

Gothic

new piano music from Ireland

Mary Dullea



music by: ed bennett benjamin dwyer david fennessy
frank lyons john mclachlan gráinne mulvey jonathan nangle

MSV
28549

Gothic

new piano music from Ireland

Ed Bennett (b.1975)

1 *Gothic* 7:57

David Fennessy (b.1976)

2 *the first thing, the last thing and everything in between* 4:42

Jonathan Nangle (b.1981)

3 *grow quiet gradually* 5:05

Frank Lyons (b.1964)

4 *Tease* 12:42

John McLachlan (b.1964)

Nine 14:03

5 Arpa [0:43] 6 Scala [1:01] 7 Ananda [1:35]

8 Kimata [1:25] 9 Nebula [1:18] 10 Aurea [3:13]

11 Maya [2:22] 12 Hikka [1:08] 13 Fretta [1:17]

Gráinne Mulvey (b.1966)

14 *Étude* 5:08

Benjamin Dwyer (b.1965)

Homenaje a Maurice Ohana 11:39

15 primera parte [6:23]

16 segunda parte [5:11]

total duration: 61:37

Mary Dullea

Preface

As an Irish concert pianist appearing across the globe, performing music by Irish composers, it has been a particular pleasure for me to bring this collection of seven works for solo piano by Irish composers to fruition in a CD recording. It is the result of relationships built and developed over nearly two decades. I have worked closely with all these composers performing their music for solo piano and in many cases, other solo and chamber works.

Though all the composers are Irish, these piano pieces demonstrate a fertile wide range of voices, sonorities, inspirations and exploration of the role of the performer. They all call on the virtuosity of the pianist, not only at the keyboard but, in some cases, extending that even further, incorporating voice and other extended techniques. Each work marks a point in the composer's path, whether a relatively early work, one composed as a response to a significant event or to a commission request.

As a passionate advocate of new Irish music it has been immensely rewarding for me to compile this collection of piano music, perform and record it and construct this journey through seven unique voices.

Mary Dullea, 2014

Mary Dullea

As soloist and chamber musician, Irish pianist Mary Dullea performs internationally at venues worldwide, from Ireland and the UK to China, the USA and around Europe. Festival appearances are also numerous and include many major events. Her frequent broadcasts include BBC Radio 3, Radio 4, RTHK, RTÉ Lyric FM, WNYC, Radio New Zealand and Sky Arts, Irish, French, Austrian and Italian television. She was the Irish representative at EU 12 and 15 Piano Extravaganza Concerts in Salle Pleyel Paris, Palais des Beaux-Arts Brussels and in Luxembourg. Concerto appearances include RTÉ Concert Orchestra, KZN Philharmonic Orchestra and the BBC commissioned and broadcast piano concerto by Rob Keeley with Lontano.

A sought-after interpreter of new music, Mary's expansive repertoire covers the standard piano literature as well as an ever-increasing amount of 20th- and 21st- century compositions, many of which are dedicated to her. She has commissioned and premiered works from composers as varied as Michael Finnissy, Johannes Maria Staud, Michael Nyman, Donnacha Dennehy and Gerald Barry– notably with her piano trio, The Fidelio Trio and with violinist Darragh Morgan.

Mary's CD releases have appeared on nine labels so far. Since 2008 she has been the curator of Soundings new music festival at the Austrian Cultural Forum, London. She is currently Artist-in-Residence at St. Patrick's College Drumcondra, Dublin City University with The Fidelio Trio. In February 2015 she will serve on the jury of 'Schubert und die Musik der Moderne' International Chamber Music Competition in Graz, Austria.

Mary studied at The Royal College of Music, London on the Edith Best Scholarship with Yonty Solomon. She holds a MMus in Contemporary Music Studies from Goldsmiths University of London and a PhD in Performance from The University of Ulster which focused on repertoire utilising both the inside and outside of the piano. Mary is the Director of Performance at The University of Sheffield and is also on the teaching staff of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama.

