

DOCTORAL PROGRAMME  
IN MUSICAL ARTS

docARTES.

# **MUSIC FOR ALL: Ownership in Composition, Improvisation and Performance**

**Orpheus Doctoral Conference 2015**  
docARTES, Doctoral Programme in Musical Arts

18- 19 February 2015  
Orpheus Institute, Ghent Belgium

## Orpheus Doctoral Conference 2015

In light of the relative failure of Digital Rights Management technology (DRM), attempts to define musical ownership in the contemporary world of digital media have become highly contentious. The ways in which we define who owns music and what it means to own music (how it can be used, re-used, and re-imagined) all have implications for our everyday musical life. It seems, though, that whenever we attempt to form such definitions, we also find them undermined by musical practice. Even long before the era of mechanical reproduction, the distinction between the original and the copy had been a tenuous one. In Western music, the practices of transcription, adaptation, and citation have been essential to the creation of music. Remix culture is not, it seems, an entirely new phenomenon.

The issue becomes even more striking in interactions with primarily oral musical cultures. Without scores or recordings, without any sort of object to contain it, who owns this music? The traditional improvising musician participates in a web of musical practices, one in which she belongs. When we stop worrying about origins, about the music's historical source and its rightful owner, we face the interesting specter of music that might belong to no one, or perhaps to everyone. When these same oral traditions interact with literate musical practice, we are faced with even more radical challenges to our notions of ownership. Even the essential primacy of a score over its performance in Western music becomes problematic in light of the practice of improvising musicians.

These issues have a long and varied history, one that shapes our creative lives as performers, composers, improvisers, and listeners in subtle, often tacit ways. In this conference, we meet as practitioners and researchers in music to explore ownership's connections to musical practice. Participants from primarily oral musical cultures, primarily literate musical cultures, and all the shades in-between, will engage in dialogue and discussion, both on how various conceptions of ownership affect our practice, as well as how our own practice, in turn, might affect understandings of ownership.

The conference will frame the debate in a wider perspective through the keynote lectures by **Prof. Martin Scherzinger**, Associate Professor of Media, Culture, and Communication at New York University, and **Ross Daly**, professional musician.

The Orpheus Doctoral Conference is a small-scale conference, part of the docARTES curriculum and organized by the **docARTES** students. This year's organizing committee is Mark Edwards, Marina Lontou-Mochament, Tiziano Manca, Bobby Mitchell, Nizar Rohana and Alieksey Vianna.

## Schedule

Wednesday 18 February 2015

13:30 - 14:00		<b>Registration</b>
14:00 - 14:15	4th Floor	<b>Welcome by Mark Edwards</b>
14:15 - 15:00		<b>Performance and Installation</b> Falk Hübner & Juan Parra, Jukebox
15:00 - 16:00	Concert Hall	<b>Keynote Speech</b> <b>Ross Daly</b> Chair: Nizar Rohana
16:00 - 16:30		<b>Coffee Break</b>
16:30 - 18:00		<b>Presentation I</b> <b>Mathilde Pavis</b> <i>Bound by law: musical performers' obligations to respect scores or records.</i> <b>Will Connor</b> <i>Copyrighting fear: live improv, recorded composition and dread falls theatre's immersive performance father dagon.</i> <b>Alexander Hunter</b> <i>Open music with early instruments in an electroacoustic environment: an exploration of innovative anarchic small ensemble performance practice.</i> Chair: Marina Liontou-Mochament
18:00 - 19:15	1st Floor	<b>Dinner in-house</b>
19:15 - 19:45		<b>Group walk (1.6 km) from Orpheus Institute to De Centrale</b>
20:00 - 22:00	De Centrale	<b>Concert by Ross Daly and Kelly Thoma</b>

