



Music Lovers' Field Companion

The Sage Gateshead
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Music Lovers' Field Companion

20/21/22 May 05

In an ever changing musical landscape, The Sage Gateshead presents a festival of performances from some of the most exhilarating and urgent underground musicians the world has to offer, artists who define genres, break moulds and inspire scenes; it's an exploration of the bold and exciting in new music and something we think you daren't miss.





Music Lovers' Field Companion

Keiji Haino

'The Secret of Music'

Vibracathedral Orchestra

My Cat Is An Alien

Kazuo Imai

Luc Ferrari & eRikm
Les ProtoRythmiques'

Takehisa Kosugi

Jandek

nmperign

Shuji Inaba

Kyoaku No Intention

Munehiro Narita / Shoji Hano

Tickets

Day pass: £11

Festival pass £26

More short performances, talks, screenings and informal events are being programmed all the time. Check the website www.musicloversfieldcompanion.org for updates. Times may be subject to change: please check with the Box Office or on the website for accurate timings nearer the event.

In 1954, composer John Cage (often perceived as the father of experimental music) was invited to write an article on music in an edition of the United States Lines Paris Review, primarily devoted to humour. In it he suggested that a lot could be learnt about music by looking at the other great passion in his life: the mushroom.

In particular, or at least most pertinently to this festival, he bemoaned the lack of guidance when surveying the ever expanding, potentially confusing genre of experimental music. If you were serious about mushrooms then the first thing you would reach for, when out for a Sunday afternoon picking, would be your trusty Field Companion to guide you towards the tastiest, non-toxic examples in the field. Why couldn't there be such a companion to music?

Although not offering anything quite as pompous as a complete guide to the outer reaches of experimentation in music today, this festival does humbly set out to offer a few cardinal points to both those deeply embedded in the scene and to those who might wish to take a risk and expand their horizons, to venture into the undergrowth. All the performances here are from genre defining, hugely important musicians, lions in their field. They may not necessarily be household names, but their influence reaches far into contemporary music.

If you already know half these names, then I'm guessing you've already got your ticket. If not, then I hope you can take a risk and cautiously gamble on a programme of works that many of your musical heroes would fall over themselves to attend. Either way, we're pretty sure that you'll walk away having witnessed some of the most thrilling, dramatic and charged performances in the UK this year.

Barry Esson
Festival Curator

The thrill of discovering music that is new or new to us, that blows us away and opens up whole new worlds of listening is a fantastic and stimulating experience. At The Sage Gateshead we are committed to creating opportunities that challenge our ears and offer insight into underground music scenes. With Music Lovers' Field Companion we hope you will come along to our beautiful new building with open ears, to hear some of the most prolific and pioneering performers and composers in international experimental music today and take away an experience that you are unlikely to forget!

Tamsin Austin
Performance Programme Manager
The Sage Gateshead

Thanks to: Bryony McIntyre, Alan Cummings, Motochika Kinoshita, Takako Okamoto, David Keenan, greystreethotel.

Music Lovers' Field Companion

20/21/22 May 05

Friday 20 May

19.30 Takehisa Kosugi
M CRO 1
Hall One

20.00 Keiji Haino
'The Secret of Music'
Hall Two

Saturday 21 May

16.00 'The Secret of Music' discussion
Northern Rock Foundation Hall

17.30 Vibracathedral Orchestra
Northern Rock Foundation Hall

18.45 My Cat Is An Alien
Hall Two

20.00 Kazuo Imai
Hall Two

21.15 Luc Ferrari & eRikm
Les ProtoRythmiques'
Hall Two

22.30 Takehisa Kosugi
Catch-Wave 05'
Hall Two

Sunday 22 May

17.30 Jandek
Hall Two

19.30 nmperign
Hall Two

20.45 Shuji Inaba
Hall Two

22.00 Kyoaku No Intention
Hall Two



Hall Two, 20.00

Kazuo Imai

Over the course of his thirty-year career Kazuo Imai has matured into one of the most arresting and unique improvisers in Japan creating an original and powerful body of free music. Principally working with guitar (both acoustic and electric) – although he also uses electronics and viola de gamba in performance – Imai creates music which displays a keen interest and empathy for both the textures of ethnic and avant-garde classical genres alongside an unparalleled schooling in free playing and improvisational techniques.

