

Sound Junction

Ayusp, Denis Smalley and Louise Rossiter

Saturday 9th May 7.30pm,

Drama Studio

PERFORMANCE
VENUES
CONCERTS

Ayusp (Graham McElearney and Paul Mills) - Artmenu

Louise Rossiter -

I/O (2023)

Black Velvet (2010, revised 2024)

Denis Smalley - Valley Flow (1992)

INTERVAL

Denis Smalley -

Sommeil de Rameau (2015)

Resurgent (Premiere) (2025-26)

The Voices of Circius (Third Fabrezan Prelude) (2016)

Ayusp - Artmenu

Artmenu is a track from Sheffield electronica duo Ayusp's (Graham McElearney and Paul Mills) upcoming album "Signals From the Orange Star", which is being released on the acclaimed Castles In Space label this year. The track is a beautiful pastoral and dreamlike journey inspired by the landscape of the Peaks, blending melodic flute lines with organic analogue synthesizers.

Louise Rossiter

Louise Rossiter (b. 1986) is a UK-based electroacoustic composer and Research and Innovation Digital Transformation Lead at University Hospitals of Leicester. Her work spans internationally performed acousmatic composition alongside digital transformation in healthcare, focusing on improving the feasibility, efficiency, and governance of clinical research through user-centred electronic systems.

Louise completed a PhD at De Montfort University under the supervision of John Young and Simon Emmerson, having studied previously with Pete Stollery, Robert Dow and Robert Normandeau. Her research interests include expectation in acousmatic music, silence and sound, acoustic ecology, multi-channel composition, and spatialisation.

Her current research continues this work through exploring how interactions of sound, silence, and timbral blending evoke implication, expectation, and ambiguity. Recent work includes *Der Industriepalast*, a suite inspired by Fritz Kahn, released on the Oscillations label.

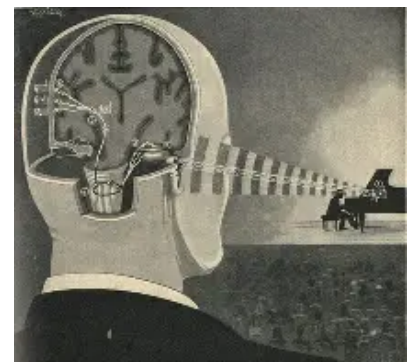
Louise's works aim to provide highly immersive and often unpredictable sonic experiences, exploring contrasts between real and imagined environments. Her music has been performed and broadcast internationally at EMS, Electronic Music Week (Shanghai), Influx (Musiques & Recherches), L'Espace du Son, New York City Electroacoustic Music Festival, BEAST, SSSP, Sound Festival, Soundings, Sound Junction, the Toronto Electroacoustic Symposium, Bologna Conservatory of Music, and Electroacoustic Wales. She has been invited as a featured artist at BEAST, USSS (Sheffield), and Electric Spring Festival (Huddersfield), and in 2019 her work *Homo Machina* was selected to represent the UK at CIME in Kraków.

Louise is Co-President of the Prix Russolo International Competition and has served on international juries including Destellos, CIME, Prix Russolo, and Musica Nova (Prague). Her work has received numerous awards, including prizes in the Destellos International Composition Competition, Musica Nova (Prague), the Franz Liszt Stipendium (Weimar), and Electronic Music Week (Shanghai). In 2012, she was awarded first prize in the L'Espace du Son international spatialisation competition, and in 2021 received the Prix Russolo for *Synapse*.

I/O (2023)

Dedicated to the memory of John Rossiter (1957-2023)

I/O represents the final work of the *Industriepalast Suite*. The work is based upon an infographic by Fritz Kahn entitled, "*Sound Perception*" (1929). The image portrays sound waves being transmitted from the distant piano, which are then likened to a radio transmission. The ear acts as an antenna, and the brain acts as a radio receiver to reassemble the waves into recognisable musical patterns.