## Schedule

Thursday 19 February 2015

08:45 – 09:00	Concert Hall	<b>Introduction by Bobby Mitchell</b>	
09:00 – 10:00		<b>Keynote Speech</b> <b>Martin Scherzinger</b> <i>Dialectic of the Musical Commons</i> Chair: Bobby Mitchell	
10:00 – 10:30		<b>Coffee Break</b>	
10:30 – 11:30		<b>Presentation II</b>  <b>Bjørnar Habbestad</b> <i>Performing after high modernism.</i> <b>Victoria Tzotzkova</b> <i>Improvising the standard repertoire: transparency, improvisation, and agency in classical piano performance.</i> Chair: Alieksey Vianna	
11:30 – 12:00		<b>Concluding Panel</b> Chair: Mark Edwards	
12:00 – 12:30		<b>Break</b>	
12:30 – 13:30	Concert Hall	<b>Concert</b>  <i>Piano Etudes (2012-2014)</i>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Verso la Capo: Handel's Looking Glass</i></li><li>• <i>Gigue</i></li><li>• <i>außer sich mäßig</i></li><li>• <i>Schoenberg dans Brahms</i></li><li>• <i>Chopi Chopin</i></li><li>• <i>The Horse is Not Mine, an Imitation Horse</i></li><li>• <i>Paganini, Piano Hero</i></li><li>• <i>Fast zu sorglos</i></li><li>• <i>Errata Erratica</i></li></ul> Bobby Mitchell, piano	<b>Martin Scherzinger</b>
13:30 – 14:30	1st Floor	<b>Lunch in-house</b>	
14:30		<b>Departure</b>	

## Abstracts & Biographies

### Keynotes

**Ross Daly**

*The Cost of Inspiration*

**Martin Scherzinger**

*Dialectic of the Musical Commons*

### Performers & Presenters

**Performance and Installation** *Falk Hübner & Juan Parra, Jukebox*

**Mathilde Pavis** *Bound by law: musical performers' obligations to respect scores or records.*

**Will Connor** *Copyrighting fear live improv, recorded composition and dread falls theatre's immersive performance father dagon.*

**Alexander Hunter** *Open music with early instruments in an electroacoustic environment: an exploration of innovative anarchic small ensemble performance practice.*

**Bjørnar Habbestad** *Performing after high modernism.*

**Victoria Tzotzkova** *Improvising the standard repertoire: transparency, improvisation, and agency in classical piano performance.*

**Bobby Mitchell**, *piano*

## Keynotes

### Ross Daly

*The Cost of Inspiration*

#### Biography

*Many years before what we call "World Music" appeared on the scene, certain individuals had already understood the enormous value and vast variety of the world's various musical traditions and had dedicated their lives to their study. One such person is Ross Daly. Although of Irish descent, Ross Daly does not really fit into any particular ethnic stereotype given that his life has been spent in many different parts of the world and his home for the last 35 years is the island of Crete in Greece. Ross Daly, at a very early age, discovered that music was, in his own words, "the language of my dialogue with that which I perceive to be sacred".*

*This dialogue eventually led him to the great modal traditions of the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Indian Subcontinent where he finally found the musical archetypes that he had been searching for all his life. In these traditions he encountered music which was not merely a vehicle of self-expression, but which was able to take one beyond what one normally perceived to be the boundaries of one's self into other transpersonal realms of experience.*

*This discovery changed everything in Ross Daly's life and he subsequently gave up all other activities and dedicated his life to the study of the innermost secrets of these musical traditions as well as to the art of composition. He subsequently traveled extensively, studying under many of the world's greatest masters of modal traditions. Since 1975 he has been based on the island of Crete where he is universally recognized as one of the foremost experts on the island's rich musical tradition.*

*He is also especially well known and respected for his ability to bring artists of different and seemingly unrelated traditions together in collaborations of unique quality and depth. In 1982 he established the Labyrinth Musical Workshop which is today situated in the village of Houdetsi 20 kms south of the capital city of Herakleion.*

*The Musical Workshop Labyrinth ([www.labyrinthmusic.gr](http://www.labyrinthmusic.gr)) is a unique educational institution dedicated to the study of the world's modal musical traditions and every year Ross Daly and his colleagues organize an impressive number of seminars and masterclasses which are taught by many of the world's greatest master musicians.*

