



Dave Maric: *Silent Architects*

for percussion, piano, analog synths, alto recorder and musical saw and film

GBSR Duo: Siwan Rhys (piano) and George Barton (percussion)

Sunday 26th October 2025, 4pm

The Barn, Banchory

*Commissioned by sound. With support from the Hope Scott Trust
and the National Lottery through Creative Scotland.*



Duration: 29 minutes.

1. The Stream Evolution Model
2. Resilience
3. Deadwood
4. Revivers
5. Back Towards the Light
6. Sinuous Channels

A few years ago I posted on the nascent social media platform Threads a triple split-screen trail camera video in portrait mode, featuring beavers dragging branches along a pool they had recently created, with a caption something like: “Wouldn’t it be great to have a gallery event with multiple projections of this – plus a sound installation, and live music!”

Not sure it would sell any tickets, but it would be awesome!”

To this day this post has had zero likes. Zilch. Needless to say, I abandoned Threads...

Nevertheless, GBSR Duo contacted me soon after, and possibly coincidentally asked me to realise this precisely – in real life. Having wanted to write them a piece for a number of years, I jumped at the chance; this opportunity allowed me to fully merge my creative endeavours in photography and videography with my history as a composer.

They arrived at Bamff in September 2024 for a research and development week; the sound world for Silent Architects was established: piano, various small percussion instruments, the musical saw, alto recorder and two analogue synthesisers. I quickly knocked up a 30-minute film with footage of beaver dams, trail cameras, drones, George Barton performing on some shards of wood from a beaver-felled tree, plus a random montage of still photos. When it came to developing the piece further, I added the vibraphone and had, by this stage, as much as a few days' worth of raw video footage. The challenge to parse through all of this and make sense of it was the hardest. But it made sense to follow the already established flow of moving between different vantage points filmically – from the austere, atmospheric dimension of standing by a beaver dam at dawn, to the intimate, secretive, sometimes comical captures from trail cameras in the darkness of night, and the bird's-eye view looking over the astonishing patterns in the landscape created by these creatures.

The beavers, introduced in 2002 by Paul Ramsay (who authored the two lines of text seen in the film, excerpts from his forthcoming book), have transformed Bamff Wildland from a series of straight agricultural ditches into something unrecognisable, prehistoric: meandering waterways, channels/canals, pools of various sizes and depths, and a whole new generation of vegetation and accompanying fauna. Punctuating all of this – and the direct cause of it – are sculptures, architected mostly in the darkness of night by near-blind activity: using touch and smell to construct these beautiful, highly varied and elaborate structures which fundamentally change the nature of the whole landscape.

In summer 2024 I asked the ecologist Duncan Pepper if he would be interested in adding an extra dimension to this project: his soft, Perthshire-inflected voice. In July 2025 I offered my services as a volunteer for one of his “River Reviver” projects – where he and his partner, Maja Pepper, transform a Scottish river in desperate need of biological and topographical uplift. They are human beavers, sawing and dragging woody elements into the water, creating beaver dam analogues. Their repertoire of improved rivers grows year by year.

Duncan knows the rivers intimately, even seeing them as a species of lifeform. To witness in real time this beaver-like activity, and to play a small part in it, is an indelible experience of inspiration. Hence the wisdom and experience of this have been incorporated into Silent Architects – through “secretly” capturing them as “wild animals” with a trail camera, and through the interview I had with Duncan being featured – sometimes as a narrator, sometimes just out of earshot – as the obvious ramifications of the actions of beavers, whether from a rodent or an ape,

become overwhelming, filling the screen with patterns shifting from season to season.

A landscape transformed forever, and ready to tackle the oncoming storms.

Biographies

GBSR Duo – George Barton (percussion) and Siwan Rhys (piano) – combines two of the UK's finest young contemporary chamber instrumentalists: “a wonderful, adventuresome, sensitive pair of musicians” (Kate Molleson, BBC R3).

Known for their fearless, intense performances, GBSR's work ranges from the twentieth-century modernism of Stockhausen and Ustvolskaya to music by Brian Eno and Aphex Twin; from the exquisite delicacy of composers like Morton Feldman, Eva-Maria Houben and Barbara Monk Feldman to the cracked virtuosity of Alex Paxton and Arne Gieshoff; and from the classic experimentalism of John White and Christopher Hobbs to the contemporary cross-genre work of Oliver Leith, Laura Bowler and CHAINES.

Their collaborators range from team-ups with leading soloists and ensembles such as the Heath Quartet, EXAUDI, 12 Ensemble, Twenty Fingers Duo, Sean Shibe, the Basel Sinfonietta and the LA Philharmonic, to inventive cross-disciplinary pairings with artists like Angharad Davies and Dejan Mrdja.

GBSR's recordings are praised for their exceptional fidelity and variety, whether bringing new depths of appreciation to existing repertoire through benchmark recordings of Stockhausen (*The Guardian* Album of the Week; “the best spatial audio purchase I've made this year” Seth Colter Walls, *The New York Times*) and Barbara Monk Feldman (“achingly beautiful” Christian Carey, *Sequenza 21*) – or highlighting new works in premiere recordings of Oliver Leith, Eva-Maria Houben, Lisa Illean, Alex Paxton, Lawrence Dunn, Julius Aglinskas and others.

Regular performers at Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, Kings Place and London's Bold Tendencies, they have also performed at venues including the Wigmore Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room, Royal Opera House Linbury Theatre and Walt Disney Hall, and at festivals including Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, Darmstädter Ferienkurse, Muzikos Ruduo Vilnius, Presteigne Festival, Sound Aberdeen, Spitalfields Music Festival, No Bounds, Cheltenham Festival, Norfolk and Norwich Festival and Three Choirs Festival.

GBSR are hcmf Fielding Talent artists and were the winners of the Royal Philharmonic Society 2025 Young Artist award where the judges commended them for a “commitment to new music that’s thrilling in its fearlessness...their programmes and collaborations fizz with style, energy and invention”.

Dave Maric is a British composer and performer of acoustic and electronic music, who has created numerous works for the concert hall, stage and film. He is also an

environmentalist/ photographer who currently lives and works at a habitat restoration project in Scotland.

His multi -stylistic music is reflected through a long experience working with classical musicians, jazz musicians, experimental electronics, free improvisers, folk musicians, rock musicians, singer-songwriters, poets, visual/performance artists, choreographers, animators and film makers, which has also led to curating numerous events featuring stylistically varied music – often in conjunction with other artistic disciplines.

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