



Martin Read Foundation

supporting young composers

established 2014

registered charity no.: 1156661

www.martinreadfoundation.org

Festival of Contemporary Music

2021

on-line

New short works

on the concept of

Distance



PROGRAMME

Established 2014 · registered charity no.: 1156661 · Hampshire Music Hub partner:





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RUNNING ORDER:

10am to 12noon: Judith Weir CBE, Patron - in conversation with MRF's young composers, with **Sam Bullard - saxes and Ben Corrigan - electronics.**

Conversation with each composer, with a performance of their piece:

Start time on film edit:

4.07	Ellen Drewe, alumnus - <i>Go Outside</i>
16.06	Freddie Hodkin, alumnus - <i>Latter Days</i>
26.31	Samby Anderson, award-holder - <i>Difference Engine</i>
37.55	Sam Carr, alumnus - <i>is anyone receiving?</i>
47.00	Owen Russell, alumnus - <i>Unwinding a Tidal Separation</i>
55.34	Jack Robinson, alumnus - <i>Sky Longing</i>
1.06.57	Pernille Faye, award-holder - <i>Contact</i>
1.16.11	Catherine Upfold, alumnus - <i>indivisible</i>
1.22.50	Joel Knee, alumnus - <i>Alas</i>

12noon to 1pm: Zoom meeting to stay open - *fetch yourself a snack and enjoy the chat*

1pm to 3pm **Concert of premieres:**

Start time on film edit:

0.10	Ellen Drewe, alumnus - <i>Go Outside</i>
5.47	Simon Speare, composer-mentor - <i>Returning, We Hear the Larks</i>
18.09	Freddie Hodkin, alumnus - <i>Latter Days</i>
22.59	Samby Anderson, award-holder - <i>Difference Engine</i>
30.54	Sam Carr, alumnus - <i>is anyone receiving?</i>
34.46	Owen Russell, alumnus - <i>Unwinding a Tidal Separation</i>
	Simon Speare, composer-mentor - <i>Returning, We Hear the Larks</i>
39.50	Jack Robinson, alumnus - <i>Sky Longing</i>
46.50	Pernille Faye, award-holder - <i>Contact</i>
53.06	Catherine Upfold, alumnus - <i>indivisible</i>
57.51	Joel Knee, alumnus - <i>Alas</i>

With: Ali Willis, Simon Speare, Freddie Hodkin & Beccy Read - trustees;
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3pm Close of Festival





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Programme notes and biogs.

- as running order

Judith Weir, CBE - Master of the Queen's Music

MRF Patron

Judith Weir was born into a Scottish family in 1954, but grew up near London. As resident composer with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra in the 1990s, she wrote several works for orchestra and chorus (including *Forest*, *Storm* and *We are Shadows*) which were premiered by the orchestra's then Music Director, Simon Rattle.

In recent years, Judith Weir has considerably expanded her choral catalogue, with regular performance by choirs worldwide of music such as her Christmas carol *Illuminare*, *Jerusalem* written for Stephen Cleobury and the choir of King's College Cambridge.

Now based in London, she has had a long association with Spitalfields Music Festival; and has taught as a visiting professor at Princeton, Harvard and Cardiff universities. Honours for her work include the Critics' Circle, South Bank Show, Ivor Novello and Elise L Stoecker awards, a CBE and The Queen's Medal for Music.

In July 2014 Judith Weir was appointed to the 395-year old royal post of Master of the Queen's Music, in succession to Sir Peter Maxwell Davies. Amongst her priorities in this role are the support of school music teachers, of amateur orchestras and choirs, and of rural festivals. In this role she has written music for national and royal occasions, including the Queen's 90th birthday celebrations and the UK's official commemoration of the 1918 Armistice.

Judith Weir's music has been widely recorded, particularly on the NMC and Delphian labels; and is published by Chester Music and Novello & Co.

Judith became a [Patron for MRF](#) in 2018, supporting our Showcase Concert at Borough New Music that November, and at our first on-line [workshop, May 2020](#). Having joined us at our [Feb '21 workshop](#), we are delighted that she will be 'in conversation' with Festival '21 composers on April 25th.

