



Our Place in Space and Dumbworld present

CONSTELLATIONS of NOISE

The Court House, Bangor
25 & 26 March 2023

CONSTELLATIONS of NOISE

**"Lying on our backs,
we look up at the night sky.
This is where stories began."**

— John Berger

The Constellations of Noise showcase is the culmination of a year-long programme of artistic intervention across Northern Ireland, delivered by Dumbworld as part of the Our Place in Space music programme.

Eight musicians worked with a range of communities to create a wildly diverse, cosmos-crossing set of sound and visual experiences. Traditional music, opera, free-form improvisation, stories, film, song, extraterrestrial radio, poetry, theatre, and illustration have collided for this unique spectacle.

The artists join a long line of scientists, storytellers, inventors and prophets in a moment of looking and reflection to find their own unique perspective and starting point. Each assembled a group of travelling companions to accompany them in this moment of exploration and creation.

The result is a series of out-of-this-world collaborations between the artists and people from all reaches of Northern Ireland.

For one weekend only, journey through the cosmos as you navigate your way through The Court House, taking in alien language radio stations, immersive sculpture and audio installations, film screenings, interactive operetta, and live music performances. ✨

Constellations of Noise invites the curious, the stargazers, the night sky watchers and the earth dwellers to experience eight unique journeys in sound and vision.

ARTISTS

Aidan O'Rourke, Áine Mallon, Dee Isaacs, Jamie Thompson, Rory Friers, Rose Connolly, Steve Davis, Una Monaghan.

COLLABORATORS

Aine Gordon, Aine McMenamin, Amanda Koser, Amanda St John, Amy Ni Fhearraigh, Arco String Quartet, Barry Lynn, Becky Manson, Byddi Lee, Cahal Masterson, Conan McIvor, Connor Cupples, David Edmonds, Eileen Winter, Emily DeDakis, Fiona Ni Mhearin, Ian Dodds, Kelli Ann Masterson, Kevin McCullagh, Kerry Bryson, Marwan Mousa, Matt Bourne, Michael Keeney, Noirin McAlastair, Peadar Gill, Ross McClean, Shahed Mzaiek, Shane Latimer, Sian Hetherington, Viola Migone, Zain Cruikshank.

PARTICIPANTS

Armagh Writers, Abeer Asaad, Adam Hazeno, Ahmad Soda, Ali Soda, An Gaeláras - Culturlann Derry, Ballyholme Primary School, Engage with Age Belfast, Glendun Nursing Home, Hasnaa Ramadan, Lareen Soda, Maya Soda, Mazen Hazeno, Muhammed Amir Soda, Newtownbutler Comhaltas, NIUFO, Renad Soda, Shahed Muzaik, Strabane Brass Band, The Arts Academy Strabane.

Constellations of Noise is part of Our Place in Space, a year-long STEAM project centred around an epic scale model of the solar system by artist Oliver Jeffers.

LED BY



CREATIVE TEAM



TAUNT



LOCATION PARTNERS



FUNDED BY



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RUNNING ORDER

View the installations, enjoy a film screening or listen to some live music
— **all for free.**

SATURDAY 25 MARCH

| LOCATION | ARTWORK | MEDIUM | TIME |
|------------------|---|---|--|
| Open Arms Bar | <i>Home</i> by Rory Friers | Film and audio installation | 11am–6.30pm |
| Courtyard | <i>Cosmic Earworms</i> by Jamie Thompson | Extraterrestrial audio installation | 11am–6.30pm |
| Courtyard | <i>Léag láimhe ar an úir</i> by Rose Connolly | Sensory deprivation audio installation | 11am–6.30pm |
| Upstairs Kitchen | <i>Pendulum</i> by Una Monaghan | Sound installation with visuals and sculpture | 11am–12.30pm and 2pm–3.15pm |
| Upstairs Bar | <i>The Sky Has No Borders</i> by Dee Isaacs | Film and sound installation | 12.30pm–2pm and 3.15pm–6.30pm |
| Live Room | <i>They Made the Earth Stand Still</i> by Aidan O'Rourke | Immersive film and sound installation | 11am, 11.30am, 12pm, 2.15pm and 2.45pm |
| | <i>Carbon Women</i> by Áine Mallon* | Interactive, live operetta | 1.15pm–2pm and 4pm–4.45pm |
| | <i>Levitate</i> by Steve Davis | Live improv performance | 5.15pm–6.30pm |
| Live Room | An evening of music hosted by Dumbworld* | | |
| | Rois (Rose Connolly & band) | Live performance | 8.30pm–9.15pm |
| | Steve Davis & Shane Latimer | Live performance | 9.35pm–10.10pm |
| | Aidan O'Rourke & Brighde Chaimbeul | Live performance | 10.15pm–11pm |

