

Sounds Finnish!

defunensemble

Saturday 26 October 2024, 3pm

Cowdray Hall, Aberdeen

Programme

Lauri Supponen	<i>Continuo (UK Premiere)</i>
Matti Heininen	<i>Dance of the Obscure (UK Premier)</i>
Sami Klemola	<i>Peak (UK Premiere)</i>
Matilda Seppälä	<i>the monstrous bond of togetherness (World Premiere)</i>
Antti Auvinen	<i>Warp My Simone (UK Premiere)</i>

Hanna Kinnunen (flute), Mikko Raasakka (clarinet), Emil Holmström (piano), Markus Hohti (cello), Timo Kurkikangas (electronics), Anders Pohjola (electronics), Sami Klemola (artistic director).

Programme notes

Lauri Supponen *Continuo*

Continuo is a literal re-composition of Girolamo Frescobaldi's 'Recercar con obbligo' movement from the Fiori Musicali collection. In it a trio of musicians feed a keyboard player with live-recorded samples of their playing. Fragments of the obbligato are given to the toy piano.

Matti Heininen *Hämärän tanssi* ("Dance of the Obscure")

My composition Hämärän tanssi ("Dance of the Obscure") has been influenced by the attitude of early techno music: "Techno is everything you haven't imagined yet".

The piece includes some direct references to the origins of techno music, Detroit Techno, where one of the aims was to find a kind of hope through imagination amidst

urban darkness and poverty - "a Salvation in a dystopian world". Similarly, in my own work, I have sought a kind of liberation through imagination.

True to its name, the piece contains some dance-like elements, but mainly with materials that are ill-suited for this purpose. The expressive field of the piece is formed, as it were, from this friction between expression and material. The use of live electronics supports this idea.

The title of the piece also refers to a kind of awakening of the underlying, lifeless material. This is achieved by emphasizing non-traditional methods of sound production, as well as a certain role for the performers, where musicians act more as controllers of sounds rather than active sound producers. The aim is to "make the obscure dance". I have explored similar expressive fields in several of my recent works, such as the orchestral piece "towards the extraordinary adventures of Baron Munchausen, premiered by the FRSO and Gustavo Gimeno in 2019. The piece is dedicated to Sami Klemola and the defunensemble. In the realization of the electronics, I have been assisted by my longtime collaborator Erkkä Lempiäinen, as well as Timo Kurkikangas of the defunensemble.

Sami Klemola *Peak*

"Peak" is a piece about intensity and softness. These contrasts reflect our inner lives, where strong feelings of for example positivity or strength can suddenly turn into doubt or sadness. By alternating between harsh and gentle textures, "Peak" tries to represent the unstable nature of human emotions.

Matilda Seppälä *the monstrous bond of togetherness*

the monstrous bond of togetherness is a commissioned extension of a part of a piece for five clarinets that end up getting intertwined in a physical way. In this piece we are focusing on exploring the depths of merging and attaching. The impossibility of handling this monster of an instrument alone makes it an interesting community effort to make sound. The rather awkward way of playing together emphasizes the communal aspect of art and music; sharing and playing together in a physically interdependent way, counterbalancing the hyper individualistic culture we currently live in.

Antti Auvinen *Warp My Simone*

Antti Auvinen (b. 1974) is one of Finland's most distinguished contemporary composers. His piece *Warp My Simone* stands out for its bold and multilayered expression. The work draws inspiration from a diverse range of sources, creating a unique soundscape. A major influence comes from Afric Simone, a Mozambican singer whose energetic, rhythmic recordings from the 1970s have inspired the sonic tapestry of the composition.

The text material of the work also makes reference to the existential philosopher Simone Weil, whose reflections on justice and the inner struggles of humanity resonate in the deeper layers of the work. Alongside these two contrasting text

sources Auvinen has taken inspiration from even more unusual sources, such as the TV commercial used in the launch of the Boeing 747 aircraft.

Warp My Simone shows Auvinen's distinctive ability to create complex, multi-layered compositions in an unorthodox and surprising way offering a captivating musical journey.

Biography

Formed in 2009, **defunensemble** has astonishingly fast established itself as one of the most important contemporary music groups in Finland. The ensemble's vigorous mission is to systematically delve into the world of electroacoustic music.

Defunensemble gives Finnish premieres of the most essential electroacoustic repertoire both classic and current, while simultaneously actively commissioning new works incorporating the latest technologies. With artistic director Sami Klemola the ensemble's concert concepts have proven to be highly innovative, blending different sub-genres of the electroacoustic persuasion with an unprecedented street credibility—any dusty notions of classical music are soon forgotten. A serious professional undertaking, the musicians and sound designers of defunensemble are some of the most active personalities in the Finnish contemporary music scene. After conquering the major Finnish festivals, the ensemble is already gaining international pull, their concert calendar is filling rapidly.




During its brief history defunensemble has already performed over 120 concerts and at over 20 different festivals, the most notable being Tampere biennale (FI), Time of Music (FI), Musica nova Helsinki (FI), Helsinki Festival (FI), Flow Festival (FI), Klang Concert Series (FI), Crusell Music Festival (FI), Nordic Music Days (FI, SE), dOCUMENTA (DE), chiffren - kieler tage für neue musik (DE), November Music (NL), Loop Festival (BE), Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival (GB), Re:new music (DK), ISCM World Music Festival (EST) and Copenhagen Avantgarde Music Festival Klang (DK). Defunensemble has premiered works by - for example - Tim Page, Antti Auvinen, Hikari Kiyama, Ville Raasakka, Perttu Haapanen, Pink Twins, M. A. Numminen, Guðmundur Steinn Gunnarsson, Peter Ablinger, Christian Winther Christensen, Alexander Schubert and Gilbert Nouno.



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This year's **soundfestival** is dedicated to the memory of cellist Rohan de Saram, one of our patrons, who took part in many festivals. His musicianship, kindness and generosity will be much missed.

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