

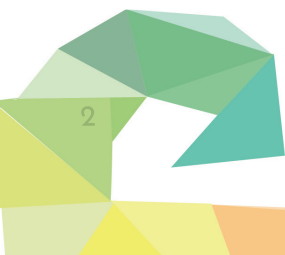
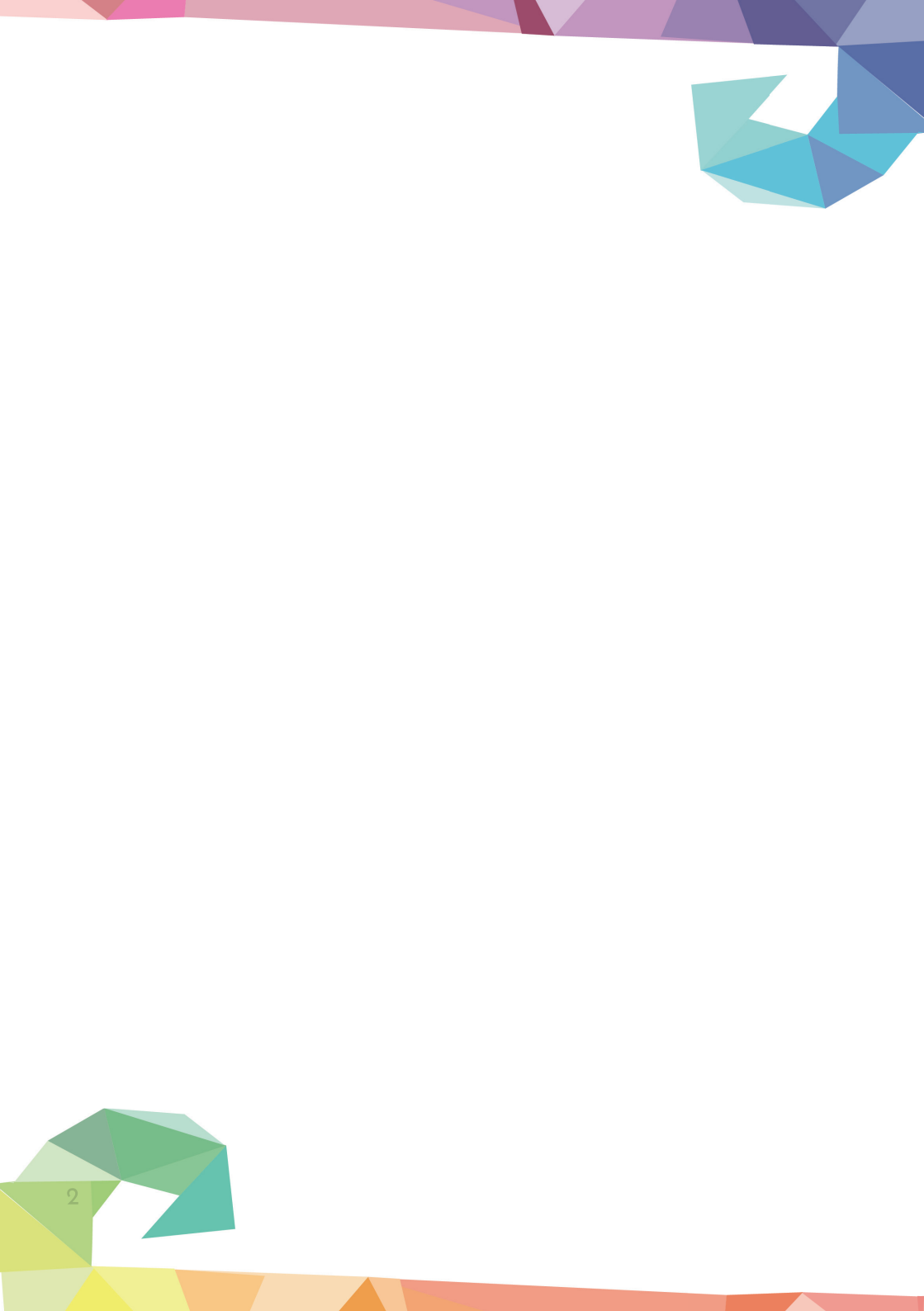