*Please note performances by Áine Mallon and the evening of music are ticketed events. Additional free spaces may be available to the public. Please speak to a member of staff.



SUNDAY 26 MARCH

| LOCATION | ARTWORK | MEDIUM | TIME |
|------------------|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| Open Arms Bar | <i>Home</i> by Rory Friers | Film and audio installation | 11am–4.45pm |
| Courtyard | <i>Cosmic Earworms</i> by Jamie Thompson | Extraterrestrial audio installation | 11am–4.45pm |
| Courtyard | <i>Léag láimhe ar an úir</i> by Rose Connolly | Sensory deprivation audio installation | 11am–4.45pm |
| Upstairs Kitchen | <i>Pendulum</i> by Una Monaghan | Sound installation with visuals and sculpture | 11am–12.30pm and 2.15pm–3.30pm |
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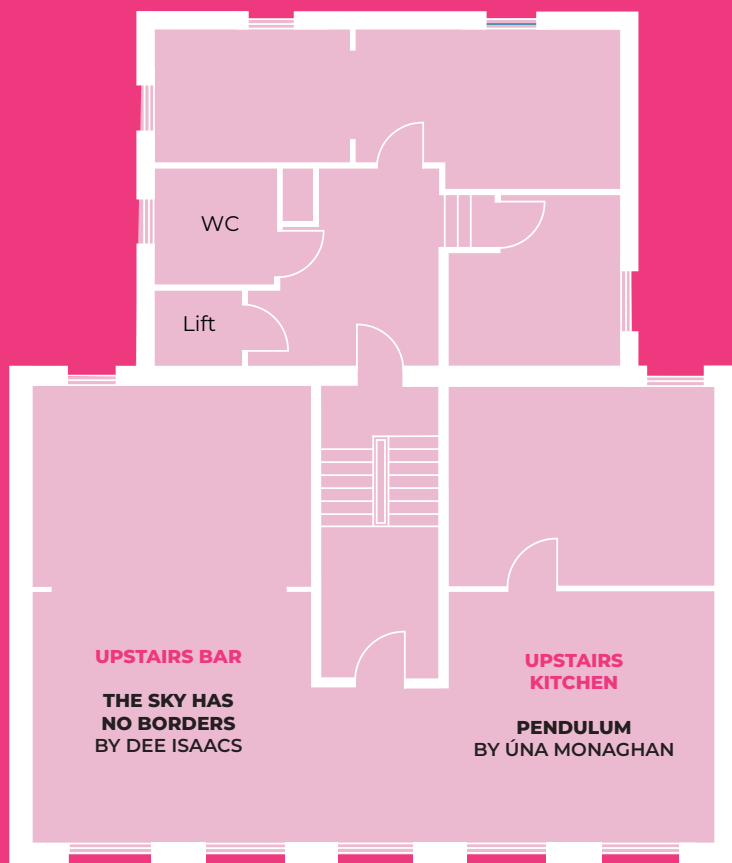
*Please note Áine Mallon's performances are ticketed.
Additional free spaces may be available to the public. Please speak to a member of staff.



