



THE EXPANSIVE CANVAS

DUBLIN, IRELAND
26-28 AUGUST 2025

Creative Palette Creative Responses

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The Expansive Canvas – Creative Palette Responses

Following on from [The Expansive Canvas](#), the International Conference and Collaborative Symposium exploring Large-Scale Form in the Music of 19th-Century Women Composers, which took place in Dublin in August 2025, we are delighted to bring you the collated creative responses from our [Creative Palette Open Call](#). [!\[\]\(529949c2c3dadbaa4e538e8c643454bc_img.jpg\)](#)

We have been truly inspired by the level of creativity of all the submissions, and offer our heartfelt thanks to all the creators who have taken the time to share their responses to the music and stories of the women composers featured in the Expansive Canvas.

In the following pages you are invited on a unique creative journey of exploration.

From poetry, to short story, newly created artworks to improvisations, newly composed pieces, video responses and mixed reality experiences, each response invites reflective engagement by offering unique perspectives on the music that inspired them.

Linger, pause, ponder, then delve in again as you discover the music and stories of 19th-Century women composers anew.

We invite you to find out more about the creators and their work, as well as continuing to explore the many creative and musical possibilities from the original [Creative Palette Inspiration Springboard](#).

Let's continue the conversation...happy explorations!

Nicole, Denise & Sinéad

Nicole Grimes, Associate Professor of Music, Trinity College Dublin
Denise Neary, Doctoral Studies Coordinator, Royal Irish Academy of Music
Sinéad Hayes, Conductor, Royal Irish Academy of Music

This booklet was collated and created by Sinéad Hayes, with editorial support from Dr Nicole Grimes. The work forms part of Sinéad's output for [The Creative Conductor Blog](#), partly funded by the Marten Toonder Bursary (Individual Artist Music Bursary) from the Irish Arts Council, of which Sinead was the grateful recipient, supporting her artistic development for 2025.



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Bernadette Scott



The creator...

Bernadette Scott is a daughter, a wife, a dog-lover and keen learner who is fascinated by the stories of wonderful women.

The work...

A short piece imaging the shedding of Augusta Holmès's male pen name and a reflection on aspects of her unique life.

The inspiration...

Augusta Holmés (1847–1907)

Born in Paris but of Irish descent, Holmés published her music under a male pseudonym, lived life on her own terms, and even turned down a marriage proposal from composer Camille Saint-Saëns.



I am Augusta Holmés

Bernadette Scott

Hermann Zenta, I am not.

They say my work is too masculine, too virile. And why must these attributes be fitting for a man but unbecoming for a woman? The words of Mr. Yeats may peruse the political. But for the likes of Maud and me, no. Women cannot refer to the revolutionary, my compositions should not centre on such concepts. Was it not a brigade of women who marched upon Versailles seeking change? How can a land be given a female name, called after a Goddess of Sovereignty; yet I can have no freedom in it? He can fight for her, but she cannot fight for herself. I will fight for this to change.

I have tried to mould myself, to disguise myself and my work. I have tried to become more palatable to fit to a societal norm. But I will not conceal myself any longer.

I have survived the disapproval of my mother and the devastation of her death. I know she did not want this way of life me. I struggle to make my peace with that, to honour her memory and stay true to myself. They will have to remain as two separate entities. We are full of many different entities.

I have taken a lover and refused a marriage proposal. For both a yes and no, I will be scorned.

I have been refused a formal musical education but formally musically educated, behind closed doors.

I have had a master and mastered the note but been forbidden from becoming notable.

I have birthed siblings and symphonies, only one of these being deemed appropriate for me. George was the better parent and I'm not sorry if that is also a difficult thing to accept.

You see me as a woman, as a mother. I see myself as other. But we have never been quite comfortable with the other, have we? We are all bound by conventional rules and regulations. When will one realise, they can do more harm than good. Can we not let people be?

I choose to be. I choose to shed the facade. I am not Herman, and I am not Zenta. I am a woman, I am Irish, I am French, I am an artist, I am a composer. And I choose to live in full orchestral colour. I am Augusta Holmès.

