

# Galway Music Residency Annual Activity Report



January-December 2021

## Happy New Year!

Galway Music Residency (GMR) wishes all of its Friends, supporters, and audience members every health and happiness for 2022.

Behind the scenes we are busy finalising the details of our upcoming programme for the year with many exciting performances and activities in store. We look forward to sharing the details very soon, and welcoming you to our events. Keep an eye on our website and social media platforms, and join our mailing list, for announcements.

We had a busy and fulfilling year in 2021 despite the challenges we faced in the context of the ongoing pandemic. We continued to deliver a whole range of top-notch opportunities for the people of Galway City and County to listen to, learn about and love music through our lively online and in-person offerings of performances, workshops and more.

We thank you for your ongoing support .

Here's a look back at some of the highlights of the 2021

*Maeve, Orla and all at GMR*

## Performance

### From Europe with Love...

From Europe with Love is our ambitious project exploring the shared musical heritage of the 27 EU mem-

ber countries through string quartet repertoire. It has ignited the imaginations of our Galway audiences, with lots of online engagement and in-person attendances.

In 2021 we presented six editions of the series, four online (due to the ongoing pandemic) and two in-person in the stunning surrounds of St Nicholas' Collegiate Church. The 2021 instalments featured music



*Bogdan Sofei performing during From Europe with Love: Belgium*

from Estonia, Slovenia, Cyprus, Greece, Belgium and Poland, with our resident ConTempo Quartet performing works by no less than 16 composers including among them César Franck, Grażyna Bacewicz, Mikis Theodorakis, Andy Skordis, Tõnu Kõrvits, Ester Mägi and Nina Senk.

We were delighted to welcome guests with links to the featured countries to introduce each instal-

ment. Our thanks to Sylvie Mossay (Belgium); Dr. Natasha Remoundou (Greece); Penelope Soteriou (Cyprus); Jane O'Leary (Slovenia); Aino Lepik von Wirén Ambassador of Estonia to Ireland (Estonia); and Joanna Zalech (Poland) for their insightful introductions. We look forward to presenting the final two instalments of this series this Spring.

### 3 Kinds of Music

Our ever popular *3 Kinds of Music* series migrated online for its Summer 2021 iteration, and was presented in the form of a digital pop-up festival over one memorable weekend. Curated by music mastermind Matthew Berrill, it featured some of Ireland's finest emerging and established musicians across a range of musical styles including



*Uilleann piper Eugene Lambe performs*

Galway based artist Niamh Regan, cellist Aoife Burke and sean nós dancer Emma O'Sullivan.

For the winter edition of this series we were delighted to return to in-person events and to welcome three guest curators to the series. Guitarist, composer and producer **Aengus Hackett** devised a programme inspired by the natural world featuring Haydn's Bird quartet, traditional music performed by piper and botanist Eugene Lambe, and contemporary jazz inspired by the event's theme from pianist Greg Felton. Songwriter, musician and broadcaster **Ruth Smith** curated a programme featuring original music from SÍOMHA, songs from German Composer Kurt Weill performed by



Curator Ruth Smith introduces the artists

Ruth McGill (soprano) and Niall Kinsella (piano), and Dave Flynn's 'The Cranning' performed by ConTempo Quartet. The final instalment of the series was curated by Galway's own **Anna Mullarkey** and featured music from Anna's own trio in which she teamed up with bassist Sam Wright and accordion player Paul McClure as well as singer songwriter Emma Lohan, and works by Arvo Pärt and Philip Glass performed by ConTempo Quartet.

Galway Music Residency is hugely grateful to Druid and the Mick Lally Theatre for their support in presenting this series, and to the Office of

Public Works who housed our first performance in the Hall of the Red Earl on Druid Lane.

### *ConTempo Countywide*

Continuing its commitment to bringing performances to local centres throughout County Galway, GMR presented ConTempo Quartet at Oughterard Courthouse; Kiltartan Church, Gort, in association with Coole Music; Claregalway Castle; and Christchurch in Portumna as part of the Shorelines Festival.