Black Velvet (2010, revised 2024)

To everyone involved in my journey...

The original version of *Black Velvet* was realised in the studios of The University of Aberdeen in early 2010 when I was in my final year of my undergraduate degree, and was one of my first pieces of acousmatic music. Essentially, the work was an exercise in exploring a sole sound source to realise a piece of acousmatic music. However, as a neophyte acousmate, the piece was more than that, it was my gateway into the world of acousmatic music.

In revising and rewriting this piece nearly 15 years on, I hope to not only encapsulate the original work, but incorporate all I learnt from many years of input from my mentors. Hopefully, then, the result is a far more mature and refined version of the original work.

As with the original work, much of the material was sourced from a can of Guinness Nitro, which adds a further dimension to the work. Recordings from the Everards Brewery in Leicester, and a pub cellar, are also featured.

Denis Smalley

Denis Smalley was born in New Zealand in 1946. He studied music at the University of Canterbury and the Victoria University of Wellington prior to spending a year at the Paris Conservatoire in Olivier Messiaen's composition class. At the same time he completed a diploma in electroacoustic composition with the Groupe de Recherches Musicales/Paris Conservatoire. He moved to England, completing a doctorate in composition at the University of York. Until 1994 he was Senior Lecturer in Music and Director of the Electroacoustic Music Studio at the University of East Anglia, Norwich. He then moved to City, University of London (now City St George's), as Professor and Head of the Department of Music. He retired in 2009, and is Professor Emeritus.

Denis Smalley's works have been widely acclaimed, winning a number of international awards including the Prix Ars Electronica in 1988. In 2008 he was awarded an honorary Doctor of Letters by the University of Huddersfield for his achievements in electroacoustic music.

Denis Smalley is a noted writer on electroacoustic music aesthetics. He developed the concept of "spectromorphology" (the shaping of spectral energies through time), which aims to explain the ways listeners interpret sonic relationships. The article, *Spectromorphology: Explaining Sound-Shapes*, published in English, French, German and Italian, is widely studied in education institutions throughout the world.

***Valley Flow* (1992)**

The sound world of *Valley Flow* was influenced by the dramatic vistas of the Bow Valley in the Canadian Rockies. The work is based on a flowing motion which is stretched out to create airy, floating and flying contours and broad panoramic sweeps, but also contracted to create stronger textural turbulence. Landscape qualities predominate - water, fire and wood; the gritty, granular fracturing of noise-textures; and the wintry, glacial thinness of sustained lines.

The mixing of the piece was started during a Creative Residency in the Media Arts Program at the Banff Center for the Arts situated in the Bow Valley. Sounds previously created at IRCAM were incorporated, and further materials were subsequently developed at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver. The piece was completed in the composer's studio in Norwich.

Commissioned by BEAST (Birmingham Electroacoustic Sound Theatre) with funds provided by West Midlands Arts, and was given its premiere in a concert broadcast live by BBC Radio 3 from Birmingham on February 27, 1992.

Sommeil de Rameau (2015)

Sommeil de Rameau was composed in homage to Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683-1764), whose music I have long loved and admired; 2014 was the 250th anniversary of his death. I have drawn on characteristics of the sleep scene in French Baroque stage works and cantatas, which first appeared in *Les amants magnifiques* (1670), a comédie-ballet by Molière and Lully. Many examples of sleep scenes can be found during the following hundred years, including Rameau's music.

When a sleep scene is invoked, dramatic action is suspended as a main character is exhorted to sleep. The music may be solely instrumental, or may involve sung commentary, where, for example, the singers personify dreamed thoughts or suggest future courses of action. The musical style, with its slowish harmonic motion, undulating or rocking contours, and airy instrumentation, is intended to create a contemplative atmosphere and a sense of timelessness. Rameau's sleep music adapts the Lullian characteristics in imaginative ways, and there can be drifting, descending contours, sometimes adventurously chromatic, rather than relying on undulating motion.

