

hcmf//



huddersfield contemporary music festival

In partnership with
The University of Huddersfield

**Thursday 18 - Monday 22
November 2021**

www.hcmf.co.uk
Box Office: 01484 430528

#hcmf2021



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Registered charity number: 514614

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Printed by The MANSON Group Ltd

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Welcome to the 44th Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival!



© Robbie van Zoggel

It has never felt more important to be able to write those words.

After 18 months of unparalleled challenges as a result of the global pandemic, and the devastating impacts it has had on the creative sector, artistic communities, and the wider world of new music – not only in the UK, but on our partners and collaborators across the globe – it gives me great pleasure to announce **hcmf//**'s return to live events with a programme of performances, installations, exhibitions and talks.

I am extremely proud of the work we were able to do last year and the artist-centred approach we adopted, which has seen **hcmf//** commission over 30 new pieces – ranging from large-scale works to miniatures – providing immediate and direct support for artists. In all, **hcmf//** provided around 120 paid opportunities for artists/creative practitioners throughout 2020 and into the first half of 2021.

But this is not a moment for looking back! Let us fix our gaze firmly towards November and celebrate a return to live performance which will reunite composers, musicians and artists with in-person audiences. **hcmf//** will, inevitably, look and feel a bit different. In curating a festival against the ongoing risks and uncertainties of the pandemic, the emphasis must be on protecting the health and well-being of our artists, the festival team, and – of course – you, the audience.

So, we have five days in place of the usual 10, with socially distanced performances across fewer venues. There will be no walk-up sales, and we'll

be using mostly electronic tickets. Please help us to ensure everyone feels safe and comfortable by observing our COVID-19 safety guidelines, which will be published at www.hcmf.co.uk.

And whilst the festival is reduced in scale, it certainly isn't when it comes to quality! **hcmf//** 2021 is choc-full of premieres, radical voices, maximum invention and simply brilliant new sounds, literally bursting out of artists into the world after months of lockdown.

Our thanks go to our core partners and funders for their continued support – to Arts Council England (including for an award from the Government's Culture Recovery Fund for which they were a delivery partner), Kirklees Council and the University of Huddersfield. To PRS Foundation, for supporting our Fielding Talent activity. To British Council, whose support for our online Unbound Listening series not only kept us connected internationally as physical borders closed, but has expanded our reach across the world.

And, as always, we are beyond grateful to our wonderful audience! Many of you joined us online last year, and now we can't wait to welcome you all back to Huddersfield at festival time.

Stay safe.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. McKenzie'.

Graham McKenzie
Artistic Director & Chief Executive

Arts Council England

Following the success of **hcmf//**'s digital edition in 2020, delivered against the odds at such a challenging time, we are thrilled that this year's compact edition will be taking place in-person in Huddersfield, with an exciting five-day programme of thrilling live concerts, performances and events. As the music sector and its audiences make steps towards recovery and experiencing music in our 'new normal,' **hcmf//**'s audiences – old and new – will be able to join us in celebrating **hcmf//**'s unique blend of high quality live contemporary music. We commend the staff and trustees at **hcmf//** for navigating the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic safely, and with creativity, and we share in their 'cautious excitement' in bringing together composers, artists and musicians for this year's edition. We are particularly delighted that Israeli-American composer Chaya Czernowin is **hcmf//**'s Composer in Residence for 2021, after rescheduling in 2020, so that her large-scale visceral and wild works with minute and sensitive details will be brought to life to tantalise audiences in Huddersfield. As proud supporters of the festival, on behalf of everyone at Arts Council England, I wish **hcmf//** every success with this year's edition and in its longer-term recovery from the pandemic.

Claire Mera-Nelson

Director, Music, Arts Council England

Kirklees Council

It has been a very difficult time for the cultural sector over these difficult pandemic times, and it is heartening to have seen **hcmf//** adapt to this situation with a greater online offer. However, I am delighted to see the return of the festival, albeit in a slightly smaller version this year. Kirklees Council firmly supports **hcmf//** on this road to recovery, as we remain committed to music in Kirklees. Our planning for Year of Music 2023 continues, and future ambitions grow from this. For us, we see **hcmf//** as a key moment in the annual music calendar for Huddersfield and Kirklees.

The team at **hcmf//** continue to push boundaries in music, from its programming to the work it

does year-round within the music ecology and the Learning & Participation programme that reaches out to our children and young people. It is always great to see how **hcmf//** evolves each year, and I am excited to see what this year's festival brings as I have missed live performance. I would like to celebrate the tenacity of the festival team to keep going, and I hope to see you at this year's festival.

Councillor Will Simpson

Portfolio Holder, Culture and Greener Kirklees, Kirklees Council

University of Huddersfield

The last 18 months have been among the most difficult that many of us can remember and this year's **hcmf//** represents another significant step on the long journey to recovery. The return of live music and performance will provide a welcome boost to those who missed the collective joy that such activities bring to our everyday lives. As Dean of the newly formed School of Arts & Humanities, **hcmf//** is a central component in our ongoing commitment to work alongside Kirklees Council and Arts Council England to support a thriving cultural agenda, promoting excellence in the arts within the region. **hcmf//** is one of a number of public-facing activities that the School of Arts & Humanities is proud to be involved with, as we are committed to further developing a vibrant and progressive arts scene that drives the town's cultural economy. Huddersfield is on the cusp of a creative renaissance and **hcmf//** is crucial to the success of realising that transformation.

The School of Arts & Humanities, with its Performing Arts department ranked 27th globally by the QS World University Rankings in 2021, is proud of its world-leading Centre for Research in New Music (CeReNeM) which attracts some of the best academics and students worldwide. As Dean of the new School, I greatly look forward to the UK's foremost contemporary music festival as one of the high points in the cultural year of the University and the region.

Professor Nic Clear

Dean of the School of Arts & Humanities, University of Huddersfield

British Council

As I observe – with the greatest of joy – the world of music and performing arts open up once more, I reflect on the past year and also what lies ahead for us in the future. The British Council has long partnered with **hcmf//**, enabling composers, programmers, directors, journalists and other music professional from all corners of the globe to travel and immerse themselves in the unique Huddersfield experience – to hear work, to network, meet likeminded international colleagues, and to plot and plan future collaborations.

During the pandemic we have not ceased activity, but together with the festival have found other ways of keeping the contact, listening and dialogue alive throughout the year. Three editions of Unbound Listening, our online event bringing together international voices – including those from countries which are more difficult to access – virtually rather than in-person, have explored vital contemporary issues. Combining dialogue and sharing with networking and discovering new music experiences, we have immersed ourselves in the iconic underground music scene in Beirut in the period just following the devastating explosion, explored environmental and ecological concerns with colleagues as far afield as South and East Asia, and discovered the work of artist-activists across Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa.

That we have been able to do this is testament to the creativity, imagination and resilience of Graham and his team. Throughout lockdown, they have continued to support artists, enabling them to create and develop, and have continued to strive to make the festival ever more inclusive, addressing issues of gender inequality and ethnic diversity. As we question now what 'normal' is, and as it dawns on us there will be no going back to 'normal', the global issues and communities our collaboration has brought us into contact with will provide a powerful springboard for continuing conversations.

Though it is too early this year to bring back international delegates in person, I look forward to continuing the dialogue and developing new ways of sharing and listening which before too long will include physical presence.

Congratulations **hcmf//**, and here's to five inspiring days in November.

Cathy Graham OBE

Director Music, British Council

BBC Radio 3

Being a part of **hcmf//** and bringing new and experimental music to audiences around the world is such an important part of what BBC Radio 3 does and we're delighted to again be on the ground in Huddersfield this November after we hosted performances from last year's festival at our Maida Vale Studios.

Our recording teams are back with their microphones, capturing that very special **hcmf//** atmosphere giving listeners at home and abroad the opportunity to hear some of the world's finest performers and composers of new work. Everything we record will be broadcast on Radio 3's New Music Show starting on Saturday 27 November with the world premiere of James Dillon's *Emblemata: Carnival* performed by Red Note Ensemble. As well as works by the festival's Composer in Residence Chaya Czernowin, in the coming weeks we'll hear performances by Zubin Kanga, the London Sinfonietta, Arditti Quartet, Riot Ensemble and many others.

One of the most important things for us to do at Radio 3 is to take the most interesting contemporary music there is to as many people as possible. Being part of the festival and recording the live music making that happens here allows us to bring this work to that wide audience. Listen out for our recordings in two special New Music Shows dedicated to the festival on 27 November and 4 December, as well as music from the festival which will run in the New Music Show on Saturday nights through until next year. Our partnership with **hcmf//** is part of the life blood of the future of music and I am so very pleased we are able to be back in Huddersfield again. Have a wonderful festival.

Alan Davey CBE

Controller, Radio 3, BBC Proms and BBC Classical Music

Chaya Czernowin : hcmf// Composer in Residence

It's all about *else*. The words used to describe composer Chaya Czernowin's music are married to otherness: it goes beyond and reaches underneath, finding places submerged, digging into our subconscious. Her pieces are metaphors for the imaginary, putting us in positions and environments that would otherwise be impossible to conceive of. The sounds are visceral – using familiar instrumentation to create something abnormal, they frequently scan as feelings rather than as sounds. The music is not just immersive; you exist *within* it.

Getting her music to this point has taken practice. In her university years, Czernowin studied with Yizhak Sadai, one of Israel's most renowned composers. He got her counting every grain of detail: 'Sadai asked me to analyse every pitch, every rhythm, every dynamic', she told Daniela Shemer. From then on, Czernowin's compositions have become more and more precise, carrying what she describes as 'the concentration of a surgeon with a scalpel'. Her music has only become richer, and more visceral, for it; Czernowin delved so deep into the forensics of sound that she discovered the wildness underneath.

This approach informs 2013's *HIDDEN*, one of Czernowin's largest scale compositions. Written for strings and electronics, it explores a place 'foreign and indecipherable' to the human ear – somewhere only Czernowin's music could make present. I've mentioned the instrumentation, but it's a disservice to think of the piece this way, to give you ordinary visions of an ensemble playing music. *HIDDEN* is foley art. Its performers create visceral sounds that serve as analogy for something we've never known – for whatever it is that exists 'underneath music'. Czernowin's score suggests something physical is rooted within sound: the pitches are shrill, the stringwork is coarse, and the percussion shifts like molten rock. Towards the end of the piece, the string players start groaning up and down their instruments in a destructive wave of *glissandi*, as if mimicking movements of the earth's core.

HIDDEN is indicative of Czernowin's music. It is caught between imagination and interrogation; it's plucked from her head, but then intricately workshopped. 'A title comes first', she explained in an interview with Ensemble Musikfabrik's Thomas Fichter, 'and the name of the piece is a seed that keeps growing underneath the earth'. The first part is simple – the rest of the world takes some building. The phrases she comes up with are suitably abstract – little turns of phrases with secret powers. *On the Face of the Deep. Knights of the Strange. At the fringe of our gaze. Fast Darkness*. Everything is just out of sight, on the periphery of manifesting. It's there that Czernowin composes.

