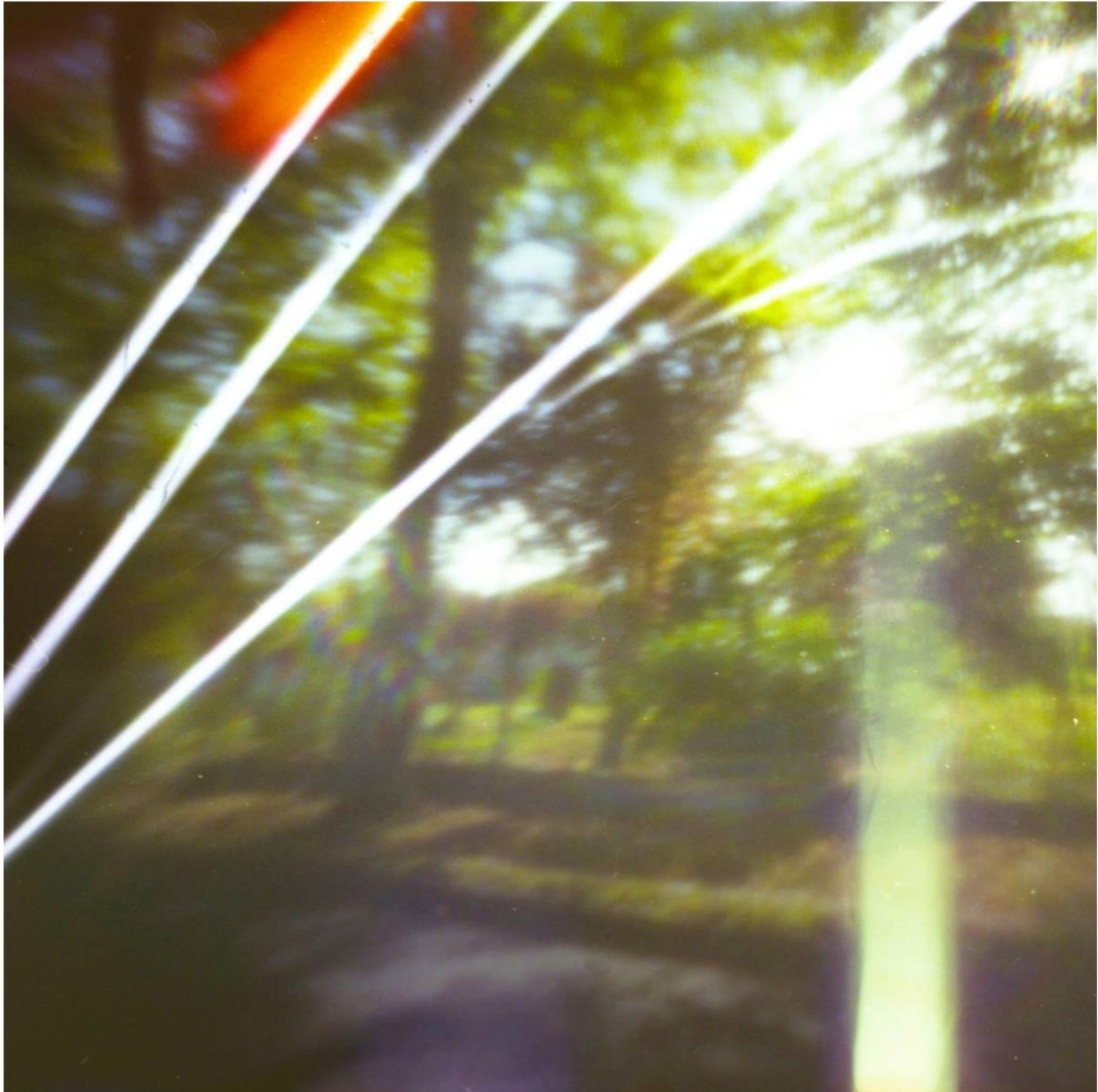


840

NEW MUSIC FOR VIOLA AND CELLO

07/07/18 7.30pm St James' Islington, N1 8PF



Music by: Colin Alexander / Amanda Feery /
Eva-Maria Houben / James Luff /
Alex Nikiporenko / Marc Sabat /
Garrett Sholdice

Jennifer Ames Alexander *Viola*
Colin Alexander *Cello*

eightforty.co.uk

Amanda Feery
Square Movement

Orlando Gibbons
Lute Duet No.3

James Luff
DUET

Marc Sabat
Plainsound Duet

Garrett Sholdice
Gymel

INTERVAL

Orlando Gibbons
Lute Duet No.4

Marc Sabat
Claudius Ptolemy

Colin Alexander
JI

Eva-Maria Houben
à l'unisson X

Orlando Gibbons
Lute Duet No.1

Alex Nikiporenko
Carré

Amanda Feery – Square Movement (2016)