<www.marydullea.com>

the composers and their music

Gothic

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"**Gothic** was written while I was artist in residence at the Irish Cultural Centre in Paris in the autumn of 2008. I lived very close to Notre Dame Cathedral and walked past it almost every day, occasionally dropping in to see what was going on. The music is perhaps an image of that huge, resonant space at night when it's not full of tourists, just quiet hunchbacks, ghosts and gargoyles. The pianist has to make some unexpected sounds in this work. *Gothic* was written for Mary Dullea and premiered by her in Dublin in 2008."

Irish composer **Ed Bennett** was born in Bangor, Co. Down. His music, which has been described in the press as 'anarchic' (*Irish Times*), 'manic' (*Classical Music*) and 'thrilling' (*Gramophone*) is often characterized by its strong rhythmic energy, extreme contrasts and the combination of acoustic, electronic and multimedia elements; it was recently described in *The Guardian* as 'unclassifiable, raw-nerve music of huge energy and imagination' whilst *Sinfini Music* described his work as 'some of the most scintillating to emerge from the British Isles today'.

His body of work includes large-scale orchestral works, ensemble pieces, solo works, electronic music, opera, installations, improvisation and works for dance and film. He is artistic director of the ensemble Decibel and in 2012 he was awarded the prestigious Philip Leverhulme Prize for Performing Arts.

<www.edbennett.co.uk>

the first thing, the last thing and everything in between

(universal edition)

"I wrote this piece in memory of the Scottish poet and playwright Tom McGrath (1940-2009). Lingering in the resonance of the repeated piano chords you might be able to make out some of the Aria from Bach's Goldberg Variations; a piece which fueled Tom's unbridled imagination."

David Fennessy was born at Maynooth, Ireland; he began his musical life as guitarist in a school rock band but had no formal musical training until the age of fifteen when he decided to study classical guitar. He became interested in composition whilst studying for his undergraduate degree at the Dublin College of Music. In 1998 Fennessy moved to Glasgow to study for his Masters Degree at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama with James MacMillan. He was later invited to join the composition faculty and has held a teaching post there since 2005.

His music has been performed nationally and internationally by many groups including the RTE National Symphony Orchestra and the RTE Concert Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Ensemble Modern, Hebrides Ensemble and London Sinfonietta.

Recent significant works include *Pass the Spoon*, an evening length music theatre collaboration with the English visual artist David Shrigley and *Hauptstimme*, a work for solo viola and ensemble premiered by Garth Knox with Rednote Ensemble at the 2013 Huddersfield Festival. Since 2012 he has been working on a trilogy of large scale works based on the diaries of the German film director Werner Herzog written during the production of the 1982 movie *Fitzcarraldo*. This will culminate in a new large-scale music theatre work for the Munich Biennale 2016.

His music is published by Universal Edition (Vienna)
<www.universaledition.com>

grow quiet gradually
(copyright control)

“This is a piece that grew in a very organic fashion from a seed of an idea, that being, the opening two chords, and the arpeggiated motif in which they are first presented. From this opening the piece unfolds within a restricted framework, concentrating on a small reservoir of ideas and the interaction between them.”

Jonathan Nangle created this work in 2008. He is a composer whose work explores many diverse fields ranging from notated acoustic and electro-acoustic composition, through live and spatially distributed electronics, to video, field recording, interactive sound installation and electronic improvisation.

A graduate of Trinity College Dublin, he studied composition under Donnacha Dennehy and Rob Canning and Electro-Acoustic composition with Roger Doyle. Since 2008 he has continued to study privately with composer Kevin Volans.

His work has been commissioned and performed internationally by, amongst others, the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, Crash Ensemble, Ensemble Scratch the Surface, The Dublin Guitar Quartet, The Chatham Saxophone Quartet, Ergodos Orchestra, New Dublin Voices, Irish Youth Choir, the Spatial Music Collective, violinist Darragh Morgan and pianist Thérèse Fahy.

Jonathan is a lecturer in Music Technology and Electro-Acoustic Composition at the Royal Irish Academy of Music and a member of the music faculty at Wesley College Secondary School.

