

Red Note Ensemble

Katherine Bryer (oboe) and Cerys Ambrose Evans (bassoon)

Saturday 1st November 2025, 12pm

St Andrews Cathedral Church, Aberdeen

Programme

Olivia McLean	<i>Sea-Churn</i>
Finn O'Hare	<i>Modes of Lessness</i>
David Ford	<i>Route 75</i>
Alison Beattie	<i>The Lost Children</i>
Ewa Adamiec	<i>Charukeshi Duet</i>

Programme notes

Olivia McLean *Sea-Churn*

Sea-Churn reflects on the uneasy constancy of change and memory, part inspired by the choppy North Sea, the shifting passage of time, and returning to a place that feels familiar yet distant. The piece moves between moodier harmonic undercurrents and melodic playfulness, aiming to capture the tension of revisiting somewhere unchanged while recognising how you yourself have changed, and the mixed feelings of unease, hope, and wonder that this evokes.

Olivia is a Scottish composer and cellist pursuing a Master of Music in Composition at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Her music combines structured experimentation with inspiration from everyday sounds, the natural world, and emotional extremes, focusing on timbre, texture, and atmosphere to invite personal reflection in listeners.

Finn O'Hare *Modes of Lessness*

Modes of Lessness unfolds through processes of expansion, omission, and repetition. Material originates in a shared central register and extends toward the extremes of the oboe and bassoon ranges. As outer pitches are added, inner ones are withdrawn, producing a texture that becomes increasingly sparse and spatially dispersed. Register, duration, and dynamic are interrelated, forming a network of associations that shape pacing and density. The structure is informed by the

process of working with tape loops, where repetition and asynchronous patterns shift rhythmic expectation. The final passages are marked by increased spacing and reduced density, allowing silence to define the shape of the music.

Finn is a composer and sound artist based in Glasgow, working across scored music, sound installation, and performance. His recent work includes compositions for Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival and Nordic Music Days, where he developed new pieces for strings and electronics. Finn's music often explores texture, resonance, and spatial listening, drawing on both traditional notation and experimental approaches such as field recording and graphic scores. He holds an MSc in Sound Design and Audiovisual Practice and a BEng in Electronics with Music, both from the University of Glasgow. Alongside his creative practice, he facilitates sound and music workshops in schools and community contexts.

David Ford *Route 75*

Written for Sound Festival Aberdeen 2025, 'Route 75' is named after the national cycle route and follows a journey along the banks of the River Clyde on a bright summer's day. Following the contours of the river, the music meanders, changes pace and style overtime as the scenery shifts between nature, urban and industrial settings. The music is often rhythmic and decorative with energetic interlocking patterns as well as passages where oboe and bassoon blend together to create a single entity. The music flows like water with no exact overarching structure. Composed with the acoustic of St Andrew's Cathedral (Aberdeen, Scotland) in mind, the piece is designed to fill a large reverberant space to truly show its contrasting harmonic colours and timbres.

David is an award-winning Scottish composer from Glasgow, who writes film and concert music captivating stories, film and place through timbre and orchestration. Past commissions include the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Hebrides Ensemble, United Strings of Europe and Nordic Music Days. 'The capacity of Ford's imagination has no bounds...' (Discovery Music Scotland).

Alison Beattie *The Lost Children*

The Lost Children for Oboe and Bassoon, is a programmatic piece which attempts to reflect on the genocide of the Palestinian people. It begins with a fast rhythmic section based on a Palestinian wedding dance, followed by a gentler portion and then a spirited section to suggest children playing. The ominous advent of the war and then the horrific destruction is simulated using extended techniques. I have endeavoured to portray the unimaginable grief of the loss of a child in the slow part. The composition concludes with reflection using small fragments of the playful section in a ghostly manner.

