

# SONIC VIGIL<sub>2</sub>

It might seem odd to inquire about the conventions of an improvised music performance but the notion struck me while attending a recent performance of electronic and improvised music. After all of the individual performances the musicians assembled collectively to perform as a group. A base rhythm was laid out by one of the laptop musicians and everyone else contributed their own layers to it. Both sonically and as a spectacle it was a rousing end to the occasion but with the definite beat pinning everything down it was clear that the performance had taken on the dynamic of a conventional rock or electronic gig.

Despite the unconventional nature of some of the instruments used the music was propelled by a standard groove.

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Recognisable chord progressions and riffs abounded. Given the template that Can and other likeminded groups laid down almost forty years ago Suzuki could have performed that gig in his sleep. Interestingly a goodly proportion of “Sound carriers” on the night were artists but the language didn’t stray far from rock’s vocabulary. This should not be taken as a criticism of them. I like pumping motorik grooves as much as the next man. However, it would seem that when musicians get together for a spontaneous jam, no matter what their artistic pedigree, the default setting is rock. Is this wrong? I don’t think so. I guess it is a function of the situation. It is a lot easier for one or two musicians thrown together to spark off different patterns than it is for a more cumbersome group situation. Besides, wouldn’t a group of musicians pumping out burst of skronking free jazz send people running for cover? The one situation that bucked this retreat to cliché was the Sonic Vigil in St Fin Barre’s cathedral. What allowed so many disparate musicians to come together and create an overall sound that was both coherent and startling in a thrillingly spontaneous way was the way the participants were physically spread around the building creating a situation where each musician responded to the those on either side of them creating a Chinese-whisper-like circuitry with the information continuously refracting within an overall prism. Anyway I don’t condemn the practice I describe in the first two paragraphs. Improvised music concerts can be demanding and to conclude them by returning to familiar well-trodden paths can offer relief, joy even, for the audience and perhaps even the musicians. Some of whom might even view it as a secret vice. But I’m a music journalist; what would I know?

Don O’Mahony

## Sonic Vigil2 Sat 17th 2007

Video.....	2:00 - 2:10
Act 1: Tony Langlois.....	2:10 - 2:30
Break.....	2:30 - 2:40
Video.....	2:40 - 2:50
Act 2: James Ojeie + Declan O’Meara.....	2:50 - 3:10
Break.....	3:10 - 3:20
Video.....	3:20 - 3:30
Act 3: Giordai ua Laoghaire.....	3:30 - 4:00
Break.....	4:00 - 4:10
Video.....	4:10 - 4:15
Act 4: the Quiet Club.....	4:15 - 4:35
Break.....	4:35 - 4:45
Video.....	4:45 - 4:55
Act 5: miXil.....	4:55 - 5:15
Break.....	5:15 - 5:25
Video.....	5:25 - 5:35
Act 6: Christian Carley + Jesse Rouneau.....	5:35 - 5:55
Break.....	5:55 - 6:05
Video.....	6:05 - 6:15
Act 7: Séamus O’Donnell.....	6:15 - 6:35
Break.....	6:35 - 6:45
Video.....	6:45 - 6:55
Act 8: Mathias Forge + Cyril Epinat + Leo Dumont.....	6:55 - 7:15

The first **Sonic Vigil** initiated by Cork Artist Collective took place in November 2005 as part of the Art Trail programme. It was located in St. Fin Barre's Cathedral and was curated by Mick O'Shea and project managed by Mary Cremin. It was a 12-hour continuous event which included 25 sound artists performing from 15 minutes past 12 noon to 15 minutes past midnight. The performers were free to choose a location, or roam the Cathedral and interact with the space, the visitors and the other performers. There was no structured programme for the various electronic, acoustic and electro-acoustic performances within the 12 hour frame; some performed continuously for long sessions, spanning the whole of the 12 hours and others for short episodes. The vast space of St. Fin Barre's Cathedral enabled the discovery of new sound pieces by those wandering and exploring the installed acoustic architecture of Sonic Vigil. Soup, prepared in the space provided sustenance for performers and the continuous stream of visitors

