

**N E W  
M U S  
D U B**

**TOTEMIC**

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28th April 2022, 1pm | Kevin Barry Recital Room, National Concert Hall, Dublin

**Kate Moore** *Crucible*

**Missy Mazzoli** *Tooth and Nail*

**Benedict Schlepper-Connolly** *One Thing I Know*

**Francois Sarhan** *Homework*

**Ian Wilson** *TOTEMIC*

**Nathan Sherman** viola • **Alex Petcu** percussion

## PROGRAMME NOTES

This colourful programme for viola and percussion celebrates *Totemic*, Nathan Sherman and Alex Petcu's debut album released on the Ergodos record label. CDs will be available for sale after the concert. You can also visit [ergodos.ie](http://ergodos.ie) to stream, download, or order a CD.



ERGODOS

### **Kate Moore** *Crucible*

The title *Crucible* was inspired by the play of the same name by Arthur Miller about the witch trials in Salem in the 17th Century. The composition follows on from an earlier work that invokes Saint Brigid to protect the chanter from harm at the hands of her pursuers. St Brigid was named after the Celtic goddess Brigid who was a triple Goddess who presided over three flames: that of inspiration, poetry and music, that of the hearth, family and children, and that of the forge, iron mongering and the crucible, which is a vessel used to hold molten metal. The crucible is also a symbol for witchcraft. In feasts for Brigid and later Saint Brigid, a doll is made to celebrate the goddess/saint in spring. It is an innocent and sweet object made of straw by children as an offering to the goddess/saint, yet in the play *The Crucible*, the doll, made as a gift, becomes a symbol of the devil and evil, evoking hysteria and used as an excuse to accuse and trial innocent person of witchcraft.

—Kate Moore

### **Missy Mazzoli** *Tooth and Nail*

*Tooth and Nail* was inspired by the extraordinary musical traditions of Uzbekistan, where jaw harp (also called Jew's harp or mouth harp) plays a prominent role. The jaw harp player consistently plucks the instrument, creating overtones and melodies by changing the shape of his or her mouth, and the central Asian style takes this technique to wild and beautiful extremes. 'I have created my own version of this music, based on my memories of hearing Uzbek jaw harp players', says Mazzoli. The electronic part is made up almost entirely of viola samples, allowing the live viola to play in counterpoint with itself. *Tooth and Nail* was written for violist Nadia Sirota and recorded for her album *Baroque*.

### **Benedict Schlepper-Connolly** *One Thing I Know*

*One Thing I Know* (2022) began in a rehearsal with violist Nathan Sherman, and was sparked by the simple enjoyment of the low C# on the viola's C string, a note with a characteristic all of its own. The work developed from here, continuing a childlike appreciation of individual sounds, adding in a custom assembly of percussion instruments, some of which were built by percussionist Alex Petcu himself. While working on the piece, I came across the poetry – and tragic life – of Edeltraud Eckert, who was arrested for her opposition to the East German government in 1950, and who died in prison at the age of 24 in 1954. Her poem 'Eines weiß ich' is absurdly optimistic for a better future, and lends this piece its title. *One Thing I Know* was commissioned by Nathan Sherman and Alex Petcu with funds from the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.

—Benedict Schlepper-Connolly

## **Francois Sarhan** *Homework*

The main point of *Homework II: In The Garage* is to show someone reading a generic instruction manual. This action is superimposed with a ritualistic attitude, which transforms the reading and action of assembling the device into a trance.

The text alternates between the introspection of the performer and the text of the instruction manual. As the piece progresses, these two concepts merge. The music does allude to the ritualist aspects and gives all the dramatical direction. It also shows the destruction of the individual via the paroxysm of physical activity. I must say, however, that the narrative is quite allusive and doesn't establish a clear plot. My difficult task was to be both precise and allusive...

The idea of body percussion and its short, percussive sounds is linked to the idea of building a mechanical / electronic device, both through the type of sounds and the "DIY" concept (the person in his garage building something produces all the sounds himself). This opposition between the mechanics and the absence of instruments (not so frequent in contemporary music) is the central point of the piece, because it questions the existence and the nature of the *thing*, of the *tool*, the *object*.

