

## Dunedin Consort and Sean Shibe

Sean Shibe *guitars*

Dunedin Consort

John Butt *director*

Pittville Pump Room

Thursday 11 July

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Various	Straloch and Rowallan Scottish lute manuscripts	8'
John Dowland	'Lacrimae antiquae' from <i>Lachrimae</i>	4'
Henry Purcell	Fantasia No.7 in four parts	4'
Henry Purcell	In Nomine in seven parts	3'
Francesco Geminiani	'The Last Time I Came O'er the Moor' from <i>A Treatise of Good Taste in the Art of Musick</i>	5'
James MacMillan (arr. George Duthie)	From Galloway	8'
David Fennessy	Excerpts from Rosewoods	5'
Linda Catlin Smith	Sinfonia	10'
Cassandra Miller	Chanter (Cheltenham Music Festival co-commission)	20'

### About the Programme

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#### Cassandra Miller 'Chanter'

Cassandra Miller explains... "One afternoon, guitarist Sean Shibe visited my apartment and sang along to the music of Scottish smallpipes player Brighde Chaimbeul. I recorded his singing, and layered his voice many times on itself – he then sang along to his own recorded voice again and again, reclining on the sofa, until he was somewhere between sleep and song: sleep-chanting.

The chanter is the part of the bagpipes on which one plays the melody. The smallpipes chanter is played with many evocative and heartbreaking ornaments – my favourite is the finger vibrato: waving the finger in the air to make what we might call a 'timbral trill', drawing attention (as moth-wings to light) to that moment (or flight-path) of the melodic line.

I've taken the sleep-recording of Sean, and I accurately transcribed his sighing to form the skeletal architecture for the guitar part of this concerto. I returned also to the recorded performance of Brighde, stealing the original ornaments, and exploring how these could inspire the guitar to warble-ripple in its own resonance.

I give immense gratitude to Brighde for her music, and for the permission for me to work in this way. Specifically, the source melody is Brighde's live performance of O Chiadain an Lo, as recorded in Sligachan on the Isle of Skye. Although this tune (a North Highland Air) is found in the Patrick McDonald collection of 1784, Brighde arranged it for the small-pipes and transposed it into the Dorian mode – and in her hands, the melody is breathtaking. This concerto, Chanter, is quite far from her melody, having been transformed into something new – but without her work, nothing of

this concerto would exist. In honour of this fact, small truth-window moments of her melody can be heard in the string ensemble, as occasional shafts of richly-coloured light.

The result of all this is a warbling, folk-like, sighing mantra, repeated by the guitar until we reach a dreamlike landscape – all the while carried by the string ensemble's rippling, lulling, rocking – in four verses and coda, played continuously:

*Verse 1: Rippling Sea*

*Verse 2: Bellowing*

*Verse 3: Sleep-chanting*

*Verse 4: Slowing Air*

*Coda: Skye-dreaming*

## Artist Biographies

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### Sean Shibe *guitars*

A former BBC New Generation Artist, Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship 2012 winner, Royal Philharmonic Society 2018 Young Artist Award winner and recipient of the 2022 Leonard Bernstein Award, Sean Shibe continues to prove himself a truly original mind at the frontier of contemporary classical music. This season sees him premiere new concertos by Cassandra Miller and Oliver Leith, as well as tour Thomas Adès's first work for a non-keyboard solo instrument. He also appears in recital at iconic venues across Europe including Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Philharmonie de Paris, Konzerthaus Wien and Wigmore Hall as he takes up the title of ECHO Rising Star. Further highlights comprise a US tour with tenor Karim Sulayman, performances with mezzo-soprano Ema Nikolovska, and the UK premiere of Francisco Coll's Turia, for guitar and large orchestra with Delyana Lazorova and BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra.

Ever keen to explore new cooperative dynamics, Shibe regularly collaborates with soloists and ensembles alike. In recent years, he has worked with the Hallé, National Youth Orchestra of Scotland, BBC Singers, Manchester Collective, Dunedin Consort, Quatuor Van Kujik, Danish String Quartet, LUDWIG, Krzysztof Urbański, Christoph Eschenbach, Taavi Oramo, Catherine Larsen-Maguire, flautist Adam Walker, singers Allan Clayton, Ben Johnson, Robert Murray, Robin Tritschler and performance artist Marina Abramović.

Shibe is an ardent supporter of contemporary music, regularly taking a hands-on approach to new commissions and programmes and working with composers to experiment with and expand the guitar repertoire. Premieres to date include works by Daniel Kidane, David Fennessy, Shiva Feshareki, David Lang, Julia Wolfe, Freya Waley-Cohen and Sasha Scott. He is equally committed to traditional repertoire, regularly pairing bold, new pieces with his own transcriptions of J.S. Bach's lute suites and seventeenth-century Scottish lute manuscripts.

Born in Edinburgh in 1992, Shibe studied at Royal Conservatoire of Scotland under Allan Neave. He studied further at Kunst-Universität Graz in Austria, in Italy under Paolo Pegoraro, and is now a Guitar Professor at Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

### Dunedin Consort

Dunedin Consort is one of the world's leading Baroque ensembles, recognised for its vivid and insightful performances and recordings. Formed in 1995 and named after Din Eidyn, the ancient Celtic name for Edinburgh Castle, Dunedin Consort's ambition is to allow listeners to hear early music afresh, and to couple an inquisitive approach to historical performance with a commitment to commissioning and performing new music. Under the direction of John Butt, the ensemble has earned two coveted Gramophone Awards, a BBC Music Magazine Award, and a Grammy nomination. In 2021 it was the recipient of the Royal Philharmonic Society Ensemble Award.

Dunedin Consort performs regularly at major festivals and venues across the UK and abroad, and enjoys close associations with the BBC Proms, Wigmore Hall, Edinburgh International Festival and Lammermuir Festival. Dunedin Consort is also committed to a wide-ranging education programme both in schools and in the wider community. In inspiring and encouraging musical participation, developing vocal skills and fostering a love of classical music, historical performance and new music, Dunedin Consort aims to develop and nurture its potential audience and to encourage the performers of the future.