7th

NOVALIS FESTIVAL

8 - 10 October, 2024
Osijek, Croatia

Biographies





GUEST LECTURERS

JESSIE MARINO



Jessie Marino is a Berlin-based composer, performer, and media artist. Her compositions and solo performances abstract ideas drawn from all stripes of popular culture and political discourse, girded by a definitively humanistic sensibility rife with equal doses of wit and pathos. Marino's pieces score out sound, video, story, lighting, and staging, treating each of these elements as expandable musical materials. She transcends the conventional materials of composition to help audiences locate music in the most commonplace activities and relations. She will be one of the 2023/2024 artists-in-residence at the Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center (EMPAC). In 2020 she was a recipient of a Fromm Composition Commission from Harvard University and in 2018 Marino received the Rome Prize in music composition at the American Academy in Rome. She has recently been commissioned by Donaueschingen MusikTage, Plus Minus (UK), SPOR Festival (DK), Ensemble Tzara (CH), Speak Percussion (AU), ECLAT Festival (DE), Decoder Ensemble (DE), Ultima Festival (NO), Darmstadt International Summer Course (DE), Borealis Festival (NO), Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival (UK), and Transit Festival (BE). Her work has made recent appearances at the BAM! Festival for MusikTheater (Berlin), Festival Musica (Strasbourg), Heroines of Sound (Berlin/MX), Elbphilharmonie (Hamburg DE) and her pieces have been performed by formidable new music ensembles such as Pinguins (NO), Speak Percussion (AU), KNM Ensemble (DE), Plus Minus (UK), SCENATET (DK), SoundInitiative (FR), We Spoke Percussion (UK), Decoder Ensemble (DE), Ensemble Adapter (DE), Die Ordnung Der Dinge (DE), and Ensemble Pamplemousse (USA). Marino studied Cello with David Geber and the Manhattan School of Music, composition at Wesleyan University with Alvin Lucier and Ronald Kuivila and she earned a DMA in music composition from Stanford University, working with sound artist Paul DeMarinis. www.jessiemarino.com





MARKO CICILIANI



Marko Ciciliani (*1970) is a composer, intermedia artist, and performer. His artistic focus lies in composing performative electronic music, primarily within an audiovisual context. Interactive video, light design, and laser graphics often play an integral role in his compositions, as do elements of ergodic or transmedia storytelling and speculative fabulation. The German magazine **Neue Zeitschrift für Musik** described him as “one of the most interesting composers today in the field of electronic music and multimedia” (01/2020).

Ciciliani’s projects have been performed and exhibited in more than forty-five countries across Eurasia, Oceania, and the Americas. As a result of his interdisciplinary practice, his work can be found in various genres. His music has been programmed at festivals and concert series for experimental electronic music, such as **Experimental Intermedia**, NYC; **Club Transmediale**, Berlin; **SuperDeluxe**, Tokyo; **Ibrasotope**, São Paulo; and **Findars**, Kuala Lumpur. He has also been featured at post-avant-garde music festivals such as **Donaueschinger Musiktage**, **Wien Modern**, **Ultraschall Berlin**, **Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival**, and **Maerzmusik**; as well as in the context of media art, including **Ars Electronica**, Linz; **Glowing Globe**, Rijeka; or with iMAL, Brussels. Ciciliani is a selected artist of the European-funded EASTN-DC network.

His work has been published on five CDs and four multimedia books featuring transdisciplinary and audiovisual works. Additionally, his music can be found on over a dozen compilation CDs. In the field of artistic research, Ciciliani has published several papers and articles, mainly in the area of interdisciplinary composition, a practice he termed “Music in the Expanded Field” in a widely discussed lecture of the same name, which he gave in Darmstadt in 2016.

Ciciliani is a professor of electronic music composition and sound design at the Institute of Electronic Music and Acoustics (IEM) at the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz (Kunstuniversität Graz). In 2014, 2016, and 2018, he taught as a mentor at the “Summer Courses for Contemporary Music Darmstadt”. In 2017, 2020, and 2021, he served as the artistic director of the interdisciplinary workshop for young creatives **ChampdAction.LaBo**, as well as the **TimeCanvas@DeSingel** festival in Antwerp.



MLADEN TARBUK



Mladen Tarbuk is a Croatian composer, conductor, writer, educator, and broadcaster. He was a guest conductor at the Deutsche Oper am Rhein Düsseldorf - Duisburg during several seasons and has been performing regularly with renowned orchestras and opera houses around the world, such as Hungarian State Opera, Haifa Symphony Orchestra, Opera Lyra Ottawa, Orquesta Sinfonica de Estado Mexico, Sinfonietta Cracovia, Wiener Concert-Verein, Nordic Chamber Orchestra, Orchestra Sinfonica Siciliana Palermo, Teatro Verdi Trieste, State Opera Prague, Hungarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra and many other.