*After many years of intensive training in a variety of musical traditions, Ross Daly turned his attention largely to composition drawing heavily on all of the knowledge which he acquired during his long apprenticeships. Today he has released more than thirty five albums of his own compositions as well as of his own arrangements of traditional melodies that he collected during his travels. The island of Crete in Greece still provides a base for his personal and musical research as he continues traveling around the world performing his music.*

## Martin Scherzinger

### Dialectic of the Musical Commons

The reach of private property rights, it seems, is widening. Over the last two decades, scholars in a variety of disciplines have tackled the impact of IP law on practices of politics, science, economics, law and culture. Not only has IP been extended to new information objects (from databases and software designs to biological seed lines, bacteria, genetically engineered life forms and DNA sequences), but the lengths of time for which protection is granted have been substantially extended for nearly all objects. At the same time, we witness today an outpouring of academic and popular scholarship in critical response to the widening reach of the IP concept. Like an evil twin, the progressive IP and cyber law scholarship calls for an expansion of the commons, emphasizes the productive delinking of cultural practice from cultural policy, and offers countervailing forces to the enclosure of the commons. Instead of identifying the expanding commons as inherently progressive, this paper argues that it is the peculiar comingling of the commons with its privatized antithesis that productively underwrites new networks of exchange value. The demise of proprietary relations in one sphere efficiently serves to secure the ascendancy of proprietary relations in another sphere. Above all, it is the opportunistic conceptual *mélange* between private property and public domain - whereby one side of the conceptual pole readily supplements (as alibi) for the other - that prevents the proper functioning of either conceptual principle in practice. Not property alone, but the very opposition between property and commons becomes the bastard concept for power. The demise of economic value for creative labor as the privatized "clouds" that connect the communal "crowd" simultaneously garner profits becomes an exemplary contemporary case of powerful proprietary interests vested in anti-property; or, polemically stated, a capitalist expansion of the laboring commons. This paper argues that music is at the vanguard of these developments.

*Martin Scherzinger is a South African-born composer and media theorist, who works on and engages with the music of Africa. He plays various percussion instruments, notably mbira dza vadzimu from Zimbabwe. His research investigates the poetics and politics of digital technologies as well as property relations in diverse sociotechnical environments. He also has a particular interest in the global biographies of sound and other ephemera circulating in geographically remote regions. He is best known for his publications on the nature of mathematical geometries in African music. He is an associate professor at New York University.*

## Martin Scherzinger

### Concert

#### Piano Etudes (2012-2014)

For piano

- Verso la Capo: Handel's Looking Glass
- Gigue
- außer sich mäßig
- Schoenberg dans Brahms
- Chopi Chopin
- The Horse is Not Mine, an Imitation Horse
- Paganini, Piano Hero
- Fast zu sorglos
- Errata Erratica

#### Bobby Mitchell, piano

*"When I was growing up in South Africa, I remember how African pianists at the local music school approached works of the great European masters, with a rich and strange inflection. This Africanized sound was generally unacknowledged by official culture at the time. Today, black opera singers from South Africa are gradually becoming prominent internationally, but they are one small element of a much greater story. With the arrival of pianos, guitars and accordions in the colonies, Africans have long indigenized classically European instruments to great effect.*

*It is not easy to define this approach, but perhaps one can speak here of a change in focus from figure/ground relations to all-over-pattern. Instead of bringing long range structural lines and harmonic schemata to the fore, the African approach finds inspiration in the texture of the figures, their manner of weaving, and the surface as cloth. Perhaps one may even say the African approach hears music, not as developmental or goal-directed, but as continuous and cyclic. This is present tense music.*

*Written for Bobby Mitchell who brings a crucial dimension of poetry and politics to them, these etudes mimetically inhabit the music of early Romanticism with a paradoxically cyclic African touch. In the first piece, for example, a verso da capo of Handel's iconic theme is Africanized in a set of variations with changing tempi. Like speaking Biedermeier with a Tswana or a Zulu accent, the music speaks to the impossibility of pure mimesis as a site of revelation."*