Laura Savigni & Carlo Alberto Vandelli



The creators...

Laura Savigni is a professional musician specialising in fortepiano and nineteenth-century performance practice, with a longstanding duo with her sister, the guitarist Enrica Savigni.

Carlo Alberto Vandelli is a professional painter who also owns a workshop in Modena (Italy), where he paints, builds frames, and organizes art exhibitions.

The work...

The painting *Sinuosa* is part of the series *Musica Pittorica* (Painted Music). *Musica Pittorica* is a project by Laura Savigni and Carlo Alberto Vandelli since 2023, aimed at exploring the connection between visual art and music.

The art-practice sessions are a shared performing act in which Laura plays various keyboard instruments including the piano, harpsichord and fortepiano discovering a specific piece of music through performance, practice, and analysis, while Carlo Alberto paints in response to the music.

The project seeks to capture a fleeting moment, something meant to exist in the present but already slipping into the past: music flows, just like skies and clouds, which are two of the main subjects of *Musica Pittorica*.

This particular artwork was painted while practicing *Romance*, Op. 11 No. 1, by Clara Schumann.

The inspiration...

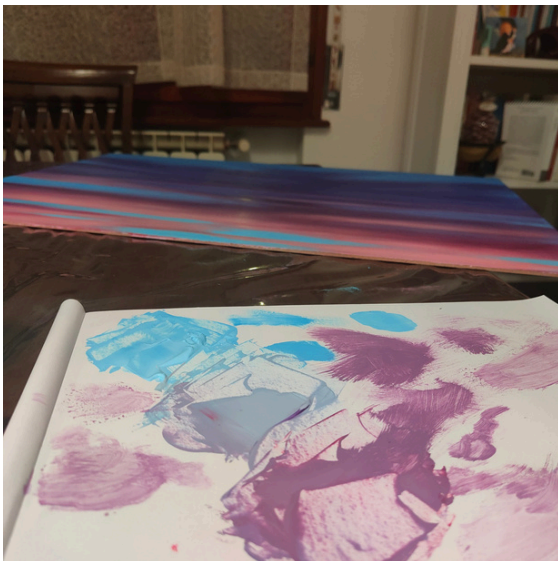
Clara Schumann (1819–1896)

Schumann enjoyed a highly successful performance career as a pianist. Her marriage to Robert Schumann, against the wishes of her father, slowed down her compositional output, as the care of their eight children occupied her time. In 1854, the year she met Brahms, she composed 16 pieces, but her compositional activity waned again after this.

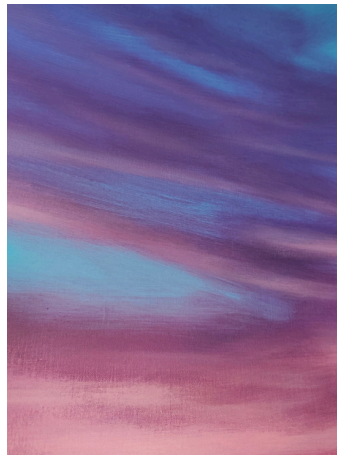
Listen to her *Romance*, Op. 11 No. 1 via the link below.



In progress...



In detail...





Carlo Alberto Vandelli & Laura Savigni

***Sinuosa*, 2024**

Acrylic on Canvas (50 x 70cm)



Take a closer look...



Click on the **magnifying glasses to take a closer look.**

You will be taken to a full screen silent video or still of the artwork.



We have deliberately left the video silent so you can add your own soundtrack (real or imaginary!) as you look.

Adrienne Jill Maher



The creator...

Adrienne Jill Maher is a poet and musician who spends most of her life engaged in the creative process in some way or another, when not busy with her family, and even then some...! She plays guitar and fiddle and sings Irish songs, mostly from Donegal. She also composes music on the piano.

She grew up listening to music especially by Clara and Robert Schumann and Brahms, all played by her mother for hours a day on piano. These composers and their music are often the backdrop to her inner musical and poetic landscape.

The work...