This piece is a result of a significant change in my work routine, which has gone from having an expanse of time in front of me to work on a piece; enough time to walk into walls, stare into space, and toy around with a compositional idea, to these very short, high intensity bursts of writing. The piece is made up of small blocks of disjointed musical material, composed weeks apart during a stolen hour here and there. Parts in the piece square up to each other rather than move seamlessly through time.

amandafeery.com

Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625) – Lute Duets (arr. Alexander)

Gibbons was one of the leading composers of vocal, keyboard and ensemble music in Tudor and Jacobean England, and from 1603 until his death he was a musician in the Chapel Royal. Gibbons tended to use small rhythmic and melodic motives, sometimes in dense counterpoint. Despite his voice-leading often implying such contrapuntal richness, his use of reduced textures also allows for great clarity. Despite obvious differences, we feel that there's an interesting affinity between many aspects of Gibbons' work and some of the composers on tonight's programme.

James Luff – DUET (2018)

While I was writing this piece, I spent a lot of time pinned to the sofa, holding my newborn son and watching art documentaries on YouTube. This quote from Jasper Johns particularly stuck in my mind:

“The meaning may just be that the painting exists, and then like anything disturbs people or calms people, or what they find to do with it. It's in the space they are and they react to it, as they would to anything else”

Similarly, I simply aimed to create a certain kind of musical object, one balanced between stasis and change, automatic processes and decision-making. The music remains quite static, yet gradually and organically develops. However, rather than thinking of this as development that pushes forwards in a conventional sense, I prefer to think of it as a kind of development that edges sideways.

jamesluff.co.uk

Marc Sabat – Plainsound Duet (2018)

Plainsound Duet was written in 2018. A companion piece to my earlier duo *Gioseffo Zarlino*, it similarly explores two possible melodic modes which divide the major third into wholetones, one larger (9/8) and one smaller (10/9). In this case, the counterpoint invites the middle note to continually change its tuning by a syntonic comma, sometimes higher, sometimes lower, by following a path suggested by simple consonances.

marcsabat.com

Garrett Sholdice – Gymel (2018)

"Gymel" is a term associated with two-part counterpoint in Medieval and Renaissance vocal music, especially in England. In particular, it often refers to the "dividing" of one part into two parts. The piece is dedicated to James Luff, Molly Maitland, and Joseph Apollo Maitland.

garrettsholdice.ie

Marc Sabat – Claudius Ptolemy (2008)

Claudius Ptolemy was written in 2008 for Johnny Chang and Jessica Catron. Tempo is free: as swiftly as accurate intonation permits, but taking time whenever necessary. Each pitch may be held whenever needed to clearly focus the sounds. For the most part, overlapping tones produce 'tuneable intervals', which may be precisely realised by ear.

There are only seven pitch classes used in this piece, forming a scale tuned according to the tetrachord of Claudius Ptolemy's tense diatonic mode. This ancient scale is one of the earliest expressions of a tuning system called 5-limit just intonation, in which pitches are related by simple frequency ratios of primes 2, 3 and 5 only. The music systematically explores the melodic and harmonic intervals of this scale, each in turn.

The two individual voices may also be played as solos, and instrumentation may be varied on each repeat.

**Colin Alexander – JI
(2018)**

Ji is a duet of reflections and connections embracing the warm sound world of these two instruments.

**Eva-Maria Houben – à l'unisson X
(2015)**

à l'unisson X for 2-6 strings is one piece within the series *à l'unisson*, all realising different kinds of performing in unison.

Why a French title? I got many ideas listening to music of Hector Berlioz who loved the unison sound. It's a sound that often opens a great space of amazing colours and overtones.

All performers play the same pitches (nearly) together, and the resulting sound may be different from and greater than the sum of the individual sounds.

evamariahouben.de

**Alex Nikiporenko – Carré
(2018)**

Carré is a duet exploring resonant sonorities created by open strings and natural harmonics. A simple number-based process orders the material into symmetrical music squares (16-note segments), which are themselves ordered into a larger square-like structure.

alexnikiporenko.com

BIOGRAPHIES

Jenny Ames Alexander – Viola

Jenny has worked extensively with the New London Orchestra, Bath Philharmonia, Brandenburg Sinfonia, Orchestra of the Swan and the London Contemporary Orchestra. She is a member of the newly formed string chamber orchestra the 12 Ensemble, and has performed with them at St James Church, Piccadilly. She is also a member of the Pythagoras Ensemble, a virtuosic string chamber orchestra, with whom she recently had a residency at the Vault Festival in Waterloo.