<www.jonathannangle.com>

Tease for piano and live electronics
(copyright control)

“**Tease** (2009) was written for and is dedicated to Mary Dullea as part of her investigation into music which explores an expanded soundworld through playing on the inside and outside of the piano. Whilst continuing threads of interest from previous pieces, such as a fascination with virtuosity, improvisation, incorporation of extended techniques and use of live electronics, this new piece opens up new paths of exploration, particularly with regard to formal structuring and to timbral colouring. The title refers to the generation of sound using the extended techniques required in the piece where notes have to be literally teased out of the instrument. *Tease* begins with a short introduction followed by twelve short sections, the order of which is decided by the performer, before ending with a brief coda.”

Frank Lyons is Professor of Music and Director of the Arts and Humanities Research Institute at University of Ulster. He has developed an international profile as a composer and researcher with performances and exhibitions of his works having been given in China, Japan, Australia, South Africa, the US, Europe, the UK and Ireland and broadcast on BBC, RTE, NPR and ABCFM by artists such as the Ulster Orchestra, Ensemble Noszferatu, The Smith Quartet, Fidelio Trio, Hu/Slotkin Duo, Darragh Morgan, Mary Dullea, Paul Roe, Carlos Bonell, Mark Chambers, Simon Jermyn and Alan Banks.

He has been invited composer-in-residence at Share Music Summer School in Hjo, Sweden, the Shell Darwin International Guitar Festival in Darwin, Australia and the Canterbury Sounds New Festival in the UK. In 2005 he was shortlisted for a British Composer Award for *Rush*, for violin and live electronics and in 2010 he was awarded the Japanese Agency of Cultural Affairs Media Art Prize with media artist Masaki Fujihata for their interactive installation piece *Simultaneous Echoes* which has been exhibited in Canada, Germany, Japan and Poland.



Ed Bennett



John McLachlan



David Fennessy



Benjamin Dwyer



Jonathan Nangle



Frank Lyons



Gráinne Mulvey

Nine (copyright control)

"I completed ***Nine*** for solo piano in late 2011. I had been saving up little pieces for a number of years, with the intention of creating a set of miniatures in the same way as Chopin or Prokofiev, but entirely within my own styles. In fact these pieces are a good guide to the styles of my chamber music in recent years, featuring limited but non-repeating patterns in rhythm and/or pitch.

The pieces have titles from Italian, Spanish, Sanskrit, Greek, Latin and Finnish, as follows: Arpa (harp), Scala (stairs or scale), Ananda (bliss), κύματα (Kimata, waves), Nebula (cloud), Aurea (golden), Maya (illusion), Hikka (hiccup or hocket), Fretta (hurry)."

John McLachlan was born in Dublin. He is a freelance composer who is also active in the representation and promotion of Irish composers. He is also known for writing about contemporary music.

He has written over 40 works, for all the usual instrumental combinations and his music has been played and broadcast widely around the world, from Tokyo to New York and South Africa to Peru. Commissions have come from the Irish National Symphony Orchestra, National Concert Hall, the Dublin International Piano Competition, and Music Network, and from many international groups and soloists active in new music.

He holds a musicology PhD from Trinity College Dublin and was the Executive Director of the Association of Irish Composers from 1999 to 2012. He is a member of Aosdána, Ireland's state-sponsored academy for the creative arts.

<www.johnmclachlan.info>

Étude

(copyright control)

“**Étude** (premiered 8th March 1994) is in arc form, comprising three main sections and a short coda. The first section consists of a series of transformations of a chordal motif, presented initially in the bass register. This leads directly into the second section, characterized by a slower arpeggiated texture. The third section has a more reflective, consonant feel, which nevertheless refers back to the harmonic material of the opening, now shifted to the middle and high register. The piece ends with a brief coda in a faster tempo, again referring to the opening material, now descending.

Many thanks to Mary Dullea for her tremendous performances and for recording this piece. My sincere thanks to Chris Corrigan for the production.”

Gráinne Mulvey's music has been performed and broadcast across the globe. She has been the recipient of many awards, commissions and honours, including the *Young Musician of the Future Award*, (Composers Class) in 1994, the Macaulay Fellowship (Arts Council Of Ireland), Arklow Music Festival, New Music for Sligo in 1999 and St. John's University Memorial Award, Newfoundland in 2003. She has received commissions from the Concorde Ensemble, the ACME Ensemble, Chicago, RTE NSOI, Romanian Radio Chamber Orchestra and The Northern Sinfonia.