Tarbuk was the Intendant of the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb, the region's leading opera, ballet, and dramatic plays house, Music Programme Director and subsequently the Artistic Director of the renowned Dubrovnik Festival. His prolific career has been significantly enriching the musical life in Croatia through conducting concerts and operas at the national opera houses, teaching composition, orchestral conducting, orchestra, and music theory at the Music Academy of Zagreb and presenting, hosting, and conducting concerts for youth and children that were broadcast by Croatian Radio. In addition, his long-term collaboration with many home festivals and institutions, especially with the Croatian Radiotelevision Symphony Orchestra, resulted in Tarbuk arranging, revising, editing, performing, conducting, and recording thousands of pages of Croatian music.

Mladen Tarbuk wrote over 90 works, from solo and chamber music to large symphonic and theatrical forms. His pieces have been performed in major contemporary music festivals, including Enescu Festival Bucharest, The World Music Days, Europamusicale Munich, Musicora Paris, Le Temps de soufflé Paris, Trieste Prima, World Saxophone Congress Glasgow, Musikprotokoll Graz, Moscow Autumn, and Music Biennale Zagreb. As a composer, Tarbuk came to international fame in 1990, when the International Gaudeamus Festival in Amsterdam has premiered his piece *Martyr d'un jongleur*. Then, the first International Composers Competition in Vienna in 1991, chaired by Claudio Abbado, gave his composition *Medida del Tiempo* a recommendation. Tarbuk also won two first prizes in international competitions Ernst Vogel and Tolosa, as well as numerous Croatian awards for the highest achievements as a composer: Šulek, Slavenski, Papandopulo, and the Academy Award of Lisinski Concert Hall. His ballet *Streetcar Named Desire* opened The World Days of Music 2005 in Zagreb. Tarbuk appears in many recordings on labels such as HoneyRock, Orpheus and Cantus.

GUEST PERFORMERS



PAPANDOPULO KVARTET



From its inception in 2008, Papandopulo Quartet was built on the legacy of one of Croatian most celebrated composers, Boris Papandopulo. A dynamic and award-winning ensemble, firmly established as one of the leading quartets of its generation, the Papandopulo Quartet has been described as “the best thing that could happen to composers” (Zarez) with performances balancing “superb musicality” and “extraordinary dedication” (Croatian Radio 3).

Papandopulo Quartet has performed throughout Europe and USA in a remarkable series of more than 300 performances and it has appeared in some of the most important concert halls worldwide such as Carnegie Hall in New York City and Berliner Philharmonie in Berlin. The Quartet received numerous national and international awards at some of the most prestigious chamber music competitions and festivals (Orlando award for best artistic achievement in the musical program at 75th Dubrovnik Festival, 1st prize and Grand Prix at the 3rd Berliner International Music Competition, Golden Medal at Vienna International Music Competition, 1st prize and Grand Prix at the 6th Manhattan International Music Competition, Orpheus Prize, Vatroslav Lisinski Award, Milka Trnina Diploma, Danijel Marušić Award, 2 Porin Awards, etc.)

As champions of new music, Papandopulo Quartet has premiered more than 40 new pieces dedicated to them. Their discography consists of four albums, three of them were recorded for Croatia Records: Papandopulo (2013), Per Quattro (2015) and Scherzo (2017). Their debut album has won the Croatian discography Porin prize and it is reputed to be the best-selling Croatian classical album of the last decade. Their last album titled “Scenes”, with music dedicated to and written for the quartet, was released in June 2022 by Cantus Records and it received 4 nominations for the Porin Award.

The Quartet’s diverse activities have also included numerous international radio and television broadcasts, theater productions and together they have founded the School of Saxophone in Jaska, a highly successful international spring masterclass for saxophone students that won the annual City of Jastrebarsko Award. Members of the Quartet are also engaged in pedagogical work leading chamber music and instrumental classes at Universities in Zagreb, Split, Banja Luka and Novi Sad and

6 Music schools in Zagreb and Jastrebarsko.

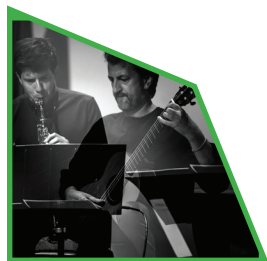
Members of Papandopulo Quartet are:

Nikola Fabijanić, soprano saxophone

Gordan Tudor, alto saxophone

Goran Jurković, tenor saxophone

Tomislav Žužak, baritone saxophone



DUO TUDOR REŽIĆ

Gordan Tudor and Mislav Režić are among the most sought-after musicians of their generation. Individually they have performed in the most prestigious festivals and halls in the world, among others - Carnegie Hall, Berlin Philharmonic Hall, Gnessin Academy in Moscow, Lutoslawski Hall in Warsaw, Onassis Cultural Centre and Greek National Opera in Athens and European Parliament Hall in Bruxelles.

