

## Late Night soundsession

with

Steve Garrett, Clara-Jane Maunder, Guera Crockett,  
Katherine Wren, Gareth Brady and Phil Gault

**The Anatomy Rooms, Aberdeen**

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 9pm

### Programme

Steve Garrett	<i>The Song of the Ice</i>
Gareth Brady	<i>The Homeowners Guide to the Chainsaw</i> *
Clara-Jane Maunder	<i>Erosion</i> *
Katherine Wren	<i>Vast Superficies</i> *

\* world premieres

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### Programme notes

#### **Steve Garrett** *The Song of the Ice*

A solo guitar piece with projected imagery combining music, science, sound, animation and images relating the life of the Antarctic ice sheet in three parts:

1. Isolate: the last 180 million years - other continents move away isolating Antarctica ending with the ice sheet forming
2. Grow: the last 30 million years — the ice sheet grows and moves with the sounds of icequakes and images from my field work across the Antarctic Peninsula and West Antarctica.
3. Breathe: the last 0.8 million years — the rise and fall of CO<sub>2</sub> in ice cores converted to sound and music, with the recent change at the very end.

Partners in this 2020 lockdown project included friends at the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) providing scientific data, Stuart Hamilton at Castlesound Studios processing sound processing and Chris Bell processing images. The work was launched online on Earth Day 2020.

### **Gareth Brady**     *The Homeowners Guide to the Chainsaw*

The *Homeowners Guide to the Chainsaw* came about during lockdown in 2020 following on from a **sound** zoom composition webinar about writing for voice led by Laura Bowler. One of the subjects discussed during the webinar was where from and how to source text, with ideas floated of how text could be used in an abstract way and come from anywhere. Not just poems and literature but signage, news articles, online or wherever. Specific advice of *best to avoid writing your own text* was definitely also given. Encouraged to write some music for voice and a solo instrument I sat down with a couple of instruction manuals for some then uncooperative garden machinery, which were to hand, and set about writing the text. The original idea was for a semi-staged piece of music theatre for clarinet, voice and some pre-recorded elements. In four scenes with each part depicting a snapshot of the protagonist's current existence. Part 1 (which you'll hear tonight) sets the scene. After months of being stuck at home alone with no one to talk to and nothing much to do our hero loses his previous job and subsequently decides to keep himself ticking over by doing odd jobs for reasonable rates. Despite trying to make the best of things he is constantly pondering his predicament. Initially outside sawing up a few logs he comes in to re-sharpen his chain and top up his oil, quickly becoming sidetracked by the endless possibility of unlikely consequences.

GB.

### **Clara-Jane Maunder**     *Erosion*

Scored for solo violin and pre-recorded track, *Erosion* explores how Scottish heritage sites and natural landscapes are suffering damage caused by climate change and global warming. Suggestions of Scottish folk music can be heard in the live violin part, pre-recorded violin part (recorded by Clara-Jane to duet with the performer) and synthesized drone, but the solo violin melody has been twisted and eroded to a form almost incomparable with our beautiful Scottish folk melodies. With quotes taken directly from Historic Environment Scotland's 'Climate Change Risk Assessment' report from 2018 which highlights the threat of global warming on Scottish heritage sites, as well as some original text written by the composer, *Erosion* tells the story of how climate change threatens our historic sites and beautiful Scottish landscapes. *Erosion* poses the question: 'Who are we without our Scottish heritage, both man-made and natural, when climate change erodes the links to our past?'

Please feel free to read the report for yourself:  
<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and->

research/publications/publication/?publicationId=55d8dde6-3b68-444e-b6f2-a866011d129a

Many thanks to Historic Environment Scotland for giving me permission to use their report, and to some friends and family who kindly recorded the text for me.

## **Katherine Wren      *Vast Superficies***

“Vast Superficies” was written as part of a series of short pieces by Katherine Wren and Alex South inspired by the poem “The Voyage of the Fox” by Lesley Harrison.

“The Voyage of the Fox” describes the journey undertaken by Captain Francis L. McClintock and his crew to the Arctic in 1859 in search of the lost ships “Erebus” and “Terror.”

Katherine’s starting point for this piece was a recording of footsteps in the snow recorded in Greenland during her sabbatical there in 2017. The track was altered electronically and layered up with recordings of storms and phrases from the poem. The live bass clarinet and viola parts are semi-improvisatory and reflect the horror of the storm-lashed, ice-bound sea.

