



PARAMIRABO

PRESENTS

# HORIZON MADOG

TUESDAY  
FEBRUARY 6 AT 8 P.M.

VON KUSTER HALL  
DON WRIGHT FACULTY  
OF MUSIC - LONDON, ON

JEREMY HUW WILLIAMS

PAUL FREHNER

PARAMIRABO



Conseil des arts  
du Canada

Canada Council  
for the Arts



Conseil  
des arts  
et des lettres  
du Québec



CONSEIL  
DES ARTS  
DE MONTRÉAL

FONDATION  
SOCAN  
FOUNDATION

Relations  
internationales  
et Francophonie  
Québec



Western  
Music  
Don Wright Faculty of Music



wales arts international  
celfyddydau rhyngwladol cymru



Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru  
Arts Council of Wales



ARIENNIR GAN  
Y LOTERI  
LOTTERY FUNDED



# Program

Welsh baritone Jeremy Huw Williams and Paramirabo present the premiere of *Horizon: Madog*, a new chamber opera by faculty member Paul Frehner and librettist Angela J. Murphy. The program also features the premiere of *Tynged yr Iaith (the Fate of the Language)* by Welsh composer Claire Victoria Roberts and works by William Mathias and Claude Vivier.

---

**ROBERTS, Claire Victoria** *Tynged yr Iaith*  
*(Fate of the Language)*

**MATHIAS, William** *Sonatina Op. 98*

**VIVIER, Claude** *Paramirabo*

----- INTERMISSION -----

**FREHNER, Paul** *Horizon: Madog*

---

Durée approximative du concert : 1h15

**Paul FREHNER**

Composer / Conductor

**Angela J. MURPHY**

Librettist and Director

**Chris Wardell**

Video / Lights

A production of  
**Paramirabo**

# Synopsis

Horizon: Madog takes place in a distant future, when the world's oceans have flooded coastal regions across the globe, and geomagnetic storms have decimated global communication systems, isolating the scant remaining survivors of societal collapse. Humanity is recovering but is still in a fragile state, and once-great nations are now fractured into island states.

The piece explores the musings of Madog, who believes he is a descendant of the legendary Welsh prince 'Madog' who purportedly reached North America in the 12th century. This tri-lingual (French, English and Welsh) Elder has been an instrumental founder of the fictional Île-Mont-qui-Tremble, a vibrant trilingual island community situated somewhere in what was 'Quebec'. Madog and his now-deceased wife Élodie and their descendants are core founders of this 'back-to-the-earth' movement that have found a new Way, a mantra, for living in harmony with the environment.

At the core of their ethos, nothing is created from objects that contribute to further pollution; everything is reused and re-usable. But, Madog's rough-hewn "radio" has been transmitting news in Welsh that somewhere east, societies are re-developing. He fears that with the use of build-build-build technology, they will commit the same environmentally destructive errors and desecrate an already fragile-but-healing world. Seeing himself as a Messianic figure, he is making his final preparations before embarking on a solo perilous ocean journey by sailboat to find what remains of his ancestral homeland, and to spread his knowledge of the Way to those he encounters.

# Program Notes

**ROBERTS, Claire Victoria** : *Tynged yr Iaith (Fate of the Language)*

Saunders Lewis, a controversial figure in Welsh history, made his name as a writer and politician in 20th-century Wales. When Jeremy approached me to write the piece, he suggested looking into subject matter regarding the Welsh language in Wales, to premiere in another bilingual country, Canada. I found it greatly interesting to listen to the speech that Lewis gave on the 13th of February, 1962, at the BBC annual broadcast lecture.

The speech is titled 'Tynged yr Iaith', The Fate of the Language, and presents an arching shape from past to present and future. Jeremy was interested in singing parts of the speech, and as a fellow Welsh speaker, concerned for the fate of the people of Wales and their future in a world where so much feels beyond our control, I was more than happy to oblige.

The speech outlines the history of English marginalisation of the language, in the pursuit of a united kingdom with England, and the passivity or complicity of the Welsh people in this endeavour.

The lecture was a very important plea to save the language of Wales, and Cymdeithas yr Iaith was formed shortly after (the Welsh Language Society, a direct action pressure group in Wales campaigning for the right of Welsh people to use the Welsh language in every aspect of their lives). Many parts set in this dramatic song cycle are not the words of Lewis, but rather lines that he quotes from historical court documents.



From the death of Elizabeth until the threshold of the twentieth century there was neither an attempt nor an intention by anyone of importance in Wales to undo in any way the bond that united Wales to England. The concept of Wales as a nation, as an historical unit, ceased to be a memory, an ideal or a fact.