These are poems I've written about music. Music is in my bones and blood; my mother was practicing for a piano concert career when I was a child, and she, as well as my grandmother, taught piano. She studied with Vivan Rifkin, a well known American pianist, and I attended her lessons.

My great grandmother Clara was in an all female orchestra that performed all over Europe in the 19th Century. That is how she emigrated to the U.S. My father's father played and taught the Uilleann pipes in New York after he emigrated to Brooklyn.

A few days ago I spent a few hours listening to Clara Schumann and reading about her life, and some of the letters between her and Robert Schumann. Her life was rich with the passion and beauty of music and love, and yet full of the deep, desperate, grief that comes with the sad losses in life.

I admire how much she was able to perform and compose while being a mother to eight children, suffering the loss of two sons, and seeing the love of her life sink into madness. I particularly liked the Romances for Violin and Piano, especially the third one.

The inspiration...

Clara Schumann (1819–1896)

Schumann enjoyed a highly successful performance career as a pianist. Her marriage to Robert Schumann, against the wishes of her father, slowed down her compositional output, as the care of their eight children occupied her time. In 1854, the year she met Brahms, she composed 16 pieces, but her compositional activity waned again after this.

Listen to her Romance for Violin & Piano, Op. 22 No. 3. *Leidenschaftlich schnell* via the link below



Quarantined in Donegal, in Search of Music

Adrienne Jill Maher

Here in the Rosses, late September
the flirtatious bees buzz about the fuchsia ballerinas,
though some have pulled in their tutus
and tucked into their tiny cabanas for winter.
Some sprays of roses still cling on
in memory of the ghosts who sit on the benches
by the woods on the old rail trail,
or stir the pot in the stone ruins--
hydrangeas have aged to colors of fine wine,
others filter the woodsy light in purples and pinks,
also scattered with ruins
and flecked with winged petals
perched as if they have just landed
like the bold white cottages
with all mod cons next to empty sheds
that might have housed hungry families of twelve—

The fairies have shut themselves into their round stone huts
in their pebbledash villages
strewn along the shore, like the cove beaches are
among the rocky heathered headlands,
and the hills and valleys where no music
wafts from the streets or pub doors.
I listen hard as I pass houses on the road—
somewhere in this pandemic
fiddlers are still fiddling and singers still singing—
was that only a cadence of wind or murmur of wave?
The moors chant their panoramic of glistening greens,
the lakes shimmy and shimmer shamelessly
for no audience in particular,
and why would I come this time
life has gone online
and why am I drawn as if pulled mercilessly
by local rip tides?

I'll take any road as long as it leads to the coast
and rough any headland, rock or stream
to touch my feet to the strand
and feel the cold surf on my knees—
I almost forget my need for anything--
the ocean's blue heart is always breaking
and mine is but a tiny muscle in a shell
tossed on the curl, tumbled in the foamy lace
and safely onto the sand
where I keep listening
for the all music still to come...

Elegy in Snow

Adrienne Jill Maher

One winter day after Christmas
you're walking the dog in your pajamas
under your coat, down an icy sidewalk
between white crusted banks,
before your first sip of coffee,
worried about your mother
who has fallen and broken ribs,
the inevitable failing of life and limb--
and yet--the blue heart is pumping
legs moving, this day is better
than you expected, the sun even
trying to shine—glint of ice
on the neighbors' withered buds,
but then-- a blast of snow,
whiteout in the street--
past, present and future
suspended as you step.
a blip of stasis,
in the trajectory you've walked
all your life—to the exact moment
your loved one exhales and is gone.
No more voice at the end of the line.

She takes her last breath,
unnamed moth in migrations of moths,
soul flitting among the notes
of her piano, the measures of her days
heard in a breath of wind-blown
swirling specs of time,
the unfinished symphonies of her sublime—

our loved ones know so little of us,
and we of them--
only those few scattered words
over the phone or glass of wine,
months and years of living apart,
missed birthdays, holidays, Sundays,
shopping, cooking, sharing clothes,
and laughter never heard,
memories not rehearsed,

all lost forever in this white world
blowing into one cold globe,
with me inside,
the wind's rough hands
tracing her name
somewhere on an unmarked grave,
never telling her secrets,
the music of her
life's longing,
forever lost
between the staves of
the silent
snowy wires.

