

Double Quintet Tour

Two Quintets – Two Sets – Two New Albums - Ten Musicians

Performance – Masterclasses and Workshops

KEVIN FIGES WALLPAPER MUSIC
AL SWAINGER POINTLESS BEAUTY



Al Swainger – Ant Law – Gary Alesbrook
Jon Clark – George Cooper

Kevin Figes – Brigitte Beraha – Jim Blomfield
Ashley John Long – Mark Whitlam

Double Quintet Tour

Spring 2022

Tour and Workshops

To request a press kit please contact
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Kevin Figes 'Wallpaper Music'

'A mind-expanding feast for the ears' The Guardian

Kevin Figes

Saxophonist, flautist, composer, arranger, musical director, educator, producer, founder of Pig records.

Kevin Figes, a leading name in the Bristol music scene, began by studying with Elton Dean and attended the Guildhall School of Music and Drama studying with Tim Garland. An accomplished composer, his latest recording ('**Wallpaper Music**', recorded January 2021 and due for release in December 2021) represents a maturity of voice and attitude.

The music is a unique amalgamation of a wide range of influences, including rock, free jazz, contemporary classical and folk. It oscillates throughout between lyrics and melodies and open improvisation. Music pursuing its own way, pushing against the mainstream or any one genre, it will have the audience gripped from beginning to end.

This ensemble features:

Kevin Figes – Flutes, Saxophones

Brigitte Beraha – Voice

Jim Blomfield – Keyboards, Electronics

Ashley John Long – Bass

Mark Whitlam – Percussion



"This was often challenging music, but such the quality of the band, it looked and felt natural. There's an exciting new energy to this new music from Kevin Figes and the band he's assembled to play it, invest it with vital, inventive life" – Mike Collins (St George's, Bristol – review of first live performance June 27/06/2021)

The album 'Wallpaper Music' is due for official release in December 2021 on Pig Records.

For more information please see: www.kevinfiges.co.uk



Kevin Figes Quintet Premiere of Wallpaper Music, St Georges 27th June, 2021

Photo: Janinka Diverio

Al Swainger – Pointless Beauty

“Ethereal bliss... a filmscore to the movie inside your head... an absolutely standout jazz album.” – Martin Phillips (Some Diurnal Aural Awe) – of the 2018 release After & Before

Al Swainger

Electric & Double Bass player, Composer, Arranger, Musical Director, Educator, Producer, Digital artist and FX Specialist.

Rich and eclectic atmospheres offer a musical platform in which to escape, daydream and stimulate emotion. A state of mind and in part, meditative philosophy.

Pointless Beauty is the contemporary project of bassist, digital artist, composer and producer Al Swainger. A multi-instrumentalist from a young age, incorporating bass, piano, French horn, guitar, synths, computer sequencers and sound design.

Inspired as much by Weather Report as Iron Maiden, Pink Floyd or Chick Corea, Swainger's sincerity and authenticity is clearly drawn from multiple influences. Combining instrumental quintet with computer based live sound manipulation, the new lineup for 2021 features some of the UK's most exciting musicians. Long standing collaborators George Cooper (Haggis Horns, Abstract Orchestra, Jazz Defenders) and Jon Clark (Biophosmos, Camo Clave, Paper Dragon) join relatively new associations Ant Law (Tim Garland, Evelyn Glennie, Jason Rebello) and Gary Alesbrook (Kasabian, Super Furry Animals, Duval Project) to complete the group. The new album, **'Hearts Full of Grace'** was recently recorded and is currently being mastered due for release in early 2022.

This ensemble features:

Al Swainger – Bases and Electronics

Ant Law – Guitar

Gary Alesbrook – Trumpet

Jon Clark – Drums and Ableton Live

George Cooper – Keyboards



For more information please see: www.alswainger.com

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Al Swainger Quintet

At the recording of new album 'Hearts Full of Grace'

May 2021 – Photos: Elmar Rubio



Workshops

Kevin and Al are both experienced educators. These workshops will take improvisation as their theme but will also be an exploration of the senses aiming to work with the visually impaired and hard of hearing to establish new ways of understanding and relating to sound.

We can offer three settings where each band leader will take it in turns to support one another in the delivery.

“ The Organisation of Sound”

Both artists agree that there is so much more to improvisation than playing notes. They want to help interested and curious attendees expand their minds and approach improvisation in new ways, whatever the instrument or tool, even through the ‘self’. Improvisation can be as simple as clapping hands or a more sophisticated technique, collaborating with contemporaries. Al and Kevin will guide participants through a range of exercises and practices to encourage musical expansion or personal vocabulary.



Masterclasses – Creativity without Judgement

Designed for musicians who have a confident understanding of their craft and wish to have a greater understanding of improvisational techniques.

Workshops – Breaking Down Inhibitions

Ideal for classroom and small ensemble scenarios where beginners and learners can understand the theory behind improvisation and why it's such an important method to incorporate into creative practice.

Community Groups/Audiences - Permission to Play

For non-players who have a passion for music and wish to understand improvisational techniques with whatever is available. Whether this be one's voice, a computer or found sounds from around your homes.



Expect the unconventional. Delivery may include the use of boxes, masks, objects.

All workshops will take onboard any current Government Covid 19 legislation.

Statement from no_place_arts

This tour was the idea of **no_place_arts** who identified that the similarities and differences between Figs and Swainger could be jointly celebrated.

‘Both artists have similar work ethics and now lead their own ambitious projects. They are Bristol based yet move in different circles. Whilst being aware of each other’s work they had never formally combined to work with each other. The light-bulb moment came when I realised Kevin and Al had both previously worked with Keith Tippett. Kevin had been called upon by Keith a number of times and Al mostly knew him from Dartington Summer School. They almost met last year when both were asked to perform in Keith’s Octet but sadly this was cancelled due to poor health. The subsequent passing of Keith made me realise how Kevin and Al were unwittingly connected through his legacy. Tippett was undoubtedly an undercurrent and influence in the lives of these musicians, and I know would be thrilled to see them both expanding their careers and taking new risks. Whilst this tour isn’t a tribute to Keith, for me his ethos underpins it and I felt a duty to pull together these invisible aspects and make happen something that he has inspired. I managed Keith Tippett for a number of years and his influence still resonates. I think he would approve of this next generation taking the helm of the alternative jazz music scene and being rightly acknowledged for their contribution’’ – Janinka Diverio

Reasons why should you book us?

- 1) To hear creative accessible music with substance and performed with integrity. To celebrate these two individuals and their body of work which has been developed over many years and culminates in this turning point of maturity for them both.
- 2) To enable three creatives (two artists and one project manager) to work alongside and with each other and to learn from this experience.
- 3) To expand and build upon two different methods of delivery. Each artist has a slightly different approach and to explore the common denominators.
- 4) To allow **National Lottery Project Grants** to fund this project and to combine one set of funding and one set of resources to double the value of the return enabling the team to engage with ground-breaking workshop ideas, gather data stemming from these workshops and to incorporate these ideas into performance.
- 5) The tech spec and space requirements for this tour are broader than usual and this presents both challenges and opportunities. We want to embrace these and find solutions whilst working with the next level of venue to accommodate this double quintet concept, propelling the artists onto different stages and introducing their work to new audiences.
- 6) To allow the opportunity for us to deliver exciting workshops focusing on improvisation and working with, but not exclusively, two specific social groups; the hard of hearing and the visually impaired and to observe and explore the challenges and advantages of doing this with the intent of making our live performance suitably engaging.
- 7) To connect with new audiences and participants through new original music and workshops.

This tour is subject to Arts Council funding.