As part of the ConTempo Countywide programme we were thrilled to work with Compass Quartet and Burren Con Brio, a GMR alumni Apprentice Ensemble, for one of the performances. Another highlight of the 2021 Countywide programme was the World Premiere of Galway-based composer Jane O'Leary's quartet entitled *Strings in the Air / Songs in the Stones*. The piece was inspired by Claregalway Castle and is dedicated to castle owner Eamon



Composer Jane O'Leary introduces her work

O'Donoghue and ConTempo Quartet. It explored the memory of life, love and music held in the castle's stones. Its premiere took place in the castle, a beautiful moment shared in an extraordinary setting.

### *Estonian Independence Day*

This year we were delighted to partner with several organisations on a range of events. Among them was the Estonian Embassy in Dublin. To mark Estonian Independence Day Galway Music Residency and ConTempo Quartet joined with NUI Galway's Alumni Ensemble to present a virtual performance of Arvo Pärt's *Da pacem Domine* directed by Peter Mannion.



Estonia Day Virtual Performance

*Da pacem Domine* (Give peace, Lord) is a choral composition by Arvo Pärt on the Latin prayer for peace of the same name. We were very grateful to Mr Pärt, who gave his personal permission for this particular arrangement.

### *Embodying Glass*

Another GMR partnership in 2021 involved work in the area of dance. Produced by Galway Music Residency with Cuisle Productions for Galway Theatre Festival, *Embodying Glass* is a creative response to a global existential crisis. ConTempo Quartet and choreographer-performer Jérémie Cyr-Cooke came together in the Spring to offer a new piece of dance-theatre, inspired by Philip Glass' four-movement *Company* (1983). The project which saw



ConTempo Quartet & Jérémie Cyr-Cooke

the dancer, and the musicians at times, quite literally embodying the musical score, was not only a celebration of our temporal beings, but a challenge of exhausting repetitions, as musicians and dancers conversed about the relationship between music and our bodies.

### *Galway 2020 European Capital of Culture Commission*

'The Mighty Ocean' was produced by Galway Music Residency for TG4 as part of Galway 2020's Capital of Culture Programme, and had its World Premiere on Sunday 25 April. Composed by accordion maestro Máirtín O'Connor and scored for 12 musicians including the ConTempo

Quartet, this suite opens a musical dialogue between mankind and the environment, touching on the entrancing power of the sea, while questioning the destructive influence of humankind on our endangered oceans. The Mighty Ocean was filmed by HeavyMan Films in the stunning surrounds of St Nicholas' Collegiate Church for broadcast on TG4. Commissioned by Galway2020, The Mighty Ocean was co-funded by Creative Ireland, Galway County Council and Galway City Council. The film is currently available on the TG4 Player.

### *ConTempo 25*

Our beloved ensemble in residence ConTempo Quartet was formed in 1995 in Bucharest and turned 25 years old in 2020. Celebrations were somewhat delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic, but in 2021 they came to fruition in a partnership with Galway International Arts Festival to celebrate this remarkable anniversary. Over three concerts in August and September, ConTempo Quartet

performed its favourite works composed for string quartet, as well as a finale concert with long-time friend and collaborator Finghin Collins. From Borodin to Haydn, Schubert to Shostakovich and more, there was something for everyone.

### *Music for Galway Partnership*

Music for Galway and Galway Music Residency are longstanding collaborators and supporters of one another's work. We were thrilled to celebrate their 40<sup>th</sup> season with them through a partnership for their 40<sup>th</sup> season Gala Concert. The concert brought together artists who have made a special mark on Music for Galway's history over the past four decades, including ConTempo Quartet. The programme featured works by Stravinsky, Fauré and a pairing with the Vanbrugh Quartet to perform the first movement of Mendelssohn's octet in E minor. The 40th celebrations continue in January 2022 when Galway Music Residency will present ConTempo Quartet as part of Music for Galway's Midwinter Festival celebrating Charles Villiers Stanford.