Irresistibly drawn by the pull of music I left a career in Chemistry to embark on the journey towards becoming a Composer and Sonic Artist. I completed a Masters in Composition in 2019 and formed my company Alison Beattie – Composition and Sound Sculpture in 2020. I had pieces performed during the Sound Festival in 2023 and 2024. I currently play saxophone, cornet and trombone in numerous bands. I am one of four

volunteer directors for “Music for People Summer School”. I have recently started studying for a BA in Fine Art Photography at GSA. I believe music and art to be a powerful medium for breaking down barriers and bringing people together from different sectors of society. <https://www.alisonbeattiemusic.com>

Ewa Adamiec *Charukeshi Duet*

Charukeshi Duet for Oboe & Bassoon is a North Indian Classical and Western Classical fusion piece based on Raag Charukeshi – carnatic origin, commonly known for its extensive melodic palette. This raga represents grace and beauty in music, and evokes feelings of compassion, devotion, and longing. The piece interlaces composed elements, as well as moments of improvisations by the performers.

Ewa is a visionary composer who creates sonic fusions by interlacing the intricate beauty of Western classical music with the evocative traditions of Indian classical, West African rhythms, and the lively melodies of Scottish traditional music. At the heart of Ewa’s work lies a commitment to cultural connection.

Biographies

Formed in 2008, **Red Note Ensemble** is Scotland’s leading contemporary music group. The ensemble commissions and performs innovative new works, supports emerging composers and performers, and brings contemporary music to audiences across Scotland and beyond. Through bold programming and inventive collaborations, Red Note champions new sounds, new ideas, and new ways of listening.

Oboist **Katherine Bryer** enjoys a varied career working as an orchestral, solo and chamber musician with a variety of ensembles throughout the UK. After 3 years in Edinburgh studying with Joe Houghton at St Mary’s Music School, Katherine moved to London to pursue both a Bachelors and Masters at the Royal Academy of Music, studying oboe with Chris Cowie, Ian Hardwick and Celia Nicklin, and cor anglais with Sue Böhling and Jill Crowther.

During her time in London Katherine pursued a wide-ranging career as an orchestral musician, appearing with orchestras including London Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, and Philharmonia Orchestra. In August 2022 Katherine was appointed as Sub-Principal Oboe with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra. Katherine is a dedicated solo and chamber musician and has enjoyed many recital opportunities as a Countess of Munster Musical Trust Recital Scheme Artist with pianist and duo partner, Irena Radić. Her chamber pursuits have also led to performances with groups including Hebrides Ensemble and specialist contemporary music groups, Explore Ensemble and Red Note Ensemble, in festivals taking her from Orkney to the Netherlands.

Born in London, **Cerys Ambrose Evans** started playing the bassoon when she was 15, after first playing the double bass. She studied at the GSMD, learning with Miriam Gussek, Daniel Jemison, Helen Simons and Peter Whelan, and was awarded the

Howarth-GSMD Bassoon prize in her first year. After participating in the Erasmus scheme in Amsterdam and graduating with first class honours, she continued her studies with Bram van Sambeek at the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague. Since moving back to the UK, Cerys has enjoyed a varied freelance career, performing with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, RPO, LSO, Hallé, CBSO, BBCSSO and The Orchestra of the Royal Opera House. In 2021, she was appointed Principal Bassoon with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra.

*This concert is the culmination of a 4-month composer development opportunity run by **sound** and Red Note Ensemble, mentored by composer Anna Appleby.*

*It is part of our **sound**creators programme (nurturing new music creators with year-round artistic & skills development opportunities). The **sound**creators overall programme is supported by Creative Scotland, PRSF Talent Development Network, Aberdeen City Council & Pear Tree for Music Fund, & this particular composer development opportunity concert is also supported by Hinrichsen Foundation, Idlewild Trust, Leche Trust & the Vaughan Williams Foundation.*

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sound is a new music incubator based in north-east Scotland encouraging new music creation and discovery. We run the annual **sound**festival, as well as year-round activity supporting a wide range of composers, engaging with local communities and providing educational opportunities

Find out more: www.sound-scotland.co.uk

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