*Soon Hobson will leave us  
for the Pole, advancing our depots  
charting our half knowledge of these vast  
superficies of thin, young ice  
and gusts of rain, and silence.  
I do not envy him.*

Lesley Harrison – *The Voyage of the Fox* from *Disappearances* (Shearman Books, 2020) with permission from the author.

## **Biographies**

**Steve Garrett** is a guitarist and earth scientist. He has lived in the UK, Antarctica, USA & Canada. He calls NE Scotland home. Steve's solo electric guitar recordings *The Song of the Ice*, *Discover* and *Endure & Even Song* re-imagine jazz, folk, rock and classical music. An acoustic duo with the double bass of Peter Lowit is featured on the EP *In Arden*. These works have been received well across jazz, folk and roots genres on radio stations and in magazines across the UK. Steve is currently directing the traditional/acoustic music project 'Our Living Rivers and Glens' for the Dee and Don Ceilidh Collective.

As a freelance clarinetist and saxophonist **Gareth Brady** has performed with a number of the UK’s symphony and chamber orchestras and has been widely

involved in musical theatre and session recording. He has worked extensively in the performance of new music and formerly, when based in London, performed with leading contemporary music groups including the London Sinfonietta, BCMG and the Composers Ensemble. Now based in the Scottish Borders recent compositional projects include a suite of movements for retro electronica and a collection of solo and multi-tracked works for various clarinets and saxophones. Pre lockdown playing work included performances, recordings and tours with Scottish Opera, the RSNO and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra.

Welsh-Irish baritone **Phil Gault** figures that most people don't read these biogs for a list of roles (available at [www.philgault.com](http://www.philgault.com)), so suffice to say his repertoire includes Don Giovanni, the Count (Figaro), Dandini (La Cenerentola), as well as Carmina Burana, Bach cantatas, and song cycles like Dichterliebe and Chansons Gaillardes. Interesting TV jobs include hand-doubling for Tobias Menzies on Outlander, hurdling for a soft drink advert, pretending to be Sir Chris Hoy's thighs, and being chief henchman for Karen Dunbar in MI:High. He has also broadcast opera in Welsh with Opra Cymru of the title roles in the award-nominated "Barbwr Sefil" and "Macbeth." When not singing, he enjoys running, cycling, and swimming (he completed IronMan Wales in 2018 after leading the anthem at the start in a wetsuit). In spite of this, he likes people to buy him drinks, having read this in the late Terry Pratchett's bio, and thinking it's worth a shot...

**Clara-Jane Maunder** is an emerging composer and violinist from Aberdeen. She is about to begin her fourth year of study on the Bachelor of Music (BA Hons) course at the University of Aberdeen, and studies composition under Dr John De Simone. Alongside University work, she has had multiple works performed by the Red Note Ensemble as part of Red Note's Noisy Nights online lockdown concert series in 2020, and at GoCompose! and other Sound Festival workshops. She recently won a competition to write an original composition for the University of Aberdeen Concert Band (AUCB) which will be premiered later this year and she is thrilled to have 2 world premieres in the Sound Festival 2021.

**Guera Crockett** was born in Aberdeen and studied at the Royal Academy of Music.

She became a member of the Orquesta Sinfonica de Sevilla in 1991, then went on to join the Ulster Orchestra, and later the Orchestra of Scottish Opera.

Guera has now returned to Aberdeen and teaches violin at Aberdeen City Music School, North-East of Scotland Music School, and The University of Aberdeen.

She is currently a member of the Aberdeen Sinfonietta and the Cargill Piano Trio, and helped create a new contemporary music ensemble 'Any Enemy' which made its debut at the Sound Festival in 2018.

**Katherine Wren** has been a full-time member of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra since 1998. In 2016 Katherine founded Nordic Viola, a flexible ensemble specialising in contemporary and traditional music from the North Atlantic. She has worked with many musicians around the North Atlantic and memorable performances include an improvised concert in Reykjavik's premier new music venue, *Mengi*, with East Iceland viola player and composer Charles Ross. Katherine has also commissioned new works by emerging composers inspired by landscapes, history and the culture of the Far North. She was shortlisted in 2019 and 2020 for the Scottish Awards for New Music "Making It Happen" category. In 2020 she received a special commendation in the Salomon Prize, awarded by the RPS and ABO to orchestral musicians who have not only shone musically but made a remarkable contribution to the life of their orchestra, its audience and community.

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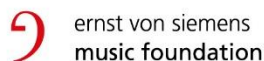
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