

Crash Ensemble premieres a new work by Pulitzer Prize winner David Lang, in a programme of music written especially for Crash. With special guest Iarla Ó Lionáird.

Just back from their début performance in Australia and returning to NYC for the Bang On A Can marathon, Crash Ensemble are firing on all cylinders with a programme of music by some of its favourite composers written especially for the group – two from the United States, and three from Ireland.

This concert will include the World Premiere of a new work along with a reprise of four of its most outstanding premieres of recent years.

David Lang is one of America's most celebrated composers and the most recent composer to be commissioned by the Crash Ensemble. His 2007 work *The Little Match Girl Passion*, based on the story by Hans Christian Andersen, was recently awarded the prestigious Pulitzer Prize for music. David is also a founder of the cutting edge music collective Bang On A Can. Crash is delighted to present this World Premiere in the presence of the composer.

Commissioned by the Louth Contemporary Music Society, Crash Ensemble was equally honoured to give the World Premiere of a work in 2007 by another seminal American composer, the grandfather of minimalism, Terry Riley. It was performed in the presence of the composer during the Drogheda Arts Festival. Evocatively titled, *Loops for Ancient Giant Nude Hairy Warriors Racing Down the Slopes of Battle*, it captures scenes of ancient Celtic Ireland and is heavily inspired by old Irish art.

As part of its 10-year anniversary marathon, *Shindig*, also in 2007, Crash Ensemble gave performances of two works by two of Ireland's foremost composers, Gerald Barry and Kevin Volans. Commissioned by Crash with funds from the Arts Council, Gerald Barry's *First Sorrow* for string quartet is an important work from this critical composer. Barry says in his score that *First Sorrow* refers to the story by Kafka about a trapeze artist who is happy only when aloft. At the end the quartet sings a hymn to 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star'.

Kevin Volans has long been associated with the Crash Ensemble having gifted music to the group as well as even occasionally performing in its concerts! Crash is delighted to once again perform the work *Joining Up the Dots*, which was commissioned by RTÉ for the Living Music Festival in 2007, in this concert.

The final work on the programme is by Donnacha Dennehy. Considered by many to be the leading Irish composer of his generation, Donnacha has also been the Artistic Director of the Crash Ensemble since its inception in 1997. *Grá agus Bás* features another irreplaceable Irish voice, that of renowned sean-nós singer, Iarla Ó Lionáird. Premiered in Dublin in January 2007 this work has captured and enthralled audiences from New York to Baile Mhúirne.

This concert is presented in association with Lyric FM and the International Rostrum of Composers.

Programme:

Riley: Ancient Giant Nude Hairy Warriors Racing Down the Slopes of Battle

Barry: First Sorrow

Lang: final march (World Première) *Commissioned by the Crash Ensemble with funds from the Arts Council*

Volans: Joining Up the Dots

Dennehy: Grá agus Bás

Conductor: Alan Pierson (*Principal Conductor*)

8pm, Vicar Street.
Tuesday, June 10th.
Tickets: €20/18(Conc.)
www.ticketmaster.ie

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Biographies:

Gerald Barry

Gerald Barry was born in Ireland in 1952 and first came to public attention in 1979 with his radical ensemble works '_____ ' and Ø. Many of his works have been commissioned by the BBC, including Chevaux-de-frise for the 1988 Proms, Hard D for Orkest de Volharding, The Conquest of Ireland and Day for the BBCSO, and The Eternal Recurrence, a setting of Nietzsche for voice and orchestra.

His first opera, The Intelligence Park (recorded on NMC) was first performed at the 1990 London Almeida Festival, and a second, The Triumph of Beauty and Deceit opened the 2002 Aldeburgh Festival followed by performances in London and the Berliner Festwochen. It received its North American premiere with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in 2006 and will be followed by performances in Paris, Amsterdam and New York in 2007-2008.

In 1997 The Road was written for the Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra, and the Bavarian RSO gave the German première of The Conquest of Ireland in 1998. Barry has had a long association with the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group for whom he wrote Wiener Blut and Dead March. Wiener Blut received its German premiere with the Frankfurt RSO in June 2006. BCMG will premiere a new work, Beethoven, for Bass voice and ensemble in 2008.