—Francois Sarhan

## **Ian Wilson** *TOTEMIC*

*TOTEMIC* (2020) is both a response to Berio's *Naturale* and an exploration of quiet sonic gestures. Fragments of my own melody to the old Irish song *The Mountain Streams* come and go, while part of my 1996 piano solo *A Haunted Heart* also appears twice as a farewell to a unique person in my life who died shortly after I completed the work. *TOTEMIC* was co-commissioned by Belfast Music Society (with funds from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's Commissioning Programme for Creative Innovation), SOUND Festival Aberdeen, and New Music Dublin.

—Ian Wilson

## BIOGRAPHIES

### **Alex Petcu**

An Irish musician of Romanian origin, Alex Petcu performs with a wide variety of ensembles in Ireland, including Crash Ensemble, Hard Rain Soloist Ensemble, Bangers and Crash Percussion, the various orchestras in Ireland, and many more. He has a passion for solo and chamber music that features percussion and has performed at various festivals. He also teaches percussion at the MTU Cork School of Music.

[alexpetcu.com](http://alexpetcu.com)

### **Nathan Sherman**

Nathan Sherman was drawn to the sound of the viola from an early age. He attended the Royal Irish Academy of Music, Royal Academy of Music in London, and ESMUC in Barcelona, and now enjoys a lively performance career as a chamber, orchestral and solo musician. Nathan has premiered many works and enjoys collaborating with composers and other like-minded musicians in the creation of new music. He is the artistic director and violist of Ficino Ensemble, and performs regularly with the National Symphony Orchestra, Irish Baroque Orchestra, Irish Chamber Orchestra, Camerata Kilkenny, and Resurgam. [nathanshermanmusic.com](http://nathanshermanmusic.com)

### **Missy Mazzoli**

Grammy-nominated composer Missy Mazzoli was recently deemed 'one of the more consistently inventive, surprising composers now working in New York' (The New York Times). From 2018-2021 she was the Mead Composer-in-Residence at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and her music has been performed by leading ensembles all over the world. In 2018 she made history when she became one of the two first women to be commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera. Mazzoli is also an active TV and film composer, and a pianist and keyboardist. Her music is published by G. Schirmer.

[missymazzoli.com](http://missymazzoli.com)

### **Kate Moore**

Kate Moore (b. 1979) is an Australian-Dutch musician and composer of new music. Her works have been released on major labels, including the Grammy and Edison nominated album Dances and Canons, released on ECM New Series, and the Cantaloupe release Stories for Ocean Shells. Active on the international scene, Moore has had works performed by acclaimed ensembles including ASKO|Schönberg, Alarm Will Sound, Bang On A Can All-Stars, and Icebreaker. [katemoore.org](http://katemoore.org)

### **François Sarhan**

François Sarhan (b. Rouen, 1972) is a French composer, director and visual artist, performed in Asia, Africa, America and Europe. His works have been presented at international festivals and he is regularly commissioned by leading french soloists and international ensembles. He is noted for creating his own music-theatre and multimedia works in which he himself often performs, and has directed his own work since 2008. Sarhan has taught at IRCAM, and at the Marc Bloch University in Strasbourg. Since 2015 he has taught composition at the UdK (Berlin) and occasionally at the Musikhochschule in Dresden. [francoissarhan.blogspot.com](http://francoissarhan.blogspot.com)

## **Benedict Schlepper-Connolly**

Benedict Schlepper-Connolly is a composer and producer from Dublin. As a composer, he moves between various musical forms, including chamber music, choral writing, orchestral work, arrangement, songwriting, field recording and music for dance and film. In recent years, Benedict has worked with a range of orchestras and groups such as the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, Ensemble Klang, Crash Ensemble, and Slagwerk den Haag. His debut solo album, *The Weathered Stone*, was released in 2016. [benedict.ie](http://benedict.ie)

## **Ian Wilson**

Ian Wilson (b. Belfast, 1964) has composed over 200 works in many different genres which have been performed and broadcast on six continents. He is a member of Aosdána, Ireland's national association of creative artists, and his music is published by G. Ricordi & Co. Ltd and Universal Edition. [ianwilson.ie](http://ianwilson.ie)



Alex Petcu and Nathan Sherman

# 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  
Soloist Ensemble

**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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