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Hard Rain Soloist Ensemble

Tuesday 19 November 2024
4pm, Huddersfield Town Hall

Hard Rain Soloist Ensemble:

Aisling Agnew flutes

Sarah Watts clarinets

Darragh Morgan violin

David McCann cello

Daniel Browell piano

Irish forests, rivers and peatland

The programme is conceived as a unified approach to the intertwining of instrumental and environmental sound worlds. The three composers are field recording practitioners focusing on sites which are sensitive to environmental change. These sites are the focus of continuous listening and recording practices over a number of years, revealing specificity in sonic character. Each piece deals with a particular ecosystem: forests, rivers and peatlands – unique habitats which share sonic qualities as well as presenting distinct features. The sites are across the counties of Antrim, Donegal and Wicklow, spanning a mix of public and private spaces with a range of human engagement and intervention. The works cultivate active listening for both performers and audiences – a kind of listening in the field.

Robert Coleman (Ireland, 1989)

These hills used to be forests (2024) 15' **World Premiere**

These hills used to be forests guides the listener through the soundscape of the new Glas-na-Bradán Wood in the Belfast Hills. This work is an extension of my ongoing exploration into ecological soundwalks, adapting the experience of these walks for the concert stage. Through narration and field recordings of local birdlife, the piece delves into our relationship with the natural world and the

transformations occurring in the hills over time. Musical material is generated from these recorded sounds and the performers are encouraged to listen in real-time and provide their own response. © Robert Coleman

Lara Weaver (Britain, 1998)

Soft Ground (2024) 12' World Premiere

Soft Ground is a re-sounding of the Northern Irish bog. Inspired by field recordings taken from within the miry layers of peat, the piece derives sonic material from the subtle under-sounds of the wetlands – a vibrant, delicately explosive sound world of bubbling and crackling. Then, just as peat forms when material does not fully decay in acidic and anaerobic conditions, this sonic material lingers and seeps over in a generous build-up of layers, alternatively permeating and disrupting, settling together in a sonic swamp. © Lara Weaver

Pedro Rebelo (Portugal, 1972)

Crana (2024) 15' World Premiere

Crana is a sonic exploration of the River Crana in Donegal, Ireland. Through its short 12-mile path, the river has an impressive variety of soundscapes, reflecting various environments and water flows. The work uses immersive field recordings as the base for deriving instrumental materials which invite active listening and interaction between the performers through a score that negotiates relationships between fixed and fluid musical ideas. © Pedro Rebelo

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