Her orchestral work has also been performed by the Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra, the Hradec Králové Philharmonic and the Orchestre De Lorraine. She has represented Ireland twice at the ISCM World Music Days in 2008, and 2009 and at the International Rostrum of Composers in 1994 and 2006. Soloists such as Joe O'Farrell (flute), Elizabeth Hilliard (soprano), David Bremner (organ), Martin Johnson (cello), Annette Cleary (cello), Therese Fahy (pianist), Slawomir Zubrzycki (pianist), Matthew Schellhorn (pianist), Paul Roe (clarinettist), Dermot Dunne (accordionist) and Mary Dullea (pianist) have also championed her music regularly.

The RTE NSOI has commissioned a cello concerto to be premiered in 2015 and The Dublin International Piano Competition has commissioned a test piece for 2015.

Her music is represented by The Contemporary Music Centre, Ireland and soon to be published by BabelScores – Contemporary Music Online. Her CD "Akanos" was released earlier in 2014 by PARMA Recordings LLC. She is a member of Aosdána, Ireland's state-sponsored academy for the creative arts.

<www.grainnemulvey.com>

Homenaje a Maurice Ohana (copyright control)

“*Homenaje a Maurice Ohana* is an early work of mine dating from 1999. *Primera parte* is built upon a harmonic frame created from a cycle of fifths that folds back upon itself. Thus, temporally, the music is built upon two voice lines: the upper layer evolves in fifths while the lower layer unfolds in fourths. Such a prescribed harmonic trajectory, alongside a tightly knit melodic construction built on the major 7th, allows for a reasonable amount of free association in the writing. Near the end of the movement, the two-note major 7th builds into a series of heavy chords, which I have always associated with falling tombstones.

Segunda parte comprises a spine of descending chords around which four distinct musical fragments develop (one of which is a rapid four-note motif on the same note). While these four musical ideas expand independently of each other, they climax simultaneously. Following this culminating moment, one of those fragments is heard alone and in full for the first – it is, in fact, a quote from Maurice Ohana’s *Tiento* for guitar. While this quote allows attention to settle on a single beautiful, if somewhat somber phrase (Ohana perfectly caught the shade behind the light in Andalucía), the movement itself never regains unity and its fragments disperse into the ether. However, the Ohana quote makes one final appearance at the very end. This time, the phrase, heard at the extreme high register of the instrument, is locked into the four-note rhythmic motive heard at the lowest.”

As a composer, guitarist and researcher, **Benjamin Dwyer**'s creative and critical work extends from a broad base in performance and artistic practice. He is an elected member of Aosdána, an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music, London (ARAM), and is Professor of Music at Middlesex University. Dwyer's compositions are regularly performed internationally, and he has been the featured composer at the Musica Nova Festival in São Paulo, the Bienal de Riberão Preto, the Irish National Concert Hall's Composers' Choice and the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra's Horizons series.

In recent years, he has completed a number of large-scale works including *Scenes from Crow*, based on the *Crow* poems of Ted Hughes (Diatrobe label), *Twelve Études* for guitar (Gamelan label) and *Umbilical*, his re-working of the Oedipus myth for Baroque violin, double-bass, harpsichord, tape, and Butoh dancer composed for Maya Homburger, Barry Guy, David Adams and Sayoko Onishi.

Recent compositions include the viola work, *imagines obesae et aspectui ingratae*, written for Garth Knox, *Strange Country* for uilleann pipes, tape and narrator, written in collaboration with the American-Irish poet Kimberly Campanello, and *Nocturnal, after Benjamin Britten*, composed for the Fidelio Trio.



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Engineer and producer – Chris Corrigan

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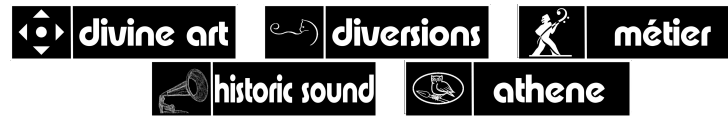
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