



Legato

Conducted by Jean Deroyer

Friday 31st October 2025, 1pm

Fountainhall Church at the Cross, Aberdeen

Programme

Anne Castex	<i>Backlash</i>
John Aulich	<i>Atranones</i>
Laura Heneghan	<i>Undercurrent</i>
Monika Dalach Sayers	<i>Plastiglomerate</i>
Paul Scully	<i>The Significance of Plot Without Conflict</i>
Vincent Portes	<i>Les sons maigres</i>

Cédric Jullion (flute), Bogdan Sydorenko (clarinet), Alexandra Greffin-Klein (violin), Ingrid Schoenlaub (cello) and Maroussia Gentet (piano).

Legato is a unique international cooperation programme for early-career composers, co-designed by partner organisations from three countries: France (the Ensemble(s) Festival, co-organized by Ensembles 2e2m, Cairn, Court-circuit, Multilatérale, and Sillages); Ireland (Contemporary Music Centre Ireland and New Music Dublin) and the UK (**soundfestival**).

Following a call for participation, six emerging composers aged 20 to 30 were selected: three women and three men, two French, two Irish, and two British. The 14-month programme (September 2024 to October 2025) gave them the opportunity to discuss contemporary musical creation in their respective countries, experiment with new concepts under the mentorship of two established composers (Laura Bowler and Jérôme Combier), encouraging them to push the creative boundaries of their writing process. The resulting new works have been performed in Bagnolet (France), Dublin and today's performance is the last part of the project.

Programme notes

Anne Castex *Backlash*

Backlash is a process of dynamic resistance: a reaction that arises from a change perceived as threatening, and that unfolds over time, in response to social transformations. *"When a group of actors disadvantaged by the status quo mobilises to transform the situation, they necessarily challenge a deeply entrenched power structure. Resistance to change led by those in power constitutes a backlash, the reaction of a group aware that it is losing power... Backlash, whose purpose is to regain lost or threatened power, can present itself in subtle forms of coercive power (ridicule, condemnation, ostracism, censure) or in much less subtle forms..."*

Jane Mansbridge & Shauna L. Shames

Literally, it also evokes the counter-coup, the backlash, the backlash— notions of shock and movement.

Anne is a composer of instrumental, electroacoustic, and mixed music. She is currently studying contemporary composition at the CNSMD in Lyon. It was during her Master's degree in musicology that she became closely interested in contemporary music and the creative process. She then began a composition course at the Toulouse Conservatory in Bertrand Dubedout's class and obtained her diploma in 2019. In 2022, she obtained her DNSPM in composition (mixed music) in Michele Tadini's class. For her master's degree, she studied instrumental composition with composer Martin Matalon. A laureate of the Academie ManiFeste (Ircam) and the Luxembourg Composition Academy, she has received commissions from the Multilatérale ensemble, Ina-GRM, Radio France (World Creation program), and GRAME - CNCM. Her works have been performed at the MANCA Festival (Nice), the ByPass Forum, the Philharmonie de Paris, and the Maison de Radio-France. In 2024/25, she is receiving a grant from the Société Générale Corporate Foundation, C'est vous l'avenir.

John Aulich *Atranones*

The piece is an exploration of the atmosphere of dread created by the presence of damp and mould in domestic spaces.

John is a composer and technologist from Manchester, UK. His works have been performed internationally by prestigious ensembles such ICE and ELISION. His recent projects include *in hollows spilled thin*, which was performed by members of the London Symphony Orchestra in April 2023, and *Je Mets Mon Scapahndre*, a new 45-minute piece bassoon and live electronics piece created for Olivia Palmer-Baker. John's music spans a number of broad themes, including viscerality, ambiguity of meaning, sensuality and touch, and the philosophical

and political connotations of music and notation. His work is characterized by evocative, highly-charged and volatile sound-worlds stemming from the physicality of performance. John combines the erotic and the anxious, circumscribing a complex interplay of potential narratives that create fissures and ruptures in the listening experience. A particular focus of his latest work is abject, disgusting and surreal sound-worlds. John currently teaches part time at the University of Edinburgh.

Laura Heneghan *Undercurrent*

Undercurrent takes its name from the dual meaning of the word: a hidden current beneath the surface of water, and a figurative sense of something concealed yet powerfully present. Many of my works are centred around the theme of nature, and in this piece, I drew inspiration from water.

