



Ensemble Court-circuit

Alexandra Greffin-Klein	violin
Antoine Dreyfuss	horn
Hugues Viallon	horn
Jean-Marie Cottet	piano

Thursday 28th January 2021, 1700

Programme

Grisey	<i>Accords perdus for two horns (1987)</i>
Tansy Davies	<i>Grand Mutation for violin, horn and piano (world premiere)*</i>
Ligeti	<i>Horn trio for violin, horn and piano</i>

Q&A with Tansy Davies after the performance

*Co-commissioned by **sound** and Ensemble Court-circuit

Supported by Bureau Export, Fondation Francis et Mica Salabert, Ernst von Siemens Music Foundation and Diaphonique, Franco-British fund for classical contemporary music; in partnership with the SACEM, the Friends of the French Institute Trust, the British Council, the French Ministry of Culture, the Institut français, the Institut français du Royaume-Uni, the Bureau Export, and the Salabert Fondation

Programme notes

The horn isn't frequently found in contemporary chamber music despite being important to composers and orchestral music for centuries. This programme aims to highlight the potential of the horn within this genre.

Grisey's *Accords perdus* takes us back to the origins of the horn exploring its untempered sound and diverse natural intonation.

Ligeti's famous *Trio* for violin, horn and piano was conceived as a tribute to Brahms and was a turning point in Ligeti's career.

The world premiere of Tansy Davies's **sound** commissioned Trio for violin, horn and piano completes the programme. Tansy Davies is considered "one of the most distinctive voices in British music today."

Biographies

Ensemble Court-circuit

Composer Philippe Hurel and conductor Pierre-André Valade created the ensemble Court-circuit in 1991, following a meeting with the founders of Analix Gallery in Geneva. "Created by a composer for composers", Court-circuit from the outset was a place of experimentation, an art project promoting intense risk-taking in a spirit of total freedom. A strong commitment to contemporary music is the real cement of the ensemble. Court-circuit owes its nervous, rhythmic, incisive identity, as well as its banner-like name, to the musicians and their leader Jean Deroyer, who animate it with determination and virtuosity. A sought-after partner for composers, the ensemble cheerfully plays its role of agitator in the international contemporary scene.

Court-circuit was invited by highly dynamic international programming (Maerzmuzik festivals, Ultima, Printemps des Arts, Musica Electronica Nova, Traiettorie, Gaïda) and has thrived at the high places of French creation and festivals : Agora festivals, Manifesto, Novelum, Aujourd'hui Musiques in Perpignan, Messiaen in the Land of Meije, the Reims Opera, the Metz Arsenal, the Caen and Besançon theaters, and the Paris Opera.

Court-circuit is also involved in interdisciplinary projects that go beyond the sphere of contemporary music. After working with the Paris Opera for choreographic creations (Preljocaj, Lagraa), the ensemble had a fruitful partnership with the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord (Paris), where it created

two chamber operas (*The Second Woman* – Grand Prize of Critics 2011 – and *Mimi* – 2014 – both composed by Frédéric Verrières and staged by Guillaume Vincent, before beginning a collaboration with the Opera Comique (Paris) where it participates in the opera *La Princesse légère* composed by Violeta Cruz and directed by Jos Houben (premiere in 2017).

In parallel, Court-circuit created several ciné-concerts such as *Paris qui dort* (a René Clair film, with music by Yan Maresz) and *Les hommes le dimanche* (a Robert Siodmak film, with music by Alexandros Markeas). Court-circuit asserts its pedagogic mission by regularly working with the Paris Conservatory and the Ile- de-France conservatories. In 2012, it settled in the Hauts-de-Seine, where it conducts numerous projects with music institutions and national distribution structures.

The ensemble is regularly invited to participate in European programs, like Integra (2006-2011) dedicated to mixed music, and Re: new music project (2009- 2011). Court-circuit's discography features about twenty records that accurately reflect his extensive repertoire: Reynolds, Bertrand, Blondeau, D'Adamo, Fineberg, Grisey, Hervé, Hurel, Leroux, Matalon Monnet, Murail, Schneller, Buchala, Jodlowski...

Named several times "Favorite" by the Académie Charles Cros, these CDs were recognized by numerous awards (Le Monde de la Musique, Diapason d'Or, 10 de Répertoire).

DRAC Île de France – Ministère de la culture, Région Île de France, SPEDIDAM, SACEM, Copie Privée support the activities of Ensemble Court-circuit.