In 2007 Sonic Vigil, curated by Mick O'Shea and Danny McCarthy takes place in the Unitarian Church, the oldest working church in Cork. Artists come from as far a field as Germany, France and America to perform alongside Irish artists from Dublin, Waterford, Limerick and Cork. A difference this time round is that each act will perform separately for around half an hour culminating in a mixed improvisation at the end. A new video collective called The **YoYo Club** organised by Irene Murphy and Collette Nolan will also make its debut.

The **Sonic Vigil** performers line up is

Tony Langlois, James Ojeie + Declan O'Meara, Giordai ua Laoghaire, The Quiet Club (Mick O'Shea, Danny McCarthy + Guests Harry Moore, Loz Fitzgibbon) miXile, Christian Carley + Jesse Ronneau, Séamus O'Donnell, Mathias Forge + Cyril Epinat + Leo Dumont

The **YoYo Club** line up is:

Irene Murphy, Collette Nolan, Wendy Young, James McCann, Claire Guerin, Declan O'Meara.

After surviving a tragic air crash, **Tony Langlois** was raised by a colony of marmosets on the barren volcanic island of Jersey. When introduced to human society in his late teens, he could only communicate in grunts and shrieks, features which have become hallmarks of his music in recent years. Inspired by his musical mentor, the flamboyant Austrian composer Ulf Schatkaks, Tony attempts in his compositions, (all of which are performed on a portable computer) to merge the spatial and rhythmic qualities of dub reggae with found sounds, lost sounds, decontextualised speech and the dark pagan spirit of morris dancing. As part of the ensemble 'Missioncreep' Tony has recently performed at the Dublin Electronic Arts Festival, The Sonic Arts Festival expo in Manchester, Zelloloid 'Club' events in Cork and Derry, and the Cork Film Festival. In previous incarnations, and on various instruments, he has performed with such groups as The Anchovies, Winkhorst, The Mighty Stinkhorn, Willy Beard and his Wierd Billiards, Furious Cigars, to name just a few...



Works of sound art play on the boundaries of our often-unconscious aural experience of a world dominated by the visual. Sound Art tends to recontextualise sound by transporting it into a different context thus creating an alternate meaning. Sound artists claim their work is distinguished by its ability to fully engage and activate spatial experience as well as duration. It encourages the audience to pay attention to how they listen, and to experiment with new ways of listening. Sonic Vigil is an event that allows you to isolate this sense and to relish in the resounding sounds that are orchestrated through various mediums be it electronic, sound objects, or original musical instruments. The previous SONIC VIGIL (2005) was a 12 hour concert of improvised and experimental electronic music and sound works. The concert aspired to create a dialogue between the artists through the use of sound. The result was a hum of overlapping sound and sonic atmospherics. This years Sonic Vigil is an exciting mix of sound artists who for the duration of 6 hours will perform a challenging and compelling concert, each artist will perform for a period of half an hour. This collaborative sound art project will engage and direct participants in an activity of sensory exploration. It will focus the audiences attention not only on the audible qualities but also the way sounds are experienced visualized and translated into other forms, the result being rich tapestry of sound.

**Mary Cremin**

**James Ojeie** Originally from Galway, graduated from Limerick School of Art & Design in 2004 with a Degree in Fine Art, now based in Cork. Work in sound concerned primarily with recontextualisation, especially with regards to the unintentionally meditative / sublime qualities of sounds divested of (and absolved from) quotidian associations. For the past while has been using simply a guitar and delay pedal, playing the instrument – loaded as it is with connotations of modern, western musical forms – “against itself”, i.e. in an “eastern” manner, extracting from it dense harmonic overlays and extended, resonant drones.

