

2011

Encyclopedia of Music in Ireland: Crash Ensemble

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Recommended Citation

Smith, Adrian: 'Crash Ensemble,' in The Encyclopedia of Music in Ireland, Gerard Gillen, Harry White (eds.) (UCD Press: Forthcoming)

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Funder: Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS)

Crash Ensemble. Irish contemporary music ensemble. Founded in 1997 by composer DONNACHA DENNEHY, conductor and pianist Andrew Synott and clarinettist Michael Seaver, the Crash Ensemble was established to fulfil the need in Ireland for a flexible and interdisciplinary performance ensemble influenced by groups such as Icebreaker in the United Kingdom and the New York based ensemble, the Bang on a Can All-Stars. The group's repertoire is broad but it has earned a reputation for specialising in post-minimalist and experimental music while also appealing to contemporary classical, rock and alternative music audiences. The ensemble usually plays amplified while its instrumentation reflects the experimental nature of its repertoire, combining electric guitar, electronics and keyboards alongside a more conventional line-up of violin, viola, cello, double bass, flute, clarinet, trombone, piano and percussion. In addition, the ensemble considers its sound engineers, technicians and video makers an integral part of its interdisciplinary make-up.

Since its formation the Crash Ensemble has assumed a central role in the commissioning of new works by established Irish composers including DONNACHA DENNEHY, GERALD BARRY, RAYMOND DEANE, KEVIN VOLANS, STEPHEN GARDNER, JOHN GODFREY, and IAN WILSON. Perhaps more significant however has been its role in promoting the work of a younger generation of Irish composers such as ANDREW HAMILTON, JENNIFER WALSH, ED BENNETT and more recently the work of JONATHAN NANGLE and SIMON O'CONNOR through its series of Free State concerts which focus exclusively on Irish composers. The ensemble has also commissioned and premiered works by international composers such as Terry Riley, Gavin Bryars, Michael Gordon and David Lang. As well as performing regularly on the international scene, Crash has hosted three contemporary music festivals in Ireland and has featured in the RTE LIVING MUSIC FESTIVAL in 2006 and 2007.

Bibliography

<http://www.crashensemble.com/about.php>, accessed 29/11/2010

Discography

Arnold Dreyblatt: *Resonant Relations* (Crash Ensemble: CD, Cantaloupe Music CA21046, 2008)

Donnacha Dennehy: *Elastic Harmonic* (Crash Ensemble, Darragh Morgan, Ensemble Intégrales, Joanna MacGregor, NSOI cond. Gavin Maloney: CD, NMC D133, 2007)

Erik Lund: *by the line of the arc that they form* (Crash Ensemble, Various Artists: CD, Centaur CEN 2992, 2010)

Zack Browning: *Banjaxed* (Crash Ensemble, Various Artists: CD, Capstone Records, CPS 8697, 2001)