Starting in the mid 70s, Imai studied under the two giants of Japanese experimental music at that time, free jazz agitator Masayuki Takayanagi and fluxus agent provocateur Takehisa Kosugi

Famously Imai was the sole graduate from Takayanagi's exacting twelve years of tutelage, all other students falling by the way by the second term.

But it was twelve years well spent, as over the past decade Imai has produced a body of work that shows him to be an improviser of international importance. In particular his latest release on PSF Records sees him navigating his nylon string guitar through a whole realm of new possibilities. Under the attack of an extended battery of techniques it sings out a deep and emotional intensity born of tension and abstraction and far beyond the conception of most.

Hall Two, 21.15

Luc Ferrari & eRikm 'Les ProtoRythmiques'

Maverick composer Luc Ferrari is one of the most important and intriguing, idiosyncratic and crucial musical figures of the latter half of the twentieth century. His human and often humourous aesthetic continuing to inspire generations of contemporary composers.

Recognised as being one of the grand masters of concrete music alongside Pierre Schaeffer and Pierre Henry (although in contrast to his august peers, he has been described as "the only real artist among many excellent researchers") he also spearheaded the front line of artists who expanded *musique concrète* by stretching its boundaries beyond tape manipulation to include electronic and electro-acoustic music, field recordings and sounds of everyday life.

Governed by Ferrari's charm it's compelling musical world in which wit, sensuality, sound realism and a willingness to address social issues, and a love for good food are central and inspiring elements.

Constantly moving forward and having only recently started performing live, *Les ProtoRythmiques* sees Ferrari on piano and prepared electronics, throwing his hat in with turntable radical eRikm. A firebrand presence on the European improvising scene for the last decade eRikm has done much to expand the realms of what is possible in turntablism, often working large swathes of noise around a decidedly avant-garde technique that moves way beyond the glib quoting of references to create a style of composing in sound without referring to other works or falling back on exaggerated techniques and intellectual posturing.

Hall Two, 22.30

Takehisa Kosugi: 'Catch-Wave 05'

Kosugi is one of the most important sound artists and musicians Japan has produced in the past fifty years. In 1960 he co-founded Group Ongaku, the first improvising group of musicians to break cover in Japan, whose performances were pitched directly against conventional creativities of the time. His event pieces and performances merged into the New York Fluxus artists' movement in the late 60s before forming the inception of the Taj Maha Travellers, a loose collective of improvising jazzers and free rock pioneers, whose mind-bending slices of droning and ethereal improvisations are widely held as one of the key early evocations of the Japanese psychedelic rock scene.

That heritage is of course impressive, but it's the awe-inspiring physical experience of Kosugi's pieces that should encourage the wary to try to catch his performance here.

We're working with him to stage a new interpretation of *Catch-Wave*, his most famous piece. And it really is something to behold: a mind-expanding meditation on the relationships between invisible phenomena. As the performance starts, Kosugi's violin and vocals, processed through a battery of electronic devices, are slowly engulfed in a chasm of echo mediated by radio transmitters hung on wire that orbit over receivers, their gentle swaying motion setting off a cloud of fluctuating hypnotic drones, in front of a backdrop of projected waves. It can be a truly overwhelming experience, heightening your awareness of all that surrounds you. It's without doubt unlike anything you're likely to have seen or heard before.

Sunday 22 May

Hall Two, 17.30 Jandek

The work of Jandek is one of the most incomparable deeply personal and affecting bodies of music of all time, to date spanning forty albums since *Ready For The House* first altered perceptions in 1978. An often dark realisation of avant-blues and folk music, but one full of surprisingly vulnerable epiphanies, the genius that resides within this music can roughly be broken down if you study how an untutored and personal perspective is applied to each of the three key aspects of the music: guitar, voice and lyrics.

Stoically intuitive and self-taught, the guitar style remains, after nearly three decades, a barbed proposition. One minute maniacally grating at the strings, the next disconsolately bending them; it's an attack built up around deviant blues chord progressions that sporadically drift out of tune, only occasionally returning to recognisable melodies.

Vocally it's far beyond any recognised notions of tunefulness, ranging from a gaunt wisp to a black, anguished cry via an unmediated delivery that gives vent to the most base of human emotions. It's a melancholic, ghostly and desolate moan of a voice as haunted as any of the great blues singers, bent to a sometimes iron, sometimes faltering will, enunciating far-sighted yet personal visions of universal existential truths.

