

BOULEZ 90

NATIONAL SAWDUST

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Pascal Gallois & The International Contemporary Ensemble

November 17, 18, 19 & 21, 2015

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BOULEZ 90 / New Dialogues & Perspective I / Nov 17, 18, 19 & 21, 2015

NATIONAL SAWDUST
Brooklyn, NY

When ICE was a burgeoning collective based in Chicago, six years after hatching at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music in 1999, we were invited to play our first international festival in Morelia, Mexico. Our first night there, we attended an astounding solo concert of Pascal Gallois which included Luciano Berio's *Sequenza XII*—a piece written for Pascal and inspired by his limitless technique and imagination. Too shy to speak with him after the performance, we let that opportunity slip by us, and we simply admired him and his work from a distance for the next six years.

You can imagine our surprise when Pascal appeared on ICE's Facebook page a few years ago, commenting on performances he'd seen on DigitICE (our online video archive), offering encouraging remarks before concerts, and expressing enthusiasm for our advocacy efforts. You can also imagine our delight when he suggested collaborating on a project centering on the work of Boulez during his 90th birthday year, and on the “dialogues” between cultures, generations and aesthetic viewpoints that have emerged from this iconic, at times incendiary, but inarguably visionary figure in music history.

We have taken this opportunity, first in France and then in New York at National Sawdust - our new Brooklyn home for contemporary music - to craft programs that capture the power and beauty of Boulez's music through a series of New Dialogues. Using Boulez's playful masterpiece with electronics, *Dialogue de l'ombre double*, as a springboard, these programs introduce new works by Olga Neuwirth, George Lewis, Sabrina Schroeder, and Franck Bedrossian that inflect the vibrant landscape of voices in today's golden era of new music that Boulez set in motion a half-century ago. And in this week's closing concert, we put Boulez “en dialogue” with his closest musical compatriots from both sides of the Atlantic (Luigi Nono, Elliott Carter, and Karlheinz Stockhausen) at the height of their creative powers.

None of the dreams we indulged as adolescents at Oberlin would have even entered our minds without the intrepidity and the audacity of Pierre Boulez. Was it a coincidence that ICE is an anagram of EIC? In the words of Boulez himself, “Music is a labyrinth with no beginning and no end, full of new paths to discover, where mystery remains eternal.”

We are grateful to JazzBank, the French-American Cultural Exchange, National Sawdust, and most of all to Pascal for bringing this pulsating dialogue to life.

Claire Chase & Joshua Rubin, ICE co-artistic directors

I first began working with Pierre Boulez in 1981. As a composer and conductor, Boulez has been a profoundly influential figure in music history from as early as 1945. His impact on teaching, orchestral music, and cultural politics has been lasting and deep. Ever open to young musicians and composers, Boulez founded IRCAM (Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique) and the Ensemble Intercontemporain in the 1970s, two institutions which were subsequently imitated the world over. His celebrated artistic endeavours, spanning over seven decades, are unique in the history of music.

These four concerts at Brooklyn's National Sawdust, the culmination of a collaboration between the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE) and myself, will allow for a greater appreciation of Boulez's music through its presentation alongside the works of like-minded composers such as Elliott Carter (featured on the November 18th program), whom Boulez himself championed.

The concerts on November 17th and 19th will provide a welcome opportunity to confront a new generation of American composers whose members include Sabrina Schroeder and Mario Diaz de Leon. Each concert will open with a piece by Olga Neuwirth--a favorite composer of Boulez whose music he has performed and premiered extensively--written especially for this collaboration.

The final concert on November 21st will feature pieces by Luigi Nono and Karlheinz Stockhausen from the 1950s and will end with Boulez's *Le Marteau sans maître*. These three composers came to the forefront of contemporary music in the wake of the second world war at the Darmstadt International Summer Courses for New Music. Nono, Stockhausen, and Boulez came to represent what was then known as the "Darmstadt School" of which *Le Marteau* represents the pinnacle of its serialist style. The chaos wrought by Nazism gave rise to the "no compromise" attitude of that generation of European composers.

And last but not least, I must mention how much of a pleasure and honor it is for me to conduct and play with ICE. Their dynamism, energy and artistic achievements are quite exceptional. I am delighted to conclude this phase of our Boulez project, which commenced on the French Atlantic coast at Quiberon and then traveled to Paris, here in Brooklyn at National Sawdust.

Pascal Gallois

Tuesday, November 17, 2015
National Sawdust, Brooklyn, NY.

7pm

Olga Neuwirth (1968)

new piece (premiere)

for two bassoons

Pierre Boulez (1925)

Dialogue de l'ombre double

clarinet & electronics

George Lewis (1952)

Emergent

flute & electronics

Pierre Boulez (1925)

Dialogue de l'ombre double

bassoon & electronics

Claire Chase : flute
Pascal Gallois : bassoon
Rebekah Heller : bassoon
Joshua Rubin : clarinet

Wednesday, November 18, 2015
National Sawdust, Brooklyn, NY.

9:30pm

Olga Neuwirth (1968)

new piece (premiere)

for two bassoons

Pierre Boulez (1925)

Incises

piano

Elliott Carter (1908-2012)

Two diversions

piano

Pierre Boulez (1925)

Dialogue de l'ombre double

bassoon & electronics

Pierre Boulez (1925)

Sonate #2

piano

Elliott Carter (1908-2012)

Two thoughts about piano

piano

Pascal Gallois : bassoon

Rebekah Heller : bassoon

Dimitri Vassilakis : piano

Thursday, November 19, 2015
National Sawdust, Brooklyn, NY.

9:30pm

Olga Neuwirth (1968)

new piece (premiere)

for two bassoons

Sabrina Schroeder (1979)

new piece (premiere)

bass clarinet & electronics

Franck Bedrossian (1971)

Transmission

bassoon & electronics

Maria Diaz de Leon (1979)

The Soul is the Arena

Bass clarinet & electronics

Pierre Boulez (1925)

Dialogue de l'ombre double

bassoon & electronics

Pascal Gallois : bassoon

Rebekah Heller : bassoon

Joshua Rubin : clarinet



Saturday, November 21, 2015
National Sawdust, Brooklyn, NY.

8pm

Luigi Nono (1924-1990)
Polifonica-Monodica-Ritmica
for six instruments and percussion

Karlheinz Stockhausen (1928-2007)
Kontra-punkte
for ten instruments

Pierre Boulez (1925)
Eclat
for fifteen instruments

Pierre Boulez (1925)
Le Marteau sans maître
for ensemble & mezzo soprano

International Contemporary Ensemble

Pascal Gallois : conductor
Katalin Károlyi : mezzo soprano

www.concerts-boulez90.com

www.pascalgallois.com

www.iceorg.org



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