This project exists since 2020 as a unique classical music combination since - together with saxophone and classical guitar, the duo uses the electric guitar and electronics. The duo performs mainly contemporary music and commissions new works from composers around the world, but also expands the limits of classical music by performing their own arrangements of music by Frank Zappa, Radiohead and Brian Eno. So far, composers Michalis Paraskakis, Ivan Božičević, Davor Branimir Vincze, Juraj Marko Žerovnik, Sanda Majurec and Šimun Čarli Botica have dedicated their works to Tudor-Režić duo.

Although existing for a relatively short period of time, they have performed in numerous classical music festivals in Croatia, France (Paris), and the US (University of Santa Barbara, Stanford University and Centre for New Music - C4NM in San Francisco). Their concerts are acclaimed both from the audience and the critics alike, and they were selected as one of the best Croatian classical music collaborations in 2023. They are winners of the Concert hall Ivo Tijardović - Hrvatski dom Split award for the season 2023/24. Together with the award, Gordan Tudor and Mislav Režić were named artists in residence of the Concert hall in Split for the season 2024/25.



ALEKSANDER GABRYS



Aleksander Gabrys, born in Upper Silesia, Poland, was educated at the music academies in Katowice and Basel, where he has lived since 1999 and has worked continuously as a solo double bassist with Ensemble Phoenix Basel ever since. He has already dedicated several instrumental and electronic works to his adopted city: 'Bas-el-Karneval' (2000), 'Basilesia' for the choir Camerata Silesia (2020) and the realisation of the performance of the 'Beelzebub Sonata' (2021).

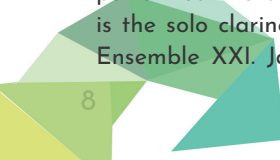
Aleksander Gabrys's versatile compositional work includes works for different instrumentations and purposes. As an instrumentalist specializing in contemporary music, he has performed in most European countries and on both American continents. At festivals such as La Biennale di Venezia, Maerzmusik and Ultraschall in Berlin or Wien Modern, he has presented recitals and solo works with renowned ensembles such as Klangforum Wien, NOSPR, Ensemble Modern Frankfurt, Schlesische Philharmonie, oenm Salzburg, Collegium Novum Zürich. He is the recipient and interpreter of many works dedicated to him, including works by Piotr Radko, Edward Bogusławski, Jevgenij Iršai and Zbigniew Karkowski; he is currently working on new works with artists in the UK and Germany. At the invitation of Stanford University in California, he led a course in performance and composition there in 2020. In the 23/24 season he is part of the band 'Die Dreigroschenoper'.

The festival ensemble consists of: Szilard Benes, Đorđe Davidović, Olivia De Prato, Victor Lowrie Tafoya



SZILARD BENES

Szilárd Benes is constantly on the lookout for new sounds with his instrument and goes to the outer limits of music, thus making collaboration with composers an important component of his creativity. His concerts have been recorded several times and broadcast on Ö1, as was his recording of Krzysztof Penderecki's clarinet quartet in Graz in 2012. He has also worked and made recordings with CD Labels such as Austrian Gramophone, Kairos and Inexhaustible Editions. In 2018 he performed the solo clarinet part in La Chute d'Icare by Brian Ferneyhough. Benes is the solo clarinetist of the Schallfeld Ensemble in Graz and Bass clarinetist of the Ensemble XXI. Jahrhundert in Vienna. As a soloist and chamber musician with his



own ensembles and with other well-known ensembles, like Klangforum Wien, Ensemble Phace, The Black Page Orchestra, Benes has been invited in Asia, Europe and America to such international festivals and venues as the Salzburger Festspiele, Steirischer Herbst, IMD Darmstadt (Germany), Klangspuren Schwaz, Bregenzer Festspiele, Time of Music (Finland), Visiones Sonoras Festival (Mexico), Daegu International Contemporary Music Festival (South Korea), reMusik (Russia), SoW Milan (Italy), Wien Modern, ensembles festival (Spain), ManiFeste (France), Wiener Festwochen, Gaudeamus Muziekweek (Netherlands), Jeunesse Vienna, Impuls, Novalis (Croatia), Sound of Stockholm (Sweden), Afekt Festival (Estonia), Poznań Musical Spring (Poland), Wiener Konzerthaus, and Carnegie Hall. Benes has collaborated among other with the composers Beat Furrer, Brian Ferneyhough, György Kurtág, Pierluigi Billone. Together with Christof Ressi, he was selected to receive support from the Foreign Ministry's program "New Austrian Sound of Music 2020/21".