The music is fast-paced and highly rhythmic, driven by energetic, punchy gestures that surge forward like a force beneath the surface. Against this, more delicate sections emerge, creating moments of fragility and stillness before the momentum reasserts itself. These contrasts reflect the way an undercurrent can be both subtle and commanding, sometimes barely perceptible and sometimes pulling strongly against what is visible above.

Through this interplay of rhythm, fragility, and punchiness, the piece reflects the layered character of water with its stillness on the surface and the persistent drive beneath.

Laura is an Irish composer who predominantly composes chamber and vocal works. With music described as "memorable and strongly conceived" (The Scotsman), with a distinctive ability to make « vivid use of the [ensemble]'s sonic potential in a compelling and convincing musical argument". Laura's work has been performed throughout the UK and Ireland by notable ensembles such as Chamber Choir Ireland, Gaia Duo, Con Anima Chamber Choir, Contempo Quartet, Irish Chamber Brass and Hard Rain Soloist Ensemble. She has had work performed at the Cork International Choral Festival, Sound Festival, West Wicklow Chamber Music Festival, the University of St. Andrews and the Emily Anderson Concert Hall in the University of Galway.

Laura has won the Seán Ó Riada Composition Competition (2023) and the West Wicklow Chamber Music Festival Emerging Composer Competition (2023, Brass Quintet). She is currently a participant in several development schemes including the Contemporary Music Centre's Emerging Composer Scheme, LEGATO, and Choral Sketches. Most recently, she was selected as a finalist for the 6th Peter Rosser Award.

Laura completed her Bachelor of Arts degree (Music) at the University of Galway in 2022, where she worked on her compositions with Dr Amanda Feery. Soon after, she pursued a master's in composition at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland where she worked with Dr Bekah Simms and David Fennessy.

Monika Dalach Sayers *Plastiglomerate*

Plastiglomerate refers to a type of rock formation that consists of a combination of melted plastic debris, such as bottles, bags, and other discarded items exposed to high heat, with sediment, sand, shingle, seaweed, and other natural materials. First identified by the oceanographer Charles Moore in 2006 and later given the name in 2014, it has come to represent the moment when human pollution and nature permanently fused. In her electro-acoustic work Monika translates those transformation processes into sound, resulting in acoustic instruments incorporating the pre-recorded and electronically processed sounds of plastic waste and natural debris within musical structure and composition.

Monika is a Polish composer and multimedia artist based in London. Her music broadly references pop culture and addresses a range of current and social issues including textile and plastic waste. In her compositional practice, she blends contemporary electronic textures with traditional ensemble scoring working across acoustic, electro-acoustic, and electronic music. Her approach to making music is driven by intensive research and sound experimentation with the aim to develop cutting-edge and thought-provoking projects. She seeks new hybrid forms of musical expression crossing across art genres and working with text and video.

Monika has recently composed the music for *The New Real*, a new political thriller by David Edgar produced by the Royal Shakespeare Company. In 2024 Monika was appointed on to the London Symphony Orchestra Panufnik Composers Scheme to write an orchestral piece. Monika has worked with ensembles such as Plus-Minus, EXAUDI, Workers Union and Kompopolex. Her piece *CARBON IS THE NEW BLACK* was recently performed at the Heroines of Sound and Warsaw Autumn Festivals. Her other music has been performed at contemporary music festivals including Sacrum Profanum and Darmstädter Ferienkurse, and venues such as the Wigmore Hall, Milton Court, The Arthur Rubinstein Philharmonic and The National Philharmonic in Warsaw. Monika held a Junior Artist Fellowship (2017/18, 2018/19) at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama for two years, following her Master's Degree in Composition. Her music was featured on the *New Music Show* on BBC Radio 3.

Paul Scully *The Significance of Plot Without Conflict*

We are currently living through the worst violence the world has ever known.

Paul is a composer from Dublin, Ireland. His practice is interdisciplinary, borrowing from performance art, theatre, philosophy, literature, and visual art. Speech and language are often important features in his music. Much of his work is site-specific, and sometimes context-specific, considering the full gamut of an audience's experience. Recent works 'Will we Give it a Bash?' and 'Everything's Left That's Worth Defence' – both premiered in 2022 – seek to subvert the assumptions of the audience through playful, humorous, and often chaotic means. He is the general manager of the experimental music ensemble Kirkos and runs their venue and artist space, Unit 44, in Stoneybatter, Dublin.