GROUND FLOOR



UPSTAIRS



They Made the Sun Stand Still

Aidan O'Rourke

(in collaboration with
Becky Mason and Barry Lynn)

An immersive film and sound installation. Sound experience created and composed by Aidan O'Rourke and Barry Lynn, film by Becky Manson.

The catalyst was a New York Times headline: *'They Are Not Alone: U.F.O. Reports Surged in the Pandemic'*. Many of us looked to the sky in new ways during lockdown — we were all after answers, after all. I spent time with Janice and Chris from the Northern Ireland UFO Society and listened to their stories.

There's something older here, too — a supernatural race called Tuatha De Dannan supposedly came to Ireland in 'flying ships' surrounded by 'dark clouds'. Their 'great god', Dagda, had an ability to manipulate time by shifting the movement of the sun — to 'make the sun stand still'.

I wanted the film to draw a line between neolithic mystic beliefs and contemporary ones, so I asked filmmaker Becky Manson to weave her magic. I worked with young musicians in Derry to make a mysterious, contemplative soundworld, and a serendipitous meeting with Barry — an astrophysicist/electronic music whizz at the Dark Skies Observatory — guided the project into new spheres.

ABOUT AIDAN

Fiddler/composer Aidan O'Rourke has roots in Scottish and Irish music but tends to roam the edges of both traditions. His trio Lau came together in 2006 and ventured a new sound in progressive, politically-charged folk music. His duo with pianist Kit Downes formed in 2016 and developed the epic tune-cycle 365. Aidan performs with piper Brighde Chaimbeul and produced her debut album, *The Reeling*. In 2022, he wrote music for *Macro* — a multi-genre spectacle which opened the Adelaide and Edinburgh International Festivals. Aidan teaches at Ulster University where he is a PhD researcher in composition.



Carbon Women

Áine Mallon

ABOUT ÁINE

Áine Mallon is an award winning, Irish-born composer. Her music engages with the fundamental human experience of storytelling and has been described as “traditional yet fresh and new”. She is quickly making a name for herself as a sought after composer of both Irish folk and contemporary classical music. Recent commissions saw her work with world-class ensembles and soloists such as the ORA Singers, Chamber Choir Ireland, Psappha and Michael McHale. She was selected as the Contemporary Music Centre of Ireland Emerging Composer 2020/2021; and was the winner of the 2019 ORA Singers Composer competition and audience prize.



Interactive, live operetta. A classic Greek myth is re-written in the stars. Composed by Áine Mallon, written by Emily Dedakis and Áine Mallon. The audience directs the action by choosing outcomes for Andromeda and Cassiopeia.

During this short, live ‘Choose-Your-Own-Adventure-Operetta’, the audience has the power to change the stories of our Carbon Women. This is the story of Cassiopeia and Andromeda and how they came to be star constellations. It’s one of countless archetypes with similar solidified gender roles; ‘wicked’ mothers who wrong their offspring, ‘innocent, helpless’ daughters, and ‘heroic men’ — who always save the day.

The women, always incredibly beautiful, are valued for little else, and have no agency over their own lives. In this operatic retelling of the story, the audience takes responsibility, making choices for Cassiopeia and Andromeda depending on what they want to see happen.

Soprano, cello and piano conspire to play out the audience’s choices with commissioned illustrations by artist Áine Gordon. This journey began with a group of writers in Armagh gathered together by author Byddi Lee. They sowed the creative seeds of revolution to retell a classic Greek myth held in the stars.

The Sky Has No Borders

Dee Isaacs

A reflection of journeys, resilience, loss and belonging. Featuring four cello pieces composed by Dee Isaacs and a large painted mural of 'Cetus' — The Whale.

I was lucky enough to work with two Syrian families living in Craigavon in the summer of 2022. We did not really know what we were trying to create together although I had learned an old Arabic song — *Lama Bada Yatathana*. They laughed and joined in when I played it on the cello and sang in Arabic.

The music became an intermingling of this traditional tune with my own compositions and I hope it reflects the richness of Syrian culture.

