

Dr Henry McPherson

(Dougal Henry James McPherson, he/him)

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PROFILE / STATEMENT

I am an interdisciplinary artist, composer, and improviser. Working across multiple strands of media and live performance, much of my portfolio explores personal relationships to the green world via folk and plant lore in interspecies storytelling. I am interested in cross-cultural understandings of non-human knowledges, as well as tensions between increasingly urbanised infrastructure and precarious local ecosystems and communities. I have an ongoing interest in issues of artistic practice and marginalised identity, particularly around LGBTQ(+) and disability visibility, agency, and advocacy. Of Scottish, Irish, and English heritage, I was raised in rural Herefordshire in the West Midlands, and since 2013 have been living and working primarily between Scotland and the north of England.

EDUCATION

2019 – 2023	University of Huddersfield Doctor of Philosophy (Music, Dance), awarded May 2023 Supported by Collaborative Studentship in Music and Dance in association with Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival (3 years) Supervisors: Dr. Ben Spatz, Dr. Hilary Elliott, Prof. Philip Thomas, Dr. Claudia Molitor Research area(s): Transdisciplinarity in performing arts, experimental and improvised music, postmodern theatre dance, improvised dance, applied critical race and queer-feminist theory within music and dance studies, qualitative research, practice-as-research.	Huddersfield
2017 – 2018	Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Master of Arts (Music, Composition). 25 October 2018. Supported by Institutional Scholarship (Masters, 1 year). Composition: Dr. Colin Broom. Research area(s): Graphic and experimental notation, interdisciplinary collaborative and devised performance, queer theory in artistic practice.	Glasgow
2013 – 2017	Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Bachelor of Music (Hons, 1 st Class). 4 July 2017. Supported by Institutional Scholarship (Bachelors, 4 years). Composition: Prof. Rory Boyle (primary tutor), Dr. Oliver Searle, Dr. Stuart Macrae Piano: Sinae Lee, Silviya Mihaylova, Saša Gerželj-Donaldson. Specialist Modules: Arts Leadership and Fundraising; Theory of Creativity.	Glasgow

INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

University of Manchester, Research Associate (Creative Manchester), 2023 – present

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Visiting Lecturer (Free Improvisation), 2021 – present

University of Huddersfield, Part-time Lecturer (Music), 2020 – 2023

GRANTS, AWARDS, and HONOURS

Stadt Wien and AustroMechana Creative Funds (with Florijan Lörnitzo, Vienna, AT), 2022 – 2023

Creative Scotland Four National International Fund, IMMERSIONS residency (UK, NL), 2021 – 2022

Goethe Institute Virtual Partner Residency Fund (with The Noisebringers, Geneva, CH), 2020 – 2021

University of Huddersfield Collaborative PhD Studentship in Music and Dance in Association with Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, 2019 – 2023

New Music Scotland Scottish Awards for New Music (Shortlist Nomination, “Collaboration in New Music”), 2019

Help Musicians Transmission Fund, 2018

Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity Creative Gesture Programme Scholarship (Banff, CA), 2018

Psappha Ensemble Composing for Guzheng Bursary, 2018

Harriet Cohen Memorial Music Trust Harriet Cohen Memorial Music Award, 2018

Royal College of Music Patron’s Prize for Composition, 2017

New Music Scotland Scottish Awards for New Music (Shortlist Nomination, “Best Recorded New Work”), 2017

Scottish Opera Opera Sparks Commission Prize, 2017

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Institutional Scholarship (Masters), 2017 – 2018

BBC Scottish Symphony Club Composition Prize, 2016

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Sibelius Essay Prize, 2016

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Agnes Millar Award for Harmony and Counterpoint, 2015

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Dinah Wolfe Memorial Prize for Composition, 2013 – 14

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Institutional Scholarship (Bachelors), 2013 – 2017

SELECTED CONCERT PREMIERES (composed works)

This, Here, Now (2024), Text scores, premiered by Edges Ensemble, at Bath House Galleries, Huddersfield, March 2024