We shall reveal to the world the value of this old language in such beautiful colours as it will be reckoned an honour henceforth to speak it amongst the learned and the nobility of the kingdom. (Richard Morris)



It has always been the policy of the legislature to introduce the English language into Wales. (A lawyer in a court of law in 1773)



In the middle of the industrial revolution in South Wales when thousands of the agricultural poor of rural Wales were flocking to the coal-mining and iron-working valleys.



Is the position hopeless? It is, of course, if we are content to give up hope. There is nothing in the world more comfortable than to give up hope.

## **MATHIAS, William** : *Sonatina Op. 98*

Mathias' *Sonatina*, originally composed in 1953 but revised in 1986, is a slighter yet more approachable work. A considerable amount of straight repetition renders the music easily assimilable. For instance, both main themes in the opening sonata movement are repeated during the exposition; similarly a large stretch of the development consists simply of a transposed version of a previous passage. Only in the third and final movement does the structure become more complex, with the combination of variants of the main themes of the first movement. But such subtleties pale into insignificance when compared with the rhythmic ebullience and good humour of the outer movements, and the suave, urbane lyricism of the central *Andante*. If the listener is entertained agreeably, the *Sonatina* has done its job well.

## VIVIER, Claude : *Paramirabo*

“

Je compris que c'était plus que la musique qui avait besoin de moi mais bien la Vie dans le sens le plus créateur et le plus universel du mot

”

- Claude Vivier

It is said that the title of *Paramirabo* comes from a mistake by Vivier, who intended to name it *Paramaribo* in reference to the capital of Suriname, a South American country which there is no indication that Vivier ever visited in his biography. The result is a work of imaginary exoticism that, when listened to, evokes a story for children in music. By considering the instruments as characters - the pastoral naivety of the flute, the lyricism of the violin, the ambivalence of the piano, and the friendly aspect of the cello in its solo - one can clearly hear a dialogue.

A calm and peaceful situation of flute, violin, and cello is quickly disrupted by a violent intervention from the piano. This is followed by exchanges during which the instruments play in alternation, making snippets of childish melodies heard that one would believe to know. As Vivier's works are never quite cheerful, one is not surprised by the long, very calm final section: like an unsettling consensus among the instruments, all seem to wake up from a bad dream.

Martine Rhéaume [viii-07]

**FREHNER, Paul** : *Horizon: Madog*  
Libretto by Angela J. Murphy

-----  
*Textual notes*

Canadian English / **Quebec French** / *Welsh*

*Welsh text translated is in [brackets and italics] in English*

-----

**RADIO BROADCAST:**

*"Yr Wyddfa Dewch draw Rydym yn ffynnu Tyfu Datblygu Ailadeiladu*

*Mae gennym ni'r dechnoleg, mae gennym ni'r ffordd"*

*[Mount Snowdon, Come here, We are thriving, growing, developing, rebuilding,*

*We have the technology, we have the way.]*

**MADOG:**

**Précieuse balance qu'on enseigne ainsi aux Monts et monde,**

I am not used to silence

**isolé comme qu'on est sur notre Île-Mont qui Tremble, Québec je me**

**souviens oui oui**

whatever

The **cacophonie du grand village** born from sun's death tongue and melted

**mer** mass

*Élodie, wyt ti'n cofio? [Élodie, do you remember?]*

My eyes did not breathe in the sun-born firelight that blinded **ceux qui nous**

**précèdent**, nor my skin hiss as the **satellites friables et foutus** catapulted

their torn excrements on the **masse de monde entamée sur une terre déjà**

**infectée par une lassitude robotique**. *A wnaeth e ein cosbi ni, ein duw-olau? A*

*oedd e yn caru'r rhew uffernol hwn?*

*[Did It punish us, our god-light? Did it love this infernal ice to heaving gasping]*

**petite-mort**, and drown our want of bloated excess?



**On raconte encore de ces pauvres derniers du Mont Réal, perchés sur leur p'tite croix ancienne,** succoured into the deep on blinging boats of useless treasures and trophies—hoooo that sucking **vortex infini** they cried out **sacrements aux saints qui leur foutaient carrément.**

**Mais on a su Élodie, qu'une terre bondée** *daear sy'n mygu ac yn suddo i anhrefn gwastraff lis an earth that suffocates and sinks into the chaos of waste.*

**Précieuse balance qu'on enseigne ainsi aux Monts et monde, façonnant la panoplie des belles terres** that adore our mantra, our way of aliving. Sublime fertile **féconde seconde vie**, sublime fertile, our rebirth recycled from the crass crust of oil gluttons and tech-fucking satellite-adulating...**bande de dévastateurs!**

**Élodie, regarde cette big-ass astuce de bois récupérée, voilée, bâtit par nos bébés, on y va là, toi pis moi**

**Aye - est pas ci p'tite que ça all that all that**  
**Et ch-te l'ai dit, c'est le signal qui'm guide!** You heard it too you did clear as day on this damn concoction.

