



**Across Borders,  
*entre les horizons***

**6 July 2024 at 7:30PM / The Black Box, Belfast**

**8 July 2024 at 7:30PM / BelloBar, Dublin**

## **Across Borders / entre les horizons**

*New music commission project: France-Ireland-UK*

Entre les Horizons / Across Borders focuses on the concept of interaction: between composer and performer, between different cultures and artistic traditions, and between different generations. Ensemble Écoute has commissioned three works from Emma Jane Lloyd (Scotland), Matthew Whiteside (Ireland) and Sofia Avramidou (Greece/France), which will be developed as part of the project.

Beginning with an artistic residency at the Collège Franco-Britannique in Paris, it will include two tours, the first to Ireland and Northern Ireland, followed by another to Scotland and England.

The aim of this Franco-Irish-British project is twofold. The first, to explore the music of three young composers coming from or living in each of the represented countries in order to create a program where new musical works dialogue with masterpieces of the 20th century. Then, to strengthen the existing, but sometimes neglected, links between musicians, composers and audiences in France, the UK and Ireland through a highly collaborative project.

To encourage and aid the public to plunge into this world, each concert will be preceded by a round-table discussion where the guest composers can present their music and exchange views with the audience.

The concert program will include works by composers of different generations from all three countries: Pierre Boulez, Rebecca Saunders and David Fennessy.

We also hope that this tour will enable us to establish a lasting relationship with the UK and Ireland, so that we can continue the musical exchange in the future with new projects.

## **Program**

**Emma Lloyd** (Scotland, b. 1987)

*Orbites\**

*Solo violin, flute,, clarinet, violin, cello, piano, percussion, electronics*

**Rebecca Saunders** (England, b. 1967)

*the under-side of green*

*Clarinet, violin, piano*

**David Fennessy** (Ireland, b. 1976)

*The room is the resonator*

*Cello and live electronics*

**Matthew Whiteside** (Northern Ireland, b. 1988)

*Points Decay\**

*Flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano, percussion, electronics*

**Sofia Avramidou** (Greece, b. 1988)

*An absurd reasoning*

*Violin, cello, piano*

**Pierre Boulez** (France, 1925 - 2016)

*Dérive I*

*Flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano, vibraphone*

*\*World premiere – work commissioned by Ensemble Écoute*

## *About the music...*

**Emma Lloyd** (Scotland, b. 1987)

*Orbites (world premiere)*

*Violin solo, flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano, percussion and electronics*

As the title suggests, this piece is built on repeated rotations. The ensemble is divided into duos - clarinet and flute, violin and cello, piano and percussion, conductor and improviser - and each duo moves at its own speed in orbit. There is only one point in the piece where all the duos collide.

The start of each cycle is marked by a struck singing bowl, suspended from a frame and wired to also serve as a MIDI device that triggers samples from each of the musicians in the ensemble: an instrument that is the first prototype of a much more complex system and a larger sculpture-instrument hybrid conceived by the composer. In addition, the samples are sent via two types of processing. The first is impulse-response reverberation from the Inchindown oil reservoirs in the Scottish Highlands, which hold the record for the longest reverberation in the world. The samples are then sent via modulations and delays controlled by the driver via a MUGIC motion sensor in a glove.

**Sofia Avramidou** (Greece, b. 1988)

*An absurd reasoning (2017)*

*Violin, cello, piano*

The composer chooses to quote Albert Camus (Paris, March 1955) in the description of this piece:

Absurdity and Suicide

“Living, naturally, is never easy. You continue making the gestures commanded by existence, for many reasons, the first of which is habit. Dying voluntarily implies that you have recognized, even instinctively, the ridiculous character of that habit, the absence of any profound reason for living, the insane character of that daily agitation, and the uselessness of suffering. What, then, is that incalculable feeling that deprives the mind of the sleep necessary to life? A world that can be explained even with bad reasons is a familiar world. But, on the other hand, in a universe suddenly divested of illusions and lights, man feels an alien, a stranger. His exile is without remedy since he is deprived of the memory of a lost home or the hope of a promised land.

This divorce between man and his life, the actor and his setting, is properly the feeling of absurdity. All healthy men having thought of their own suicide, it can be seen, without further explanation, that there is a direct connection between this feeling and the longing for death.”

**Matthew Whiteside** (Northern Ireland, b. 1988)

*Points Decay (world premiere)*

*Flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano, percussion and electronics*

When writing the piece my plan was to create an angrily ambient work where the ensemble starts quite separate from the tape and are slowly subsumed during the piece.

Throughout the work there are frequent interjections but ultimately the tape wins creating a sense of decay into stillness.

*Matthew Whiteside*

**David Fennessy** (Northern Ireland, b. 1976)

*The room is the resonator (2009)*

*Cello and electronics*

Throughout the piece the cello plays against a long, held chord which I recorded on an old harmonium that resides in the garage of my girlfriend's mother in Aberdeen. There's something about that instrument, that garage, that day - there's a stillness in that room, you can *hear* yourself. As I sat there listening to the pedals pushing air through the instrument my mind drifted to other places, other rooms...

