

PRESS RELEASE – December 15, 2006

Crash Ensemble premier a new work by Dennehy for Iarla Ó Lionáird in Dublin and New York in 2007

Crash Ensemble: Strange Folk
10 February, 8pm at Samuel Beckett Theatre

In an eagerly anticipated highlight of 2007, Crash Ensemble, Ireland's leading contemporary classical music group, will premier a new work by **Donnacha Dennehy** for Sean Nós singer **Iarla Ó Lionáird** as part of a unique celebration of newly composed music inspired by the sounds and ideas of ethnic music.

Called **STRANGE FOLK**, this one-night concert at the Samuel Beckett Theatre, will not only be the occasion for the premier of Dennehy's large new piece for Iarla and the group in advance of its New York debut, but for the first time in the ensemble's ten-year history, they will be presenting work by the important composers **Oswaldo Golijov**, and **Franghiz Ali-Zadeh**, alongside an Indonesian-influenced piece by Bang On A Can's **Evan Ziporyn**.

STRANGE FOLK will feature the conductor Alan Pierson.

OSVALDO GOLLIOV

Born into an Eastern European Jewish family in Argentina, Oswaldo Golijov is presently setting the U.S. alight with his flamboyantly imaginative compositions. Most of his work draws on various strands of world music; his recent opera

Ainadar premiered at Tanglewood in 2003, was literally brimming beautifully and unashamedly with references from many musical traditions built into the fabric of the work. Crash Ensemble will be performing his beautiful 1990's piece *The Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind* for klezmer clarinet and string quartet.

FRANGHIZ ALI-ZADEH

The Azerbaijani composer Franghiz Ali-Zadeh is prominent both as a pianist and a composer. She was the first to introduce formidable avant-garde figures such as John Cage and George Crumb to Azerbaijan and other old Soviet Republics. Her evocative *Music for Piano* (1989/97) resembles the music of the Azerbaijani *tar* simply by a subtle but straightforward preparation of the piano's middle register.

EVAN ZIPORYN

Evan Ziporyn is probably best known as the clarinetist for the Bang On A Can All-Stars, but he is a remarkably individual composer in his own right. *Kebyar Maya* for cello and electronics is based very explicitly on a very well known but anonymously composed piece in the Balinese Gamelan Tradition.

DONNACHA DENNEHY/IARLA Ó LIONÁIRD

Finishing off the concert will be Crash Ensemble's Artistic Director Donnacha Dennehy's new piece specially written for the renowned Sean Nós singer Iarla Ó Lionáird and the group. This marks a significant new adventure for both Donnacha and Iarla. Commissioned by Trinity College, *Grá agus Bás* is inspired by the moments of ecstasy (both luscious and dark) within a number of particular Sean Nós

songs, but especially *Aisling Gheal*, and uses these as a collective point of departure for a journey exploring the themes of love and death in a non-narrative context. It is almost a year and a half since Donnacha and Iarla began meeting and recording in advance of this piece, and Iarla has shown true collaborative spirit in assisting Donnacha with the project. *Grá agus Bás* will be accompanied by a special new film made by the artists/programmers Neil O'Connor and Gavin O'Brien. The collaboration with the visual artists was funded by a project grant from the Arts Council.

***Grá agus Bás* will be presented again by the Crash Ensemble in New York at Merkin Hall as part of *New Sounds Live Concert Series* on the 28th March.**

ALAN PIERSON, Principal 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*.

Programme Order

"Strange Folk"

Crash Ensemble at the Samuel Beckett Theatre
Saturday, 10th February 2007 at 8pm
Conducted by Alan Pierson

Franghiz Ali Zadeh - Music for Piano (1989/1997)

Oswaldo Golijov- The Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind (for klezmer clarinet and string quartet)

INTERVAL

Evan Ziporyn - Kebyar Maya (for cello and CD)

Donnacha Dennehy - Grá agus Bás (for Iarla O'Lionaird and Crash)

BACKGROUND ON CRASH ENSEMBLE

Crash Ensemble was founded in 1997 by composer Donnacha Dennehy; conductor and pianist Andrew Synott; and clarinetist Michael Seaver. Their repertoire features the works of major composers of the 20th and 21st century, including Reich, Stockhausen, Andriessen, Glass, and Cage among many others. They have 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 their regular concerts in Ireland, they have also performed in the UK, Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Estonia, Canada and the USA, and have featured in radio broadcasts in all of those countries. The BBC broadcast their recent December 2005 London debut in full.

Crash 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 today and the (extremely) recent past. Crash will feature in recordings by labels such as NMC (London) and Cantaloupe (New York) to be released in the coming year.

Crash Ensemble is supported by the Arts Council. **For more details visit www.crashensemble.com**

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