For this project, Ensemble Court-circuit has received the support of Bureau Export, Diaphonique, Fondation Francis et Mica Salabert and Ernst Von Siemens Foundation.

Tansy Davies

Tansy Davies characterises the role of the solo saxophone in her 2004 work *Iris* as that of "a shaman, or 'one who walks between worlds'," and in doing so she also describes herself – a musician whose boundary crossing curiosity makes her one of the most distinctive voices in British music today.

Born in Bristol on 29th May 1973 (Gemini Sun, Libra Rising, Taurus Moon), her studies in composition began with Alan Bullard at Colchester Institute, where she was later (in 2011) awarded an honorary doctorate. In 1996 she was a BBC Young Composer, and subsequently studied with Simon

Bainbridge at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and with Simon Holt at Royal Holloway.

Early support from the Composers Ensemble and the London Sinfonietta led in 2002 to *The Void in this Colour*, a Spitalfields Festival commission for the Brunel Ensemble, vividly reviewed by Tim Ashley in The Guardian as “a prismatic soundscape at once alluring and alienating.” The work’s qualities of sensuousness and brittleness feature in much of what Davies has written since, while the prismatic aspect points towards her fascination with the physical world, both natural and manmade. The visceral impact of her music can be perhaps be partly attributed to her own immediate, physical sense of making sounds; from her background as a horn player, electric guitarist and vocalist.

Her work is often inspired by an acute visual/spatial sense. Components of Zaha Hadid’s buildings find exact parallels in the structuring of *Spiral House* (2004) – a trumpet concerto for Mark O’Keeffe and the BBC Scottish – while the work of Anselm Kiefer gave inspiration and a title for *Falling Angel*, a work written for Thomas Adès and BCMG and first performed successively in Birmingham and in Paris, at Présences in 2007.

Alongside works for sinfonietta and orchestral music of such brazen confidence as *Tilting* (2005) for the LSO, Davies has composed a series of equally vivid chamber works, some of which involve electronics. The almost literal tang of the textures and the title of *salt box* (2005) and the suggestiveness of *grind show* (2007) can both be heard on her much admired first album, *Troubairitz* (Nonclassical) which was released in 2011.

Davies has been commissioned by numerous world class ensembles and orchestras, including the London Sinfonietta, the CBSO Youth Orchestra, the City of London Sinfonia, the BBC Scottish Symphony orchestra, BIT 20, the BCMG, and a large-scale piece for the BBC Symphony Orchestra, *Wild Card*, for the Proms in 2010.

International groups including the Cantus Ensemble, Grup Instrumental de Valencia, the Tiroler Ensemble für Neue Musik, Musiques Nouvelles, Melos Ethos Ensemble, Orchestra of Filharmonia Baltycka, Israel Contemporary Players, Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfonica de Chile, Tokyo Symphony Orchestra, and Tokyo Ensemble Factory, have performed her work.

In 2009 she received a Paul Hamlyn Award. In 2010 the critically acclaimed *As with Voices and with Tears*, a requiem for choir, string orchestra and electronics, was performed to commemorate Remembrance Sunday in Portsmouth Cathedral, with the London Mozart Players. This work was nominated for the South Bank Show / Sky Arts Award 2011. Also in

2011, Davies collaborated with Norwegian choreographer Ingun Bjørnsgaard on *Omega and the Deer*, a dance project which toured to Oslo, Berlin, Potsdam, Hamburg and New York. Later that year her carol, Christmas Eve, was performed at the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols in King's College Cambridge and broadcast around the world.

2012 saw the premiere of a piano concerto *Nature* for Huw Watkins and the BCMG, conducted by Oliver Knussen (a co-commission with the Oslo Sinfonietta), as well as the release of her second commercial CD, *spine*, on the NMC label. The disc, which features many of her ensemble and chamber works, has been widely praised for its 'emotional depth & unrestrained exuberance', as well as its 'sensibility' and 'inventiveness.'

In 2014 her trumpet concerto *Spiral House* was performed at Warsaw Autumn Festival, with trumpeter Marco Blauw and the Warsaw Philharmonic. Later that year the Asko Schönberg ensemble brought *neon* to the Queen Elizabeth Hall.

Her opera *Between Worlds*, written in collaboration librettist Nick Drake, was premiered by ENO at the Barbican Theatre, London in April 2015. Praised for its 'originality' and 'inexorable power', the work was well received by audiences and critics alike.

