

Elaine Agnew

(b. 1967)

“I like to write music which is direct: sudden disruptive jolts contrasting with ritualistic still textures and whispers. The gestures of the performers as they play give direction to my work.”



County Antrim composer Elaine Agnew studied composition at Queen's University, Belfast and at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama with Michael Alcorn, Kevin Volans and James MacMillan.

She was recently appointed as the first RTÉ lyric fm Composer-in-Residence in association with the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, and her first commission *Hiccup* (2008) for early instruments will be broadcast throughout the EBU on Handel's anniversary in April 2009. Her year long residency

includes a new carol *Curoo Curoo* for RTÉ lyric fm's annual *Choirs for Christmas* competition and an orchestral piece for the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, alongside a series of education and on-line projects.

Her works have been performed worldwide by artists such as Lontano, the Vogler Quartet, the National Chamber Choir, Concorde, the European Union Chamber, the Irish Chamber, the Ulster Youth and Ulster Orchestras and pianists Angela Hewitt and Romain Deschamps.

Recent premieres include *one less petal, one less flame* (2007), a major education commission celebrating the Flight of the Earls in Donegal. Irish pianist Isabelle O'Connell performed *Seagull* (2005) at the Carnegie Hall in New York while Concorde performed her song cycle *In the Adriatic* (2006) at the Unicum Festival in Slovenia in May 2008.

Elaine Agnew has directed extensive education and community projects and is the Artistic Advisor of Music Network's Continuing Professional Development programme.

She was awarded a Major Individual Arts Award from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and has recently returned from her first trip to Australia where she met with composer Elena Kats-Chernin. A second visit is planned in 2009 to work with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

Elaine Agnew is currently writing a series of chamber pieces with poet Chris Agee in collaboration with Maltese musicians and a new score for a production by Tall Tales Theatre Company of *Maisy Daly's Rainbow*.

Selected Works

ORCHESTRA

Sixth of January (2005)

Concerto for Two Violins and String Orchestra

2 vn-solo, str

MS 17'

Commissioned by Irish Chamber Orchestra with funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.

Premiere: 22 July 2005. St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick.

Nicola Sweeney (vn-solo), Andre Swanepoel (vn-solo), Irish Chamber Orchestra, conductor Nicholas McGegan. Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Blessed (2005)

str

MS 10'

Commissioned by the European Union Chamber Orchestra with funds provided by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland National Lottery Unit.

Premiere: 23 October 2005. Elmwood Hall, Belfast. European Union Chamber Orchestra, conductor Gernot Sussmuth.

Slasp (2003)

1121 2111 timp perc str

MS 12'

Commissioned by BBC Radio 3 for the Sonorities Festival of Contemporary Music 2003.

Premiere: 2 May 2003. Ulster Hall, Belfast. Ulster Orchestra, conductor David Porcellijn.

Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

The Moon (2002)

str

MS 3'

Commissioned by the Irish Chamber Orchestra.

Premiere: 17 July 2002. Killaloe Music Festival, St Flannan's Cathedral, Killaloe, Co. Clare. Irish Chamber Orchestra.

Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Straight to the Point (2000)

2222 4431 timp 4 perc hrp str

MS 13'

Commissioned by the Ulster Youth Orchestra with funds provided by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland National Lottery Unit.

Premiere: 25 August 2000. Newry Town Hall, Co. Down. Ulster Youth Orchestra, conductor Andrew Shulman.

Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Strings A-stray (1994 rev. 1998)

str [2.2.2.2.1]

MS 10'

Commissioned by the Irish Chamber Orchestra with funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.

Premiere: 22 October 1994. Guildhall, Derry. Irish Chamber Orchestra, director Fionnuala Hunt.

Recording: *Strings A-stray*. Irish Chamber Orchestra, director Fionnuala Hunt. Black Box 1998. BBM1013.

carry each other (2007)

str

MS 10'

Commissioned by the DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama.

Premiere: 13 December 2007. Gleeson Hall, DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama. DIT Sinfonia, conductor Dermot Dunne.

ENSEMBLE

Hiccup (2008)

2 vn [baroque], G-violone, hpd

MS 5'

Commissioned by RTE Lyric fm as part of the Composer in Residence scheme.

Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Ready, Steady, Go! (2004)

2 vn va vc

MS 8'

Commissioned by Dublin Youth Orchestras with funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.

Premiere: 2 October 2007. St George's Church, Carrick-on-Shannon. Hunka Quartet.

Calligraphy (2002)

fl+all, cl+bcl, vib vn vc
MS 10'

Commissioned by Concorde with funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.
Premiere: 12 May 2002. Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin. Concorde. Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Statues (2001)

vn pf
MS 12'

Commissioned by Katherine Hunka and Sophie Rahman
Premiere: 4 February 2002. Wigmore Hall, London. Katherine Hunka (vn), Sophie Rahman (pf). Recording: *Music from Northern Ireland*. Lontano Records 2004. LNT117.

SOLO INSTRUMENTAL

Seagull (2005)

pf

Contemporary Music Centre Editions 5'
Commissioned by AXA Dublin International Piano Competition 2005 with funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon. Premiere: 13 May 2006, National Concert Hall. Kyu Yeon Kim (pf). Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

The Big Sky (2001)

pf
MS 12'

Commissioned by the Sonorities Festival with funds provided by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland National Lottery Unit.
Premiere: 11 May 2001. Harty Room, Queen's University, Belfast. Andrew Zolinsky (pf). Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

VOCAL AND CHORAL

One Less Petal, One Less Flame (2007)

children's choir, str [4.4.3.2.1]
MS 32'

Commissioned by Donegal County Council under the Per Cent for Art Scheme. Premiere: 16 September 2007. St Peter's Church, Milford, Co. Donegal. Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

This is Me! (2007)

unison choir, 2 vn va vc pf

Text: County Sligo children, directed by Eibhlin Nic Eochaidh
MS 10'

Commissioned by the Sligo Arts Service.
Premiere: May 2007. St Columba's Church Drumcliffe, Co. Sligo. Vogler Quartet, Lorna Horan (pf) and Ardkeerin NS Choir, conductor Elaine Agnew.