Borough New Music 2018 MRF showcase with Judith Weir.





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Sam Bullard - saxophones

Sam achieved a first class honours BMus degree from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in 2005 and now enjoys a wide variety of musical work in a wide variety of venues.

He has performed across the world with ensembles such as the BBC Big Band, the Philharmonia Orchestra, the BBC Concert Orchestra, the Heritage Orchestra, the London Jazz Orchestra, the Syd Lawrence Orchestra, the Michael Garrick Jazz Orchestra, the Pasadena Roof Orchestra, and worked in West End theatre orchestras for 'Jersey Boys', 'Singin' in the Rain', 'Dirty Rotten Scoundrels', 'Funny Girl', 'Dreamgirls', 'Matilda', 'Motown', 'Strictly Ballroom', 'Bat out of Hell' and '9 to 5'. With other ensembles he has backed artists as diverse as Cliff Richard, Tim Minchin, Beardyman, Jamie Cullum, and dancers Anton and Erin. Sam has also led his own jazz quartet and performed with groups in London's most prestigious jazz venues such as the 606 Club and Ronnie Scott's. He can be heard (and in some episodes seen!) on BBC and ITV productions including 'Downton Abbey' and 'Mr Selfridge'.

Sam enjoys teaching at Westminster School and at the Junior Trinity College of Music.

Ben Corrigan - electronics

Ben graduated from Trinity Laban having arrived via Sound and Music Summer Schools.

I now has a music podcast called [excuse the mess](#) (which won Bronze in the Best Arts & Culture category at the British Podcast Awards in 2019) where he interviews other composers and then they write a piece together using just one instrument and electronic manipulation. The listener follows the whole composition process.

He's also been working a lot with Robert Ames and the London Contemporary Orchestra, orchestrating & arranging for lots of films (Honeyboy, True History of Ned Kelly Gang), concerts (Riceboy Sleeps, Erased Tapes X LCO, William Basinski) and recordings.

In TV, he's done additional composition for Isobel Waller-Bridge, plus some sound design and synth programming for her Black Mirror score, and more recently, he was music editor for Anne Nikitin on the BBC Pale Horse series.





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Ellen Drewe - MRF alumnus 2016

Go Outside

'Go Outside' explores the challenges of isolation with a busy mind. The self-written text is explored primarily through voice, both sung and spoken. This is embellished by two violins, with the brief addition of a thunder tube. The piece was designed to be easily put together online, with the main focus on the flexible and freely written vocal line. The brief violin entries can therefore be recorded in short segments that are later aligned with the text. This piece is also suitable for live performances, with cues from the singer to the violinists.

Ellen is a composer and conductor currently studying at the Royal Academy of Music. She has written commissioned pieces for a variety of ensembles and venues such as the the Royal Academy of Music 200 bicentenary commissions, Martin Read Foundation, Pianist Nicola Meecham (Warehouse Waterloo), BSO Kokoro Ensemble, The Royal Parks, The Eumelia Trio, The Brunel Museum and the V&A Museum. She has received awards for her compositions such as being shortlisted for BBC Young Composer of the Year Award 2016, Martin Read Foundation Award and the BSO Kokoro Young Composers Call for Scores Award, as well as appearing on BBC Breakfast, talking about the music installation project 'Music for Trees' based in Regents Park. She is currently the Conductor and Musical Director for the Luna Collective, based in London.

Simon Speare - composer-mentor for MRF.

'Returning, We Hear the Larks' – *premiered at MRF Festival '21.*

'This is the title of a WW1 poem by Isaac Rosenberg which celebrates the beauty of birdsong in a dire situation.

The four movements reflect my responses to different bird songs as the earth turns over a day and night. So the piece is 're-turning'.

