

**KILKENNY
ARTS
FESTIVAL**

06-16 August 2026

Music Notes

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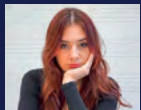
New Ross Piano Festival

20 Years

23–27 September 2026

This year's artists:

Finghin Collins
Jean-Efflam Bavouzet
Anna Fedorova
Dida Condria
Jamie Duffy
Judy Carmichael
Fabrizio Chiovetta
Rebeca Omordia
RTÉ Concert Orchestra
Rachel Roberts, viola
Robert Plane, clarinet



newrosspianofestival.com



Timo Andres & David Kaplan

Programme I

Friday 7 August

Meredith Monk

Ellis Island for two pianos

John Adams

Hallelujah Junction

Timo Andres

How Can I Live in Your World of Ideas?

Donnacha Dennehy

Between (World Premiere)

Duration 65 mins approx. (no interval)

Programme II

Saturday 8 August

Steve Reich

Piano Phase

Christopher Cerrone

Passagework

Gabriella Smith

Imaginary Pancake

Donnacha Dennehy

Between (second performance)

Duration 75 mins approx. (no interval)

Programme Notes: Programme I

Meredith Monk

Ellis Island

Ellis Island (1981) was originally composed for my short film of the same name, evoking the passage of immigrants to the United States at the turn of the 20th century. The music of the two pianos makes one stream or overall texture, like clear water flowing.

Meredith Monk

John Adams

Hallelujah Junction

Hallelujah Junction was written at the request of Grant Gershon and Gloria Cheng, two musicians with whom I have had a long and fruitful history. When they asked me to compose a 'short' piece for a special concert at the Getty Museum in 1998 I simply could not decline.

Hallelujah Junction is a tiny truck stop on Route 49 on the Nevada-California border, not far from where I have a small mountain cabin. One can only speculate on its beginnings in the era of prospectors and Gold Rush speculators (although a recent visit revealed that cappuccino is now available there). Here we have a case of a great title looking for a piece. So now the piece finally

exists: the 'junction' being the interlocking style of two-piano writing which features short, highly rhythmicized motives bouncing back and forth between the two pianos in tightly phased sequences. This is a technique I first used in the 1982 *Grand Pianola Music* and later expanded in orchestral pieces.

The 'hallelujah' is for another Los Angeles friend: Ernest Fleischmann. Like many composers, conductors, and performers, I have benefitted immeasurably over the years by Ernest's friendship and by his unflagging advocacy. As we all think back over the extraordinary tenure of his service as managing director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, 'hallelujah' seems to be the only appropriate word. We all owe him a debt of deep gratitude.

Hallelujah Junction lasts approximately 15 minutes and is in four parts, linked one to the other. The first section begins with a short, exclamatory three-note figure which I think of as '-lelujah' (without the opening 'Hal-'). This energized, bright gesture grows in length and breadth and eventually gives way to a long, multifaceted 'groove' section.

A second, more relaxed part is more reflective and is characterized

by waves of triplet chord clusters ascending out of the lowest ranges of the keyboard and cresting at their peak like breakers on a beach.

A short transitional passage uses tightly interlocking phase patterns to move the music into a more active ambience and sets up the final part. In this finale, the 'hallelujah chorus' kicks in at full tilt. The ghost of Conlon Nancarrow goes head to head with a Nevada cathouse pianola.

John Adams

Timo Andres

How Can I Live in Your World of Ideas?

How can I live in your world of ideas? takes its name from the caption of a cartoon I drew, which depicts a young penguin and his parents in a museum, looking at a painting of a naked woman. This piece starts out as a theme and variations, but is then gradually overtaken by extraneous material from somewhere else entirely.

Timo Andres

How can I live in your world of ideas? began life as a movement in the two piano cycle *Shy and Mighty*, recorded by Timo Andres and David Kaplan and released by Nonesuch in 2010.

Donnacha Dennehy

Between for two pianos (2023-6)

Written especially for the pianists David Kaplan and Timo Andres, *Between* is in seven connecting movements as follows:

- i. Glenflesk, summer
- ii. Northeast Corridor, fall
- iii. Bull Island, late autumn, early winter
- iv. Midtown Manhattan, midwinter (cost-benefit)
- v. Anne Devlin, spring
- vi. DUB—EWR, summer
- vii. Penn Station, fall

I've slowly come to terms with the fact that among other things I'm also an emigrant/immigrant. And that, as time elapses, more and more of my outlook on the world is influenced by two countries in particular: Ireland (where I'm from) and the US (where I moved well into my adult life). But also there is a kind of liminal in-between for me, surely experienced by everyone who has left where they are from to live and become part of a society elsewhere. Every movement refers to an in-between place of personal significance, and sometimes the emphasis is more on the traveling from point to point.

