Mandala

3

music by David Lumsdaine & Nicola LeFanu

Gemini
Nicola LeFanu (b. 1947)  
*Invisible Places* clarinet and string quartet  

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David Lumsdaine (b. 1931)  
17 *fire in leaf and grass* soprano and clarinet  

Nicola LeFanu (b. 1947)  
18 *Trio 2: Song for Peter* soprano, clarinet and ’cello  

David Lumsdaine (b. 1931)  
*Mandala 3* piano, flute, clarinet, viola and ’cello  

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**total duration**  
76:34

**Gemini**  
director Ian Mitchell

SARAH LEONARD  soprano
ALEKSANDER SZRAM  piano
In 1973 a young composer turned up at the SPNM Composers’ Weekend held that year at Reading University. I and fellow clarinettist Edward Pillinger had been booked as players on the w/e. The young composer was Peter Wiegold who was working on his PhD with David Lumsdaine at Durham University. Peter’s composition Gemini for two clarinets and two percussion was one of the successes of the weekend and soon after, when Peter came down to London, the ensemble Gemini was born at a meeting in Edward’s Putney kitchen. When Gemini’s line-up expanded beyond clarinets and percussion the repertoire obviously expanded too, and it was not long before we performed our first work by David Lumsdaine – Mandala 2 – at the Arnolfini Gallery in Bristol where Peter was resident, with the ensemble often joining him, and from then on I gradually got to know music of both Nicola and David. We recorded Nicola’s The Same Day Dawns for Chandos; Peter commissioned Mandala 3, which we toured, and then Trio 2 from Nicola; there was a fiftieth birthday concert for DL at the Wigmore Hall with musical tributes from friends and pupils including Anthony Gilbert, Helen Roe, John Tavener and Robin Walker.

When Peter left Gemini to run the new Performance and Communications Skills Department at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama I took over the running of Gemini. It was logical and satisfying to continue the relationship with Nicola and David, both of whom had become personal as well as musical friends.

We presented a sixtieth birthday concert for David at St John’s Smith Square, and continued to perform, broadcast, record and commission his music, introducing several works to the UK. I can still only sense the extraordinary intellectual control over the music, whether it is on a huge scale, such as Aria for Edward John Eyre or in the miniature Six Postcard Pieces, but it is the actual sound and the journey of the music that is always so absorbing. How this is done is far beyond me. I liken it to the wonderfully dramatic use of chiaroscuro in paintings by Caravaggio, or the astonishing architecture of the Pantheon in Rome. Again I don’t know how it has been done but I marvel at the results.

Gemini was one of the instigators of a festival at the South Bank Centre in 1988 from which the organization Women in Music emerged. Nicola had a crucial role at the festival and became a leading figure in the organization. We continued to work closely with her musically
(a fun highlight being the ‘adult’ ensemble for her children’s opera *The Green Children* with the composer conducting), and when she became a trustee and then Honorary President of the ensemble. I enjoy the translucency in Nicola’s work and a depth often achieved with remarkably spare, yet rich and striking textures that seem to me to reflect her strong literary leanings.

I am delighted and excited that Gemini has been able to present these, the first recordings of all the music on the disc, to mark anniversaries of both composers.

*Ian Mitchell* Director, Gemini

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David Lumsdaine & Nicola LeFanu in Australia
Nicola LeFanu  *Invisible Places*

*Invisible Places* (1986) for clarinet and string quartet lasts about sixteen minutes, and plays continuously although it is made up of sixteen small movements. The four string players form a group throughout; sometimes the clarinet is caught up with them, but more often it is like a person pursuing an independent train of thought: sometimes talking to itself, sometimes conversational, sometimes singing.

