

Dublin Sound Lab

performs music by

Kagel, Essl, Ablinger, de Ruiter,

Karen Power and Fergal Dowling

Michael Quinn *organ*

Fergal Dowling *computer*

Marja Gaynor *violin*

Mercedes Carroll *double bass*

St Teresa's Church,
Clarendon Street,
Dublin
21 November 2008

Dublin Sound Lab is supported by the Arts Council



Programme

Karlheinz Essl, *Fontana Mixer* (2004) generative sound environment after John Cage

Karlheinz Essl, *More or less* (1999–2007) computer-controlled soloists

Peter Ablinger, *Violine und Rauschen* ("Veronica") (1995/96) violin and CD

Mauricio Kagel, *Raga* (from *Rrrrr.....*, 1981) organ

Mauricio Kagel, *Rossignols enrhumés* (from *Rrrrr.....*, 1981) organ

Karen Power, *Cows, Coffee, Birds, Bees and a New Room* (2007), double bass and CD

Peter Ablinger, *Orgel und Weltempfänger* (1999) organ and FM-receiver

Wim de Ruiter, *Whim* (1997) violin and organ

Karlheinz Essl, *Sequitur-III* (2008) violin and computer

Fergal Dowling, *Stops* (2008) organ, violin, double bass, and computer

Michael Quinn

Michael Quinn, a native of Dublin, began studying organ and piano at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, continuing his organ studies at the Royal Conservatory, The Hague, with Jos van der Kooy. He has premiered works by Jacques Bank and Tristan Brooks, and collaborated with several composers, including Daan Manneke and Wim de Ruiter. Assisted by Arts Council awards, he has participated in masterclasses with leading organists, including Szigmond Zsathmáry. He co-founded Dublin Sound Lab with composer Fergal Dowling earlier this year. Michael has appeared as a soloist with the RTE Concert Orchestra in Dublin, and performed in The Netherlands, Germany, England, Spain and the US. He was organ scholar of St Mary's Pro-Cathedral and of Trinity College, where he studied music. In 2006 he co-founded The Crow Street Consort, a period-instrument ensemble.

Fergal Dowling

Fergal Dowling is a composer of electro-acoustic and instrumental music. Born in Dublin, he studied composition with Kevin O'Connell and Donnacha Dennehy at Trinity College Dublin. With the assistance of the Elizabeth Maconchy Composition Fellowship, awarded by the Arts Council of Ireland, he completed a PhD in composition at the University of York in 2004. He has lectured in music technology at the Dundalk Institute of Technology (2006-08). Many of his works make use of computer-mediated performance strategies to combine electronic parts with instrumental or vocal forces. Since 2001 he has employed 'granular spatialisation' to render multichannel works for large, three-dimensional loudspeaker arrays, including: Falls (2001); Rain (2002); Rise (2003); Rainground (2003); Pass (2004); Cloud Types for Auditors (2005); 76 seconds of distorted pulses (2005); Quarters (2006); Fun with Numbers (2006); Manchester Material (2008).

His compositions have been performed and broadcast in Ireland, England, Germany, Spain, Sweden, Canada, the USA, and Brazil. As a performer he has presented his own computer-based interactive works throughout Europe and has worked with groups such as Concorde, Ensemble Chimera (UK), Projektgruppe Neue Musik Bremen (Germany), Ex-Machina (Brazil), Grup XXI (Spain), EAR and Improvised Device. He worked with EAR (2005-07) and was represented in their Composers Choice concert at the National Concert Hall, Dublin (2006). Together with the organist Michael Quinn, he co-founded Dublin Sound Lab (2008), a performance group specialising in contemporary electro-acoustic music.

Marja Gaynor

Marja Gaynor hails from Finland, but has been a resident of Cork since 2002. She completed a MA in Cork School of Music in 2004, and afterwards pursued her interests in early music, Baroque violin and viola studies in the Royal Conservatoire of Den Haag, Netherlands. There, she participated in many contemporary music projects and concerts.