Sommeil de Rameau is a contemplative journey based around recurring refrain materials, contrasted with diversions into a series of episodes that lengthen as the piece progresses. My starting point was a refrain motive adapted from a pair of chords, rocking over a pedal note, which intervenes between the main phrases in the "sommeil" in Act IV of the tragédie en musique *Dardanus* (1739). Passages derived from Rameau's music permeate the longer episodes, but these are recomposed and transformed, and are not explicit references. Tonal intervals and harmony prevail, but are expanded through spectral "orchestration", creating an electroacoustic "spectral tonality", as if Rameau in his (sometimes disturbed) dreaming were contemplating an imagined musical future.

Commissioned by the Sonorities Festival, Belfast, and first performed at the Sonic Arts Research Centre on April 25th, 2015.

Resurgent (2025-26) (Premiere)

Resurgent started out as *Surge* - a short piece composed as a contribution to the concert celebrating the 80th birthday of the Belgian composer Annette Vande Gorne in January 2026.

It was revised and extended to provide a companion piece for the *Fabrezan Preludes*. "Resurgent" can also be regarded as a metaphor for the reinvigoration in my compositional activity on the occasion of my own 80th birthday in 2026: I have composed very little since the *Preludes* that marked my 70th birthday.

The Voices of Circius (2016)* *(Fabrezan Prelude no.3)

The three *Fabrezan Preludes* were composed mainly in Fabrezan, a village in the Corbières, in the Occitanie region of France, where Denis Smalley and his partner have had a house for the past 23 years

The Voices of Circius refers to the Roman god of the *cers* wind to whom the Emperor Augustus dedicated an altar near Narbonne, in Occitanie. The *cers* blows from the north-west, gathering force and circular motion as it is channelled through valley corridors, towards Narbonne and the Mediterranean. It can be impetuously violent, emerging suddenly, bending trees to its will, chasing away clouds, initiating luminous skies. Recognised as having health-inducing properties, it can bring welcome cool breezes in the summer heat, but can be bitingly cold in winter. This prelude aims to capture aspects of its "voices".

Commissioned by the School of Music and Fine Art, University of Kent, and first performed in the Colyer-Fergusson Hall, Canterbury, on May 21st, 2016.

Coming up next

We've got loads of great events coming up, you can visit our website for full details - www.performancevenues.group.shef.ac.uk

Sheffield University Symphony Orchestra

Sunday 10th May 2026 - 7:30pm

£7.50-£14

Firth Hall

Join us for an evening that showcases student talent in the iconic Firth Hall.

Students in Sheffield University Symphony Orchestra have performed across the world and are current or former members of prestigious orchestras such as the British Police Symphony Orchestra, World Doctors' Orchestra, Singapore National Youth Orchestra, National Youth Orchestra of Wales, and English Schools' Orchestra.

Mostar Sevdah Reunion

Thursday 14th May 2026 - 7:30pm

£10-£17

Firth Hall

The pioneers of 21st century sevdah.

Mostar Sevdah Reunion is an exceptional collective of artists united by a single, profound passion. Some might say they live for Sevdah—that this centuries-old music is not merely their vocation, but their reason for being. Interpreting and presenting a musical tradition more than 400 years old, rooted in Bosnia and Herzegovina, is no easy task. Yet despite war, loss, and countless obstacles, Mostar Sevdah Reunion has endured.

Free Concerts on campus

Throughout term time we run free informal recitals and events in Firth Hall, including visiting guests and the performances from the talented students from the Department of Music.

These events are free to attend and are performed at lunch time and rush hour, which we believe make the events accessible for everyone to enjoy. To find out more about these events and to reserve your ticket, head to our website.

Monday 11th May	Lunchtime Concert - MA Ensembles	Firth Hall	13:10
Wednesday 13th May	Rush Hour Concert - Pop & Jazz Recitals	Firth Hall	17:45
Tuesday 26th May	Rush Hour Concert - Maryland Clarinet Choir	Firth Hall	17:45