

# HEBRIDES ENSEMBLE

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## World first for professional ensemble

Last week, Composer James MacMillan and Hebrides Ensemble broke new ground by being the first professional ensemble to simultaneously connect musicians in Edinburgh to London and Italy in real-time.

Hebrides Ensemble ran a masterclass on James MacMillan's *Horn Quintet* from Edinburgh Napier University Music Department on 22 April, with horn players from Conservatorio Tartini in Trieste and the Royal College of Music in London, but the horn players were not in Edinburgh. They were connected from London and Italy to Edinburgh using LOLA (Low Latency) audiovisual streaming technology.

Marking the launch of Hebrides Ensemble's Digital Programme, the masterclass was part of a long-term research project exploring how LOLA technology and fast, reliable networks can connect musicians across Europe. An audience from Creative Scotland, national performing companies, arts organisations and composers witnessed the masterclass in Edinburgh.

Dr. P. Ferguson, School of Arts and Creative Industries: Music, Edinburgh Napier University said:

*"This was our largest test of LOLA to date and we believe this was a world first - using two LOLA systems to simultaneously connect a professional Ensemble in Edinburgh Napier University to*

*conservatoires in London and Trieste in real-time.”*

Gill Davies, Digital Producer, Hebrides Ensemble and postgraduate research student at Edinburgh Napier University said:

*“Hebrides Ensemble players had no previous experience of a distributed music session. In feedback after the masterclass, they said the technology is a valuable tool for teaching, masterclasses and some forms of rehearsal. They also said that it could give opportunities to students who would not otherwise be able to learn from professional players and reduce the carbon footprint of performing groups.”*

The ensemble will share research findings from the Masterclass with colleagues at Creative Scotland and other arts organisations so their work can have the widest possible benefit. Over the coming years, Hebrides Ensemble plan to expand the reach of their audience by streaming a series of performances online.

**ENDS.**

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **PHOTO:**

William Conway (Cello), Artistic Director of Hebrides Ensemble in Edinburgh's Napier University rehearsing James MacMillan's *Horn Quintet* with Federico Lamba in Conservatorio Tartini Trieste, Italy. Wednesday 22 April 2015. Photo: Gill Davies.

### **LOLA:**

LOLA (Low Latency) is an audiovisual streaming system that allows musicians to play together remotely in real-time. It is currently used in universities and orchestral academies around the world for music education, rehearsal and performance. LOLA relies on very fast, reliable networks - the national research and education networks that connect universities around the world - to operate effectively. Edinburgh Napier University has a dedicated synchronous 1Gb connection to the Janet network, the UK's national research and education network.

For more information, images, video or to arrange interviews, please contact James Coutts on 07510 011 294 or email [james@hebridesensemble.com](mailto:james@hebridesensemble.com).

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