**Martin Scherzinger**



## Performers & Presenters

### **Bobby Mitchell**

Piano

*The American pianist **Bobby Mitchell** (1985) is interested in both contemporary music as well as music from the past centuries. Besides the modern piano he plays the fortepiano and the harpsichord. Also he presents himself as improviser, composer and conductor. Bobby Mitchell received prizes from the Festival Music Antiqua (Bruges, Belgium), the Dutch government, the National Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts (US) and the American Liszt Society Baltimore-Washington Chapter. He got grants from the HSP Huygens Talent Programme, the Carpe Diem Foundation (Illinois) and the German DAAD (Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst). As a soloist Bobby played with the World Youth Symphony Orchestra, the Eastman Wind Ensemble, Concerto Armonico Freiburg and the Noord Nederlands Orkest. He has given many concerts with the very virtuoso variation series *The People United Will Never Be Defeated!* By Rzewski. He has often co-operated with Rzewski and other composers such as Steve Reich, Louis Andriessen and composers of his own generation. His most important teachers are Nelita True, David Kuyken, Robert Hill, Stephen Perry and Bart van Oort.*

## Falk Hübner's and Juan Parra's *Jukebox*

### Negating owner and authorship in experimental music theatrical performance

*Jukebox* is both a performance and an installation, for a musician, instruments, loudspeakers, laptop and objects, created in close collaboration with Juan Parra Cancino. As performance, a musician prepares for a concert. He arranges his instruments: keyboards, synthesisers, a guitar, a laptop, plenty of cables and a number of loudspeakers. During assembling, the instruments more and more get the identity of an audio sculpture. When the preparations are over, the sculpture of musical instruments is able to play without any further operation by the musician; it becomes an own identity, an organism of its own. The concert so carefully prepared doesn't happen. Experiencing his own self-playing music box, the musician has staged his own needlessness.

After this 'preparatory performance' the sculpture becomes an installation. Re-using, 'recycling' already existing music by Falk Hübner and Juan Parra Cancino, to be played back as in a 'real' Jukebox. The audience is allowed to interact with the sculpture by pushing buttons and by this choosing specific music or reactions from the sculpture - only without paying for it.

Naturally, being a piece of artistic work, *Jukebox* does not so much provide answers to the various issues concerning ownership, but rather questions prevalent notions of author- and ownership. Both in creation process and in the final result, *Jukebox* challenges ownership on various levels: who owns the piece; Falk Hübner as composer, director and conceptualist, or Juan Parra as composer, performer and programmer, without whom both process and product would have been inconceivable? Or does the audience take over, left alone with the installation after the leave of Parra?

Furthermore, just like in a real jukebox, there is not so much "new" to the piece. Viewing the piece itself as a non-human and even non-physical actor (Bruno Latour), the work does not own its material: the software is little more than an old patch re-used and only slightly edited for the piece; the space is inhabited by rather old equipment, including a revox recorder out-of-use today, and the music includes processing of old composition of both Parra and Hübner.

However, despite these seemingly "negative" interpretations, *Jukebox* is meant to be understood as an invitation for the audience to experience what is new; what is indeed owned by Hübner, Parra and the piece itself, and what this could mean for the understanding of different notions of shared (co-)author and ownership.

*Falk Hübner, PhD, is a composer, music theatre maker and researcher. He creates experimental stage work which falls between concert, installation and performance. Alledaagse gebeurtenissen zijn inspiratie voor zijn werk. Fascinated by (non-)communication phenomena of the individual, isolated human being in our technological age, he uses everyday experiences as inspiration for his artistic work. He reflects on these experiences by translating them into performance frameworks, staging the relationships and tensions between live performers and digital technology. In doing this, he seeks to open up the individual imagination of each member in the audience, to take with them back into everyday life.*

## Mathilde Pavis

### Bound by Law: Musical performers' obligations to respect scores or records

Intellectual Property laws, whether we are looking at continental authors' rights or copyright law, have placed a strong emphasis on the fixed, written or recorded musical work. The emphasis is such that the fixation rather than the creation of the work seems to be the source of legal authorship. While this position can be mitigated, the hegemony of musical scores or of musical records has undeniably shaped the ways in which authors' rights are distributed amongst musicians but more significantly, it has also influenced the way performers are protected.

