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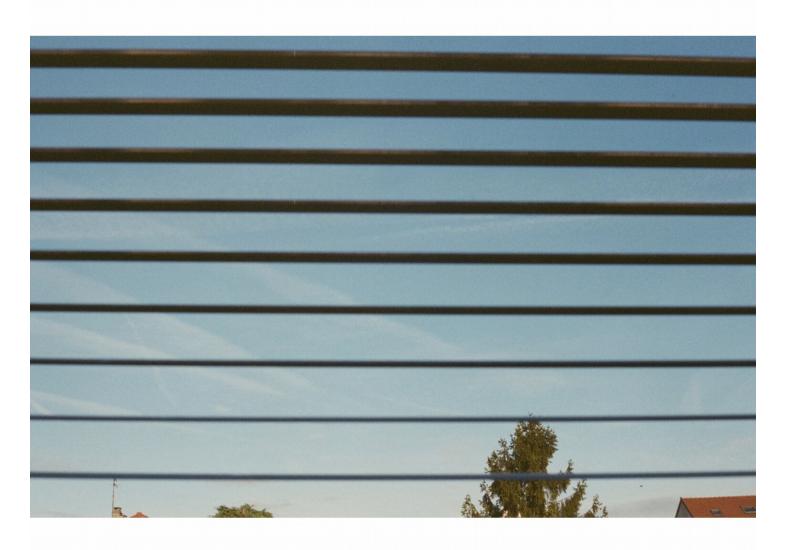## NEW MUSIC FOR BASSOON AND DOUBLE BASS

09/04/19, 7.30pm
IKLECTIK, SE1 7LG

Music by Tom Johnson, Mary Jane Leach, James Luff,
Alex Nikiporenko, Aaron Parker, Georgia Rodgers,
Kirill Shirokov, James Tenney and Maya Verlaak

Performed by Joe Qiu and James Oesi

eightforty.co.uk

PERFORMERS

Joe Qiu — Bassoon

I started off my musical life as a guitarist, drummer and recorder player, before finding my calling as a bassoonist aged 13. I studied at the Guildhall in London before heading to the Amsterdam and then The Hague, where I eventually completed my Masters degree in 2017.

Since moving back to my beloved South East London I have been lucky enough to make a living playing the bassoon, most recently with groups such as the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, BBC Concert Orchestra, Academy of Ancient Music, The Hague Philharmonic, La Nuova Musica, and the Dunedin Consort. With these groups I perform on a range of instruments, from my copy of a 1730's baroque bassoon to the 2011 modern instrument I am using this evening.

As well as my performing work, I teach 8 budding mini-bassoonists on Saturday mornings for the Wandsworth Music Service, and have loved being part of a range of other education projects, including those run by the OAE and the Multi-Story Orchestra, with whom I have spent many happy summers in the car park in Peckham. Opening the emails containing the new works specially written for tonight's concert has been a career highlight!

joeqiu.strikingly.com

James Oesi — Double Bass

Residing in the Netherlands, South African double bassist James Oesi is one of few forging a solo career with his instrument. As soloist he appears regularly on the most important stages and festivals of the Netherlands and as a chamber musician has played with ensembles such as Asko|Schönberg and Ensemble Modern.

James is founder of the Dutch Double Bass Festival, which had it's first edition in 2017 with among others, John Pattituci, Adam Ben Ezra, Edicson Ruiz and Gary Karr.

In May 2012 James graduated from the Royal Conservatoire of The Hague achieving full marks with distinction and the Fock Medaille for best exam of the year. In 2005, aged sixteen, James travelled from Johannesburg to Moscow to pursue studies at the acclaimed Moscow State Tchaikovsky Conservatoire under Lev Rakov. James was at the time the youngest student at the conservatoire and the only foreign double bassist.

jamesoesi.com

Mary Jane Leach
Feu de Joie

James Tenney
Beast

Kirill Shirokov
(for bassoon & double bass)

Alex Nikiporenko
American Music

INTERVAL

Aaron Parker
kasulitzè

James Luff
bassoon and double bass

Tom Johnson
Failing

Georgia Rodgers
Base

Maya Verlaak
Grounding

Mary Jane Leach — Feu de Joie
(solo bassoon and six multi-tracked bassoons, 1992)

Feu de Joie was written for bassoonist Shannon Peet and is an homage to the bassoon and its wonderful sound. I had always wanted to write for bassoon, but since my primary interest in writing is to hear what happens when notes are combined, I didn't want to write a solo piece for just one line of music, so I wrote *Feu de Joie* for six taped bassoons and one live bassoon (the concert format).