With *HIDDEN*, Czernowin began doing things differently. She was growing increasingly interested in how the flow of time was affecting her music, and came up with something she calls 'infinite now'. This music, she argues, is outside the rules of standard time – there's no path or progress. Rather than move forwards, Czernowin argues that 'time is going inward'. With *HIDDEN*, her score burrows itself deep within certain music phrases, until there's no movement or momentum – until we're completely insulated from time. In Czernowin's hands, the scratch of a string might never stop resonating.

Placed through our **hcmf// 2021** programme, we'll get to go inside of Czernowin's music. Accompanying the Arditti Quartet and IRCAM with their performance of *HIDDEN*, Ensemble Musikfabrik will play *The Fabrication of Light*, a piece that typifies her ambiguous, illusory approach. She compares its structure to optical illusions – 'colours that seem striking and deep, but that aren't really there'. Courtesy of the Riot Ensemble, we'll also hear *Fast Darkness*, a piece that attempts to distill the sensation of disassociating – of missing a step, or zoning out of a moment. It's a collection of work that reaches out for the otherworldly, linking the unknown to the real.

Profile by Robin Smith



Fielding Talent

hcmf// still happens when the lights are out. The festival takes place in November, but we don't really have an off season; in fact, we're in action all year round, working on educational projects, collaborative commissions and our ever-growing series of artist talks. We're about continuity, and over the last 40 years, we've had one very significant daily mission: talent development.

Nurturing artistic talent has been at the heart of **hcmf//** for the last four decades. Ever since we awarded James Dillon the Young Composers' Award at our inaugural festival in 1978, we've been investing in the future of emerging composers and performers. In the past decade, mentoring and guidance has become a core constituent of the **hcmf//** programme itself. We've helped bring artists up through the early stages of their careers, inviting **hcmf//** shorts performers such as Explore Ensemble and GBSR Duo to return to the festival in a feature role. We've provided more than just a platform for these artists, supporting them in taking the next step on the international music circuit.

A key part of fostering talent is providing a supportive community. In 2019, we decided to bring our talent development programmes together under one roof. We called that roof Fielding Talent, in a nod to our hope of making **hcmf//** one important part of an artist's journey, rather than the whole end game. We hope to provide a launch pad, to keep these artists' music in orbit for listeners around the world. That's the kind of follow-through we'd already been seeking out with our International Showcase programme, back in 2016. Laurence Osborn, who was part of that project, is making waves with his work, and has circled back to us for a new performance this year. 'So are the Riot Ensemble and Gareth Davis. All of them have worked together.

But, platform is more than performance. With Fielding Talent, our intention is to bring our talent development work front and centre throughout the year, to show audiences what it's like for these artists to be working full time and flat out on their craft. For the first half of 2021 we ran an Artist of the Month website series, providing in-depth examinations of our artists and the projects they're producing. It's an opportunity for them to speak for themselves, to blog on their work, and to give our audience an insight into how and why they create.

Participants have been generous and reflective with their features: sound artist Hayley Suviste talked us through her environmental sound walks; ambient musician Alex Ives penned a poignant piece on discovering noise music as a teenager; Lauren Sarah Hayes took over our Instagram to get up close with her site-specific improvisations. We're excited to continue growing this archive of features, and to show you what goes on for these musicians away from the stage.

hcmf// 2021 reflects our dedication to Fielding Talent, with artists from our development strands to be found throughout the programme. We'll have plenty more to share going forward, but in the meantime, you can learn more by visiting our website's Fielding Talent section and our Artist of the Month archive.

Fielding Talent at **hcmf//**:
hcmf.co.uk/fielding-talent

Artist of the Month Archive:
hcmf.co.uk/category/artist-of-the-month

hcmf// is a PRS Foundation Talent Development Partner supported by PPL





hcmf// Young Curators' Programme

Claye Bowler © Brian Slater

Back in 2019, **hcmf//** embarked on a new year-long initiative with the aim of supporting young event curators across Kirklees to take the next steps in their practice. Over the course of that summer, we connected with five young people who were interested in further developing their skills – with the support of the **hcmf//** team – in order to build on the events they were already creating. **hcmf//** intended for this programme to be of practical benefit, but what we were even more interested in was the growth of the participants' artistic curatorial vision. We wanted our Young Curators to be ambitious, and we wanted to support them as they changed the cultural offer across Kirklees.


Halfway through the project, like everyone else, we had a pandemic to deal with. Our Young Curators responded fantastically. They agreed to carry on with the process for an additional year, and the festival's relationship with these remarkable young people grew stronger and more open as we navigated how to proceed together.

Our Young Curators have distinct interests and requirements for learning, so for much of the programme we worked with each of them individually to support their needs. They received

bespoke mentoring from members of the **hcmf//** team, and where we needed specific advice on niche topics, we reached out to our network of partners who were able to provide support and inspiration. In addition to this, we ran group training sessions on topics ranging from event budgeting to field recording, and we are very grateful to the professionals we called upon to lead these workshops.

At this year's festival you will see live events constructed as a result of the Young Curators' Programme – though this will inevitably only represent a fraction of the work that has taken place. We hope we have equipped our Young Curators with the tools to enhance their curatorial practices, but equally important is the personal growth we've seen in each of them. We wish them all huge success as they continue to produce their own unique events in the future.

hcmf//s Young Curators' Programme is funded by the Leeds City Region Business Rates Pool, through a bid secured by Kirklees Council



Workshop: Little Sing

Heritage Quay, University of Huddersfield

Saturday 20 November

Free event (booking required)

Holly Czolacz © Mike Sabato

Session 1

(for babies up to 6 months):

10.30am – 11am

Session 2

(for children under 5):

11.30am – 12pm

To book a place or discuss your visit further, please contact Sophie Cooper at s.cooper@hud.ac.uk

The Opera Mill presents the Little Sing workshops!

Bring your children along for activities involving singing and playing musical instruments. As well as helping you to discover musical themes through the use of sensory objects and movement, Little Sing will include a mini-chamber concert with a live performance for you and your family.

The Opera Mill was founded in 2020 by Artistic Director Holly Czolacz. Its aim is to promote opera and classical music within the local communities of Kirklees and beyond, collaborating with festivals, musicians, artists and audiences from all backgrounds in order to deliver workshops, perform live music and create an environment where opera is accessible, inclusive and open to everyone.

Produced by hcmf//

Created as part of the hcmf// Young Curators' Programme

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Memorial of Rebellion

Bates Mill Photographic Studio

Thursday 18 – Monday 22 November, 10am – 5pm

Tickets £10 // Under 30 £5 // booking required

Brigitta Muntendorf
(Germany, 1982) & **Michael Höppner**
(Germany, 1982)

Memorial of Rebellion
(2020) 19'

UK Premiere

Brigitta Muntendorf music /
conception / direction

Michael Höppner conception /
direction

Carola Schaal voice /
performance

Louis Bona viola / voice /
performance

Till Künkler trombone / voice /
performance

Malgorzata Walentynowicz
voice / performance

Evdoxia Filippou voice /
performance

Andreas Huck video mapping

Roland Nebe video mapping

Martin Siemann light design

Jule Saworski make-up

Maximiliano Estudie

audiomix

Songs of Rebellion is dead. One of many large-scale projects killed off by the instant impact of COVID-19, Brigitta Muntendorf and Michael Höppner were able to give the piece a brief but incredible run as a full ensemble work. An ambitious homage to protest songs, as well as an examination of their current place in the world, the work allowed its audience to get closer to Muntendorf and Höppner's ideas. As their ensemble wove its way through fragmented sounds and references to popular standards, the audience moved through the performance space, joining the musicians in an aquarium tank of political uprising and community action to experience the power of protest – as well as the vulnerable space it comes from.

Now, there is enforced social distance. *Songs of Rebellion* can no longer be experienced as the simultaneous journey it once was; it is no longer a ritual itself, a lived-in example of how people organise towards a common purpose. In its place, Muntendorf and Höppner have created *Memorial of Rebellion*, an audiovisual installation that remembers, and honours, its source material, inviting the listener to ruminate on the personal protests of their life. Where *Songs* offered a vast, open space, in which listeners could coalesce, *Memorial* is all insulation, a 'memory-trail' experienced on headphones. *Memorial of Rebellion* continues to contemplate calls to action throughout the world, and the place of protest song in both popular and community-driven music.

Co-commissioned and co-produced by November Music, Ultima and hcmf//

***Memorial of Rebellion* is part of the Sounds Now project co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union**

Listen to my World

Bath House Gallery, Sovereign Design House

Thursday 18 – Monday 22 November, 10am – 5pm

Free event

Claudia Molitor

(Germany / UK, 1974)

Listen to my World (2021)

World Premiere

Interested in the stories told by raw material, Claudia Molitor's work is foraged for, making use of field recordings and found instrumentation. She offers translations, ways of explaining one space, or situation, to another.

Listen to my World is a collaboration. Communicating with six people living in different European towns and enabling them to tell their own stories, Molitor weaves a tapestry of experiences together. Following in the footsteps of *versamt*, her collaboration with choreographer Anna Koch at **hcmf// 2020**, she tells a myriad of environmental and social stories at once, implementing visual and sonic material from across the continent to reflect the connections, and divergences, in the lives of the participants involved.

Co-commissioned and co-produced by Onassis Stegi, SPOR, Transit Festival, Time of Music, Wilde Westen and hcmf//

Listen to my World is part of the Sounds Now project co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union

Entity

DAI Hall, Huddersfield Piazza

Thursday 18 – Monday 22 November, 10am – 5pm

Free event

Charlotte Roe (UK, 1991)

Entity (2021)

World Premiere

An artist based in Huddersfield, Charlotte Roe imagines versions of virtual space that you can touch and feel, presenting a hands-on version of screen-time. She is fascinated by the creative potential of computer coding, and is currently making work with scraped data, generative visuals and Pure Data audio. Her new work *Entity* attempts to make browsing the internet feel tactile; a database of tweets, all starting with the phrase 'I feel', is sorted by sentiment and strength, Roe mapping out their emotional categories by sound. Through the piece, Roe explores whether a virtual space, made up of intangible data, can take on a material form, embodied within a physically explorable space.