- i. Glenflesk is a place quite close to the two villages where my parents are from in Kerry and occupied an outside place in our

experience of summer when we were growing up.

ii. I am only too familiar with the Northeast Corridor as I am often on NJ Transit going between Princeton, an almost bucolic town between woods on one side and Route One on the other, and New York City, one of the most bustling cities in the world.

iii. My young boys spent a lot of time at Bull Island, a beautiful place, connected artificially to Clontarf in North Dublin by a wooden bridge, before we moved permanently to New Jersey. There was something especially nice about visiting it and its strand before winter really kicked in.

iv. Midtown Manhattan, midwinter (cost-benefit). No need for anything more than the title I think: this may be the trickiest of the movements to play!

v. Anne Devlin is a road in Rathfarnham, Dublin, between the two streets I grew up on. We moved from a house off one side of

it to another off the far end while I was a child. I still return to this street often, as my parents still live in the house there. Incidentally, Anne Devlin herself was an Irish revolutionary hero.

vi & vii. The final two movements concentrate on travels and places of transit that I know very well now, the first the trip from Dublin back to Newark airport, and the second the station just shy of midtown which acts as my portal for every trip into the city. It is always a kind of jolt when I step out of the train from tree-bedecked Princeton, and there you are on Seventh Avenue.

Of course, on another level, *Between* is abstract music, playing on the interactions of material between two identical instruments, but non-identical players.

Donnacha Dennehy, July 2026

Commissioned by Kilkenny Arts Festival, Kaufman Music Center, and the Ralph and Shirley Shapiro Fund and UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music for Timo Andres and David Kaplan.

Programme Notes: Programme II

Steve Reich

Piano Phase

Shortly after completing *Come Out* I began to think about writing live instrumental music. Unfortunately, it seemed to me at the time impossible for two human beings to perform that gradual phase-shifting process since the process was discovered with, and seemed indigenous to, tape recorders. On the other hand I could think of nothing else to do with live musicians that would be as interesting as the phasing process. Finally, late in 1966, I recorded a short repeating melodic pattern played on the piano, made a tape loop of it, and then tried to play against that loop myself, exactly as if I were a second tape recorder. To my surprise, I found that while I lacked the perfection of the machine, I could give a good approximation of it while enjoying a new and extremely satisfying way of playing that was both completely worked out beforehand and yet free of reading notation, allowing me to become completely absorbed in listening while I played.

Piano Phase was later completely written out in musical notation with dotted lines between one bar and the next to indicate the gradual phase shifting. The score

shows that two musicians begin in unison playing the same pattern over and over again and that while one of them stays put, the other gradually increases his or her tempo so as to slowly move one beat ahead of the other. This process is repeated until both players are back in unison, at which point the pattern is changed and the phasing process begins again. Everything is worked out, there is no improvisation, but the psychology of performance, what really happens when you play, is total involvement with the sound, total sensuous intellectual involvement.

Steve Reich

Christopher Cerrone

Passagework

In 2019, the pianist David Kaplan approached me with a proposition: he was interested in commissioning new pieces from both me and the composer Anthony Cheung; he was also interested in having us react to one another's music in this commission.

Anthony is an old friend and someone I hold in high regard. His work, however, is very different

from mine and this presented me with a challenge to stretch my voice. So I said yes.

I suggested, as a starting point, that Anthony and I quote small snippets from one another's compositions. Anthony had written a beautiful piano concerto whose second movement featured a repeating accompaniment as well as the sound of the piano muted with blu-tac (a kind of poster board putty). I took this as my starting point.

To this, I added a new effect I'd recently developed: that blu-tac can work as not just mute but also a device to retune strings with sufficient pressure. So I used blu-tac to tune three different keys – A, G#, and F# – to all sound like the pitch F. Along with the unadorned F, I had the ability to create different kinds of figurations around a fast and rhythmic repeated note, an effect that is normally difficult and unidiomatic on the piano. An added bonus was that the retuning is nearly impossible to make precise, so in reality, one gets a series of almost Fs that rub against one another, creating a unique sonic tension.

While working on the project with David and Anthony, the latter mentioned that his composition had a lot of 'passagework', a word that was unfamiliar to me at the time but doubtlessly known to

most pianists. 'Passagework' is, according to Merriam-Webster, 'a section of a musical composition characteristically unimportant thematically and consisting especially of ornamental figures.' Despite the derisive connotation, I loved the term and particularly loved the dual meaning of 'passage,' not just a musical figure but also a journey. I sought to create such a journey by transforming a single 'repeated note' figuration into a composition whose mood shifts from the melancholic to the tense to the delicate to the triumphant.