The Mдина Gilder (2006)

satb

Text: Chris Agee
MS 6'

Commissioned by the National Chamber Choir with funds provided by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.
Premiere: 13 December 2006. Harty Room, Queen's University, Belfast. National Chamber Choir of Ireland, conductor Celso Antunes.

In the Adriatic (2006)

S-solo, cl bcl ace vc

Text: Chris Agee
MS 16'

Commissioned by Concorde.
Premiere: 29 July 2006. Galway City Museum.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

I am a Miracle (2006)

children's choir, str

Text: St Colman's College and Coleraine High School, directed by Kate Newmann.
MS 10'

Commissioned by the European Union Chamber Orchestra with funds provided by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.
Premiere: 10 May 2006. Riverside Theatre, Coleraine. Coleraine High School Choir, European Union Chamber Orchestra, conductor Elaine Agnew. Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

The Whisper of Ghosts (2004)

children's choir, vib, 3 perc, hrp, str, 2 speakers

Text: Piercetown, Murrintown and Mayglass National Schools, directed by Kate Newmann.
MS 43'

Commissioned by Wexford County Council.
Premiere: 27 May 2004. Theatre Royal, Wexford. Piercetown, Murrintown and Mayglass National Schools, Robert Kendall (vib), Clona Doris (hrp), Irish Chamber Orchestra, conductor David Brophy. Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Bread (2004)

satb

Text: Pat Boran
MS 6'

Commissioned by RTÉ lyric fm.
Premiere: 30 September 2004. National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin. National Chamber Choir, conductor Celso Antunes.

Recording: *Contemporary Music from Ireland, Volume Five*. Contemporary Music Centre 2005. CMC CD05

April Awake (2004)

Mez-solo, pf

Text: John Hewitt
MS 5'

Commissioned by the Belfast Music Society.
Premiere: 17 April 2004. Great Hall, Queen's University, Belfast. Catherine Robbin (Mez-solo), Angela Hewitt (pf).

Kiss me (2003)

satb

Text: From the Song of Solomon
MS 5'

Commissioned by the National Chamber Choir with funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.
Premiere: 4 December 2003. National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin. National Chamber Choir, conductor Celso Antunes.

Snow-Hole (2003)

S-solo, vc

Text: Michael Longley
MS 5'

Commissioned by the National Concert Hall.
Premiere: 15 April 2003. 'Composers' Choice' series, John Field Room, National Concert Hall, Dublin. Judith Mok (S-solo), Juliet Welchman (vc). Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Albert's Clock (2002)

satb, 2222 2120 timp 2 perc str

Text: Michael Longley
MS 8'

Commissioned by the Belfast Festival at Queen's with funds provided by the Northern Ireland Lottery Arts Fund.
Premiere: 25 October 2002. Waterfront Hall, Belfast. Cappella Caeciliana, Ulster Orchestra, conductor Thierry Fischer.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Fire (2002)

unison choir [children], fl, cl, bcl, asax, tsax, tpt, trb, euph, 2 perc,

Text: St Joseph's National School, directed by Kate Newmann
vn, vc

MS 6'

Commissioned by Breaking Ground.
Premiere: 11 April 2003. Ballymun, Dublin. Ballymun Comprehensive and St Joseph's Primary School, conductor Ron Cooney.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Wait and See (2000)

children's choir, str

Text: Charlotte Cory, children of the Mercy Primary School, Crumlin Road, Belfast
MS 12'

Commissioned by the Irish Chamber Orchestra with funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.
Premiere: 23 November 2000. University Concert Hall, Limerick. Irish Chamber Orchestra, conductor Rachel Worby.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Mushrooming (1999 - 2000)

S-solo, vn, vc, pf

Text: Chris Agee
MS 10'

Commissioned by Music Network with funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.
Premiere: 1 May 2000. King House, Boyle, Co. Roscommon. Judith Mok (S-solo), Irish Piano Trio. Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Rain is coming (1997 - 1998)

satb [div.]

Text: Dermot Healy
MS 10'

Commissioned by the National Chamber Choir with funds provided by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland National Lottery Unit.
Premiere: 8 March 1998. International Women's Day Concert, St Patrick's Hall, Dublin Castle. National Chamber Choir, conductor Colin Mawby. Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

BAND

Little Christmas (2006)

5 cnt fgh 3 hn 2 bar 2 trb btrb euph 2 tuba timp 2 perc

The Music Company (UK) Ltd. 6'

Commissioned by the North of Ireland Bands Association.
Premiere: 29 April 2006. Waterfront Hall, Belfast. Arklow Shipping Silver Band, conductor John Bonner. Recording: *2006 European Brass Band Contest*. Doyen 2006. DOY CD211

Jack in the Box (2002)

2 fl, ob, 3 cl, bcl, asax, bn, 2 hn, 3 tpt, 3 trb, euph, tuba, 2 perc
MS

Commissioned by The National School Band Association for the NSBA Derry Wind Festival 2002.
Premiere: 16 March 2002. Waterside Theatre, Derry. National School Band Association-Western Education and Library Board Wind Band, conductor Elaine Agnew.
Recording: *Music for Young Bands from NSBA*. Students of The Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama RSAMD 2004. NSBA1.