OLIVIA DE PRATO

Internationally recognized as a soloist as well as a chamber musician, Austro-Italian violinist Olivia De Prato has been described as "flamboyant....convincing" (New York Times) and an "enchancing violinist" (Messaggero Veneto, Italy). After moving to New York City she has quickly established herself as a passionate performer of contemporary and improvised music, breaking boundaries of the traditional violin repertoire and regularly performs in Europe, South America, China and the United States. Her chamber music activities include appearances at the Bang on a Can Marathon in New York City, the David Byrne Perspective Series at Carnegie Hall, the Lucerne Festival with Pierre Boulez, the Ensemble Modern Festival (Austria), "June in Buffalo" Festival, the Ojai Festival with Steve Reich and Brad Lubman, the Darmstadt New Music Festival and the Aldeburgh Festival in the UK.

Olivia is a member of New York contemporary music ensembles Signal and Victoire, and is the co-founder and first violinist of the Mivos String Quartet. She has recorded on New Amsterdam Records, Tzadik, Carrier, Sunnyside, Mode, Cantaloupe and Porter Records. In 2010 and 2011 she toured Europe and South Africa with Grammy-award winning Esperanza Spalding and Chamber Music Society on violin and viola. As a guest artist, she has been invited to hold solo and chamber music master-classes for young musicians and composers in Anchorage (Alaska), Medellin (Colombia),

Vienna (Austria), Hong Kong, “Yong Siew Toh Conservatory” (Singapore), Shanghai Conservatory, MIAM University (Turkey), Manhattan School of Music, Brooklyn College, New York University and CUNY Graduate Center in New York. Olivia has closely collaborated with well-known composers such as Sir Harrison Birtwistle, Pierre Boulez, Anthony Braxton, Chaya Czernowin, Peter Eotvos, Beat Furrer, Michael Gordon, Annie Gosfield, Georg Friedrich Haas, Helmut Lachenman, David Lang, Brad Lubman, Philippe Manoury, Benedict Mason, Meredith Monk, Krystof Penderecki, Hilda Peredes, Steve Reich, Todd Reynolds, Ned Rothenberg, Jorge Sanchez-Chiong, J.G Thirwell, Julia Wolfe, Charles Wuorinen, and Evan Ziporyn. Olivia De Prato grew up in Vienna and Italy. She studied at the University of Music and Arts in Vienna and holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music and the Manhattan School of Music. www.oliviadeprato.com



VICTOR LOWRIE TAFOYA

Victor Lowrie Tafoya is a versatile violist, improviser and composer. As a passionate advocate of new music, he has appeared as a soloist, chamber musician and educator throughout the US, South America, Europe and Asia. Victor is a founding member of Mivos Quartet, Synchronos Ensemble, and Trio Kavak, and performs regularly with groups such as Ensemble Signal, OENM and Slee Sinfonietta. He recently recorded Joël-François Durand’s viola concert with Ensemble Dal Niente for an album to be released in 2023. As a composer, Victor writes for soloists and chamber ensembles, combining an ever-evolving personal sense of melody and harmony with explorations into improvisation and electronics. He earned his Bachelor of Music Performance from San Francisco State University, and was in the inaugural graduating class of the Master in Contemporary Performance program from the Manhattan School of Music. Victor is currently based in Vienna with his wife and young son.



DJORĐE DAVIDOVIĆ



Since the age of three, Djordje Davidovic has shown a deep fascination for the accordion. His first encounter with this instrument at the age of five marked the beginning of his musical journey. During his studies he was guided by esteemed mentors such as Tijana Jovanovic (Music School Nis, Serbia), Grzegorz Stopa (Music and Arts University of the City of Vienna, Austria) and Mie Miki (Folkwang University of the Arts Essen, Germany). Throughout his career to date, he has been awarded more than 30 1st and 2nd prizes at major international competitions. In 2016, he was selected as one of the most successful accordion students in Europe to perform a solo recital as part of a prestigious national project in China. Davidovic Performances have taken him to four continents and over 40 countries, collaborating with renowned artists such as Álvaro Pierri, Georg Friedrich Haas, Bernd Richard Deutsch, José M. Sánchez-Verdú, Petar Ralchev or Jovan Pavlovic. He has performed in prestigious venues including the Wiener Konzerthaus, Musikverein Wien, MUPA Budapest, and Takatsuki Gendai Gekijyo Hall.