Christopher Cerrone

Gabriella Smith *Imaginary Pancake*

I recently made a new recording and film of Gabriella Smith's *Imaginary Pancake*, which she wrote for me in 2020. Why re-record? The first version I made was part of my pandemic-era 'Carnegie recital from home'; I'd had about two months with the piece at that point. Now, nearly five years later, having performed the piece many times, working it up and letting it lie fallow in cycles, I feel more that it is 'my' piece, in a way. Not to say it isn't still Gabriella's – surely nobody else could've written it – but I think I've mostly surmounted its significant technical difficulties and

internalized its characteristic peaks and valleys. Not to mention, the new recording reflects five years of studio upgrades and knowledge gained about the recording process. Good to be reminded that world premieres are often a rough outline of what's to come.

Timo Andres, October 2024

Donnacha Dennehy

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Donnacha Dennehy, July 2026

The Andres-Kaplan Philharmonic

The Andres-Kaplan Philharmonic is the four-hands duo of pianists Timo Andres and pianist David Kaplan. Described as 'quietly charismatic' by *The New Yorker*, they have performed together since 2006, when they were students at the Yale School of Music. Since then, their numerous appearances include the National Gallery in Washington, the Ravinia Festival in Chicago, and in New York's National Sawdust, Barge Music, and le Poisson Rouge. Since their debut at the Barbican Centre in 2014, they have performed regularly in London as recitalists, soloists and collaborators.

They have carved out a distinctive niche of repertoire that includes transcriptions of major orchestral works (Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* and Rachmaninoff's *Symphonic Dances*) and contemporary bulwarks (Steve Reich's *Piano Phase* and John Adams' *Hallelujah Junction*). They are praised for 'dazzling on the ivories' in *Shy and Mighty*, the hour-long album for two pianos released by Nonesuch

Records in 2010, which was the first of several pieces written by Andres for the pair. This year, they premiere *Between*, a major new work written for them by GRAMMY-Award winning composer Donnacha Dennehy.

Timo and David have collaborated with Third Coast Percussion, the countertenor Anthony Roth Costanzo, the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, the Metropolis Ensemble, and with the organist James McVinnie on the first performance of Philip Glass's landmark *Music in 12 Parts* outside the Philip Glass Ensemble. In 2017, they premiered a new two-piano concerto by Timo (*Steady Hand*) with the Britten Sinfonia and conductor Benjamin Shwartz, alongside John Adams' *Grand Pianola Music*. Both David and Timo are proud to be Yamaha/Bösendorfer Artists, share a passion for cooking, and can often be found haunting Manhattan's garment district thrifts stores for vintage finds.

Timo Andres



Timo Andres (b.1985, Palo Alto, CA) is a composer and pianist who grew up in rural Connecticut and lives in Brooklyn, NY.

In January 2025, Andres was awarded the biennial Elise L Stoecker Prize from Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, in recognition of significant contributions to the field of chamber music. Shortly thereafter, Andres performed at Stanford Live with Conor Hanick, and at the Phillips Collection with Aaron Diehl; they perform their duo program at Carnegie Hall in 2026. Later this season Andres reunites with the Calder Quartet to perform his recent piano quintet *The Great Span* in New York City for the People's Symphony.

Other recent highlights include a sold-out solo recital debut for Carnegie Hall, and the world premiere of a piano concerto for Aaron Diehl at the Los Angeles Philharmonic, led by John Adams. Andres's orchestrations and arrangements for Justin Peck's 2024 production of Sufjan Stevens's *Illinoise* completed an acclaimed limited run on Broadway at the St James Theater following sold-out runs at The Fisher Center at Bard, the Chicago Shakespeare Theater, and at New York City's Park Avenue Armory. For his work on the production, Andres was nominated for a 2024 Tony Award for Best Orchestrations.

Andres continues with performances of Philip Glass's Piano Etudes internationally; he is a trusted collaborator of Philip Glass, serving as advisor and editor of a 2023 edition of the Etudes published by Artisan. Andres performed these works last season at Lincoln Center, the Chicago Humanities Festival, the Music Academy of the West, for NPR's Tiny Desk Concerts, and in 24/25 performs the Etudes at the Glass House in Stamford, CT, for Carolina Performing Arts, and at the Elbphilharmonie and the Philharmonie Berlin.

Notable works include *Everything Happens So Much* for the Boston Symphony; *Strong Language* for the Takács Quartet, commissioned by Carnegie Hall and the Shriver Hall Concert Series; *Steady Hand*, a two-piano concerto commissioned by the Britten Sinfonia premiered at the Barbican by Andres and David Kaplan; and *The Blind Banister*, a concerto for Jonathan Biss, which was a 2016 Pulitzer Prize Finalist.

