

Program

Gilberto Agostinho

born 1986

Jamais Vu – Version D (2017)

Friedemann Schmidt-Mechau Ent-Gegnung (2019)

born 1955

Gilberto Agostinho

and thereafter they shape us (2019)

Petr Bakla

born 1980

Something with something else III (2014)

Matthias Lorenz, Violoncello

Gilberto dos Santos Agostinho Filho

Gilberto dos Santos Agostinho Filho was born in Osasco, Brazil, in 1986. After composing only as a hobby during his studies of physics, in 2006 he decided to fully dedicate himself to music. Agostinho first took private composition lessons with Mário Ficarelli before moving to the Czech Republic to study at the Prague Conservatory. In 2011, he was accepted at the Music Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague. Agostinho has earned his bachelor title in 2014 and his master title in 2016, both under the supervision of Luboš Mrkvička. In 2017, he started his PhD studies at City, University of London, under the supervision of Newton Armstrong on the subject of algorithmic music and the nature of randomness.

Agostinho has composed works for several formations, from short piano pieces to orchestral works, as well as electroacoustic pieces. He employs algorithmic techniques to produce both instrumental and electroacoustic compositions. The main element of his compositional technique is the use of probabilistic and generative methods to automatically produce complete pieces of music by computer programs, be they instrumental or electroacoustic. In the case of instrumental music, these computer programs output scores which are ready to be performed..

Jamais Vu (2017)

Jamais Vu is an algorithmic composition for solo cello, dedicated to Matthias Lorenz, and created using a computer program. Its score exists in infinitely many versions as each execution of this program rewrites the music, generating a new unique score. Thus, every little detail in every version of this work has been logically created according to the composer's strict rules and yet these details are all unforeseen, making two scores generated by the same program look alike but never be the same.

In his *The Psychology of Déjà Vu: Have I been here before?*, Vernon M. Neppe defines jamais vu (French for 'never seen') as '[a]ny subjectively inappropriate impression of non-familiarity of the present despite numerous past exposures.' Likewise, even though the listener of this work may develop a sense of intimacy with this music, every new version will invariably create a sense of non-familiarity.

and thereafter they shape us (2019)

and thereafter they shape us is a piece for solo cello written in 2019. The title comes from a quote found in an article on medium theory by J.M. Culkin in which he writes: 'Life imitates art. We shape our tools and thereafter they shape us.' The notion that the tools we choose shape our artistic works is very important for composers -- such as myself -- who employ computers as a fundamental element of their compositional process. This piece explores some of the themes that have been the focus of my interest recently, in particular musical repetition and looping. Due to its own nature, repetition is of course highly suitable for algorithmic investigation. Here I employ the idea of a looping window, which moves a little bit forward with each new iteration, and in the process uncovers new musical cells which had not been exposed to the listener before. It also creates new relationships between materials, since the juxtaposition of the elements at the end/beginning of each loop becomes unpredictable. I am particularly interested in using these algorithmic processes to engage with our ability to remember material and relationships of materials.

Friedemann Schmidt-Mechau

was born in Frankfurt am Main in 1955. After dropping out of school early, he completed an apprenticeship as a carpenter in 1971 and worked in this profession until 1985. From 1987 he studied musicology with the subsidiary subjects history and art at the Carl von Ossietzky University, Oldenburg, especially with Gustavo Becerra-Schmidt and Gertrud Meyer-Denkman. From 1988 he also studied composition and piano at the Hochschule für Künste, Bremen, with Jens-Peter Ostendorf and Luciano Ortis.

From 1987 to 1991 and from 2001 onwards he worked as choir director with various choirs in Oldenburg and since 2015 in Frankfurt am Main. For these choirs a large number of choir arrangements were created.

In 1990, together with other he founded „oh ton - Förderung aktueller Musik in der Provinz e.V.“, organized numerous concerts with new music in the Weser-Ems district and the oh ton-Ensemble, Chamber Orchestra for New Music, was formed.

Since 1992 he has been a freelance composer. From 1997 he worked as assistant to Gertrud Meyer-Denkmann and collaborated on her various publications. In 2014 he moved to Frankfurt am Main.

He has received a number of composition prizes and scholarships.

Ent-Gegnung (2019)

In the course of the time of my compositional work there was a pendulum movement between more complex and simpler forms. Often there were compositional questions that were refined and branched out from piece to piece. The necessity to break this development direction again and again and to arrive at simple structures without loss of differentiation requires a certain radicality. This can be seen again and again in the music of Beethoven. Such a break helps not to lose oneself in mannerism, but to come back to clear statements. It should be clear that I am not striving for a reduction of complexity here, as can be observed in so many ways in our present day, with which discourse becomes mere expression of opinion, with which often only drawers are used and clichés are produced.