In 2019, Davidovic was invited to collaborate with Die Toten Hosen, one of Germany's most famous punk rock bands, where he was a guest musician on the CD *Alles Ohne Strom*, which was recorded live at the Tonhalle Düsseldorf and sold more than 100,000 copies. The CD was then presented at a series of concerts throughout Europe. Beyond the boundaries of classical and contemporary music, Davidovic's roots in Serbian traditional music fuel his innovative fusion of Balkan folklore with jazz and classical elements. This unique blend has earned him acclaim and numerous awards. Premiering more than 20 compositions, he continuously collaborates with contemporary ensembles such as Windkraft - Kapelle für neue Musik, notabu.ensemble, Spectra Ensemble and others. In 2015, Davidovic co-founded the Duo AVIDO together with saxophonist Alvaro Collao León, presenting a diverse repertoire from baroque to contemporary music, culminating in their acclaimed album *SPOTLIGHTS*.

A passionate advocate for music education, Davidovic conducts workshops in Vienna and engages with aspiring accordionists through social media. Since 2012, he has been proudly associated with the leading accordion brand Bugari Armando, playing their two top models, Selecta Special and Balkan DM, to captivate audiences worldwide.



WORKSHOP ATTENDEES: COMPOSERS

MONTE TAYLOR




Monte Taylor (b.1991) is a composer, guitarist, improviser, and sound engineer based in West Lafayette, IN. His work in electroacoustic composition emphasizes interactions between live performers and live-generated DSP and sound in Supercollider. Recently, he has been exploring the use of open-source machine learning platforms to facilitate accessible approaches for creating intuitive, interactive systems for electroacoustic performance and improvisation. His work has been recognized through the KLANG! International Electroacoustic Composition Competition and the American Prize. In November of 2024, he will serve as a Fulbright Specialist on the project 'Artificial Intelligence in Sound Design and Editing' in collaboration with the High Cinema Institute in Giza, Egypt. His works have been presented on conferences and festivals including Matera Intermedia Festival, NYCCEMF, SCI, Seoul International Computer Music Festival, SPLICE Institute, and Web Audio Conference by ensembles including Bent Frequency, Line Upon Line Percussion, and [Switch~ Ensemble].

PROGRAM NOTE:

In Kurt Vonnegut's 1959 novel *The Sirens of Titan*, Harmoniums are a race of small bat-like creatures that inhabit the caves of Mercury, subsisting on the sound waves emanating from each other's calls to one another. The Harmoniums' simple ecosystem is ultimately disrupted upon the arrival of the Martian war survivors Boaz and Unk, the former of whom introduces the Harmoniums to recorded music from Earth. While the Harmoniums derive great pleasure from the music, direct contact with the tape player causes them to shrivel and die from overexposure which happens in the book when Boaz leaves the cassette player unattended for a short period of time. Parable of the Harmoniums uses this moment in the book as a point of reflection on the negative impact of unchecked vice and excess consumption can have on a society and/or ecosystem.

In *Parable of the Harmoniums*, the audio signal from the saxophone and guitar is manipulated through a series of loopers, live-generated sound, and audio effects that are distributed between the main stereo outputs and a series of transducers placed inside of the piano. Interaction between the resonance of the piano and the transducers



creates an isolated sonic ecosystem that is reliant on input from the performers and electronics to exist, but is vulnerable to being erased by the same forces that allow it to exist in the first place. The works of Leo Brouwer and Heitor Villa-Lobos serve as inspiration for many of the techniques and chord shapes used in the guitar part, which are further corrupted by the introduction of simple dissonances in both the guitar and saxophone.

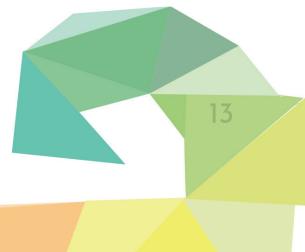
DARREN XU



Darren Xu is a Chinese Canadian composer who is currently a PhD student at the Royal College of Music, where he recently obtained the Artist Diploma in Composition. He enjoys writing music for acoustic instruments, films, and cross-disciplinary collaborations. He has had the opportunity to work with various groups, including Standing Wave, Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra, the Wallace Collection, English National Ballet School, Piano-Erhu Project (PEP), TorQ Percussion Quartet, and Trio Immersio. His first orchestral composition, *To Liberate*, was premiered by the WSO at the Winnipeg New Music Festival, and was subsequently read by the VSO. Darren's collaborations with the Musqueam artist Debra Sparrow culminated in performances of his music as parts of installations and showcases of Debra's Salish weavings, which took place at venues across Vancouver. His film score, *Stargazer*, was awarded Best Score by New York Film Awards in November 2018. He received his BMus, BCom, and MMus at University of British Columbia.

