



ST JOHN'S SMITH SQUARE

Sunday 18th October 2020

Occupy the Pianos

Rolf Hind - piano

Loré Lixenberg – voice

Sasha Balmazi-Owen - film



Occupy the Pianos has been made possible thanks to generous support from
The Marchus Trust and the **RVW Trust**.

RVWTrust

OCCUPY THE PIANOS 2020

The concert is designed as an uninterrupted sequence, mixing recorded sound, live sound and visuals.

The Music

David Hindley: Huia - a reconstruction of the song of the extinct New Zealand bird.
(sound, with film)

Sasha Balmazi Owen - Occupy the piano film 1

Maurice Ravel plays Ravel Oiseaux Tristes (film: archive, from Youtube)

Loré Lixenberg: Robin (voice plus pre-recorded sound/film)

Rolf Hind: Bhutani (creatures) for solo piano (first performance)

Avatara - he who descends

Bhujanganam - winding-going; Snake

Khaga - Skygone: Bird

Isidore Isou: Ligne Unique de Consonne 1966 (solo voice)

Chris Hutchings: I was listening to a pogrom (text by Michael Rosen) (voice and piano)

Niels Rønsholdt: Thoughts on the Duration of Exile (text by Brecht) (voice and piano)

Charles Koechlin, from Les Heures Persanes for solo piano

La Caravane (reve, pendant la sieste)

L'Escalade Obscur

David Hindley: Organum - Lullula Arborea 13.5.61 (the woodlark) solo piano

Robert Schumann: Six songs from Liederkreis

Alison Willis: Kintsugi (first performance) solo piano

Kintsugi is the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery with lacquer dusted with gold, beautifying the breakage and making it a part of the object's history, more precious than it was before.

Per Nørgård: Remembering, solo piano

Elaine Mitchener: Tree Scream (first performance) voice and piano

David Hindley: Dodo (song reconstruction, pre-recorded)

Ravel: Oiseaux Tristes from Miroirs, solo piano with film

Pauline Oliveros: Telepathic Improvisation

Sasha Balmazi-Owen: Occupy the piano film 2

In this concert, designed as a taster and prelude to a full iteration of the Occupy The Pianos Festival next year, Hind, Lixenberg and Balmazi-Owen, design and describe a personal journey through some of the preoccupations the future festival will dwell on: migrations - of humans, of birds and animals.

The time and mood of lockdown is also reflected in fierce and angry music, ruminative music, and especially the increased awareness of our relationship with nature (Schumann and Hindley.) In an uninterrupted 90 minute sequence these moods are examined and played out, with sound and film to complement and comment on the journey.

As ever with Occupy there's a bracing mix of brand new, with premieres from Hind, Willis and Mitchener; little-performed - Koechlin's astonishing piano pieces from the 1910s, for example – and classics in a new context: songs from Schumann whose direct yet mysterious Eichendorff texts encapsulate Man's age old fascination, horror and intoxication with the natural world.

Come and join us for this cathartic sequence that opens with the sound of a mythical bird, and ends with the audience creating the sounds, as we remind ourselves of the beauty, outrage, and outrageous beauty of music.