The presentation aims to assess whether the focus the law places on the 'written' or 'recorded' musical work over its performed versions has been translated into a legal obligation for performers to respect the scores. Are performers legally bound to be faithful to records of what is understood as being the composer's wishes? If so, what are the terms of such obligation? Would it apply to composers long dead such as Mozart, Beethoven or Schubert? The presentation investigates the legal relationship between composers and performers by analyzing statutory dispositions and the jurisprudence litigating disputes between musicians in various western jurisdictions (United Kingdom, the United States, France, Canada and Australia). The presentation concludes that the law has enforced a hierarchy between musicians, favoring composers' creativity over performers'. It confirms that the hegemony of the scores experienced by musicians in their professional community has found its echo in law. Performers, seen as the composers' puppets, must abide by the scores they interpret in order to avoid breaching authors' rights (moral right) which may be enforced by their estate after their death, and so, eternally. This clearly undermines performers' creative freedom but also the reality of practice where such clear cut 'composer/performer' statuses become obsolete stereotypes of the creative composing process.

*Mathilde Pavis is a public-funded doctoral student in Intellectual Property Law based at the University of Exeter (since March 2013). Her research focuses on challenging the current legal understanding of creativity, more specifically performers' creativity. Her research compares the legal narratives of the United Kingdom, France, the United States, Australia and Canada. Her thesis aims to shift the current author/performer divide enforced by most western jurisdictions' intellectual property laws, in order to better protect performers and ensure the sustainability of their contribution to our cultural heritage. She is a member of the Invisible Difference project, an interdisciplinary AHRC funded project looking at the legal protection of works made by disabled dance artists. Mathilde is also the co-founder of the New IP Lawyers network and a regular blogger. Her work has been published, or will soon be, on different platforms targeting different audiences. She currently teaches both undergraduate and postgraduate law students at the University of Exeter in Intellectual Property Law and Policy, Copyright Law, French Administrative Law and French Law of Contract.*

## Will Connor

### Copyrighting Fear: Live Improv, Recorded Composition, and Dread Falls Theatre's Immersive Performance *Father Dagon*

With the development of immersive theatre performances, such as international theatre company Punchdrunk's *Drowned Man* and *Sleep No More*, new situations surrounding mechanical and performing rights have appeared. Organizations such as the Performance Rights Society in the United Kingdom to date have not yet addressed compensating composers for music presented in immersive performances within their guidelines, which has left a loop hole for sound designers to utilize when presenting pre-recorded music in their shows. Dread Falls Theatre, in their current immersive show, *Father Dagon*, however, have made directorial and sound design decisions that have lead to additional concerns, and as a result delved into even newer copyright territory. By merging live improvised music with pre-recorded copyright free and standard copyrighted material, as well as using live improvising musicians working directly with directors and partially improvising movement actors during the performances, questions of who should be considered the composer of the show's music and how those composers and performers should be paid arise. In this presentation, I will draw from research and interviews with the performers, composers, director, and sound designers to outline the legal difficulties encountered by the sound designer, ways in which the performers and directors involved see their contributions, and how the show administration is handling copyright and compensation of the material for their current runs of the this trending, immersive style theatrical show and the subsequent post production musical releases.