Mary Branley



The creator...

Mary Branley is a poet and musician from North Sligo. She is the author of three poetry collections and is closely associated with the Kids Own Publishing Partnership.

The work...

Fleet is a short poem using musical language to express the creativity of women composers from the Expansive Canvas, and the challenges they faced.

This same poem is also part of the musical submission of Clíodhna Quinlan (pg. 14) where it is recited at the beginning and end of her jig based on the work of Maria Szymanowska. Mary Branley is co-collaborator with Bob McPherson whose art work *Melange à trois* is also featured in this collection.

The inspiration..



The composers of the Expansive Canvas

Fleet

Mary Branley

Fleet fingers on keys and strings, a flash of new,
molto vivace, notes drop, treble and bass,
allegro, allegretto, presto,
 fleet the ink on secret staves and clefs.
Pianissimo, in the dead of night.

Fleet their rise, fleet the fame,
 till duties came.
 Fathers', husbands' forbiddings *crescendo*.
 Scores of children claim *sforzando*,

fingers, hands and arms.
 Accidentals in every key.
 The heart, *staccato*
sempre largo and *lentamente*.
Rallentando until *caesura*.

Listen to *Fleet/Le Murmure* here:



[Fleet/Le Murmure by poet Mary Branley with original newly
 composed jig \(Le Murmure\) by Clíodhna Quinlan](#)

Cliodhna Quinlan



The creator...

Cliodhna Quinlan is a musician and fiddle player who has worked and toured with many artists. She arranged and performed strings on the first album by songwriter and percussionist Ronan O'Snodaigh, *tip toe*. She collaborated with Sligo poet Mary Branley to create this work.

The work...

This is a jig inspired by Maria Szymanowksas' Nocturne "Le Murmure" and put together with Mary Branleys poem *Fleet*.

I took phrases from the nocturne and I reimagined them as a jig. I wanted to make it accessible to trad players and so I changed the key from Ab to Bb and found phrases that worked in the jig format.

The nocturne is already in 6/8 time so when I listened to it I could hear the possibility of making it into a jig. The jig is a four part tune that repeats the A part after each part to echo the way the main theme in the piece comes back again and again. The form is AABACADAA The poem is solo at the beginning and then comes in again at the end while the music fades underneath it to end on the single word *caesura*.

The inspiration...

Maria Szymanowska (1789–1831)

Polish virtuoso pianist and composer Szymanowska had a very successful performing career, playing all over Europe in the years following her separation from her husband in 1820. She eventually relocated to St. Petersburg with her three children, where she hosted a celebrated salon and served as court pianist to the Empress of Russia. Listen to "Le Murmure" via the link below.



Le Murmure

Form: AABACAD
End on AA

Clíodhna Quinlan
from Nocturne
"Le Murmure"
by Maria Szymanowska

♩. = 65

A

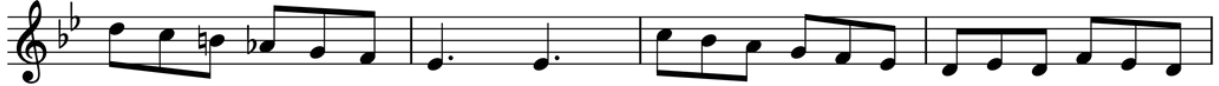


5



9

B



13



17

C



21



25

D



29



33



Fleet/Le Murmure

Clíodhna Quinlan (music) Mary Branley (poem)

Listen to *Fleet/Le Murmure* here:



Fleet/Le Murmure by poet Mary Branley with original newly composed jig *(Le Murmure)* by Clíodhna Quinlan

Bob McPherson



The creator...

Bob McPherson is a visual artist from Edinburgh based in North Sligo. She is very interested in the subject of the silencing of women's voices and is deeply affected by this incredible project shared with her by her partner and co-collaborator, Mary Branley.

The work...

Melange à Trois is a mixed media/collage on canvas.

The inspiration...