#### **RADIO BROADCAST:**

*"Yr Wyddfa Dewch draw Rydym yn ffynnu Tyfu Datblygu Ailadeiladu  
Mae gennym ni'r dechnoleg, mae gennym ni'r ffordd"  
[Mount Snowdon, Come here, We are thriving, growing, developing, rebuilding.  
We have the technology, we have the way.]*

#### **MADOG:**

What can they mean but catastrophe with their tech and tangled airwaves of expansion bullshit!

And in dreams my ancestral namesake he growls at me :

*cer i'r môr y tir-garwr truenus!*

*[Go to the sea you pathetic land-lover!] Teach them! Save them! Seek them!*

**Mes pieds plantés sur un pont sanguin** fy mamwlad [my motherland] beckons nonetheless.

These soft liquid siren lips lapping **les os** fy nghroen o bridd [my earthen skin] |  
**Mais non! Non!**

**Baptême et blasphème de création sacrée! Ici on est au paradis quand même hé! Pis c'est qui les dieux maintenant Élodie c'est nous autres,** earth savers bathers not those tech slavers who milked our mother til the skies belched sun-stricken blood rain and broke the land the covenant **entre humains bêtes et ancêtres.**

Our ancient land is poised for poison again, *y sŵn mecanyddol diraddiol ffaidd hwn yn cael ei hyrddio, hyrddio dramor, y sŵn mecanyddol, yn hyrddio* [this disgusting degrading mechanical sound being hurled overseas] while here, we know we KNOW.

**Ce qu'elle veut. C'est nous les dieux,** ni yw y duwiau [we are the gods] , **c'est nous les dieux...** haaa yes yes yes

here we know

**Ce qu'elle veut.**

**C'est nous les dieux,** ni yw y duwiau

*ni yw y duwiau ni yw y duwiau NI YW Y DUWIAU!* **Ce qu'elle veut.**

**C'est nous les dieux** ni yw y duwiau

Are you done with me my love? **Te fous-tu de moi?** Done with your new god?  
*Dywed wrthyf! Dywed wrthyf! Dywed wrthyf!* [Tell me! Tell me! Tell me!]

*Rwy'n eich adnabod chi, tagiwr awyr-lyncwr ffyrnig, ond nid yw fy ffræe i gyda chi.*  
*[I recognize you, fierce sky-swallowing choker, but my quarrel is not with you.]*

This we-blessed wind-blown vessel *bydd hyn yn fy ysgubo yn gyflym ac yn gadarn i'w hachub rhagddynt eu hunain* [this will sweep me swiftly and soundly to save them from themselves] **et donc sauvera le monde entier.**

Here we know, Here we know,

**Oui nous'l'savons** Ni yw y duwiau, [We are the gods]

*Ni yw y duwiau, Ni yw y duwiau*

# Jeremy Huw Williams

## Baritone soloist

The Welsh baritone Jeremy Huw Williams studied at St John's College, Cambridge, at the National Opera Studio in London, and with April Cantelo. He made his debut with Welsh National Opera as Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) and has since appeared in more than seventy operatic roles. He has given performances at major venues in North and South America, Australia, China, India, and most European countries.



He has given recitals at the Wigmore Hall and Purcell Room, and at many major music festivals. He has appeared with the RTE Concert Orchestra in Dvořák's *Requiem* at the National Concert Hall in Dublin, the Orchestre National de Lyon in Benjamin's *Sometime Voices* at the Auditorium de Lyon, l'Orchestre Léonard de Vinci in Brahms's *Requiem* at the opera house in Rouen, the Orquestra Simfònica de Barcelona i Nacional de Catalunya in Orff's *Carmina Burana* at the Auditori in Barcelona, and the Sønderjyllands Symfoniorkester in Bach's *Weinachts-Oratorium*.

He is renowned as a fine exponent of contemporary music and has commissioned much new music. He frequently records for BBC Radio 3 (in recital, and with the BBC NOW, CBSO, BBC SO, BBC SSO, BBC Philharmonic and BBC CO), and has made more than fifty commercial recordings, including some twenty solo discs of songs.

He was awarded an Honorary Fellowship by Glyndŵr University in 2009 for services to music in Wales, the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Music from the University of Aberdeen in 2011, the Medal of the Order of the British Empire in the 2021 Queen's Birthday Honours, and the 2022 John Edwards Memorial Award, the most prestigious non-competitive award given in Wales for services to the nation's music.

# PARAMIRABO



Taking its name from an evocative composition by iconic Montreal composer Claude Vivier, Paramirabo was founded in 2008 by young musicians at the Conservatoire de musique de Montréal. Since then, the ensemble has forged new paths through its audacious programming, numerous collaborations and exchanges, engagement with the public, and its commitment to the creation of new music by young Canadian and Québec composers at home and abroad.