1. Round Robin; 2. Dusk; 3. Moon Song; 4 Dawn Chorus

Simon is Head of Composition and Contemporary Music at the RCM Junior Department. He was born and brought up in Cornwall. He studied composition with Simon Holt at City University, London. His music has been widely performed by professional and amateur groups in the UK and abroad and broadcast on national radio and television. He teaches composition at The Purcell School and has lectured and examined at universities and conservatoires. He is an experienced leader of workshops in schools and colleges and recently led the *Go Compose* project in schools as well as during the Sound and Music Summer School. He is a sought-after adjudicator and has been a judge for the British Composer Awards. He has been a Martin Read Foundation young composer mentor for five years. Married with two children, he also fronts the rock band *Simon and the Spears*.





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Freddie Hodkin - MRF alumnus 2015, trustee

Latter Days

This piece was written for the 2021 Martin Read Festival as part of the MRF Alumni Composition Collective. The brief was the theme of 'distance' and we were to write about our experiences of the Covid-19 pandemic that changed all our lives so profoundly. I called the piece Latter Days to reflect the (while ultimately not true, certainly common) apocalyptic rhetoric and feel of the world at this time, such as empty streets, wildlife returning to areas long since taken over by people, and the feeling that normal life and the rest of the world was more distant than ever. The title also comes from the fact that the piece was started during that liminal period of the last few days of December, between Christmas and New Year, when it is so easy to lose track of time.

The harmony is melancholic but hopeful, acknowledging sadness while suggesting better times to come. The main theme is loosely based on an idea I had previously jotted down, and it felt fitting to reach into the distant past and bring to life something that had lay dormant for years, imbuing it with the experiences (musical or otherwise) that I have had since that initial sketch, through the lens of the circumstances we find ourselves in at the time of writing. My hope is that the chorale-like texture of the second half gives time for listeners and players alike to reflect, this passage of regular pulse and flowing melody/harmony acting as a reward, a return to peace and relative predictability, after the uncertainty of the opening section. This uncertainty is created by juxtaposition of line, seamless transition from 3/4 to 4/4, and ambiguous harmony, which I feel mirrors the experience of the last year, and how distant such relief felt at times.

Freddie has been awarded a Dischma Trust award for Excellence in the Arts, Martin Read Foundation Young Composers ' Award 2015 (where he is now a trustee and socialmedia manager), Hampshire Music Service Composition Award, and SHG Mediation Services Award for Excellence in the Arts. Performances of his work include Borough New Music in London, Cardiff University Brass Band, Cardiff Contemporary Music Festival, Cardiff University School of Music Composition Showcases, Martin Read Foundation Festivals and Chelmsford City Theatre Lunchtime Concert Series. He has received commissions from Farnham Brass band and had pieces workshopped by several professional artists. His music demonstrates a fine balance between sonorous detail and imaginative treatment of material, a colourful yet accessible harmonic language, and the assimilation of eclectic interests into coherent and highly organised structures. He has just completed an MA in Composition at Cardiff University.





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Samby Anderson - MRF award-holder '20 & '21

Difference Engine

When I heard the theme for this year's festival was 'distance', my mind jumped to something we have all been missing this past year, variously monotonous and exciting, routine or spontaneous - travel. I am not much of an adventurer, but the simple act of heading out the door every day breaks up the pace of life in a way I sorely miss. I wanted my piece to reflect the tangible anxiety of these times we are in, but also to provide a collective escape, so I wrote a piece that will hopefully serve as a journey by proxy we can go on together - beginning somewhere anxious, departing somewhere soothing for a few minutes, then coming back again.

Every sound in the track is a recording of traffic I have taken in the last year or so (the starter motor of a honda civic, a motorcycle on the M25, etc), digitally manipulated into music to accompany the baritone saxophone.

Samby is in his final year at 6th form. He has been offered a place at Trinity Laban to study composition from September '21.

As well as a composer, I am a drummer and a guitarist, currently writing and recording with my experimental rock duo, Gaba Oolong. I began composing a few years ago inspired by my discovery of the unique sound worlds of Messiaen and Penderecki. My music draws from a diverse pool of influences, not just from the classical world but also jazz, electronic music and the contemporary art world. I love writing music that incorporates new sounds made possible by technology, and drives these sounds to their extremes, exposing their limitations.

Sam Carr - MRF alumnus 2017

'Is Anyone Receiving...?'

