



## **Sonia Allori *Room to Breathe* (world premiere)**

Nevis Ensemble: David Cumming (trumpet), Dominic O'Sullivan (bassoon),  
Gabriela Jaros (flute) and iPad Lab (members of Digital Orchestra)

Wednesday 26th October 2022, 5pm

The Anatomy Rooms

Commissioned by Drake Music Scotland in collaboration with Nevis Ensemble.



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### **Programme notes**

#### **Sonia Allori *Room to Breathe***

*Room to breathe* is a new work which explores breath and breathing during and post the Covid-19 pandemic in different ways through a series of 5 imagined rooms or movements:

1. The rhythm of the breath.
2. Breathing out.
3. Fear, hope & breathing.
4. The well-tempered breath.
5. Take a deep breath.

The work is like a tightly coiled spring, very tense and strained at the start and during the first few movements, then slowly releasing that tension over the duration of the hour-long piece. Each room is scored for a different combination of digital and acoustic instruments, voice and recorded tracks. The 5 rooms take the audience through the pandemic as a visceral lived experience in words, sound and music. Text is illuminated at various points through captioning and BSL.

## Biographies

### Sonia Allori

Sonia Allori is a composer, performer, researcher and community music therapist. She completed a PhD in composition at Edinburgh Napier University which explored interactions between words and music through the lens of gender and Italian contemporary classical music post 1900.

In 2019 she was a Music Fellow in Learning & Participation at Trinity Laban, performed in “Sound Symphony” (IAP/ Oily Cart) and “The Lost Thing” (Royal Opera House/ Candoco). Sonia was Artist in Residence with Drake Music in 2020 and is currently Development Artist with Sonic Bothy where she co-performed and co-composed the collaborative work Verbaaaaatim for Tectonics Festival (2021). She is currently a part-time researcher at RCS exploring D/deaf performance and the intersection of Deaf Studies with Performance Studies.

Sonia is deaf and a wheelchair user. Her practice continues to have the combination of words and music at its core. She is a multi-instrumentalist and has been known to sing from time to time! When writing music Sonia uses aural imagination to “hear” what she makes and often works with creative captioners in her work during rehearsals and performances to help fill in aural detail.

Recent commissions are F-email – Rarescale at Angel Field Festival (2021) – for alto flute, bass clarinet and voice track; Songs in isolation – Disability Arts Online (2021) – electroacoustic song trilogy; Curious-er (shortlisted for a Scottish New Music Award 2021) – Drake Music (2020) – electroacoustic work for EWI (electronic wind instrument); Concentric Circles– written as part of Ben Lunn’s Sign Cycle (2019) – for BSL performer, clarinet & piano; Memorial to an important lace shirt – Exploding Collage/Hatton Gallery (2018) – for live vocal and track; Last tango in Liverpool – Drake Music & DadaFest (2018) – for string quartet, trombone & vocal track.

### iPad Lab

iPad lab is an offshoot from Drake Music Scotland's award winning Digital Orchestra. It is a small ensemble of musicians led by composer/musician Clare Johnston who use iPads to create and perform original music. A key app that they use is Thumbjam which provides a rich and highly flexible soundworld that gives the iPad lab it's own unique quality. iPad lab has performed in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool and also Toured to Tromsø in Norway for a collaboration called Digital Orchestra.

### Nevis Ensemble

Nevis Ensemble is different. There’s nothing else quite like us in Scotland. Our vision is *music for everyone, everywhere*. And we mean business.

Since our first performance in July 2018, the orchestra has given almost 200 performances to around 28,500 people all across Scotland, from the schools,

supermarkets and museums of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen, to a farm in the Scottish Borders and the summit of Ben Nevis in the Highlands – and everywhere in between, including the biggest ever tour by an orchestra of the Outer Hebrides – all the way out to the remote archipelago of St Kilda. Concerts have taken place in venues as diverse as swimming pools and children’s parks, to homeless centres, museums and train stations.

Removing barriers to accessing orchestral music means bringing it to where people are, and when they are there. Just think; 40 energetic musicians run out of a bus, instruments in hand, and less than five minutes later the intrigued crowd hears something incredible and unexpected. Everyone leaves feeling uplifted and inspired, proud of the place to which they belong. Full-scale, orchestral performances with music of all genres: popping up and surprising commuters first thing in the morning; entertaining residents in oft-forgotten parts of the city; guerrilla-style appearances in swimming pools; generating huge public audiences in public spaces.

Running in parallel to a fast-and-furious public pop-up performance schedule, is a carefully plotted patchwork of community-based performances. Partnerships with voluntary and third-sector organisations are nurtured to ensure the most vulnerable and marginalised in our society do not miss out. Our musicians hone their specialist skills in working with the very young, the very old, and those who face challenges in their lives, knowing that access to great live music provides a huge wealth of benefits, particularly to health and wellbeing, social cohesion, and the simple but powerful feeling of joy.

### **David Cumming (Trumpet)**

David Cumming is a freelance trumpet player from Aberdeen, currently based in Glasgow. He has recently completed his master’s degree in Orchestral Performance with Distinction at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, studying under Philippe Scharz and Dean Wright.

As a freelancer, he has performed in a variety of different settings, including work with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Welsh National Opera, the Infinity Orchestra and even appearing on welsh-speaking soap opera, Pobol Y Cwm within a brass quartet.

David is excited about joining Nevis Ensemble and broadening his commitment to removing barriers in classical music.

### **Dominic O’Sullivan (Bassoon)**

Dominic is a bassoonist and multi-instrumentalist from Cambridge, currently living and working in and around Birmingham and across the UK. Since graduating in 2021 from the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, he has enjoyed a mixture of orchestral and show playing, alongside theatre projects working with improvisation and movement.

Dominic also enjoys exploring a range of folk traditions, and is a keen whistle player - he regularly plays for (and dances at) ceilidhs, and performs in klezmer &

Balkan folk bands. He has a particular interest in working with music and movement, and in playing anywhere outside of traditional concert venues, be it up a tree, in a disused swimming pool, or an empty stretch of canal under the M6!

### Gabriela Jaros (Flute)

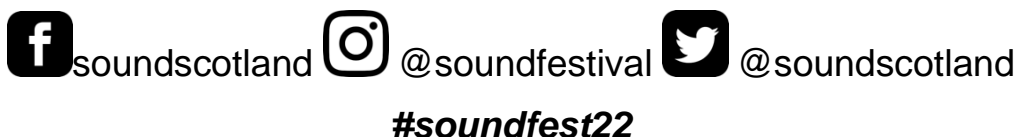
Gabriela is a flute player from Poland where she was a member of Cracow Youth Philharmonic Orchestra and International Lutoslawski Youth Orchestra. She was also a laureate of numerous competitions. After graduating from Complex of State Music Schools in Cracow with the highest mark she moved to France to study with Jean- Philippe Grometto and she was awarded "Diplome d'etudes Musicales". She was teaching in music school in Moutier and playing in various orchestras and ensembles.

Since 2018 she's been studying at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland where her teacher is Ruth Morley. Gabriela is a recipient of ABRSM scholarship towards her Master degree. For over 4 years she was a member of Nevis Ensemble with who she played over 200 performances what allowed her to gain experience from performing in different and challenging situations and meeting so many inspirational people.

Gabriela has been gaining her experience all over Europe. Last 2 summers she spent in Italy performing Marriage of Figaro and Don Giovanni during Opera Festival. When studying in Scotland she won the piccolo position in the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland (2019) and first flute position in the Universities of Scotland Symphony Orchestra. She's also been a guest player in the Strasbourg Youth Symphony Orchestra and Glasgow Sinfonia.

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