The starting point for my quintet was Italo Calvino’s *Invisible Cities* (I am grateful to two people for introducing me to Calvino’s writing: my father, William LeFanu and my friend Liz Till). The inspiration of Calvino was twofold. First, he offered a model of how to create a continuous narrative through many tiny, discontinuous ideas. In my piece, each fragment has its own cyclic path, now expanding, now contracting. Second, and most important, was the image from the closing words of Calvino’s book. The Great Khan senses the nightmare of our ‘brave new world.’ Marco Polo urges him to cherish those who, in the midst of the inferno are not of the inferno: cercare e saper riconoscere chi e cosa, in mezzo all’inferno, non è inferno, e farlo durare, e dargli spazio. ‘seek and learn to recognise who and what, in the midst of the inferno, are not of the inferno, then make them endure, give them space.’

The quintet is dedicated to Hugh Sargent, who commissioned it. Damaris Wollen and the Brindisi String Quartet gave the first performance in the chapel of Southampton General Hospital on June 4th 1986.

Nicola LeFanu
David Lumsdaine  *fire in leaf and grass*

This short work was composed in London, August 1991, using a text by Denise Levertov, for a Gemini concert at St John’s Smith Square, London on 31 October 1991. The first performance was given at that concert by Mary Wiegold and Ian Mitchell – on the occasion of the composer’s 60th birthday.

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**Living**

The fire in leaf and grass
so green it seems
each summer the last summer.

The wind blowing, the leaves
shivering in the sun,
each day the last day.

A red salamander
so cold and so
easy to catch, dreamily
moves his delicate feet
and long tail. I hold
my hand open for him to go.

Each minute the last minute.

Denise Levertov

From *The Snow Dance* (1967), published by New Directions Publishing Corporation
©Denise Levertov 1967

Nicola LeFanu  *Trio 2 – Song for Peter*

Trio 2 is written for soprano, clarinet and 'cello. The text weaves together lines by Emily Dickinson, Ted Hughes, Sara Teasdale and Anton Chekhov, in order to give different perspectives to perennial thoughts about time and mortality. Dickinson describes a mystical experience when she seemed to cease to be, yet was fully conscious. Hughes uses a house in a storm as a metaphor for the storms wreaked by humans. Teasdale is a pacifist poet of the First World War; her poem is used complete, as a quiet heart to the trio, whereas the other poems are fragmented. Teasdale paints
a benign picture of our planet without people; Chekhov's lines from 'The Seagull' give us a bleaker view, and these words are used as a refrain in the Trio:

\[
\begin{align*}
No more shall white cranes wake and cry ... \\
All living bodies have turned to dust \\
All, all have gone \\
Into stones, into water, into dust.
\end{align*}
\]

Trio 2 was commissioned by Gemini, who gave the first performance in March 1983. It was written in January '83 while I was nursing my new-born baby. Is there a paradox between the happiness of those weeks and Chekhov's bleak vision? Perhaps – but not a contradiction.

Nicola LeFanu

Soprano
Sarah Leonard
Clarinet/bass clarinet
Ian Mitchell
Cello
Sophie Harris

Song for Peter – taken from words by Emily Dickinson, Anton Chekhov, Ted Hughes and Sara Teasdale*

Ah ... 
It was not death, for I stood up 
And all the dead, lie down 
It was not night, for all the bells 
Put out their tongues for noon. 
No more shall white cranes wake and cry 
No more shall white cranes wake. 

Like rain it sounded till it curved 
And then I knew ’twas wind 
It walked as wet as any wave 
And swept as dry as sand. 
Far ... this house has been far out all night 
Far out at sea

No longer, no more, cranes no longer wake in the meadows, wake and cry
As if my life were shaven
And fitted to a frame
And could not breathe

There will come soft rains and the smell of the ground
And swallows calling
And frogs in the pools singing at night
And wild plum trees
And not one will know of war, not one will care, not one will mind
If mankind perished
And spring herself, when she woke at dawn
Would scarcely know we were gone.
No more shall white cranes wake and cry.

Like midnight
When everything that ticks has stopped
And space stares

Wind ... we watch ...
Wind flexing like the lens of a mad eye
We watch ... seeing the window tremble to come in
We watch ... hearing the stones cry out under the horizon
No more, no longer, shall white cranes wake
Far, far out
This house has been far out all night
Far out at sea ... far ...