Produced by hcmf//

Created as part of the hcmf// Young Curators' Programme

More Than One Thing

Create Lab, Barbara Hepworth Building, University of Huddersfield

Thursday 18 – Monday 22 November, 10am – 5pm

Free event

Henry McPherson (UK, 1995)

More Than One Thing (2021)

Participating Artists:

Sky Su, David Yates, Skye

Reynolds, Michael

Schumacher, Colin Frank,

Maria Sappho, Brice Catherin,

Catherine Cary, Juan-Fran

Cabrera, Faradena Afifi, Henry

McPherson, Tim Tsang,

Laurent Estoppey

Embracing improvisation across the board, Henry McPherson's *More Than One Thing* encompasses dance, music and performance art, bringing a huge roster of collaborators in on the task of 'collective meaning-making'. Through live studio sessions, as well as online environments demanded by the pandemic, the group has shared spontaneous moments of expression, combining their individual approaches to performance and considering the different thresholds they hold for themselves in their improvisation. In this visual installation, he and his group document the project, with annotated videos and studio footage providing fascinating insight into the act of co-creating spontaneity.

Produced by hcmf//

***More Than One Thing* is supported by the University of Huddersfield's Collaborative PhD Scholarship in Contemporary Music and Dance in association with hcmf//**

The cold black rain shall be your coat

Yonder Gallery, Slaithwaite

Friday 19 – Sunday 21 November, 12pm – 5pm

Free event

Charlotte Cullen, Roma

Hardaker, Fraz Ireland, Oren

Shoesmith

The cold black rain shall be your coat (2021)

Charlotte Cullen

prints / sculpture / audio

Roma Hardaker

video / audio

Oren Shoesmith

sculpture / performance

Fraz Ireland

video

Centering the experiences of queer and trans artists, Claye Bowler's Yonder Gallery uses its quiet rural setting in the West Yorkshire village of Slaithwaite to offer residencies to those exploring new avenues within their practice. A new installation for the space curated by Bowler, *The cold black rain shall be your coat* involves four artists responding to Slaithwaite's local environment. Named after *The Gardener*, a folk song dating back to 1956, *The cold black rain shall be your coat* is inspired by the song's depiction of retaliation against unwanted attention and harassment and finds Charlotte Cullen, Roma Hardaker, Fraz Ireland and Oren Shoesmith taking ownership of their anger, channelling it into a work of self-assertion.

Produced by hcmf//

Created as part of the hcmf// Young Curators' Programme



Georgia Rodgers

Georgia Rodgers: Tonewood

Available throughout hcmf// 2021 at www.hcmf.co.uk

Georgia Rodgers (UK, 1985)
Tonewood (2021)

Georgia Rodgers electronics

Georgia Rodgers' sound installation *Line of Parts* was its own special part of **hcmf// 2019**. Running all day in a quiet spot on the University of Huddersfield campus, it became a cocooned world that listeners could drop into and experience for as long as they liked. With her penchant for writing and recording the most detailed, immersive music possible, Rodgers' electronic music is best taken in this way, on the same level you take in your surroundings.

Having written works for a diverse range of buildings and spaces, including St Andrew's Lyddington and York Minster, Rodgers is used to encountering a space and identifying what sounds might come out of it. Her new work, *Tonewood*, hits a little closer to home. It's inspired by an ash tree she can see out of the window of her flat in North London. She has developed an enduring relationship with it, one marked by its seasonal changes; she watches it come into leaf, and sees it providing shelter for birds and animals. For *Tonewood*, Rodgers attempted to capture these changes, to record the tree against the cycles of weather and hibernation. The piece features these sounds, filtered into a mix with Rodgers' own cello and violin accompaniment, connected in an 'exploration of the different voices of resonant wood'.

***Tonewood* is commissioned by hcmf//**

hcmf// Talks

This year, we're proud to be presenting another series of **hcmf//** talks, building on the fruitful conversations that have been taking place via our new **Artist to Artist** series as well as our **Unbound Listening** panel discussions.

At **hcmf// 2021**, we invite composers and performers to discuss their work with the same candid approach, exploring the culture and context of their work. We'll have more information about when and where our talks will be happening soon – but in the meantime, here's a taster of what's to come.

Composer in Residence **Chaya Czernowin**'s work is often compared to archaeology. Rather than writing linear pieces, her music digs downwards, into the earth, in search of sounds and sensations. At **hcmf// 2021**, she'll join us to discuss three major pieces being performed at the festival, and the ways in which time and direction are distorted in her work.

Since his last appearance at **hcmf//**, composer **Laurence Osborn** has drastically changed the language with which he writes music, tempering the quickfire bombast of his 2017 piece *CTRL* with music that's more subtle and introspective. He'll join us for a talk offering insights into his new **hcmf//** commission *Essential Relaxing Classical Hits*, and the ways in which it is inspired by our small, everyday acts of commodification.

Created in collaboration with six people across six European countries, **Claudia Molitor**'s new audio-visual installation *Listen to my World*

is a rumination on the act of sharing stories, and the terms on which we hear them. Molitor will discuss the making of the work, her site-specific approach to creating, and the new-found influence of feminist theorist Donna Haraway on her work.

Georgia Rodgers' music employs field recordings and surround sound set-ups to create what feel like simulations of real environments, installations where there's rain and wind and seasonal change. Her new **hcmf//** commission *Tonewood* is as close to home as she's ever been, offering a sound-based representation of the view from her flat window. In her talk, Rodgers will discuss her approach to creating musical environments, and *Tonewood* in particular.

Though more tangible than ever, climate change also exists in the invisible. In a panel discussion, we'll investigate the environmental impacts of creating, performing and even listening to music, paying close attention to the emissions found in our streaming habits. We'll discuss the arts sector's interaction with the environment and the ways in which we can make ourselves a greener cultural community in the future.

Please check www.hcmf.co.uk for further details.





Explore Ensemble: Systema Naturae

Bates Mill Blending Shed, 7pm

Tickets £19 // Concession £16 // Under 30 £5 // booking required

Mauro Lanza (Italy, 1975) &

Andrea Valle (Italy, 1974)

Systema Naturae

(2013-2017) 85'

UK Premiere

Regnum Animale (2013) 20'

Regnum Vegetabile (2014) 22'

Regnum Lapideum (2016) 19'

Fossilia (2017) 21'

Explore Ensemble:

Taylor MacLennan flute

Katherine Bryer oboe

Alex Roberts clarinet

David Zucchi saxophone

Sarah Park piano

Angela Wai-Nok Hui

percussion

Sam Cave guitar

David López Ibañez violin

Morag Robertson viola

Deni Teo cello

Nicholas Moroz

artistic director

Systema Naturae is about discovery. It is a meditation on the process, rather than the act, of making them, depicting the ways in which we classify, organise and most importantly give name to the minutiae of the natural world. A four-part 'play' comprising a series of pseudo-textbooks, Maura Lanza and Andrea Valle have created a vast, open world metaphor for our own histories of observation and categorisation.

Inspired by medieval texts known as *bestiaries*, *herbarias* and *lapidaria* – encyclopaedic books that listed types of animals, plants and stones – Lanza and Valle envisioned an imaginary ecosystem of their own. The piece is organised as if it were a musical transposition of this information, its score structured like a reference catalogue in the vein of the eponymous work written by Carl Linneaus in the 18th century. With over 50 discoveries spanning four distinct musical movements, their lorebook is densely comprehensive, containing an entire natural world of mythology.

In imagining new beings, Lanza and Valle began treating the music itself as a biological discovery, creating new, object-like instrumentation for their orchestra, manipulated by the duo, who serve as a 'mechanised orchestra' alongside their performers. They also imagined new bodily actions for the traditional instruments at hand; strings are prepared differently on the inside, and performers, arranged in different shapes on the stage, are asked to use extended techniques when they play. Bringing these two families of sound together, Lanza and Valle create a new ecosystem, an environment of observable instruments.

Systema Naturae is complex, reflective of the scientific quandaries it describes. Lanza and Valle control the music digitally, syncing Explore Ensemble up with the mechanically-manipulated objects being used. In these moments of imposed alignment, the piece gets at the essence of categorisation, and the ways in which we define the mutable.

Co-produced by hcmf// and November Music; supported by the Ernst von Siemens Musikstiftung

GBSR Duo + Eva Maria Houben

St Paul's Hall, 9.30pm

Tickets £14 // Concession £11 // Under 30 £5 // booking required

Eva-Maria Houben

(Germany, 1955)

together on the way (2020) 80'

World Premiere

GBSR Duo:

George Barton percussion

Siwan Rhys piano

Eva-Maria Houben organ

GBSR Duo have been playing music like they're careful not to drop it. With a sensitivity to the fragile extremes of music; long durations, pronounced spacings and wonky arrangements – the piano-percussion duo has recorded and performed a captivating breadth of work that suggests good focus and even better breath-holding. The quiet intensity of the duo can be heard in the featherweight chords of Barbara Monk Feldman, collected onto the recent album '*Verses*', and the upside-down timbres of Oliver Leith, which they sorted through on his piece *good day good day bad day bad day*.

Out with the minutiae, though. At **hcmf// 2021**, they assist composer Eva-Maria Houben in something quite grand in scope: opening and closing a portal. Using the organ as a catalyst, Houben hopes her new work *together on the way* will create 'a temporal landscape, whose vista slowly opens, and gently returns into darkness and silence'. Inspired by her experiences of listening to Morton Feldman in concert, she volunteers the piece to the illusory corners of time, where listeners can encounter it as a seemingly limitless movement of music. She herself admits to the contradiction of giving it a time frame, allowing the environment to determine the length of its journey.

Described by Houben as an evocative piece, *together on the way* is also personal, and she understands it will exist in different ways for listeners who are part of the same audience. Its slow, durational movements will seem longer for some, shorter for others; it will intrude on certain attentions, and be a route into daydream for others. Houben is getting at music's ability to make us realise, and reflect, and imagine, even if only for a moment. 'The utopian character of music can emerge – while performing and listening, this utopia really can appear – but it vanishes while appearing.'

Produced by hcmf//

***together on the way* is commissioned by hcmf//**

Eva-Maria Houben

For many of the minutes of music accumulated across Eva-Maria Houben's vast discography of compositions, all is quiet. A space has opened up between the chords she's playing, often distanced far across the keyboard of her piano. In that space, there can be silence, but just as often, there is *quietness*, the tail-end of a pronounced phrase slowly releasing itself from the throes of her sustain pedal. Those moments are pure Houben: the exhale, the fade, the receding goodbye. It's her way of showing us that music is decaying.

There are musicians who will tell you sound is its own thing, that we play a bit-part role in it, and that composers serve more as a vessel for music than as the architects of it. And then there's Houben, who exists at the next level, her music suggesting that sounds are living for themselves. An organist and pianist, her discoveries are made through the instruments she plays. She's keen to emphasise the sense of *release* found in pressing on keys, as if she's helped sound find its way.

It's a very particular kind of music-making that can be attributed to Houben's affiliation with Wandelweiser. A group of composers that includes Jürg Frey and Michael Pisaro, they've cultivated a hushed, measured aesthetic where sound is not only vulnerable, but scarce, blanketed by its absence. Like other composers of the circle, Houben has a slightly different focus to many of her contemporaries. Her music is less horizontally minded, and is removed from a traditional view of narrative world-building. Sounds are not rigidly connected; instead, what they share is a life-cycle.