The Team

Rolf Hind, piano <http://www.rolfhind.com/>

Loré Lixenberg, voice <http://lorelixenberg.net>

Sasha Balmazi-Owen, film

The composers

David Hindley <https://twitter.com/wrotebirdsong?lang=en>

Elaine Mitchener <https://www.elainemitchener.com/>

Alison Willis <http://www.alisonwillis.com/>

Chris Hutchings <http://www.hutchingsmusic.co.uk/>

Niels Rønsholdt <http://www.nielsroensholdt.dk/>

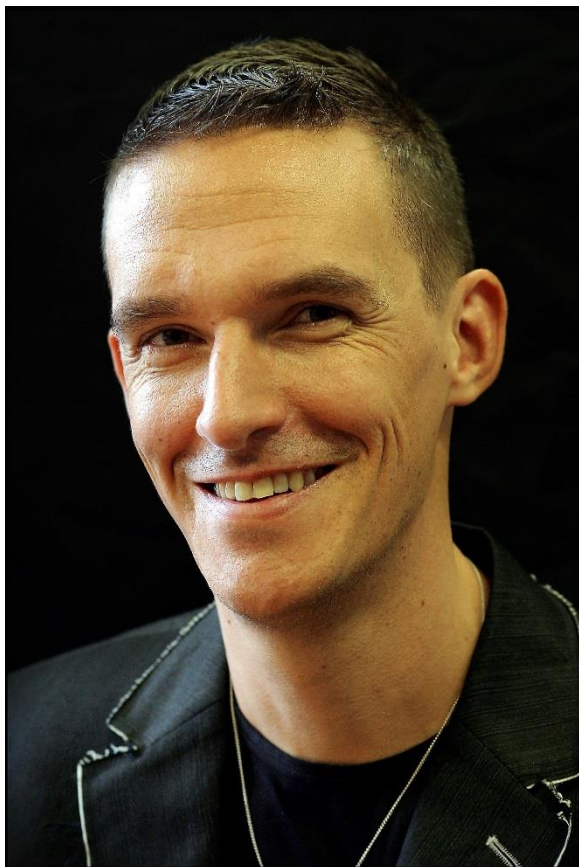
Pauline Oliveros https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pauline_Oliveros

Charles Koechlin https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Koechlin

Per Nørgård <https://www.theguardian.com/music/tomserviceblog/2012/jul/30/per-norgard-contemporary-musicguide>

Eichendorff - In a Castle

Up there at his look-out
The old knight has fallen asleep;
Rain-storms pass overhead,
And the wood stirs through the portcullis.
Beard and hair matted together,
Ruff and breast turned to stone,
For centuries he's sat up there
In his silent cell.
Outside it's quiet and peaceful,
All have gone down to the valley,
Forest birds sing lonely songs
In the empty window-arches.
Down there on the sunlit Rhine
A wedding-party's sailing by,
Musicians strike up merrily,
And the lovely bride weeps.



Rolf Hind's career has established him as a major force as soloist, composer, recording artist, chamber musician, pedagogue, collaborator and concert planner. He has given recitals at many of Europe's leading new music festivals, and at Carnegie Hall, Sydney Opera House and on tours of Korea, Taiwan and Cuba.

Rolf has worked with many leading conductors, including Ashkenazy, Knussen, Rattle, David Robertson and Andrew Davis and appeared seven times at the BBC Proms. Orchestras he has worked with include the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Munich Philharmonic, Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Malmö Symphony, and Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, many appearances with the London Sinfonietta, the LPO, RPO, and with all the BBC orchestras.

Composers who have worked with Rolf or written for him include Tan Dun, John Adams, Helmut Lachenmann, Unsuk Chin, Elliott Carter, George Benjamin and James MacMillan. Rolf's compositions include a piano concerto, *Maya-Sesha* (nominated for a British Composer's Award) and a concerto for accordion, premiered at London's Barbican Centre. Much of his music is inspired by India, where he travels often, while drawing on the technical adventurousness of performers including himself.

An interest in new dance has resulted in collaborations including with choreographer Rui Horta on a large-scale tour of a new work, *Danza Preparata*, featuring John Cage's *Sonatas and Interludes* for prepared piano, with dancer.

Rolf curates and performs in *Occupy The Pianos*, a new piano festival which has become a regular feature at St John's Smith Square in London. The festival now enters its sixth iteration, having also travelled to France and in future to Denmark. He initiated a project in March 2020 which has now produced nearly 100 new short piano pieces from composers far and wide, intended as responses to lockdown, a fascinating range of pieces which he is now including in recital.

His first opera, *Lost in Thought*, a 'Mindfulness opera' commissioned by Mahogany Opera Group was premiered at The Barbican in London. Current composition plans include a major new piece commissioned by the BBC Singers and featuring Robin Michael, cello, plus an operatic project about the poet Sufi Rumi, working with Rolf's long-time collaborator Frederick Wake-Walker and the Anglo-US poet Dante Mischeaux.



A former Theatre de Complicite performer, and alongside a formal vocal and composition training, **Loré Lixenberg** also performed in stand-up as 'The Opera Device' in Kluuub Zarathstra with Stewart Lee and Simon Munnery. She's sung work by a host of contemporary composers (Rolf Hind, Georges Aperghis, Bent Sørensen, Helmut Oehring, Mark-Anthony Turnage, Karen Power, György Ligeti, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Beat Furrer, Harrison Birtwistle, Peter Maxwell Davies, Earle Brown, Luc Ferrari, Frederic Acquaviva Pauline Oliveros and Gerald Barry), often working closely with the composers themselves also performing with artists Sam Belinfante, STELARC, Bruce Mclean, ORLAN, Squib Box (Neil Luck/Adam de la Cour/Federico Reuben) and David Toop. Lixenbergs' own compositions reflect her obsession with organic participatory

principles, new technologies and structures found in the natural history and include BIRD, SINGLR, Adipose, Innanacara among others, she is a Phd student at York studying with Federico Reuben. Since the start of 2018, she's declared her whole life to be "an extension of her voice and singing practice... therefore to be considered an extended vocal." She runs La Plaque Tournante with composer Frederic Acquaviva.



Sasha Balmazi-Owen is a Russian-Welsh film & theatre maker. His recent credits include the film 'Steel to Smoke' for Nonclassical with Yfat Soul Zisso, and collaboration 'Physical Education' for BCMG with Robert Reid Allan, as well as the opera film 'Death Visits Mererid' for Random Acts. He has also worked with Institute of Contemporary Art, Copenhagen Opera House, Mahogany Opera Group, David Toop, Richard Court, Jonathan Goddard and Zoë Martlew. He has collaborated with Rolf Hind and Loré Lixenberg since 2015, fusing opera, music and film.

St John's Smith Square

The coronavirus pandemic has had a devastating effect on people's lives and their livelihoods. St John's Smith Square is a registered charity, We receive no regular public funding with all our revenue provided for by hiring out the hall, ticket revenue, catering receipts and generous donations. When we closed our doors on 16th March 2020 we immediately lost over 80% of our income.

We are delighted to now be able to re-open and to start to share the joy of live music in these challenging times whilst providing a vital base for artists to once again perform. Ticket sales alone only cover approximately 30% of the operating costs for these concerts. If you have enjoyed today and are able to consider making an additional donation your support would be greatly appreciated. Details of ways in which you can help can be found on our website at: <https://www.sjss.org.uk/donations>. You can also make a simple donation by TEXT MESSAGE:

Text STJOHNS to 70450 to donate £10

Texts cost £10 plus one standard rate message

Thank you for your support.

In accordance with the requirements of Westminster City Council persons shall not be permitted to sit or stand in any gangway.

The taking of photographs and use of recording equipment is strictly forbidden without formal consent from St John's Smith Square.

Smoking is not permitted anywhere in St John's Smith Square.

Please ensure that all digital watch alarms, pagers, and mobile phones are switched off.

Please stay in touch with us online

Twitter: @StJohnsSmithSq
Facebook: /StJohnsSmithSquare
You Tube: /StJohnsSmithSquare
Instagram: /StJohnsSmithSquare
Vimeo: /StJohnsSmithSquare

info@sjss.org.uk
www.sjss.org.uk

Administration

Richard Heason – Director
Lydia Brookes – General Manager
Kelly Etridge – Box Office Manager
David Hackney – House Manager
Mary Clements – Bookkeeper

Board of Trustees

Dr Martin Smith – Chairman
The Countess of Chichester – Vice-Chairman
Lady Brewer
Professor Peter Holgate
Claudia Pendred
Jessica Simor QC

Registered Office: St John's Smith Square Charitable Trust, St John's Smith Square, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HA

Registered in England | Company No. 3028678 | Registered Charity No. 1045390