All living bodies have burned to dust
All, all, all have gone
Into stones, into water, into clouds.

* Anton Chekhov (1860-1904), from The Seagull; Emily Dickinson (1830-86), from It was not Death; Ted Hughes (1930-98), from Wind; Sara Teasdale (1884-1933), from There will come soft rains.
In 1975, I composed the solo piano piece, *Ruhe sanfte, sanfte ruh’*, a meditation on the final chorus from the *St Matthew Passion*. When Gemini asked me to compose a work for them in 1978, I returned to this work and wove it into a more extended structure which further explored the harmony of Bach’s chorus in terms of style and layers of textures.

The work is in three parts, the first being a transcription of the original chorus in the style of a classical quintet. The recapitulation of the opening is interrupted by the second part, the sonata, a classically shaped binary form, which makes many passing references to other music in the context of the Bach chorus.

The sonata dissolves into the opening of the piano piece, *Ruhe sanfte*, which is now the foreground of an extended fantasia. The other instruments create an enfolding resonance around the piano, leading eventually to the recapitulation of the Bach chorus, floating serenely above the climax of the piano music.

This description of the work is a little too clean cut for such a very odd piece. The clear edges of the music in the chorale and sonata are an essential foil to the ambiguity and open-endedness of the fantasia. It is insufficient to say that the centre of this mandala is the Bach chorale. What was the centre of that music? As soon as one resonance opens up, it merely opens up another. Is it a meditation on the act of listening itself? I can’t speak dispassionately about this music. It came from nowhere, and it continues to take me everywhere.

*David Lumsdaine*

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<td>Conductor/Chinese gong</td>
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David Lumsdaine

was born in Sydney on October 31, 1931, and educated at Sydney University and the Sydney Conservatorium. In 1953 he travelled to England to study with Mátyás Seiber, and afterwards remained in the UK, working freelance as composer, conductor, teacher and music editor.

Early performances which attracted attention included orchestral works and the several cantatas in which he collaborated with Peter Porter. Lumsdaine's reputation was established with such works as *Kelly Ground* (1966), *Flights* (1967), *Mandalas 1* (1967) and *2* (1969). The vivid imagery and rich harmonic vocabulary of these pieces were to become hallmarks of his style; the lucidity of the music belies its technical virtuosity, much commented on at the time.

During the sixties he was immersed in British contemporary musical life; he set up The Manson Room for composers at the Royal Academy of Music, and was increasingly sought after as a composition teacher. This led to university appointments, first at Durham (where he founded and directed the Electronic Music Studio) and subsequently at King's College, London, where he shared a post with his wife, the composer Nicola LeFanu.

In 1973 Lumsdaine returned to Australia, and since then his life has been divided between the two countries, with an increasing number of performances in both. In both Australia and UK he was much in demand, too, as a director of composers' workshops; with Don Banks, he pioneered the SPNM Composers' Weekends in the UK, and the Young Composers' Schools in Australia.
During the forty years of his career as a composer, Lumsdaine composed a body of strikingly original music, including such major works as Aria for Edward John Eyre, Hagoromo, Mandala 5, Garden of Earthly Delights and Kali Dances. As well as substantial orchestral commissions, Lumsdaine has written many solo and chamber works commissioned for, and by, individual performers.

In 1993 he retired from academic life. Due to severe hearing difficulties, he gradually withdrew from the musical world and ceased composing in 1997. He moved to York (where his wife was appointed Professor of Music at York University) while still spending extended periods in Australia.

