

Newcastle Festival of Jazz and Improvised Music 2024

Friday 27th September - Sunday 29th September
Thursday 3rd October - Sunday 6th October



Newcastle Festival of Jazz and Improvised Music

With great pleasure we announce the 8th year of
Newcastle Festival of Jazz and Improvised Music.

Launched 2017, the festival continues to respond to the city's appetite for a contemporary grass roots jazz festival, presenting an innovative and diverse international line up, celebrating and pushing boundaries that challenge perceptions of jazz and improvised music.

This year we welcome new performance spaces including Jesmond Swimming Pool and the legendary Tyneside music haunt The Cumberland Arms, alongside our regular venues Gosforth Civic Theatre, The Globe and the Newcastle Literary and Philosophical Society.

We have a special collaboration with the Friday Night Chill Out at Jesmond Pool, and we'll be featuring live soundtracking to a selection of historic surrealist films in Gosforth working with the help of Northern Silents, once again also commissioning a series of recorded Interludes that can be heard over the PA systems across the festival events and available through New Jazz and Improvised Music Recordings.

We continue to work with our lead partners Jazz North East, but also other key regional promoters including Jazz.Coop, GemArts, and this year we also welcome Endless Window into the fold.

Alongside British and International UK based artists this year we're delighted to be bringing musicians from Copenhagen, Holland, Switzerland, Japan and the USA.

Newcastle Festival of Jazz and Improvised Music gratefully acknowledges Arts Council England, associated partners and funders for their support.

We hope you enjoy the show!

- Wesley Stephenson (Artistic Director and Festival Producer)

Faye MacCalman

Jeppe Zeeberg and the Absolute Pinnacle of Human Achievement

Warp/weft

Taupe

Ingrid Laubrock / Tom Rainey / Johnny Hunter / John Pope

Alcyona Mick

Juliana Day

Satoko Fujii

Amirtha Kidambi with Manon McCoy

Ziv Taubenfeld / Olie Brice / Kresten Osgood

Andy Champion

Izumi Kimura and Gerry Hemingway

Aruán Ortiz

Shunyata Improvisation Group

J.A.M. String Collective

Tara Cunningham

The Flame

Catriona Bourne Quartet

Heather Ferrier

Emma Johnson's Gravy Boat

FRIDAY 27th SEPTEMBER

Jesmond Swimming Pool

Chill Out Swimming from 8.00pm / Pool Closes 10.00pm (Music Performance 8.30pm - 9.30pm)

Faye MacCalman

Faye MacCalman (Solo Saxophone)

SATURDAY 28th SEPTEMBER

The Cumberland Arms

Doors: 7.00pm

7.30pm - 8.15pm

Jeppé Zeeberg and the Absolute Pinnacle of Human Achievement

Henrik Olsson (Guitar) / Casper Nyvang Rask (Bass) / Søren Høi (Drums) / Jeppé Zeeberg (Piano and Organ)

8.35pm - 9.20pm

Warp/weft

Angharad Davies (Violin) / Sarah Farmer (Violin) / Richard Scott (Viola) / Ute Kanngiesser (Cello)

9.40pm - 10.30pm

Taupe

Mike Parr Burman (Guitar and Objects) / Jamie Stockbridge (Alto Saxophone) / Alex Palmer (Drums)

SUNDAY 29th SEPTEMBER

The Globe (Downstairs Venue Space)

Doors: 7.00pm

Set 1: 8.00pm - 8.45pm / Set 2: 9.00pm - 9.45pm

Ingrid Laubrock / Tom Rainey / Johnny Hunter / John Pope

Ingrid Laubrock (Saxophone) / Tom Rainey (Drums) / Johnny Hunter (Drums) / John Pope (Double Bass)

THURSDAY 3RD OCTOBER

Gosforth Civic Theatre

Doors: 7.30pm

Alcyona Mick and Juliana Day (Surrealist Silent Film Screenings and Scores)

8.00pm - 8.45pm (Times are approximate)

Alcyona Mick

Alcyona Mick (Piano)

Entr'acte - Rene Clair and Francis Picabia

Ballet Mechanique - Fernand Leger and Dudley Murphy (Photography by Man Ray and Dudley Murphy)

Emak Bakia - Man Ray

9.00pm - 9.45pm (Times are approximate)

Juliana Day

Juliana Day (Recorder / Whistle / Vocals / Electronics)

Anemic Cinema- Marcel Duchamp

Rhythmus 21- Hans Richter

Un Chien Andalou - Luis Buñuel / Salvador Dali

FRIDAY 4th OCTOBER

The Literary and Philosophical Society (The Loftus Room)

Doors: 12.30pm

1.00pm - 2.00pm

Satoko Fujii

Satoko Fujii (Solo Piano)

The Literary and Philosophical Society (The Private Members Library)

Doors: 6.00pm

6.20pm - 7.00pm

Amirtha Kidambi with Manon McCoy

Amirtha Kidambi (Voice and Electronics) / Manon McCoy (Harp and Electronics)

The Literary and Philosophical Society (The Loftus Room)

Doors: 7.00pm

7.20pm - 8.00pm

Ziv Taubenfeld / Olie Brice / Kresten Osgood

Ziv Taubenfeld (Bass Clarinet) / Olie Brice (Double Bass) / Kresten Osgood (Drums)

8.20pm - 8.50pm

Andy Champion

Andy Champion (Solo Bass and Electronics)

9.10pm - 10.00pm

Izumi Kimura & Gerry Hemingway

Izumi Kimura (Piano) / Gerry Hemingway (Drums and Percussion)

SATURDAY 5th OCTOBER

The Literary and Philosophical Society (Joseph Swan Room)

Doors: 10.00pm - 5.00pm

Art, Entertainment and Politics Workshop with Andy Hamilton

(Amirtha Kidambi / Izumi Kimura / Gerry Hemingway / Aruán Ortiz)

