

ANAM AT THE CONVENT: ELISION ENSEMBLE

FRIDAY 20 JUNE 7PM
ROSINA AUDITORIUM, ABBOTSFORD CONVENT

Franco DONATONI (1927-2000) <i>Spiri</i> (1977)	10'
Liza LIM (b. 1966) <i>Veil</i> (1999)	10'
Isabel MUNDY (b. 1963) <i>Le Voyage</i> (1996) [†]	22'
INTERVAL	20'
Improvisation	10'
Iannis XENAKIS (1922-2001) <i>Eonta</i> (1963-1964)	20'
Dariya MAMINOVA (b. 1988) <i>Melchior</i> (2021)	11'

ELISION Ensemble
ANAM Musicians

Approximate duration: 2 hours (includes a 20-minute interval)

[†] *Australian Premiere*

Members of ELISION in residence this week include Daryl Buckley (Artistic Director), Aaron Cassidy (conductor), Paula Rae (flute), Richard Haynes (clarinet), Tristram Williams (trumpet), Benjamin Marks (trombone), Alexander Waite (piano), Peter Neville (percussion), Rohan Dasika (bass)

Isabel Mundy's Le Voyage, published by Breitkopf & Härtel, has been supplied by Clear Music Australia Pty Ltd as the hire agents in Australia.

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TO LISTEN OR TO PERCEIVE?

THE INTELLECTUAL GAUNTLET OF NEW MUSIC

"The qualification 'beautiful' or 'ugly' makes no sense for sound, nor for the music that derives from it; the quantity of intelligence carried by the sounds must be the true criterion of the validity of a particular music." —Iannis Xenakis, 1971

Perception is perhaps the most fundamental part of what makes something art – how an object, event or merging of the two across a set of dimensions interacts with human senses, experience and understanding. Johann Sebastian Bach explored perception through counterpoint and fugues, creating an illusion of space between each line. Joseph Haydn did too, displacing ideas in time and subverting held expectations, often to humorous effects. Not to mention visual artists, architects, chefs: each using the gap between their realisation and your perception to create experience. This is the window in which we find each of today's composers operating in, using their ever-expanding toolbox to construct and deconstruct, craft in closer detail and ultimately challenge previously held assumptions about music and art.

Franco Donatoni was a frequent and beloved collaborator of ELISION prior to his passing in 2000. His opera *Alfredo, Alfredo* (1995) was written about his hospitalisation whilst in Melbourne on tour with ELISION (as for the substance of the opera... you'll have to ask Daryl Buckley about that). The Italian was unashamedly open about his struggles with repeated depressive episodes and compositional crises, dismissing the idea of composer-as-isolated-Romantic-genius for his own experience of being a craftsman. His idea of composing was, as he often said, "lavorare e lavorare, sempre lavorare" – work and work, always work.

Aaron Cassidy* conductor
Sola Hughes* (QLD) solo violin
Daisy Wong* (NSW) violin
Lachlan McKie (VIC) viola

Maria Zhdanovich* (SA) flute
Joshua Webster* (NZ) solo oboe
Richard Haynes* clarinet
Georgia White* (VIC) clarinet

Steven Bryer* (QLD) percussion
Liam Furey* (NZ) celeste

Australia's pre-eminent contemporary composer **Liza Lim** has in recent years focused on collaboration and communication. Recent works including *Extinction Events and Dawn Chorus* and *Multispecies Knots of Ethical Time* directly face issues of our time, fusing cross-cultural collaborations with environmental and social messages in often theatrically heightened methods. *Veil* is an earlier work which more directly confronts individual experiences of perception, playing on the paradoxical experience of perceiving something that is obscured or veiled. The textures and instrumental techniques constantly swerve and dance around, creating what Lim describes as a "poetry of the 'oblique glance' or 'intensely averted gaze'."

