

When Water Speaks | WWD, 22 March 2021

A musical tribute to water (and online webinar) to celebrate the World Water Day

A collaboration between the Global Network of Water Museums (a flagship initiative of UNESCO-IHP), Orchestra of St. John's (London/Oxford) and the School of Geography and the Environment (University of Oxford)

This year the event organized by the Global Network to celebrate the WWD will focus on rivers and consider new means of expression to reflect on the value of water and its crucial importance for every living being. Rivers are the blood vessels of our world. They provide freshwater to support, directly or indirectly, the lives and daily livelihoods of billions of people globally. However, when they run dry, overflow or become unpredictable, they turn into major threats for society. Climate change is projected to amplify and accelerate these challenges. This first musical tribute focuses on the [name of the river], in Nepal.

The proposed webinar is the first in a multi-part series

which engages audiences by emotionally connecting them to water science and issues related to security and climate change through music and visual art. It will feature one electro-orchestral composition commissioned by the [Orchestra of St John's](#) and composed by [Limpet Space Race](#), in response to scientific research:

- [Earth Flow](#), focuses on the theme of landslides, and erosion accelerated by climate change in Nepal, responding to the [Himalayas to Ocean](#) (H2O) documentary project.



The streaming of each music video will be followed by a panel discussion with the artists and scientific experts whose research inspired the pieces. The session will be 75 minutes in length and will also feature images taken by Alice Chautard in Nepal and Ethiopia as part of projects on water security and climate change research led by University of Oxford's [REACH programme](#)

Draft program (75 mnts) with list of speakers

10 mnts - Introduction (chaired by) Abou Amani, Director of UNESCO-IHP (TBC)

Welcome by Eddy Moors, President of WAMU-NET

15 mnts - Presentation of the musical performance by Cayenna Ponchione-Bailey (Orchestra of St John's Associate Conductor) and showing of the video performance [Earth Flow \(click here to watch the video\)](#)

15 mnts – Discussion between Cayenna Ponchione-Bailey, the artists Nikò O'Brien and Hannah Jacobs (Limpet Space Race) and Alice Chautard (REACH Research and Knowledge Exchange Manager, University of Oxford)

30 mnts – Round Table with 5 invited panellists (TBC)

5 mnts – Conclusion TBC



Public participation: Following the first music performance on World Water Day 2021, we plan to run an online participatory photography campaign, encouraging people around the world to send us images that capture what climate changes means to them, in relation to water. The images will be compiled into a moving collage overlaid with a soundtrack from Limpet Space Race using snippets from the musical pieces, improvisation, field recordings and modular synth, to be shown as part of FUTURE sessions.

Vision for future music performance/events and webinars: The Orchestra of St John's, Limpet Space Race and Alice Chautard will be collaborating with the Global Network of Water Museums to identify scientific projects to form the basis of the final two commissions in this series. Using the network to connect with international water scientists and engage audiences, future webinars will see scientists 'pitch' their research to the artists in bids to become the next collaborators. This format will create a dynamic and engaging space for sharing water research to broader audiences and raise awareness around the work of the Global Network of Water Museums and water security more generally.



About the contributors / invited panelists



Alice Chautard

Alice Chautard is the Communications and Knowledge Exchange Manager for the REACH programme - a DFID funded research programme led by the University of Oxford to improve water security for the poor in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. She is also a documentary photographer using photography as a tool to communicate environmental, water and climate research.

REACH is a 9-year (2015-2024) research programme led by the University of Oxford and funded by the UK Government, to improve water security in Africa and South Asia, especially for people affected by poverty. Climate change is a central theme of the research cutting across all research sites in Kenya, Ethiopia and Bangladesh.



Himalayas to Ocean (H2O) was a documentary project in partnership with the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, and the Environmental Change Institute, to communicate the science around climate change in Nepal's mountainous environment through multi-media outputs including photography, video and audio recordings.



Cayenna Ponchione-Bailey

Alaskan conductor Cayenna Ponchione-Bailey uses orchestral music to promote social justice and environmental sustainability. Through a unique brand of artistic co-production and creative collaboration, her commissioning and performance projects amplify voices and raise awareness; fusing the local with the global, the political with the personal. Based in the UK, Ponchione-Bailey is the Associate Conductor of the Orchestra of St John's and collaborates with numerous artists and organisations including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Afghanistan National Institute of Music and University of Oxford.

Limpet Space Race

'This duo are geniuses' - BBC Introducing



Duo mishmashing pop, jazz, prog and diy electronics to bring you 'sublimely experimental' songs with a 'one of a kind sound'. They are Niko O'Brien (FR/IT) on drums/guitar/diy electronics and Hannah 'Jakes' Jacobs (UK) on vocals/synths/bits and bobs. They gig, build sound installations and do experimental collaborations. Recent commissions include works for electronics and orchestra, an artist residency and a surround-sound project.

Orchestra of St John's



The Orchestra of St John's, founded by John Lubbock OBE in 1967, continues to be distinguished by both its world-class concerts and its vibrant 'Connections' work, which breaks down barriers to classical music through a cluster of creative initiatives including cross-cultural artistic collaborations, its young artists platform and its 'Music for Autism' and 'Serenading' for mental health

programmes. Originally in residence at St John's Smith Square OSJ has toured internationally and now maintains concert series in Wigmore Hall, Dorchester Abbey and the Ashmolean Museum with acclaimed artists including Sheku Kanneh-Mason, Evelyn Glennie, Yo Yo Ma and Yehudi Menuhin amongst others.



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