The Literary and Philosophical Society (The Loftus Room)

Doors: 12.30pm

1.00pm - 2.00pm (Times are approximate)

Aruán Ortiz (Cub(an)ism and the Freedom of Now, Building a living score)

Aruán Ortiz (Solo Piano + Q&A)

The Literary and Philosophical Society (The Private Members Library)

Doors: 4.45pm

5.00pm - 7.00pm

Shunyata Improvisation Group with special guest Ziv Taubenfeld

John Garner (Violin) / Mark Carroll (Cello) / NofC (Voice / Melodeon / Percussion) / Mick Wright (Guitar) / Ziv Taubenfeld (Bass Clarinet)

The Literary and Philosophical Society (The Loftus Room)

Doors: 7.00pm

7.20pm - 8.00pm

J.A.M. String Collective

Annalise Lam (Violin) / Julia Dos Reis (Viola) / Miranda Lewis-Brown (Cello)

8.20pm - 8.50pm

Tara Cunningham

Tara Cunningham (Solo Guitar)

9.10pm - 10.00pm

The Flame

Robert Mitchell (Piano) / Olie Brice (Double Bass) / Mark Sanders (Drums)

SUNDAY 6TH OCTOBER

The Globe (Downstairs Venue Space)

Doors: 1.30pm

2.00pm - 2.50pm

Catriona Bourne Quartet

Catriona Bourne (Harp) / Francis Tulip (Guitar) / Asaph Tal (Bass) / Joe Bainbridge (Drums)

3.20pm - 3.50pm

Heather Ferrier

Heather Ferrier (Accordian)

4.20pm - 5.20pm

Emma Johnson's Gravy Boat

Emma Johnson (Saxophone) / Fergus Vickers (Guitar) / Richard Jones (Piano) / Angus Milne (Double Bass) / Steve Hanley (Drums)



**New Jazz
and Improvised
Music Recordings**

www.newjazzandimprovisedmusicrecordings.bandcamp.com

CLICK HERE FOR TICKETS

Jesmond Swimming Pool

The Cumberland Arms

The Globe

Gosforth Civic Theatre

The Literary and Philosophical Society



Many festival events regularly sell out in advance due to venue capacity. Limited tickets may be available on the door subject to availability, we encourage our audiences to buy in advance to avoid disappointment.

Promoting ecology and sustainability across the festival we encourage ticket holders to bring digital mobile tickets and booking codes to save on ticket printing.

Venues

Jesmond Swimming Pool

St George's Terrace, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 2DL
0191 281 2482 / info@jesmondpool.online
www.jesmondpool.online

The Cumberland Arms

James Place Street, Ouseburn, Off Byker Bank, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 1LD
0191 265 6151
www.thecumberlandarms.co.uk

The Globe

The Globe, 11 Railway Street, NE4 7AD
0191 272 5185 / info@jazz.coop
www.theglobenewcastle.bar

Gosforth Civic Theatre

Regent Farm Road, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 3HD
0191 284 3700 / info@gosforthcivictheatre.co.uk
www.gosforthcivictheatre.co.uk

The Literary and Philosophical Society

The Literary and Philosophical Society, 23 Westgate Road, NE1 1SE
0191 232 0192 / library@litandphil.org.uk
www.litandphil.org.uk

Age Restrictions | Accessibility | Travel

Jesmond Swimming Pool

Age Restrictions: 16's and over adult swimming session.

Accessibility: Please contact the venue for questions regarding accessibility.

Travel: Jesmond Swimming Pool is located approximately 1000 ft from West Jesmond Metro, also accessible via the Osborne Road - Lindisfarne Road 35 Q3 Quaycity VOLTRA Bus.

There is limited street parking (Charges may apply).

The Cumberland Arms

Age Restrictions: Please contact the venue for age restrictions.

Accessibility: The Cumberland Arms has a ramp at the rear of the venue space for wheelchair users to access the building, no wheelchair accessible toilets are available in the building.

The front entrance to the venue space is preceded by a number of stairs.

Travel: Any Bus and Metro to Shields Road Morrisons which is located less than 1500 ft from the venue (approximately 5 minutes walk). Byker Metro is located a half mile away from the venue (approximately 15 minutes walk)

There is parking available on a grassy space next to the building.

Gosforth Civic Theatre

Age Restrictions: 16+ Only

Accessibility: Gosforth Civic Theatre is a fully accessible building.

Travel: Regent Centre Metro and Bus Station is Just across the road.
There is limited parking at the venue.

The Literary and Philosophical Society

Age Restrictions: All ages welcome with under 18's accompanied by an adult.

Accessibility: The Loftus Room at The Lit and Phil is partly accessible. There is a lift at the venue entrance for wheelchair users to access the building and performance space, no wheelchair accessible toilets are available in the building.

The festival has permissions for visiting wheelchair users to access toilets located on the ground floor in Sleeperz Hotel which is just a few doors down (16 ft) to the right of the Lit and Phil as you exit the building.

Accessible toilets are also available at 5 Quarter Cafe Bar to the left as you exit the building.

The Private Members Library is not a wheelchair accessible space and is preceded by a small number of stairs.

Travel: Any Bus and Metro to Central Station which is located less than 300 ft from the venue (approximately 2 minutes walk).

There is limited street parking, the closest car park is at Central Station (Charges may apply).

The Globe

Age Restrictions: All ages welcome with under 18's accompanied by an adult.

Accessibility: Fully accessible for wheelchair users, a lift facility is available to access an upstairs fully accessible toilet.

Travel: Central Station Metro is located just under half a mile from the venue (approximately 8 minutes walk).

Buses: 12 / 12A / 22 / 22X to Scotswood Road.

Limited street parking outside of the venue, a small fee based car park is located across the road (Charges may apply).