PROGRAM NOTE:

And then there were none: this work for solo double bass depicts a potential future of our earth if no ramifications are made in regards to its ecology. The current trajectory of our climate will continue to deteriorate and become even less hospitable to human and many other species. Beginning with a glimpse of the earth's beauty, the music gradually descends into chaos.





FRANCESCO SGAMBATI

Francesco Sgambati was born in Naples (Italy) in 1990. After the BA in classical guitar at the Conservatory "San Pietro a Majella", he achieves a MA in Didactics and Music Pedagogy and in Music Composition. Francesco has been awarded at the "XVIII International Lavagnino Film Festival", the "XV Veria International Composition Competition", the "Acerra Guitar Composition Competition" (John W.

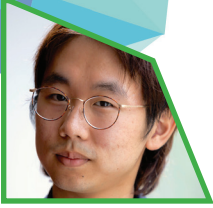
Duarte Centenary Celebration), the "XIX Italy PAS (Italy Percussion Competition)", The "VI Dutch Guitar Foundation-Composition Contest", the "Il Mario Pagano Composition Competition", the "Premio Veretti 2023" -Fiesole Music Academy, the "Jacopo Napoli - Composition Competition 2022" and at the "VIII Thessaloniki International Music Festival". His music has been presented in many Festivals as "Foresty International Music Festival", "Guitar Education and Research Guitar Festival", "Falerna Music Festival", "Prospettive Music Festival", "Livorno Music Festival", "Accademia Chigiana", "UrtiCanti Contemporary MusicFestival", "Veria International Guitar Festival", "Incontri di Musica Contemporanea", "Sydney Contemporary Festival", "New Sound Field" and "Festival di Musica Pontino", "Rondò Contemporary Music Festival". He has worked with several contemporary ensemble and soloists as Dissonanzen, AltreVoci ensemble, L' Orchestra d' archi di Alessandria, Quartetto Prometeo, Matteo Cesari, Francesco Salime, Kontakaxis-Ivanovich Guitar Duo, Fotis Koutsothodoros, Felicita Brusoni, Six-memos Ensemble, Harp Trio Chagall, Marina Boselli, Maria Grazia Bellocchio, RoadRunner Trio, Marko Topchii and Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra. His works have been published by Les Production d' Oz (Canada), The Bergmann Edition (Denmark), Studio & Studio Edition (Italy), Et-Cetera Musica (Italy) and DaVinci Edition (Japan).

PROGRAM NOTE:

VOICE, for Saxophone Quartet - FRANCESCO SGAMBATI The work aims to reflect the delicate historical moment we are living in. The effects of climate change we are facing threaten to overwhelm and permanently alter our world. The Earth is rebelling, but no one seems to listen to its "Voice". Following this painful imagine, I decided to narrate a story. At the beginning, one single voice, very weak and feeble, appears. It is the Earth's Voice. It does its best to make itself heard, but in vain. What surrounds her, in fact, seems not to care, playing too loudly and oppressively. But, slowly, the Voice begins to gain strength and volume. The other instruments, which previously ignored her, one by one start to pay attention to her, even joining her in her "song". Only one instrument, undeterred, still keeps fighting it. It is the negative version of our society, everything that doesn't work, capitalism, the excessive exploitation of Earth's resources..., but its last efforts will be useless. It will not succeed in its intent because we cannot do anything isolated in our selfishness, but instead together, each individual voice can become a magnificent and powerful chorus capable of everything, even of saving our world.



SOLOMON KIM



Solomon Kim (b. 2001) is a composer, arts organizer, and cellist. His music and artistic leadership have earned awards and honors from organizations including Emory University, League of Composers/ISCM, College Music Society, and Society of Composers, Inc. Hypercube, Tacet(i) Ensemble, the Emory Wind Ensemble, and the Atlanta Improvisers Orchestra, among others, have performed his music. Solomon's interdisciplinary approach often grapples with identity, art's political and economic facets, and communities in flux or creation. He performs free-improvised music as a cellist and conducts ensembles using a non-idiomatic gesture-based conducting system. His approach builds rich, visceral textures from individual physical impulses, whether in a solo or large ensemble context. Solomon recently graduated from Emory University (B.A. of Music Composition, summa cum laude), where he attended as a Robert W. Woodruff Dean's Achievement Scholar and studied with Katherine Young. Solomon is currently a 2024-2025 Fulbright grantee to study Music Composition in İzmir, Türkiye with Timuçin Şahin.