Herbarium (2022-23) *co-composition with F. Lörnitzo*, Premiered by Between Feathers at Conservatoire de Musique de Gatineau (CA), January 2024; and in Europe by Florijan Lörnitzo, Anna Maria Niemiec, Flora Geißelbrecht, Vienna, March 2024

Maud (chamber ver. 2023), Premiered by Scottish Opera Young Company/Chris Gray, Scottish Tour (Glasgow, Stirling, Largs), July 2023

Dancing with Colours (2022), Premiered by Henry McPherson and JoAnne Haines, Mind the Gap Studios, Bradford, December 2022. Dir. JoAnne Haines. Choreo. Rachel Dean/Maia Leeke. Music: Henry McPherson.

snow-constellation (ver. 2, 2019) Premiered by Orestis Tsekouras, Haris Kanellidis, at Muncie (USA, IN), March 2022

Sphagnum (2022) Performed by Henry McPherson and Stanford Cheung, at IKLECTIK, London, January 2022

Sigil (2019) Premiered by Yiyang Zhao, [hybrid performance] Berlin (DE), December 2021

Foutraque (2021), *co-composition with the Noisebringers* Premiered by Glasgow Improvisers Orchestra, at GIOFest, Centre for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow (UK), November 2021

The abusers of power united will never be defeated (2020) Premiered by The Noisebringers, Colin Frank, Weston Olencki, at *Electric Spring Festival*, University of Huddersfield, February 2020

Ecosystem I (2019) Premiered by Ensemble Academy Koninklijk Conservatorium, at *Dag in der Branding Festival*, Zuiderstrandtheater, Den Haag (NL), June 2019

Parchments (2019) Premiered by Ronan Whittern, Nathan Watts, at Bauhaus-Dessau, Dessau-Roßlau (DE), 2020

Sigil (2019) Premiered by Adam Hall, at Town-Hall, Marquette (USA, MI), June 2019

Pathways (2018) Premiered by 1.5 Months, at Old Hairdressers, Glasgow (UK), 2019

Maud (2017) Premiered by Scottish Opera, Connect Chorus + Orchestra, at Galvanizers, SWG3 Glasgow (UK), June 2018

snow-constellation (2017) Maso Giroto, Samrat Majumder, at Ledger Recital Room (RCS) Glasgow (UK), May 2018

Wintersun (2018) Premiered by Henry McPherson, at Kinnear Centre for Creativity and Innovation, Banff (CA), August 2018

Opening Hands (2018) Premiered by DECIBEL, at Ledger Recital Room (RCS), Glasgow (UK), May 2018

Studies in Black and White (2018) Premiered by Maria Sappho, at Stevenson Hall (RCS), Glasgow (UK), May 2018

Book of Trees (2015) Premiered by Gregor Forbes, at Project Café, Glasgow (UK), June 2018

Hellyys (2018) Premiered by Savage Parade at Silk St Concert Hall, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London. Commissioned by Robert Reid Allen. Premiered in 'Anthems for Queer Youth'. Nominated for New Music Scotland *Scottish Award for New Music* 'Collaboration in New Music' 2019.

Three Dreams at the End (2017/19) Premiered by Peter Norris, Adam Wallace, at Picture Gallery, Royal Holloway (UK), June 2018

Meditations (2016) Premiered by Glasgow New Music Expedition, Alice Allen, Stevenson Hall (RCS), Glasgow (UK), May 2017

Jane the Quene (2016) Premiered by Leslie Schipa, Maciej Granat, Alexander Gibson Opera School, Glasgow (UK), June 2017

For Sylvia (2017) Premiered by Savage Parade, Nicholson School of Dance, Birmingham (UK), September 2017

Ūhte (2015), BBC SSO (w/ Martyn Brabbins) Opera-Film, Recorded by BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra with Martyn Brabbins, BBC Scotland, K. Reid, E. Mockett, D. Horton. Premiere showing at PLUG 2015. BBC iPlayer May 2017

Death the Mother (2016) Premiered by Ensemble Modern, at Stevenson Hall (RCS), Glasgow (UK), 2017