**Please do contact the venues for full details regarding younger ages
and for any further queries regarding accessibility and parking.**

**We encourage ecologically sustainable travel wherever possible across the festival
by foot, bike and public transport.**

International Travel and Hotels

Newcastle Central Rail Station and Metro carries direct links to and from Newcastle Airport with a journey time of around 25 minutes. Wherever you are coming from head for Central Station and you can find most venues quite easily.

Central Festival Hub

There are many hotels and hostels available surrounding Central Station and very close to The Literary and Philosophical Society which is our main festival hub. We recommend 'Sleeperz Hotel' for good accommodation at a reasonable price and you're just a few doors down.

Sleeperz Hotel Newcastle, 15 Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1SE

Telephone: +44 (0)191 261 6171

www.sleeperz.com

Eating and Drinking

There are many places to eat in the surrounding environments for our main festival weekend. The 5 Quarter Cafe at The Common Room is just next to the Lit and Phil to the left as you exit the building and is a fully accessible bar and restaurant.

The Common Room, Neville Hall, Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1SE

Telephone: 0191 250 9717

www.thecommonroom.org.uk/5quarter

Promoting veganism and ecological sustainability, and just a little further away from the venue, we recommend the Super Natural Cafe. The cafe is less than 1000 ft from The Lit and Phil (approximately 5 minutes walk). Please contact the cafe for questions regarding accessibility.

Super Natural Cafe, 29 Grainger Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 5JE

Telephone: 0191 4473800

Super Natural Cafe

Acknowledgements

Newcastle Festival of Jazz and Improvised Music gratefully acknowledges Arts Council England and all of our associated funders, partners, venues and friends including Jazz North East, Chris Calver and James Smith at The Literary and Philosophical Society, Paul Bream and Jazz Alert, Andy Hamilton at Durham University, Mark Corcoran-Lettice at Endless Window, Jazz North, Jazz Promotion Network, Jazz Danmark, Andrew Maughan Graphic Design, John Martindale at Blank Studios, Repeater Radio, Northern Silents, Jazz.Coop at The Globe, GemArts, The Cumberland Arms, Gosforth Civic Theatre, Jesmond Swimming Pool, Newcastle City Council, Cullercoats Brewery, New Jazz and Improvised Music Recordings... and more!

“Teamwork makes the dream work” - John Maxwell

Weblinks

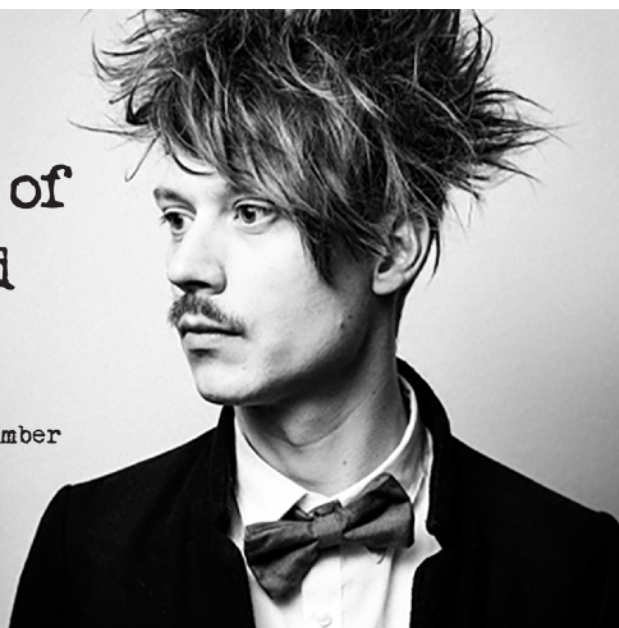
www.newcastlefestivalofjazzandimprovisedmusic.co.uk
www.facebook.com/newcastlefestivalofjazzandimprovisedmusic
Twitter: @NFOJaiM
newjazzandimprovisedmusic@posteo.net

Cover Image Credit

Jeppe Zeeberg (Photograph by Malthe Folke Ivarsson)

Newcastle Festival of Jazz and Improvised Music 2024

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Funders / Venues / Partners / Sponsors / Friends



Artist Biographies

FAYE MACCALMAN



Faye MacCalman (Solo Saxophone)

Faye MacCalman is a performer, composer-songwriter and improviser on saxophone, clarinet, voice and electronics. Faye fuses experimental songwriting with free-weaving melodies and enveloping rhythms drawing on jazz, folk and rock music inspired by under the surface emotional worlds; playfully merging magical realism with raw realities.

In 2023 Faye was selected as artist in residence at The Glasshouse International Centre for Music in Gateshead, and performs as a solo artist and as bandleader of jazz-art-rock adventurers Archipelago, nominated for UK Jazz Act of the Year in the Jazz FM Awards.

Faye's music has been described as 'captivating' by (NARC Magazine), and 'moving...I lost myself' (Huw Stephens, BB6 Music) and has seen her supporting luminary artists such as LA Harpist Mary Lattimore.

Faye has increasing strands of activism in her music, and in 2022 Faye debuted her AV installation 'Invisible Real'; highlighting anonymous experiences with mental illness within a dreamlike subconscious space, at Cheltenham Jazz Festival. For Faye's residency at The Glasshouse she developed 'Invisible Real' into an expanded live experience with ethereal visuals and music for a brand new ensemble of musicians including Faye.

An in demand collaborator, Faye has worked with Maximo Park, Zoe Rahman, Arun Ghosh, The Unthanks, David Brewis, Daniel Casimir, Me Lost Me and John Pope. Faye's music has been aired on BBC6 Music, NTS Radio, BBC Radio 3 and Worldwide FM, as well as making featured artist interview appearances on BBC Radio 3, BBC Radio 4 and BBC6.