PROGRAM NOTE:

Around midnight last night, I took a walk in my old Tokyo neighborhood. I came to what used to be a side street that led to a small park behind Azabu Elementary School. It had a playground, a couple of benches, and leafy, shade-giving trees. The side street and park were gone, replaced by a mess of equipment, cranes, wires, and lights. A skyscraper sprouted from the ground where trees once grew. Surrounded by a forest of technology and commerce, I could still see the park. I saw sun dancing off the leaves, I heard my friends' voices, and I felt a gentle autumn breeze. That night, I was once more a high schooler exploring Tokyo for the first time.

Still time, for double bass, inhabits a transitional space: one where memory and present reality alike reside. In this piece, I approach the geography of Tokyo—where I came of age—and its human-technological ecology through a personal lens. I superimpose images from memory and reality, and reckon with the cognitive dissonance of seeing a place I love so radically transformed. -SK, 3 September 2024

NOVALIS FESTIVAL COMMISSION

BRUNO VLAHEK



Bruno Vlahek was born in Zagreb in 1986. Critics emphasize his musical versatility and “depth of thought that captivates the audience.” As a pianist, he performs in prestigious venues and festivals across Europe, Asia, Africa, South America, Russia, and the Middle East. He has recorded for HRT, France Musique, BBC3, the Dutch NPO4 Radio, Australian ABC, Spanish RTVE and Catalunya Radio, as well as Radio of Italian Switzerland. He is a laureate of numerous international piano competitions, including those in Paris, Shanghai, Lyon, and Monte Carlo, where he performed in a piano duo with his wife Dubravka Vukalović. He has been awarded the title “Young Musician of the Year” by the Zagreb Philharmonic, received the Swiss “Paderewski” prize, the Yamaha Foundation Award, the Pnina Salzman Memorial Prize in Israel, the Artists on Globe Award, and holds an honorary diploma from Queen Sofia of Spain.

Simultaneously, as a composer, he is a laureate of the “Cristóbal Halffter” International Composition Competition in Spain, the MBZ “5 Minute Piano Concerto Competition,” and the “New Classics - Organ Taurida” held in 2021 at the Great Hall of the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow. He is also a recipient of the “Porin” discography award and the “Stjepan Šulek” award. He graduated in piano under Vladimir Krpan as one of the youngest students in the history of the Zagreb Academy of Music and completed his postgraduate studies at the Lausanne Conservatory under Jean-François Antonioli and at the Hochschule für Musik in Cologne under Vasily Lobanov, where he studied composition and improvisation in addition to piano. From 2010 to 2013, he furthered his studies under the legendary pianist and pedagogue Dmitri Bashkirev at the Queen Sofia School of Music in Madrid. He also performs on the organ, and his compositional output includes numerous orchestral, chamber, solo, and choral works performed on five continents—from Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, and Costa Rica, through the USA and Canada, London, Amsterdam, Vienna, Salzburg, Prague, Berlin, and Saint Petersburg, to Dubai, Singapore, Seoul, and Sydney. His compositions are performed by renowned soloists and ensembles at festivals such as the World Days of New Music, the Zagreb Music Biennale, the Dubrovnik Summer Festival, and the Osor Music Evenings, among others. Some of his works are part of the curriculum at higher music institutions in Germany, New York, Istanbul, and Beijing, and have been set as required pieces for international performance competitions. His works have been published in Croatia, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the USA. Find more on: <https://brunovlahek.com>



PROGRAM NOTE:

Germination for four saxophones was created on commission for the Novalis Festival and is dedicated to the Papandopulo Quartet. Inspired by ecology, the musical narrative follows the emergence of a young plant through the process of germination, a phenomenon essential for all life on Earth and for the sustainable existence of humanity.

The five movements, which flow seamlessly one into another, symbolize the different phases and changes occurring in this biological process, the necessary natural conditions, and the elements involved. The piece begins with the imagination of a dormant dry seed and its gradual soaking in water, followed by the onset of breathing and the activation of metabolic activity, through the effects of light and the reaction of reserve substances that initiate vital processes, all the way to the final development into a seedling.

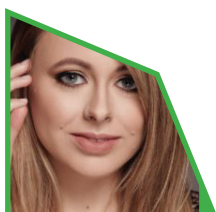
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Tihomir Ranogajec
Event Manager



Dorotea Racz
Production & Communication



Davor Branimir Vincze
Festival Board



NOVALIS CONCEPT COLLABORATORS

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