At its heart, Lumsdaine's music embodies his experience of the Australian landscape – the variety of its shapes, rhythms, colours and textures: the vitality of its creatures; its sudden violence; its sense of unlimited space and time. An introduction to Lumsdaine's music can be found in the standard music dictionaries; more detailed studies have been written by Michael Hall (Between Two Worlds; The Music of David Lumsdaine, Arc Publications, 2003) and Michael Hooper (The Music of David Lumsdaine; Kelly Ground to Cambewarra, Ashgate, 2012), and there is an extensive essay by Nicola LeFanu on the composer’s website: www.davidlumsdaine.org.uk

A reflection by Peter Wiegold

I was sitting nervously on the stairs at Goldsmiths College in the 1971 SPNM Composers’ Weekend (these were wonderful, buzzy events where up to 50 young composers met for an intense few days of performances, workshops and talks, with several leading composers present). I had finally managed to track down David to see if I could show him my piece Dove sta amore. He focussed intently, half sung and performed his way through it, then began the feedback: ‘I see what you are doing here, that’s the key idea, you have a deep sense of harmony...’. It felt like the first time in my life I’d been understood.

Within months I was studying for a PhD in Composition with David at Durham University. I say studying, but it was more sharing a life. Cheese and onion baps in the Shakespeare at lunchtime, home-made curries, walks on the Durham moors, trips to concerts, day-long absorption in music and composition.
David lived and breathed music. Whether Mozart or Webern his mind was razor-sharp in seeing how it worked, and what it was speaking of. As we sat in his top floor office overlooking Durham Cathedral, he was clinical, pointing to a B flat on the 3rd page of a piece by Webern and asking, ‘Why that note there?’ Such a depth of analysis – while always that half singing/performing of the music as we went, engaging his whole body and spirit in it.

It was a particular pleasure and education to help him prepare and perform the tape part for his big London Sinfonietta/BBC piece *Aria for Edward John Eyre*, and to enjoy seeing how he worked creatively with artists such as Jane Manning, Barry Guy and Elgar Howarth. This piece takes the listener on a harrowing journey into delirium in the Australian outback; a beautiful musical line that carries us from sanity to insanity and back again through the landscape, and through the most sustained rhythmic and harmonic ‘mandala’.

David often talked of ‘harmony’, he has an exquisite ear, and a most poetic voice. He is steeped in 1000 years of European culture and history – but always viewed with that quizzical and sometimes abrasive Australian eye.

His alignment and absorption with European music is most poetically seen in his piece *Mandala 3*, a long essay built around the poignant, and ‘end of history’ chorale that closes Bach’s St Matthew Passion.
‘Endness’, farewell. I commissioned the piece for my ensemble Gemini, and how we loved going through that journey, in and out of the Bach harmony, night after night on a South-West Arts tour with pianist Ronald Lumsden.

A voice so literate and so immersed in a European lineage, yet David never loses that Australian desire for red earth and infinite space. Twenty years after I studied with him we spent a week camping together in the Australian bush. He heard every bird, saw every snake, ate simple food, living content and at ease with the wilderness. It was a long way from the ‘hallowed towers’ of Durham University, but this is a life inspirationally lived between those hemispheres.

Nicola LeFanu

was born in England in 1947, the daughter of Irish parents: her father William LeFanu was from an Irish literary family, and her mother was the composer Elizabeth Maconchy. LeFanu studied at Oxford, Royal College of Music and, as a Harkness Fellow, at Harvard. She has honorary doctorates from the universities of Durham, Aberdeen, and Open University, is an Honorary Fellow of St Hilda’s College, Oxford, and is FRCM and FTCL.

She has composed around one hundred works which have been played and broadcast all over the world; her music is published by Novello and by Peters Edition. She has been commissioned by the BBC, by festivals in the UK and beyond, and by leading orchestras, ensembles and soloists. Many works are available on CD, including music for strings (Naxos), Horn Concerto (NMC) and Saxophone Concerto (NEOS).

She is active in many aspects of the music profession, as composer, teacher, director and as a member of various public boards and new music organisations. From 1994 to 2008 she was Professor of Music at the University of York, where many gifted composers came to study with her. Previously she taught composition at King's College, London; in the 1970s, she directed Morley College Music Theatre.