Following her work in areas of mental health, Faye will perform at Jesmond Swimming Pool as part of a new festival initiative to encourage audiences into holistic spaces centred around health and wellbeing.

Newcastle Festival of Jazz and Improvised Music is delighted to work in partnership with Jesmond Swimming Pool Friday night Chill Out session. And we do emphasise that this adult only session is for swimming whilst you're listening.

www.fayemaccalman.com

JEPPE ZEEBERG AND THE ABSOLUTE PINNACLE OF HUMAN ACHIEVEMENT



Henrik Olsson (Guitar)
Casper Nyvang Rask (Bass)
Søren Høi (Drums)
Jeppe Zeeberg (Piano and Organ)

Jeppe Zeeberg is a Danish pianist, composer and band leader. His style is a personal, uncompromising blend of genres based in jazz and free improvisation. His music has been called "A beautiful, convincing proposal for how modern jazz or contemporary music may sound by American magazine All About Jazz."

In 2022, Zeeberg's seventh album *Conventional* was released to great acclaim in his homeland. The album is comprised of music performed by his main band Jeppe Zeeberg and the Absolute Pinnacle of Human Achievement. It won the prize for Experimental Album of the Year at Danish Music Awards Jazz 2022.

Jeppe Zeeberg has a master's degree from Rhythmic Music Conservatory in Copenhagen (2013) and he is active in the groups Jeppe Zeeberg and the Absolute Pinnacle of Human Achievement, Horse Orchestra, Dødens Garderobe and Kresten Osgood Quintet. He has worked with John Tchicai and is responsible for several events and smaller festivals, especially in Copenhagen. As a solo pianist he has performed in, amongst other places, Denmark, Japan and the US.

"If Zeeberg isn't a genius then he certainly ranks pretty close to one" - All About Jazz

www.jeppezeeberg.com

Warp/weft



Angharad Davies (Violin)
Sarah Farmer (Violin)
Richard Scott (Viola)
Ute Kanngiesser (Cello)

The project Warp/weft, first conceived by Birmingham-based artist and musician Sarah Farmer in 2019, forms a subversive reconstitution of one of the most thoroughly established ensemble formats in classical music - the string quartet - exploding it apart into kaleidoscopic free improvisation. The distinct palette of this group allows them to move seamlessly between a highly differentiated atomistic space and a dense, monolithic slab of blended sound.

It's a great pleasure to welcome this improvising string quartet to Newcastle Festival of Jazz and Improvised Music at such an embryonic stage of the project.

www.angharaddavies.com
www.sarahmfarmer.com
www.richard-scott.info
www.cafeoto.co.uk/artists/ute-kanngiesser/

TAUPE



Mike Parr Burman (Guitar / Objects)
Jamie Stockbridge (Alto Saxophone)
Alex Palmer (Drums)

Taking risks only works if you're willing to fail, and Taupe share an understanding that there's no wrong way to play.

A decade of friendship has conjured a spooky telekinesis that anchors the band, even when their improvisations teeter on the edge of total collapse. The three-piece are an explosive live band, veering from taut metronomic precision into intentionally turbulent, uncharted territory. A DIY ethos feeds their wonky compositions, colliding sour scatter-skronk with sludgy, doom-inspired riffs.

Anarchic, joyful debut album *Fill Up Your Lungs and Bellow* (2017) was best described by *All About Jazz* as “a chain of chemical reactions”, and their 2019 EP *Get The Keys* is a wild joyride through the night their car was almost stolen - with their instruments, Mike and Adam still inside it.

Not Blue Light (released April 7th 2020) is their boldest record yet. Picking up the story from where the EP left off, it rattles from shit-your-pants fear to adrenaline, relief and total bafflement.

It's no surprise that their exhilarating sense of discovery has won them support from the likes of BBC 6 Music's *Freak Zone* and BBC Radio 3's *Late Junction* and *Freeness*, as well as support slots with acts such as *Deerhoof*, *Richard Dawson & Circle* and *Melt Banana*.

Fizzing with ideas, Taupe are a non-jazz band that prizes surprise over any specific sound.

Taupe featured on *Adjunct Ensemble's Sovereign Bodies / Ritual Taxonomy*, *The Guardian's Contemporary Album of the Month May 2023*.

“A radical expression of empathy, as stunning as its themes are crushing” - *The Wire*

“A disorienting act of resistance” - *The Guardian Contemporary Album of the Month*

www.taupetaupetaupe.com

LAUBROCK / RAINEY / HUNTER / POPE



**Ingrid Laubrock (Saxophone)
Tom Rainey (Drums)
Johnny Hunter (Drums)
John Pope (Double Bass)**

An auspicious collaboration between the US and UK improvised music scenes, this quartet brings together two stalwart voices of the New York creative music community alongside a pair of the most in-demand collaborators in the North of England. Frequent rhythm-section colleagues with a near telepathic musical empathy, Johnny Hunter (drums) and John Pope (double bass) bring their energetic chemistry and versatile musicianship to a variety of projects across the spectrum of modern creative music, from straight-ahead swing and hard-bop to searing fire music to the most abstract of free improvisation.

This brand new ensemble features them in combination with two of the most acclaimed musicians in NYC and beyond: the long-time partnership of luminary composer and band leader Ingrid Laubrock (saxophone) and master improviser Tom Rainey (drums). This potent configuration of creative artists promises to be a thrilling example of the powers of collective music-making, international collaboration and the wide-open possibilities of a double drum kit line-up.

**www.linktr.ee/ilaubrock
www.linktr.ee/basspope
www.linktr.ee/johnnyhuntermusic
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom_Rainey**

ALCYONA MICK AND JULIANA DAY



Alcyona Mick (Piano) Juliana Day (Recorder / Whistle / Vocals / Electronics)

For this very special event Newcastle Festival of Jazz and Improvised Music has teamed up with Northern Silents to present acclaimed soundtrack artists Alcyona Mick and Juliana Day.

