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CMC's *Contemporary Music from Ireland* series of promotional CDs are distributed free of charge to radio stations throughout the world. Michael Quinn talks to some of the broadcasters who receive and make use of the CDs, and examines the impact that the series has on their programming.

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A Short History of Grúpat

Grúpat

Grúpat is an international arts collective based in Tallaght, County Dublin, Ireland. The collective works primarily in sound, with work ranging from strictly-notated compositions for classic ensembles to graphic scores, sonic sculptures, sound installations and interventions in both the public and private sphere. The roots of Grúpat can be traced to 1999, when Bulletin M, The Parks Service, Turf Boon and other artists met at a rave at the Hellfire Club on Montpelier Hill, in the Dublin Mountains. They decided to form a political and artistic "insurgency" based on the ideas of the Situationists, graffiti artists, direct action networks, and others, which they called "The Avant Gardaí." The rave was shut down by the police, but the artists met together later and began to develop interventions, dérives, and détournments along Situationist lines, which culminated in the infamous 2001 *Quaring the Square* intervention in the Tallaght Square, a multimedia infiltration that set upon Saturday afternoon mall shoppers with a three-hour long, illegal spectacle of music, dancing and art. Several members of The Avant Gardaí were arrested as a result, all of whom refused to give their proper names or answer any questions in any way except to say: "Grúpat." As the practices and goals of The Avant Gardaí shifted and changed after the events surrounding *Quaring the Square*, and as membership evolved and grew more artistic and less provocatively political in orientation, what began as an

assumed identity—Grúpat—was taken as the name for a new transformation of The Avant Gardaí, and Grúpat was soon developing not only interventions but also hosting shows and concerts featuring its members.

Grúpat is comprised mainly of artists living in the South Dublin County Council area, but has over the last few years grown to be international in scope and membership. While the group has a core roster, its affiliations and “temporary members” range widely. As well, many of the members of Grúpat, in line with their early pranksterish roots, exhibit and perform solely under pseudonyms. These facts sometimes make it difficult to determine exactly who or what is in Grúpat. Notable members include Bulletin M, The Parks Service, Detleva Verens, Ukeoirn O’Connor, Flor Hartigan and O’Brien Industries. This sub-set of Grúpat often exhibit under the name “6by4” a reference to the Parisian composers known as “Les Six” and the postcode Dublin 24, in which they all reside.

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The views expressed in this interview are those of the persons concerned and are not necessarily those of the Contemporary Music Centre.

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