Tides (2015) Premiered by Rednote Ensemble, at Ledger Recital Room (RCS), Glasgow, March 2016

Kindred (2013) Premiered by Garth Knox, Mieko Kanno, Stevenson Hall (RCS), Glasgow (UK), May 2014

SELECTED FESTIVALS and EXHIBITIONS (mixed media works, performance)

Bryophyte No.1 and Moss Verses (2024) [graphic score, text score], shown at *It Could be Better* (Cur. Association de Malfaiteurs), Galerie Analix Forever (Geneva, CH), February 2024

121 Seven Second Nocturnes for Beginners (2022) [audio installation], shown at *Seven Seconds* (Cur. Mark Fearbunce), Fringe Arts Bath, June 2022

More Than One Thing (2021) [audiovisual installation], shown at *Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival*, November 2021

What IIIIF 10/10 (2021) [audiovisual performance] shown at *Improvisation Festival*, Guelph (CA)

Tente Saga (2021) [audiovisual installation, performance], shown at *AiiA Festival*, Théâtre St. Gervais (Geneva, CH), October 2021

Various works shown at *IS THE NEW PUNK* (Cur. The Noisebringers, Barbara Polla), Galerie Analix Forever (Geneva, CH)

Revolutionary Thoughts (2020) [digital installation] shown in *The September MASS* [publication], September 2020

Parchments (2020) [graphic score] shown in *The Gathering Zine*, London Design Museum, July 2020

Seals (2020) [sculpture score] shown at *Exhibition by Post* (Cur. Lizzie Donegan), June 2020

Cities, Staircases [graphic scores] (2020) shown at *Coantivirus Digital Exhibition*, NY20+ Gallery (Chengdu, CN), March 2020; and at *A Propos of Aesthetics* (Cur. Arron Hansford), May 2020.

The abusers of power united will never be defeated [performance, sculpture] (2020) shown at *Electric Spring*, University of Huddersfield, February 2020

Pathways (2018) shown at *GEMS Festival* (Cur. Gregor Forbes), November 2019

Collagens//Collages (2018) [installation, performance] shown at *Open Out* (Cur. Iain Morrison), Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh, February 2019

Collagens//Collages (2018) shown at *Corpos Abertos* (Cur. Consuelo Bassanesi), Despina Gallery, Rio de Janeiro (BR)

Ūhte (2015) shown at *PLUG 10*, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow, May 2016

For Sylvia (2017) shown at *FLUID Festival* (Cur. Trevor Pitt), Centrala Café + Nicholson School of Dance, Birmingham, September 2017

Various compositions shown at *PLUG Festival* (2013 – 2016) Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow.

RECORDING and BROADCAST

Free Improvisations (2024), co-creation with Colin Frank (CA), premiere recording February 2024

Interlunar (2022), Brian Bromberg (USA), Premiere Recording (2023)

capella_dream (from *INTIMACIES*, 2020), The Sampler, Resonance FM (cur. Colin Frank), Broadcast (Radio, 2023)

Noise at the death of one beloved, part IV (2023), Freeness (prod. Phil Smith), BBC R3, Broadcast (Radio, 2023)

INTIMACIES (2020), Radiophrenia, Broadcast (Radio, 2022)

Tous Ensemble (2021, w/ **Brice Catherin**), Cartopodes (CH), Broadcast (Radio, 2022)

Duo with Brice Catherin (2021), Late Junction (cur. Verity Sharp), BBC R3, Broadcast (Radio, 2022)

Colagens//Collages (2018), Radiophrenia, Broadcast (Radio, 2022)

Noisebringers Olympics (2021), Mopomoso TV, Broadcast, (Livestream, 2021)

un port une femme my head ukwibukusha half cup sugar (2020), The Noisebringers, Radio Dordogne (FR), Broadcast, (Radio, 2021)

Will I Enjoy Covid 19 If I Haven't Watched the First Eighteen? (2020), The Noisebringers, Chez Roger (FR), Broadcast (Livestream, 2020)

Parchments (2019), Ronan Whittern, Nathan Watts, Premiere Recording (2020)