### *Culture Night*

On 17 September we celebrated Culture Night with a very special event to launch an exhibition of 21 decorated currachs at NUI Galway's Emily Anderson Concert Hall. The exhibition, coordinated by Áras Éanna arts centre on Inis Óírr, included works by John Behan, Jennifer Cunningham, Ger Sweeney and Áine Phillips. ConTempo Quartet performed a specially selected suite of classical and contemporary



Behind the scenes filming of *The Mighty Ocean*



*Welcoming the currachs*

music connected to the ocean, composed by Alec Roth, Claude Debussy and Katharina Baker. NUI Galway Drama students also took part in the event, reciting a selection of poetry by Máirtín Ó Direáin.

## *Decade of the Centenaries Commission*

*Rough Beast* is the title of a new work co-commissioned by Galway Music Residency and Galway City Council in 2021 from Irish composer Rhona Clarke. Composed for string quartet and soprano, it takes inspiration from WB Yeats' poem *The Second Coming*.



Amelie Clonan, BA Student in Drama and Theatre at NUI Galway, performs a dramatic reading of Yeats' *The Second Coming*

The work received its World Premiere at an exclusive performance by ConTempo Quartet and soprano Aisling Kenny, presented by GMR and the Contemporary Music Centre (CMC) as part of NUI Galway's Arts in Action programme in November.

The event also included a fascinat-

ing perspective on the historical context of the poem by Dr Adrian Paterson, as well as dramatic readings, an interview with the composer led by GMR Board member and CMC's Linda O'Shea Farren and an archive exhibition, with material sourced from the collections of NUI Galway Library Archives, relating to Yeats and modern artistic responses to violence. This project was supported by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media under the Decade of Centenaries 2012-2023 initiative. A film of *Rough Beast* will be available on our Facebook page and YouTube channel in the coming weeks.

## *Friends & Funders Event*

To wrap up the year we held an exclusive evening of music and conversation for all of our Friends and Funders in the intimate South Transept of the historical St Nicholas' Collegiate Church. ConTempo Quartet explored a range of interesting music with conversation and questions facilitated by Galway Music Residency board members John Caulfield and Jane O'Leary. There were lots of fascinating musical insights both in terms of repertoire and the Quartet's approach to performing that repertoire.

***If you would like to become a Galway Music Residency Friend and enjoy exclusive events such as this one, please contact Orla Henihan by email at***

***orla@thegalwaymusicresidency.ie.***

## **Online Initiatives**

As well as much of our regular series moving online in 2021, GMR also developed a number of projects specially for the medium.

### *Connecting with ConTempo*

Connecting with ConTempo is our 'at-home' series aimed at keeping in touch with our audiences digitally by delivering beautiful music and musical insight.



*Jamie Toomey talks about his work*

We were delighted to team up with The Black Gate Cultural Centre to present two Connecting with ConTempo offerings in January. The first saw ConTempo Quartet team up with Galway based musician and composer, Jamie Toomey, and the second featured ConTempo Quartet performing Philip Glass' 'Company', which was paired with a previous offering in which multi-award winning author Mike McCormack reflects on the music of Glass.