We painted the big Cetus mural to represent the courage that is necessary to survive leaving your homeland. The painting is inscribed with Arabic poetry and images of Syria.

I wanted our music and Ian's film to reflect the journeys somehow, and to capture this spirit of resilience. All members of the families took part. They are exceptional people, as you will see.

ABOUT DEE

Dee is a composer and cellist. She is senior lecturer in Music in the Community at the University of Edinburgh where she has established a city-wide outreach programme for music students. Dee is passionate about the creation of music and its wider value. In 2012 she was awarded the Principal's Medal by the University of Edinburgh for her work in music education and within communities both near and far. She studied composition with Professor Nigel Osborne. Although Dee trained as a classical cellist and pianist, her composition is always inspired by the richness of other musical cultures and very much influenced by the people she has met along the way.



Cosmic Earworms

Jamie Thompson

ABOUT JAMIE

Jamie Thompson is a composer and musician based in Belfast. Currently working under the name Adjunct Ensemble (previously James Joys), his polyglottal approach encompasses choral works, electroacoustics, entropic experimental dance music, improvisation, and exploratory jazz-adjacent work. In April 2023, he will release *Sovereign Bodies/Ritual Taxonomy* on Diatribe Records, a large-scale work for turntablist, operatic soprano, spoken word poet, jazz-punk trio, and electronics. Jamie is also one half of avant-pop crooners Ex-Isles, who will release their second album *Domestic Sacraments* in late 2023.

Inside an extra-terrestrial receiver craft that has landed on earth, alien language stations are being beamed through the cosmos to the space ship's transmitters. Step aboard and tune in to cosmic earworms.

I collaborated with 90 school children from Ballyholme Primary School to develop eight languages that imagined what aliens from each planet in our solar system might speak/sound like.

Eight cosmic earworms were written based on these texts and some recordings of the children performing on modified instruments and their voices.

Listen to each planetary broadcast by climbing aboard our travelling extraterrestrial receiver craft and scan our cosmic neighbourhood for other-worldly sound and music by our superterrestrial community.



Home

Rory Friers

As film is projected onto a scale model of Glendun Nursing Home, voices and music merge in a composition that considers human perspective, stories and songs, and the concept of 'home'.

Over a six-month period in 2022, Rory spent time with the residents of Glendun care home in Cushendun. During these visits he collected hours of audio recordings, conversations and interactions with the people whose lives share the space: the residents, the staff, the visitors.

It was these recordings that formed a scrapbook of sounds on which Rory composed a score for string quartet, piano and guitar. An attempt to collaborate with new friendships made, their past and their future, their stories and their songs. Where is home and when are we there?

Playing with scale and perspective, this sound and video installation is centred around a scale model of the care home itself, built especially for the piece.

ABOUT RORY

Rory is a composer, producer and multi-instrumentalist best known for his film score work and as songwriter in award-winning experimental rock band And So I Watch You From Afar (ASIWFYA). He composed music for short films before scoring his first feature length movie, *The Cured* (Elliot Page) in 2017. He has created the multi disciplinary long-form ensemble piece *Jettison* — a 60 minute long live work for eight musicians and string quartet with accompanying visuals by renowned video artist Sam Wehl (Mogwai/Actress). His latest project is sound and video installation *All Together; All Alone* which was commissioned by the NI Science Festival.



Léag láimhe ar an úir (Touch the earth)

Rose Connolly

ABOUT ROSE

Composer, performer and multi-instrumentalist Rose Connolly was born in County Fermanagh. Her unique sound is an idiosyncratic combination of modernist/contemporary music with inflections of Irish traditional music, folk and jazz. As a composer, her body of work includes large-scale and small-scale ensemble work, electro-acoustic, short film/multi-media works and installation audio-visual work also. In 2020 Rose won the Finding A Voice Composition Competition for Emerging Women Composers. Rose also recently received the Young Musicians Platform award NI in which she received a sizable grant to record an album which will be released in March 2023.