*Will Connor is a London-based percussionist devoted to experimenting and composing using unconventional instruments and techniques. Innovatively rethinking how to generate percussive and acoustic sounds with a goal of reversing the aural expectations of the instruments, attempting to create electronic sounds with acoustic devices, et cetera, Connor plays drones and sustained tones along with truncated, abrupt sounds. He freely draws upon Italian Futurism and Dadaist sensibilities to create textural soundscapes and industrial sonic explorations, performing on household objects and homemade devices, including pot lids, grill hoods, sheet metal, springs, shelf brackets, and bicycles, as well as traditional and ethnic percussion. Connor primarily performs dark ambient composed and improvised material, but also works in gothic, jazz, rock, traditional-fusion, and modern classical contexts.*

*Connor's academic musical research and performance projects are all part of his larger goal to invent new ways of approaching percussion and assists him on his quest: He hopes to generate and incorporate exciting, cutting edge instrumentation and combine them with performance techniques that result in a continuous and exciting musical adventure that he shares with his listeners through live presentations and recorded media. Furthermore, Connor seeks to provide a creative outlet for his deep appreciation of gothic and steampunk literature, specifically his greatest literary influence H. P. Lovecraft. As part of this exploration, Connor will release his first full length solo album and at least one release by each of his other full time projects (*PerKelt*, *Second Head*, and another Lovecraft-related set of material) by the first quarter of 2014.*

## Alexander Hunter

### Open Music with Early Instruments in an Electroacoustic Environment. An exploration of innovative anarchic small ensemble performance practice

The work of the newly formed trio, Helyard, Hunter & Martin, consists of three performers utilising early and electronic instruments (harpsichord, regal, viola da gamba, theorbo, malletKAT, etc.) realising 'open works' in an electroacoustic and ambisonic environment. Based in the Australian National University's Experimental Music Studio, this faculty ensemble presents performances of partially improvised open works, utilising an anarchic ensemble performance model stressing the combination of independence and interdependence.

The members of this research-led ensemble are interested in the development of performance practice in terms of both early instruments (new extended techniques, including the use of live electronics) and electroacoustic ensemble performance (interactive spatialisation). In addition to his instrument(s), each performer has access to a console from which he can manipulate his signals in terms of both effects and spatialisation.

The ensemble performance model is informed by the small-scale anarchic politics of composers and free improvisers like AMM, FIG, Christian Wolff and the Reductionists. The performance environments used in these open works are created (composed) by member Dr Alexander Hunter (viola da gamba, theorbo).

These compositions draw on Hunter's research into mobile forms, informed in part by the writings of Jonathan D. Kramer and the works of the Earle Brown. Utilising non-verbal cues (visual, sonic, or electronic), the three performers navigate and influence the trajectory of each performance, shifting between and altering a mobile series of semi-composed events with varying levels of specificity in terms of performance parameters (rhythm, pitch, density, timbre, spatialisation, etc.).

This paper will use both scores and video recordings of recent performances to discuss the ways in which these open works utilise an anarchic combination of independence and interdependence in a small ensemble performance environment combining early and electric instruments and ambisonics.

*Alexander Hunter studied composition, double bass, viola da gamba and ethnomusicology at Northern Illinois University, and received a PhD in composition from Edinburgh Napier University. Currently lecturing at the Australian National University, Hunter teaches composition and theory and directs the ANU Experimental Music Studio. His work as a composer is based on open works, which encourage a fluid relationship between composer, score and performer. Hunter's current performance-led research is based on his participation in a trio of improvisers utilising the combination of open works, early instruments, and electroacoustic techniques and spatialisation.*

## **Bjørnar Habbestad**

### Performing after high modernism

After more than a century of 'contemporary' music, we can trace a certain dichotomy between the musicianships of 'experimental' and 'new music' traditions. Such a reductive scheme does not reflect the whole picture, as there are numerous tangents found in performance histories, but it might serve as a starting point for discussing developments in what we could call 'a contemporary' or 'avant-garde' musicianship.