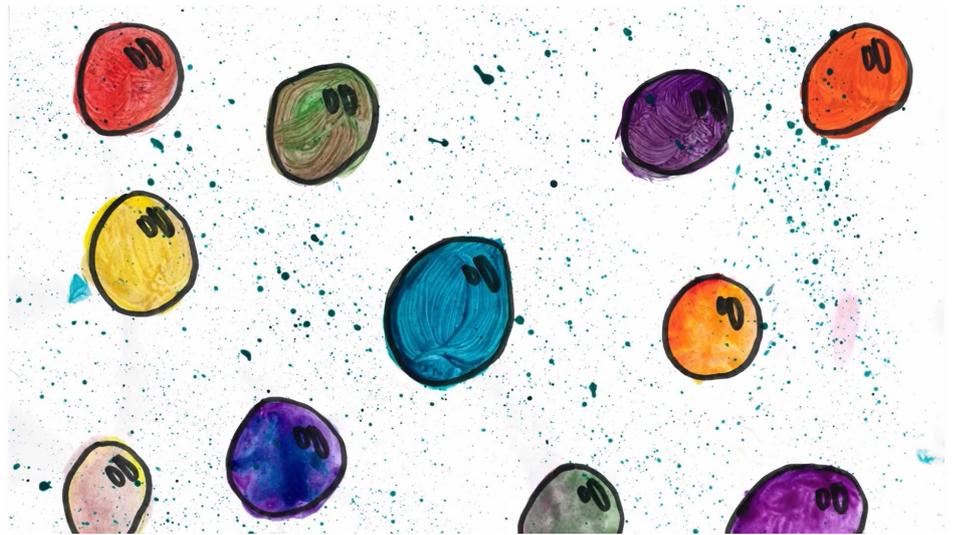
### *Creative Responses*

Creative Responses is the community outreach branch of our Connecting with ConTempo initiative, which invites local artists and writers to explore a deep connection to music and ConTempo Quartet within their own art form. The results so far have been exquisite with contribu-

tions from artists and writers throughout Galway .

In February and March members of Kinvara Area Visual Arts responded to ConTempo Quartet’s performances of Haydn and Dvořák. They were joined by poets Eva Bourke and Vincent Woods who responded with their respective poems “Dvořák in America” and “Swift Light”.

In May we embarked on a children’s edition of Creative Responses working with the three Senior Infants and 5th classes of Radharc na Mara Primary School in Mervue. The students spent a week interacting with ConTempo Quartet’s performances of Johann and Josef Strauss and Tchaikovsky in lots of different



... the music reminds me of bubbles flying everywhere and jumping up and down Emma 5th class

ways: Listening with eyes closed; listening while imagining; watching and listening; listening while creating art works in different mediums.

## Education

### Apprentice Ensemble Programme

Our 2021 Apprentice Ensemble programme kicked off with an online performance from Burren Con Brio, one of our alumni ensembles. Check it out on our YouTube channel.

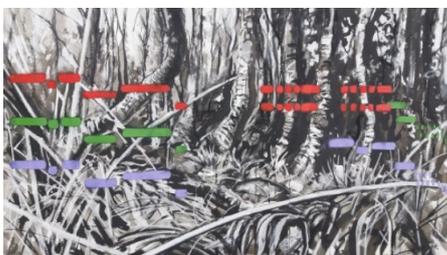


Apprentice Ensemble in action

Mozart with ConTempo Quartet over two days. Sinéad devised engaging resource documents for the young musicians to supplement the instrumental tuition from the Quartet. We were delighted to return to face-to-face interaction with our Ensemble participants in December for a day-long workshop at Athenry Music School, building on what they had learned in the summer workshops. An in-person summer course is planned for 2022. Contact [orla@thegalwaymusicresidency.ie](mailto:orla@thegalwaymusicresidency.ie) to find out more.

### Primary Level offerings

Connecting Kids with ConTempo is a FREE initiative designed to help primary school children engage with classical music in a fun and creative way. In this four-part series, we explored opposites in music: loud and soft, fast and slow, major and minor, and more. Children interact with the music through self-reflective questions and respond to



Understudy No. 2; Shona MacGillivray



Sea Dancers; Christopher Banahan



Untitled; Anne Korff

Under the stewardship of musician, conductor and GMR board member Sinéad Hayes we moved online for the Summer edition of the Apprentice Ensemble workshops. Nineteen young Galway musicians took part and explored music by Haydn and



