SATURDAY 12 JULY

REICH
REPETITIONS
COLIN
CURRIE
GROUP

BOLD TENDENCIES

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SATURDAY 12 JULY at 7.30PM

REICH REPETITIONS
Colin Currie Group

“I aspire that my music will have the legs to survive whatever context it finds itself in.”
– Steve Reich

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COLIN CURRIE GROUP

Percussion and Keys

Colin Currie

Percussion

Owen Gunnell
Sam Walton
Aidy Spillett
Catherine Ring
George Barton
Matt Farthing
Iris van den Bos

Singers

Ali Ponsford-Hill
Katy Hill
Midge Parry

Sound Engineer

Ian Dearden

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PROGRAMME

Steve Reich
Music For Pieces of Wood
for five pairs of tuned claves
(1973)

Steve Reich
Music For Mallet Instruments Voices And Organ
(1973)

Steve Reich
Six Marimbas
(1986)

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Some 19 years ago, before the beginning of Bold Tendencies, the BBC Proms staged ‘Steve Reich at Seventy’ – an ode to the great American composer’s work, life, and seventh-decade; featuring Proms premieres of some of Reich’s most iconic works. The programme’s closer, *Drumming* (1971), was presented by the then-newly formed Colin Currie Group – handpicked especially for the occasion, by its leader and namesake.

First encountering Reich’s music as a teenager, Currie – ‘the world’s finest and most daring percussionist’ (*The Spectator*) – has dedicated much of his musical career to the investigation of the former’s oeuvre. Since their assembly nearly two decades ago, the Colin Currie Group has performed Reich’s music around the world. Their association with the composer himself followed Reich's attendance of a performance of *Drumming* at London’s Southbank Centre in 2011, heralding the start of a rewarding and supportive artistic relationship between Currie and Reich.

There are few composers better suited to the theme of Déjà Vu, with Reich’s pioneering brand of minimalism defined by the deployment of canonic rhythms, successive patterns, and repetitive figures. Indeed, in a double déjà vu, Steve Reich is no stranger to this carpark – his work has been performed here on a number of occasions, including a performance of *Music for a Large Ensemble* by the Multi-Story Orchestra in 2016, as part of the first BBC Prom outside the Royal Albert Hall. For Reich, music is a system of gradation; he is interested in “perceptible processes” that happen “throughout the sounding music”. The Colin Currie Group upholds the centrality of musical restatement in their presentation of this programme ‘Reich Repetitions’: spanning Reich’s early investigations into phase shifting, his mid-career interrogation of augmentation and psychoacoustics, and his later forays into formal counterpoint and functional harmony.

The marimba plays a central role in *Music for Mallet Instruments, Voices and Organ* (1973) – a piece that grows spontaneously from one simple marimba pattern, to many patterns played by different instruments. Dealing with two simultaneous, interrelated rhythmic

processes, the work is fast moving and rippling; the rhythmic constructions of the percussion instruments are complimented and imitated by three female voices. By contrast, *Music for Pieces of Wood* (1973) is remarkably under-orchestrated: played by only five parts of tuned claves, the work's core impetus reflects Reich's seeking to make music with the simplest possible instruments. Though Reich's score specifies the physical arrangement of the players, and features precisely notated bars, it is up to individual ensembles to determine the character and duration of the piece – the score instructs musicians to repeat each bar 'approximately' the number of times indicated.

The structure for *Music for Pieces of Wood* is based entirely on the process of rhythmic 'build ups'; so too does *Six Marimbas* stack eight-beat rhythmic patterns to create an 'overall contrapuntal web' (Steve Reich). Characterised by pure, luscious tones, the work bears the inspiration of African drumming and gamelan music. Hugely influential on the development of repetitive music, *Six Marimbas* is a valid precursor of ambient and techno music.

Evocative without falling into the realm of the sentimental, pattern, melody and pulse come together within this specially curated programme in powerful expression. Traversing Reich's early investigations into phase shifting, mid-career interrogations of augmentation and psychoacoustics, and grand, hypnotic later works with formal counterpoint and functional harmony, the programme foregrounds works such as *Different Trains* (1988), the multimedia opera *The Cave* (1993), and the collage of cosmopolitan sound *City Life* (1995). Stripping away long, unfolding melodies and complex harmonies in favour of minimal beats, rhythms and pulses, the Colin Currie Group brings to life Reich's rich layering of sound, creating a glimmering musical tapestry within the rigorous dimensions of the present day concrete building.