Premieres in recent years have included works for chamber ensemble; for solo instrumentalists; *Tokaido Road* (music theatre), and *Threnody* for orchestra (premiered in Dublin by the RTE NSO). In 2015 she was awarded the Elgar bursary, which carries a commission from the Royal Philharmonic Society for the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

**An Appreciation by Kate Romano**

If I had to try to capture the essence of Nicola LeFanu’s highly original and free-spirited compositional output, I would choose a single word: ‘landscape’: the formation of a land, the taking-in of a shape, a contour, whilst drawing attention to the smaller details, a ‘fleeting glimpse of a world that is always there if we stop to listen for it’. In over 100 published works, LeFanu has ventured far and wide to find such real or imagined landscapes. Her musical forays into Edo Japan, medieval Ireland, the Zuni Indians, Russian samizdat, twelfth-century Suffolk and nineteenth-century Corsica have shaped her music into an increasingly un-categorisable and unique body of work. Her first large-scale orchestral work, written for the 1973 Proms, was called, prophetically, *The Hidden Landscape* – the first hints of a new imaginative world.

It is perhaps no wonder that LeFanu’s music is well-travelled. So is she. She likes to compose at the *Centre d'Art i Natura* at Farrera de Pallars in the high Pyrenees, which she combines with long walks in truly remote country. As a child she had regular holidays in Ireland,
birthplace of her composer mother Elizabeth Maconchy and her father, William LeFanu, a distinguished medical librarian. She spent the summers of her student years in Italy. Her travels led to discoveries that have fed back into her music: Renaissance art and architecture from Italy; bird life and natural habitats of Arizona; the art galleries of New York and Washington. In 1976 she joined her husband David Lumsdale in Australia, a country that became like a second home. They travelled extensively, camping in the outback. LeFanu describes living outdoors, discovering the flora and fauna of the bush as being of enormous importance to her. She says: ‘I am not an urban person. I need to be outdoors, using ears and eyes. Natural history means a great deal to me. Going to my allotment ... even that offers the quiet and headspace my music needs.’

While the natural world is a source of inspiration and provides the creative space in which to compose, the essence and detail of her music emerges from the conscientious research which lies behind the cultural borrowings and travels. Take *Light Passing*, an opera on the life of Clement VI, Pope in Avignon at the time of the Black Death. LeFanu immersed herself in the music that he and his contemporaries would have known, re-learning plainsong notation, familiarising herself with the polyphonic repertoire of Philippe de Vitry, singing Machaut with friends and re-reading Petrarch and Boccaccio; ‘The late mediaeval era was coming alive for me in all its vividness and paradox’, she says.
LeFanu is not merely beguiled by the beauty of scenery or charmed by a foreign tongue. She knows her subjects intimately enough to treat them dispassionately. Even when deliberately conjuring up the spirit of a place very different from our own, her music is never romanticised or idealised, her cultural borrowings are never sentimental or false. Hers is an honest and highly original evocation, as in her portrayal of Hiroshige’s Japan in her chamber opera, *Tokaido Road*. How easy it would have been instantly to invoke a Western take on the East with that most evocative of Japanese wind instruments, the shakuhachi. But LeFanu favoured a far more challenging approach in writing for the East-West Ensemble, creating her own distinctive musical language from the possibilities and restrictions the instruments provided. My favourite review of the opera speaks of a ‘*world between worlds*’ – a bridge perhaps, between East and West, between past and present, old and new. To my ears, this is the elusive, dramatic space in which so much of her music resides.

Nicola’s curious and studious approach to composition has been conducive to a parallel academic career. With a prestigious collection of prizes and accolades to her name (three honorary doctorates on top of her own DMus), she has undertaken a variety of teaching and academic positions. After King’s she joined York University in 1994 as Head of Music, and was made Emeritus Professor in 2008. I first met Nicola during her years at King’s when she examined my composition viva. I have never forgotten her contagious enthusiasm, her patience and her delight that my amateurish analytical fumblings found some sort of sense in the piece she had put in front of me. LeFanu loves to teach. Generations of students speak with great warmth of her classes and lectures, her care and encouragement. She is a natural and gifted communicator, whether gently teasing ideas from a young composer’s mind, or addressing a large public group. She has an ability to present complex ideas in a straightforward way and I believe that this trait filters into her music, which is also more than capable of speaking to a wide audience.

