

# RED NOTE

## Red Note Associate Contemporary Ensemble

Wednesday 5 June  
Sloans. Glasgow  
7.30pm

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OLIVER SEARLE

### **Breakfast Baroque**

The title of this piece is a tag line from *Classic FM*, describing an early morning show that existed when the station first went on air. Although *Classic FM* was responsible for sparking my interest in classical music in the early 90s, I have since become less attached to their programming and while listening around Christmas time, was bombarded by the same recording of *Zadok the Priest* three times in the space of a few hours. I love Handel's most well-known coronation anthem (performed at every coronation since 1727), but have used it to display my contempt for the fickle way in which music is treated, as well as my nostalgia for the enjoyment I experienced on hearing certain pieces of music for the first time. I have asked the flute player to use quite specific tunings throughout this work, and double on a baroque instrument (pitched slightly lower, at A = 415Hz), for a short section.

On hearing this piece for the first time, my composer-friend Gareth Williams described it as: 'what might have happened had Gavin Bryars attempted to write *Zadok the Priest*'

RORY BOYLE

### **Such Sweet Sorrow**

The Elizabethan composer, Giles Farnaby, was particularly recognised as a composer for the virginal, and his haunting work for that instrument, *Loth to depart*, has long been a favourite of mine. This realisation was made in 2010 for an instrument which I felt would be perfect for capturing the melancholic longing of the music.

THOMAS BUTLER

## **My Life in Ventriloquism**

'My Life in Ventriloquism' is a virtuosic piece for solo clarinet in three continuous movements. It lasts about eleven minutes.

DAVID FENNESSY

## **Five Hofer Photographs**

From 1965 to 1966 the German-American photographer Evelyn Hofer (1922-2009) lived in Dublin and in 1967 produced the book *Dublin: A Portrait*. Five photographs from that collection provided the starting point for these five little pieces for solo cello. They are:

1. *Girl with bicycle*

A young girl looks wistfully over her shoulder. The bicycle is clearly much too big for her.

2. *Anna and Emma*

A black and white photo of two chamber maids; one youthful, the other much older, with a severe yet stoic look in her eye. It occurred to me they might be related or even the same person at different stages of their life.

3. *Gravediggers*

Another black and white portrait, this time of three gentlemen with huge shovels dressed in heavy overcoats and sporting Panama hats. They might have stepped out of a Raymond Chandler novel.

4. *Phoenix Park on a Sunday*

Four knobbly kneed men dressed in garish pink, red and black football kit stand in a line with their arms folded. I imagined what the ensuing match might have been like.

5. *Mountjoy Square*

Covered in a thin blanket of snow, this scene is devoid of people. An empty park bench in the foreground suggests a ghostly absence. I have given this movement the subtitle *In Memoriam*.

*Five Hofer Photographs* is dedicated to Jane O'Leary.

## ❧ Interval ❧

DREW HAMMOND

## **Ecto**

I was not certain if *Ecto* would ever be performed, and I am delighted to be able to resurrect it for Red Note. It is largely a study piece, dating from the final phase of my PhD when I was attempting to find a somewhat less laborious process for my compositions. The problem seemed to come down to the idea of personal reflection. My tendency to turn judgment inward, to examine and re-examine both my motivations and my justifications for aesthetic decisions, has at times led me to the brink of voicelessness.

I am still, quite simply, too worried about what I think of myself. *Ecto*, according to its etymology, was an attempt to remove the inwardness and be, as it were, 'ective' ('Ecto', from Greek *Ektos*, meaning outside or external), or to switch off the internal hung parliament and pronounce something in a downright manner. Given this revival, the piece may turn out to be the first of a folio of small chamber pieces, an example of which can be found in my on-going collection of *Coyote Nocturnes*.

GORDON MACPHERSON

### **Stunt Double No.5 - Lamenta Infracta**

*Lamenta Infracta* looks at the idea of stunt doubling from a slower perspective. It is not surprisingly a lament that tangles itself up in fear and doubt to the point of becoming shattered or infracted by its own weight. I thought it suited the viola and is dedicated to Kay Stephen who premiered the piece earlier this year as part of an Edit-Point concert at the City Halls, Glasgow.

GORDON MACPHERSON

### **Stunt Double No.4 - The Triple Truth**

This dance movement carries on from the first three stunt doubles for sextet and virtual sextet commissioned by Psappa in 2011. These on-going pieces explore the boundary, sometimes playful, sometimes serious, between the real and virtual instrument - in terms of notes and expression between the merely extremely difficult and the impossible. Ostensibly a duet where the virtual instrument doubles the acoustic soloist throughout its virtuosic narrative.

From the Tiantai (Buddhist school) the basic philosophical doctrine is summarised as the triple truth, or jiguan ('perfected comprehension'): (1) all things (dharmas) lack ontological reality; (2) they, nevertheless, have a temporary existence; (3) they are simultaneously unreal and temporarily existing—being the middle, or absolute, truth, which includes and yet. (*Encyclopedia Britannica*)

"This is your Mister Señor Love Daddy talking to you from We-Love radio, 108 FM on your dial, and that's the triple truth, Ruth." (Samuel L. Jackson *Do the Right Thing*, 1989)

*Stunt Double No 4 - The Triple Truth* is dedicated to Ruth Morley to thank her for all the difficult passages of my music she has played over the years.

