

Donnacha Dennehy

(b. 1970)

“Donnacha Dennehy has a soundworld all of his own.”

The Wire Magazine, 2007.



Born in Dublin, Donnacha Dennehy has received commissions from the BBC, WNYC (Public Radio New York), RTÉ, Amsterdam Fonds Voor der Kunst, the Arts Councils of both England and Ireland, and from many individual ensembles. Noted performers of his work include Bang On A Can All-Stars, Orkest de Volharding, London Sinfonietta, Percussion

Group of the Hague, Ensemble Integrales, Electra, Prism Saxophone Quartet, Joanna MacGregor and Jenny Lin among others. He has also collaborated with artists working in video and dance.

He studied composition at Trinity College Dublin and at the University of Illinois, USA, where his main teachers were Salvatore Martirano and William Brooks. He pursued further studies in electronic music at The Hague, and at IRCAM, Paris. Returning to Ireland, he founded the Crash Ensemble in 1997 to concentrate on the newest music exploiting multimedia. He now lectures in music technology and composition at Trinity College Dublin.

His work has been featured in festivals such as ISCM World Music Days, Bang On A Can in New York, Sonic Evolutions Festival at Lincoln Center, Wien Modern, EXPO 2000 in Germany, the Ultima Festival in Oslo, the Gaudeamus Festival in Amsterdam, and State of the Nation at the South Bank.

Recent premieres include *Stamp (to avoid erotic thoughts)* (2008), for the Smith Quartet, *Stainless Staining* (2006-7) for the New York based pianist, Lisa Moore, and *Grá Agus Bás* (2006-7) for the Crash Ensemble and the sean nós singer, Iarla O' Lionáird. His first full-length album, *Elastic Harmonic*, was released on NMC in June 2007.

Donnacha Dennehy was elected to Aosdána, Ireland's state-sponsored academy of creative artists, in 2005.

Selected Works

ORCHESTRAL

Elastic Harmonic (2005)

vn-solo, 2431 4321 hrp pf 3 perc str
MS 15'

Commissioned by RTE for the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra
Premiere: 5 September 2005 [TV broadcast]. RTÉ, Dublin. Ioana Petcu-Colan (vn-solo), RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, conductor Robert Houlihan.

O (2001-02)

4042 2 sax 4440 4 perc 2 hp str
MS 15'

Commissioned by Trinity College Dublin in memory of the late Brian Boydell, Professor Emeritus of Music
Premiere: 21 May 2002. National Concert Hall, Dublin. National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, conductor Gerhard Markson.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

The Vandal (2000)

3330 3331 pf str [16.14.12.10.8]
MS 11'

Commissioned by RTÉ.
Premiere: 22 September 2000. National Concert Hall, Dublin. National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, conductor Alexander Annissimov.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

ENSEMBLE

Streetwalker (2003)

cl+bcl, egui, perc [vib, bdm, sdm, cowbells], pf, vc, db
MS 12'

Commissioned by WNYC Radio, New York.
Premiere: 23 May 2003. Vicar Street, Dublin. Bang On a Can All-Stars.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

The Pale (2002)

ssax, asax, tsax, barsax, 4perc
MS 10'

Premiere: 11 May 2003. De Ijsbreker, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Aurelia Saxophone Quartet, Slagwerkgroepdenhaag.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Composition for percussion, loops, blips and flesh (2001 - 2002)

6 mar
MS 14'

Commissioned by Slagwerkgroep den Haag with funds provided by the Amsterdam Fund for the Arts.
Premiere: 1 March 2002. Korzo Theatre, The Hague, Netherlands. Slagwerkgroep den Haag, John Gerrard (live electronics, video).

A Game for Gentlemen Played by Thugs (1999)

ob, tpt, hpd [all amplified]
MS 5'

Premier: 20 February 2003. BBC Maida Vale Studios, London. London Sinfonietta. Recording: CMC Sound Archive

The Traces of a Revolutionary Song (1998)

4 tpt, hn, 3 trbn, btrbn, tuba
MS 10'

Commissioned by Music Network.
Premiere: 28 November 1998. Bantry House, Cork. London Brass.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Pluck, Stroke and Hammer (1997)

2 vn va vc pf
MS 6'
Commissioned by Music Network with funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.
Premiere: 23 November 1997. St Patrick's Hall, Dublin Castle.
RTE Vanbrugh Quartet, Hugh Tinney (pf).
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

SOLO INSTRUMENTAL

Mad, Avid, Sad (2000)

org
MS 3'
Premiere: 6 August 2000. St Michael's Church, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. David Adams (org).