Crocus (2018), Zilan Liao, Psappa Ensemble, Premiere Recording (2018)

Colagens//Collages (2018), Transmission Radio, Broadcast (Radio, 2018)

Oracle (2018), Ronan Whittern (IE/UK), Premiere Recording (2018)

Ūhte (2015), BBC SSO, BBC Scotland, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Broadcast (BBC iPlayer, 2016)

DISCOGRAPHY

- Free Improvisations (2024), with Colin frank [Forthcoming Digital Release, EP]
- Henria's Lullabies (2024), Digital Release [EP]
- Interlunar (2023) on Gateless Garden (Brian Patrick Bromberg, 2024), ShanGORIL La Records (HK/USA) [Contribution to album, Digital and Cassette release]
- Vignettes (2022), Instrumental, Digital Release [Single]
- The Noisebringers and Colin Frank play Chilli and bonbon in Chililabombwe (2022), Instrumental/Electronics, Digital release [Album]
- String Quartet (in memoriam Béla Bartók) (2022), Instrumental, Digital Release [EP]
- Moss Gardens No.1 (2022), Instrumental, Digital Release [Single]
- Moss Gardens No.2 (2022), Instrumental, Digital Release [Single]
- Moss Gardens No.3 (2022), Instrumental, Digital Release [EP]
- Noise at the death of one beloved (2022), Instrumental, Digital Release [Album]
- INTIMACIES (2020), Instrumental/Electroacoustic, Digital Release [Album]
- The Colour of Things (2020), Instrumental, Digital Release [Single]
- Kerrera, Inner Hebrides, Scotland (2020) on Rocks I have Taken (Maria Sappho, 2020), Electroacoustic, Digital Release [Contribution to Album]
- Palindromes (2020) on Will you marry us? (2020), the Noisebringers + Collaborators, Digital Release [Contribution to Multimedia Album]
- Pavane (2019), Single, Electroacoustic, Digital Release [Single]
- Colagens//Collages (2018), Electroacoustic/Field Recording, Digital Release [Album]
- Smoke (fire), Voice, Mountain (2018), Instrumental/Field Recording, Digital Release [Album]

RESIDENCIES and SCHEMES

- 'It could be better' Residency, Association de Malfaiteurs/Galerie Analix Forever, Geneva (CH), Artist-in-residence, 2024
- IMMERSIONS Residency (Creative Scotland Four Nations Fund), Norfolk (UK)/Friesland (NL), Artist-in-residence, 2022
- 'Let's Move' at Chapeltown Community Nursery, Leeds, Improviser-in-residence, 2022
- 'The New Together' Residency, NGallery, Athens (GR), Artist-in-residence 2022
- Manasamitra 'Not the Fringe Festival', Dewsbury, Artist-in-residence 2021
- 'IS THE NEW PUNK' Residency, Galerie Analix Forever, Geneva (CH), Artist-in-residence, 2021
- Goethe Institute Virtual Partner Residency, UK-DE collaboration, Artist-in-residence 2020
- 'Open Bodies' Residency, Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh; Despina Gallery, Rio de Janeiro (BR), Artist-in-residence 2018-19
- The Creative Gesture: Collective Composition Lab, Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, Banff (CA), Participant 2018
- Psappha 'Composing for Guzheng' Scheme, Manchester, Participant 2018

ACADEMIC PUBLICATION and PRESENTATION

(forthcoming) McPherson, D.H.J. (2024). A Queer Way to Sound: Corporeality, Instruments, and Social Identity in Transdisciplinary Free Improvisation. AJIRN Conference 2024. Monash University (AU).

(forthcoming) McPherson, D.H.J. (2024). "Remember, you have a body": developing presence with instrumental musicians through kinaesthetic methods in higher education improvisation pedagogy. Scenario Conference 2024: Presence in Performative Teaching, Learning and Research. Trinity College Dublin (IE).

(in press). McPherson, D. H. J., Catherin, B., Sappho, M. (2024). Making Mychorrizal Noise: Hypermedia, Digitality, and Interpreting the Parafictional Universe of the Noisebringers. Liminalities.