**Declan O' Meara** Born in Co. Tipperary in 1981. Declan graduated from the Limerick School of Art and Design in 2004. Currently based in Cork, since graduating he has been a member of contact studios in Limerick city and Enso in Galway. He has performed/ exhibited in various locations throughout the country. Declan's main body of work consists of photography and performance.

Polticz: “Every Thursday”

Every Thursday.... the street is filled to the brim with your noise....a half paralysed cat bisects our conversation....a fly circles, loses itself in your hair....complain of interference....diffuse and scrambled....disrupted intent....discarded conversation.... set adrift...

Every Thursday, we meet, but it is of no consequence....

**Giordai Ua Laoghaire** presents Na Ceithre hAirde  
a surround sound version of Roger Gregg's radio play Marsyas

Tá Giordai Ua Laoghaire sean sean sean/sean sean seán/sean seán seán/ seán seán seán/ seán seán séan/ seán séan séan/séan séan séan/séan séan sean/séan sean sean/ sean sean sean.

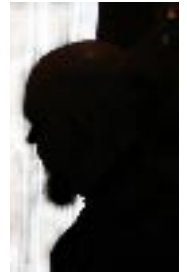
The Quiet Club was formed early in 2006 by Danny Mc Carthy and Mick O'Shea two of Irelands foremost sound artists as an outlet for their own work and that of other artists. They have met with great initial success and have performed at festivals and venues all over Ireland. Most recently the performed at the Lost Shadows 2 Festival in the Factory Berlin. Often performing with special guest artists including John Godfrey, Harry Moore, Christian Carley, Viv Corringham and more recently Mark Wastell. They perform using a wide mixture of sound sources ranging from circuit bending ,homemade instruments, amplified textures ,stones, Theremins, samplers and various other electronic devices.

There is no link for The Quiet Club and the first rule of The Quiet Club is you don't talk about it.

**Danny Mc Carthy** studied at the National College of Art and Design. He has pioneered both performance art and sound art in Ireland and he continues to be a leading exponent exhibiting and performing both in Ireland and abroad. His work has appeared on numerous C.D.s and has been broadcast widely on both radio and T. V. His first solo C.D. "Beyond The Point" was released on Soundworks Unlimited. Another C.D. (with SAFE) entitled "The air is full" has been released on the label Dot Dot Dot Music (dotdotdotmusic.com). As part of Art Trails Soundworks Festival he was editor (with Julie Forrester) of a new book on sound art entitled "For Those Who Have Ears" the first publication of its kind in Ireland. He co-curated with David Toop a major international exhibition of outdoor sound art entitled "SOUND OUT" for Cork 2005 as part of Corks year as European Capital Of Culture. He has edited an illustrated catalogue with CD entitled "Sound Out" to accompany the exhibition. He is curated a CD (open submission & invited) entitled "Bend It Like Beckett" for Sound Works/Art Trail Festival to commemorate the Beckett Centenary He is a founding director of Triskel Arts Centre and of the National Sculpture Factory and is a director of Art Trail and the Sirius Arts Centre.



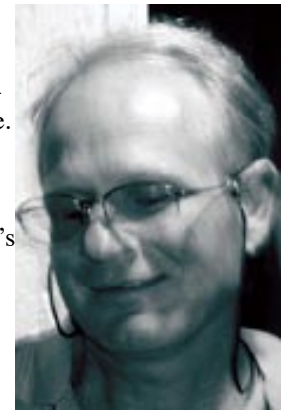
**Mick O'Shea** lives and works in Cork city and is a member and director of the Cork Artists Collective and has exhibited in Germany, Lithuania, Belgium, Scotland, Tasmania, Japan and Finland. He studied instrument physics in C.I.T. and works as an instrument technician in UCC. All of his works spring from his essential experience in drawing. His medium includes sculpture, drawing, sound and cooking. O'Shea formed Domestic Godless with Stephen Brandes 2003 to create cooking events and recipes that transgress our food taboos. He also works with various sound artists both national and international. In 2006 he formed The Quiet Club with sound artist Danny McCarthy to promote and showcase improvised music and soundworks.