This double bill will feature 'Chien Andalou', 'Ballet Mecanique' and a series of other short dadaist films by historic surrealist artists including Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí, Hans Richter, Marcel Duchamp, Man Ray, Fernand Leger and Dudley Murphy amongst others.

Six short films with live soundtracking will be screened throughout the evening.

Juliana regularly plays improvised live scores to silent film, and often performs with for the Northern Silent Film Festival. She will be improvising scores to 1929 Spanish-French surrealist masterpiece Un Chien Andalou and other short films.

Alcyona is a London based pianist and composer who's interest in film stems from studying for a Masters degree at the National Film and Television School in Beaconsfield. She will be performing a primarily improvised accompaniment to the films.

Dada was an irreverent art movement founded in Switzerland in the early 20th century. The Dada films were created in the early 1920s and experimented with the new film technology that was developing. With a slight pessimistic thread born of a reaction to World War 1, the films sit at a crossroads between the surrealist and constructivist aesthetics in art, theatre, music and literature at the time.

Alcyona Mick

Entr'acte - Rene Clair and Francis Picabia

Ballet Mechanique - Fernand Leger and Dudley Murphy (Photography by Man Ray and Dudley Murphy)

Emak Bakia - Man Ray

Juliana Day

Anemic Cinema- Marcel Duchamp

Rhythmus 21- Hans Richter

Un Chien Andalou - Luis Buñuel / Salvador Dalí

www.alcyonamick.com
www.julianaday.co.uk

SATOKO FUJII



Satoko Fujii (Solo Piano)

Pianist and composer SATOKO FUJII, “an improviser of rumbling intensity and generous restraint” (Giovanni Russonello, New York Times), is one of the most original voices in jazz today. For more than 25 years, she has created a unique, personal music that spans many genres, blending jazz, contemporary classical, rock, and traditional Japanese music into an innovative synthesis instantly recognizable as hers alone.

“Fujii’s music troubles the divide between abstraction and realism. . . . All of this amounts to abstract expressionism, in musical form. But it’s equaled by her rich sense of simplicity, sprung from the feeling that she is simply converting the riches of the world around her into music,” writes Giovanni Russonello in the New York Times.

A prolific composer for ensembles of all sizes and a performer who has appeared around the world, she was the recipient of a 2020 Instant Award in Improvised Music, in recognition of her “artistic intelligence, independence, and integrity.”

Her talent as a big band composer, arranger, and leader have been recognized numerous times in DownBeat Critics Polls. The New York City Jazz Record has twice named her Artist of the Year. In 2021, El Intruso named her Pianist of the Year.

It’s great pleasure to invite Satoko Fujii to perform solo at this years Newcastle Festival of Jazz and Improvised Music following her last visit to Tyneside performing alongside Australian Pianist Alister Spence in the outstanding Kira Kira Quartet.

www.satokofujii.com

AMIRTHA KIDAMBI



Amirtha Kidambi (Vocals)

Amirtha Kidambi "takes a holistic approach to singing, which can mean treating every element as unfixed: Words can be opened up, rendered nonspecific. Melody can be repeated and frozen and stuck in place. Markings of rhythm can become utterly abstract, freed from cadence." (New York Times).

Amirtha Kidambi is invested in the creation and performance of subversive, anti-hegemonic music, from free improvisation and avant-jazz, to Indian carnatic and devotional, experimental bands, electronic music, noise and new music.

She is an educator, activist and organizer working to challenge systems of white supremacy, colonial, capitalist, patriarchy, and is co-founder and co-organizer of South Asian Artists in Diaspora and Musicians Against Police Brutality.

As a bandleader and composer, she is the creative force behind the incendiary protest group Elder Ones and has received critical praise for her albums Holy Science (2016) and From Untruth (2019) on Northern Spy records from the New York Times, Pitchfork, Wire Magazine and Downbeat among others, topping Critics Poll in the categories of "Rising Star Vocalist", "Rising Star Composer" and "Rising Star Jazz Group".

Kidambi is active in several improvising duos with bassist Luke Stewart, guitarist Matteo Liberatore, meimei (മൈമി) with pianist Ananya Ganesh and Neti-Neti, with percussionist Matt Evans.

Amirtha Kidambi is a key collaborator in MacArthur "genius" Mary Halvorson's sextet Code Girl, the duo Angels & Demons with saxophonist Darius Jones based on the poetry of Sun Ra, and in various collaborations with bassist William Parker and with late elders Muhal Richard Abrams and Robert Ashley. She has also worked with several of New York's luminary improvisers including Matana Roberts, Ingrid Laubrock, Tyshawn Sorey, Hamid Drake, Nick Dunston, Maria Grand, Ava Mendoza, Shahzad Ismaily, Trevor Dunn and many others.

It's a pleasure to welcome Amirtha Kidambi to Newcastle for a brand new collaboration put together by the festival. She will perform in an improvised duo setting alongside the Sheffield based Harpist Manon McCoy who played a captivating set with her group Balo at the 2023 festival edition.

www.amirthakidambi.com

MANON MCCOY



Manon McCoy (Harp and Electronics)

Manon McCoy (she/her) is a Sheffield based composer, experimental harpist and singer who's work draws from training western classical music, contemporary classical music, free improvisation and British folk music. Manon is currently studying an MA at the RNCM generously supported by the William and Frances Dobie Charitable Foundation.

Manon's playing reframes the role of the harp in her ensembles, taking a rhythmic lead and exploring repetitive and dynamic textures, likened to the works of experimental harpists such as 'Zeena Parkins and Lara Somogyi' in a recent review by James Cardie (NowThen Magazine).