Paramirabo has performed internationally, from Belgium, France and Germany, to Mexico and the UK, and has been invited to numerous new music festivals: Kontraklang (Berlin, 2021), Festival MNM (Montréal, 2021), Festival LOOP et Ars Musica (Mons, Liège, and Brussels, 2019), Waterloo Region Contemporary Music Sessions (2018), Frontiers Festival (Birmingham, 2016), Eduardo Mata Festival (Oaxaca, 2016), New York's Mise-En Festival (2014), Winnipeg's Cluster New Music Festival, and Montreal Contemporary Music Lab (2013). From 2017 to 2023, Paramirabo was the ensemble in residence for the new music workshop at the international music and dance academy of Domaine Forget, and will begin a new collaboration with Orford Musique in the summer of 2024.

Paramirabo is the winner of the 3 OPUS Prizes (2019, 2020, 2021), and was nominated for a JUNO Award in 2020 for Classical Album of the Year.

# Paul Frehner

Composer / Conductor

Paul Frehner, born in Montreal in 1970, completed his Doctorate in music at McGill University in 2004, studying composition under Denys Bouliane. His Master's degree, finished in 1998 at McGill, included composition studies with Brian Cherney and orchestration with Bengt Hambraeus.



Renowned for his compositions, Frehner's works have been performed by numerous artists and ensembles globally, including Almeida Opera, Soundstreams Canada, the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, and the Prague Philharmonia, among others. His opera, *Sirius on Earth*, was commissioned by the Genesis Foundation and premiered at the 2003 Almeida Opera Festival in London.

Frehner has earned various accolades for his compositions, including First Prize in both the Jeunesses Musicales World Orchestra's International Composition Competition (for *Overture 2000*) and the Prague Philharmonia's Symphony of the Third Millennium Composition Competition (for *Elixirs*). He also received Second Prize in the Genesis Prizes for Opera (2003), a Finalist Award in the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra's competition (2004), and the Claude Vivier National Award for *Lila* (2007). In 2012, he was honored with the K.M. Hunter Artist Award in Classical Music.

Currently, Frehner teaches composition, orchestration, and electroacoustic music at Western University's Faculty of Music, where he also directs CEARP, their advanced electroacoustic music production studio.

# Claire Victoria Roberts

## Composer

Claire Victoria Roberts is a composer, vocalist and violinist, blurring the boundaries of jazz, contemporary classical and singer-songwriter genres. She collaborates with musicians from classical, jazz and folk spheres. Her work has been performed by the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Psappha Ensemble, cellist Oliver Coates, Opra

Cymru, Uproar Ensemble, Solem Quartet and The Carice Singers. She has collaborated as a violinist and improvising vocalist with the Camden Symphony Orchestra, Sherman Theatre, New Voices choir, Morley Arts Festival, Aberystwyth Arts Festival, and Sherman Theatre. As a composer, she has been commissioned by the Cheltenham Festival, Presteigne Festival, MusicFest and the Wigmore Hall.



# Angela J. Murphy

Librettist and Director

Angela J. Murphy is a creator whose home and inspiration has always been Montreal. Working within the theatre community for the past 25 years, she currently runs the Front of House at the Segal Centre for the Performing Arts. She is a graduate of Dawson's Theatre program and Concordia's English and Creative Writing program.

Through her creative work, she is driven to explore the nuts and bolts of why people be peopling, the meat of their stories, and their relationship with their environment. She is also wildly fond of portmanteaus and making up her own idioms, no matter how ridiculous and oblique they may be.

Her first libretto and collaboration with composer Paul Frehner took place in 2003. *Sirius on Earth*, was produced in London, England, funded by the Genesis Foundation. As *Horizon: Madog*, it also explores a dystopian future where sadness has been cured, to the detriment of what it means to be human.



# Musicians

## **Baritone soloist**

Jeremy Huw Williams

## **Flute**

Jeffrey Stonehouse  
PARAMIRABO

## **Violin**

Hubert Brizard  
PARAMIRABO

## **Cello**

Viviana Gosselin  
PARAMIRABO

## **Piano**

Pamela Reimer  
PARAMIRABO



## Next Dates



# HORIZON MADOG

**26 MAY**

7:30 pm

Beumaris Festival, Canolfan Beumaris  
Wales, UK

**29 MAY**

8 pm

Rhyl Music Club, Rhyl Town Hall  
Wales, UK

**31 MAY**

7:30 pm

Ucheldre Centre, Holyhead  
Wales, UK



## Production Team

**Jeffrey Stonehouse**

Artistic Director

**Viviane Gosselin**

General Manager

**Audrey Chea**

Communications Manager

**PARAMIRABO WARMLY THANKS ITS PARTNERS**