Nicola LeFanu has always been a voice for new music and an advocate for artistic issues. It is rare to find an interview that does not touch on the subject of women composers. As a prominent, articulate composer with a composer-mother, it is perhaps not surprising that she seems to have become the go-to person for comment. But LeFanu has only ever campaigned for equal opportunity, which she cares passionately about and has approached with her trademark patience, practicality and humour. ‘*You cannot combat sexism with sexism*,’ she says. ‘*I’m interested in the women’s movement as an instrument of social change, not as a separatist movement.*’ LeFanu in fact frequently champions composers,
colleagues, fellow artists – men and women. She is quick to acknowledge the greatest musical influences in her life: her mother, her husband, and her two composer-teachers, Jeremy Dale Roberts and Earl Kim. Swift to recognise the talent, vision and tenacity of others, she constantly looks for opportunities where their abilities might flourish. It is rare to have a conversation with her where she does not sing the praises of someone she has worked with, a writer she has discovered, a young composer who shows great promise, a composer who has been overlooked.

A visitor to the Lumsdaines’ York townhouse won’t be surprised to find walls, shelves and tables stacked with books. LeFanu has a passion for good literature and a love of the sound of words which is reflected in her affinity for vocal composition. Aside from the eight chamber operas, her catalogue includes eighteen songs and seventeen choral works. As I write, she is completing a large-scale orchestral work for the BBC Symphony Orchestra and soprano Rachel Nicholls: *The Crimson Bird*, based on the poem *Siege* by John Fuller. This new commission will be her fifth Fuller setting. It is easy to see why she is attracted to the writings of this prodigious literary technician, whose poetry is as un-categorisable as LeFanu’s music.

The two works on this disc also draw on some literary giants: Dickinson, Hughes, Teasdale, Chekhov and Italo Calvino. The Calvino-inspired *Invisible Places* holds particular fascination for me. I like to think of the journey undertaken by the 26-year old composer of *The Hidden Landscape* to the surety of the 39-year old composer of *Invisible Places*. Whilst the former evokes an enigmatic sense of space and time – sounds receding and emerging as if from a distant past – *Invisible Places* fearlessly tackles Calvino’s ‘thought-experiments’ head-on, recreating his ‘cities of ideas’ in a musical language which manages to suggest both the other-worldliness of the book and to mimic its structure in musical terms.

As the catalogue of works continues to grow, I am left in no doubt that Nicola will continue to follow her own path, creating an inimitable music that can never be confined to a ‘school’. As she says, ‘*I do not know from what hinterland of the imagination the next ideas will come ... but as each moment takes shape, it does so within a larger context which has been present from the beginning*’: the words of a composer who loves to travel in mind and body and is very sure of her own presence in a living landscape.
Lumsdaine and LeFanu works performed by Gemini (many with multiple performances):

**David Lumsdaine:**
*Catches Catch* (Mandala 2) for fl(pic/afl), basset cl, vla, vc, perc; *Kangaroo Hunt* for pno and perc; *Caliban Impromptu* for pno trio, tape and live electronics; *Aria for Edward John Eyre** for soprano, double bass, two narrators, 3 cls (doubling b cls), tmpt, hn, tromb, hp, 2 perc, tape and live electronics; *Mandala 3/*** for solo pno, fl, cl, vla, vc, Chinese bell; *What Shall I Sing?** for soprano, double bass, two narrators, 3 cls (doubling b cls), tmpt, hn, tromb, hp, 2 perc, tape and live electronics; *Mandala 3/*** for solo pno, fl, cl, vla, vc, Chinese bell; *Bagatelles* for fl, cl, vla, vc, pno; *Empty Sky, Mootwingee* for fl, tromb (or hn), vc, pitched perc (2 players); *A Dance and a Hymn for Alexander Maconochie, Norfolk Island, May 25 1840* for fl, cl, perc, gtr, mndln, vln, db; *A Tree Telling of Orpheus*/** for soprano, fl, cl, vln, vla, vc; *fire in leaf and grass**/* ***for soprano and cl; *Blue upon blue* for vc; *Sine Nomine* for b cl, tuned perc; Incidental Music for *The Crane*, a play for radio by Brenda Townsend Hall, picc (afl) perc, hp; *Six Postcard Pieces* for solo pno.