This piece was commissioned by the Martin Read Foundation for the 2021 Festival, and performed by the Alumni Collective.

Through exploration of the theme of 'Distance', I felt drawn to how the current pandemic has heightened online communication through social media and other video conferencing platforms. There are times where this form of communication can feel like shouting into the void and hoping that you are heard, and this piece's foundation is built upon that feeling.

Sam Carr is studying contemporary classical composition at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, London.

Her work is often influenced by algorithms, nature, and the human body - generally stemming from a minute stimulus. Sam's work has been performed and workshopped by CoMA London, the Broncano-Mnich Duo, and numerous Trinity Laban ensembles. Currently in her final year at Trinity Laban, Sam has experimented with video editing, unusual use of the performance space, and collaborating with contemporary dancers.





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Owen Russell - MRF alumnus 2017

Unwinding a Tidal Separation

Performed by: Martin Suckling - Viola, and Mark Hutchinson - Piano.

This is a miniature response to the pain and loneliness lockdown has generated in us, both as individuals and as a people. Our physical and emotional isolation has given us more space to consider our relationships with others introspectively. Rumination on our separation in turn leads us to despair.

This piece poses gestures of internal conversation: gestures of despair, of pain, and of pause. Through the tidal development of this conversation, the separate gestures become involved in an intertwined dance, inevitably whirlpooling towards a central realisation on the nature of separation and connection. In that sense, this piece expresses an optimism that through our pain we will become whole, and that our individual suffering has never been in vain.

Owen is a composer and jazz trombone player from Horndean, Hampshire. He is currently studying for a Masters in Composition by research at the University of York, where he previously completed his undergraduate degree in music from 2017-2020. His recent research has been focused on philosophy and religion from primarily South-East Asia (most notably Buddhism), as well as music involved in or inspired by particular traditions such as gamelan. Owen has begun to resonate and engage with this material in his ongoing work on varying levels, from using group meditation to produce sonic experiences in tandem with notated material, to writing allegorical pieces illustrating Buddhist perspectives, often inspired by artistic and literary sources.

Jack Robinson - MRF award-holder '18 & '19.

Sky Longing

Sky longing is a piece about isolation including its peacefulness and its loneliness. The influences for the piece were the feelings of loss and the different way in which time is experienced under lockdown conditions. Writing this piece, I wanted to explore a small amount of music ideas to their fullest, exploiting harmony to create the sense of direction. Throughout the whole piece there are repeated quaver chords in the piano which, as well as working towards this goal of the piece, make it much easier to record the parts separately, as is necessary under lockdown; the piano part was recorded first and the other instruments recorded their parts on top of it.

Jack Robinson is a young composer from London who writes contemporary classical music mostly for acoustic chamber ensembles. Jack worked with the Martin Read Foundation on two other projects and at 14, was the youngest award-holder so far.

Jack was a winner of the BBC Inspire Competition in 2016, and was also a winner of a Music For Youth competition which led to a performance of his string quartet in the Royal Albert Hall in 2018.

Examples of his music are on:

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQetJwDQObucqZmfGasrLag>

Soundcloud: <https://soundcloud.com/justjack42>





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Pernille Faye - MRF Award-holder '19 to '21

Contact

Contact explores the changing face of human interaction over the past year as we've had to adapt to living apart from others. During a year when distance has become more important than ever, we look ahead to future shared experiences and contact with friends and family once more.

The gentle ebb and flow of chords which opens the piece prompts the music forwards, supporting the baritone saxophone line and allowing the alto to weave a more expressive melody on top. A pared down triplet bass in the middle section conserves this momentum, mirroring the persistence of time with a steady pulse whilst the alto melody is gradually reinforced as more parts enter. The warmth of the opening chords closes the piece as the music fades.

Pernille is a Norwegian/Irish composer. She has been a Martin Read Award Young Composer for 2019 and 2020 and attended many composition workshops including the 2019 BBC Inspire Day and 2020 Sound and Music Summer School. She has studied with Dr Pande Shahov and Ali Willis. As a composer she has explored many different ways of working including projects with percussion, electronics, field recordings, a jazz sextet, a string quartet using tone rows based on pi and an orchestral work which depicts the Skerries Mills set against the dramatic Irish coastline. Many of these works can be found on her YouTube channel.