I was initially struck by how fully Houben's pieces are realised, and how much space and time is afforded to each phrase. Was it not sacrilegious that these receding piano notes were being bullied out of earshot by my laptop fan? Pieces for other instrumentation had the same effect;

A'men, written as a prayer chant, sounded intensely focused, with dynamic phrases creating a bubble of their own. *Livre d'heures* was so full sounding, registering each bell chime so roundly, that it seemed it should exist in a vacuum. I felt the need to shut up, to create the stillest environment possible. And so I was struck by Houben's own words on the matter: 'sound and noise do not need any silent location – they are quiet themselves. Their quietness creates silent rooms, which welcome all sounds'.

It's a beautiful sentiment. Houben relates sound in a slight, unassuming way that expects nothing of the listener, nor the music they're listening to. There are no right experiences, no proper etiquettes. In recent years, she has turned her focus to drone music, using her skills as an organist to develop soft, subdued pieces that make the instrument sound dreamier than it does in the hands of others. There's an intentional ambiguity and relativity to this work. Some listeners might listen passively, experiencing it in their own small way. Others will be switched on by it, focusing on the repeated patterns, looking over the bridge at what lies beyond.

Houben's new piece, *together on the way*, says it all far better than I can. Its title is embracing, celebrating the strange ritual of getting people together to share a room for their own intimate moments of listening. It is both intentional and absolving, her score carrying instructions that can be split up and removed, hoping for music that is both 'ethereal and embodied'. Most importantly, it doesn't really end. She says it's 'ongoing', a work that 'continues after the audience has left the hall, as it began before they entered'. She describes us, as much as she does the music, passengers moving in and out of place, arriving and receding like sounds across a song.

Profile by Robin Smith



Red Note Ensemble © Julie Howden

Dillon 1: Red Note Ensemble

Huddersfield Town Hall, 1pm

Tickets £19 // Concession £16 // Under 30s £5 // booking required

James Dillon (Scotland, 1950)

Emblemata: Carnival
(2020-21) 35'

World Premiere

Luke Styles (Australia, 1982)

Five Phase Sphere (2021) 17'

UK Premiere

Aileen Sweeney (Scotland, 1994)

The Land Under the Waves
(2021) 8'

World Premiere

Red Note Ensemble:

Ruth Morley flute

Will White clarinet

Tom Hunter percussion

Simon Smith piano / keyboard

David Alberman violin

Tom Hankey viola

Robert Irvine cello

Iain Crawford double bass

Geoffrey Paterson conductor

Parts of this concert will be
broadcast by BBC Radio 3 on
27 November

Leading Scottish ensemble Red Note has been a prominent purveyor of James Dillon's work for the last decade, bringing premieres of his large-scale works to the festival in 2013, and then again in 2017. This continuous relationship with the composer is palpable: they perform his seemingly insurmountable music with poise, carrying it while also conveying its fragile breaking point. In this concert, they deliver the world premiere of his immense new work *Emblemata: Carnival*.

Red Note delivers Dillon's new composition alongside music from Luke Styles, who describes his new piece *Five Phase Sphere* as 'abstract, with no programme whatsoever'. Written more for the instrumentation it uses than for any narrative reason, it comes from a place of unbridled intuition, focusing on resonances and combinations. Red Note completes the programme with a new work from emerging Scottish composer Aileen Sweeney, an accordionist who uses her folk roots as a means of protest against social inequalities.

Produced by hcmf// supported by the Ernst von Siemens Musikstiftung and hcmf// Benefactors Allan & Mo Tennant and Martin Staniforth

Emblemata: Carnival is commissioned by Red Note Ensemble with support from Creative Scotland and PRS Foundation

Five Phase Sphere is commissioned by sound, Red Note Ensemble, Ask Duets and hcmf//

The Land Under the Waves is commissioned by Red Note Ensemble with support from Creative Scotland and PRS Foundation

Ensemble Musikfabrik

St Paul's Hall, 7pm

Tickets £28 // Concession £21 // Under 30s £5 // booking required

Chaya Czernowin (Israel, 1957)

The Fabrication of Light (2020) 60'

UK Premiere

Enno Poppe (Germany, 1969)

Prozession (2020) 50'

UK Premiere

Ensemble Musikfabrik:

Jaume Darbra Fa flute

Peter Veale oboe

Carl Rosman clarinet

Joshua Hyde saxophone

James Aylward bassoon

Christine Chapman horn

Marco Blaauw trumpet

Nathan Plante trumpet

Bruce Collings trombone

Melvyn Poore tuba

Ulrich Löffler piano / keyboard

Benjamin Kobler piano /

keyboard

Francesco Palmieri electric guitar

Dirk Rothbrust percussion

Gerrit Nulens percussion

Rie Watanabe percussion

Thomas Meixner percussion

Ramón Gardella percussion

Hannah Weirich violin

Tinta Schmidt von Altenstadt violin

Axel Porath viola

Dirk Wietheger cello

Florentin Ginot double bass

Enno Poppe conductor

Parts of this concert will be broadcast by BBC Radio 3 on 4 December

Following on from a legendary appearance at **hcmf// 2018**, Cologne's Ensemble Musikfabrik returns to the festival with new roles to play. With their penchant for interpreting conceptual work and committing to the doubled-down demands of composers, they take on *The Fabrication of Light*, a feat of musical mechanics by **hcmf//** Composer in Residence Chaya Czernowin, as well as *Prozession*, a knotty new piece by Enno Poppe.

With *The Fabrication of Light*, it's the process, rather than final form, that Chaya Czernowin is after. Described by the composer as a 'ceremony of building', the piece's spiraling sound structure suggests its own construction. Still a work in progress, it's in a perpetual state of being created; Ensemble Musikfabrik take it around in cycles, embracing trial and error as they put it together. *The Fabrication of Light* is a testament to how Czernowin imagines music as something with connected architecture: it can be assembled, and we can go inside of it. She points to the interior life of sound, the tunnels and corridors within.

Guarded as he is with the alchemy behind his music, you won't glean much from the title of an Enno Poppe piece. The conductor and composer has visited **hcmf//** with an array of pieces in recent years, all of them distinct, speculative experiments. His new piece, *Prozession*, was written over the pandemic, germinating rapidly over a series of writing sessions. It's grown from nine distinct sections to a grand total of 81. Interweaving a series of developing melodic duets and solo lines, the piece is an exercise in flow, eventually finding its own current and sweeping all of Poppe's material up with it.

Produced by hcmf// supported by the Ernst von Siemens Musikstiftung

The Fabrication of Light is commissioned by von ACHT BRÜCKEN - Musik für Köln und Ensemble Musikfabrik

Prozession is commissioned by Ensemble Musikfabrik, Bernd und Ute Bohmeier, Festival AFEKT und Kunststiftung NRW

Ensemble Musikfabrik is supported by the state of North Rhine-Westphalia

Cath Roberts

Bates Mill Blending Shed, 10pm

Tickets £14 // Concession £11 // Under 30 £5 // booking required

Cath Roberts (UK, 1983)

And then the next thing you know (2021) 50'

World Premiere

Cath Roberts

baritone saxophone

Otto Willberg

double bass

Tullis Rennie

trombone

For the last four years, Cath Roberts has been meeting with improvisers Tullis Rennie and Otto Willberg to play deliberately disrupted music. The trio intrude on themselves, using objects, texts, and made-up rules to change the course of action. Their self-sabotage has so far existed behind locked doors, but Roberts' new **hcmf//** commission, *And then the next thing you know*, changes that. It's the kind of music you'd expect from them: it comes from a place of distortion and confusion, rippling out from their experiences of the pandemic.

For Roberts, *And then the next thing you know* is about describing the half-broken creative life artists have led since 2020, and the fragments of life being lived. The piece is chiefly inspired by Cornelia Parker's stunning artwork *Cold Dark Matter: An Exploded View*, a sculpture in which shattered wooden debris casts shadows across the room, an implosion in panorama. Roberts' took the piece as the catalyst for a new graphic score; performing her new piece, the trio will surround a cluster of cardboard hangings with painted-on instructions. Cut-up into smaller pieces, they provide remnants of Roberts' score, half-clues as to what it said at the point of creation. There was a piece; live, they'll rummage through it.

And then the next thing you know is an act of destroying, Roberts taking on flux, uncertainty and impermanence, and ultimately charging them down. It feels pertinent, given the future projected for us, that we're hearing what's *left* of the piece: the trio are performing what can still be salvaged from it.

Produced by hcmf//

***And then the next thing you know* is commissioned by hcmf// as part of the COVID-19 Commissions series**

Cath Roberts

Maybe you can tell, ahead of time, what kind of music Cath Roberts' band Sloth Racket plays. Maybe you can hear something upstairs, when you read the name – a lazy, joyful noise that's sort of exploding and tailing off at the same time. Maybe you can already imagine them live, meandering about in a discordant chain of guitar, sax and drums. If not, I've just described them to you. Formed in 2015 by Roberts and a supergroup of UK-based improvisers, Sloth Racket has been the principle outlet for the baritone saxophonist ever since. The band's records are all about tinkering and trying; they capture the synchronized minds of five seasoned collaborators, going up against the discombobulated unknown.

On some level, Roberts writes music for Sloth Racket. Really, though, she and her bandmates tend to be working off scraps, improvising around tiny ideas. They're into the idea of *riffs*, and Roberts tends to write aphorisms inspired by heavier, more guitar-oriented music. These short burst moments sound like the metal version of jazz heads: the title track from *Dismantle Yourself* opens with a sluggish guitar lick, almost Sabbath-like in its worship of lethargy. They use jazz tricks, but negotiate them, the moments of clarity sometimes turning up later, amongst the chaos, dropped in like musical espionage; *Butterfly Takes the Train* only assembles itself at the nine-minute mark.

It's hard to know where *writing* comes into it with this band. Roberts has written scores for Sloth Racket, but looking at them, it's like they're inscribed, code with clefs, data that only a Sloth Racket member could interpret. The band is hooked up by telekinesis; everyone has played with each other in some different iteration of the group, which can be divided up into parts, like Ripsaw Catfish, an experimental outfit between Roberts and guitarist Anton Hunter, or Article XI, where the entire group joins onto a larger, even noisier ensemble.

Roberts' new project is off the grid. She formed her new trio with trombonist Tullis Rennie and double bassist Otto Willberg in 2018. As a group, they've made a point of being disruptive, even downright belligerent, albeit unto themselves. All of their improvisation is done with objects they find and 'respond' to, much of it intended to push them off whatever expected course was laid out in front. Roberts talks at length about "the table", a setting on which they place all of these objects in their rehearsals. When I talk to her, Roberts flashes back to a time when Rennie put a small toy reindeer on the table. She remembers it as if it were a disturbance in the fabric of the universe.