*David Fennessy*

**Pierre Boulez** (France, 1925 - 2016)

*Dérive I*

*Flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano, vibraphone*

In parallel with the composition of *Repons*, Pierre Boulez created a number of short pieces for small ensemble, exploiting certain ideas that arose during the gestation of this large-scale work.

*Dérive* is based on the proliferation of a simple harmonic structure: a series of six permuted chords, each containing the six notes of the cryptogram of William Glock, to whom the piece is dedicated, followed by six transpositions forming an inverted cryptogram.

Resonance plays a central role in this work, with the piano holding all the notes in the octave.

The piano holds all the notes in the lowest octave throughout the piece, allowing the notes to sound freer and with greater harmonic richness. Ornamental and melodic figures intertwine in a climate of jubilation, culminating in an abrupt, elided ending.

*Philippe Albèra*

**Rebecca Saunders** (England, b. 1967)

*the under-side of green (1994)*

*Clarinet, violin, piano*

"At this juncture, we ought to say something about lights and colours. It is evident that colours vary according to light, as every colour appears different when in shade, and placed under rays of light. Shade makes a colour dimmer, and light makes it brighter and clear. Colour is swallowed by the dark."

- Loeon Battista Alberti: *On Painting* (1435)

"Emerald, ruby, hyacinth, chalcedony, jasper. Color, like these jewels, is precious. Even more precious, it cannot be possessed. Color slips through your fingers and escapes. You can't lock it in a jewelry box as it disappears into the darkness." - Derek Jarman: *Chroma* (1994)

The underside of green, *CRIMSON – Molly's Song 1* (1995) and *Molly's Song 3 – shades of crimson*, (1996) make up a cycle of compositions that were influenced by Molly Bloom's closing monologue in James Joyce's *Ulysses*.

This relentless and intense monologue flows unpunctuated for 35 pages: "*...and O that awful deepdown torrent O and the sea the sea crimson sometimes like fire and the glorious sunsets and ...yes ...*"

*Rebecca Saunders*

*About the artists...*

### **Sofia Avramidou, composer**

Born in Thessaloniki (Greece), Sofia Avramidou graduated from the composition department of Aristotle University and the National Academy of Santa Cecilia in Rome, receiving the highest distinction in the class of Professor Ivan Fedele, as well as a scholarship for excellence from the Alexandros Onassis Foundation.

In Paris, in 2020, she graduated from the "Cursus de composition et d'informatique musicale" at IRCAM.

She has been awarded numerous composition prizes, including the Goffredo Petrassi Prize from the Quirinal Palace in Rome.

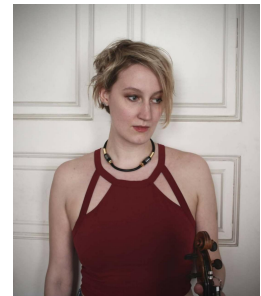
Her compositions have been performed at the Philharmonie de Paris, the Musikverein in Vienna, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Bozar in Brussels, the Barbican in London, the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg, the Philharmonie in Cologne and the Venice Biennale, Auditori Barcelona, Festspielhaus Baden-Baden, Philharmonie Luxembourg, Auditorium Lyon, Auditorium Parco della Musica Rome, Teatro La Fenice Venice, Boston University, Megaron Athens. ..



### **Emma Lloyd, composer**

Emma Lloyd is an international performer, improviser, composer, and artist. She performs as a soloist and in small ensembles, working often with live electronics, and collaborating regularly with composers. In addition to the modern set-up, she plays a baroque violin and performs both baroque and contemporary music written specifically for this instrument.

As an improviser, Emma's performance tends to be quiet and intimate in nature, exploring the innate timbral qualities of the violin, and discovering some of the often hidden sounds that can be found with her unique combination of technique and tools.



Ensembles include KUBOV, a violin/electronic duo with Jess Aslan, a duo with pianist Karin Schistek, violin/viola duo Deux Mèches with Rachel Koblyakov, and violin/cello/electronics duo with Justyna Jablonska.

She is a member of Tesseris, a new string quartet based in Edinburgh, and is one-third of Machine Orchid, a contemporary electro-alternative-folk-jazz-experimental group with fellow multi-instrumentalists Caro Bridges and Aurora Engine.

## **Matthew Whiteside, composer**

Matthew Whiteside, on the 2019 List Hot 100, is a Glasgow-based composer, collaborator, sound designer, and concert producer, named "One to Watch" at the 2017 Herald's Culture Awards and winner of the Light Moves Innovative Use of Sound Award for his work Entangled with Marisa Zanotti. His music has been described as "effective and unsettling" by BBC Music Magazine and "post-minimalist bold sparseness" by the Herald.

In 2020, he won the SMIA Award for Creative Programming at the Scottish Awards for New Music for his work on the 2019 season The Night With... His piece Night Thoughts is up for the Large Scale New Work category (sponsored by PRS) at the Scottish Awards for New Music 2021.