**Loz Fitzgibbon** LoZ , born 1971, still alive, composer/musician with green monitor. When provoked he wheels out a big speaker, lots of his favorite cassette tapes and some other strange electronic items and produces strange sounds.

**Harry Moore**; Studied at Slade School of Art, London, specialising in sculpture, photography, sound, video and performance. Since settling in Cork in 1991, he has taken part in a broad range of practices in arts organisations, including theatre, boat building, teaching and visual arts. Director of Art Trail and artistic director from 2001–5. Teaches photography at St. John's Central College.

Delighted to listen... and make sounds.



On the wikipedia encyclopedia website, a search for quiet and a blank page appears, with an offer to re-direct to silence.

The preconception of an abstract blank page is a good basis to experience or engage with Quiet Club. Apart from utilising sound as a medium there are no boundaries, beyond those defined by the experience and equipment of the practitioners operating at the club. The nature of the sound that might replace the relative silence of the arena might draw on a line of investigation, arrive at a moment that might startle or entice, define a passage towards a succinct closure, or perhaps into a rhythmic crescendo, or even silencio.

Silence has played a key role in many musical works, and could as easily be a performed piece, amongst other works in the quiet club. One famous example of silence in music is the respected composer John Cage's work, which consists entirely of four minutes and thirty-three seconds of silence. Cage had this to say about silence: "Until I die there will be sounds. And they will continue following my death. One need not fear about the future of music"

The practitioners are explorers in the medium, both in the means to create and recreate new sounds, using discovered, devised and self manufactured or assembled equipment, as well as the environmental sounds which occupy our planet, possibly electronically treated, or reproduced as discovered within an alternative context.

The oblique directions of the investigation, and the resulting process, including research and investigation allows a vast range of material to emerge, and be scrupulously presented in the setting Quiet Club.

Quiet club performances may include improvisation, allowing the practitioners to respond to the specifics of the environment and the audience, as well as the influence and inspiration of other practitioners. Quiet Club performs with other groups and ensembles and include invited guests enabling new directions and possibilities to continuously emerge.

As sometimes in film, where there is little to define the image on the screen, the eye settles on the film stock grains swirling in the screen, and this can become more interesting than determining the subject matter. Practitioners working with sound approach their chosen matter with a directness to texture

#### Harry Moore



**MiXile** (Michael Shanahan) has been working in the area of Electronic/Ambient Music/ Performance Art since 1986.

Now based in Waterford, Ireland, he grew up and lived in Australia until the mid 70s. Between 1986 and 1990, he performed a number of live visual/sound works in Ireland. From the mid to late 1990's he moved from Performance to Musical Art Pieces, and started working under the name miXile. The 2005 work, 'Phaedo' for the Sonic Vigil, St. Finbar's Cathedral Cork, Ireland, was part of a series inspired by selected literary and philosophical texts and marked a return to live



performance after a fifteen year break.

In June 2006, the artist commenced a 7 week journey that took him from Perth in Western Australia across the Nullarbor Plain and on to Sydney before travelling north to Noosa in Queensland and back to Sydney. Along the way several hundred hours of audio field recordings were made to be used as part of a series of electronic music events and other sound based projects.

[www.mixile.com](http://www.mixile.com)

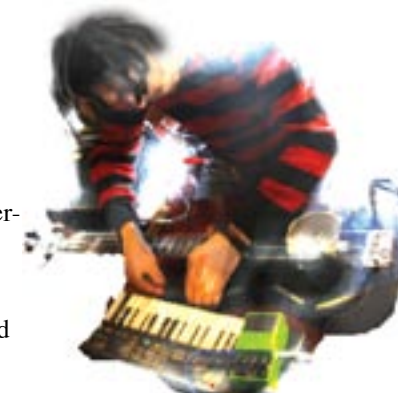
**Jesse Ronneau**, a composer and improviser, from Chicago, holds degrees in composition from the University of Cincinnati, Roosevelt University, and Northwestern University. His compositions, mostly featuring live electronic manipulation of acoustic instruments, have been performed throughout the United States and Europe. He is currently a lecturer of music at UCC.