TOM DAVID WILSON

### **Loud-Light-Still**

This quartet was completed in April 2013 to be performed by the Red Note Ensemble in June 2013. It is cast in a single movement lasting a little under twelve minutes although there are four easily discernible sections therein. The general character of the piece contrasts loud, driving yet light and dancing music with very still, seemingly slow music. At times these characters combine; as in the last section, and the dance music is most overt in the third.

The piece is designed to entertain, provide a diversion, an amusement. It is dedicated to my friend and colleague Oliver Iredale Searle.

# Red Note Ensemble

Tony Moffat **Violin**

Garth Knox **Viola**

Robert Irvine **Cello**

Gordon Bragg **Conductor**

Ruth Morley **Flute**

Peter Furniss **Clarinet, Bass clarinet**

Tom Hunter **Marimba, Vibraphone**

**Red Note** is Scotland's contemporary music ensemble, dedicated to developing and performing contemporary music to the highest standards, and taking the music out to audiences around and beyond Scotland. We were founded in 2008 by Scottish cellist Robert Irvine, and we are directed by John Harris (Chief Executive and Artistic Co-Director) and Robert Irvine (Artistic Co-Director). We perform the established classics of contemporary music; we commission new music; we develop the work of new and emerging composers from around the world; and we find new spaces and new ways of performing contemporary music to attract new audiences. Our performing ensemble is drawn from the deep talent pool of Scottish new music expertise, and we count amongst our players some of the very finest performers working in the UK today.

Red Note made its debut in May 2008 with a recording of Eddie McGuire's *Carrochan* suite for Delphian records, and since then ensemble has rapidly gained profile and support. We undertake a Spring and Autumn season each year in Scotland comprising tours, site-specific work and collaborations with other companies, and we run a regular new music series showcasing the work of new composers (*Noisy Nights* and *Noisy Words*) in partnership with the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh. We are also extensively involved in the education sector, particularly at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in Glasgow, at Glasgow University and in collaboration with Woodend Barn and the Sound Festival, Aberdeen. We are also actively developing collaborations and new work with companies abroad.

We are delighted to be appointed Associate Contemporary Ensemble at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in Glasgow, and an Associate Company of the Traverse Theatre.



**Gordon Bragg** was born in Stirling in 1984 and was educated in Dunblane. His first formal music training was at the junior department of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, where he won the school prizes for violin and piano. Gordon graduated in violin performance from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama (London) in 2006 with first class honours, studying violin with Simon Fischer and Stephanie Gonley. During his time in London, he participated in masterclasses with Rachel Podger, Ralf Gothoni, Zvi Zeitlin and members of the Amadeus, Takacs, Belcea and Juilliard quartets, as well as going on an Erasmus exchange to the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki. He was also invited to participate in the International Musician's Seminar in Prussia Cove, Cornwall where he performed in the violin class of Gerhard Schultz (Alban Berg Quartet).

Gordon was concertmaster of the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland, and has been a member of the European Union Youth Orchestra and Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester, playing under the likes of Vladimir Ashkenazy, Claudio Abbado, Myung Whun Chung and Sir Colin Davis, and in the summer of 2007 played in the Lucerne Festival Academy Orchestra under Pierre Boulez.

Following conducting studies in Manchester and Zurich, Gordon has conducted the Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg, Bayerische Kammerphilharmonie, Bern Kammerorchester, Goettingen Symphonie Orchester and the Red Note Ensemble and has taken masterclasses with Bernard Haitink, Sir Mark Elder, Ivan Fischer, Martyn Brabbins and Peter Rundel. Aside from his duties as second violinist of the Edinburgh Quartet, Gordon is currently assistant to Chief Conductor Donald Runnicles at the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and Conducting Fellow of the RCS.

The Scottish composer **Rory Boyle** was born in Ayr and received his earliest musical education as a chorister at St George's Chapel, Windsor. He studied composition with Dr Frank Spedding at the RSAMD as well as piano, clarinet, organ and conducting. A Caird Travelling Scholarship enabled him to continue his studies with Lennox Berkeley in London. Whilst he was still a student he won the BBC Scottish Composers' Prize (1971) with his first orchestral score, and further important awards followed including Royal Philharmonic Prizes for both his *Symphony In One Movement* (1973) and *Clarinet Concerto* (1975), as well as the Zaiks Prize in the Kazimierz Serocki International Competition, for his orchestral score *Winter Music* which was premiered in Poland in 1987.

His list of works covers most genres and he has received commissions from many societies, festivals and organisations including the Cheltenham, Three Choirs', St Albans, Greenwich and Latvian Contemporary Music Festivals. He has also written for leading performers, most notably Evelyn Glennie, Fine Arts Brass Quintet (including *Elegy For The Black Bitch*, nominated for a British Composers Award in 2005), Michael Chance, Nicholas Daniel, Mark O'Keeffe and David Hubbard. He has collaborated with several writers including Vikram Seth (*8 Beastly Tales*), Richard Stilgoe (*Mine Host*), and Dilys Rose (*Kaspar Hauser* and *The Fires of Bride*).