In 2005 the stage premiere of The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant (recorded on RTE) was given at English National Opera and the German language version is currently running at the Basel Opera.

Donnacha Dennehy

Donnacha Dennehy is a composer living in Dublin. Born in 1970, he studied music composition at Trinity College Dublin and at the University of Illinois, USA, where his main teachers were Salvatore Martirano and William Brooks. He pursued further studies in electronic music at The Hague, and at IRCAM, Paris. Returning to Ireland, he founded the Crash Ensemble, Dublin's now-renowned amplified new music band, in 1997.

He has received commissions from the BBC, WNYC (Public Radio New York), RTE, Amsterdam Fonds Voor der Kunst, the Arts Councils of both England and Ireland, and from many individual ensembles. Noted performers of his work include Bang On A Can All-Stars, Crash Ensemble, Electra, Ensemble Integrales, Fidelio Trio, Jenny Lin, London Sinfonietta, Joanna MacGregor, Lisa Moore, National Symphony Orchestra, Orkest de Volharding, Percussion Group of the Hague, Prism Saxophone Quartet, and San Francisco Contemporary Music Players among many others.

His work has been featured in festivals such as ISCM World Music Days, Bang On A Can in New York, WNYC's New Sounds Live, Sonic Evolutions Festival at Lincoln Center, EXPO, the Ultima Festival in Oslo, Fuse Leeds, the Saarbrücken Festival, the Schleswig-Holstein Festival, the Gaudeamus Festival in Amsterdam, and State of the Nation at the South Bank in London.

Recent premieres include 'Stainless Staining' (2006-7) for the New York based pianist, Lisa Moore, 'Grá Agus Bás' (2006-7) for the Crash Ensemble and the sean nós singer, Iarla O' Lionáird, which was described by the New York Times as a "magnificently energetic" vocal work, given a "powerful account" by the Crash Ensemble, and 'Stamp (to avoid erotic thoughts)' (2008) for the Smith Quartet.

Upcoming commissions include pieces for Icebreaker and the San Francisco Contemporary Players. He is also beginning work on his first opera, *Gas*, with the writer Simon Doyle and the director Selina Cartmell. Donnacha's first full-length album, *Elastic Harmonic*, was released on NMC 2007.

David Lang

"There is no name yet for this kind of music," writes Los Angeles Times music critic Mark Swed, but audiences around the globe are hearing more and more of David Lang's work: in performances by such organizations as the Next Wave Festival at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Santa Fe Opera, the New York Philharmonic, the San Francisco Symphony, The Cleveland Orchestra, and the Kronos Quartet; at Tanglewood, the BBC Proms, The Munich Biennale, the Settembre Musica Festival, the Sydney 2000 Olympic Arts Festival and the Almeida, Holland, Berlin and Strasbourg Festivals; and in the choreography of Edouard Lock and La La La Human Steps, Twyla Tharp, the Paris Opera Ballet, The Nederlands Dans Theater and the Royal Ballet. Recent projects include monumental musical environments like the dark and meditative amplified orchestra piece *The Passing Measures*; *Writing on Water* for the London Sinfonietta, with visuals by English filmmaker Peter Greenaway; *Shelter* for Trio Mediaeval and musikFabrik, with co-composers Michael Gordon and Julia Wolfe; *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field* - an opera for the Kronos Quartet; *Grind to a Halt* for the San Francisco Symphony; *World to Come*, a commission for cellist Maya Beiser from Carnegie Hall, and loud love songs, a concerto for the percussionist Evelyn Glennie and orchestra. Upcoming works include a collaboration with visual artist Mark Dion and Ridge Theater Company on an opera, entitled *Anatomy Theater*, and an opera with Paul Hiller and Theater of Voices that will premiere in Carnegie Hall in the fall of 2007. His most recent CD is *ELEVATED (Cantaloupe)* - it comes with a DVD of Lang's collaborations with visual artists William Wegman, Bill Morrison and Matt Mullican. The CD recording of *THE PASSING MEASURES (Cantaloupe)* was named one of the best CD's of 2001 by The New Yorker magazine. Other CDs include the introspective chamber work *CHILD (Cantaloupe)* and other works on Sony Classical, BMG, Point, Chandos, Argo/Decca, Caprice, CRI and Cantaloupe labels.