**Nicola LeFanu:**
*The Old Woman of Beare* for soprano and 13 players; *Invisible Places** for cl, string quartet; *Lullaby* for cl, pno; *But Stars Remaining* for soprano; *The Same Day Dawns** for soprano, fl(afl), cl(bcl), perc, vn, vc; *Songs without Words* for cl, string trio; *A Penny For A Song* for soprano, pno; *String Quartet II; Trio 2: Song for Peter** for soprano, clt, vc; *I am Bread* for soprano, pno; *The Green Children* Children’s Opera, libretto: Kevin Crossley-Holland. 3 Adults (STB), 5 young voices, children’s chorus, adult ensemble of fl(picc), cl(bcl), perc, gtr, vc.

*Gemini commission; **Gemini has recorded; *** written for Gemini
Aleksander Szram was winner of the 2004 Vlado Perlemuter Award, and he enjoys a varied schedule of solo piano, concerto and chamber music performances across the world, having played in more than thirty-five countries over six continents. Born in Southampton to Polish parents, he has been playing the piano since the age of five.

He studied with Anthony Green and Douglas Finch at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, London (formerly Trinity College of Music), continuing with Jane Coop for his DMA at the University of British Columbia. He now teaches piano and lectures in analysis and performance practice at Trinity Laban and has also guest-lectured at the Royal Academy of Music, the Australian National Academy of Music, the Juilliard School, and the Manhattan School of Music.

Aleksander is particularly interested in performing newly composed music, and has worked with many composers including Rzewski, Runswick, Smalley, Fujikura, Gregson and Finch, recording albums for Nimbus, MMC and Prima Facie. He collaborates regularly with the flautist Wissam Boustany, their duo having established an international reputation for performing from memory.

See www.aleksanderszram.com for more details.
Sarah Leonard

is one of Britain's most respected and versatile sopranos. She has a wide repertoire with a particular interest in contemporary music and has appeared throughout the world in major concert halls, opera houses and festivals. She has worked closely with many leading composers including Birtwistle, Boulez, Dusapin, Ferneyhough, Harle, Harvey, Huber, Lachenmann, Ligeti, Nyman and Sciarrino and premiered numerous works. Her 30-plus recordings include a recital series of English Song with Malcolm Martineau, works by Varèse with Chailly and the Concertgebouw Orchestra and Ligeti’s Aventures, Nouvelle Aventures with the Schoenberg Ensemble and the song cycle In Praise of Dreams, by Joe Cutler, with Stephen Gutman, piano, for NMC.

She has worked with many leading conductors including Pierre Boulez in Webern’s Cantatas 1 & 2 with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, and his Improvisations sur Mallarmé, with the Ensemble Intercontemporain. With Michael Tilson Thomas she has performed Debussy’s Le Martyre de Saint Sebastian, San Francisco Symphony, and Krenek’s Die Nachtigall, London Symphony Orchestra, and (with Peter Eötvös) Ligeti’s Requiem in Holland and London.

Her opera appearances include Dr. Faustus by Giacomo Manzoni at La Scala Milan, Al Gran sole Carico d’Amore Luigi Nono at Hamburg State Opera, Berio’s Laborintus II at the Teatro Carlo Felice, Genova, What Next? by Elliott Carter, Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, To Be Sung by Pascal Dusapin, Théâtre des Amandiers, Paris, Das Mädchen mit den Schwefelholzern by Helmut Lachenmann in Hamburg, Stuttgart, Paris and Vienna. Contemporary Music Theatre
appearances include *Dirty Tricks* by Paul Barker, London, *Down By the Greenwood Side*, Harrison Birtwistle, London and *Angel Magick* by John Harle at the Salisbury Festival and the BBC Proms.