Recent commitments include working with The Aurora Orchestra, touring with Percussionist Manu Delago and ongoing collaboration with composition students of the RCM. Jenny has also performed with Artists such as Bjork, Bonobo and The Cinematic Orchestra.

Colin Alexander – Cello

Colin's notable appearances as a solo cellist have included 'The Calling' by Haroon Mirza and Shiva Feshareki at the Barbican, Brahms' Double Concerto at St James' Piccadilly, Debussy's Cello Sonata at King's Place, various projects with the Mercury Quartet and a number of chamber music concerts with Tre Voci and the Ossian Ensemble. Orchestral performances since 2014 have seen Colin appear with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and as co-principal in the English Chamber Orchestra and Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra.

Colin has written pieces for Mark Simpson, the Francoise-Green Duo the Mercury Quartet, the London Contemporary Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra and the Marryat Players String Orchestra. Colin was privileged to transcribe music for Montserrat Caballé's final concert in Madrid Arena and has twice arranged music for the English Chamber Orchestra. In 2015 Colin transcribed, arranged and performed tracks by grime-artist Zimbo for Penny Woolcock's 'Utopia' at the Roundhouse and is currently working with flamenco dance company Dotdotdot for a new show at Sadler's Wells.

A m a n d a F e e r y

amandafeery.com

"I'm interested in writing for anything and anyone that reinforces my musical ideas. Recently, I've been preoccupied with the connection between creativity and everyday activity - everyday flaws, fears, and passions, and how these can translate into something musically meaningful."

Amanda is an Irish composer, working with acoustic, electronic, and improvised music, and who has worked with an extensive number of leading ensembles and performers throughout the world.

E v a - M a r i a H o u b e n

evamariahouben.de

"Houben is an archaeologist of silence. She is a musicologist and a composer; her study of the past fuels her experiments in the present. In her publications, Houben has excavated the historical silences, drawing attention to a past canon of unheard moments, stretching from John Cage to the Second Viennese School to even as far back as Berlioz and Bruckner."

Eva-Maria Houben has been performing works for the organ for more than 30 years. Her compositions are published by "edition wandelweiser", Haan. Since 1993 Professor Houben has been lecturing at Dortmund University's "Institut für Musik und Musikwissenschaft", with both music theory and contemporary music as her focus.

J a m e s L u f f

jamesluff.co.uk

James lives in Norwich, works in London and co-curates the 840 concert series with Alex. He studied music at Goldsmiths, followed by philosophy at UCL. Over the years he has received private tuition in composition from Kevin Volans, Walter Zimmermann, Laurence Crane and Matteo Fargion.

Alex Nikiporenko

alexnikiporenko.com

Born in Moscow in 1990, Alex received his formal education at Chetham's School of Music, King's College London and the Royal College of Music, where his studies were supported by a Leverhulme Postgraduate Studentship and the Derek Hill Foundation. Since 2014, Alex has studied privately with Laurence Crane.

In 2015, Alex co-founded the 840 concert series. Over fifteen concerts 840 has programmed music by fifty-two composers and has been generously supported by the Arts Council, Hinrichsen Foundation and the RVW Trust.

Marc Sabat

marcsabat.com

Canadian composer of Ukrainian descent, Marc Sabat has been based in Berlin since 1999. He makes pieces for concert and installation settings, drawing inspiration from investigations of the sounding and perception of Just Intonation and of various music traditions — folk, experimental and classical. Sabat studied composition, violin and mathematics at the University of Toronto, at the Juilliard School in New York, and at McGill University, as well as working privately with Malcolm Goldstein, James Tenney and Walter Zimmermann. He teaches composition and the theory and practice of intonation at the Universität der Künste Berlin.

Garrett Sholdice

garrettsholdice.ie
ergodos.ie

Garrett Sholdice (b. 1983) is an Irish composer. His music has been described as possessing an “exquisite delicacy” (*The Irish Times*). Notable recent works include his third string quartet, *Das Blaue Licht*, premiered at David Lang’s Festival of Music, and *The Root and the Crown*, a twenty-minute work for ensemble, commissioned by Crash Ensemble. Sholdice is a co-director of Ergodos (ergodos.ie), a Dublin-based production house and record label that he founded with Benedict Schlepper-Connolly in 2006. Based in the UK, and then between Dublin and Berlin for much of the last decade, Sholdice has been fully based in Dublin since 2016. He has lectured in composition at Trinity College, Dublin, and currently lectures at Pulse College, Dublin.



840 wishes to thank **St. James' Church**, especially vicar **John Burniston**, for hosting our concert, as well as **Signature Brew** for their generous support.