Begobs I-IV (1994 rev. 1995)

pf
MS 18'
Premiere: 1 December 1994. Krannert Centre, University of Illinois [Begob I only]; 24 October 1995. Oslo, Norway. Nils Anders Mortensen (pf).
Recording: *Grieg Grand Prix*. Nils Anders Mortensen (pf). Grieg Grand Prix 1996. GP01.

Work for Organ (1992 rev. 1998)

org
MS 3'
Commissioned by Joseph O'Gorman for his MA commencement ceremony.
Premiere: 14 May 1992. Trinity College Chapel, Dublin. Feargal Caulfield.
Recording: *Organ: The Historic Organs of Trinity College Dublin*. David Adams (org). Trinity College Dublin 1999. TCDCC002.

VOCAL AND CHORAL

Hive (2005)

sath 2230 4221 timp 3 perc hrp pf str
MS 17'
Commissioned by BBC Radio 3 and the National Chamber Choir for the Ulster Orchestra and National Chamber Choir.
Premiere: 19 August 2005, Belfast. National Chamber Choir, Ulster Orchestra, conductor Celso Antunes.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Of (1994)

S-solo [amplified [opt.], ob, cl, asax, hn, trbn, pf vn va vc db
MS 10'
Premiere: 26 April 1994. Smith Hall, University of Illinois, USA. Becky Weintraub (S-solo), University of Illinois New Music Ensemble, conductor William Brooks.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Two Yeats Songs (1992)

S-solo, fl
Text: W. B. Yeats
MS 10'
Premiere: 2 February 1993. University of Illinois, Urbana, USA. Laura Stanfield (S-solo), Jane Weigel (fl).
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

ELECTRO-ACOUSTIC AND MIXED MEDIA

Glamour Sleeper (2002)

cl, vn, db, perc [amplified], live electronics
MS 11'
Commissioned by Crash Ensemble for performance by the Contemporanea Ensemble in the Up North! Festival 2002.
Premiere: 8 December 2002. Up North! Festival, Project Arts Centre, Dublin. Contemporanea Ensemble.

Tones, loops and blips (2002)

tape 3'

Blips and Static (2002)

ghetto blasters 5'

pAt (2000 - 2001)

pf, tape
MS 11'
Commissioned by Music Network with funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.
Premiere: 12 March 2001. Draíocht Centre for the Arts, Blanchardstown, Co. Dublin. Joanna MacGregor (pf).
Recording: *By the new time*. Joanna MacGregor (pf). Silverdoor 2001. SIDO 010CD.

Counting (2000)

2 vn va vc, tape [four-channel]
MS 12'
Commissioned by Arts Office, Sligo County Council, with funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.
Premiere: 30 April 2000. Drumcliffe Church, Co. Sligo. Vogler Quartet.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

derailed (2000)

fl cl vn vc db hpd tape
MS 14'
Commissioned by Project Arts Centre.
Premiere: 27 February 2000. Temple Theatre, Dublin. Crash Ensemble.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Ecstasis, full stop (1999)

2 vn va vc, live electronics
MS 5'
Commissioned by RTÉ.
Premiere: 1 January 2000 [first broadcast]. RTÉ Vanbrugh Quartet.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Severance (1999)

fl+picc, 3 sax, 3 tpt, 3 trbn, pf, db, [all amplified] tape
MS 14'
Commissioned by Orkest de Volharding.
Premiere: 23 November 1999. De Ijsbreker, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Orkest de Volharding, conductor Jurjen Hempel.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Swerve (1998)

fl tape
MS 8'
Premiere: 22 May 1998. Stadtgalerie, Saarbrücken, Germany. Camilla Hoitenga (fl). Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Curves (1997)

hp [amplified], tape
MS 7'
Commissioned by Maria Cleary with funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.
Premiere: 25 November 1999. 'Mostly Modern' series, Bank of Ireland Arts Centre, Dublin. Clíona Doris.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Junk Box Fraud (1997)

cl, trbn, 2 pf, 2 speakers, tape, video
MS 12'
Premiere: 23 October 1997. Samuel Beckett Centre, Trinity College Dublin. Crash Ensemble, conductor Andrew Synnott.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Voitures (1996)

ob tape
MS 5'
Premiere: 23 March 1996. Smith Memorial Room, University of Illinois, USA. Melissa Peña. Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Metropolis Mutabilis (1995)

tape 6'
Premiere: 7 March 1996. Tryon Festival Theatre, University of Illinois, USA.
Recording: *waveFORMATION*. Experimental Music Studios 1997. EMS 9700.