His work in the educational sphere includes four operas for children, and in 1998 the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland's tour programme included his *Capriccio* which was performed at venues including the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam and the London Proms. In 2006 he won a Creative Scotland Award to enable him to write an opera with a libretto by the writer and poet Dilys Rose, *Kaspar Hauser, Child Of Europe* which was performed to critical acclaim in Glasgow in March 2010 and, later in that year, won for Boyle a British Composers Award.. Rory Boyle lives in Ayrshire and divides his time between composing and teaching at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland where he is a tutor in Composition.

**Thomas Butler** is a composer based in Glasgow. His work encompasses music for concert, installation and video. He is currently a PhD candidate at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and the Sound and Music Embedded composer with Red Note Ensemble.

Born in Maynooth, Co Kildare **David Fennessy** began his musical studies at the DIT Conservatory of Music, studying guitar with John Feeley and composition with Eibhlis Farrell. He gained a BMus in performance from Trinity College, in 1997 and a MMus in composition with James MacMillan at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in 2000.

His works have been performed by the RTÉ National Symphony, RTÉ Concert, Royal Scottish National, BBC Scottish Symphony, and Symphony orchestras; Ensemble Modern, Hebrides Ensemble, London Sinfonietta, National Chamber Choir, the Castagneri and Zephyr Quartets, Synchronia and Concorde, amongst others.

In 2006/2007 Ensemble Modern awarded Fennessy a scholarship to study at their prestigious International Academy in Frankfurt. A Dewar Arts Award (Scotland) enabled him to live in Germany for twelve months where he created several works in close collaboration with the musicians of the Academy. In 2000 and 2006 he was shortlisted for the Gaudeamus Music Prize and was a finalist for the Philharmonia's composition prize in 2004. His music has been chosen to represent Ireland at the International Rostrum of Composers. In 2010 he received a prestigious Paul Hamlyn Foundation Award, and was a Fellow of the Akademie Schloss Solitude in Stuttgart, 2010/2011.

Fennessy's music theatre work *Pass the Spoon*, a collaboration with director Nick Bone and visual artist David Shrigley, premiered in November 2011. Recent works include *Bodies*, written for the RTÉ NSO and *La Rejouissance-La Paix* commissioned by Ensemble Modern for their thirtieth anniversary celebrations. David Fennessy has been a composition lecturer at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland since 2005.

**Drew Hammond** is a composer and teacher living in Glasgow. Born in Central Kentucky, he received honours credit in music composition from his high school and went on to study piano and geology at Guilford College in North Carolina. From 1996 to 2000 Drew was a performer, arranger and composer for various touring groups in North Carolina before moving to Boston, Massachusetts. In 2003, he relocated to Scotland to study composition at Glasgow University with Professor Bill Sweeney. He has been awarded a Master's Degree and a PhD in composition, and he now teaches composition and academic studies at the University of Glasgow and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

In composing, Drew is concerned with tempering expressiveness through an array of highly refined compositional techniques in order to develop a wide array of challenging yet performable chamber music. His compositions often include nostalgic references to the natural environment of his native rural America.

**Gordon McPherson** was born in Dundee in 1965. Recent works include *Ghosts - Three Nocturnals* for orchestral ensemble, written with the support of a Creative Scotland Award; *Blood*, a concerto for Arabic Oud and orchestra commissioned by the National Youth Orchestra of Iraq; and *Stunt Doubles*, commissioned for the twentieth anniversary of Psappha, for sextet and virtual sextet. He is currently working on a large scale music theatre version of the Passion according to St Mark based on the Lorimer translation, a new guitar work to be premiered under unusual circumstances, and a continuing series of solo *Stunt Doubles* for various performers.

**Oliver Searle** originally studied for a music teaching degree from Aberdeen University, then taught in further education and, more recently, in schools in Glasgow. He studied with John Maxwell Geddes to gain a distinction for his Masters degree in 2002, then continued studies with the completion of a PhD in composition in 2006. Recent performances include works for the Hebrides Ensemble, John Currie Singers, Paragon, Red Note, National Youth Orchestra of Scotland, the New Music Players, the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, as well as several broadcasts.

He is frequently involved in the creation of music for theatre, has written music for people with Cochlear Implants, and holds a lecturing post at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. He won the Mendelssohn Scholarship in 2004 and a Silver Medal from the Worshipful Company of Musicians in 2003. Recent projects include working with Drake Music Scotland, as part of the London cultural Olympiad, which was recently nominated for a Royal Philharmonic Society Award.

**Tom David Wilson** was born in Manchester in 1957. In the 1970's he was a student at the Birmingham Conservatoire where he studied composition with Andrew Downs. In the 1980's he was a student at Goldsmiths College, London University where he spent five years studying composition with Melanie Dakin and Edward Gregson. For ten years he was Head of Woodwind and Tutor for Academic Music at Uppingham School in Rutland but since 1989 he has lived in Glasgow where he teaches composition at the RCS and at St. Mary's Music School in Edinburgh.