

Laureate Concert

Damian Gorandi Digital suicide (2024, impuls commission, world premiere)

Digital Suicide is inspired by the Argentine writer Adolfo Bioy Casares' novel The Invention of Morel, delving into themes of digital landscapes and distorted realities. The piece reflects on how new digital tools shape our habits and alter our perception, seeking not only to mirror our current world but also to offer an escape from it.

This work is also a personal exploration of my own complex cultural heritage. Of Ukrainian descent, raised in Latin America, and now living in France, I draw upon multiple cultural influences to shape my music. In this work, I aim to express this cultural hybridity. Rich in references to Argentina, my country of birth, Digital Suicide also incorporates echoes of pre-Hispanic Andean music. The work creates a dialogue between ideas from new technologies and elements from Latin America, bridging ancient worlds with today's industrial and digital universe. This clash of realities forms an erratic sonic dramaturgy, transporting the audience into an immersive environment. Ultimately, the piece reflects on the relationship between humans and new technologies, suggesting that answers may lie in marginalized cosmogonies and cultures.

In my creative process, I like to imagine music that is not of the present, but rooted in a very distant past or in an unknown future.

(Damian Gorandi)

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Jieun Jeong volatile (2024, impuls commission, world premiere)

The term "volatile" was my starting point in the composition process and describes a transitory, constantly changing state - a material that can hardly be brought into a fixed form. In this composition, it is a fleeting, constantly changing sound space: a musical fabric whose elements form over time into a complementary interplay and constantly unfold anew, while becoming increasingly abstract in the process of depersonalization. The sonic material moves between extreme states in which a sound is perceived as both a maximum and a minimum state. The boundaries of these states are blurred, transitions overlap and hover in an in-between space where everything is ultimately defined by our ear: Here sounds begin and end within the same sound field - and our perception experiences them as maximum or minimum states.

(Jieun Jeong)

Jieun Jeong, born in Korea in 1992, studied composition with Arnulf Herrmann, Franck Bedrossian and Clemens Gadenstätter. In her work, she concentrates on the sonic expansion

of our acoustic perception by crossing and increasingly dissolving the clear assignment of the origins of auditory stimuli. Creating connections between the sound repertoire of instruments and auditory impressions taken from other spheres (as well as the merging of both levels) is at the center of her attention. Previous collaborations have included Ensemble Adapter, Ensemble KNM Berlin, Ensemble Ictus, Ensemble Zafraan, Duo Stump-Linshalm, International Ensemble Modern Academy (IEMA 22/23), Ensemble Divertimento and soloists from Klangforum Wien, Ensemble l'itinéraire, Schallfeld Ensemble and Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart as part of festivals (Wittener Tage für neue Kammermusik, Voix Nouvelles Royaumont, impuls, Zeitaktuelle Musik Esslingen, etc.). etc.); her compositions have been broadcast on WDR3. In 2023 she received the Arnold Schönberg Anniversary Scholarship for Composition from the Federal Chancellery of Austria, in 2022 the State Scholarship of the Federal Chancellery of Austria and the Francis Burt Foundation Scholarship and in 2020 the DAAD Graduation Grant.

soundcloud.com/jieunjeong

Piyawat Louilarpprasert Parasite (2024, impuls commission, world premiere)

In my imagination, a "parasite" is an organism that comes into contact with musical instruments. This idea prompts me to consider the transformation of sounds from instruments that could be achieved by attaching some small objects, such as putting a small noise squeaker in wind instruments, equipping string instruments with small metal clips, installing rubber materials on the surface of drums, and so on. The sounds produced by the combination of the main instrument and objects offer an acoustic phenomenon that includes a variety of frequencies through harmonic instability and multi-phonics in both high and low registers—created by object experimentation.

(Piyawat Louilarpprasert)

"Young and Gifted, Meet the rebel Thai composer taking music to unheard heights"

(CNN News Worlds Report, Karla Cripps)

Originally from Bangkok, Piyawat Louilarpprasert is a Thai composer, multimedia performer, and curator who works with the interweave of music composition, visual art, and sound installation. Piyawat's music explores possibilities of creating the amalgamation of sonic and visual arts, including integrating multimedia and music, deconstructing instruments' s mechanism and physicality with sound production method, and involving Thai traditional music elements in new compositions.

With performances spanning over 30 countries across Asia, Europe, and United States, Piyawat has received commissions and awards, including the Fromm Foundation Commission, Harvard University (Boston), the Ernst von Siemens Musikstiftung Commission (DE), British Council Grant Prize (UK), 100th year commission of Donaueschinger Musiktage (DE), KulturKontakt Residency by the Austrian Federal Chancellery (Austria), Best Music Award International Computer Music Conference (Shenzhen), impuls Composer Commission (Graz), Artist in residence of Südwestrundfunk (SWR) Experimental Studio (Freiburg). Recently, Piyawat and his ensemble Tacet(i) are the recipient of the prestigious Ernst von

Siemens Ensemble Prize in 2024-25. In this Spring, Piyawat will have Finnish premiere of his "Ptera for orchestra and sound objects" with Helsinki Philharmonic at the Musica nova Helsinki. Piyawat is currently an Assistant Professor of Composition at Bowling Green State University (BGSU) and an Artistic Curator at IntAct Festival (Thailand).