*Connecting Kids with ConTempo: Bowing Opposites*

the music creatively. These videos were shared with primary schools throughout Galway city and county. Plans are in place to develop the Connecting Kids with ConTempo offering into a more comprehensive primary school programme which will be in schools in spring 2022

*You can catch up on a wide range of online content on our Facebook page or YouTube channel. And why not sign up to our mailing list on the homepage of [www.galwaymusicresidency.ie](http://www.galwaymusicresidency.ie) to receive musical treats straight to your mailbox.*

Galway Music Residency was delighted to collaborate with Branar Téatar do Pháistí on its Fuaimrian project in 2021. ConTempo Quartet with pianist David Bremner recorded the music to accompany the narration of a day in the life of a young girl written by author Mary Murphy. This gorgeous audio initiative supported by educational resources will be delivered in primary schools in 2022.

## **2nd Level offerings**

In November we connected with Junior Cycle and Leaving Cert music

students from Dominican College Taylor's Hill and Salerno Secondary School to deliver a morning of workshops relating to the curricula. These workshops, which focused on the aural skills requirements of the Junior and Leaving Cert syllabus took place in the Dominican College, Taylors Hill, and were facilitated by GMR Board Member and music teacher Marie Kerrigan. In 2022 we plan to return to this programme both in City and County schools.



*Junior Cert Workshop*

## **NUI Galway Education Partnership BA in Music**

Galway Music Residency with ConTempo Quartet continues to work with Dr Aidan Thomson and his colleagues on the BA in Music at NUI,

Galway. Our work is embedded in the programme through regular workshops across music history, critical writing, composition and more. In 2021, ConTempo Quartet delivered workshops both online and in-person as part of the programme ensuring continued delivery of this service. In November, we were also delighted to provide an open rehearsal opportunity for the BA students to experience first-hand professional musicians and composer in preparation for the world premiere performance of a newly commissioned piece of music, Rough Beast (page 4).



*Annie Burke*

## **Internship Programme**

In 2021 we offered our first BA Music student internship. Hugely capable third year student Annie Burke joined us in the spring. While gaining insight and learning about the workings of a small arts organisation, Annie also provided support to us across many areas of our work.

*"I loved working on every activity during my time at the Galway Music Residency. I was lucky enough to have been given the opportunity to do loads of different tasks and projects in different areas. However, one experience that I will treasure was being a part of the Mighty*

*Ocean production team. Not only did I get to see the ins and outs of how filming and recording something of that magnitude worked, but I also had the pleasure of listening to live music played by some amazing musicians."* Annie Burke.

This internship programme continues in 2022, and we have recently welcomed this year's participant, Chloe O'Reilly, on board.

### Academic Contributions

In April our Executive Director Maeve Bryan presented 'A Place for New Music in the Irish Music Canon' at the *Re-imagining the Creative Arts Curriculum and the Creative Arts Canon* webinar series hosted by the School of English and Creative Arts at NUI Galway.

Over the course of the series, scholars, practitioners, and students across the Creative Arts nationally and internationally were brought together to discuss practical strategies for teaching and learning and how that effects professional practice in the Creative Arts.

### MA in Writing

Galway Music Residency enjoys a longstanding relationship with the MA in Creative Writing at NUI Galway. While we took a brief hiatus from formal activities with the programme in 2021, we look forward to engaging with Dr. John Kenny and his colleagues for workshops in 2022 to explore links between music and literature, the written word and sound, and more.

### Performance

In 2021, we were also delighted to

continue to provide performance activities on the NUI Galway campus. You can read about our NUI Galway Culture Night collaboration, *Rough Beast* World Premiere as part of the university's Arts in Action programme, and *Embodying Glass* in the 'Performance' section of this report. The two former performances involved students and staff from a number of University departments from Drama and Theatre studies to History and Music. The latter, filmed in the O'Donoghue Theatre, contributed to NUI Galway PhD candidate Jérémie Cyr-Cooke's research on physical theatre.

