
CONCERTS AT THE UNIVERSITY

Autumn - Winter 2017

Tuesday 5 December 2017

1.10pm

Reid Concert Hall

Raymond MacDonald · saxophone

Alexander Hawkins · piano

Programme of jazz-inflected original
compositions and improvisations.



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh College of Art

Free improvisation

The Forgotten Croft

Raymond MacDonald (b.1967)

Free improvisation

The Gallery

Raymond MacDonald

Raymond MacDonald is a saxophonist and composer who has released over 60 CDs and toured and broadcast worldwide. He has written music for film, television, theatre, radio and art installations and much of his work explores the boundaries and ambiguities between what is conventionally seen as improvisation and composition. He has collaborated with musicians such as Marilyn Crispell, George Lewis, Evan Parker, David Byrne and Jim O'Rourke, is a founding member of The Glasgow Improvisers Orchestra and has a long standing collaboration with Scottish guitarist George Burt. He plays in many collaborative free improvisatory contexts and his roots in jazz and pop music can also be heard in his playing and writing. His work is informed by a view of improvisation as a social, collaborative and uniquely creative process that provides opportunities to develop new ways of working musically. He also has an ongoing collaboration, Scarecrows and Lighthouses, with artist Martin Boyce and film maker David MacKenzie and is Professor of Music Psychology and Improvisation at Edinburgh University and lectures, publishes and runs workshops internationally.

Alexander Hawkins is a composer, pianist, organist, and bandleader who is 'unlike anything else in modern creative music' (Ni Kantu) and whose recent work has reached a 'dazzling new apex' (Downbeat). A largely self-taught improviser, he works in a vast array of creative contexts. His own highly distinctive soundworld is forged through the search to reconcile both his love of free improvisation and profound fascination with composition and structure.

His writing has been said to represent 'a fundamental reassertion of composition within improvised music' (Point of Departure), and his voice one of the 'most vividly distinctive...in modern jazz' (The Jazzmann).

As a pianist, he has been described as 'remarkable...possessing staggering technical ability and a fecund imagination as both player and composer.' Concerning his organ playing, critic Brian Morton recently commented that '[t]he most interesting Hammond player of the last decade and more, [Hawkins] has already extended what can be done on the instrument.'

An in-demand sideman, Hawkins continues to be heard live and on record with vast array of contemporary leaders of all generations, including the likes of Evan Parker, John Surman, Joe McPhee, Mulatu Astatke, Wadada Leo Smith, Anthony Braxton, Marshall Allen, Han Bennink, Hamid Drake, Rob Mazurek, Taylor Ho Bynum, Harris Eisenstadt, Matana Roberts, and Shabaka Hutchings, amongst many others. He has also been noted for a number of years for his performances in the bands of legendary South African drummer, Louis Moholo-Moholo.

In 2012, he was chosen as a member of the first edition of the London Symphony Orchestra's 'Soundhub' scheme for young composers. He also received a major BBC commission in late 2012 for a fifty minute composition: One Tree Found was first performed and broadcast in March 2013, and was subsequently performed and broadcast for the WDR in Cologne (2014). He has also twice been commissioned by the London Jazz Festival (once as composer, once as an arranger), and by the Cheltenham Jazz Festival (2016). He was named 'Instrumentalist of the Year' in the 2016 Parliamentary Jazz Awards.

Concert appearances have taken him to major club, concert and festival stages worldwide.

FORTHCOMING CONCERT:

Thursday 7 December

1.15pm

Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Queen Street

Edinburgh University Singers

John Kitchen (conductor)

A concert of seasonal choral music for Advent and Christmas

Admission Free