

Alistair MacDonald

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Alistair MacDonald's practice is centred on the creative use of technology. Much of his work is collaborative and explores how technology can create bridges between modes of creation (composed, devised, improvised) and presentation (concerts; performative and static art installations; theatre, dance and site specific work). He also explores the fuzzy edges between cultures (combining classical, folk and jazz contexts and traditions) with other musicians who share diverse roots, often using recorded sound for its referential qualities to interrogate cultural identities.

He has created large scale interactive works, gallery installations and works for concert, dance, theatre, radio and film. Current projects include Strange Rainbow with Scottish harp player Catriona McKay and collaborative development, with Carrie Fertig, on music for glass percussion, electronics and live flame-working, recently selected for the Coburg Prize for Contemporary Glass. He is director of the electroacoustic studios at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland where he was made Fellow of the Royal Conservatoire in 2012.

Education

1983 BA (hons) in Music, Nottingham University
1984 MMus, University of East Anglia
1993 PhD in Composition, The University of Birmingham,

Employment

Lecturer, Director of the Electroacoustic Studios - Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
September 1996 to the present

Honorary visiting lecturer

University of St Andrews (2014-)

Visiting Research Fellow - University College Chichester, 2005 – 2009

PhD Supervisor – Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (current), Glasgow School of Art (2005-2011), Edinburgh College of Art (2008-2011)

Visiting lecturer

University of Glasgow (2009-)
Glasgow School of Art (1998, 2001, 2003, 2003-)

External Examiner

De Montfort University (2006, 2014-)
University of Glasgow (2009-)
University of Aberdeen (2008)
University of Strathclyde (2007-2014)
UWE (2010)
The University of Edinburgh (2004)

The University of Birmingham (2004-2012)
Welsh College of Music and Drama (2005-2008)
The University of Sheffield (2001-2014)

Workshop director & animateur (selection)

Dartington International Summer School: 1989, 1995-2002
Perth Prison; MacRobert Arts Centre, Stirling; Sonic Arts Network; Huddersfield Festival; Symphony Hall, Birmingham; St David's Hall, Cardiff
Norwegian Broadcasting Girls Choir (ISCM World Music Days 1990)
Scottish Youth Dance; Shobana Jeyasingh Dance Company Siobhan Davies Dance Company; Rambert Dance Company; London Contemporary Dance School; Rosemary Lee; Sue MacLennan; Sarah Rubidge

Director/Board Member

Scottish Music Centre 2014- present
Sonic Arts Network 1987-89, 1990-93 1994-2001 (Chair 2000-2001)
SEMAS (Scottish electroacoustic music association) 1997-2000

Composition - selected works since 2000

360° Sunset (trumpet and electronics, 2015)

Le Sirenuse (film: glass percussion and electroacoustic sounds, 2014)

Matter and Moisture (electroacoustic music/poetry collaboration with Alexander Hutchison, 2014)

Flames and Frequencies (glass percussion and electroacoustic sounds on film 2013)
commissioned by Carrie Fertig for Rochester Institute of Technology. Selected for British Crafts Council touring exhibition *Real to Reel: film as material in making* and The Coburg Prize for Contemporary Glass

The imagining of things (electroacoustic sound and video, 2013) with Brass Art, for Huddersfield Museum and Art Gallery, October 2013 to January 2014

Scintilla (electroacoustic music, 2013) first performance Glasgow, February 2013

Glimmer (glass percussion and electroacoustic sounds, 2012) commissioned by Carrie Fertig for the Torcher Chamber Arkestra, September 2012

Wunderkammer (electroacoustic music, 2010) first performance in *sound*, Aberdeen

Mitaki (string quintet & live electronics, 2009 revised 2012) for The Scottish Ensemble

Scatter (tuba & live electronics, 2007) first performance Glasgow, November 2007

Mareel (clarsach & live electronics, with Catriona McKay, 2007)

Silver Wings and Golden Scales (gallery installation, 2007; with Jennifer Angus)
commissioned by the Chazen Museum of Art, Wisconsin, April - June 2007

