

Press Release: February 16, 2009

Crash Ensemble to celebrate the 60th birthday of Kevin Volans in Free State concert.

**Crash Ensemble | Free State: Kevin Volans | April 9, 2009 | 8pm
| Project Arts Centre, Temple Bar, Dublin 2**

"When it comes to music, the Crash abandons `safety first'... its reputation at the cutting edge of contemporary composition has been veritably bulletproof for most of the decade"

Sunday Business Post on Free State III

"Volans remains one of the planet's most distinctive and unpredictable voices."

Kyle Gann - Village Voice (New York)

Committed to showcasing new Irish Music, Crash Ensemble is featuring a concert of work by the internationally renowned composer Kevin Volans in this year's Free State concert.

Having ended their incredibly busy 2008 with a concert focusing on new Irish music, Crash opens 2009 with another! This time they are celebrating new Irish music through Volans, who celebrates his 60th birthday this year, will curate an evening of cutting-edge music featuring young Irish composers alongside his own works. The centrepiece of the concert will be the world premiere of a new Volans' composition – an important event in new music.

As well as performing with the ensemble, Kevin has chosen three unique voices from Ireland's young composing talent to represent what he feels is new and exciting about new music in Ireland today. These works are by Jennifer Walshe, Simon O'Connor and Jonathan Nangle.

Crash has had a fruitful relationship with Volans over the past few

years, since 2002, premiering works such as 1000 Bars and Joining up the Dots, written especially for Crash Ensemble. For this very special concert and in addition to composing the new work, Kevin will not only perform Nine Beginnings with the ensemble.

The 2009 **FREE STATE** concert is Crash Ensemble's fourth annual showcase of new music from Ireland. This concert is always an adventure of the unexpected and has previously premiered new works by Gerald Barry, Julie Feeney among other unique voices of the new generation of Irish composers.

As with all Crash Ensemble's FREE STATE concerts (the last of which was November 2008) works by young Irish composers is paramount. The composers featured this year (all Volans' choices) are **Jennifer Walshe**, who will be over from New York (after her successful Grupat exhibition in the Project Arts Centre); **Jonathan Nangle** with a work for cello and viola and **Simon O'Connor** who will be writing a new work especially for the occasion.

Free State : Kevin Volans is held in association with Lyric FM.

FULL PROGRAMME FOR CONCERT

Free State: Kevin Volans | April 9, 2009 | 8pm | Project Arts Centre, Temple Bar, Dublin 2

8pm

Kevin Volans | Nine Beginnings

Kevin Volans | New Work (world premiere)

Kevin Volans | Into Darkness

Jonathan Nangle | my heart stopped a thousand beats

Simon O'Connor | New Work (world premiere)

Jennifer Walshe | work featuring the composer

Running time approx 2hours

BOOKING INFORMATION

Project Arts Centre

39 East Essex St, Temple Bar, Dublin 2
Phone: +353 1 881 9613 | www.projectartscentre.ie

Ticket prices for each concert are €20/18. Tickets are on sale now from www.projectartscentre.ie . Tickets will also be sold on the door.

MORE INFORMATION

KEVIN VOLANS

Kevin Volans has been described as “one of the planet’s most distinctive and unpredictable voices” [Kyle Gann – Village Voice 1998]. He was born in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa in 1949. After completing a B Mus at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg he went on to study in Cologne, principally with Karlheinz Stockhausen, later becoming his teaching assistant. In the mid-70’s his work became associated with the “Neue Einfachheit” (New Simplicity) – the beginnings of post-modernism in music.

In 1979 following several field recording trips to Africa, he embarked on a series of pieces based on African compositional techniques which quickly established Volans as a distinctive voice on the European new music circuit. In 1986 Kevin Volans began a productive collaboration with the Kronos Quartet. White Man Sleeps for string quartet (1986), Hunting: Gathering (1987) and The Songlines (1988) were all written for them, and given performances in festivals ranging from the Salzburg Festival to the Montreal Jazz Festival, Berliner Festwoche, Tokyo Inkspot, Adelaide Festival, Next Wave Festival (New York) and New Music America, bringing his work to a very wide audience. The Kronos discs, White Man Sleeps and Pieces of Africa broke all records for string quartet disc sales – the latter was number one on the US Classical and world music charts for 26 weeks, outselling all but Pavarotti.

In the 1990’s Volans gave increasing attention to writing for dance, collaborating with Siobhan Davies, Jonathan Burrows, Shobana Jeyasingh in Britain as well as numerous other companies around the world. In 1999 the South bank hosted a fiftieth birthday celebration of his work in the Queen Elizabeth Hall. John Allison wrote in The Times :“When it comes to composers, only a few today could be called true originals, and Kevin Volans is one of them.”

Latterly, he has turned his attention to writing for orchestra and as well as collaborating with visual artists. Recent commissions include a piano concerto for Marc-Andre Hamelin, a trio concerto for the Storioni Trio, new string quartets for the Smith and Vanburgh quartets and a chamber piece for the Crash ensemble. Future projects include a triple ensemble piece for exhibitions of the artist, Juergen Partenheimer’s work at the IKON Gallery, Birmingham, and the Deutsches Kunstmuseum.

CRASH ENSEMBLE

Crash Ensemble holds an international reputation for its repertoire and interpretations of cutting-edge music. Founded in 1997 by composer Donnacha Dennehy; conductor and pianist Andrew Synott; and clarinetist Michael Seaver, its repertoire features the works of major composers of the 20th and 21st century, including Reich, Stockhausen, Andriessen, Glass, and Cage. The ensemble has worked directly with composers such as Steve Reich, Louis Andriessen, Gavin Bryars, Michael Gordon, Kevin Volans and Arnold Dreyblatt in preparing important premieres and performances. Apart from regular concerts in Ireland, Crash has also performed in the UK, Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Estonia, Canada and the USA, and has featured in radio broadcasts in all of those countries. In 2008 Crash featured at the Canberra International Music Festival (where they were broadcast on ABC Radio), the infamous Bang on a Can Marathon in New York City, Electric Picnic in Stradbally and the Musica Viva Lisbon Festival in Portugal. Crash has made an indelible mark on the Irish music scene and beyond. The ensemble believes in a joyous yet absolutely rigorous engagement with the most adventurous music today and the (extremely) recent past. Crash feature in recordings by labels such as NMC (London) and Cantaloupe (New York) released in 2008. Crash Ensemble is supported by the Arts Council.

ALAN PIERSON, conductor

Alan Pierson has been praised as "a young conductor of monstrous skill" by Newsday, "commanding" by the New York Times, and "gifted and electrifying" by the Boston Globe. He is the artistic director and conductor of the acclaimed ensemble Alarm Will Sound which has been called "the future of classical music" by the New York Times and "a sensational force" with "powerful ideas about how to renovate the concert experience" by the New Yorker. In addition to his work with Alarm Will Sound, Mr. Pierson has appeared as a guest conductor with the London Sinfonietta, the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra, the New World Symphony, and The Silk Road Project, among other ensembles. He has collaborated with major composers and performers including Yo Yo Ma, Steve Reich, John Adams, Augusta Read Thomas, David Lang, Michael Gordon, La Monte Young, and Wu Man, and choreographers Akram Khan and Elliot Feld. Mr. Pierson has recorded for Nonesuch Records, Cantaloupe Music, Sony Classical, and Sweetspot DVD.

For more details visit www.crashensemble.com

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