Pernille plays clarinet and bass clarinet and is a music scholar at St Swithuns School. She has also been a member of National Schools Symphony Orchestra and plays regularly in the Broadstone Music Series.

She has been awarded a scholarship to study composition at the Royal Academy of Music from September.

Catherine Upfold - MRF award-holder '15

indivisible

*For me, two main concepts came to mind around the theme of **distance**. The more obvious of the two is the separation from our friends and family, something which we have all had to endure recently. The other aspect of distance is the polarisation of opinion and divisive politics which seem to have been a particular feature of the last few years. In both cases as we now look forward, there is hope of reconnecting with each other both physically and as a society, and I wanted my work to portray this sentiment.*

The piece is built around a repeating theme played by the piano. I felt that the simplicity and repetition of this reflected something of the way our lives have shrunk during the pandemic. We start with a fluid tempo, unsure of this turbulent world. But as we go on, I'd like to think there is a sense of settling into the "new normal". The two trombones carry a conversation from the two sides of the virtual space. Although distant, they are able to unite together to create something which is greater than the sum of its parts. I'm keen for the listener to hear the work through their own unique prism of experiences and to take from it as much (or as little) as they wish!





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I started playing violin at age 9, and began to want to write music pretty much as soon as I could read it! During my teens I was lucky enough to be involved with several Hampshire Music Service ensembles and award schemes, and it is through this that I was taught by Martin Read (2010-2012) and later Pande Shahov (2012-2014). Subsequently, I was fortunate enough to be one of the first cohort of MRF supported composers back in 2015.

Since then, I completed an MChem at the University of Bath and now work in industry as a Chemist. Music remains very close to my heart. I continue to enjoy composing during my spare time and I aspire to carry on learning and developing my music.

Every year I'm delighted to see another cohort of young composers benefitting from the valuable support that the Foundation provides!

Joel Knee - MRF alumnus 2016

A.L.A.S (As Light as Sound) - Joel Knee

This recording grew out of exploring ways to collaborate creatively and effectively online. Experiments jamming over zoom, or using various technology were all incredibly fun and challenging. Having written a series of duets for myself and other improvising musicians, I had to explore ways of creating a friendly musical environment to improvise in, even when not actually playing with anyone live in the room. For this piece, I put together a backing track full of dense textures and thick layers of synths for the performers to improvise along with. The reason for doing this was to allow the performers to feel like they could be improvising with others, as there was a lot of material to interact with. Once I had received everyone's recordings, I could chop them up and re-order them in ways that made the most sense, the continuity kept by the fact that while not improvising together, they are collectively improving with the same stimulus. This idea I heard first done by British musician Kit Downes, who created incredibly interactive-sounding music during the first lockdown.

The musical material came from a faux folk melody written and inspired by the music of Aidan O'Rourke. This formed the basis of the harmonic and melodic material for the piece, also informing the improvised sections. The image in my head was of the trans-Atlantic cables that ferry data back and forth. I wanted to focus in on the electrical aspect of sending data, which is why the recording is littered with electronic sounds, sometimes affecting the acoustic instruments. Many of these cables are fibre optic cables which use light to transport data. The tape effects were done using an old handheld tape recorder, with which I recorded and then "performed" the playback, representing the digitisation and arguable degradation of recorded audio. When editing and putting the music together, I took inspiration from artists like Bon Iver and Floating Points who utilise electronic and acoustic instruments together in their music.

Joel is a trombonist and composer with a focus on jazz and contemporary music.

After studying jazz for four years in London & Miami, Joel is currently composing, recording and teaching from his home in North London. Joel is active in multiple projects from him and his peers, and is a chair holder in the National Youth Jazz Orchestra. Joel continues to develop his study of jazz and composition, and is applying for postgraduate courses in New York, LA, and across Europe. 2021 will see the release of a recording from Joel's Miami based experimental trio, alongside a full visual production accompanying the music.

