

## Spells and Sadness

London Contemporary Music Festival

Thursday 10 December, 7 – 8.35pm

What are text scores but spells? Works that '*unmake the world around them so that it might be remade anew*', to quote Sarah Shin and Rebecca Tamas's '*Spells: 21st-Century Occult Poetry*' (Ignota Books).

This premise – which lay at the heart of London Contemporary Music Festival's '*Witchy Methodologies*' extravaganza of 2019 – was also the impetus behind a series of new commissions, linking the text score to the talismanic world of mantras, recipes and guides to awakening and conjuring. Two of these scores will materialise in sound and visuals for the first time for this online event, alongside a range of performances from artists and composers.

We also hear from the festival's artistic directors to introduce the assorted cast of exhausted 'sadbois' and 'sadgurls' that will make up the 2021 festival, looking to the creative possibilities of ruination, melancholy and hysteria.

### Programme

#### **19.00 Christopher Kirubi – Part One**

The artist and poet shares a selection of recent work featuring personal reflections on everyday intimacies from the experience of the natural world in the city to love and desire, read over footage collected on their phone.

Poems: *we play music; untitled; untitled; hug; southwark park; elsewhere; weight*

**Christopher Kirubi** is a London-based poet and artist who uses the mutability and promiscuity of images, objects and text to negotiate the limits of sexuality, gender, race and desire.

#### **19.09 Elaine Mitchener - Memory Says (After Sun Ra); Mysterie Play; TT+TN=NT; SKIP, BARK I + II & WALK**

The vocalist, composer and artist gives shape a new text score - *SKIP, BARK I + II & WALK* - alongside a screening of three film



shorts, originally commissioned by the Holland Festival, Colour out of Space and Ruhrtriennale Festival earlier this year.

**Elaine Mitchener** is an experimental vocalist, movement artist and composer, whose work encompasses improvisation, contemporary music theatre and performance art.

**19.30 Christopher Kirubi – Part Two**

The artist and poet shares a selection of recent work featuring personal reflections on everyday intimacies from the experience of the natural world in the city to love and desire, read over footage collected on their phone.

Poems: *butterfly; birthday ; margate; untitled; untitled; untitled; untitled; for jon; oranges; untitled*

**19.35 Conversation: Igor Toronyi-Lalic and Jack Sheen with Jane Scarth**

The Curator of Public Programmes at Whitechapel Gallery is in conversation with the Artistic Directors of LCMF about their new text score commissions and their plans for the 2021 festival.

**19.55 Hylozoic/Desires (Himali Singh Soin & David Soin Tappeser) – in the spirit of the fountain**

*'We carry our Nagada drums along a seismic line, from a nuclear mountain in the Himalayas across the world to the volcanic remnants of Pompeii. On the way, they accumulate the tremors and mythologies of the places they encounter. By listening, we call upon the spirits of place to lift us from the weight of generations past and heal us in the contemporary crisis of lost presence.'*

Whitechapel Gallery's current Writer in Residence and her collaborator join us with a sonic ritual inspired by the Himalayan *jagar*, a ritual in which ancestors are woken up to address their kin, performed at Casa Della Fontana (the House of the Large Fountain) in the ruins on Pompeii.

**Hylozoic/Desires (Himali Singh Soin & David Soin Tappeser)** is a multi-media performance duo whose work combines experimental poetry and improvisational percussion in order to imagine entangled, speculative otherverses and multiverses.

**20.15 Oliver Leith – *pushing my thumb through a plate***

This melty score for solo harp is about movement, fluctuation, and what the instrument is capable of. The choreography of the score requires a different approach to the harp, where the right hand plays with tuning keys, not strings.

**Oliver Leith** is a London based composer making acoustic music, electronic music and video. His work focuses on text, image, video, theatre, pathos and the everyday.

**20.25 FRIDjE zz X Hereo (Elvin Brandhi and Rhéa Dally) - *Recurser - in vitro in vivo***

*'Between screen and body exists the mutual extraction of self possessed interfaces into real-physical time as a means of calibrating disintegrated cells onto a fluid mass of moving anti-matter. Reality/Virtuality. The recursive loops of interface, user conversion. Cyber-spiritual twists in narrative reality. WWW. We three kings. Sonic warfare.'*

This work uses sound and image as a hybrid, anti-syntactic vernacular capable of translating the interactions between the psycho-nervous frequencies of transmission - separated into screen and body. It is part of *User Syndrome* a project developed during a residency at Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw, as part of the *Smashing Wor(l)ds* programme.

**Elvin Brandhi** is an improvising lyricist, sound, visual and performance artist originally from Bridgend, Wales. Her creative momentum is primed by an unfolding nomadic diligence. She builds aberrant beats from field recordings, tape, vinyl, instrument and voice.

**Rhéa Dally** is interested in the potential for sound to become a political language beyond borders. She creates circuit bending instruments, incorporating a variety of disciplines, genres and environments into her work.