The piano trio *Sieben kleine Sätze* is one such piece. And *Ent-Gegnung* can also be added.

Eight materials or structures are distributed over 35 sections, which clearly stand out and differ from one another in tempo, playing technique, dynamic design, density and sonority. All sections begin with a short impulse with oversized bow pressure on the C-string and the eight structures rise half-tone by half-tone. Seven times the piece starts with the first of the eight structures, always in the same order the others follow, but only once every eight follow. The run is stopped at a different point each time and restarted with the first one.

Due to the clear differences, the structures are always clearly recognizable, but they are changed with each reappearance.

On four of them the cellist's voice is used. Consonantal rubbing and sibilant sounds as well as singing are used. And the singing comes together once in unison with the cello voice, on the other hand - in the eighth structure, which occurs only once, a text by W. G. Sebald is sung contrapuntally to the cello voice, which is the trigger and key for the composition:

*Schwer zu verstehen
ist nämlich die Landschaft,
wenn du im D-Zug von dahin
nach dorthin vorbeifährst,
während sie stumm
dein Verschwinden betrachtet.*

In the opposition of the "you" and the landscape, the poem expresses a relationship in which I recognize an elementary problem of our contemporary culture: the lack of understanding for existence in other tenses than our own. The renewed intensification of class antagonisms in the globalized economy, combined with a re-nationalization, creates radically different speeds that determine the lives of different people and make encounters and mutual understanding more difficult.

Petr Bakla

Born in 1980 in Prague, Petr Bakla often employs basic pitch-based material (typically the chromatic and the whole-tone scales) in his compositions. He is interested in constructing situations and structural contexts in which these frugal musical elements can acquire a unique expressiveness and energy. A frequent feature of Bakla's work is a simultaneous course of two musical/sound layers which, although usually markedly differing in dynamics to allow for a sense of "figure and background", are not mutually subordinating - they are of equal importance, their "friction" creating specific tension and ambiguity.

Bakla's music has been performed in Austria, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, Armenia, Ukraine and the United States (NYC, Boston, San Diego ao), in many cases commissioned and/or performed by distinguished musicians. Of special importance has been the collaboration with the Ostrava Center for New Music.

Petr Bakla studied music at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, took part in several composition courses and workshops home and abroad and was awarded scholarships and residencies. He is self-taught.

Something with something else III (2014) for Violoncello solo

The purist in me is most happy when a musical idea or a situation permits only one single instrumentation solution, when all the embarrassing decorator-like concerns (which instrument should play what) just don't take place, because there is simply no other way how to do it. Something with something else is almost there: while it is entirely clear that the music has to be played on either violin, viola or cello, you will not find a single reason why precisely one of these, and not the other two. It therefore exists in three versions that are each a materialization of one and the same principle (one "meta-piece", if you will), but the notes are different (of course it would have been possible to simply transpose, but that is far beyond what my self-worth could stand). Thus, after finishing the piece, I had no choice other than writing it again, and then once more – a particular experience, definitely.

According to all sensible criteria, the piece is in a simple ABA form, but I can't help hearing it as a diptych. Something else wedges into the middle of something, while this something has never ceased to be present in fact, it only temporarily receded somewhere "behind sound".

Matthias Lorenz

was born in 1964 in Bensheim/Bergstraße, where he also spent his childhood and youth. After completing his civil service near Gießen, he began studying cello in 1986 in Frankfurt am Main with Prof. Gerhard Mantel. Even before the beginning of his studies, the decision was made to focus on contemporary music. Although there was no such focus of study, it could be realized in the freedom offered by the study regulations. Courses e.g. with Wolfgang Boettcher and Siegfried Palm completed the cellist training. In addition, for Matthias Lorenz, the study of musicology has always been an important support for cello playing.

Since the end of his studies he has been working as a freelance cellist, mainly with contemporary music. In addition to serious music - which meanwhile also includes music with live electronics - other genres are constantly emerging. Marginal areas of rock and pop music (together with Albrecht Kunze and Irmin Schmidt), stage music (for the Frankfurt Ballet, among others), improvised music. In the course of time his solo playing has been joined first by the elole piano trio (2001) - since 2018 Neues Klaviertrio Dresden - the ensemble courage in 2004 and the Ostravská Banda in 2011.

I would like to thank everyone who helped me to prepare the technical equipment for this concert.

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