Her compositional practice explores themes that arise from her own lived experiences such as body, gender, and phenomenological perceptions of time and space. She is particularly interested in the uses of spaces both musical and physical, often designing pieces that rework the performer-audience dynamic.

Her works bring with them a strong sense of storytelling and sharing of space.

We're delighted that Manon McCoy will return to the festival again, this time to play in an improvised duo setting with Amirtha Kidambi who travels from the United States to be with us.

www.manonmccoymusic.com

ZIV TAUBENFELD / OLIE BRICE / KRESTEN OSGOOD



**Ziv Taubenfeld (Bass Clarinet)
Olie Brice (Double Bass)
Kresten Osgood (Drums)**

Ziv Taubenfeld, Olie Brice and Kresten Osgood come together in a new international collaboration – a trio of bass clarinet, double bass and drums. Taubenfeld and Brice first met when they were both part of the Bimhuis October Meeting 2017, and have played in various formats ever since while discussing plans for a more ongoing project – for which they agreed Osgood would be a perfect addition.

All three musicians have rich and varied backgrounds in free improvisation, the jazz tradition and as composers, and the trio will draw on all of that in an unpredictable and exciting collage.

Lisbon-based Ziv Taubenfeld leads the band Full Sun, whose album 'Out of the Beast Came Honey' was recently released on Cleanfeed. He has also collaborated with Han Bennink, Tobias Delius and Marta Warelis, among many others.

Olie Brice will be familiar to Jazz North East audiences from numerous appearances, leading his own bands as well as playing with the likes of Mark Sanders, Tobias Delius, Luis Vicente, Rachel Musson & Dee Byrne.

Multi instrumentalist Kresten Osgood is one of Denmark's leading jazz and improv musicians. He has worked with an astonishing range of world class improvisers including Sam Rivers, Paul Bley, John Tchicai, Joe Lovano, Wadada Leo Smith, Roscoe Mitchell and Tim Berne. Osgood also leads his own bands and is a central force of energy on the Copenhagen scene.

www.zivtaubenfeld.com
www.oliebrice.com
www.krestenosgood.com

ANDY CHAMPION



Andy Champion (Solo Bass)

Andy Champion's career spans 30 years, working extensively in the UK and Europe. An in demand bassist, Andy is equally at home performing straight ahead, contemporary jazz or free improv.

For this festival solo set Andy will be delivering a set of improvisations and compositions; utilising extended techniques, loops and effects.

www.andychampion.bandcamp.com

IZUMI KIMURA AND GERRY HEMINGWAY



Izumi Kimura (Piano) Gerry Hemingway (Drums and Percussion)

This duo began in 2016 as a series of residencies, rehearsals and performances in Ireland, and further evolved in 2018 in the context of a trio with bassist Barry Guy with the release of the recording "Illuminated Silence". Both the duo and trio have since co-existed but it is the duo that has become a central platform for both players. There is by now a shared and well understood language between them that moves seamlessly between formal structures, spontaneous invention, as well as their unique interpretations of song. The release of "Kairos" in 2023 debuts this array of possibilities which continue to grow as a rich and varied performance platform for both musicians.

Writing for the WIRE about this release Bill Meyer summarizes.. "Dublin based Japanese pianist Izumi Kimura and Connecticut born, Switzerland based percussionist/vocalist Gerry Hemingway have recorded previously with Barry Guy, but Kairos is their first duo effort. While each brought a piece to this session, most of it is jointly credited, but it does not sound like a product of free improvisation so much as an investigation in how each can support the other's strengths. Even in free moments, the pianist is inexorably drawn to melodies, which Hemingway abets with complementary tonal lines on his vibes and drum kit. And Kimura, who combines preparations with conventional keyboard sounds, uses a staccato attack to reinforce the drummer's intricate constructions. It's a complementary partnership." Bill Meyer / Jazz & Improv - The Wire October 2023

"Kairos, a duet with Hemingway, takes as its title an ancient Greek word meaning the "right time", the "critical moment" or "opportunity". It's a motto for improvisers, and a defining idea on this very recording, along with possible corollaries, like the apt space or a notion of resonance. The duets are also dramatic and abstract, yet conversational, with Hemingway adding marimba, vibraphone and voice to his drumming. The concluding minute-long "Circadian Twilight" provides a moment of fleeting, evanescent beauty and makes for an apt conclusion to a remarkable program." by Stuart Broomer - New York City Jazz Record February 2024

www.izumikimura.com/portfolio/izumi-kimura-gerry-hemingway-duo/
www.sluchaj.bandcamp.com/album/kairos

ARUAN ORTIZ



Aruán Ortiz (Solo Piano)

The music of 2024 Guggenheim Fellow, composer, and pianist Aruán Ortiz dives across multiple musical contexts, as his continuous research leads him to write for chamber ensembles, orchestras, dance companies, and feature films, incorporating contemporary classical music, Cuban-Haitian and Afro-Caribbean rhythms, spontaneous composition, and improvised music in his works.

Named “one of the most creative and original composers in the world” (Lynn René Bayley, The Art Music Lounge), Ortiz is a recipient of one of the few Doris Duke Impact Awards (2014). His professional career transcends categorization and encapsulates the essence of the cultural blend between Western European classical lexicon with Afro-diasporic music communities in the Americas.

Cub(an)ism and the Freedom of Now (Building a living score)

The acclaimed Cuban pianist and composer Aruán Ortiz, considered "an avatar of creative and progressive improvisation" (Ted Panken, Jazztimes Magazine) and a "first-rate" pianist (Nate Chinen, WBGO Jazz Radio), releases his solo piano album titled „Cub(an)ism“. This album was recorded by the engineer Martin Pearson in December 2016 at the Swiss National Radio in Zürich and produced by Intakt Records.

"Cub(an)ism is the result of an in-depth conversation with a range of musical idioms and styles, and various experiences from the phases of Ortiz' life, in Cuba, Spain, France and the USA, which have formed his eclectic concept of music.

