind in meditation and reveal the deeper parts of ourselves that lie beneath. This mantra, 'Om Shri Gurave Swaha', calls on our own innermost wisdom, our highest ideal of ourself, to become our guide or teacher

## **BIOGRAPHIES**

### **David Bremner**

David Bremner is a composer and pianist/organist based in Dublin. Operating in an idiom that is both minimalist in texture and harmonically complex, his current work has involved creating fabrics made from atonal drone textures, and algorithmic composition. With soprano Elizabeth Hilliard he runs the music/text production company Béal. In 2013 he completed a PhD, supervised by Gráinne Mulvey, at TU Dublin Conservatoire, where he now lectures in composition. With the piper Mark Redmond, David in 2014 released the acclaimed CD *l'air du temps/the spirit of the times*. Works of his also feature on CD releases by Anne-Marie O'Farrell and Elizabeth Hilliard (Métier/Divine Arts Records). 2022 will see the release of his début solo CD, *Mixed Circuits*, on Farpoint Recordings, featuring Hilliard, Paul Roe, Izumi Kimura and Andreea Banciu. He is collaborating on an experimental opera with dramaturg and director Hélène Montague, to be performed in July 2022. An ongoing collaboration with the violinist Larissa O'Grady (touring March-June 2022) features algorithmic text, and commissions from writers Joanna Walsh and Kit Fryatt.

## **Kerry Hagan**

Dr Kerry L Hagan is a composer and researcher working in both acoustic and computer media. She develops real-time methods for spatialization and stochastic algorithms for musical practice. Her work endeavours to achieve aesthetic and philosophical aims while taking inspiration from mathematical and natural processes. In this way, each work combines art with science and technology from various domains. Her works have been performed in Asia, Australia, Europe and the Americas. She performs regularly with Miller Puckette as the Higgs whatever, and with John Bowers in the Bowers-Hagan Duo.

In 2010, Hagan led a group of practitioners to form the Irish Sound, Science and Technology Association, where she served as President until 2015. Currently, she is a Lecturer at the University of Limerick in the Digital Media and Arts Research Centre. She is the Principal Investigator for the Spatialization and Auditory Display Environment (SpADE) and President of the International Computer Music Association.

## **Peter Moran**

Peter Moran is a composer and music director whose interests include microtones and tuning systems, postcard miniatures, and sacred choral music.

He received his music degree from University College Dublin and his MA and PhD from the University of York. His awards and commissions include the Carl von Ossietzky Composition Prize, the Walter Becket Cup for Original Song, the Per Cent for Arts Commission and numerous Arts Council Awards. He has held artistic residencies at University College Dublin, the soundSCAPE Contemporary Music Festival in Italy, and the Frédéric Chopin Conservatoire in Paris. His music has featured in concerts and festivals across Europe, Asia and North America, and is released on Ergodos Records and Farpoint Recordings.

Moran is the founder and director of five Javanese gamelan orchestras in Dublin, in University College Dublin and in the National Concert Hall, since he acquired a complete set of gamelan instruments as a gift from the Sultan of Yogyakarta in 2014. His NCH Gamelan Orchestra has performed across Ireland, the UK and Indonesia, at festivals including the Electric Picnic, the Yogyakarta Performing Arts Festival, and the International Gamelan Festival in Java in 2018.

His current compositional interest is in creating choral settings of spiritual texts. When not composing or gamelaning, he can be found playing in local folk music sessions or leading a number of meditation groups in Dublin. In 2022 he was appointed Assistant Professor in Composition & Performance in UCD.

## **Paul Hillier (Artistic Director)**

Paul Hillier is from Dorset in England and studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. His career has embraced singing, conducting, composing, and writing about music. He formed the Hilliard Ensemble in 1973 and was its musical director for 17 years. In 1990 he created a new group called Theatre of Voices, which he continues to direct today. He has taught in the USA at the University of California campuses of Santa Cruz and Davis, and from 1996-2003 was Director of the Early Music Institute at Indiana University, Bloomington.

He was Principal Conductor of the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir (2001-2007) and has been Chief Conductor of Ars Nova Copenhagen since 2003. His books about Arvo Pärt and Steve Reich are published by Oxford University Press. In 2006 he was awarded an OBE for services to choral music. In 2007 he received the Order of the White Star of Estonia, and was awarded a Grammy for Best Choral Recording.