Lyrically the songs are full of allegorical fictions and metaphoric dramas, degenerate and oblique blues imagery, hallucinatory theology and corrupted childhood memories, coupled to allusions to killing time, being borne away on a river, pinning for lost love.

This is only the second ever live performance and the first to be advertised in advance.

Hall Two, 19.30

nmperign

The Boston duo of soprano saxophonist Bhabha Rainey and trumpeter Greg Kelley adopt an idiosyncratic and unique approach to the recordings. With an intensely physical determination to take their instruments beyond all obvious limits, Rainey and Kelley employ a slew of extended techniques to elicit a sound of refracted tones and pregnant silences that goes far beyond the reaches of free jazz or European improvisation. It's a beguiling, deep and physical sound full of drama that sucks you in closer to what can seem to be a calm centre only for the stillness to be pierced with pure shards of sound that cut like glass.

"The music of nmperign is filled with a screaming silence. Its quiet depth is totally enveloping, resensitising you to the slightest sound... nmperign rarely raise themselves to a whisper but when they do it sounds volcanic."

David Keenan, The Wire

Hall Two: 20.45

Shuji Inaba

Inaba is a dark and politically charged folk-singer and guitarist hailing from Shikoku Prefecture, a mountainous and rural region that borders Hiroshima in the Southwest corner of Japan. His stark and powerful lyrics are delivered in his native tongue but even without any understanding of the language they carry an emotional punch that needs no translation. Varying from almost inaudible whispers to guttural gulps and gasps, it can be a voice helpless in the face of emotion: anger, sadness and frequently regret pepper his serrated melodies. But it's not a morose music in it you'll find hope amongst the dark imagery.

His acoustic guitar follows a similar dynamic thrust to his vocals, with introspective silences shattered by savage jabs at the strings, whirlwind strums erupting before dying back down into tender and spartanly placed chords. It's a confrontational and somehow shamanic stance, but one that, if live recordings are anything to go by, is utterly compelling and mesmerising in the flesh.



Hall Two, 22.00
Kyoaku No Intention

Originally conceived in the early 80s as a duo project to stand alongside his legendary speed rock outfit High Rise, Munehiro Narita's Kyoaku No Intention (Worst Intentions) fired out some of the most compelling no-wave improvised rock of the time. Long dormant and with original recordings impossibly rare, few had the chance to hear the unit, until a couple of years back when Narita decided to team up with free jazz drummer Shôji Hano for a few shows around Tokyo.

And this new conception is a quite bewildering one, one that writhes and burns, Narita's distorted screaming guitar shooting out flattening, all-out Hendrix-style explosions, countered by Hano's tumbling jackhammer percussive flail.

It makes for some of the most brutal and thrilling rock you're likely to hear at the moment. This is their first ever show outside Japan.

Tickets

Day pass: £11

Festival pass: £26

Your pass guarantees you entry into all Hall Two events: Northern Rock Foundation Hall has a smaller capacity, so you will be able to drop in and out of the events in there as numbers allow.

Some single event stand-by tickets, priced at £6, may be available nearer the date of the performances.

Box Office

0191 443 4661

Open from 10am - 8pm,
Monday to Saturday and
from 10am - 6pm Sundays.

Payment can be made by Mastercard, Visa, Debit and Switch cards or by cheque. Cheques should be made payable to The Sage Gateshead and include your card number on the reverse.

Ticket Exchange and Resale

We are happy to exchange tickets for another performance (within three months) up to forty-eight hours prior to a performance, where possible.

We regret that no refunds can be given. Tickets returned for sold out performances will be resold whenever possible.

Collecting Tickets

When collecting pre-paid tickets please bring the credit card with which you paid for your ticket and appropriate identification.

Reserved, unpaid for tickets must be collected at least fifteen minutes before the start of the performance. In the case of sold out performances, uncollected tickets may be sold after that time.

Terms and Conditions

We reserve the right to refuse any ticket holder admission to a performance or event or to our building and auditoria.

The Sage Gateshead reserves the right to make adjustments and alter programmes, special offers and incentive rates at any time we deem appropriate.

Photography and any type of recording are strictly prohibited during performances.

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