

RNCM

NOISE OF MANY WATERS: Music for the Victoria Baths

THURSDAY 30 JUNE, FRIDAY 1 AND SATURDAY 2 JULY 2011
7.15pm and 8.15pm *Superintendent's Sitting Room*

Second Class Males presents **VESSEL**

David Futers *inhale/exhale* (world première)
tape

7.15pm set only

Gemma Balamoody *Where I Kept my Shoes*
Kyran Matthews *saxophone*

8.15pm set only

Aaron Parker *Fließend*
Kyran Matthews *saxophone*

Steven Jackson/Eley Williams *Channel Light Vessel Automatic*
(world première)

Eley Williams *narrator*, Saturday only; *tape*, Thursday and Friday
Steven Jackson *electronics*

Steven Jackson/Eileen Pun *Sleeping Roofless* (world première)
Martin Bickerton, Amy Perry *guitar*
Eileen Pun *narrator*, Thursday only; *tape*, Friday and Saturday,
Steven Jackson *electronics*

Laurence Tompkins/Sam Quill *Bus Hymnal*
Sam Quill *speaker*

Laurence Tompkins/Sam Quill *Six Couplets*
Kyran Matthews *alto saxophone*
Sam Quill *speaker*
Laurence Tompkins *electronics*

Laurence Tompkins/Sam Quill *On Suedeheads* (world première)
Kyran Matthews *alto saxophone*
Sam Quill *speaker*
Laurence Tompkins *electronics*

Vessel is an evening of music and spoken word presenting by Second Class Males, a collective of RNCM composers and performers. The collective writes: *'The notion of using the Noise of Many Waters event as a platform for compositional activity is a very natural one. In deciding how best to react to Victoria Baths' unique space we considered its history, the notion of water and the sea, and the acoustic properties of the building. The room which we inhabit provides an exciting combination of a rough-and-ready interior and a feeling of real intimacy, which we felt suited our immersive electronic chamber music programme. This was not a space usually available to the public when the Baths were open, and similarly it must be sought out by the audience interested to hear the new works on offer.'*

More direct engagement with the water theme of the event is taken on through collaborative work with the poets Sam Quill, Eley Williams and Eileen Pun. Eley Williams takes the shipping forecast as a point of inspiration, while in Sam Quill's *Bus Hymnal*, a bus journey from Oxford to London takes on the mythic grandeur of a sea voyage. Our room, a 'vessel' for contemporary exploration of all that the building might suggest, is a chance to unearth a new view of the Baths, alongside all the other music on offer.

David Futer's *inhale/exhale* is a simple piece based on filtered white noise and drones. The white noise is filtered with vowel sound formants and is redolent of a diver's breathing sounds. The drone material acts as a submersive and shimmering underpinning to the white noise - its pitch content becomes increasingly unsteady and gradually begins to detune.

Gemma Balamoody writes: *'Where I Kept my Shoes (7.15pm set only) for solo soprano saxophone was inspired by my training experiences as a youth sprint runner on the tracks of my old Athletics grounds. This piece, written for Kyran Matthews, is an exploration in combining routine and chance alongside a test of endurance, skill and accuracy.'*

Aaron Parker writes: *'My short saxophone solo Fließend (8.15pm set only), a German word meaning 'flowing' or 'running' or 'fluent', has a predominantly 'ebb and flow' motion of melodic lines that continually cascade and tumble into one another. These flowing lines, however, are constructed upon a sequence of steadily repeating chords, a kind of permanent foundation which underpins the entire piece. I thought this musical opposition had parallels with the structure and function of Victoria Baths, where the architecture of the building and the water within it become inextricably linked.'*

Steven Jackson has collaborated with Eley Williams to create *Channel Light Vessel Automatic*. He writes: *'A newsreader tasked with guiding boats into port veers off the course of the shipping forecast to deliver a more personal message. The electronics track that accompanies the narration has been concocted using late night long wave radio as a starting point. It fluctuates in sympathy with the newsreader as if the charged nature of the broadcast were directly influencing the radio dials.'*

Steven Jackson's *Sleeping Roofless* is a collection of three texts that explore the atmosphere and diverse characters of Grasmere beach at different hours and seasons. Kleptomaniacs, campfire singers and hazardous late night bathers all inform the guitar duo material, as do the vivid descriptions of the sights and sounds of the beach around the clock.

Laurence Tompkins writes: *'On Suedeheads and Bus Hymnal are the result of continued collaboration with my friend and poet Sam Quill and the saxophonist Kyran Matthews. In On Suedeheads the text is gradually impinged upon by aggressive musical material until its meaning is reduced to mere bombast and volume. The text of Bus Hymnal, concerning repeated journeys from Oxford to London, has its verses reordered according to musical cues, always moving from A to B but with an unpredictable construction in the middle that makes every reading unique.'*

To enhance everyone's experience of this event please try to stifle coughs and sneezes, avoid unwrapping sweets during the performance and switch off mobile phones, pagers and digital alarms. Please do not take photographs or video in the venue. Latecomers will not be admitted until a suitable break in the programme, or at the first interval, whichever is the more appropriate.

The RNCM reserves the right to change artists and/or programmes as necessary.
The RNCM reserves the right of admission.

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