Since returning to Ireland, Marja has been busy as a baroque musician, session musician, multi-instrumentalist, arranger and composer. She is a member of the Irish Baroque Orchestra, and plays with Camerata Kilkenny, Crow Street Consort, Musica Poetica (The Netherlands), The Wallfisch Band (UK) and Helsinki Baroque Orchestra (Finland). In Cork she is a founding member of Beyond the Pale – a group which specialises in Irish 17th and 18th century music on period instruments – and of Scandinavian roots / East European gypsy band The Polskadots. Marja has played and recorded with numerous bands and singer/songwriters in Ireland, including: Interference, Alphastates, The Frames, Halfset, Paul Tiernan and Maria Doyle Kennedy. Marja has arranged and played string parts on Adrian Crowley's critically acclaimed album "Long Distance Swimmer" and Glen Hansard's Oscar-winning "The Swell Season".

Mercedes Carroll

Born and raised in Dublin, Mercedes Carroll is an active freelance double-bassist currently living in London. She recently graduated from the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, where she nurtured a love for collaborating with other musicians and artists – from projects involving sitar and tabla, to drum & bass and improvisation sessions with dancers from the London Contemporary Dance School. Previous projects have included performances with the Catapult Dance Company, Fuzzy Logic ensemble, RTE Concert Orchestra, Orchestra of St Cecilia, and the Irish Chamber Orchestra, with whom she worked on a series of workshops in July 2008 based on the music of Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*. Whilst at GSMD, Mercedes founded the Tradicional Cubano Trio (flute, double bass and Latin percussion), who perform regularly and run workshops at schools in and around the London area. She is currently in the throes of a concerto series with Situation Opera, with whom she will be performing Vanhal's double bass concerto in London in December.

Karlheinz Essl (born 1960, Vienna) is an Austrian composer, improviser and performer. He studied composition with Friedrich Cerha and musicology in Vienna (doctorate 1989 with a thesis on Anton Webern). As a double bassist, he played in chamber and jazz ensembles. Besides writing instrumental music and composing electronic music, he performs on his own electronic instrument m@ze², develops software environments for computer-aided composition and creates generative sound and video environments – often in collaboration with artists from other fields. Essl served as composer-in-residence at the Darmstadt summer courses (1990-94) and completed a commission for IRCAM. Since 1994, Karlheinz Essl has been curating experimental music concerts and sound installations at the „Essl Museum“ in Klosterneuburg. Since 2007 he is professor of composition for electro-acoustic and experimental music at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna.

Essl's **FontanaMixer** is a generative sound environment based on John Cage's conceptual piece "Fontana Mix" (1958) which can be seen as a set of instructions for creating any number of compositions. Cage used these random graphical procedures to create music that is 'free of personal taste'; FontanaMixer translates these ideas to the domain of electronic music, utilising a real-time granular synthesis programme developed by Essl.

More or less is a computer-driven real-time composition where the musicians do not reproduce parts of a fixed score. Instead they have computer monitors that display random-generated playing instructions to perform one of five loosely-defined structures.

Peter Ablinger was born in Schwanenstadt, Austria in 1959. He first studied graphic arts and became enthused by free jazz. He completed his studies in composition with Gösta Neuwirth and Roman Haubenstock-Ramati in Graz and Vienna. Since 1982 he has lived in Berlin, where he founded the Ensemble Zwischentöne in 1988. In 1993 he was a visiting professor at the University of Music, Graz; he has worked as a freelance musician since 1990. Ablinger's compositions have been performed at several festivals, including the Berlin and Vienna Festwochen, Darmstadt, Donaueschingen, and festivals in Istanbul, Los Angeles, Oslo and Buenos Aires.

A distinctive feature of Ablinger's output is his use of noise without any kind of overt symbolism. He wrote that "Sounds are not simply sounds! They are here to distract the intellect and to soothe the senses". Ablinger's **Orgel und Weltempfänger** (1999) is a piece for organ and an FM-receiver tuned between two stations and receiving noise "from the ether".

Violine und Rauschen ("Veronica") is the first in the series of pieces for instruments and noise. This is a piece about complementary noise, about disappearing, about audibility. The language of form in this piece is one the composer has sometimes described as "suprematist", because of its use of "geometric" elements, like the surface, the line, the dot, which appear in sequences of a kind of "abstract" narration.

Mauricio Kagel, an avant-garde iconoclast who passed away earlier this year, wrote a set of pieces beginning with the letter 'R', entitled **Rrrrr.....**; 'Raga' and 'Rossignols enrhumés' (nightingales with the flu) are two organ pieces from this collection.