In small pods, the elements of earth — ancient remnants from our universe — form a sensory, immersive sound installation. Sensory deprivation heightens touch and sound as the soundtrack of Léag láimhe ar an úir fills the space.

This process began some time ago as a series of collaborative sessions with musicians, creatives, stargazers and people from my community in Newtownbutler in County Fermanagh.

Together, we explored elements of the earth, sky, universe and solar system. Water and rock. Soil and dust. Meanings that the elements held for us, our understanding and beliefs of where they and we began, and ways in which language held layered meaning.

Small words, especially in the Irish language, could be such powerful signifiers of philosophical and spiritual complexity. A universe of small things, so deeply meaningful to be almost outside our minds' ability to grasp it.

Our visualisations of the work shifted and moved many times, while its pure meaning remained unchanged. The final piece is the outcome of the original concept of many minds refined and redefined through a creative process.

Levitate

Steve Davis

Led by composer Steve Davis, young musicians from Strabane perform *Levitate*, playing and improvising with professional musicians.

I have written music inspired by star constellations. The music has been workshopped and performed with a group of young musicians plus some professionals. The musicians helped shape the compositions within the rehearsals process.

As a composer I am interested in improvisation within composition and have really enjoyed working with this group.

The music they have produced with me reflects these ideas of star constellations and space. I wanted the music to have a weightless feel to it and I think we got close to this.

ABOUT STEVE

Belfast-based drummer Stephen (DAKIZ) Davis mainly plays jazz and improvised music. He is the drummer in Anthony Braxton group The New Standard, and active in the UK and European improvised/creative music scenes. As well as Braxton, he has worked with Mark Ribot, Evan Parker, Ralph Alessi, Kris Davis, Alexander Hawkins, John Taylor, Rufus Reid, Paul Dunmall, Django Bates, Van Morrison, Matthew Bourne and many others. He is a composer and has his own projects published on Babel Label London as well as Intakt records Switzerland. Steve is an assistant lecturer at Queen's University, Belfast. For the best part of a decade, Davis has been one third of heavyweight UK free-jazz trio, Bourne Davis Kane, alongside pianist Matthew Bourne and double-bassist Dave Kane, releasing several highly regarded CDs including collaborations with veteran British saxophonist Paul Dunmall. He also leads the quartet, Human, featuring Alexander Hawkins, Alex Bonney and Dylan Bates, which released a debut album, *Being Human*, on Babel in 2013.



Pendulum

ABOUT ÚNA

Úna Monaghan is a harper, composer, researcher and sound artist from Belfast. She collaborates, improvises and performs with poets, visual artists, computers, writers, musicians and others. Úna has held artist residencies at the Centre Culturel Irlandais Paris, the Institute for the Public Life of Arts and Ideas Montréal, and Atlantic Music Festival, Maine, USA. Úna also works as a sound engineer specialising in Irish traditional music, and experimental, live electronic and multichannel music. In 2019 she received the inaugural Liam O'Flynn Award from the Arts Council of Ireland and the National Concert Hall Dublin, and in 2020 a BAN BAM award from Moving On Music and Improvised Music Company. Her new album *Aonaracht*, for solo traditional musicians and electronics, was released in January 2023.



Úna Monaghan

(In collaboration with
Conan McIvor and Nóirín Nic Alastair)

Sound installation with visuals and sculpture. Reflective, quiet audio installation — tiny sounds, overlapping artworks and fragmented voices.

“Nobody actually talks about afterwards.”

This installation started out as a series of conversations with older people from Engage With Age (Belfast) about disaster. And ended up as a space to listen to and think about big questions of danger, ageing, communication, technology, inner and outer worlds, space, climate, resources, time, pandemics, and war.

If we move from one position or condition to the opposite extreme, do we come back again?

An audio installation that tries to take one small step — through tiny sounds, overlapping artworks and fragmented voices — towards working out what we can do individually about the scary questions. How to practically respond, and how to stay in touch with others as we do it.

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OUR PLACE
IN SPACE
OLIVER JEFFERS

DUMB
WORLD