One of the main differences between the two is related to the creation of meaning and the subsequent idea of ownership to this meaning. The experimental tradition is often associated with collaborative creative processes, a high degree of performer agency and great value put to performance ethos. The 'new music' tradition has a much stronger association with the singular creative act, a lower degree of performer agency and a creation ethos, thus the value is often attributed to «work itself», the composer or «the composers intention». I argue that both these conceptions lack the necessary flexibility to be operational today.

I would like to address the differences in perceived authorship in these different traditions, mainly in order to discuss potential consequences as elements from these musicianships converge in different hybrid work formats, creation processes and performance practices. The tracing of different perceptions of authorship, outside the purely legal ones, is key in understanding of how this music is developed, shared and performed today. In 2015 - does a composer really «own» the sound from her composition? Do the sounds from a free improviser truly «belong» to her and only her?

The presentation builds on two artistic processes: my work performing Luigi Nono's Das Atmende Klarsein and the development of Lemur's site specific composition Critical Band.

***Bjørnar Habbestad** (1976) made his debut as a soloist with the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra in 2000, and launched the very same evening the art project Telart, a series of 100 miniature compositions presented on 10,000 mobile telephone voice mails.*

*After completing studies in flute, chamber music and contemporary music at the Grieg Academy (2000), Guildhall School of Music, London (2001) and the Conservatorium van Amsterdam (2003) he has established himself as a soloist, chamber and ensemble musician with Norway and Europe as workplace. His musical span is large, with activities stretching from premiering new solo works for flute via installation art, to chamber music, improvisation and electro-acoustics.*

*Central concerts include the solo part of Luigi Nono's monumental work "IO" in Bergen in 2011, "Das Atmende Klarsein" by the same composer during the Ultima 2010 and premiere of Alwynne Pritchard theatrical flute concert "DONT TOUCH ME" under Borealis 2008. Previous year's concert schedule has taken him to Reykjavik, London, New York, Milan, Rome, Berlin ao.*

## Victoria Tzotzkova

### Improvising the standard repertoire: Transparency, improvisation, and agency in classical piano performance

Addressing ownership in a metaphorical rather than a legal sense, this presentation focuses on a classical music performer's relationship to the music of the standard classical repertoire. "Ownership" of music one performs as a classical musician is a complicated issue, the composer looming large as the rightful source (or "owner") of the music, with direct consequences for a performer's sense of creative license and personal agency (Wise et al. 2011, Kingsbury 2001, Klorman 2014, Tzotzkova 2014).

Focusing on the concept of transparency, as an ideal defining the relationship between a musical work and its performance (Goehr 2002, Hunter 2005), as well as practical discourses around the evaluation of classical music performance (Hill 2012, McCormick 2009, Hamilton 2008), this presentation aims to: 1) highlight the experienced tensions around owning or not owning the music one performs as a classical musician, and 2) present a view of the act of performing the standard piano repertoire as an act of improvisation, by focusing on piano performance as an act of creating sound in particular, continually shifting conditions, both acoustic and experiential.

As the call-for-presentations already outlines, practices of improvisation are at odds with ideas of ownership resting with anyone other than the musician creating sound on any given occasion; the improviser "owns" the music she makes in a much less problematic way than the performing classical artist "owns" the music she sounds out in a standard, classical recital. Highlighting the improvisatory dimensions of classical music performance is a way to shift and re-align the relationship between performer and repertoire in the classical tradition, as well as a way to point to common ground between different musical traditions, anchored on the pervasiveness of improvisation in acts of creating and experiencing sound.

**Victoria Tzotzkova** is a pianist and theorist, whose research and artistic priorities center on the experiential richness of sound in classical music piano performance. She completed her doctoral dissertation, *Theorizing Pianistic Experience: Tradition, Instrument, Performer*, in May 2012 at the Department of Music, Columbia University, with Professor George E. Lewis as her main adviser. She is currently a Teaching Fellow at the Department of Music, Harvard University. Performance credits include Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, the Miller Theatre, Steinway Hall in New York, Bulgaria Concert Hall in Sofia, Bulgaria. ([www.victoriatzotzkova.com](http://www.victoriatzotzkova.com))

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