His recent work includes a short opera, Little Black Lies, commissioned by Scottish Opera Connect, with a libretto by Helene Grøn; Night Thoughts, commissioned by Crash Ensemble and premiered at New Music Dublin 2020; Rama, commissioned by The Night With... for Ensemble Offspring; Entangled, commissioned by the Institute of Physics for the NI Science Festival 2018; and a collaboration with filmmaker and choreographer Marisa Zanotti to create a collaborative work with Magnetic North.

He has received international performances by ensembles and performers such as RTÉ NSO, Red Note Ensemble, Aurea Quartet, Pauline Kim Harris, and Diagenesis Duo at venues including New York University, National Concert Hall in Dublin, Glasgow City Halls, Salem Artworks in New York, and the Belfast International Festival at Queen's. He was commissioned by Cottiers Chamber Project and Lorimer Productions for Cappella Nova and was jointly commissioned by the Sound Festival and R-Space Gallery to collaborate with Dominika Mayovich in the creation of an interactive sound/art installation that resulted in Exhibition Music.

Alongside his artistic work, Matthew is passionate about supporting the DIY community through education work such as publishing "The Guidebook to Self-Releasing Your Music".



## **Fernando Palomeque, musical director**

Conductor and pianist (Buenos Aires, 1990), Fernando Palomeque is one of the most renowned Argentinian musicians of his generation. His vast repertoire extends from the Baroque to contemporary music, the latter to which he devotes most of his work.

His commitment to new music has led him to work with some of the world's leading ensembles, including Ensemble Intercontemporain, Ensemble Musikfabrik and Ensemble Modern. Musical and artistic director of Ensemble Écoute, he has conducted the Argentine Symphony Orchestra, Dortmunder Philharmoniker, Staatsorchester Rheinische Philharmonie, Orchestra di Padova e del Veneto, Bergischen Sinfonikern, Filarmonica Dinu Lipati, Divertimento Ensemble, Ars Nova....

He has also performed in major venues in Europe, North America and Latin America, including the Maison de la Radio, the Kennedy Center, the Teatro Colón and the Studio Ansermet - Radio Suisse, among others.

A graduate of the CNSMDP and the Hochschule in Düsseldorf (master's degree in orchestral conducting with Rüdiger Bohn), he also specialized in conducting the contemporary repertoire at the CRR in Strasbourg (class of J.P. Wurtz). As a pianist, he trained with Rena Shereshevskaya and Bruno Gelber.



## *About Ensemble Écoute...*

Ensemble Écoute was created in 2015 at the initiative of the conductor and pianist Fernando Palomeque and the composer Alex Nante. Directly engaged in working with the newest generation of composers, as well as dedicated to music of historically famous repertoire of the end of the 20th century, the Ensemble strives to convey this rich array of musical expression to a vast public via concerts, audiovisual installations, and recordings.

In addition to the season-long residencies offered to a composer annually, each concert program or production of the Ensemble features a premiere by a young composer. To date, Naoki Sakata, Antonin Rey, Manon LePauvre, Alex Nante, Charles Peck, Demian Rudel Rey, Nicolas Roulive are among the numerous young up-and-coming composers that have been programmed. The Ensemble is composed of young musicians of various nationalities, most of whom have graduated from the Artist Diploma in classical and new music performance of the National Conservatory of Music of Paris (CNSMDP), as well as from other major institutions.

Beginning in September 2024, the Ensemble will be in residence at the Singer-Polignac Foundation, Paris. Previous residencies: Cité Universitaire Paris (4 years), Cité Internationale des Arts de Paris (2018- 2020). Dedicated to supporting young composers and instigating the creation of new works, the annual Ensemble Écoute Composition Competition was established in 2016. Each year, the jury consists of well known guest composers, in addition to the Ensemble's artistic and musical directors.

The Ensemble is regularly invited to participate in numerous festivals, among them: Action! Creation of France Musique. In 2022, the Ensemble was awarded the La Scala Paris label prize to record their first CD, *Creo*, which was released in October 2023.

Ensemble Écoute is supported by the Caisse des Dépôts, SACEM, SPEDIDAM, the Impuls Neue Musik Fund, the Centre National de la Musique (CNM), the Mairie de Paris, the Peter Eötvös, National Music Center (CNM), the City of Paris, the Peter Eötvös Foundation, the Maison de la Musique Contemporaine, the Mécénat Culturel Société Générale, the Cité Internationale des Arts, Ibermusicas, Unesco and the Cité internationale universitaire de Paris.

The Ensemble is under the artistic direction of Fernando Palomeque and Rachel Koblyakov.

**Music and artistic director:** Fernando Palomeque

**Co-artistic director:** Rachel Koblyakov

### **Musicians**

**Rachel Koblyakov** (violin), **Emma Lloyd** (solo violin), **Emmanuel Acurero** (cello), **Samuel Casale** (flute), **Youjin Jung** (clarinet), **Ezequiel Castro** (piano), **Quentin Dubreuil** (percussion)



*Acknowledgements and Thanks*

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**Artistic Directors Ensemble Écoute** : Fernando Palomeque and Rachel Koblyakov

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**Artistic Director The Night With...:** Matthew Whiteside

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