



Hebrides Ensemble Diversions

Sunday 31st January 2021, 1300

Programme

Siobhan Dyson

Joe Stollery

Rylan Gleave

Ben Teague

Lucy Hale

Jason Hodgson

Ben Lunn

Long Sharp Winds

The Skene Obsession

Permanent Address

Miniatures for clarinet

Sustain and Snap

the destination is obsolete

*Symphonies of Instruments (final
movement)*

Programme notes

Siobhan Dyson *Long Sharp Winds*

Long Sharp Winds is a piece inspired by Iceland. With its sharp cut winds and open scenery, Siobhan has given us her interpretation of Iceland's landscape. Siobhan chose violin to express this sharp but open picture.

Joe Stollery *The Skene Obsession*

This piece is based on a short, darkly comical legend about the 17th century Laird of Skene (pronounced: 'skeen'), who lived in central Aberdeenshire, and was also allegedly a wizard. At a local ceilidh one night, he got so fed up with the music and dancing that he put a curse on the entire party, forcing them to play and dance to the point where their fingers and feet bled, and they collapsed exhausted.

As an autistic, I am familiar with the concept of obsession, and this legend provided a suitable framework to demonstrate this idea in music. The piece is therefore basically a reel that is repeated in evermore frantic iterations and brought past the point of endurance (though I should point out that I absolutely do NOT intend the musicians to bleed or harm themselves in performance!)

Rylan Gleave *Permanent Address*

Permanent Address is a reflection on living out of a suitcase, whether that is keeping all necessary belongings in a bag, ready to leave at a moment's notice, or pulling out metaphorical tools to hastily adapt to an unfamiliar, new social situation.

Navigating a sense of loss of home with neurodivergence is disruptive, and often isolating. This piece is representative of some of the feelings of loneliness I have felt in both countries I have lived in long term, as well as some of the odd comfort I have found in some of the places I have stayed, namely Scotland.

Ben Teague *Miniatures for clarinet*

Miniatures for Clarinet (2017-2019) are a small collection of previously unfinished works for solo clarinet. The miniatures are written using two operations. Firstly, an interval, (namely seconds, thirds, and latterly fourths in the third movement), and secondly only being allowed to use intervals used in previous movements. The result of these constraints could inevitably

generate quite trivial music, though the focus is on rhythm, dynamics, and phrasing in these pieces.

Lucy Hale *Sustain and Snap*

Written in 2013, *Sustain and Snap* for solo cello was originally developed in collaboration with choreographer Bernardo Ribiero, who at the time was a student at the Northern Ballet School. It has only been danced once, at Manchester's Dance House Theatre in May 2014. However it has recently begun a "second life" as a concert work. The title refers to the two "types" of sound made by the cello which permeate the work; the sustained chords, and the "snap" pizzicato.

Jason Hodgson *the destination is obsolete*

the destination is obsolete (2013) is a musical game of mistakes; the ensemble aim to match the pitch of the soloist, while the soloist travels up from the bottom to the top range of their instrument via randomly generated instructions. The ever-changing score creates an environment where the ensembles task becomes almost impossible. But as Spock once said in Let That Be Your Last Battlefield (Star Trek the Original Series, Season 3, Episode 15, 1969) "Change is the essential process of all existence."

Ben Lunn *Symphonies of Instruments* (final movement)

Commissioned by Drake Music Scotland and Hebrides Ensemble for 'Diversions' in the Queen's Hall Edinburgh.

The work tries to create a platform where accessible music technology can simply play alongside 'traditional' orchestral instruments and stand shoulder to shoulder with the past.

The nod to Stravinsky highlights the sentiment - a group of instruments playing together.

The work is four movements long

I - Searching

II - Hoquetus

III - Chorale

IV - Finale

Performed by the Hebrides Ensemble and Digital Orchestra, conducted by Ben Lunn

Biographies

Hebrides Ensemble

With programmes that are diverse, imaginative and inspiring, Hebrides Ensemble has established itself as one of the foremost chamber music collectives in the UK.

Co-founded and led by its artistic director, the cellist and conductor William Conway, the Ensemble is renowned for its fresh and intelligent approach to programming, which places contemporary music at the heart of a diverse range of repertoire.

The Ensemble's flexibility is its strength, drawing its performers from a pool of the most outstanding musicians in the UK and beyond, ensuring the exceptional performance standards for which it has become renowned. This is an international ensemble with its roots in Scottish culture, a collective which performs regularly at venues and festivals throughout the UK and Europe, and is regularly featured in broadcasts for BBC Radio 3.

In recent years, the Ensemble has given premieres at the Muziekgebouw in Amsterdam, London's King's Place, The Wigmore Hall, Aldeburgh Festival, the Edinburgh International Festival and in 2018, made its debut appearance at the BBC Proms.