Leokadya Kashperova (1872–1940)

Russian composer and pianist Kashperova composed in secret for much of her life. Dismissed by her former student Igor Stravinsky as "antiquated and a blockhead", in recent years her music has gained an audience, with her *Symphony on B minor* receiving increasingly frequent performances.





Bob McPherson

***Melange à Trois*, 2025**

Mixed media/collage on canvas

Take a closer look...



Click on the **magnifying glasses** to take a closer look.

You will be taken to a full screen silent video or still of the artwork.



We have deliberately left the video silent so you can add your own soundtrack (real or imaginary!) as you look.

Eileen Grant



The creator...

Eileen Grant is a writer from Ontario, Canada currently enrolled in a Masters program at Trinity College Dublin. She has played piano her whole life, and loves classical music. She thinks everyone should listen to Fanny Hensel's *Nocturne in G minor*!

The work...

This is a short story about Fanny Hensel/Mendelssohn from the perspective of a young girl whose mother is a big fan of the composer.

The inspiration...

Fanny Hensel (1805–1847)

Born in Hamburg, but growing up in Berlin, pianist and composer Hensel displayed prodigious talent, composing over 450 work in her relatively short life. Although overshadowed by her younger brother Felix Mendelssohn, encouraged in her work by her husband, a number of her compositions were published in her lifetime.

Listen to her *Nocturne in G minor* via the link below.



Composure

Eileen Grant

I am utterly incapable of eating breakfast. I blame my mother. Before I was tall enough to reach the stove or strong enough to open the fridge, she taught me that mornings were for tea and that was all. She let me put sugar in mine and told stories to pass the time while the mug was still steaming. She lacked variety in her facial expressions, like a grumpy cartoon character. She had a faded green dressing gown to match her eyes, and cold feet because she refused to wear slippers. She had a painting of Fanny Mendelssohn hanging on the wall next to the kitchen table.

I think Fanny began watching over us when I was seven years old. She was a gift from Aunt Rose for my mother's 40th birthday. The box arrived the morning after the party and barely fit through the door. Mother and I unwrapped the package together, admiring the neat gold frame and Fanny's outmoded hairstyle. My father grunted from his place on the couch. "Just don't put it in the bedroom," he ordered, and she nodded without shifting her gaze.

Mother talked about Fanny as if she were a distant relative. Our house was cramped with family photos; every surface held a smiling cousin or a wedding portrait or a Christmas card featuring vaguely familiar faces. As a child, I felt bewitched by the fuzzy, unreal quality of Fanny's picture. Those ridiculous coils of hair led me to believe she was royalty.

Whenever morning conversation involved Fanny I never finished my tea. Brain fully occupied, I lost control over my body. Hunchback, slackjaw, lazy eyes. Mother snapped at me to signal any unpleasantness. Oftentimes I attempted to avoid disruption by fixing my attention on a spot in the room. I could listen and imagine without behaving improperly. This method failed me on numerous occasions. I hated to look at anything but Fanny, locked up in her golden cage. I studied the sheen of her lips during the story of her marriage. I searched relentlessly for a smile on her round face. The corners of her mouth refused to turn despite any squinting. Mother informed me that smiling was not in style during Fanny's time. That made my chest hurt; I remember the feeling clearly. Mother sighed and sipped cold tea. Her undereyes were so dark they looked like shadows.

Mother's narration decidedly diverged from romance, but I nonetheless imagined Fanny's wedding all white and gold and floral-scented. Bouquet of lilies, gloves of lace, tray of desserts stacked up to the ceiling.

I saw her veil lifted, heard her whisper "I do." Mother played the piano at her own reception. I hoped Fanny did too, or at least the harpsichord. She rarely performed publicly. This is a fact I have known for my whole life, with which I have never made peace.

Fanny married an artist. He sketched her more beautiful than she was, vision impaired by admiration. His portrayals boasted excessive personality when compared with the sterile portrait on our wall. In those drawings, her expressions revealed genius, elusive yet undeniable. In lead, Fanny glimmered nymphlike, lips pursed and gaze askance, as if she had a secret to share. More than likely she told her husband all of her secrets. He knew she was destined to be a famous composer. Others believed that she should be a wife and nothing more.