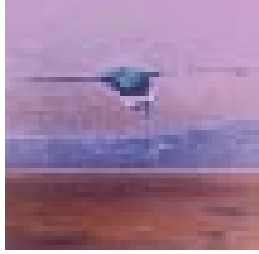


**Christian Carley** was born in Cork

in 1981 and is a recent graduate of the Crawford College of Art and Design. His current Sound/performance project "Agitator"

involves the utilization of old musical and computer equipment to generate atmospheric and explosive soundscapes."





With Noisiv or as Lifeloop, **Séamus O'Donnell** uses a mixture of concrete and electronic audio material, pumping new life into everyday sounds. Since 1999 he gathers recordings of his surrounding soundscapes, then cuts, filters, converts them by digital means into aural noise. Structure to chaos - to structure again. He is careful not to restrict himself within the standard sequenced rhythms or melodies.

<http://www.noisiv.de.vu>



'Non-Knowledge', according to the theorist and thinker Sarat Maharaj, is a way of thinking otherness, of encountering - outside or at the edge of given modes of apprehension and discussion - the radically strange, the representative of the outside. He has also called this thinking 'xeno-epistemology', making allusion in the 'xeno' both to the origins of Western thinking (a large number of Greek philosophers had names beginning with 'Xeno') and to the idea of the stranger (as in 'xenophobic').

When talking of non-knowledge Maharaj often refers to the work of his friend, the late Hugh Davies, who once held a residency at the Sirius Arts Centre. Davies was a teacher and sound-artist, but his 'xeno-sonics' encompassed a wide range of activities: from inventing instruments and performing with them to composing electronic music (he studied with Karlheinz Stockhausen). Sound art, for Maharaj, is exemplary in its confrontation of the public with something that both holds attention and stubbornly remains unrecognisable. For Nietzsche our sense of hearing was somehow associated with our experience of the night, and xeno-sonics, to Maharaj's thinking, plunges us into a darkness of understanding. In xeno-sonics we must confront the stranger, just as contemporary social experience daily involves encounter with the presence of the alien, the immigrant.

Certainly the experience of sound-art is a grappling without rules. A public gathers and gives attention to an event that stumps and evades their attempts at pinning it down to meaning, while still capturing them. It doesn't always work like that, of course. The sound-work can easily become dependent on reproducible devices, sonic chestnuts, as it were. I have a few favourites myself, all electronically produced, to which I've given suitably cataclysmic labels: the 'galaxing collapsing into a black-hole' sound; the 'palaeolithic scratchings and tappings'; the 'background traces of the Big Bang' noise. This is understandable: sound-art is a deliberate plunge into the unknown; consequently, with repetition it is always in danger of either losing its hold on us or of slipping back into known effects. When it does work, however, it may indeed seem like the instrument of Maharaj's 'non-knowledge', an Aeolian harp sounding to the chaotic wind that blows through the rips and rents of our comprehension.