McPherson, H. (2024). This, Here, Now: Invitations to Improvise. [Self-Published]

McPherson, D. H. J. (2024). Environmental Reciprocity in Improvising Practice. Cultures of Sound. Huddersfield University Press.

McPherson, D.H.J. et al. (2024). "Shaping the Moment Together: Training Residential Care Home Staff in Improvisation-Based Therapeutic Music-Making for Older Adults Living with Dementia." International Conference on Improvisation in Music Therapy. Leuven (BE)

McPherson, D.H.J. (2024). Sounding Care: improvisation and empathy [Workshop]. Care Aesthetics Project. Care Lab, Whitworth Gallery, University of Manchester. (UK)

McPherson, D.H.J. (2024). Where in the world is the improviser? Transdisciplinarity, ecology, and new ways of dreaming in contemporary free improvisation practice. Musicians' Perspectives on Improvisation Symposium. Exploratorium Berlin (DE).

McPherson, D.H.J. (2023). Towards Ecological Improvisation: Listening with the Body. Beyond Listening Symposium, Central European Network for Sonic Ecologies (CENSE). Budapest (HU).

McPherson, D.H.J., Dowlen, R., Keady, J., Bithell, C., Gagatsis, A., Young, A., Hoskin, L., Thomas, M. (2023). Embedding music in care home contexts through staff carer training. Liverpool Dementia & Ageing Research Forum Conference, Liverpool. (UK). [poster presentation]

McPherson, D. H. J. (2023). Listening like an Improviser: Composing In the Studio with Collaged Acoustic Free Improvisations. CeReNeM Journal, No.8

McPherson, D. H. J. (2023). More Than One Thing: A Practice-Led Investigation into Transdisciplinary Free Improvisation in Sound and Movement [PhD]. University of Huddersfield.

McPherson, D.H.J. (2023). Environmental Improvisation – an introduction. Crossley Art Gallery, Halifax [Artist Talk]

McPherson, D. H. J. (2021). Meanings in the Moment: Nonsense and Narrative Interactions in Transdisciplinary Free Improvisation. The Improviser's Experience: Knowledge, Methodology, Communication, University of Huddersfield, in association with the Royal Musicological Association.

McPherson, D.H.J. (2021). More Than One Thing [Digital Installation]. hcmf//

McPherson, D. H. J. (2021). Sounding-Moving Emergence in Transdisciplinary Free Improvisation. Emergence/y. A Sound Difference. Orpheus Doctoral Conference 2021. https://youtu.be/Ft_LakEKDqY

McPherson, D. H. J. (2021). "Spinning out world after world": Considering transdisciplinary free improvisation as a practice of performative worlding. ReCePP/CMCI Research Colloquium, University of Huddersfield.

McPherson, D. H. J., & Sappho Donohue, M. (2021). Inventing the Language of Mush: How to Improvise a World. Cross-Genre and Locality. Rethinking Borders Symposium, Osaka University, University of Huddersfield [Online]. <https://youtu.be/9crzjBhIglU>

McPherson, D. H. J. (2020). Considering the Fixed Naming of Entities: Towards a Transdisciplinary Approach to Free Improvisation. CeReNeM Journal, No.7 (Performing Stuff: Human-Entity Interactions in Contemporary Artistic Practice), 16-40.

McPherson, D. H. J. (2020). Ways Without Words: Thoughts on Presenting About Improvisation. Vision 2020 - Postgraduate Conference, University of Huddersfield. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_V_YMSYvzTI&t

McPherson, D. H. J. (2020). Fighting Fisher's Matrix: Hierarchies of Awareness and Improvising Freedom. Capitalist Realism: 10 Years On, Symposium (RMA). University of Huddersfield.

McPherson, D. H. J. (2019). Transforming, Translating, Transmitting : Stimulus to Response in Interdisciplinary Improvisation. Lines of Flight Seminar Series. Research Centre for Performance Practice, University of Huddersfield.

For additional information, academic or creative references, please contact:

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