Equivalence (electroacoustic music, 2007) first performance CBSO Centre, Birmingham, March 2007

SeaUnsea (interactive sound and electroacoustic music for dance and public installation, 2006) with choreographer Carol Brown and architect Mette Ramsgard Thomsen

Psychedelian Streams (electroacoustic music, 2004) commissioned by Reeling and Writhing

The Quintessence (soprano, piano, 3 percussion & tape, 2004) commissioned by The Paragon Ensemble, performances CCA Glasgow; Queens Hall Edinburgh

Sensuous Geographies (performative installation with Sarah Rubidge, 2002-3)

Bound for Glory (electroacoustic music, 2002)

Stripped (music for dance, 2002) commissioned by Anna Krzystek for the Tramway, Glasgow

The Salutation (clarsach and tape, 2002) commissioned by Catriona McKay

Zero into the void (music for dance, 2000) commissioned by Anna Krzystek for the Tramway

The Tincture of Physical Things (electroacoustic music, 2000)

Electra: Queen of Revenge (electroacoustic music/sound design, 1999) for Theatre Cryptic

Performance (live electronics, selection) with:

Catriona McKay (Strange Rainbow): Glasgow, Manchester, Stirling, Aberdeen, Dundee, Aberdeen (sound festival), Deveron Arts, Celtic Connections 2005-present
Anne-Liis Poll (voice), Anto Pett & Aaron Shorr (pianos), Mieko Kanno (violin); Edinburgh Fringe, August 2013
with Nick Fells, (shakuhachi); Ghent 2013
Jo Hyde, Paul Dunmall (saxophones), Roberto Bellatalla (bass) and Keith Tippett (piano) - in Birmingham, Dartington, Belfast (1997-2001)
dance: Anna Krzystek (2000); Sue MacLennan & Company (1993)

Works Published On Compact Disc

scuttle Jos Zwaanenburg *20 odd years* (FMRCD316)

skimmerin' Strange Rainbow with Catriona McKay (Mirror-image 009)

invisible from land and sea Strange Rainbow with Catriona McKay (Mirror-image 008)

track 6, *Transformed into those lacy fiery fragments* republished on *Magic Harp* as part of the World Music Instruments series (NoEthno 1012-14 – LC10658)

Final Times on *drift-one* (A.D.O.R. 991) and *Sonic Art From...* (MPSCD013)

Dreel on *Sonic Art From...* (MPSCD013) and *Legacies* (Sargasso SCD28046)

Kilim on *Prix International Noroit-Leonce Petitot 1993* (NOR-3 MUSIDISC 244992) & *Klang* (NMC D035)

A trace of infinity on *Driftglass* (1M1CD 1018)

Meeting Point on Issue no. 1 of *Unknown Public* (upcd 01)

Busk on *Cultures Électroniques 4.* (LCD 278049/50) and *Klang* (NMC D035)

(inter)play on *Overhear* (OhM 001)

Psychedelian Streams on *Standing Wave*

Mareel on *Starfish* (Glimster Records)

Residencies, Bursaries, Publications

Visiting composer

Creative Scotland Residency with Carrie Fertig and Stuart Brown, Lyth Arts Centre, Caithness, September 2014

Cove Park residency, September 2009 with the Scottish Ensemble

Groupe de Musique Expérimentale de Bourges, March - April 1991

Scottish Arts Council Creative Scotland Award 2002

Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama Research Award 1999-2000

Articles and papers:

"Dislocation and relocation: clarsach and live electronics"; Scottish Journal of Performance, Volume 2, Issue 1

"Dislocation and relocation" at Sonorities, Belfast, May 2014

"Sensuous Geographies: a multi-user interactive/responsive environment"; Digital Creativity Vol. 15, No 4, 2004, 245--252

"Performance practice in the presentation of electroacoustic music"; Computer Music Journal vol.19 no.4 (1995); Sonic Arts Network Journal 1998; Sound in Space, New Adventures in Sound Art (2003)

"National & International trends in electroacoustic music" NICA (Network for International Collaboration in the Arts), Glasgow (2001)

September 2015