The six taped parts are equal and dependent, while the solo part is meant to be a solo with the tape as accompaniment. This is the first piece that I wrote for multiples in which I couldn't play the instrument; it is also the first piece I wrote using my computer. This is no coincidence; I was able to write very specifically for the bassoon's sound after I did a series of studies using a programmed bassoon sound that matched the real sound very closely, so I was able to hear what was going to happen without having a performer's specific knowledge. The taped bassoons combine to create a sound that exploits the unique qualities of the bassoon, creating combination and interference tones. I started with unison pitches that created the richest sound and built the piece from there. Most of the subsequent pitches and phrases that I wrote occurred naturally before I notated them later on in the piece, and these in turn created others. So, in effect, the nature of the bassoon and its natural sound determined the direction of the piece. The solo part starts off by playing dissonant tones and then picks out notes that are being heard on the tape, continuing on to play a melody that "floats" above the taped bassoons.

mjleach.com

James Tenney — Beast
(solo double bass, 1971)

Beast is the first in a series of musical scorecards (postcards) composed by James Tenney. The piece explores dual resonance on a single instrument, the double bass, using two strings. One pitch is fixed (A), the other is in motion from unison down about a minor third and back, causing, through slowly changing beat frequencies, an oscillating resultant, and other effects. The work is dedicated to Buell Neidlinger.

Kirill Shirokov — (for bassoon & double bass) (2019)

Exploring the experience of automatic-like writing in the piece I put some little subtle events in the score. Decisions here are not formally coincidental but spontaneous in a way of being based on elusive thoughts and feelings. So the piece finally is a sounding trace of discrete inner narration. The result probably is an intimate monologue for two players as well as a distinctly structured composition made of separated sound events.

soundcloud.com/kirillshirokov

Alex Nikiporenko — American Music (bassoon and double bass, 2019)

The last six American presidents – Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, Barack Obama and Donald Trump – ruled over a period of dramatic change: from the decline and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union, to 9/11 and the War on Terror, and to the growing political polarization of the recent years.

"American Music" looks at one aspect of their presidencies that is similar – their oaths of office.

alexnikiporenko.com

Aaron Parker — kasulitzè
(bassoon, double bass, objects and effects pedals, 2019)

"I held a yellow twilight in my head.
I saw the glow of it's after-
image, green & blue, circle the globes of apple.
I walked upon the clods
of cumulus, & saw a "glory" moving always before me
on the grass. And melody came, in openings
of the air"

(from The Book of the Green Man, by Ronald Johnson,1967)

aaron-parker.com

James Luff — bassoon and double bass
(2019)

This piece aims at a sense of steady progress, always changing and developing yet without any clear goal. It is made from fragments of various lengths which loop in strict cycles. These loops are then combined, layered, arranged and disrupted intuitively to form the final piece.

jamesluff.co.uk

Tom Johnson — Failing: a very difficult piece for double bass
(1975)

Failing is an entertaining and theatrical narration through "a very difficult piece". Turning 80 this year, Johnson is renowned for his rigorous and exploratory pieces of great clarity, laying logical processes bare for all to hear.

editions75.com

Georgia Rodgers — Base
(bassoon and double bass, 2019)

This piece is constructed from several simple counting processes which work in parallel to create a more complex structure. The intention is to foreground the rich sound of the instruments themselves, alone and in combination with each other.

polarpatterns.wordpress.com

Maya Verlaak — Grounding
(bassoon and double bass, 2019)

The light is the score.

The light will change brightness. There are 5 levels of brightness.

Each brightness level is directly connected to the amount of voltage the light receives. Each voltage is directly related to a frequency (e.g. 220V = 50Hertz).

A fundamental frequency of a specific voltage is connected to a series of pitches, a specific harmony.

Each of these 5 different voltages can be grounded by performing the 5 corresponding fundamental notes. The specific brightness of the light and the sound of its harmony are the musicians' guide to find these fundamental notes.

If a correct fundamental is performed, the voltage will be grounded and the light will turn off.

maya.ricercata.org

We would like to thank **Ilme Vysniauskaite** for the use of her photo and **Iklectik** for hosting our concert.