On this album, Ortiz' pieces arise from specific ideas and moods, developed imperceptibly along systematic constructions spiked with the unexpected. Despite a certain adherence to system, the music on Cub(an)ism remains sensual at all times. Using clear but flexible systems, the music lives from structure and surprise. Crystalline structures are abruptly dissolved, clear forms blurred like a reflection in stormy water, before resurfacing. Ortiz' music breathes this magic, the allure of dancing structures". (Florian Keller, liner notes)

... "a genius exercise in the exploration of depth and perception that reveals a bright new wrinkle in the relationship between music and mathematics, reimagining Afro-Haitian Gaga rhythms, Afro-Cuban rumba and Yambú into heavily improvised meditations on modernism that recall John Cage and Paul Bley. Stunning." - Ron Hart, The Observer

www.aruan-ortiz.com

SHUNYATA IMPROVISATION GROUP



The Shunyata Improvisation Group playing violin, cello, guitar, percussion and voice, create an extraordinary style of music; intimate, distinct, quiet, acoustic, entirely composed in the moment. Each concert provides an immersive meditative experience. Inspired by Zen approaches to art, emphasising spaciousness, exploring both timbral and pitch-based improvisation.

The musicians of the Shunyata Improvisation Group are:

John Garner (Violin)

John trained in classical, jazz and South Indian music. He has an impressive discography and toured at home and internationally. John combines immaculate technique with a fearless musicality and free-wheeling improvisational aesthetic.

Mark Carroll (Cello)

Mark is a composer, cellist, and pianist. As a composer, he has been commissioned by the London Sinfonietta and performances of his works include in the Royal Festival Hall and on Radio 3; as an improvising cellist he enjoys exploring the wider timbre possibilities of the instrument. Mark performed a solo electric cello improvisation at the 2016 Tusk Festival at the Sage Gateshead.

NofC (Voice, Melodeon, Percussion)

As an enthusiastic amateur, NofC has sung in multiple large and small choral contexts over a great many years, learnt melodeon via the Sage-based Folkworks programme, and performed improv with Cooking with Three and Newcastle Improvisers Workshop.

trubba not (Acoustic Guitar)*

trubba not has performed hundreds of concerts over several decades as a jazz and ambient guitarist. trubba not has a direct, spacious style seeking to emphasise the natural clarity of the acoustic guitar.

Mick Wright (Guitar)*

Mick Wright was born on Tyneside and for the past half-century has played, taught, and relished listening to the abundance of music surrounding us here. He works at Newcastle University and is researching the work of guitarist-composers Mick Goodrick and John Renbourn.

*Please note for this performance Mick Wright will appear as stand in guitarist for trubba not.

“Yesterday’s performance was one of the most emotionally uplifting pieces I have EVER heard..... perfect sounds in a perfect atmosphere.” Andy Wood, Editor TQ ZINE.

www.shunyataimprovisationgroup.weebly.com
www.instagram.com/shunyataimprovisationgroup

J.A.M. STRING COLLECTIVE



Annalise Lam (Violin)
Julia Dos Reis (Viola)
Miranda Lewis-Brown (Cello)

J.A.M. is a London based all-female improvising string trio, weaving songlike melodies into open group improvisations, creating spontaneous filmic textures, injected with a solid dose of groove and the Blues. They perform as a trio, as well as with singers and instrumentalists, forming their collective, placing improvising strings at the forefront.

In May 2023 they released their debut EP joined by legendary saxophonist Steve Williamson (The Steve Williamson Experience), and emerging drum talent Zoe Pascal (Zenel), supported by Help Musicians. This followed with an 11-date UK tour including a sold-out EP launch gig at Toulouse Lautrec, in association with Tomorrow's Warriors and Women in Jazz.

In November 2023 they were awarded the Peter Whittingham Jazz Developmental award, which will support them in writing new material for their first full length album in collaboration with Jonas Gwangwa Composition Initiative Awardee, composer Oleta Haffner.

"pushing at the boundaries of jazz... delivering walking lines, heavy riffs and rattles and taps, are thoroughly contemporary.... much more than a warm up act" - Financial Times

"J.A.M. String Collective [give] us a really strong and unique performance with a wide variety of textures and grooves as well as a meaningful narrative in their improvisations. It was very moving to hear them play." - Zoe Rahman, MOBO awardee jazz pianist

"It was a pleasure to hear J.A.M. String Collective. The trio's innovative nature came through as they perfectly balanced classical string composition with jazz and improvisation." - Daniel Casimir, Multi-award winning bassist

"Hopopono" (GoGo Penguin) LIVE from Lightship 95

www.youtube.com/watch?v=4cdV1a3W0kl

www.jamstringcollective.bandcamp.com

TARA CUNNINGHAM



Tara Cunningham (Solo Guitar)

Tara Cunningham is a guitarist, composer, collaborator and improviser from Bath, UK. Current live + recorded projects include; 90s acid-jazz pioneers Red Snapper, improvised experimental duo with bassist Caius Williams, and alt-rock three piece COOL QUIET.

Her solo work, drawing on a range of influences from Derek Bailey to CAN to Erik Satie, focusses on embracing and improvising with the negative space, as well as the positive within compositional structures, and pushing the textural boundaries of her instrument.

Her work as a composer for film includes 'a loop, of exchanges, until we vomit' with art film maker Luca Baioni, Strange Like It Sounds in collaboration with Switzerland-based Nick Walter, as well as Pascal Bergamin's 2023 feature film Portraits of Dangerous Women.