Following that, a new work *Re-greening* for large singing orchestra (without conductor) was premiered at Snape Maltings, Aldeburgh, by the National Youth Orchestra, who later performed the work at the 2015 BBC Proms. The Evening Standard listed her in Progress 1000, as one of the UK's most influential people of 2015.

2017 saw the premiere of *Song Horn* premiered at the Berliner Festspiele by Musikfabrik's Christine Chapman and *Antenoux*, a new work for 10 players, premiered by the Crash Ensemble, who later recorded the work.

In June 2018, *Cave*, a new chamber opera, to a text by Nick Drake, was premiered in the vast warehouse space of the Printworks, in London's Canada Water. Staged by the London Sinfonietta in association with the Royal Opera, this new work for tenor Mark Padmore and mezzo-soprano Elaine Mitchener follows a grieving man's quest for survival and renewal, in a dystopian future of deserted shopping malls and melting glaciers. *Cave* was awarded a Royal Philharmonic Society Award for best chamber work during the 18/19 season.

Also during that season, Davies was Composer in Residence at the The Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, resulting in *Soul Canoe*: a new work for the

Asko|Schönberg Ensemble, co-commissioned by Red Note Ensemble for Sound Scotland festival.

In November 2019, a new vocal work, setting texts by Sylvia Winter and John Berger, entitled: The rule is love, was premiered by Elaine Mitchener and the London Sinfonietta. The work was co-commissioned by Doaueschingen, where it will receive its German premiere in November 2020.

Current projects include new works for Court Circuit and the Arditti Quartet.

Forthcoming sound*festival* events

Richard Ingham and Pete Stollery | Thu 28 January | 2000

Music for saxophones and electronics by Pete Stollery, Denis Smalley and Richard Ingham

socialsound | Thu 28 January | 2130

Join us online for a chat about the day's events in the company of featured artists

Rookh Quartet | Fri 29 January | 1200

Programme includes works written for the Rookh Quartet, exploring unusual sounds as well as capturing the soul of the horn

The Metalization of a Dream | Fri 29 January | 1500

Duncan MacLeod's *The Metalization of a Dream* is an open form sound-work responding to the dada and surrealist-inspired collages of artist Eduardo Paolozzi

We Ask These Questions Of Everybody | Fri 29 January | 1700

Operatic event sharing disabled people's experiences under austerity in the UK, performed by an exceptional cross-genre, all-disabled ensemble

Ensemble Court Circuit | Fri 29 January | 2000

Works by Philippe Hurel and Ravel

socialsound | Fri 29 January | 2130

Join us online for a chat about the day's events in the company of featured artists

Promenade Concert | Sat 30 January | 1000

Join us for a winter themed discovery of new music for the whole family with Ruth Wall (harp), Richard Watkins (horn) and Richard Ingham (saxophone)

Gold.Berg.Werks | Sat 30 January | 1200

Karlheinz Essl's unusual take of Bach's *The Goldberg Variations* performed by Xenia Pestova Bennett (piano) and Ed Bennett (electronics)

Aberdeen | Sat 30 January | 1500

New collaboration between David Fennessy, Sonia Cromarty and Tim Cooper

Any Enemy & Brandon University New Music Ensemble | Sat 30 January | 1700

Unique live digital performance including new works specially commissioned for joint performance by the two ensembles

Richard Watkins, horn + Composer Conversation | Sat 30 January | 2000

Philip Cashian's *Scenes from the Life of Viscount Medardo* and discussion with Philip Cashian, Aileen Sweeney and Rylan Gleave

social/sound ound | Sat 30 January | 2130

Join us online for a chat about the day's events in the company of featured artists

Listen Carefully | Sun 31 January | 1000

Siobhan Dyson's audio-visual work depicts a day in the life of an autistic person

Hebrides Ensemble *Diversions* | Sun 31 January | 1300

Works by Joe Stollery, Ben Teague, Rylan Gleave, Siobhan Dyson, Ben Lunn, Jason Hodgson and Lucy Hale

Available throughout the festival:

[Digital French Horn Exhibition](#)

Most of the performances will be available on our YouTube channel until 28 February. Please see our website for more information.

Follow us on social media for up to date information and festival news



#soundfest20

sound is a new music incubator based in north-east Scotland encouraging new music creation and discovery. We run the annual **soundfestival**, as well as year-round activity supporting a wide range of composers, engaging with local communities and providing educational opportunities

Find out more: [**www.sound-scotland.co.uk**](http://www.sound-scotland.co.uk)

soundfestival gratefully acknowledges the support of:

