

Program Notes:

ADAM ROBERTS - IMPULSE FRACTURE

Impulse Fracture (2006) is a piece about the *joie de vivre* of gesture, energy, color, line, and formal shape. Scored for a small “orchestra” of flute, clarinet, horn, trombone, violin, viola, and cello, *Impulse Fracture* begins with a declamatory, fractured “E”, out of which spirals of energy shoot upwards, each charting its own course. This opening gesture serves as a metaphorical seed for the kind of activity that ensues: simple formal shapes are filled with a thick *impasto* made up of individual strands of instrumental gesture. Throughout its ca. 7 minutes, the piece moves through several terrains, including playful, jagged rhythms, murmuring streams, and full timbre/harmonies, to name a few. *Impulse Fracture* was composed for Ensemble Fa; this is the third performance of the work.

– Adam Roberts

STRATIS MINAKAKIS - SKIAGRAFIES IV

“Skiagrafies” (shadow etchings in Greek) is a cycle of works that approach sound through the perspective of shadows. It consists of four autonomous works: “Skiagrafies I” (for Partch instruments and saxophone quartet), “Skiagrafies II” (for flute and piano amplification), “Skiagrafies III” (for wind ensemble), and “Skiagrafies IV” (for chamber ensemble).

All four works approach the concept of shadows through two principal angles: the exploration of particularly minute gradations of sounds, and the reflections and retraction of the musical object in continuously evolving environments.

“Skiagrafies IV” adds a psychological dimension to the concert of shadows. The work traces its origin to a quotation of Odysseus in Sophocles’ “Ajax”: “I see that us the living are nothing but ghosts, hollow shadows.” In “Skiagrafies IV” an otherworldly, repeating sound signal becomes the connective tissue around which an array of subconscious memories gradually unfold.

- Stratis Minakakis

PHILIPPE HUREL - SO NAH SO FERN

So nah so fern («so close, so far»), is a 2015 piece composed as a tribute to the composer Luc Brewaeys, who died the same year. It is part of a series of pieces - Some traces in the air, D'autre part, Ritual trio- that have to do with disappearance and mourning. The title refers to the feeling we can have about loved ones who have left us but remain very present in our memories despite

their physical disappearance. Musically, the piece is organized as a single energetic process followed by a more meditative coda.

During this process, a transformation of characteristic and differentiated musical materials and situations takes place: violent bass clusters played repeatedly by the prepared pianist and the *amtam*, slow harmonic episodes countered by the low impacts of the piano and the bass clarinet in unison, «hazy» polyphonies of the strings and the bass clarinet, and the «faint» sound of the piano. The latter end up by melting down and shortening their duration into a swirling rhythmic loop, so that the listener is left with only a memory of their original constitution.

The coda, slow and rather meditative, then appears as a kind of poetic space, almost improvised, in which the material and the musical situations of the piece have disappeared. All that remains is a distant memory linked to the texture and the playing modes borrowed from the previous process. Only the impact of the piano in the low register remains, for a short time, without the unison of the bass clarinet.

JOHN AYLWARD - SLIP

In 2018, Court-circuit toured the states and performed at Clark. On their concert, they performed a piece by Christophe Bertrand that made an impression on me. Bertrand's use of long-range polyrhythms seems to me to be fresh, energizing, and always suspenseful. After much study of Bertrand's musical language, I composed a work of my own, *Ananke*, recently recorded by Klangforum Wien, that responds to the influence Bertrand had on my music. This new work written for Court-Circuit, *Slip*, shares much of the same rhythmic ideas that surfaced for me in *Ananke*, all inspired by Bertrand. *Slip* is a playful work that uses fast-running passages over slowly unfolding harmonies. The piano plays a central role in its harmonic impulses and resonances. It is a piece that shifts between airy textures, moments of ferocity, and contemplative spaces.

About the Performers:

ECCE ARTS

ecce is a group of our generation's most accomplished performers who are committed to presenting captivating and visionary performances of contemporary music. Through concerts, symposia, and other community-centered events, ECCE shares new forms of engagement in modern music with a diverse international audience.

ecce has realized personal and refined interpretations of works by composers such as Georg Friedrich Haas, Philippe Hurel, Lee Hyla, Helmut Lachenmann, Fabien Levy, Hanspeter

Kyburz, Louis Karchin and many others. Every year, the ensemble deepens its relationships with prominent composers and brings their work to new audiences.

ecce's annual residency is the Etchings Festival in Auvillar, France. There, the ensemble shares diverse contemporary repertoire, as well as new works by emerging international composers, with European audiences.

In addition to the Etchings Festival, ecce continues to expand its residency and workshop programming, holding events at The Goethe-Institut Boston; The La Pietra Forum in Florence, Italy; the NEON Festival; Virginia Commonwealth University; and The University of Campinas at Sao Paulo, Brazil. These opportunities continue to connect ecce with the most diverse cross-sections of society, sharing with them the profound aesthetic experience of contemporary music, and the joy of its creation.

COURT-CIRCUIT

Composer Philippe Hurel and conductor Pierre-André Valade founded Court-circuit ensemble in 1991. Created by a composer for composers, Court-circuit has been a place of experimentation, an artistic project promoting total freedom.

Court-circuit owes its nervous, rhythmic and incisive identity to its musicians and conductor Jean Deroyer who serve the project with determination and virtuosity.

Court-circuit has been invited by important festivals (Maerzmuzik festivals, Ultima, Printemps des Arts, Musica Electronica Nova, Traiettorie, Gaïda) and venues of French creation and dissemination: Agora festivals, Manifesto, Novelum, Aujourd'hui Musiques in Perpignan, Messiaen in the Land of Meije, the Reims Opera, the Metz Arsenal, the Caen and Besançon theaters, and the Paris Opera.

Court-circuit is also involved in pluridisciplinary projects that go beyond the sphere of contemporary music. After working with the Paris Opera for choreographic creations (Preljocaj, Lagraa), the ensemble had a fruitful partnership with the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord (Paris), where it created two chamber operas (The Second Woman – Grand Prize of Critics 2011 – and Mimi – 2014 – both composed by Frédéric Verrières and staged by Guillaume Vincent, before beginning a collaboration with the Opera Comique (Paris) where it participates in the opera La Princesse légère composed by Violeta Cruz and directed by Jos Houben (premiere in 2017).

In parallel, Court-circuit created several ciné-concerts such as Paris qui dort (a René Clair film, with music by Yan Maresz) and Les hommes le dimanche (a Robert Siodmak film, with music by Alexandros Markeas).

Court-circuit asserts its pedagogic mission by regularly working with the Paris Conservatory and the Ile- de-France conservatories. In 2012, it settled in the Hauts-de-Seine, where it conducts numerous projects with music institutions and national distribution structures.

The ensemble is regularly invited to participate in European programs, like Integra (2006- 2011)

dedicated to mixed music, and Re: new music project (2009-2011). Court-circuit's discography features about twenty records that accurately reflect his extensive repertoire: Reynolds, Bertrand, Blondeau, D'Adamo, Fineberg, Grisey, Hervé, Hurel, Leroux, Matalon Monnet, Murail, Schneller, Buchala, Jodlowski... Named several times "Favorite" by the Académie Charles Cros, these CDs were recognized by numerous awards (Le Monde de la Musique, Diapason d'Or, 10 de Répertoire).

Court-circuit receives financial support from Direction régionale des affaires culturelles d'Île-de-France - Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, Région Île-de-France, Mairie de Courbevoie, SACEM, SPEDIDAM and from MMC - Maison de la musique contemporaine.

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