Tragic moments provided suitable pause for a big gulp of tea. Mother took such an opportunity while discussing Fanny's multiple miscarriages. Missedriages? I asked, and with careful patience she explained the definition of the word. Prone to absorbing meaning phonetically, I guessed that Fanny might have been late for a horse-drawn journey.

Mother never cried during sad stories, just sipped intermittently until she regained her composure. Fanny lost two babies, she said, and I replied that maybe God did not want her to be a mommy. Mother said no, no, but I held strong my own conviction. Fanny's body had rejected pregnancy because she was an artist before she was a woman.

This was not true, I later learned. Fanny cared for her brother maternally, gently, inadvertently. Felix Mendelssohn was in actuality the only reason anyone knew Fanny's name. That realization injured me, made my brain swell with misunderstanding and disappointment.

It was a boy in music class who told me. He pinched my arms and stepped on my shoes and he knew about Felix but not about Fanny. He told me the only famous composers were men and I cried, helplessly, in response. He faced no punishment.

When I came home that day I took a moment to reexamine the portrait. Previously, I had interpreted Fanny's non-smiling face as merely polite. Now I was able to recognize the restraint clouding her expression. A genius neglected, a daughter discarded, a mother to a brother renowned in his lifetime. Her composure was miraculous, really. I guessed she was accustomed to composing herself.

'''

For as long as I can remember, my favourite of Fanny's compositions has been her Nocturne in G minor. Melancholy in tone, the pace of the piece is deceptively quick. Mother played it in her own hands every so often, while I closed my eyes and pictured what Fanny might have intended with each distinct phrase. Parsing the song's ever-shifting moods, I found misery, then hope, triumph, frustration, and concession. Fanny had concealed images between notes, vignettes of herself awake at dawn scribbling on the grand staff. Youthful confusion between the words "nocturne" and "nocturnal" led me to believe that this piece had been composed entirely after midnight. In my mind, Fanny's eyes were wide open, like an owl's. Her anguish was silent, like a mother's.

Our piano sat in the corner of the living room, next to a window. Mother always played after she came home from work. A relentless performer, she provided entertainment for parties, especially on her birthday when nobody could tell her to stop.

I had my first taste of alcohol on one such occasion. Drinking in music and wine, I got warm and red in my party dress. Mother rested for applause breaks; father did not participate. I remember how shiny she looked under yellow lighting, how genuinely her eyes shone when guests began to clap. Peeking her head out from behind her perch, she kept squawking "One more?" like a parrot with a limited vocabulary. I turned, smiling, at my father, who coughed loudly and swigged his beer. He did not look at me. His eyes rolled, I watched them go, and he stood up to shout.

"Give it up!"

That wretched voice, raspy and cut with disdain, still sits unwelcome at the back of my mind. That phrase, the product of so much resentment, haunts my subconscious. I have imagined people hurling the same words at Fanny. Bitter figures morally opposed to feminine ambition. Mother did not show off, but she had talent. Envious on a pretty face. Deplorable on a face worn by time and complacency.

Fanny died at 41. It was sudden, a stroke. Mother explained this word too. She saw me shift my eyes toward the painting, looking for brushstrokes. Once I understood, I thought it befit Fanny to die young. I liked that she did not have to suffer for long. I did not want to picture her without those rosy cheeks, or glossy brown curls.

She died composing. I hoped she would never decompose.

Rachel Fehily



The creator...

Rachel Fehily is currently engaged in creative-based doctoral studies at UCD.

The work...

This is a short video response to Susan Spain-Dunk, *Stonehenge*, a symphonic poem composed in 1929.

The inspiration...

Susan Spain-Dunk (1880–1962)

Composer, violinist/violist and conductor Spain-Dunk studied at the Royal Academy of Music, London where she eventually taught. A noted conductor, she frequently conducted her own works in concert, including performances in the Proms in 1924. Listen to *Stonehenge* via the link below.



Video Response to *Stonehenge*

Rachel Fehily

Watch the video here:



Rachel Fehily Video response to Stonehenge (Susan Spain-Dunk)

Lullie



The creator...