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Njabulo Phungula ochre song (2024, impuls commission, world premiere)

"ochre song" is, simply, an exploration of layers. I was very interested in exploring how to treat layers of sound as layers of physical matter. How does one material react when in contact with a specific material? There are three main types of musical 'layers' in ochre song: grain, fluid, and earth. These "layers" are presented in a variety of combinations and "ratios", which reflect what I imagine would be the outcome, for example, of granular objects mixing with certain fluids, or indeed how the ratio of one layer to another would affect its character. Some of the sonic gestures that represent these ideas are based on my own instinctive musical response to the material in question. For example, temple blocks and string pizzicati representing granular material, whilst slow, bowed, glissandi in the double bass, or the sound of a friction mallet being drawn across the skin of a bass drum represent the depths and ever-shifting qualities of the earth matter beneath us. On a more personal note, ochre song, in some ways, allows me to revisit my earliest experiments in music-making some 17 years ago, when I would mix-and-match a variety of pre-recorded musical materials in a Digital Audio Workstation, building layers of sound one track at a time. Form, then, becomes a very crucial parameter here for tying together this musical exploration.

(Njabulo Phungula)

Njabulo Phungula (b. 1993) is a composer from Durban, South Africa. Drawing on his engagement with literature, film, the visual arts, his music documents the exploration of convoluted forms, inspired by the concepts of time, memory, gesture, and the creative process itself.

His works have been performed in South Africa, Germany, the USA, and UK, by ensembles such as ensemble recherche, International Contemporary Ensemble, Kompass Ensemble, the JACK Quartet, Odeion String Quartet, PULSE, Mizar Trio, Christine Chapman, Marco Blaauw, Bronwen Clacherty, Stephanie Lamprea, Midori Samson, and Naomi Sullivan, among others. He has received commissions and grants from NewMusicSA, the New Music Forum at Stellenbosch, JACK Studio, impuls, and the Goethe-Institut, and his works have been featured at the Unyazi Music Festival: Infrastructures in 2016, and at the SASRIM Composers' Meeting in 2018, Deep Time, and ISCM World New Music Days festivals in 2023. He was a JACK Studio Artist from 2020-2022 and a Postcolonial Recherche Fellow (with ensemble recherche and the Goethe-Institut) from 2021-2022. He was named as a laureate of the impuls Composers Competition for 2025, received the 2023 Henri Lazarof International Commission Prize from Brandeis University, as well as the 1st prize at the inaugural SASF Composers Competition for his work Bound objects.

He holds a BA Hons degree from the University of KwaZulu-Natal where he studied composition under the supervision of Jürgen Bräuninger, and later with Clare Loveday.

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Kelley Sheehan strainer (2024, impuls commission, world premiere)

"Strainer" is a work for impuls and Klangforum Wien, entirely acoustic. This piece explores the elastic boundaries of tension and collapse, focusing on the inevitable moments of awareness that occur just before a system either fails or transcends. As this system accumulates pressure, a sense of strain intensifies as it approaches this breaking point, yet it is denied total disintegration. In this, there is joy.

(Kelley Sheehan)

Kelley Sheehan is a composer and musician moving between electro-acoustic, multimedia, and performance art works. Her work has been described as "full of discovery, collaboration, and unpredictability" (Iannotta, Kyriakides, & Stähler) and "shatteringly visceral" (VAN Magazine, ty bouquet).

In any medium, her work constructs environments meant to merge electronic and acoustic forces into one composite organism, dependent on this merging to become more than just an extension of itself. Her work focuses on sculpting noise, shifting materiality, housing structures, machinery, and grappling with the sustainability of electronics within a climate crisis.

Named prize winner of the Gaudeamus Award 2019, laureate of the 2025 IMPULS Composition Competition, awardee of a 2022 Hildegard Commission, recipient of a 2023 Barlow Endowment Commission, awarded first place for the 2020 ASCAP/SEAMUS commissioning competition, the 2023 John Green Prize, and given honorable mention at the 2023 Darmstadt Summer Courses, among others.

When not composing, she's an avid improviser on self-made DIY electronics, no-input mixer, her AI-electric guitar hybrid called 'other machines,' or modular. Having performed at such venues as the Banff Center for the Arts, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Goethe Institute of Boston.

She recently obtained her PhD from Harvard University having studied with Chaya Czernowin and Hans Tutschku. Currently, Kelley is teaching and conducting research as a Post Doc in Music Technology (2023-25) at the Smith Music Department. Her research has led her to study with composers of various interests such as Sivan Cohen Elias, Marcos Balter, and Fredrick Gifford.

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