### Warm Welcomes and Fond Farewells

Galway Music Residency welcomed on board a new Administration Assistant in October. Orla Henihan has many years of experience in the Arts. She filled the posi-

tion vacated by Julie Seagrave who has moved to pastures new, and to whom we extend our heartfelt thanks for her service.

In December, we bid fond farewells to Board members Sally Coyle and Michael Cuddy as they stepped down from their roles as directors. Sally and Michael dedicated many years of service to the organisation, both serving as chair of the Board during their time with us.

Sally, nicknamed 'The Godmother of Galway Music Residency' by Adrian of ConTempo Quartet, was the person who first dreamed up the idea of bringing a renowned ensemble to live and work in Galway, providing the citizens of Galway opportunities to interact with classical music at the highest level. And here we are, almost 20 years later with a full and vibrant programme centred around our wonderful ConTempo Quartet. A depth of gratitude to both Sally and Michael for their unwavering support of Galway Music Residency.



Sally Coyle and Michael Cuddy

## News

### The Knights of ConTempo

On 6th January 2022, the president of Romania **Klaus Iohannis** bestowed a very special honour on ConTempo Quartet:

*“As sign of appreciation for their dedication and interpretative talent put in the service of art, for the artistic mastery and the special place they have in the cultural-artistic life of the country, for the talent, dedication and professionalism that led to the enrichment of universal culture and spirituality and promoting the image of Romania in Ireland, the President of Romania, Klaus Iohannis conferred the Order of “Cultural Merit” in the rank of Knight, Category D “Performing Arts”, to the*

*founding members of the ConTempo Quartet: Andreea Banciu, Adrian Mantu, Ingrid Nicola and Bogdan Sofei.”*

We are thrilled for our ensemble in residence, who truly deserve this distinction. It remains to be seen if they will show up to performances on horseback in future..

### ConTempo at Midwinter Festival STANFORD

2022 has truly started out with a flourish! Galway Music Residency is once again partnering with our friends at Music for Galway to present ensemble in residence **ConTempo Quartet** as part of their exciting Midwinter Festival STANFORD in January.

The cream of Irish musicians make up the cast of this year’s festival. ConTempo Quartet perform alongside mezzo-soprano **Sharon Carty**, clarinettist **John Finucane** and festival programmer and pianist **Finghin Collins**. The immersive festival will include performances, talks, films and an exhibition, giving Irish composer **Charles Villiers Stanford** a well-deserved weekend in the spotlight.

### Onward and upward!



## Galway Music Residency

*Listen, Learn, Love Music...*

### Board Members

**Keith Warnock (Chair)** | Peter Allen | John Caulfield | Sinéad Hayes | Marie Kerrigan | Jane O’Leary | Linda O’Shea Farren | Sara Stewart

### Staff

**Maeve Bryan, Executive Director** | **Orla Henihan, Administration Assistant**

### ConTempo Quartet

**Bogdan Sofei, violin I** | **Ingrid Nicola, violin II** | **Andreea Banciu, viola** | **Adrian Mantu, cello**

### Contact us

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W: [www.galwaymusicresidency.ie](http://www.galwaymusicresidency.ie)



### We are proudly supported by:



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe  
Galway County Council



### Our Media Partner is:

## Help us make music...

Everyone should have the right to **listen to, learn about and love music**. This simple belief is the driving force of the **Galway Music Residency**. We provide opportunities for people of Galway City and County to experience music in new and unexpected ways, to learn from inspiring musicians and spark joy in their lives.

### We can’t do this alone.

Our family of Friends play a key role in making our work possible. Becoming a Friend of GMR empowers us to give the gift of music to more children, adults and communities in and around Galway.

To learn about our Friends programme visit our website

[www.galwaymusicresidency.ie/support](http://www.galwaymusicresidency.ie/support)

Or contact Orla Henihan on:

[orla@thegalwaymusicresidency.ie](mailto:orla@thegalwaymusicresidency.ie)