As a pianist, Timo Andres has appeared with the LA Phil, North Carolina Symphony, the Albany Symphony, the New World Symphony, the Metropolis Ensemble, among others. He has performed solo recitals for Lincoln Center, and Wigmore Hall. Timo's collaborators include Becca Stevens, Jeffrey Kahane, Gabriel Kahane, Brad Mehldau, Nadia Sirota, and – of course – Philip Glass, who selected Andres as the

recipient of the City of Toronto Glenn Gould Protégé Prize. He was nominated for a Grammy award for his performances on 2021's *The Arching Path*, an album of music by Christopher Cerrone; and his 2024 album, *The Blind Banister* with Metropolis Ensemble, is Grammy-nominated for Best Engineered Album, Classical. Andres's collaborations with Sufjan Stevens also include his May 2023 recording with Conor Hanick of Stevens's latest album, *Reflections*; arrangements of ballets for New York City Ballet, and a solo piano album, *The Decalogue*.

A Nonesuch Records artist, Andres has multiple albums on the label since his debut, *Shy and Mighty*, in 2010. A Yale School of Music graduate, he is a Yamaha/Bösendorfer Artist and is on the composition faculty at the Mannes School of Music at the New School.

David Kaplan



David Kaplan, pianist, has been called 'excellent and adventurous' by *The New York Times*, and praised by the *Boston Globe* for 'grace and fire' at the keyboard. As orchestra soloist, he has appeared with the Britten Sinfonia at London's Barbican, Das Sinfonie Orchester Berlin at the Philharmonie, and with the Symphony Orchestras of Baltimore, Hawaii, San Antonio, among others. As recitalist, he has performed at the Ravinia Festival, Sarasota Opera House, Music on Main in Vancouver, Strathmore, Washington's National Gallery and New York's Carnegie and Merkin Halls.

Kaplan has consistently drawn critical acclaim for programmes that creatively interweave classical, contemporary and newly commissioned works. As a guest

artist of Piano Spheres at Los Angeles' Zipper Hall, he recently premiered *Quasi una Fantasia*, a programme exploring the grey area between composition and improvisation through works by Anthony Cheung, Christopher Cerrone and Andrea Casarrubios, together with Couperin, Beethoven, Schumann, Saariaho, Ligeti and his own improvisations. Kaplan's *New Dances of the League of David*, a recital infusing Schumann's *Davidsbündlertänze* with 16 new works by composers including Augusta Read Thomas, Marcos Balter, Caroline Shaw and Andrew Norman was cited among the Best Classical Music Performances of 2015 by *The New York Times*. The *New Dances* album was released in 2024 on the New Focus label, immediately garnering raves in *Gramophone*, *Fanfare* and *The Financial Times*.

Balancing solo performances with meaningful collaborations, Kaplan has played with the Attacca, Ariel, Enso, Hausman and Tesla String Quartets. As a core member of Decoda, the Affiliate Ensemble of Carnegie Hall, he performs frequently in New York's most exciting venues, from the Metropolitan Museum of Art to National Sawdust, as well as creating innovative residencies

as far away as Abu Dhabi, Mexico and Scotland. The ensemble's self-titled debut album was recorded at Tippet Rise Art Center, and has been nominated for a 2024 GRAMMY for the premiere recording of Valerie Coleman's *Revelry*, originally composed for Decoda in 2018.

He is a veteran of numerous distinguished chamber music festivals and series, such as the Seattle Chamber Music, La Jolla, Bard and Mostly Mozart Festivals, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Chamber Music Northwest and Barge Music. He is an alumnus of Tanglewood and the Ravinia-Steans Institute and performs regularly as an alumnus of the Perlman Music Program, including with Itzhak Perlman at Miami's Arsht Center. He serves as Co-Artistic Director of Lyrica Chamber Music, a community series in Morris County, NJ currently in its 39th season.

In addition to last year's debut solo album, Kaplan has recorded for Naxos and Marquis Records, as well as for Nonesuch as part of his longstanding duo with pianist/composer Timo Andres. Performing

often with his wife, flutist Catherine Gregory, the duo released *Vent* in 2023 on Bright Shiny Things, including music by Gabriela Lena Frank, David Lang, Mr. Andres, Schubert and Prokofiev.

Kaplan was a student of the late Claude Frank, and previously studied with Walter Ponce and Miyoko Lotto. His mentors over the years have included Anton Kuerti, Richard Goode and Emanuel Ax. He studied conducting at the Universität der Künste Berlin with Lutz Köhler, under the auspices of a Fulbright Fellowship from 2008 to 2010. The recipient of a DMA from Yale University in 2014, Kaplan earned his Bachelor from UCLA, where he has also served on the faculty since 2016, and now is the Associate Professor and Inaugural Shapiro Family Chair in Piano Performance.

David is proud to be a Yamaha/Bösendorfer Artist, and when at home in Los Angeles, he enjoys practicing on his childhood piano, a 1908 Hamburg Steinway model A. Away from the keyboard, he loves cartooning and cooking, and is mildly obsessed with classic cars.

Kilkenny City