The project is silly, Roberts says. The core focus is the music, but the route is paved with daftness. The table has proved a catalyst for elements of performance art, with the group often just chucking things around the room. Willberg once tried miming, too. It all seems a bit cabin fever, from the outside, a cult of three whispering "the table!" at unindoctrinated audiences. The energy is unique though, as is the result. They stumble into new arrangements of sound, sourced directly from the surprises they've pushed on one another.

Roberts' new **hcmf//** commission was written with the hijinks of the group in mind. It places them in a familiar line-up, circling an uncooperative thing. This time, it's one of Roberts' suggestive scores. She painted the composition's outline onto a large cardboard cut-out, and broke it into tiny, indecipherable fragments, leaving the remnants open to what little interpretation can be had. It's a way of owning a bit of the distorted reality the last two years has put artists through – embrace the fragments, Roberts' piece says, and call them your own. A pocket-sized moment is all you need.

Profile by Robin Smith

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Dillon 2: Irvine Arditti + Noriko Kawai

Huddersfield Town Hall, 1pm

Tickets £19 // Concession £16 // Under 30 £5 // booking required

James Dillon (Scotland, 1950)

The Freiburg Diptych (2019) 35'

UK Premiere

Irvine Arditti violin

James Dillon (Scotland, 1950)

echo the angelus (2016) 30'

Noriko Kawai piano

James Dillon's music sits out of time. His hermetic writing style has spanned over 40 years of work, and is dedicated to his own obsessions: ancient mythologies and lost stories. Drawing from obscure historical narratives, the Scottish composer's work is a labyrinth of small moments. His use of 'molecular' musical material, woven together into larger, busier works, reflects his determination to pore over the detail, to put together layers that ripple together, like history, into meaning.

Last year was Dillon's 70th birthday; we'd planned Dillon @ 70, a tribute to the composer showcasing the ways in which his work can be dynamically manoeuvred, from expansive ensemble pieces to surprisingly enveloping solo works. Due to the pandemic, the celebration has been filtered through two years of **hcmf//** programming. Finally, this year, Irvine Arditti will perform *The Freiburg Diptych*, a phenomenal new work for violin and tape that sees Arditti's twisting solo movements accompanied by dominant electronic interventions. The piece is, as with many Dillon works, continuously confounding, moving brazenly between staccato phrases, plucked violin echoes and droning string scratches.

This concert also features a performance from renowned Japanese pianist Noriko Kawai, who surveys Dillon's solo piano work *echo the angelus*, traversing the piece's 'eerie silences' and 'unsettling mood'. Initially performed at last year's **hcmf//** as part of our BBC Radio 3 coverage, the piece will now reverberate through Huddersfield Town Hall, its vulnerable sound shared with a live audience. Kawai has had a long time to sit with *echo the angelus*, and for her, it reflects the anxious stillness of the last two years. One of Dillon's most evocative pieces ever, she characterises it as 'heart-wrenching', a piece that emphasises the composer's love of fragile, breaking sound.

Co-produced by hcmf// and SWR Experimentalstudio; supported by the Ernst von Siemens Musikstiftung and hcmf// Benefactors Professor Emeritus Richard Steinitz and Peter Bamfield

The Freiburg Diptych is co-commissioned by ECLAT Festival and **hcmf//**

The Riot Ensemble

St Paul's Hall, 7pm

Tickets £28 // Concession £21 // Under 30 £5 // booking required

Chaya Czernowin (Israel, 1957)

Fast Darkness I: I can see your turned eyes from inside your body (2020) 32'

UK Premiere

Clara Iannotta (Italy, 1983)

They left us grief-trees wailing at the wall (2020) 19'

UK Premiere

Bára Gísladóttir (Iceland, 1989)

Animals of your pasture (2021) 20'

UK Premiere

Jenny Hettne (Sweden, 1977)

Whispering c(h)ords, quietly falling (2021) 10'

World Premiere

Hannah Kendall (UK, 1984)

Tuxedo: 'Hot Summer No Water' (2020) 5'

Tonia Ko (USA / Hong Kong, 1988)

Soothe a Tooth (2020) 5'

The Riot Ensemble becomes a better name for this lot every year. The London-based music group have become exponentially more out there through time, getting a bit closer to the chaos they promise to incite with every concert programme. This year, their **hcmf//** performance is a different kind of left field surprise, embracing the low-lying, slow-moving sounds of Chaya Czernowin and Clara Iannotta, along with the focused resonances of Jenny Hettne and Bára Gísladóttir. As always, Riot brings energy and compassion to the pieces, poring over each detail in kind.

One of Composer in Residence Chaya Czernowin's recent compositions, *Fast Darkness 1* refers to fleeting moments of visceral dissonance. It's inspired by the moment where you take another step when there isn't one, or when your hand feels like it's someone else's, just for a second – incoherence and clarity, colliding at violent speeds. With *Fast Darkness 1*, Czernowin attempts to mine for this kind of moment, using her measured approach to stretch a millisecond of dissociation into a 30-minute piece of music. It attempts to make those curious turns fully absorbable.

Clara Iannotta's work has long been connected to the dark poetic visions of Dorothy Molloy. With *They left us grief-trees wailing at the wall*, the composer continues to use the writer as a source of inspiration and colour for her music, drawing on the dark, inverted portrayals of domesticity found in her texts. Molloy's work deals with the mystery and misery of the mundane; Iannotta's new piece reflects those feelings, both in the timbre of the household instruments used and in the subtle emergence of movement from what seems like dead air static. Within the piece's noisier textures, Iannotta introduces fragile things: chimes, glasses, and the hollowed-out sound of a vibraphone shroud the piece in dusk, as if it were going tragically unnoticed.

Icelandic composer Bára Gísladóttir creates work calmly, and with a blank face, while distilling intensity and rage. In pieces such as *VÍDDIR* she makes acoustic instruments sound like noise machines, her arrangements controlling a kind of ecstatic chaos. Though brash and overwhelming, her music contains something quiet at its core, a dormant sound such as that heard underneath the rubble of her 2018

The Riot Ensemble:**Richard Craig** flute**Philip Haworth** oboe**Horia Dumitrache** clarinet**Amy Green** baritone sax /
tenor sax**Andy Connington** trombone**Tom Kelly** tuba**Sam Wilson** percussion**Goska Isphording** harpsichord**Neil Georgeson** piano /
keyboard**Petur Jonasson** guitar**Marie Schreer** violin**Stephen Upshaw** viola**Louise McMonagle** cello**Marianne Schofield** double
bass**Aaron Holloway-Nahum**

conductor

Gareth Davis bass clarinet
(*Fast Darkness 1*)**Parts of this concert will be
broadcast by BBC Radio 3 on
27 November**

composition *ÓS*. This concert features the world premiere of her new piece *Animals of your pasture*.

The starting point for Jenny Hettne with *Whispering c(h)ords, quietly falling* was the image of the cord of a spring drum resonating with its body. The Swedish composer was struck by this image, and created a work that emerges from percussion, beginning as little more than sparse timbral variations of one, single note. From there, like a plant with roots, there's growth: the piece fills out, from chords played on a manipulated clarinet to quietly ascending strings. Hettne's piece suggests a kind of growing and living that is uneven, the shape of the piece defined by detuned notes and a 'modified harmonic spectrum'.

As part of this concert, the Riot Ensemble will also deliver the first live performances of last year's **Zeitgeist Commissions**, performed by soloists from the group. Violist Stephen Upshaw collaborated with composer Tonia Ko on *Soothe a Toothe*, an imagined soundtrack for 'clenched jaws, cracked teeth and dry tongues' that uses repetitive melodic patterns to describe the anxieties we manifest on our bodies. The piece is joined by Hannah Kendall's *Tuxedo: Hot Summer No Water*, which makes use of auxiliary police whistle instruments and spiritual songs in its suggestion of both conflict and community, and is performed by cellist Louise McMonagle.

**Produced by hcmf// supported by the Ernst von Siemens
Musikstiftung and hcmf// Benefactor Professor Mick Peake OBE**

***Fast Darkness 1* is commissioned by Riot Ensemble, Transit
Festival, Wien Modern and hcmf//**

***Animals of your Pasture* is commissioned by the Riot Ensemble**

***Whispering c(h)ords, quietly falling* is commissioned by the Riot
Ensemble**

***Soothe a Toothe* and *Tuxedo: Hot Summer No Water* are
co-commissioned by the Riot Ensemble and hcmf// in partnership
with Zeitgeist Online Gallery**

Laurence Osborn: Essential Relaxing Classical Hits

Bates Mill Blending Shed, 9.30pm

Tickets £19 // Concession £16 // Under 30 £5 // booking required

Laurence Osborn (UK, 1989)

Essential Relaxing Classical Hits (2021) 50'

UK Premiere

Ensemble Klang:

Michiel van Dijk saxophones

Erik-Jan de With saxophones

Anton van Houten trombone

Joey Marijs percussion

Saskia Lankhoorn piano

Pete Harden electric guitar

Agata Zubel voice

British composer Laurence Osborn thinks in terms many would consider alien: he wonders what pop music can do for composition, or how fast he can destroy the formalities of industry. He asks whether a piece can be louder, please, just a little bit louder. He's called his style 'extreme' before – but it's not chaotic. It uses sounds and subtext to shift the conversation, far beyond what we've come to accept.

His collaboration with Ensemble Klang came out of their performance at **hcmf// 2018**, where the composer witnessed what he described as 'the loudest performance I've seen at the festival'. He goes well together with Klang, feeling an inescapable natural link between his bombastic music and their 'garish set-up' of trombones, saxophones and electric guitars – instruments that squeal and provoke. And so of course he's named his new piece – which combines his acerbic, emphatic music with an elemental, spun-out ensemble – *Essential Relaxing Classical Hits*.

Osborn's music has long been a space for the composer to explore – and commiserate about – the world that it's mapped onto. Following on from 2017's *CTRL*, which used the Riot Ensemble as a vehicle to eviscerate ideals of masculinity, *Essential Relaxing Classical Hits* is a bitter case study into late capitalism, detailing our collective transformation into objects of mass exploitation, dehumanisation and commodification. The piece, smiling through gritted teeth, reimagines *Pachelbel's Canon*, *Air on a G String* and *Au Clair de Lune* as mined-for resources, stripped of history and identity, way out of character but just there, in the mix. No future, and no past. One of Osborn's most sombre works, it also showcases him as a lyricist, with a text he wrote 'quickly and angrily'.