Hebrides Academy supports the next generation of performers, composers, artistic directors and cultural leaders through its mentoring programme and Hebrides Digital allows audiences around the world to be part of our performances, using live streaming and cutting-edge digital technology.

In October 2019 Hebrides Ensemble released its fourth recording in a series of composer-focused discs with Delphian. *Airs from Another Planet: Chamber music and songs by Judith Weir* follows discs profiling the works of Nigel Osborne and Peter Maxwell Davies, as well as the first recording of James MacMillan's *Since it was the day of preparation...*, which went straight to No 1 in the Specialist Classical Charts.

In December 2019, the Ensemble worked in partnership with Drake Music Scotland and composer Ben Lunn on Diversions, a concert showcasing works by disabled composers and including a new piece for Hebrides Ensemble together with Drake Music Scotland's Digital Orchestra. The concert was designed with accessibility at the front and centre of the creative process, and the event was recognized with multiple awards at the Scottish Awards for New Music 2020.

Siobhan Dyson has obtained her BMus (Hons) degree in composition at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. She is now undertaking her master's degree at the same university studying with composer, Dr Oliver Searle.

Born in Macclesfield, she developed a passion for composing when her grandfather gave her a keyboard where she was self-taught on piano and starting writing at the early age of ten.

During her school days she developed her piano and composition skills and decided that she wanted to pursue a career in composition.

She has also performed many of her pieces live and composed pieces many pieces for Concert bands; dancers; musicians; short films and narrations.

Siobhan is currently working on a multitude of projects including; Collaboration with a P.H.D student studying English; Electroacoustic works for an ensemble; An instillation piece for Sound Scotland and a brass quintet for 'in the night with'.

Joe Stollery is a composer currently based in central Aberdeenshire. He recently graduated with a MMus in Composition at the University of Aberdeen (2016).

He has written for a wide variety of ensembles, mostly instrumental, but also including art songs and some secular choral works, as well as a handful of chamber operas. His musical interests (including 19th and 20th century classical, musical, film music, rock and metal) cover a wide range, and as such his compositional aesthetic stands somewhere between tradition and the avant-garde, often coming close to each pole in the same piece, but through many different approaches. This is mainly prevalent in his harmonic writing, which, while usually expressing a conventionally tonal language, also regularly explores chromatic progressions through unorthodox cadences and part-writing. He is also keen on putting dramatic statements into his music, and is inclined towards a theatrical element in many of his instrumental works (*The Twa Corbies*, *Pantomime-Masque*, *A Recumbent Gateway*). He is particularly interested in the concept of illustrating a variety of external ideas in music.

He was twice a finalist in the Carlaw-Ogston Composition Award (2015 & 2016), has participated as an observer at the Cheltenham Festival (2016), and has been commissioned by the Aberdeenshire Youth Orchestra and the Geneva-based wind band L'Harmonie Nautique, amongst others. He was also commissioned by the *sound* festival and the Silver Cities Stories project for his opera *Mither Kirk* (2017), and has collaborated with Scottish Opera for

the production of *Nature's House* (2014), as part of a Leverhulme scholarship. His first opera *The Maiden Stone* (2014), based on a local legend, was given its premiere outside at the foot of the hill Bennachie where the story was set.

His personal interests lie in a wide variety of sources, many of which stream into his music. These include the local environment and its history, nature, myths and legends, especially with regard to mythical creatures, and the supernatural.

Rylan Gleave is a composer and vocalist from the north of England, currently based in Glasgow, Scotland.

His compositions have recently included pieces for d/Deaf actors in morality-tale style narratives (*The Strange Musician*, 2019), chamber works about navigating neurodiversity (*Permanent Address*, 2020), defiantly Queer sound art (*Distinguished Guests*, 2017), duets for out-of-tune piano and snoring (*Stolen hours*, 2019), and relaxed concert music for children with Additional Support Needs (*Six Weather Pictures*, 2019).

Recent successes have included being selected from three worldwide Call for Scores, issued by Nevis Ensemble (*you are embodied air, afloat* 2020), Rolf Hind (*The void above*, 2020), and Red Note Ensemble, (*Unpitched skin*, 2020) the Nevis Call for Scores culminating in a new commission for their Year of Coasts and Waters Tour, 2020 (*winding through seaweed*, 2020, which will receive a BBC Radio premiere). He was also awarded 2nd Prize in the Septet category of The Diversity Initiative Call for Scores (*In a sea of screaming I hear your voice*, 2020), and an Honourable Mention in the Trio Category (*Sediment*, 2020).

Rylan performs as lead vocalist with theatrical black metal band Ashenspire, and as a live and recording artist for contemporary vocal works. He also sings as a baritone with Wellington Church Choir, in the West End of Glasgow.

Rylan is currently studying a Master of Music degree at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, supported by an RCS Trust scholarship, and The Glasgow Educational and Marshall Trust, after graduating from his Bachelor of Music Degree with First Class Honours.