Karen Power's initial interest in composition came during her undergraduate degree in University College Cork (UCC), where she familiarised herself with as many musical styles as were on offer. This musical diversity continues to shape the character of her musical output. She completed an MA in Composition in UCC in 2000 and is currently working as a music technician in Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick.

Up until 2004, Karen Power's compositional output was predominantly instrumental, but she is currently exploring electro-acoustic composition, sound-art and live electronics. She continues to have her music performed throughout Europe, with one of her recent works, 'You Me', receiving its premiere in Serbia. She recently won an Experimentation Award with the Belltable Theatre, Limerick which enables a sound/video installation exhibition throughout November 2008.

Karen Power is an active member of the ICC (Irish Composer's Collective), the AIC (Association of Irish Composers) the SPNM (Society for the Promotion of New Music), and the IWMA (International Women in Music Association). *Cows, Coffee, Birds, Bees and a New Room* for double bass and CD was composed in 2007.

Wim de Ruiter (born in Heemstede, The Netherlands, 1943) studied organ with Piet Kee and thereafter composition with Ton de Leeuw. From 1973 until 1995 he was a teacher at the Conservatory of Amsterdam. He taught theory of 20th century music, and later also composition of electronic music. As from 1985 he was in charge of the electronic studio. He also taught for four years theory of 20th century music at the conservatory of Zwolle, where, in 1995, he became visiting lecturer for electronic music. Today he is active as a composer and as a member on various boards, including those of the International Organ Festival, Haarlem and the Federation of Artist Associations. Together with others he established the Foundation Conlon, pursuing the promotion of music in which acoustical instruments are electronically controlled. He is the author of *Compositietechnieken in de twintigste eeuw* (Composition techniques in the twentieth century), a book describing musical developments in the twentieth century. His oeuvre consists of solo pieces, chamber music, music for orchestra (including two concertos), songs, choral music, an opera and electronic music. In several projects Wim de Ruiter has collaborated with visual artists such as Jaap Egmond, Johan Cornelissen and Ruth van Veenen. In 1972 Wim de Ruiter won the first prize in the composition competition for organists in Zwolle with Music for organ (1972). In 1975 he was awarded the third prize during the Gaudeamus Music Week for his composition Re. In 1992 his chamber opera *Een Job van onze tijd* (A Job of our time) after a short story by J.M.A. Biesheuvel had its premiere, performed by the Kleine Opera Stichting (Small Opera Foundation) and the Delta Ensemble. In a 2001 a three-day festival was organized to showcase his music in the Westerkerk in Amsterdam. **Whim** for violin and organ was premiered by Daniel Rowland and Jos van der Kooy in 1997.

Essl's **Sequitur-III** (2008) for violin and computer represents an attempt to write a composition which takes advantage of the violin's idiosyncratic instrumental possibilities - and confront them with a real-time sound processing environment that has its own 'secret life'
Stops (2008)

Stops – Fergal Dowling

Stops was conceived in early 2008 when I began discussions with the organist Michael Quinn about the possibility of a collaboration on a piece for organ and electronics. *Stops* was written especially for the MIDI-enabled pipe organ at St. Teresa's Church, Clarendon Street. The organ's MIDI interface enables two-way communication between computer and organ and allows for the organ itself to be played remotely (including stop changes) by computer. This also permits the computer operator to capture accurately timed key movements and pedal movements during performance time. *Stops* makes extensive use of the possibilities afforded by the latter approach.

In *Stops* I use MIDI 'note-off' data (sent from the organ to the computer whenever a note is released) to trigger recording of the sounds left hanging in the air just after a note has ceased. We can also use this feature to capture other continuing sounds (for example, of the violin or double bass), or to allow the organist to control the replay of sampled materials. But it is perhaps the capture of these "ghost sounds", the marks left behind by the actual notated and sounded material, that is most ear-catching.

Stops is my most technically ambitious piece to date, involving the integration of a range of techniques and compositional processes that I have only used in isolation before now: spectral analysis; computer-aided composition; MIDI-based real-time interaction; real-time sampling and playback of spatially disposed instruments.

Stops reveals itself in a series of discrete sections, each of which is followed by representative samples of "stops" from that section, sometimes heard over other sounded materials, sometimes heard in isolation, and sometimes in accumulated layerings of elusive "after-sounds", the reverberations that remain after the music has stopped.