Produced by hcmf//

***Essential Relaxing Classical Hits* is co-commissioned by November Music and hcmf//**

Ensemble Klang is financially supported by the City of The Hague and Performing Arts Fund NL

Laurence Osborn

If you want a sneak peek at Laurence Osborn's *Essential Relaxing Classical Hits*, before we premiere it, visit clothing emporium website lululemon.co.uk. It will go a long way to explaining what he's been up to. Osborn was browsing the site while writing his new piece, and was grabbed by the ostensible words accompanying the yoga pants and short-sleeve shirts on sale. 'Pulse mapped'. 'Metal vent'. 'Coin pockets'. All of it seemed to suggest an optimal version of the body, upgradable with new slots.

Things like this tend to take hold of Osborn. He reacts to things so absurd they dare you not to react, to simply ignore the simulation glitch. At **hcmf// 2017**, the Riot Ensemble premiered his piece *CTRL*. Disturbing and explosive, the piece found Osborn thinking about masculinity – specifically 'the role it plays in the production and reproduction of trauma'. It was treated with auto-tune, a tool that signified the illusion of invulnerability, while also betraying, through reference to what was being corrected in the voice, a very human fragility. Juxtaposition took hold of him, as genres clashed and time collapsed. 'I like to write music that is loud and intense and uses all the resources at its disposal', Osborn once said, summing it up.

Where Osborn may once have bulldozed listeners, he now wants to create work from a subtler vantage point. It can be done; this is a composer who once described one of his own pieces as 'a cheeky little chord on piano and vibes', after all.

Returning to **hcmf//** with a new commission for Ensemble Klang, his work is still pointed, but in more than one direction. The piece is about capitalism, but really, it's a meditation on us, and the way we commodify ourselves. It's about the insulated worlds we've sealed ourselves in.

Osborn's new piece fights back against the new expectations that have cropped up around him: 'People might have a specific idea as to what my pieces sound like, and I don't want to let that happen'. He wants to peel back the loudness; this doesn't mean he's getting rid of it, but that

he sees something in its silhouette. The new piece is called *Essential Relaxing Classical Hits*, though its title is half a misnomer; it does refer to moments from *Pachelbel's Canon*, *Air on a G String* and *Au Clair de Lune*, but it's really quoting the factory line on which they've been packaged and branded, voided of all meaning over a handful of decades.

There's a lot of this kind of thing in the piece. Its text, which is as disturbing as it is hilarious, references the mindfulness industry, pithily reacting to its status as a DIY mental health solution. In moments, his music wades through the aesthetic of new age, and the renaissance it's had in both the mainstream and underground. He tries to see if something beautiful can be salvaged, in spite of itself. That's a very Osborn thing, actually: irony and sincerity, wrapped up with one another in hell.

Osborn isn't above it all, looking down on us as we merge our DNA with capitalism. He spent the last year and a half in the same space we did. 'The system we have allows us to construct a world around us that's fake. It runs by the principles that we hold, and confirms biases we have. The last year has really brought that to the surface.' His new piece suggests the phenomenal ease with which we can start to take anything as the norm, whether it's yoga pants described with game theory or revered classical music that sells us things. If it sounds a little quieter than usual, and moves a little less linear, then it's because Osborn is down here with us, scrolling with suspicion.

Profile by Robin Smith

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Chaya Czernowin: HIDDEN

Huddersfield Town Hall, 4pm

Tickets £28 // Concession £21 // Under 30 £5 // booking required

Chaya Czernowin

(Israel, 1957)

HIDDEN (2004) 45'

UK Premiere

Natasha Barrett (UK, 1972)

Hidden Values (2012) 21'

Michael Pelzel

(Switzerland, 1978)

Birds, Bees and Bells

UK Premiere

Arditti Quartet:

Irvine Arditti violin

Ashot Sarkissjan violin

Ralf Ehlers viola

Lucas Fels cello

Carlo Laurenzi (IRCAM)

computer music design

Parts of this concert will be
broadcast by BBC Radio 3 on
4 December

Chaya Czernowin's music is an excavation. For years, she's been burrowing deep into the ground of her pieces, writing music that can be heard going through itself. With its layers of sound and sensation, *HIDDEN* pushes down. It exists not only horizontally – *across* her score, from one destination to another – but vertically. The low, seething vibrations of *HIDDEN* orientate the piece differently, pointing below the surface into places where the music emerges.

In collaboration with sound engineering from IRCAM, the Arditti Quartet's performance becomes a holistic exercise, making use of electronics and multi-speakers that push the piece's sound through the concert environment, as if we were underground with it. The piece asks its players to treat the act of playing music as an observation – using instruments not to create sound, but to sift through it. It is performed slowly, attentively, and gradually, until we have been taken through it.

Performed alongside *HIDDEN* are works that also sift and search: Natasha Barrett's *Hidden Values*, for electronics only, and the UK Premiere of Swiss composer Michael Pelzel's *Birds, Bees and Bells*.

Co-produced by hcmf// and IRCAM; supported by the Ernst von Siemens Musikstiftung

Eupepsia/Dyspepsia

Bates Mill Blending Shed, 7pm

Tickets £19 // Concession £16 // Under 30 £5 // booking required

Eva Reiter (Austria, 1976)

Eupepsia/Dyspepsia: An Archive of Appropriations (2021) 68'

UK Premiere

Itcus Ensemble:

Eva Reiter viola da gamba / miscellaneous instruments

Tom Pauwels electric guitar / miscellaneous instruments

Tom De Cock percussion / miscellaneous instruments

Anna Mendelssohn narrator / miscellaneous instruments

Alex Fostier sound engineer

Eva Reiter concept / texts

Karin Harasser concept / texts

Featuring texts by:

Alejo Carpentier, Karin Harasser, Florian Paucke, José Manuel Peramás and Eduardo Viveiros de Castro

Eva Reiter's *Eupepsia/Dyspepsia* is a sound museum. It depicts the history of 18th century Bolivia, and the violent effects of its colonisation by Spain. Through a large-scale work envisioned as part-conference, part-performance, Reiter documents the Indigenous music of the country, and the way it travelled to Europe through Jesuit missionaries. In this appropriated music, Reiter identifies the dominant colonial legacy of the Western world, a history often made invisible in service of the favourable revisions of history we are taught.

Colonisation is not just our past, but our present: it ripples out in the world we live in now, with appropriation referencing violence and cultural exportation disguising theft. Occupation and civilisation still exist, in reinvented forms. Reiter's piece blends the baroque music of the Chiquitos province with instrumentation that references European musical practices, reflecting the long-term European presence in Bolivia, as well as the modern-day effects of intrusion and assimilation.

Connecting different musical traditions and merging them into one another, the sounds of Reiter's piece actually suggest silence, the attempts to quell cultures and the symbols that came with them. The word *eupepsia* refers to 'good digestion', and serves here as a metaphor for the West's easy, free-flowing destruction of the world around it – as well as the seemingly natural way it adopted and passed on music and art as its own. In Reiter's own words, '*Eupepsia* offers hybrids not as solutions or remedies, but as sound-objects to ponder the longue durée of cultural violence.'

Co-commissioned and co-produced by Onassis Stegi, SPOR, Time of Music, Ultima, Wilde Westen and hcmf//

***Eupepsia/Dyspepsia* is part of the Sounds Now project co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union**





John Butcher © Andy Moor

John Butcher + 13

St Paul's Hall, 9.30pm

Tickets £19 // Concession £16 // Under 30 £5 // booking required

John Butcher (UK, 1954)

Fluid Fixations (2021) 60'

World Premiere

John Butcher saxophones

Isabelle Duthois voice /
clarinet

Liz Allbee trumpet

Matthias Müller trombone

Sophie Agnel piano

Aleksander Kolkowski stroh
viola / musical saw

Angharad Davies violin

Hannah Marshall cello

John Edwards double bass

Pascal Niggenkemper double
bass

dieb13 turntables

Pat Thomas electronics

Ståle Liavik Solberg drums

Mark Sanders percussion

Saxophonist John Butcher returns to **hcmf//** and doubles up. Twice the size of previous festival commissions *somethingtobesaid* and *Isola*, this new, communally performed piece sees him superimpose musical styles, drawing on the distinct practices of 14 different musicians. A love letter to the relationships formed through improvisation, Butcher developed the score for *Fluid Fixations* by looking back on 20 years of collaboration, exploring the one-to-one collaborations he's had with each individual artist involved in performing the piece. A myriad of personal connections are scattered through it, Butcher coalescing memories of those special, unrepeatable moments of person-to-person contact into a larger work about the harmony of different approaches.

Butcher has dedicated his musical career to imagining alternate realities for the saxophone, finding new ways for it to be an instrument through extended techniques, playing scenarios and unexpected collaborations. The music has been free-ish, reducing the inhibitions of music-making while searching for new systems. Right down to the name, *Fluid Fixations* considers the way musical freedom is structured and fabricated, with Butcher assembling logical ideas – 'precise notation, text, imagery and instructions' – and dismantling them by encouraging the instincts of those around him.

Produced by hcmf// supported by the hcmf// Friends

***Fluid Fixations* is commissioned by hcmf//**

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Catch this year's festival highlights on the New Music Show, the place to hear the best in new music from the UK and around the world, plus exclusive recordings, the latest releases and composer interviews.

27 NOVEMBER

Jenny Hettne: *Whispering c(h)ords, quietly falling*
Tonia Ko: *Soothe a tooth*
Riot Ensemble

James Dillon: *Emblemata:*
Carnival Red Note Ensemble

Chaya Czernowin: *Fast Darkness I: I can see your
turned eyes from inside your body (UKP)*
Riot Ensemble

4 DECEMBER

Zubin Kanga: *Steel on Bone*
Zubin Kanga (*piano/electronics*)

Lisa Illean: *Januaries*
London Sinfonietta

Michael Pelzel: *Birds, bees and bells*
Arditti Quartet

Chaya Czernowin: *Fabrication of Light*
Ensemble MusikFabrik

PLUS MANY MORE OVER THE COMING MONTHS INCLUDING:

Mauro Lanza: *Systema*
Luke Styles: *5 Phase Sphere*
Aileen Sweeney: *The land under the waves*
Enno Poppe: *Prozession*

Bára Gísladóttir: *Animals of your pasture*
Hannah Kendall: *Tuxedo*

Laurence Osborn: *Essential Relaxing Classical Hits*
Simon Steen-Andersen: *Pretty Sound (Up and Down)*

Natasha Barrett: *Hidden values*
Georgia Rodgers: *Ringinglow*
Laurence Osborn: *Absorber*
Joan Magrané: *Faula*

Raquel Garcia Tomás: *aequae*
Roberto Gerhard: *Leo*

Clara Iannotta: *They left us grief trees
wailing at the wall*

LISTEN ON **SOUNDS**

hcmf// shorts 1

St Paul's Hall, 12pm – 2pm

Free event // booking required

Juliet Fraser + Mark Knoop

Laurence Crane (UK, 1961)

Natural World (2021) 50'

Juliet Fraser soprano

Mark Knoop piano

Laurence Crane's *Natural World* expresses the poetry of information. It draws on Crane's love of reading textbooks, and his ability to delight in scientific lists, following them through the alphabet to a conclusion. Crane's piece deals delicately with this pastime, celebrating the way we use fantasy and imagination to internalise facts. Taking place across three distinct movements, his piece is indebted to two sources, referencing *The Observer's Pocket Book of Birds* alongside a collection of books by the marine biologist Rachel Carson, known as 'The sea trilogy'.