Aaron Cassidy* conductor
Sola Hughes* (QLD) violin
Ariel Volovelsky* (NSW) cello

Braden Simm* (QLD) flute
Josephine Daniel* (QLD) clarinet
Lewis Grey* (NZ) trumpet

Jamie Willson* (TAS) percussion
Timothy O'Malley* (VIC) piano

Isabel Mundry describes her work *Le Voyage* ('The Journey') not as having a statement but containing suggestions, drawn from "the everyday perceptions of changeability and the experience that nothing stays constant, except the attempt to reorientate oneself again and again." She takes issue with some of the prescriptivism she sees in the avant-garde, and instead asks how is it that something can become art, rather than what is (or, implicitly, isn't) art. Mundry's works have a fractal quality, with their most engaging dimension being their depth: as you zoom 'in' and 'out' of the texture and detail, you find yet more detail as she composes in smaller and smaller perspectives, from the widest perspective of the entire work ever-inwards.

Aaron Cassidy* conductor
Miriam Niessl* (QLD) violin
Noah Coyne* (VIC) violin
Hanna Wallace* (NSW) viola
Daniel Casey* (VIC) viola
Fergus Ascot* (VIC) cello
Boudewijn Keenan* (NZ) cello

Allan McBean* (SA) bass
Emica Taylor* (NZ) flute
Paula Rae* flute
Ethan Seto* (QLD) oboe
Karen Chen* (NSW) clarinet
Josephine Daniel* (QLD) clarinet
Tom Allen* (VIC) horn

Stephen Mosa'ati* (NZ) trumpet
Harrison Steele-Holmes (VIC)
trombone
Caleb Goldsmith* (NZ) percussion
Jonathan Parker* (WA) percussion

Today's improvisation is devised and performed by:

Lili Stephens* (QLD) violin
Helena Burns* (QLD) viola

Allan McBean* (SA) bass
Karen Chen* (NSW) clarinet

Jonathan Parker* (WA) percussion

The past and present violently collide in the hands of **Iannis Xenakis**. Living in France as a political refugee following the Greek Civil War, he never lost his connection to his homeland, with most of his works carrying Greek titles and a lifelong interest in ancient Greek philosophy driving his works. *Eonta* ('Beings', the plural present participle of the Greek 'to be') is taken from the works of Parmenides, Plato's predecessor and considered the father of ontology (the philosophy of existence and reality). In Xenakis's derivation of Parmenidean philosophy, he explores how being and not-being can be equated in the realm of music, using mathematical set theory to define spaces of notes (and resultant combinations, intersections and subtractions) to craft segments of the work. Taking advantage of the emerging field of computer science, Xenakis used an IBM 7090 to generate the material for the intense piano opening. Despite the complicated technical thinking behind the work, musicologists have found inconsistencies between the "correct" sets of notes and what Xenakis has written – is this simply human error or a statement on the necessity of human intervention to truly make something art?

Aaron Cassidy* conductor
Tristram Williams* trumpet
Koominka* (NSW) trumpet

Benjamin Marks* trombone
Max Gregg (NSW) trombone
Toby Sward (TAS) trombone

Alexander Waite* (ANAM Alum, 2018)
piano

The final perspective comes from Cologne-based **Dariya Maminova**, a multidisciplinary artist who has fast become notable for her cross-genre explorations of contemporary and popular styles, particularly through her 'Dariya Songs'. *Melchior* is one of these, taking its name from a poem by *Doctor Zhivago* author Boris Pasternak, which itself takes its name from a silvery alloy of copper, nickel and zinc, which Pasternak uses to describe a river. A fragment Edward Thomas's *Gone, Gone Again* is also used, in which the flowing of the river is equated to the passing of time. Among the samples that make up the work are snippets of Dariya singing both poems, further playing with our own perception of time as we hear these echoes of the past. None of these sampled sounds are technically live, but the visceral intensity of two performers triggering each sample is its own show of virtuosity and questions how 'live' something must be to be a performance.

Po Goh* (VIC) piano

Timothy O'Malley* (VIC) piano

"For those who wish to listen to music with an open mind, it is work, work which must be constantly repeated, beyond all fashion and mythmaking." —Brice Pauset, on the music of Mundry, 2007

Written by Alex Owens, ANAM Music Librarian, Robert Salzer Foundation Library

* Denotes ANAM musicians supported by ANAM Syndicate donors or a foundation.

* Denotes ELISION Ensemble player

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