



## SONNEURS

Erwan Keravec (bagpipes), Mickaël Cozien (biniou koz), Erwan Hamon (bombard), Guénolé Keravec (trelombard)

Friday 28th October 2022, 6pm

The Lemon Tree

### Programme

Dror Feiler	<i>Desobedience in BDS</i>
Laura Bowler	<i>Starting Line(world premiere)</i>
Wolfgang Mitterer	<i>RUN</i>
Bernard Cavanna	<i>To Air One</i>
Géraldine Foucault	<i>Ce que les oreilles doivent à la nuit (world premiere)</i>
Philip Glass	<i>Music in Similar Motion</i>

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### Programme Notes

After the first thirteen contemporary music pieces –nine for solo piping (Nu Piping #1) and four more for a voice and bagpipe trio (VOX, Nu Piping#2)– Erwan wished to explore the possibility of extending his ambition further than his own instrument, i.e. of modifying a strong cultural origin. To achieve this, he has set up a piping quartet that brings together the four instruments of the Breton piping tradition, starting with the historic bombard and biniou koz and including the Scottish bagpipe, which has become Breton over the last century, and the trelombard, invented to act as a counterpoint to the bombard and bagpipe in bagadou (plural of bagad: Breton piper bands). With its culturally marked instruments, this quartet is characterised by its raw sound, rich tone colour, continuous biniou and bagpipe resonance, condensed spectrum and, obviously, powerful sound. At present, the only existing contemporary repertoire concerns the Scottish bagpipe (mainly thanks to Nu Piping). As for the other three instruments, SONNEURS will be their first journey into the world of contemporary music writing. Whoever is familiar with the biniou koz has no doubt

about its aesthetics and originality, yet the bombard and trelombard are not to be outdone. The bombard is said to be the ancestor of the oboe, but this filiation can be misleading since their tone colour and impact are quite different.

Although it does not exist in the Breton piping tradition, to Erwan this quartet is the symbol of the traditional material. Lastly, for the fun of it... String and wind quartets are two key ensembles in erudite music. Henceforth, thanks to this third Nu-Piping undertaking, a new one is to be added: a pipers' quartet. Perhaps, one day, this ensemble will become part of the Western erudite music tradition – who knows?

My musical practice is hybrid, in between contemporary music and improvised music. I want to place SONNEURS in that same place, being able to exist both in contemporary and experimental music. I'd like SONNEURS to be another means of expression for composers coming from the improvised music field. Musical creation often opposes written music and improvised music. I think they are complementary.

(Erwan Keravec)

## Biographies

**SONNEURS** is a piping quartet that brings together the four instruments of the Breton piping tradition, starting with the historic bombard and biniou koz and including the Scottish bagpipe, which has become Breton over the last century, and the trelombard, invented to act as a counterpoint to the bombard and bagpipe in bagadou (plural of bagad: Breton piper bands). With its culturally marked instruments, this quartet is characterised by its raw sound, rich tone colour, continuous biniou and bagpipe resonance, condensed spectrum and, obviously, powerful sound.

**Erwan Keravec** is a highland bagpiper, composer and improviser. In seeking out the more unusual sounds, and ways of playing and listening to his instrument, far from its original cultural setting, he is exploring improvised music, free and 'noise' jazz, and establishing a repertoire of contemporary music for solo pipes, trio with solo voice and with choir. With an interest in movement and in settings associated with reinvention, he also writes, plays and improvises for dance.

Trained by luthier and piper Jorj Botuha, and tutored in the playing style and repertoire of Scottish bagpipes, Erwan Keravec made his debut in Lokoal Mendon's Bagad Roñsed, and as a twosome with his brother Guénolé Keravec on the bombard. Starting in 1996, he explored free jazz and improvised music with La Marmite Infernale, the ARFI big band – Association a la Recherche d'un Folklore Imaginaire – (Coeff 116 – 1997). During his time with ARFI, he took part in the Guanabara programme (2005) and played in the Baron Samedi set-up. Alongside his exploits with the Niou Bardophones – a quartet comprising the bagpipe-bombard pairing, baritone sax and drum kit – and the release of albums Air de rien (2005), Champ d'âne (2008) and Sages comme des fous (2013), he jammed with trumpeter Jean-Luc Cappozzo (Air brut – 2010), and put his name to the album Outside the budaga (2010) with Romain Baudoin, Jerome Renault and Joan Francès Tisner.

In 2009, he met Basque singer Beñat Achiary, with whom he made Ametsa (2011). Since 2007, he has pursued his quest for a style of piping that's removed from its original setting, with the projects Urban Pipes I (2007) and Urban Pipes II (2011), on which he wrote and improvised solo, with his brother Guénolé, and with Beñat Achiary. To make his intentions clear, he commissioned composers with absolutely no

knowledge of bagpipes to write solo pieces for the instrument as part of the Nu Piping series (since 2011). So far, he has been behind 13 works for solo pipes, by Sébastien Bérenger, Bernard Cavanna, Benjamin de la Fuente, Xavier Garcia, Lars Kynde, Heiner Goebbels, Philippe Leroux, Zad Moultaqa, François Rossé, François Sarhan, and Susumu Yoshida. For the Sonneurs quartet, comprising wind instruments from the Breton tradition (bagpipes, bombard, biniou-koz, and trélombarde), since 2015 he has been developing the repertoire with Pierre-Yves Macé, Wolfgang Mitterer, Samuel Sighicelli, Susumu Yoshida and Frédéric Aurier (for a 2019 piece with the quartet Béla).