Solo Guitar sets regularly feature within the programme for Newcastle Festival of Jazz and Improvised Music and we're delighted that Tara Cunningham will be joining us this year.

www.tara-cunningham.com

THE FLAME



Olie Brice (Bass)
Mark Sanders (Drums)
Robert Mitchell (Piano)

These are urgent, intense, improvised flights. A sound of complete commitment to the spirit of now. Mark, Olie and Robert have a vast array of approaches born out of their collective and individual experiences and contributions over several decades. This show will feature music, new poetry, the acoustic, the electronic, the collective and the individual perspectives from a trio in rapid evolution. This is their debut appearance at the festival - and is in support of their second album following fantastic reviews for their first.

'Three heavyweights of British creative music come together on a satisfying live session at the adventurous London venue, Cafe OTO. Given their vast collective experience, which includes work with Evan Parker, Courtney Pine and Alexander Hawkins among others, as well as leadership of their own groups, it comes as no surprise that the result is impressive.'

– Kevin Le Gendre (Jazzwise)

www.577records.bandcamp.com/album/towards-the-flame-vol-2

CATRIONA BOURNE QUARTET



Catriona Bourne (Harp)
Francis Tulip (Guitar)
Asaph Tal (Bass)
Joe Bainbridge (Drums)

Multi-instrumentalist Catriona Bourne marries technical virtuosity with unique sound-worlds to create exciting and original programmes. Her performances on electroacoustic harp and flute blend elements from classical, folk and jazz traditions, carefully curated around themes of nature and mythology. Catriona has played as a soloist and in small groups at venues including Kings Place, London Jazz Festival, Wilderness Festival, St. John's Smith Square, and the Elgar Room at the Royal Albert Hall.

Her new album *Triquetra* was funded by Youth Music's NextGen Fund, made possible thanks to principal partner the Players of People's Postcode Lottery, and support from Dr Martens Foundation. As a session musician, Catriona has worked with a number of artists including world-jazz singer Lea Mondo, performing at venues such as Ninety One Living Room and Crazy Coqs.

For Newcastle Festival of Jazz and Improvised Music Catriona Bourne and her quartet will perform material that celebrates the release of her debut album, *Triquetra*. An impulsive dive into experimental folk-jazz drawing off Catriona's Scottish heritage, this performance promises to transport listeners through nostalgic and evocative pieces that explore the essence of a lost past.

The set paints vivid pictures of nature and landscapes, with the legendary Sligachan Bridge on the Isle of Skye and the iconic rowan trees that dot the Scottish countryside serving as inspiration. From the sophisticated harmonies of Francis Poulenc to the groove of Roy Hargrove, Catriona's compositions blend elements of jazz, classical, and folk traditions, including reimaginings of traditional folk tunes and ballads.

This live performance promises moments of introspection and exuberance, reflecting the dual nature of nostalgia and the present moment. Catriona's quartet bring a variety of colours and textures, including swirling electronic harp textures from Catriona, extraordinary guitar virtuosity from Francis Tulip, and a combination of driving power and sensitivity from Asaph Tal and Joe Bainbridge.

www.catrionabourne.co.uk

HEATHER FERRIER



Heather Ferrier (Accordion)

With captivating musicianship and a sound that is unapologetically her own, Heather Ferrier is a force to be reckoned with. An “engaging talker and magnetic performer” (NARC magazine), the Stockport born accordionist, clog dancer and composer is changing the perceptions of alt-folk on her own terms. Her latest EP *Engine for the Sound* creates music that sets the accordion free from its stereotypes, and with an extended line-up of musicians, expresses everything Heather stands for using powerful melodies and jazz-influenced harmony. Bold, passionate and enthralling; the EP has been played on BBC Radio 6 music, and well as being favourably reviewed in local and national publications.

As well as her solo work, Heather also performs in a trio with guitarist Alasdair Paul (Pons Aelius, Jordan Aikin and Quercus) and drummer Adam Stapleford (Ponyland, Yes! Grasshopper), she also collaborates in the North East with RÜNN, Jon Doran and the Northern Assembly and Jordan Aikin and Quercus.

<https://heatherferriermusic.com>

EMMA JOHNSON'S GRAVY BOAT



Emma Johnson (Tenor Saxophone)
Fergus Vickers (Electric Guitar)
Richard Jones (Piano)
Angus Milne (Double Bass)
Steve Hanley (Drum Kit)

Emma Johnson's Gravy Boat return to Newcastle in support of the release of their second album Northern Flame, a free-flowing, cinematic jazz record inspired by stories of the strength and resilience of Northern women past and present.

Developed from a commission for Lancaster Jazz Festival 2022, Northern Flame ties together tales from the history of Lancashire about lighthouse keeper Janet Raby (in first track Force of Light) and local hospice founder Sister Aine Cox (in track 3, Sister) with wider themes of light and the feeling of home.

The band share their 'characteristic Northern warmth & charm' in live settings through both the music and stories that inspire it.

Recorded at Giant Wafer Studio in Wales and produced by Ivor Novello nominated James Hamilton, the quintet explores dynamic and interplay further in this new album, which marks a more open and exploratory way of writing and recording for Johnson and Gravy Boat.

Speaking about Northern Flame Johnson says: "I'm really happy with the process and feeling of the album as a whole. It was an incredible experience to be commissioned for the first time and have time to research and write from different stories and perspectives, and to go on from there to turn those songs into a full length album has been a new and invigorating way of working for me, and I feel like that comes across."

"The theme of light ties together all the tracks on the album, from Janet Raby's lighthouse beam shining in the darkness, to the more figurative idea of the light shared between Sister Aine Cox MBE and hospice patient Anne Charlesworth when all hope was lost, to the light you find left on for you when coming home late. In these dark times, I think we all need a little more light."

"Emma Johnson and her Gravy Boat are one of the most refreshingly imaginative and perfectly configured acts in contemporary Jazz. Surely they will be occupying bigger platforms very soon."

- Neil March (Trust The Doc)

www.johnsonmusic.co.uk