In her own words:

i am a woman who makes music too but i am not sure that 'composer' is a word i like but i do like many different words including 'strummer' and 'thrummer.'

The work...

This piece is played on my Estonian zither, originally taken from measures 112-113 of Lili Boulanger's Psalm 130 *Du fond de l'abîme*. I raised each of the 3 notes by a halfstep to be playable on my zither, tuned to A Major. I played with those three notes to the point where they weren't rhythmically or melodically identical to those in the original composition and had a personality of their own that fit well with music I would typically play on this instrument.

In this work I've recorded my playing and altered some of it digitally. In terms of structure I like to think of the persistence of the unaltered playing beneath the distorted strumming akin to the music of women composers being deliberately hidden but as much as possible, through conferences like these and personal curiosity, unearthed and heard again over time.

The title is a translation of Boulanger's original title, which one can relate to this action of unearthing. In the end you can hear children playing and something flying in the air.

The inspiration..

Lili Boulanger (1893–1918)

Born in Paris, Boulanger's musical studies were delayed by illness until she was 16. She went on to become the first woman to win the prestigious Prix de Rome at age 19, before illness cut her life short at age 24. Her sister Nadia was a famed teacher.



from the bottom of the abyss

lullie

Listen to the piece here:



from the bottom of the abyss - lullie

improvisation inspired by Lili Boulanger Psalm 130

Felicity Lyn Maxwell



The creator...

Felicity Lyn Maxwell is a specialist in early modern women's writing, an arts professional, and an occasional poet, dancer and percussionist. Many of the difficulties faced by 19th-century women composers were shared by women writers of earlier ages, so this project resonates with her research and interests.

The work...

This is a poem that responds to Hilda Sehested's *Intermezzi for Violin, Cello & Piano: III. Elegie*, informed by the Creative Palette note stating that the death of her fiancé caused her to stop composing for a long time.

The poem listens for emotive cues in the music and develops the image of a bird flying over the ocean to represent the tension between hope and grief.

The inspiration...

Hilda Sehested (1858–1936)

A woman of considerable means, Danish composer Sehested's studies took her to Copenhagen and Paris. The death of her fiancé before their wedding shocked her into compositional hiatus, but she eventually returned to composing.

Listen to her *Elegie* via the link below.



[Listen to the poem being read by the author here](#)

Interrupted

Felicity Lyn Maxwell

The world is not so ordered
as we used to think
Still, we search for patterns -
a rhythm, a pulse
the echo of a melody
the missing voice

Still, we reach for hope —
do you hear it winging
over churning waves?

These shifting strains
are passing thoughts
a passing breath

stream of consciousness
suspended
from strings of measured time

Still hope drifts through
feathers unfurled
with glide and beat

and I wonder
will it reach its shore
or will it tire
in the slackening breeze
waver and
drop
into the deep

another life
interrupted

grief

Dr Svetlana Rudenko

Prof Mads Haahr

Xiangpeng Fu



The creators...

Dr Svetlana Rudenko is a Research Fellow at the School of Computer Science and Statistics, Trinity College Dublin, concert pianist, composer and researcher on new forms of multimedia for classical music: AR, MR, XR

Prof. Mads Haahr is a multidisciplinary, equally at home in the arts and sciences, and with a proven track-record in multidisciplinary research and teaching as well as a founder of two Irish technology companies

Xiangpeng Fu is a PhD candidate at the School of Computer Science and Statistics, Trinity College Dublin

The work...

The work is a visualisation of Amy Beach's composition "Dreaming" Op. 15 No. 3 in Mixed Reality for Meta Quest 3.

"Dreaming: Amy Beach MR" is the first in a series of Mixed Reality DreaMR by Haunted Planet experiences that explore philosophical concepts related to dreams and dreaming in music, literature and science. It is a short, meditative experience based on a composition by American female composer-synesthete Amy Beach (1867-1944).

"You Speak to Me from the Depth of a Dream" was the quote from Victor Hugo that Amy Beach chose as the epigraph for her composition "Dreaming" from *Four Sketches* Op. 15 No. 3 (1892).

