



DOVETAILING

Dovetailing is an exhibition inspired by luthiery (the making of stringed musical instruments).

Sculptor **Juliet Gutch** is responding with a series of suspended wooden mobiles.

Filmmaker **Clare Dearnaley** is creating a film for the installation which weaves together natural sound, quiet making, the mobile forms and played music.

The artists are working with world-renowned composer and viola player **Sally Beamish** who has specially adapted and performed a composition for the project.

The exhibition explores how the quiet care of luthiery dovetails with the natural world to create potential for musical sound.

Created over lockdown, Dovetailing will open in April 2021 at **Farfield Meeting House**, in the Yorkshire Dales. The exhibition will be by appointment.

To see a short promotional film of the project, [click here](#)





Dovetailing - Further information

Musical instruments have evolved over many hundreds of years, their shapes and forms developed from natural materials through a transfer of skills from luthier to luthier. The project Dovetailing is a creative response to this evolution.

The rhythms, harmonies and timbres of music echo back to the natural world, and it feels as if instruments themselves embody the potential for a balanced and harmonious intertwining of humankind and nature. The title of the project, Dovetailing, describes this relationship of two parts by referencing the interlocking dovetail joint in carpentry, a strong and seamless union. This joint is used in the making of instruments and the word has also been borrowed for orchestration, describing the technique of overlapping musical lines between two instruments.

The past months have brought into relief the different roles we all play in the world, and of the whole being greater than the sum of its individual parts. Considering music making as an expression of a number of interactions - from the tree to the luthier, to the instrument, the composer, the player and the audience - has felt resonant.

Composition by Sally Beamish OBE

'Prelude and Canon', originally for two violins, was commissioned by Peter Lissauer for the Inaugural 'Partial to Paganini Festival' held at Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. The premiere, in March 2006, was given by Clio Gould and Jonathan Morton, played on a Stradivarius by Clio, with Jonathan playing on a new violin inspired by Stradivarius, built that week by a team of violin makers.

This short duet is 'canonic' throughout, the opening Prelude leading to a true canon, beginning with the second violin. In the central, slower section, the violins reverse, and the first violin is the lead voice to the end of the piece, which ends with a brief coda referring to the Prelude. The two parts within the piece of music are equal and non-hierarchical, perfectly evoking the theme of the Dovetailing project.

The work has been specially arranged for violas and was premiered by Sally Beamish and Sophie Renshaw as part of their discussion about the project, recorded during the first lockdown for the London Mozart Players in May 2020.

The Dovetailing film will also feature Sally's daughter Stephanie Irvine who is a luthier and who made Sally's viola, as well as Linus Andersson who made Sophie's viola.





Mobiles by Juliet Gutch

The shapes within the mobiles will be a response to stringed musical instruments and the works will acknowledge instruments as honed and initially quiet sculptural forms.

The materials for the mobiles will take inspiration from those used for violas (spruce and maple). The creating of stringed instruments and the making of mobiles share techniques which will be used: template making, steam bending, moulding, ribbing, stringing. The sound of a played stringed instrument is the result of interactions of its own many elements, producing notes of music which radiate from the body of the empty sound box into the surrounding air. The constantly moving and changing mobiles will give a sense of this balanced interaction of varying parts and empty space. Musical notes, once played, are a unique performance; the composition is never repeated in exactly the same way. The fleeting nature of the configurations created by the movement of the mobiles will reflect this transience.

Film by Clare Dearnaley

The film, which will be projected through the suspended mobiles, will weave together light and shadow. The shapes of the mobiles will combine with sounds of natural compositions, the quiet making of sculptures and instruments, and the music playing.

The film will express the indivisibility of positive and negative spaces, and balance quietness and sound, emptiness and materiality, transience and permanence.

At times abstract, at times quietly observational, the film will be an immersive experience where birdsong, wind, music and the recordings of tools create a forest of sound.

The film will explore layers of creativity and interaction, with the viewer becoming the very final layer.

Farfield Meeting House:

Farfield Meeting House, on the Dales Way in Yorkshire and surrounded by trees and hills, was one of the very first buildings created for stillness and contemplation. Viewers of the exhibition will be invited to reflect upon the quietness of the making of musical instruments. This early Quaker meeting house was built in 1689, the same year as the Act of Toleration, and is an important monument on the road to freedom of belief. Tiny as it is, it was chosen by Historic England as one of the ten most historically significant buildings for faith and belief in the country.

"I love the idea of using a space meant for contemplation." Stephanie Irvine

"I was completely blown away by your beautiful multi-media composition Dovetailing. It's a work of peace and wonder which draws you into an enchanted world suspended in time. I loved the poetry of the narrative, the floating imagery and music mirroring the suspended, graceful shapes of the mobiles." Professor Aurora Plomer