**Fergal Gaynor**

## /WE TRUST OUR EARS/

/Beyond the idiom of language, we trust our ears, in a primordial sense our ears alert us to danger more immediately than our eyes, our eyes look out first and our ears let in, our perception of sound defines our presence in space, embodies the architecture about us, as we place ourselves within it. Sound occupies space, in this way it is often perceived as a kind of haunting, it is physically sharing the space with us. Sound is invisible, doesn't present itself before the eyes, but in the here and now and within the imagination, it is subliminally connected with memory, a recorded voice, though disembodied, conjours an intimate human presence beyond the recorded image, which will always be a representation to be looked at before it is taken in. When artists work with sound it is this intimacy and immediacy they aim to create, a sharing of the physical space and beyond this it is left open to our ears and our imaginations./

**Julie Forrester**

**Cyril Epinat** (acoustic and electric guitar, skateboard)

First, Cyril plays piano, and then he learns jazz guitar when he was 11. In January 2004 he becomes guitar teacher. He is a member of Jam spirit (Jazz and French song quintet) and PourQuoi pAs ??? (trio of indefinite music)

He begins to play improvisation during master-class with Phil Minton, René Lussier, Eugène Chadbourne or Xavier Charles. Now, he is a member of MICRO association (Musique Improvisée



en Côte ROannaise) with Mathias Forge, Léo Dumont and Thierry Moulat and plays improvisation with musicians and dancers like Mathias Forge, trombone and radios ; Nicolas Desmarchelier, guitar (collectif Ishtar) ; Xavier Saiki, electric guitar (tribu Hérisson) ; Li Ping Ting, dance and Emilie Borgo, dance (Passaros company).

**Mathias Forge** (trombone, radios and preparedpiano) Descendant of a sawers long family, Mathias is definitely roannais (from Roanne, France). It is thanks to an upright piano and a cap he began by some semblances of Thelonious Monk imitations, to finally go and lost himself with joy in free improvisation he practices regularly with Cyril Epinat (DUO...), ISHTAR collective (Masal Caldi), Emilie Borgo (Skratroum), Xavier Saiki (Sapiens), Quentin Dubost (...); and irregularly with anyone wants to. He plays the trombone and the radios, prepares the piano (always upright), but doesn't fail to perform with dancers, painters, poets and skaters, or to have fun with some sound massages aid of a device built with some parts of the trombone.

He still likes composing or arranging when he's allowed to or when someone asks him to (cf : La Baskour, Quatuor MONK, Quatuor PLI, and others one-off projects) and wanders with pleasure in streets and public places with Les Arcandiers or the Cie Jeanne Simone. He believes to authenticity, archaic abstraction and small things.

He was lucky of meeting ARFI, Li Ping Ting, Heddy Boubaker, Axel Dörner, David Chiesa, Luca Venitucci, Birgit Ulher, Dennis Mc Nulty,... and had the honor to let himself influenced by Jean Cohen, Sebastien Coste, Etienne Roche, the ISHTAR collective, the Kafé Myzik and his brother. That is with his three friends from Roanne he tries to buckle a buckle organizing couple of events about improvisation in the roannaise country (MICRO, Musique Improvisée en Côte Roannaise).

Mathias Forge

Discography : Faut pas y craindre !, les Arcandiers DUO... with Cyril Epinat (acoust. guit.), Creative Sources BIG MAC, Sapiens, with Xavier Saïki, crier dans les musées

**Leo Dumont** (drum and percussions)

He studied drum and percussions, and had different experiences in jazz, rock, free rock, theatre music,... He improvised since five years.



Active member of MICRO association (Improvised Music in Côte Roannaise), he used to meet some musicians of different collectives like Ishtar, Musique en Friche, Tout est bon dans le Cochon, la Tribu Hérisson.

His free music work is based on sound textures. He plays on "classical" percussions (cymbals and trunks) and objects (motors, sheet steels, cake plates, springs and stones, ...). The trunk of the cymbal becomes an amplification mode of the objects noise. He particularly loves old basses drum and bad little snares drum especially when the skin has some holes (which can help for other textures).

He plays regularly with two groups:

-Trio Sieste : with Vincent Guglielmi (tp) and Xavier Saïki (guit.), project to make people sleeping.

-Quatuor MICRO : with Mathias Forge ( piano),

Cyril Epinat (prep. guit.) and Thierry Moulat (tb)



THE CORK ARTISTS COLLECTIVE

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