"Exploring Dreaming with Mixed Reality" engages with the human experience of dreaming through art, music and consciousness science. Using cutting-edge Mixed Reality (MR), we approach dreaming like surrealist paintings: experiences that reside halfway between the visible and the invisible.

MR technology is uniquely suited for this purpose, because it positions the audience not within a virtual world (like VR technology does) but in a liminal space that blends the real with the un-real, the conscious with the unconscious, the physical world with the world of dreams.

The inspiration...

Amy Marcy Beach (1867–1944)

US composer Amy Beach was a prodigiously gifted young musician. Her compositional studies were supplemented by a course of thorough self study, equipping Beach with the unique compositional voice that produced her popular *Gaelic Symphony*, the first to be composed and published by an American woman. Listen to her piece "Dreaming" via the link below.



Dreaming: Amy Beach MR

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Experience the piece via YouTube here:



[Dreaming: Amy Beach MR](#)
[Rudenko Haahr Fu](#)

Experience the piece via Meta App here:



[Dreaming: Amy Beach MR \(App\)](#)
[Rudenko Haahr Fu](#)

Róisín Ní Neachtain



The creator...

Róisín Ní Neachtain is an award-winning writer and artist living in Kildare. She has been published by Abridged, Firmament (Sublunary Editions), The Honest Ulsterman and with Poetry Jukebox at IMMA. Her first independently published collection of poetry is forthcoming with Broken Sleep Books. In her painting practice, she has been mentored by Brian Maguire and exhibited nationally.

The works...

A poem where I spread your ashes and ask the ocean to give you back to me was written after listening to Ina Boyle's *Elegy*, the second time. It is a poem about grieving a loved one but is also about the climate crisis.

Gaza is an iPad drawing using ProCreate which I drew as I was listening to Ina Boyle's *Elegy* for the first time. I became overwhelmed with a torrent of sorrow. I didn't plan this. I had no idea what I was drawing until it was finished. It is a semi-abstract figurative reflection in response to *Gaza*.

The inspiration..

Ina Boyle (1889–1967)

From Enniskerry, Co. Wicklow, Boyle's many compositions were rarely performed throughout her lifetime. Following initial studies in Dublin, she travelled to London for composition lessons with Ralph Vaughan Williams. Her works are gaining more attention in recent years. A fascinating character, she persevered with her composition in spite of isolation.

Listen to her piece *Elegy* via the link below



a poem where I spread your ashes and ask the ocean to give you back to me

Róisín Ní Neachtain

I am asking you to remember this,
my pure words,
the almost-invisible
fern and soft gaze of heather
as we sweep ocean floors,
stand barefoot and alight
in the basin of this ruin, and drink
the rainy unravelling of other bodies.

To remember this embrace
this lifeboat of dust rippling
over your knuckles and lids.
The varicosed coral limbs of us,
shaken and jostling,
us, wide-mouthed into each other's burning.

To hunger for this sorrow
my dead love, my cracked creature —
in this luminous, unreal and pitiful place of pilgrimage
let me believe in illusion.

Let me show you how
the river softly blossoms blue
and the faithful sky pales and shivers
to bitter the water lily,
mooncasts our form and sounding
to write a score against dream-bare silence.

What else can I ask you to witness —
the clumsy seed of my lips?
The flushed quickening of my skin and pulse?
The frail scent and evidence of our last song,
a penitent whisper of a love tune,
hushing my brightness as I collapse
and, unreasonably, try to stop the dead
in this play of water —a limpid mirror
where I ask this drowning dream
to bless these roots, the ash of your bones,
take you back into the earth
that you may bloom tonight
as an iris in a field.



Róisín Ní Neachtain

Gaza (after listening to Ina Boyle *Elegy*), 2025

iPad using ProCreate

Take a closer look...



Click on the **magnifying glasses to take a closer look.**

You will be taken to a full screen silent video or still of the artwork.



We have deliberately left the video silent so you can add your own soundtrack (real or imaginary!) as you look.



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We hope you are inspired to explore further.

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