In 2008 he became Chief Conductor of Chamber Choir Ireland and was appointed artistic director of the newly formed Coro Casa da Musica in Porto. That same year he also created his own music publishing company, Theatre of Voices Edition ([www.tov-edition.com](http://www.tov-edition.com)). During 2009 he was artist in residence at Yale University's Institute for Sacred Music. In 2010 he was awarded his second Grammy - for David Lang's *The Little Match Girl Passion*. In 2013 he was awarded the Order of Dannebrog (the Danish knighthood) by Her Majesty Queen Margrethe of Denmark. Paul is represented worldwide by Konzertdirektion Hörtnagel, Berlin.

## Chamber Choir Ireland

### Sopranos

Abbi Temple  
Felicity Hayward  
Gemma King\*  
Sarah Keating\*

### Altos

Christina Whyte  
Laura Lamph  
Leanne Fitzgerald  
Sarah Thursfield\*

### Tenors

Rory Lynch  
Edward  
Woodhouse  
Jakob  
Skjoldborg\*  
Luís Toscano\*

### Basses

Jeffrey Ledwidge  
Eoghan Desmond  
William Gaunt  
Asger Lynge  
Peterson\*

\*Deputy

'It was at once a sheerly beautiful immersion in choral sonority'  
IRISH TIMES, MARCH 2019

Garnering a strong reputation for its unique approach to creative commissioning, recording and programming, Chamber Choir Ireland is the country's flagship choral ensemble and national chamber choir under the Artistic Direction of the multi-award-winning conductor, Paul Hillier. The Choir's programmes span from early renaissance to the present day, incorporating established choral classics with cutting edge commissions, and a style of performance that incorporates versatility, dynamism and often vocal pyrotechnics.

Chamber Choir Ireland performances have been described as having a tone which is 'liquid in its power and purity' with a 'strong vocal flexibility of style' (Belfast Telegraph). The Choir has a strong commitment to touring in Ireland and continues to develop its touring network in order to present high quality choral concerts to audiences around the country. International touring has included the USA, UK, Belgium, Russia, Germany and South America.

The choir has previously recorded for the Harmonia Mundi, RTE Lyric FM labels including the world premiere recording of works by Gerald Barry, Barry meets Beethoven, featuring the Crash Ensemble and Stephen Richardson on the Orchid Classics label. The most recent release garnering a 5-star review in the Irish Times was *Letters* which included the CCI commission *Triptych* by David Fennessy and *A Letter of Rights* by Tarik O'Regan & Alice Goodman on the Naxos label (November 2020).

Chamber Choir Ireland has a strong Learning and Participation programme, including in Composers in the Classroom, Choral Sketches, Sing! at Axis:Ballymun and a lecture series on the history of choral music in Ireland.

Chamber Choir Ireland receives principal funding & support from the Arts Council/an Chomhairle Ealaíon, is supported by Dublin City Council, is a resident ensemble at the National Concert Hall of Ireland, Associate Artists to Dublin City University, and a member of TENSO – the network of professional chamber choirs in Europe. In 2021, Chamber Choir Ireland welcomed President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins as Patron. [chamberchoirireland.com](http://chamberchoirireland.com).



## Contemporary Music Centre

The Contemporary Music Centre (CMC) is Ireland's archive and resource centre for new music, supporting the work of composers throughout the Republic and Northern Ireland.

CMC is a relevant, resourceful and recognisable force in the documentation, development and promotion of Contemporary Music in Ireland. CMC meets the needs of a wide variety of interest groups: composers, performers, musicologists, teachers, students and reaches a range of audiences including music enthusiasts, other art forms, children and young people in its support to Contemporary Music.

As the archive for composers' works and related materials from the island of Ireland, CMC's strategic goal is to ensure that the contemporary music landscape in Ireland is documented and preserved for future generations and that access to our dynamic library of contemporary works is provided. The public library in the centre's historic premises of 19 Fishamble Street in the west end of Dublin's Temple Bar delivers access to these materials on a daily basis, including provision of scores for performance. The archive preserves digitally and physically these works for the future, playing a central and unique role in the musical heritage of the island.

CMC positions audience development for contemporary music at the heart of the organisation, while supporting the continuing professional development of composers and performers of contemporary music. CMC is committed to creating a supportive environment for composers, performers & audiences of new music from Ireland.

Furthering their goal of promoting the work of composers and artists active in new music in Ireland and internationally, we build on international promotion models that have been successful for CMC as well as continuing the national partnerships we have developed in recent years to bring the works of Irish composers to a wider audience.

# 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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