

Spotlight Gig: Red Note Ensemble Duo

With Iain Crawford (Double Bass) and Tom Hunter (Marimba)

Aberdeen Art Gallery

Saturday 23 October, 1pm

Programme

Erin Thomson	<i>...and what will remain?</i>
Finn Patrick McLean	<i>Today, is a bonus track</i>
Ollie Hawker	<i>415GB/day</i>
Siobhan Dyson	<i>The History of Wood</i>
Ellie Cherry	<i>Tipping Point</i>

In association with Aberdeen Art Gallery and Red Note Ensemble.

This concert is part of our **soundcreators** programme, supporting composers.
All the pieces being performed are world premieres.

Programme notes

Erin Thomson *...and what will remain?*

...and what will remain? was composed for **soundfestival** as part of their **soundcreators** programme, which features their 'endangered' instrument for the season; the double bass. Drawing inspiration from this and their 2021 theme of the climate emergency, this piece takes inspiration from the life-cycle of a species, or

on a grander scale, humans potentially being the leading cause to what scientists are labelling "the sixth mass extinction" (or the Holocene Extinction). "No birds called, no insects hummed. The only sound was the wind through the acid-tolerant weeds." The inspiration of this piece originates from this devastating phrase from Hillel Hoffman, whom upon entering the 'Black Triangle' in the Czech Republic found land where decades of acid rain have caused devastation and destruction. The work follows this fleeting lifespan from creation to desolation.

Finn Patrick McLean *Today, is a bonus track*

'Today, is a bonus track' was commissioned by soundfestival and Red Note Ensemble. Composed just before and during the first few weeks of a new term, a new year for me in uni - it had a strange effect on me. A feeling of nothing quite new, still carrying around the baggage of all the things I wrote the year prior.

"Oh Where! can you lay all this weight down?" the crowd cried.

"in this piece I suppose" I responded.

"Oh So! this is the culmination, the synthesis of all those music, the sounds the world heard that year?" one man rejoiced.

"Yes!" I pleased.

The crowd cheered.

"Oh But! what of the many mallets, surely there must be a reason for those?"

"Well..."

Ollie Hawker *415GB/day*

415GB/day is a piece of almosts, presenting the two instruments as incongruent forces. The marimba is naïve and childlike, the double bass tired and hoarse. Yet there is a sense in which neither force ever quite gets going, always in sight of making something complete and meaningful with each other, but just out of reach. 415GB/day is yet another of my attempts to convey how I feel in many online spaces.

This piece was commissioned by soundfestival for Tom Hunter and Ian Crawford of the Red Note Ensemble.

Siobhan Dyson *The History of Wood*

This piece was created to convey the uses of wood throughout human history, through sound. Using high strings to portray the whooshing of arrows against the rhythmic beats of drums from the marimba creates an otherworldly experience for the listener. I wanted to pay homage to the forest fires through a melody. Mixing it

with dark and ominous undertones creates the destructive force fires have on the natural environment.

Ellie Cherry *Tipping Point*

“Tipping Point” was composed in support of the 2021 Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, UK. Scored for acoustic instruments over processed field recordings of melting ice, the piece alludes to the ever-increasing rate at which Earth’s glaciers are losing mass as a direct result of fossil-fuel emission and global warming over the past two decades. The title is a reminder of the urgency demanded of us all, both as societies and individuals, to incorporate changes in our daily lives to slow this loss as much and as soon as possible while it is still in our power to reverse the damage we have done—before we are past the tipping point.

Biographies

Tom Hunter is percussionist for Red Note Ensemble, plays timpani and percussion for a variety of ensembles and orchestras in Scotland. Including Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, and has made guest principal appearances with CBSO and the BBC Philharmonic orchestra.

Contemporary music features highly in Tom’s work, working on Red Note’s wide range of new music performances across the UK and Europe and featuring on Red Note Ensemble recordings with the Delphian label. Tom is a former member of the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, Norway, where he was also a founder drummer of the Bergen Pipe Band and fulfilled a dream to learn cross country skiing! Tom teaches at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and St Mary’s Music School, Edinburgh.

A native of Fife, **Iain Crawford** has been a principal player in the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra for twenty-six years. He holds BMus and MMus degrees from the Juilliard School in New York and has held fellowships to the Aspen and Waterloo Music Festivals in the US. Iain lectures in Double-Bass and Chamber Music at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and has given masterclasses in Britain, Europe, South America, USA and China. He appears regularly with Red Note and during lockdown gave the world premier of Nainita Desai’s *Root To Order* for unaccompanied double-bass, broadcast on BBC Radio 3. In the Scottish traditional music field Iain performs and records regularly as a member of The Whistlebinkies and the Alastair Savage Trio.

Ellie Cherry

Originally from the mountains of Utah, US, Ellie Cherry graduated from Cornell University magna cum laude BA in Music, studying with Professors Roberto Sierra and Marianthi Papalexandri-Alexandri. She is currently fulfilling an MMus of Composition at RCS, studying with Professor Emily Doolittle.

Her music has been commissioned by performers and directors in multiple countries, including the US, UK, and South Korea. In 2019 she was a recipient of the CCA grant for her composition and production of *Queen of Carthage*, an operatorio based on the life and death of the ancient African queen Dido, told (for the first time) from the perspective of a woman.

Erin Thomson is a Scottish composer from Glasgow. She recently graduated from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, studying composition under the tutelage of Dr Linda Buckley. Here she earned a first-class honours degree with an endorsement of Music Education with Distinction.

Recent commissions and performances include a commission for Gaia duo, works for Red Note Ensemble, a collaboration with RCS and University of St Andrews with PhD Researcher Stuart Burrell and a short, comedic work featured on Sarah Watts new album, *Feed the Hound*, raising funds for Kit Wilson Trust. Erin was also the RCS Brass Composer in Residence from 2019-2021 and received 1st prize in the RCS Walter and Dinah Wolfe Memorial Award.

External to studying composition, Erin thrives for education and community projects and has experience ranging from nursery children to high school students. This passion is something she aims to pursue further during her future studies as she embarks on her Masters in Music, specialising in composition at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in Autumn 2021.

Finn Patrick McLean is a composer and performer based in Glasgow. Finn is currently going into their 3rd year of undergraduate studies at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, tutored by David Fennessy and Matthew McAllister. Finn has worked with Psappa Ensemble, *soundfestival*, the International Percussion Institute and more.

Ollie Hawker is a Glasgow-based composer and improviser interested in ideas of digital nostalgia and the internet as folk culture. He recently received his Masters degree in composition from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, where he was also awarded the 2020 Kimie Composition Prize.

He has recently worked with **soundfestival**, Cryptic, and Live Music Now Scotland, and has performed his live electronic pieces at Sound Thought Festival, Radiophrenia and the Scottish Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh.

He plays in the bands Neuro Trash and Instruction Manual, the latter of which was nominated for a 2021 Scottish New Music Award for their audiovisual piece The Owen Wilson Elegies. He also works as a music practitioner for the charities Paragon, Hear My Music and Drake Music Scotland.

Siobhan Dyson has obtained her BMus (Hons) degree in composition at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and is now undertaking her Masters degree with 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 started 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.

She is currently writing music for a small scale animation studio depicting different mental health disorders.

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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

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