

Ensemble Offspring presents **INGUZ**

Great Southern Nights

19 November 2020 @ 7.30pm

Cell Block Theatre, National Art School

Performers: Claire Edwardes (percussion), Jason Noble (clarinets),
Lamorna Nightingale (flutes), Freya Schack-Arnott (cello)

Liza Lim - Inguz (cello & clarinet) 6'30

Kate Moore - Blackbird Song (alto flute, bass clarinet, vibraphone) 9'

Cornelis Fuhler - Tinderbox (flute, bass clarinet, cello & percussion) 6'

Gerard Brophy - ne me quitte pas (flute & vibraphone) 3' WP

Kaija Saariaho - Oi Kuu (bass flute & cello) 6'

Iannis Xenakis - Rebonds A (percussion solo) 7'

Christopher Fox - Trace (flute, vibraphone, clarinet & cello) 9' WP

Liza Lim - Inguz (1996)

cello & clarinet

Inguz (fertility) follows the genetic line of earlier works *Koto* and *Street of Crocodiles* – in fact, the work draws on an unpublished cello study written in preparation for the latter work. The title refers to the Viking rune symbolising fertility, which is associated with “the moon, intuition and the desire for harmonisation in personal relationships”. *Inguz* is dedicated to the clarinettist Catherine McCorkhill and cellist Chris Lockhart Smith on the occasion of the birth of their daughter Arianne.

Inguz is an intimate study of cello and clarinet sonorities. It explores these instruments' conforming and contrasting features amid a narrative of alternating mobility and stasis, the product of the passing congruences and divergences of pitch and rhythm. On some occasions the instruments' timbres are virtually indistinguishable, the one growing out of or intermingling with the other; on others, the contrasts of timbre and register are extreme. Lim conceives of the work as being like the alap of an Indian raga, in which the music functions to tune the instruments and to establish a mood.

(Program note by Malcolm Gillies)

Liza Lim (b.1966, Australia) is a composer, educator and researcher whose music focusses on collaborative and transcultural practices. The roots of beauty (in noise), time effects in the Anthropocene and the sensoria of ecological connection are ongoing concerns in her compositional work. Her four operas: *The Oresteia* (1993), *Moon Spirit Feasting* (2000), *The Navigator* (2007) and *Tree of Codes* (2016), and the major ensemble work *Extinction Events and Dawn Chorus* (2018) explore themes of desire, memory, ritual transformation and the uncanny. Her genre-crossing percussion ritual/opera *Atlas of the Sky* (2018), is a work involving community participants of all abilities that investigates the emotional power and energy dynamics of crowds.



Kate Moore - Blackbird Song (2018)

alto flute, bass clarinet, vibraphone

Blackbird Song is an expansive melody written in response to the early morning cantillation of a Merel. In the earliest twilight hours of the morning, before the sunrise chorus of birds, a tiny unassuming blackbird clad in shiny jet-black feathers, perches upon a high post and sings with all its might an epic melancholic tale of adventure and fantasy with its yellow beak pointed toward the heavens. Without knowing it the bird has captivated the imagination of the listener, who, despite being unable to understand the vocabulary and grammar of its language, is taken along on a journey of the blackbird's worldly and otherworldly experiences.

Kate Moore (b. 1979) is an Australian-Dutch musician and composer of new music. Her works are directly inspired by the organic shapes and sounds found in nature and lost objects of the natural biosphere, both sonic and visual. She has been based in the Netherlands since 2002. In 2017 she was the recipient of the Matthijs Vermeulen Prize, the most prestigious Dutch prize for composers, for her work *The Dam* commissioned for The Canberra International Festival. Active on the international scene, Moore has had works performed by acclaimed ensembles including ASKO|Schönberg, Alarm Will Sound, The Bang On A Can All-Stars and Icebreaker. Her works have been performed in venues including The Concertgebouw, Carnegie Hall and The Sydney Opera House and at major festivals including The Holland Festival, ISCM World Music Days and MATA.

Cornelis Fuller - Tinderbox (2014)

flute, bass clarinet, cello & percussion

Tinderbox is a person or thing that is highly excitable, explosive, inflammable. Cor Fuhler's work *Tinderbox* was written for Ensemble Offspring in our first year of Hatched Academy in 2014. It is a soft meditative looped scale, constantly changing colour and direction.

Cornelis Fuller passed away earlier this year and we would like to pay our deep respects to him as a person, creator and collaborator. He was an improviser, composer, songwriter, instrument builder, acoustic ecologist, or recording engineer; it was all part of a process: to put an idea into sound. The tool one needs could be a bassoon, a soldering iron, a computer program, a screwdriver, a microphone, a pencil and paper, a rehearsal, or even a good long walk. All are equally valuable methods in achieving beautiful, interesting, humorous, questioning or any other kind of sound world that expresses something meaningful and worthwhile.

Gerard Brophy - ne me quitte pas (2020) WP

flute & vibraphone

Ne me quitte pas literally means "don't leave me" and is a well-known 1959 Jacques Brel song.

Gerard Brophy writes of his new work – "For as long as I can remember, the Levantine city of Beirut has always held my imagination in thrall. From its prehistoric remnants (bear in mind, this is where the alphabet was invented), through the majesty of the Phoenician period and the Ottoman era, through the agony of civil war and the sheer physical beauty of its geographical setting, it has always beckoned me. Furthermore it's proximity to the Bekaa Valley and Damascus made it even more desirable. As a consequence I have found it impossible to resist it's sirens call....

