



Spotlight gig:

Stephanie Lamprea (voice) and Fiona Winning (viola)

Sunday 30th October 2022, 11am

The Anatomy Rooms

Programme

Semay Wu	<i>Soliloquy for Autumn</i> (world premiere)
Erin Thomson	<i>Dùthchas</i>
Thomas Metcalf	<i>Flawed Power</i> (world premiere)
Jessica Maclsaac	<i>Live to Forget</i> (world premiere)

In Partnership with Red Note Ensemble

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Programme notes

Semay Wu *Soliloquy for Autumn*

This is a piece of work that was inspired by one of my last memories of my Dad. He had a lifelong deep passion for his music-making, especially on the piano. His relationship to sounds, transmitted through his hands, to the keys on the piano, was a necessary daily medicine throughout his life. His musical soul was unparalleled. When he finally told me of his disconnect to 'wanting' to play, it was a pronounced realisation of a deep human need for music that was, unbeknownst to me, coming to its end.

I have written a piece that is part-graphic-part-traditional score. It has an improvisatory framework visualising a structured space that would allow the performers to interpret in their own way, but really play with what they see. Both performers have equally dynamic roles, and must intertwine emotionally and texturally to provide a deep tension for the piece to flow. This short composition is the imaginary journey of a pair of 'musical hands' being randomly dropped and gifted to my Dad. And ending with the hands slowly ebbing away to a distant shoreline, taking with them this deeply connected love for music.

Huge thanks to Fiona Winning and Stephanie Lamprea for their artistic excellence and efforts; Laura Bowler for much needed composition mentoring; and Sound Scotland for the opportunity to develop this piece for performance.

Erin Thomson *Dùthchas*

Dùthchas was composed in collaboration with soprano Stephanie Lamprea earlier this year. From ancient Gaelic, the term "Dùthchas" describes the unity between land, creatures, nature and cultures. The work explores various Gaelic words and phrases which our land has been named after, and the musical material reflects their unique shape and colour.

Thomas Metcalf *Flawed Power*

Flawed Power uses an AI-generated text with prompts relating to the environment and social power dynamics. Its main musical focus is on the dialectic between natural and artificial sounds in the voice, as well as a further dialectic between voice and viola. The highly fragmentary and chaotic material in the vocal part is reflective of an unstable internal (i.e. with itself) and external relationship, slipping in and out of coordination with the viola. The irony of the text, and the surreal element of the music is emblematic of using AI to write a piece which nonsensically critiques capitalistic and ecological power dynamics, despite the presence of AI and technology being prolifically linked to powerful media and business interests. Technology at once creates and destroys: our worldview is often deduced from this flawed power.

Jessica Maclsaac

The idea for this piece's lyrics came from an exploration of grief and the extreme end of the desire to forget negative experiences. I wanted to create a character for the soprano who is lost in the pain of knowing beyond what their mind can handle. The lyrics are loosely inspired by some famous poems referring to memory and forgetting.

Biographies

Colombian-American soprano **Stephanie Lamprea** is an architect of new sounds and expressions as a performer, recitalist, curator and improviser, specialising in contemporary-classical repertoire.

Trained as an operatic coloratura, Stephanie uses her voice as a mechanism of avant-garde performance art, creating "maniacal shifts of vocal production and character... like an icpick through the skull" (composer Jason Eckardt). Her work has been described as "mercurial" by I Care If You Listen, "dynamic" by critic Steve Smith (Night After Night), and that she "sings so expressively and slowly with ever louder and higher-pitched voice, that the inclined listener [has] shivers down their back and tension flows into the last row." (Halberstadt.de) She has

received awards from the Concert Artist Guild, St. Botolph Club Foundation, the John Cage Orgel Stiftung in Halberstadt, Germany, and the Puffin Foundation. Stephanie was a featured TEDx Speaker for TEDxWaltham: Going Places.

Stephanie devours mammoth works of virtuosity and extended techniques with ease and creative insight, singing with an entire spectrum of vocal colors (including operatic style, straight tone, sputters and throat noises) and performing in the classical, jazz, avant-garde and interdisciplinary fields. She has performed as a soloist at Roulette Intermedium, Constellation Chicago, National Sawdust, Shapeshifter Lab, Miller Theater at Columbia University, the Slipper Room, Park Avenue Armory, Museum of Fine Arts (Boston), and the Re:Sound Festival in Cleveland, Ohio. She has worked with Wavefield Ensemble, Ekmeles, So Percussion, Talujon, Guerrilla Opera, Boston Art Song Society, and the Original Gravity Concert Series. Stephanie is pursuing a Doctor of Performing Arts degree at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, under the supervision of composer and zoo-musicologist Dr. Emily Doolittle, and co-supervised by Dr. Laura Gonzalez and Jean Sangster.

Scottish violist **Fiona Winning** was until 2014 Principal Viola of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and before that the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. During her years in London she was a regular guest principal of the Philharmonia and London Philharmonic Orchestras, including four seasons at Glyndebourne Opera with the LPO. As principal she has performed under the batons of eminent conductors such as Charles Dutoit, Vasily Petrenko, Vladimir Jurowski, Yannick Nezet-Seguin and Ilan Volkov. She is also a regular guest principal viola of the Aurora Orchestra, London Sinfonietta and Scottish Chamber Orchestra. A passionate advocate of contemporary music she was a founding member of Ensemble Amorpha, and has been a regular guest principal of the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group. Highlights with the BCMG include one of Pierre Boulez's last conducting engagements (Stravinsky Dumbarton Oaks) and performances of George Benjamin's *Into the Little Hill* at the Wigmore Hall. "Fiona Winning's central viola solo was quite beautifully played" (Erica Jeal, the Guardian). She is a regular visitor to the South Bank Centre as guest principal with the London Sinfonietta, and has also appeared with them at the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, BBC Proms, and broadcast live on BBC Radio 3. She is also a regular guest with the Red Note Ensemble (Scotland), most recently in a nationwide tour of George Crumb's epic electronic quartet *Black Angels*.

For seven years she was a member of the Scottish Ensemble with whom she performed at the Wigmore Hall, BBC Proms, and at the Edinburgh International, Aldeburgh and City of London Festivals, and broadcast regularly on Radio 3. As a chamber musician she has been a regular visitor to the Wigmore Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Purcell Room, and has performed at festivals such as Wye Valley, Corbridge. Mendelssohn on Mull and Bargemusic (New York City). She was a member of the Edinburgh String Quartet from 2014-2016.

Fiona studied at the Juilliard School in New York where she lived and worked for 6 years. When not playing the viola she enjoys climbing mountains and recently climbed 6000m peaks in the Bolivian Andes and the Himalayas.

Fiona plays on an Antonio Gragnani viola from 1780 for which she gratefully acknowledges support from the Countess of Munster Musical Trust and the Loan Fund for Musical Instruments. She lives near Loch Lomond with her husband and two sons.

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