

Press Release: May 12 2009

Crash Ensemble sketches *Double Portrait* of iconic composers Lang and Andriessen

Crash Ensemble: Double Portrait in association with RTÉ lyric fm and the CMC | Samuel Beckett Theatre | Friday June 5, 2009 | www.crashensemble.com

"the Irish new-music band that plays with the energy and spirit of a rock group..." New York Times

"Crash Ensemble, bastion of contemporary music... come what may, Crash Ensemble is unflappable in execution"
Irish Independent April 2009

Cutting-edge Irish music collective Crash Ensemble showcases the innovative music of Pulitzer Prize winner David Lang alongside that of Dutch composer Louis Andriessen in 'Double Portrait' on June 5th in the Samuel Beckett Theatre, Dublin.

Along with performances of music by David Lang, including the 2008 Crash Ensemble commissioned 'Forced March', Crash Ensemble will feature the work of Louis Andriessen, one of the most influential European composers of our time.

The works of this well matched duo will make for an energetic, high-octane performance, which has become a trademark of Crash Ensemble's many concerts.

Louis Andriessen's influence over the contemporary Irish music scene is palpable and his presence was instrumental in the establishment of Crash Ensemble in 1997 by composer and Crash Ensemble Artistic Director Donnacha Dennehy. As a composer Andriessen is both provocative and enticing, his influence on the contemporary music scene resonates globally. Famed for collaborations with Peter Greenaway, Hal Hartley and Robert Wilson, Louis Andriessen is frequently credited with having changed the face of music.

Recently appointed composer in residence for 2009-2010 in Carnegie Hall, this Dublin performance of his works celebrates the composer's 70th birthday.

In Double Portrait Crash Ensemble will also be performing works by the American composer David Lang, who is at the forefront of the dynamic contemporary music scene in New York. Having won the 2008 Pulitzer Prize for **The Little Match Girl Passion**; an intrepid work commissioned by Carnegie Hall, Lang continues to surprise and delight. Lang is co-founder of legendary new music group 'Bang on a Can' in New York City, a collective exposing exciting and innovative music to new audiences worldwide.

Double Portrait presents a musical reflection on two of the most exciting composers of these times. David Lang credits Andriessen as a major influence on his work and in turn on the celebrated Bang on a Can collective, extolling his admiration for Andriessen's radical approach

to composition: Talking of Andriessen's Worker's Union (featured on the concert) Lang praises Andriessen's radicalism in freeing us from the "tyranny of orchestration, harmony or pitch."

Double Portrait sees a welcome return for Crash Ensemble to the Samuel Beckett Theatre and also marks the Ensemble's indelible 11-year mark on the Irish and global music scene.

DOUBLE PORTRAIT: FULL PROGRAMME

Lang: Cheating Lying Stealing
Andriessen: Trepidus
Andriessen: Garden of Eros
Lang: Forced March

Lang: Pierced
Lang: Memory Pieces [Cage, Spartan Arcs, Wed]
Andriessen: Workers Union

Conducted by Alan Pierson

In association with RTÉ lyric fm and the CMC

BOOKING INFORMATION

Double Portrait | Friday June 5 | 8pm | Samuel Beckett Theatre | (01) 896 2461 | €20/15

www.tcd.ie/drama/samuel-beckett-theatre

MORE INFORMATION

DAVID LANG

David Lang's strong influence on New York's exciting contemporary music scene has been felt since his co-foundation of the legendary music collective Bang on a Can in 1987. Informed by modernism, minimalism and rock, Lang's music is, in turn, comic, abrasive, soothing and conceptual. "There is no name yet for this kind of music," wrote Los Angeles Times music critic Mark Swed. David Lang was recently awarded the 2008 Pulitzer Prize for **The Little Match Girl Passion**; an intrepid work commissioned by Carnegie Hall for Paul Hillier's vocal ensemble *Theater of Voice*. Tim Page of the *Washington Post* wrote "I don't think that I've ever been so moved by a new...composition as I was by David Lang's *The Little Match Girl Passion*, which is unlike any music I know." Lang's appeal is global, his works performed by such organizations as the Santa Fe Opera, the New York Philharmonic, the San Francisco Symphony, The Cleveland Orchestra, the BBC Proms, The Munich Biennale, the Settembre Musica Festival and the Sydney 2000 Olympic Arts Festival.

Lang's desire to musically "build that world we want to live in" (*The Irish Times interview, June 9, 2008*) sums up the innovative approach which has positioned him at the forefront of this contemporary music movement; challenging the constraints of category and convention and continuously exploring fresh terrain.

http://www.bangonacan.org/about_us/david_lang

LOUIS ANDRIESSEN

Louis Andriessen's formation of his own radically alternative musical aesthetic, began as a reaction to what he perceived as the conservatism of the Dutch contemporary music scene during the 70's. His compositions have changed the face of music, mixing genres and influences without prejudice. The Los Angeles Times credit him as "the hippest, sassiest, most savvy composer we have".

His idiosyncratic style, employs elemental harmonic, melodic and rhythmic materials instrumental combinations, which continue to arouse and inspire a whole generation of composers and music lovers; Ireland's much celebrated Crash Ensemble crediting their existence to the music of Louis Andriessen. Anthony Tommasin of the New York Times speaks of being wholly "engulfed by the music alone, so extreme, volatile, strangely alluring", praising Andriessen's "ingenious musical intellect". Andriessen's mature music combines the influences of Igor Stravinsky, jazz and American minimalism. A political animal, he has musically explored the themes of time, velocity, matter and mortality in five celebrated works for large ensemble: *De Staat* (1976), *De Tijd* (1981), *De Snelheid* (1983), *De Materie* (1985-88), and *Trilogy of The Last Day* (1996-97). Celebrating his 70th birthday this June, Andriessen is considered one of Europe's most eminent and influential composers, continuing to challenge and provoke; in his own words "I like wrong notes also".

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.

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, David Lang, Gloria Coates, Gerald Barry, 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.

For more details visit www.crashensemble.com

FOR MEDIA INFORMATION, TICKETS AND PICTURES CONTACT:

Zoetrope

Nik Quaife T: 087 799 7989 | nik@zoetrope.ie

Crash Ensemble

Frances Mitchell T: 087 698 3763 | admin@crashensemble.com