Then after the devastating explosion in the port area earlier this year, the city and, in fact, Lebanon was forever changed. We grieved for our family and friends who had called this area home and we mourned the loss of the heart and soul of this seductive, magical place. As I sifted through my Levantine memories while composing this brief, soothing panegyric for this beloved city, the haunting words of Jacques Brel's inimitable classic ' Ne me quitte pas' were on a loop. Indeed Oh Beirut, please don't leave me, as I can never forget you....

This heartfelt tribute is dedicated with much admiration and even more affection to Lamorna Nightingale and Claire Edwardes.

Gerard Brophy was born in 1953. After an increasingly musical adolescence, he began his studies in the classical guitar at the age of twenty-two. In the late seventies he worked closely with Brazilian guitarist Turibio Santos and the Argentine composer Mauricio Kagel before studying composition at the NSW State Conservatorium of Music. Over recent years he has developed a keen interest in collaborating with artists from other disciplines and he is particularly active in the areas of ballet, dance and electronica. He has also been involved in exciting collaborations with musicians from other cultures among them the great Senegalese master drummers, the N'Diaye Rose family, and the timbila virtuoso Venancio Mbande from Mozambique. He currently spends his time between the Southern Highlands (NSW) and Turkey.

Kaija Saariaho - Oi Kuu (1990) bass flute & cello

Oi Kuu, freely translated "for a moon", consists of elements which came to my mind when searching for a common denominator for bass clarinet and cello; harmony based on multiphonies of the clarinet; the multiphonies and colour transformations of the cello; similar and different articulations; different colours in the same register. *Oi Kuu* was written for clarinetist Kari Kriikku and cellist Anssi Karkttunen. The work also exists in a version for bass flute and cello heard in this performance.

(Program note by Kaija Saariaho)

Kaija Saariaho is a Finnish composer based in Paris, France who was born in 1952. Saariaho studied composition in Helsinki, Freiburg, and Paris, where she has lived since 1982. Her research at the Institute for Research and Coordination in Acoustics/Music (IRCAM) marked a turning point in her music away from strict serialism towards spectralism. Her characteristically rich, polyphonic textures are often created by combining live music and electronics.

During the course of her career, Saariaho has received commissions from the Lincoln Center for the Kronos Quartet and from IRCAM for the Ensemble Intercontemporain, the BBC, the New York Philharmonic, the Salzburg Music Festival, the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris, and the Finnish National Opera, among others. In a 2019 composers' poll by BBC Music Magazine, Saariaho was ranked the greatest living composer.

Iannis Xenakis - Rebonds A (1987/89) percussion solo

The Greek born, Xenakis composer wrote *Rebonds* during his late years in France (1987-89). Composed for the relatively simple setting of bongos, tom toms & bass drum, *Rebonds* has become probably the most important composition for percussion solo to date. It has everything - rhythmic vigour, challenging form, musical lines and passionate "blows". It was written long after Xenakis's horrific experiences in World War 2 (where his face was severely disfigured), yet the raw emotion of war is ever-present.

Iannis Xenakis (1922-2001) was a Greek/French composer, music theorist, architect, performance director and engineer. After 1947, he fled Greece, becoming a naturalised citizen of France. He is considered an important post-World War II composer whose works helped revolutionize 20th-century classical music. Xenakis pioneered the use of mathematical models in music such as applications of set theory, stochastic processes and game theory and was also an important influence on the development of electronic and computer music. He integrated music with architecture, designing music for pre-existing spaces, and designing spaces to be integrated with specific music compositions and performances.

Christopher Fox - Trace (2020) WP

flute, vibraphone, clarinet & cello

Trace is music in which a wandering line grows out of a simple principle - two or three notes up, two or three notes down, always by steps of tones or semitones but never two semitones after one another. I started following this random path in early March but quite quickly it got tangled up in the course of the coronavirus and turned into something of a danse macabre, rather more of a nightmare than I'd originally intended. It's music that mutates, tracks up and down, and is played by pairs of musicians who seem to be playing the same music but in quite different versions.

British composer **Christopher Fox** studied at the universities of Liverpool, Southampton and York, where his teachers included Hugh Wood and Jonathan Harvey. He received a PhD in composition from the University of York in 1984. From 1984 to 1994 he was a member of the composition staff at the Darmstadt New Music Summer School. He is currently Professor in Music at Brunel University, a post he took up in 2006. His music is widely performed, broadcast and recorded. He is also a prolific writer on music. In addition to concert works, Fox has collaborated with artists on gallery works, and with the poet Ian Duhig on a "musical box".

An important aspect of Fox's music is its stylistic breadth—whilst his principal considerations may seem to be with systems music and adopting a systematic approach, his music also serves a political function, is deeply rooted in the post-war Darmstadt traditions of applying psychological and intellectual models to the structure and content of music and at the same time exists in a world of diverse musical attitudes, including references to the popular arts, to historical music and to cross-cultural music. The stylistic range of his works is very aurally apparent and includes complex microtonal chamber works, large-scale modernist ensemble pieces, tape cut-up collages and minimalistic pieces for guitars and saxophones.

Ensemble Offspring is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts advisory body, and the NSW Government through Create NSW.



Australian Government

