

## Quatuor Diotima

### **Dieter Ammann** Streichquartett Nr. 2 "Distanzenquartett"

Establishing distances and bridging them: this is how one could summarize the compositional leitmotif of the 2nd string quartet ("Distanzenquartett") by Swiss composer Dieter Ammann.

The distances in this composition are manifold: they can be the clash of different registers or volume ranges, the opposing poles of harmonically organized sound and complex noise textures or the juxtaposition of energetic, moving passages and quieter moments.

Distances of a harmonic nature also play an important role in this work: here, the spectrum ranges from passages with close tonality (dominant seventh chords) to "quasi" harmonies, whole-tone sounds and free-tonal harmonies to microtonally colored structures and, last but not least, partial harmonies: the composer himself calls such moments "first entrances into spectral harmony" and speaks of a compositional element that has been increasingly incorporated into his own language over the years.

Due to the constant bridging of distances, the music seems to be in constant flux over long stretches. The music seems like a constantly oscillating system; oscillating so strongly that it is impossible to predict in which direction it will develop – to the left or to the right, in front or behind? Up or down or will it drift into a new dimension in terms of sound? Will the oscillations perhaps turn into a groove, will the fluctuation become a kind of groove? As to groove: Ammann's experience in jazz and funk can always be traced in short passages in which the music develops grooves. Grooves that are often created using unconventional playing techniques (extended techniques), which present the familiar in a striking way. In addition to the aspect of the opposite pole, Dieter Ammann also emphasizes a second aspect of distance, namely the temporal covering of a certain distance. From about halfway through the string quartet, the individual sounds are given a great deal of time by Ammann's standards – whereby the pent-up, suppressed energy is then discharged eruptively. As so often the case with Ammann's oeuvre, virtuosity meets complexity, sophisticated richness of detail meets elemental passion in the Distanzenquartett. A mixture that carries Dieter Ammann's music into the most important concert halls and festivals.

(Thomas Wally, <https://oe1.orf.at/artikel/697433/Dieter-Ammann-Streichquartett-Nr-2>)

[dieterammann.ch](http://dieterammann.ch)

### **Pascal Dusapin** Streichquartett Nr.5 (2004-2005)

Born in Nancy, Dusapin has been involved in different genres of music since his childhood - from classical to free jazz. He studied art and aesthetics at the University of Paris IV-Sorbonne and was a student of Messiaen in 1976. However, he calls Iannis Xenakis, student of Messiaen himself, his "musical father", whose seminars he attended from 1974 to 1978. He regards Edgar Varèse as his "musical grandfather". His own individual style is characterized by microtonality and intense polyphony with a constant attention to intervals.

His feeling for melody has led him to reproduce the intonation of the human voice on instruments; his works are often interwoven with literary, pictorial and philosophical influences. Dusapin has gained high recognition for a variety of compositions, such as his fifth opera "Faustus, The Last Night", which premiered in Berlin in 2006 under Michael Boder and was written close in time to the 5th String Quartet. Dusapin particularly likes to draw on Samuel Beckett for his compositions. Here it is his novel "Mercier et Camier". Dusapin quotes him several more times in the course of the score, for example in the coda of the entire work, which ends with a return to the conclusion of the first part with the following passage. The first part is dominated by the singing of the first violin. Later, the tempo quickens and there are violent outbursts before the first violin returns to the lyricism of the first section over a steady movement of the second violin. The continuation is different, however: after all the parts have taken up the semiquaver movement of the second violin, there is a shadowy intermezzo before the coda mentioned before.

[durand-salabert-eschig.com/en-GB/Composers/D/Dusapin-Pascal.aspx%20](http://durand-salabert-eschig.com/en-GB/Composers/D/Dusapin-Pascal.aspx%20)

#### **Misato Mochizuki Brains, Streichquartett Nr. 2 (2016/2017)**

After a conversation with Professor Yuji Ikegaya about his neurological research, I wanted to look into some of the functional peculiarities of the human brain.

Four of these peculiarities caught my attention. The first one concerns the area of autonomy or independence. This is because even in cases where there is no external stimulation, the human brain shows spontaneous activity that expresses itself in the form of fixed patterns. The second special feature of the human brain is the principle of "infection/contamination" of gestures or sentences with the function of mirror neurons: Humans learn by imitating the gestures of others; this is the source of emotions such as empathy or sympathy. The third feature is the spontaneous learning and self-renewal of the brain, abilities that make it unique and distinguish it from a computer. And finally, the awareness of its own self that distinguishes it from the brain of an animal.

In the classical and rigorous form of the quartet I found an ideal field of exploration to develop this musical project. The quartet consists of the four brains of the musicians, but it is also an independent unit, a unified nerve center.

The composition is thus driven by imitation, on the basis of patterns that are constantly changing in search of identity and in their relationship to the other and to others (musicians).

The Other is also the autistic person who is unable to imitate and understand the expressions, emotions and gestures of the outside world. The question of relationships thus becomes a question of dependence, independence and/or interdependence. It is at the heart of my compositional process, which, by organising and sonifying the behaviours of the different voices of the quartet, is also a means of questioning myself as a composer about my identity and my own relationship to the world.

(Misato Mochizuki, 2017, <https://www.breitkopf.com/work/9536/brains>)

[misato-mochizuki.com](http://misato-mochizuki.com)

**Lisa Streich** Sternenstill (2020), 15 Min.

Dissolving time and space for a few moments – Lisa Streich wants to achieve no more and no less with her modern compositions: "Music can never explicitly express anything, but I think there are moments, when art or music can give you a moment, in which you can grasp life or the world for a moment. If I could give that to someone, it would be wonderful," says Lisa Streich.

To achieve this, her works often explore extremes through rapid tempo changes and dissonances. Streich is inspired above all by the banal things of everyday life, she explains: "... casually while living, while receiving, while listening, while thinking. It is naturally shaped by human relations or by what happens in the world – the influence of everything happening in my life. "

Lisa Streich was born in Sweden and grew up near Hamburg. She studied in Berlin, Stockholm, Salzburg, Paris and Cologne. Together with her husband and three children she lives on the Swedish island of Gotland in the Baltic Sea, because living by the sea is important to her. "It's an exciting place because it doesn't seem so Swedish, " she explains. "They say you can drive around the island and get around the world at the same time, because the shore looks so different at every corner. It really is like that. " Her string quartet "Sternenstill" was also composed on Gotland back in 2020, at the beginning of the pandemic: "I live very close to the airport. Normally there were always lots of planes flying over my house. That suddenly disappeared completely. It was a completely different silence. It gave me a completely different peace to look at, perceive and observe nature. Then I noticed that butterflies move their wings very slowly when they sit on a flower. I had never seen that before. That's actually what the piece is about."

(Julia Jänisch)

[lisastreich.se](http://lisastreich.se)