Benjamin Teague is a Welsh organist and composer based in Cardiff. A recent graduate of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Benjamin studied composition with Michael McCartney and the late Peter Reynolds. Benjamin takes a particular interest in French music, especially the Impressionists Ravel and Debussy, and the 20th Century composers Dupré,

Langlais, Messiaen, Duruflé, and Jehan Alain. Benjamin has written for various media, recently completing a string quartet (2020), two books of preludes for organ and piano respectively, and two cantatas. Benjamin studied organ in Llandaff Cathedral with David Geoffrey Thomas, and in London with Jeremiah Stephenson at All Saints Margaret Street. Benjamin has performed several recitals across the country, and in the United States.

Lucy Hale, from Manchester, was Young Composer-in-Residence with Orchestras for All, and the inaugural (2018/19) Young Composer-in-Association with BSO Resound, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra's RPS Award-winning disabled-led ensemble. She was commissioned by Drake Music in partnership with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestras for All, the National Open Youth Orchestra, Lasham Music Festival, Feelgood Theatre Productions and the Royal Northern College of Music.

Lucy's works have been performed at venues including the Barbican Centre, the Institute for Contemporary Arts, Manchester Cathedral, The Place, the Queen's Hall Edinburgh, and the Imperial War Museum North. She had work featured at the 2018 DaDaFest International in Liverpool, and another on flautist Kathryn Williams' album *Coming Up For Air* (Huddersfield Contemporary Records/NMC Recordings). Lucy collaborated with writers, choreographers and other composers; she also wrote music for film, commissioned for the opening celebrations for the arts hub HOME in Manchester.

Brought up in South London, Lucy attended the Royal College of Music Junior Department where she studied composition with David Sutton-Anderson. She went on to the Royal Northern College of Music, studying as an undergraduate with Adam Gorb and David Horne, and at Masters level with Gary Carpenter and Emily Howard. She graduated with a Masters in 2019 with distinction. She was also an Associate Musician with Drake Music and was passionate about widening access to music making for all.

Lucy Hale died on Monday 11 January 2021 - this performance is a tribute to her short but incredibly inspirational life.

Jason Hodgson (MMus), is an Award Winning*, Experimental, Avant-Garde (according to their supervisors) and Contemporary Composer with a focus on Chance and Indeterminate compositional processes, and a passion for the Wacky and Weird.

They are currently studying as one of Canterbury Christ Church University's PhD Candidates within the School of Music and Performing Arts, which is situated within the Creative Arts department. Their thesis focuses on working towards a living definition of Chance and Indeterminacy as a compositional tools for the 21st Century composer.

Their previous explorations have involved: Indeterminacy, Sweets, Theatre, Improvisation, a Box, Dice (of various shapes and descriptions), Percussion, and a Dragon.

Their Masters project involved exploring notation for circuit-bent toys, and exploring how far one could go with removing or limiting the composer's agency before a work is no longer a composition. The latter is a long-term exploration.

Their PhD, whilst continuing on this line of thought, is exploring possible living definitions of chance, indeterminacy, and aleatory, as compositional tools. Over the majority of their work, they have chosen to explore who to play with the dial of control; whether that is having 100% control themselves, or playing with how much control a composer can give up to the performers, listeners/perceivers, or more objective methods such as dice or card games.

Ben Lunn

His music has been described as 'Evocative', 'Restrained Otherworldliness', 'Chilling', 'sophisticated and most importantly obsessive' or 'produces... glorious roaring sounds' and 'desolate monotone'. He has also been referred to as a 'Composer of life music'.

Ben Lunn is a Mackem composer who studied in Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama under the guidance of Peter Reynolds, as well as studying in the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre with Marius Baranauskas. Since graduating from his master's, he now resides in Glasgow working in various elements including conducting, musicology, teaching and composing.

His work has been featured in many leading international festivals including Vale of Glamorgan, London New Wind Festival, Druskomanija, Leeds Leider+, Zilele Muzicale Aniversare, HASS FEST, Toronto Contemporary Music Lab, and Occupy the Pianos. He has had the privilege of working with leading international ensembles like N.A.M.E.S, Sofia Soloists, Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra, Ensemble Synaesthesia, Music Theatre Wales, Ligeti Quartet, OeNM, JVLMA, and Jauna Muzika.

As musicologist, his specialities focus around Baltic Music, Horațiu Rădulescu, and Composing and Disability. He has had the honour of

lecturing in some of the world's leading academic institutions including Fordham University, Mozarteum, RWCMD, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Komitas Conservatory, and Amsterdam Conservatoire. His articles have been published in Germany, UK, US, Russia, Lithuania, Latvia, and collected by the Arvo Pärt Centre. He has also delivered written work for the Music Information Centre of Lithuania and Latvia.

Currently he has been made an associate artist for Drake Music. And in October he was appointed Trainee Artistic Director of the Hebrides Ensemble.

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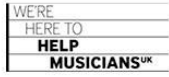
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