Sarah regularly sings with the ensemble Gemini, and has a duo with cellist Robin Michael. They have performed in the BMIC’s Cutting Edge series and given many workshops and concerts throughout the UK. She gave the UK premiere of *Got Lost* a major song cycle written for her and the pianist Rolf Hind, by Helmut Lachenmann, at the Aldeburgh Festival, and Elliott Carter’s *A mirror on which to dwell* with the Royal Northern Sinfonia.

**Gemini** (Director Ian Mitchell)

has performed extensively throughout the UK and abroad (Austria, Australia, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Oman, Taiwan); given frequent radio and television broadcasts; has recorded music by Peter Maxwell Davies (Sunday Times Contemporary CD of the Year); John White - *Fashion Music (our tribute to Tchaikovsky Year '93)* (nominated by BBC Music Magazine as a Top Forty CD of the Year); Philip Grange (2 CDs: both chosen as a Critic’s Choice of the Year by Gramophone magazine); Nicola LeFanu (2 discs); David Lumsdaine (3 CDs); Geoffrey Poole; Lindsay Cooper; Howard Skempton; Stephen Goss; Camden Reeves; Giles Easterbrook; Tim Ewers, and recorded Douglas Young's music for the video of Beatrix Potter's *The Tailor of Gloucester*, which has been shown worldwide on television. In May 2013 a DVD of Maxwell Davies’ music theatre work *Miss Donnithorne’s Maggot* and other works was launched at the Singapore Festival. UK festival appearances include Aldeburgh, Bath, Brighton, Chester, Guildford, Huddersfield, King's Lynn, St Magnus, Spitalfields, Warwick & Leamington; and there have been concerts and workshops abroad for the British Council and others.

The ensemble was a prizewinner in the music category of the Prudential Awards for the Arts, and has been the recipient of an Arts Council Incentive Award.

Since its formation in 1973 Gemini has presented a richly varied repertoire, incorporating standard eighteenth- and nineteenth-century chamber music, twentieth-century music, new music, music theatre, music and dance and improvisation, plus much music by neglected composers. Community and school concerts feature music from the eleventh- to the twenty-first century; folk music from around the world, music by children and young people as well as more standard fare.
Gemini was one of the instigators of the festival *Hidden Sounds* – a celebration of women's music – at London’s South Bank Centre, out of which grew the influential organization Women in Music.

A pioneer in the field of professional performers in education, with the twin activities of performance and education having developed hand in hand, the ensemble is regularly engaged for residencies combining the two. During these the ensemble helps students and pupils to compose their own music for performance by them and/or Gemini as part of a public concert.

Gemini has been Ensemble-in-Residence at Bristol (2005-13), Surrey (2003-10) and London (Goldsmiths College, 1998-2000) universities, and was Ensemble-in-Association with the Department of Music at the University of Exeter from 1996 to 2007.
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Kruhové vynálezy 10 (Circular inventions 10). Acrylic on plywood, 910x910 by Colin Rose:
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Tim Lumsdaine: David Lumsdaine recording on Cambewarra Mountain, Kangaroo Valley, NSW
Matt Jamie: Aleksander Szram
Gerald Place: Sarah Leonard
Elizabeth Haines: drawing of members of Gemini

Recording details
Invisible Places was recorded at St Paul’s Church, Finchley, London, on 20 September 1995;
producer, Chris de Souza; engineer, John Whiting, with the composer present.
Mandala 3 was recorded on 1 August 2015;
fire in leaf and grass and Trio 2 were recorded on 17 October 2015;
all three at All Saints’ Church, East Finchley, London;
producer David Lefeber with Nicola LeFanu; engineer, David Lefeber.
All the works on the disc are first recordings.
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