Produced by hcmf//

Natural World is commissioned as part of the Carson Commissions, supported by Arts Council England's National Lottery Project Grants, PRS Foundation's Open Fund for Music Creators and the RVW Trust. Commissioning partners include Musica Sacra and Oxford Lieder

Supported by Canongate, publishers of a new edition of Rachel Carson's *Sea Trilogy* with thanks to Katie Huckstep at Canongate and Meg Davies at Ki Agency

Heather Roche

Scott McLaughlin (Ireland, 1975)

Fringing (2021) 11'

World Premiere

Larry Goves (UK, 1980)

Borneo Rivers 2 (2021) 6'

World Premiere

Amber Priestley (Australia/UK/US, 1973)

k. 581 (but not quite his way) (2021) 5'

World Premiere

Heather Roche clarinets

Through his new project *The Garden of Forking Paths*, Scott McLaughlin wrote music for the clarinet as if it were an ecology, drawing up a map from its sound that encompasses air, wood, and reed. It is, environmentally, an open world instrument, containing over 300,000 possible fingerings, traversable as different paths for different players. Eschewing traditional notes, McLaughlin instead took these fingerings as a starting point, writing a score that used extended techniques, championing the indeterminate possibilities of the instrument found by thinking of it as an ecosystem, rather than an object.

One of the world's leading experimental clarinetists, Heather Roche has been a key part of *The Garden of Forking Paths*, field-testing McLaughlin's ideas. In this performance, she showcases music from the project, alongside new commissions from Larry Goves and Amber Priestley, who have built on the project's ideas, continuing to open up new paths that sprawl out of McLaughlin's.

Produced by hcmf// supported by Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and UK Research and Innovation

Dejana Sekulic

Dario Buccino (Italy, 1968)

Finalmente il tempo è intero n° 16 (2019) 13'

Liza Lim (Australia, 1966)

The Su Song Star Map (2017) 12'30"

Dejana Sekulic violin

Violinist Dejana Sekulic conceived of her project *Temporality of the Impossible* as a collection of pieces for her instrument that escape fixed form. They deliberately wrestle with their structure, eluding the direction laid out in their notation. Documented in her release of the same name for Huddersfield Contemporary Records, Sekulic here shares two pieces from the project's expansive programme.

Despite its detailed and predetermined instructions, Dario Buccino's *Finalmente il tempo è intero n° 16* invites its performer to 'play incorrectly', to create the feeling of an improvisation through their interpretation. He suggests that there's space for discovery through intricacy, and that a construction keeps secrets. Sekulic performs his piece alongside Liza Lim's *The Su Song Star Map*, a piece she describes as 'magical' in its unpredictable use of the low register's 'rolling depths', alongside sudden juxtapositions of pitch and harmony, the piece detailing the universe as both a structured system and an infinite journey.

Produced by hcmf// in partnership with CeReNeM and Huddersfield Contemporary Records

Finalmente il tempo è intero n° 16* is commissioned for the project *Temporality of the Impossible

Zeitgeist Commission: Anna Appleby

Anna Appleby (UK, 1993)

13.8 Billion Years (2020) 5'

Amy Green

soprano saxophone

Anna Appleby's music has its own shape. She has swung through musical styles, writing fluid, spontaneous pieces for chamber groups and dance troupes. In *13.8 Billion Years*, she has created an expansive solo piece, imagining 'the formation of the universe, through clouds of matter to galaxies, to stars, planets and, eventually, life'. Yes, it's a bit ambitious to cover all of this with five minutes of saxophone, but if anyone can do it, Appleby can. And she's realistic about her chances, too: 'the universe is estimated to have begun 13.8 billion years ago', she says, 'a length of time which is a bit longer than this piece'. Fair play. This is the first live performance of *13.8 Billion Years*.

Produced by hcmf//

***13.8 Billion Years* is co-commissioned by the Riot Ensemble and hcmf// in partnership with Zeitgeist Online Gallery**

hcmf// shorts 2

Huddersfield Town Hall, 3pm – 5pm

Free event // booking required

Zeitgeist Commission: Auclair

Auclair (UK/Rwanda, 1978)

Munganyinka is a Transformer (2020) 6'

Ausiàs Garrigós Morant bass
clarinet

Doris Auclair recorded voice

Auclair has appeared across a staggering range of projects. Alongside making abstract electro-pop records, she has taken part in the bee-themed opera *The Swarm*, contributed to Beck's *Song Reader* project, and has been part of a live rework of the Afro-Brazilian classic *Black Orpheus*. Auclair's Zeitgeist Commission is a strikingly personal work, which pays tribute to her mother: 'Ma's heartbeat is the first rhythm I heard. Ma's voice is the first music I have known. *Munganyinka is a Transformer* is an amplification of her unique cadences, a retelling of a memory, a tribute to her capacity to transform'. This is the first live performance of *Munganyinka is a Transformer*.

Produced by hcmf//

***Munganyinka is a Transformer* is co-commissioned by the Riot Ensemble and hcmf// in partnership with Zeitgeist Online Gallery**

Zeitgeist Commission: Heloise Tunstall-Behrns

Heloise Tunstall-Behrns
(UK, 1985)

Picea 433 (2020) 5'30"

Adam Swayne piano

Heloise Tunstall-Behrns has made sound art, played in indie bands and written experimental operas about the interior workings of beehives. She's interested in the sounds of community, across all sorts of existences. Her new work *Picea 433* pays respect to the spruce tree, which is the source of pianos' resonating soundboards. On one of her side quests as an anthropologist, Tunstall-Behrns studied these trees in their native Norway, looking at scientific analysis that pays attention to 'age and growth patterns', and the reasons that the wood makes for a good piano. The piece goes into forensic detail of the piano's life source, thinking about what was given to animate it. This is the first live performance of *Picea 433*.

Produced by hcmf//

***Picea 433* is co-commissioned by the Riot Ensemble and hcmf// in partnership with Zeitgeist Online Gallery**

Sound Pioneers: Nwando Ebizie

Nwando Ebizie (UK/Nigeria, 1982)

Solve et Coagula (2021) 12'

World Premiere

Nwando Ebizie voice / piano / percussion / electronics

Christopher Bangs cello

Sophie Cooper trombone

Nwando Ebizie is a multidisciplinary artist and curator whose work converges around immersive installation, performance art personas, experimental theatre, neuroscience, music and African diasporic ritual. Ebizie's new piece, *Solve et Coagula*, is inspired by the alchemical concept of the same name, which asserts that to build something up, you must first break it down. The piece is a ritual experience – an invitation to experience the psychic phenomena of breaking down the self in order to let go, pass through, remake oneself anew. Writing the piece, Ebizie was inspired by 'biophilic observations, and more-than human time scales.'

Produced as part of YSWN's Sound Pioneers Programme, delivered in partnership with CeReNeM and HISS at the University of Huddersfield, Brighter Sound and hcmf// supported by PRS Foundation's Open Fund for Organisations

Supported by the PRS Foundation's Composers' Fund and the Jerwood Arts' Live Work Fund Award 2021

Sound Pioneers: Lottie Sadd

Lottie Sadd (UK, 1994)

I'm made up of more space than I actually take up (2021) 12'

World Premiere

Lottie Sadd electronics

Taking its title from Marieke Lucas Rijneveld's novel *The Discomfort of Evening*, Lottie Sadd's *I am made up of more space than I actually take up* is a gristling, bloating dissection of the living body. It is composed entirely from recordings of Sadd's own body, using highly sensitive microphones to reveal the usually-hidden nuances of the internal world that we all possess and inhabit. Using these sounds in both raw and electronically manipulated states, the work illuminates the everyday grotesque in our bodies, and their inherent flux between growth and decay.

Produced as part of YSWN's Sound Pioneers Programme, delivered in partnership with CeReNeM and HISS at the University of Huddersfield, Brighter Sound and hcmf// supported by PRS Foundation's Open Fund for Organisations

Simon Emmerson + Irine Røsnes

Simon Emmerson (UK, 1950)

Stringscape (2010) 18'

Irine Røsnes violin

Simon Emmerson electronics

Composer Simon Emmerson describes *Stringscape* as a work with three main characters: lyric, drone and texture. Intertwined throughout his piece, they become one, the work taking on the form of a 'mosaic' that changes focus throughout, folding melody into minimalism through layers of violin and electronics. Performed by Emmerson alongside Irine Røsnes, the piece retains its contained approach to dynamics, with Røsnes' solo part scoping it a fixed and finite space.

Produced by hcmf//

***Stringscape* is commissioned by Darragh Morgan**

Zubin Kanga

Zubin Kanga (Australia, 1982)

Steel on Bone (2021) 5'

World Premiere

Georgia Rodgers (UK, 1985)

Ringinglow (2021) 11'

World Premiere

Laurence Osborn (UK, 1989)

Absorber (2019) 14'

Simon Steen-Andersen (Denmark, 1976)

Pretty Sound (Up and Down)
(2008 rev. 2021) 6'

Zubin Kanga piano / live
electronics

Parts of this concert will be
broadcast by BBC Radio 3 on
4 December

For pianists, moving away from the keys and into the body of the piano feels like touching the bones, flesh and sinew of the instrument. Zubin Kanga's new work, *Steel on Bone* is inspired by two types of films: medical documentaries and the samurai films of Akira Kurosawa. Steel is the material of both the scalpel and the katana, used for healing and for fatal duels. Using steel implements inside the body of the instrument, he draws out delicate and violent sounds, transforming them using MiMU's multi-sensor gloves.

Alongside his own piece, Kanga performs a range of work by composers that explores the sensitivity shared between piano and player, drawing on sine tones, synth sounds and digital interfaces, each practice drawing up a new lexicon for the instrument.

Produced by hcmf//

Zubin Kanga's work as composer, performer and researcher is supported by a UKRI Future Leaders Fellowship. Thanks also to MiMU for their support and advice in the creation on *Steel on Bone*.