Terry Riley

Terry Riley was strongly influenced by jazz and tape loop experiments when he began composing repetitive music. In 1964, Riley composed *In C*, which is generally considered the benchmark work of American Minimal music. Its impact was to change the course of 20th Century music and its influence has been heard in the works of prominent composers such as Steve Reich, Philip Glass and John Adams and many prominent rock bands such as The Who, Brian Eno and Curved Air. Later works like *Cadenza on the Night Plain* was selected by both Time and Newsweek as one of the 10 Best Classical Albums Of The Year. The epic string quartet cycle, *Salome Dances for Peace*, was selected as the #1 Classical Album Of The Year by USA Today magazine and was nominated for a Grammy. Terry Riley was listed in the London Sunday Times as "one of the 1000 makers of the 20th Century."

Kevin Volans

Kevin Volans was born in 1949 in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. From 1973 to 1981 he lived in Cologne where he studied with Karlheinz Stockhausen and Mauricio Kagel, later becoming Stockhausen's teaching assistant. He is now an Irish citizen and lives in Dublin.

In Germany during the mid-1970s, his work became known as part of the 'New Simplicity'. Later, following several field recording trips to Africa, he embarked on a series of pieces based on African compositional techniques which quickly established him as a distinctive voice on the European new music circuit. Since the mid-1980s his work has been extensively performed at venues including the Lincoln Center, New York; the Pompidou Centre, Paris; the Vienna State Opera; the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam; and the Royal Albert Hall, London for the BBC Henry Wood Promenade Concerts. Seventeen CDs featuring his music have been released to date.

In 1997 the BBC Music magazine listed him as one of the 50 most important living composers and he was described in the Village Voice as 'one of the most original and unpredictable voices on the planet'. Latterly, he has turned his attention to writing for orchestra as well as collaborating with visual artists.

Crash Ensemble

Crash Ensemble was founded in 1997 by composer Donnacha Dennehy; conductor and pianist Andrew Synott; and clarinettist Michael Seaver. Since its first sold-out concert in Dublin in the Autumn of 1997, the group has attracted enthusiastic audiences for its particular blend of music, video and electronics. The group is interdisciplinary in outlook, and considers its sound engineers, technicians and video makers as much a part of the enterprise as the musicians. Crash has commissioned or premiered a large amount of works by many composers including Peter Adriaanz, Raymond Deane, Donnacha Dennehy, Arnold Dreyblatt, Stephen Gardner, Michael Gordon, John Godfrey, Andrew Hamilton, Terry Riley, Jurgen Simpson, Gerhard Stabler, Jennifer Walshe, Ian Wilson and Kevin Volans. It has worked directly with all of the above, and with other composers such as Gavin Bryars, Gloria Coates, Roger Doyle, Michael Maierhof and Steve Reich.

Since 2002, Crash has hosted three contemporary music festivals, attracting international composers and performers to Dublin to collaborate with Irish colleagues. In 2006, Crash performed three concerts in the RTÉ Living Music Festival's first all-day 'marathon' event in the presence of the featured composer, Steve Reich. Presented in association with the Ensemble, the marathon was a sell-out and the festival, under the artistic direction of Donnacha Dennehy, proved a tremendous success with the Irish public. In 2007 Crash celebrated its 10th birthday with a massive marathon weekend *Shindig* to great critical acclaim followed by a national tour of *Strange Folk!* that culminated in a sell-out concert in the Ionad Culturtha, Baile Mhúirne.

As well as performing regularly throughout Ireland, Crash has appeared in the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, the UK, USA and Canada and has been broadcast on radio in all these countries WYNC broadcast their NYC debut in March 2007. In May this year Crash featured in the Canberra International Chamber Festival and the Bang On A Can Marathon NYC (with the support of Culture Ireland).

Crash Ensemble has made an indelible mark on the Irish music scene and beyond. They believe in a joyous yet absolutely rigorous engagement with the most adventurous music of today and the (extremely) recent past. Crash feature in recordings by labels such as NMC (London, 2007) and Canteloupe (New York, 2008)

Crash Ensemble is supported by the Arts Council.

"the Irish new-music band that plays with the energy and spirit of a rock group" New York Times, March 07