Vincent Portes *Les sons maigres*

The sounds I use in this piece follow a strict plan: each new sound is less dense, less heavy, less thick than the one before it. The sound material gradually thins out while the music gains speed, freed from the inertia of massive sounds. Influenced by electroacoustic music and studio techniques, my instrumental writing focuses less on the sound objects themselves than on the transformations they undergo. In this particular case, this piece has only one morphology: two sounds alternating more or less irregularly, like a wobbly "ping-pong." It is the successive filtering of these sounds that constitutes the form of the piece, a trajectory gradually leading to the emaciation of the material, until almost nothing remains but a reflection: has the music also thinned out?

Vincent's music is strongly influenced by electronics, signal processing, micro-editing, and various sound synthesis methods. He is also developing a reflection on the graphic representation of sound. The form of his pieces is often conceived as the exploration of a sound object, whose new characteristics are gradually discovered through "zoom" writing. Following his composition studies, which he began at the CRR in Toulouse and continued with a bachelor's and master's degree in instrumental and vocal composition at the CNSMD in Lyon, he followed the composition et d'informatique musicale cursus at Ircam. His works have received several international awards, and his music has been performed by ensembles such as Sillages, Multilatérale, Meitar, Divertimento, Ensemble Orchestral Contemporain, and Nouvel Ensemble Moderne.

Performer's biographies

The musicians playing in today's concert are each from one of the ensembles that created Festival Ensembles, a festival of new music that takes place in Bagnolet (France) in September each year.

2e2m (Artistic Director Léo Margue): <http://ensemble2e2m.fr/>

Cairn (Artistic Director Jérôme Combier): ensemble-cairn.com

Court-circuit (Artistic Director Philippe Hurel): court-circuit.fr

Multilatérale (Artistic Director Yann Robin): multilaterale.fr

Sillages (Artistic Director Gonzalo Bustos) : ensemblesillages.com

The French conductor **Jean Deroyer** was born in 1979. At the age of fifteen he enrolled at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Paris where he was awarded five first prizes.

Jean Deroyer has been invited to conduct the following orchestras: NHK Symphony Orchestra, Radio Symphonie Orchester Wien, SWR Orchester Baden-Baden, RSO Orchester Stuttgart, Deutsche Symphonie Orchester, Sinfonia Varsovia, Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg, Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte-Carlo, Orchestre de Paris, Orchestre national de France, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio-France, Orchestre National de Lille, Orchestre National de Lyon, Ensemble Intercontemporain and Klangforum Wien in halls like Wien Konzerthaus, Berlin Philharmonie, salle Pleyel, Luzern Hall, Tokyo Opera City and Lincoln Center in New-York.

Over several years Deroyer has built a close and privileged relationship with Ensemble Intercontemporain that he conducted several times.

Alongside Pierre Boulez and Peter Eötvös he conducted Stockhausen's Gruppen for three orchestras at the 2007 Lucerne Festival. In September 2007, he made his debut with the Orchestre de Paris and he will work again with this orchestra during forthcoming seasons. Besides he has recorded numerous CDs with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte-Carlo or Orchestre National d'Île-de-France for such labels as EMI Music and Naïve or for Radio-France.

In 2010, he gave the premiere of *Les Boulingrin*, opera composed by Georges Aperghis, staged by Jérôme Deschamps at the Opera Comique in Paris, with the Klangforum Wien. Then he conducted *Pelléas et Mélisande* at the Opera de Rouen and the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio-France in Paul Dukas' *Ariane et Barbe Bleue*. In 2012 he gave the premiere of *JJR* by Phillipe Fénelon at Grand Théâtre de Genève, staged by Robert Carsen. Recently he conducted *Cassandra*

composed by Michael Jarrell at the Avignon Festival with Fanny Ardant, as well as Reigen of Philippe Boesmans at the Opéra national de Paris.

Notable forthcoming engagements include concerts with BBC Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte-Carlo, Opera National de Paris, Ensemble Modern, Auckland Philharmonia and RTE National Symphony Orchestra Dublin.

<https://www.jeanderoyer.com>

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We gather feedback to find out whether you've enjoyed the event and to better understand our audiences and their demographic. Short forms will be distributed at the event, but if you're happy to fill in a longer online feedback form you can access it here:



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