***Ringinglow* is commissioned by Zubin Kanga with the support of the Hinrichsen Foundation**

***Absorber* is commissioned by Zubin Kanga with the support of the RVW Trust**

Simon Steen-Andersen's revised version of *Pretty Sound (Up and Down)*, and its new performance materials by Sam Underwood, are commissioned by Zubin Kanga with the support of a UKRI Future Leaders Fellowship

Zeitgeist Commission: Matthew Grouse

Matthew Grouse (UK, 1996)

Left Right, Left Right (2020) 9'

Sam Wilson percussion

Using traditional instrumentation, brash electronics and a mash-up of digital media, Matthew Grouse's work blows up the disquieting nature of augmented daily life. *Left Right, Left Right* finds its starting point in obsessive behaviours and routines, magnified during the COVID-19 lockdown in 2020. The primary instrument is percussionist Sam Wilson's own practice pad; each of his hits trigger deconstructed recordings of the collaborative process, his playing becoming a vehicle to re-tell portions of the conversations behind making the piece. This is the first live performance of *Left Right, Left Right*.

Produced by hcmf//

***Left Right, Left Right* is co-commissioned by the Riot Ensemble and hcmf// in partnership with Zeitgeist Online Gallery**

hcmf// shorts 3

Bates Mill Blending Shed, 6pm – 8pm

Free event // booking required

Timothy Cape + Mayah Kadish

Timothy Cape (Ireland 1991)

new work (2021) 11'

World Premiere

Timothy Cape (Ireland, 1991)

Sorry For The Late Reply
(2021) 12'

Jessie Marino (USA, 1984)

RotBlau (2009) 6'

Mayah Kadish violin / voice

Timothy Cape percussion

A member of the unflinchingly weird composer-performer collective Bastard Assignments, Timothy Cape's work is both experimental and tactile, often involving personal experiences, recordings of conversations, and physical manifestations of memory. Featuring two of his own new pieces, his **hcmf//** performance is a collaboration with violinist Mayah Kidish, a member of Ensemble x.y., as well as s t a r g a z e. Her eclectic playing is similarly open-ended, and can be heard across a range of baroque, experimental and folk music projects.

Produced by hcmf//

new work is commissioned by hcmf// as part of the COVID-19 Commissions series

Sorry For The Late Reply is commissioned by Angela Hui Wai Nok

Trees.R.Good

Trees.R.Good (Belgium, 1999)

/to ti ên einai/ (2021) 20'

World Premiere

Trees.R.Good bass guitar /
saxophone / keyboards / field
recordings

Her first appearance at **hcmf//**, multi-instrumentalist Trees.R.Good describes her performance as activism. Her music asserts the innate and unbreakable connection between human life and natural entities, drawing us closer to the environment at a time of ecological devastation. Her new song cycle */to ti ên einai/* is focused on trees, and the forests they cohabit. It describes their inner lives, their non-human communities, and suggests that humans are not the only ones who create and collaborate. In her own words, 'there's so much more music out there in the natural world than that made by humans alone'.

This concert is made possible via the mentoring programme of Reform Radio Soundcamp and Manchester Jazz Festival Soundcheck funded by Youth Music and PRS Foundation

Go Outside is commissioned as part of the Hulme Community Center M15 Mixtape Commission for NiaTV

Heartwood features a sample from an interview with Waorani Indigenous leader Nemonte Nenquimo, produced by Marrow of the Mountain Documentary

Bethany Holloway + Shirani Brooke

Bethany Holloway (UK, 2000)
DJ (2021) 15'

World Premiere

Bethany Holloway DJ
Shirani Brooke dancer

Creating work as part of **hcmf//**'s Young Curators' Programme, Bethany Holloway is an artist versed in music technology, sound production and mixing. In this new project, she emphasises the role of dance in music and the intrinsic connection between the two artforms. *DJ* clashes on purpose – Holloway describes it as a contrast of 'fluid, soft movements within a strong, impactful sonic environment', evoking the dancefloor introspection that can be sparked in the fastest and loudest moments. Dancer Shirani Brooke leads the way, her physical manoeuvres intertwining with the music as if she were DJing with her movements.

Produced by hcmf//

Created as part of the hcmf// Young Curators' Programme

Luke Nickel

Luke Nickel (Canada, 1988)
Steel becomes silk, gravity
recast (2021) 15'

World Premiere

Juliet Fraser voice
Luke Nickel electronics / live
simulated roller coasters

A composer and visual artist, Luke Nickel's work couples fractured sound with brazen, immersive imagery. Known for his designs of virtual roller coasters, his daring approach knots together themes of memory, translation and queer identity. His new work features new rides, placing one of his iconic simulated roller coasters against a vocal performance from soprano Juliet Fraser. A deeply collaborative effort, the piece is a duet in imagination, with Fraser's singing representing a roller coaster of her own, 'created in her mind' and expressing 'tracks, speed, height and G-force.' Described by the duo as an 'incantation', the piece demands its audience come on board, summoning them for one hell of a ride. There are no notes; only twists and turns. Only roller coasters.

Produced by hcmf//

***Steel becomes silk, gravity recast* is commissioned by hcmf// as part of the COVID-19 Commissions series**

ElettroVoce

Agata Zubel voice
Cezary Duchnowski piano /
computer

Through their collaborative project ElettroVoce, Agata Zubel and Cezary Duchnowski attempt to recontextualise the voice, placing it against improvised environments and digitised timbres. Utilising Duchnowski's prepared piano and electronics, their concerts exist without parameter or pathway, the duo focusing on the new, unexplored sound palette they've blended together. In their first appearance at **hcmf//**, they spontaneously reimagine their own music, with Zubel stretching her voice through sheets of noise, jumping between sung notes, stray conversation and expressive laughter.

Produced by hcmf//

London Sinfonietta

St Paul's Hall, 9pm

Free event // booking required

Joan Magrané Figuera

(Catalonia, 1988)

Faula (2017) 15'

Raquel García-Tomás

(Catalonia, 1984)

aequae (2012) 12'

Lisa Illean (Australia, 1983)

Januaries (2017) 11'

Roberto Gerhard (Catalonia, 1896-1970)

Leo (1969) 23'

London Sinfonietta

Edmon Colomer conductor

**Parts of this concert will be
broadcast by BBC Radio 3 on
4 December**

London Sinfonietta has a longstanding relationship with the music of Catalonia and its members are dedicated interpreters of Roberto Gerhard. In this concert, they bring his work to life, while also showcasing newer work from two of Catalonia's modern composers. A piece from Lisa Illean rounds off a programme of unpredictable, but often introspective, music.

Joan Magrané Figuera's *Faula* is a lot, all at once. It can be volatile, with a short-fuse temperament, but also meditative, a space in which the Catalan composer concentrates on strands of sound, stretching them into seemingly endless space. *Faula* sees Figuera place his trust in rawness, in the almost human sounds of acoustic instruments, like scratches and groans.

Raquel García-Tomás wrote *aequae* to ask questions about 'equality' in sound. The piece embraces oxymoron, its structure suggesting one thing – six, equally timed movements, all clocking at two minutes – while Tomás' suggests another, adjusting the tempo, accelerating and decelerating, hastening and suspending. Timbres clash between movements; some motifs are resolved, others unfinished, trembling on the line.

Inspired by childhood memories, Lisa Illean's *Januaries* distills nostalgia in fragments, as something that can no longer be put together. Though fragile and meandering, the piece is full-bodied, like strong details of memory pushed apart. As is typical of Illean, the piece is quietly unnerving, its arrangements lingering in abandoned places, the volume rising and falling like dark corners, finally explored.

One of Roberto Gerhard's final works, *Leo* belongs to a series of pieces that the composer named after astrological signs. This, the third entry in the collection, was written as a tribute to his wife. Maintaining his incredible approach to dynamics and pitch, the piece seems to reminisce on his style, and the ways in which his increasingly abstract writing still flowed into a cohesive dramatic event.

**Produced by hcmf// presented by London Sinfonietta in association
with Institut Ramon Llull**

Roberto Gerhard

With Roberto Gerhard, it's all joined up. There are songs and symphonies. There are traditions and movements. Perhaps most importantly, there's home, and there's away. Raised in Catalonia, Gerhard's music rose out of his upbringing and education, but through the years, it would grow into an entirely different shape, its script permanently changed through his travels abroad, as well as his political exile, which took him away from Spain permanently. He never shirked from sight; he continued to grow his music richly and radically, constantly redrawing the parameters of sound.

Initially studying under Spanish composers such as Felip Pedrell, who embraced folk music in his work, Gerhard's pivot as a composer came with a move away from Spain. In the mid-1920s, after the death of Pedrell, he ended up as a student of composer Arnold Schoenberg, and under his tutelage, became an important, if unsung, pioneer of the serialism movement that swept through the 1950s. Travelling across Europe, he absorbed new approaches to composing, retaining his roots along the way.

Studying under Schoenberg, Gerhard didn't so much expand his sound palette as he found new ways to organise it. Schoenberg's philosophy of evenly and equally emphasised notes, later giving way to serialism, rippled out into Gerhard's music, mapping his quotations of Spanish music onto complete, coherent pieces. Written in 1928, *Wind Quintet* might have been a subtle shift, but set against the backdrop of his earlier chamber pieces, less detailed and more straightforwardly songlike in their patter, it was a sea-change.

Through the 1950s, Gerhard's work was governed by – but also thinking beyond – his new methods. His 1951 *Piano Concerto* is immense, and all from subtle deviations. It's inaugurated by string overture that moves in tandem with stray piano notes, encountering each other anxiously on their way out. The piece showcases the hugely diverse topography a Gerhard piece can have – you can see it on the page, in the second movement, those gorgeous, trembling notes skittering off the page, quickly and quietly building back to a wicked orchestral theme.

Gerhard's hybrid aesthetic found emotional resonance in his Catalan roots, placing his stamp on the European tradition being built at the time. Moments of his past, and of Spanish folklore in particular, show up everywhere, seen in 1941's euphoric *Homage a Pedrell*, which is humming with the influence of his earliest mentor. In 1940, he wrote *Don Quixote*, a ballet that serves as an arena for the two protagonists of Cervantes' 17th century novel of the same name. Invoking Spanish dances, it's one of Gerhard's most lyrically and rhythmically delightful works. Its fourth movement is euphoric, weaving together tip-toed melodies and almost *bassy* piano lines that reflect the naive, triumph-seeking quests of his main characters.

But along with these musical references, it's important to honour the volatile relationship Gerhard had with his homeland, and the struggles he experienced trying to fight for what he believed in. From his earliest years as a musician, Gerhard was a vocal figure in the advocacy of an independent Catalonia, using his music to emphasise the movement. And he suffered for it. In 1939, following the Spanish civil war, he was exiled from the country, his artistic legacy forfeited.

Towards the end of his career, Gerhard struck a personal note, producing a series of inward-looking 'zodiac' pieces. They contain the self-portrait *Libra*, which showcases him as an increasingly experimental, uncompromising composer working swiftly and spontaneously. There's also *Leo*, written for his wife, which dazzles in rapid bursts of colour. Even in this piece, so far beyond the reality of Gerhard's earliest music, you can hear a song develop, a whisper of melody two minutes from its fade. It was still there, after all these years.

Profile by Robin Smith

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