Steve Reich has been called 'the most original musical thinker of our time' (*The New Yorker*) and 'among the great composers of the century' (*The New York Times*). Starting in the 1960s, his pieces *It's Gonna Rain, Drumming, Music for 18 Musicians, Tehillim, Different Trains*, and many others helped shift the aesthetic center of musical composition worldwide away from extreme complexity and towards rethinking pulsation and tonal attraction in new ways. He continues to influence younger generations of composers and mainstream musicians and artists all over the world.

Reich's many accolades include winning the 2009 Pulitzer Prize for *Double Sextet*, as well as GRAMMY Awards for *Different Trains*, *Music for 18 Musicians*, and an album of his percussion works. One of the most frequently choreographed composers, the several noted choreographers that have created dances to his music include Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker, Wayne McGregor and Benjamin Millepied.

Reich's documentary video opera works—*The Cave* and *Three Tales*, done in collaboration with video artist Beryl Korot—opened new directions for music theatre and have been performed on four continents. His work *Quartet* for percussionist Colin Currie sold out two consecutive concerts at London's Queen Elizabeth Hall, shortly after tens of thousands at the Glastonbury Festival heard Radiohead's Jonny Greenwood perform *Electric Counterpoint*, and followed by the London Sinfonietta performing his *Music for 18 Musicians.*

Colin Currie Group is a virtuosic ensemble that specialises in the music of Steve Reich. The hand-picked ensemble was formed in 2006 for a performance of *Drumming* at the BBC Proms. In the subsequent decade, the Colin Currie Group has performed *Drumming* around the world. They have expanded their repertoire to include many of Reich's most popular works, including *Music for 18 Musicians, Sextet, Tehillim and Music for Pieces of Wood*, and are privileged to have frequently had the composer present when rehearsing and performing these works.

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UPCOMING LIVE EVENTS

Fri 18 July at 7.30pm
J S Bach Keyboard Music
James McVinnie

Thurs 31 July at 7.30pm
J Dilla — Donuts
with Fraser T Smith, Yomi Sode & more

Thurs 7 & Fri 8 August at 7pm
Multi-Story Orchestra
Love in Many Forms

Weds 13 August at 7.30pm
Listen World! Thomas Mann & New Tomorrows
Nikolaj Schultz, Charlie Fox, Mohsen Mohamed & more

From Weds 13 August
The Listening Room — Susan Sontag

Fri 15 & Sat 16 August at 7.30pm
Eve Stainton
The Joystick and The Reins (World Premiere)

Sat 30 August at 7.30pm
London Symphony Orchestra
Music by Grażyna Bacewicz, Sally Beamish, Tchaikovsky & Caroline Shaw

Weds 3 September at 7.30pm
J S Bach Complete Cello Suites
Sheku Kanneh-Mason & Sæunn Thorsteindottír

Fri 5 September at 7.30pm
Switched-On Bach
Virtuoso Electronic Performances of Wendy Carlos
James McVinnie Ensemble

Sun 7 September at 7pm
J S Bach Goldberg Variations
Jean Rondeau Harpsichord

Sat 13 September at 7pm
Rachmaninoff —The Complete Piano Concertos
Philharmonia Orchestra, soloists Ryan Wang, Jeneba Kanneh-Mason, Boris Giltburg, Junyan Chen
conducted by Charlotte Corderoy

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Thurs 18 & Fri 19 September
at 7.30pm
Oliver Leith
Garland (World Premiere)
performed by 12 Ensemble &
orchestra, GBSR Duo, EXAUDI,
Musarc, soprano Patricia
Auchterlonie, & the massed
voices of the Bold Chorus led
by Oli Kitching
conducted by Naomi Woo &
Jack Sheen with choral refrains
written by Charlie Fox

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Bold Tendencies is a not-for-profit arts organisation established in the rooftop spaces of Peckham's Multi-Storey Car Park in 2007. It has transformed a disused building in the heart of South London into an iconic, much-loved place of culture and assembly with spectacular views out over the city and pioneering architecture project Frank's Cafe. Supporting a new generation of creative voices alongside acclaimed international artists, it delivers an ambitious annual programme of Visual Arts, Creative Learning and Live Events open to the public, offering access, participation and enjoyment of the arts for everyone.

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Oliver Leith Commissioning Circle
John & Emma Donnelly
Brian Boylan
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