At the same time, he has been working on the repertoire for VOX (since 2013), for bagpipes and voice (soprano and baritone) with Oscar Bianchi, Philippe Leroux, José-Manuel López López, and Oscar Strasnoy, which he'll further expand in Extended VOX (2019) with Les Cris de Paris – a 24-piece choir led by Geoffroy Jourdain – featuring commissions by Bernhard Lang and Wolfgang Mitterer. He is also currently staging *Blind* (2015), a piece for four instrumentalists and a blindfolded audience, and leads the *Revolutionary Birds* project (2015) with Tunisian singer Mounir Troudi and percussionist Wassim Halal. In the more familiar territory of experimental music, he is collaborating with Swedish saxophonist Mats Gustafsson (*Luft* – 2015), imagining a meeting of their respective groups, Sonneurs and Fire!. He has also formed the trio *White Sands* with guitarist Julien Desprez and percussionist Will Guthrie (2019).

He's collaborating increasingly in the field of choreography by writing, performing and improvising with Gaëlle Bourges (*Le Marin acéphale* – 199, *Homothétie 949* with the Raoul Batz group – 2002, *À mon seul désir* – 2014, *Conjurer la peur* – 2017, *Ce que tu vois* – 2018), Cécile Borne (*Robes fanées* – 2008), Boris Charmatz (*Enfant* – 2011), Emmanuelle Huynh (*Huynh/Keravec* – 2015), Mickaël Phelippeau (*membre fantôme* – 2016), Alban Richard (*Breathisdancing* – 2017). And he improvises with Boris Charmatz, Boris, Charmatz, Daniel Linehan.

In 2019, he is adding to the solo bagpipe repertoire with Goebbels/Radigue/Glass with Heiner Goebbels's *no28/50* (premiered in 2018 – Festival Schlossmediale Werdenberg – Switzerland), Éliane Radigue's *OCCAM OCEAM XXVII* (world premiere 2019 – Le Vivier – Montreal – Canada), and *Two Pages*, an adaptation for bagpipes in C of the Philip Glass work. In 2020, he'll add to the quartet repertoire with pieces by Otomo Yoshihide (world premiere January 2020 – Philharmonie de Paris) and Dror Feiler (world premiere April 2020 – Weiwuying National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts, Kaohsiung City, Taiwan).

**Mickaël Cozien** plays Scottish bagpipe, gaita, biniou and bagpipe from Poitou. He also teaches in Villenave-d'Ornon and Gradignan music schools. Mickaël was born in 1973 in Brest. After studying at Centre Breton d'Art Populaire in Brest (Breton Popular Art Centre), he first plays in the Plougastel Bagad and at Krevenn Brest-Sant-Mark where he becomes the bagpipes leader. Between 1988 and 1993 he won the main competitions as Scottish bagpipe soloist in Brittany. Since 1994 he is mostly dedicated to performing on stage within several groups: *Triskell* (1994), *David Pasquet Group* (2005), *Wig A Wag* (1994), and with the singer *Denez Prigent* from 1998 to 2007. He takes part into recording with singers such as Gilles Servat, Laurent Voulzy, Alpha Blondy... He explores different musical universes: traditional, electro, rock, world, rap and lately early music "Les Witches". Mickaël is also involved in teaching. He obtained

his DE (State Diploma) in 2006 and his CA (Teaching Certificate), both in traditional music.

**Erwan Hamon:** ‘Since when do I play music? In fact, I started early. I played flute a little at school at 10 years old and that was it! My first experiences on stage were the parties at the end of the school year, big stress! And then one day, I meet with Janick Martin who I’d met before at the “bogue d’or” the Monterfil party or Kana ar Bobl. First concert in Paimpol at marine festival in July 1991, I was then 13 years old and it was the beginning of the trio Hamon Martin (with Mathieu Hamon), more than.... 20 years ago!!! With Janick it worked straight away, simplicity, laughs, games and sports (tennis, basketball), and we never stopped. I played 8 years in the group Katé-mé, 4 albums, 1 DVD, lots of concerts and pleasure with this massive group, around Sylvain Girault (vocals). And the quintet Hamon Martin since 2001: 4 albums, lots of fest noz, concerts and tours and a lot of ongoing friendship in this group.’

**Guéno­lé Keravec:** Mostly trained in the Ronsed-Mor bagad, Guéno­lé quickly gets involved in music in couple “biniou-bombard” and “bagpipe-bombard”. When the Ronsed-Mor bagad meets with the Marmite Infernale, Arfi, he discovers another musical universe. He decides to integrate groups (Men Ha Tan bagad, Niou Barophones) where he’ll be able to meet with Henri Texier, Doudou N’Diaye Rose, Jean-Luc Cappozzo, Camel Zékri... In parallel to these experiences, he continues to play in couple with pipers for concerts and balls. Graduated in traditional music, Guéno­lé teaches at Vannes Conservatory and brings his students to meet with musicians coming from different universes (contemporary music, bagad and brass, world music).

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