



University of Ljubljana
Academy of music

Department of composition
and music theory

2nd Internati**O**nal Week

with the Com**P**osers

Steph**E**n McNeff (London, United Kingdom),

Johannes K**R**etz (Vienna, Austria),

Sidney Corbett (Chic**A**go, USA/Mannheim, Germany)

and with the Musicologist and Pianist

Erica Bisesi (Gorizia, Italy/ Graz, Austria)



Stephen McNeff studied composition at the Royal Academy of Music and did post-graduate work at the University of Exeter. He began his career working in theatres throughout Britain and he became Associate Director at the University of Manchester's Contact Theatre. He went to the Banff Centre in Canada as composer in residence writing a number of music theatre works before becoming Artistic Director of Comus Music Theatre in Toronto. There he won a Mavor Moore Award for his opera *The Secret Garden*. On his return to Britain he won a Scotsman award at the Edinburgh Festival for his opera *Aesop*, written with long-time collaborator, the Cornish poet Charles Causley.

His relationship with the Canadian Brass resulted in a Brass Quintet and he arranged numerous albums – including those with the Boston Symphony and New York Philharmonic Brass. As his reputation grew in England his work was performed in major concert hall like the newly opened Bridgewater Hall in Manchester, but it was his quirky take on T S Eliot's *The Wasteland* – presented operatically as a *film noir* thriller – that grabbed the attention of the London critics at the 1994 Covent Garden Festival. He went on to write a number of other music theatre works including *Matins for the Virgin of Guadalupe*, *Slump* (based on the cartoon strip by novelist Will Self) and, with the award winning poet Alice Oswald, *Passions*. In 2004 his opera *Clockwork* (based on the book by Philip Pullman) was a major success at the Linbury Theatre at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. The Royal Opera House commissioned him to write *Gentle Giant*, a work which has been revived twice and is in the ROH repertoire. In 2007 he won the British Composer Award for his opera, *Tarka the Otter*.

Although specialising in opera and music for the theatre and voice he has written important instrumental pieces, including a *Cello Sonata*, a *Piano Quintet* and a large range of works for wind ensembles of various kinds. *Ghosts*, his first major success in this genre, has been played extensively in Europe, Japan and the USA and been recorded twice. The Royal Northern College of Music recorded a portrait album of his wind music, *Image in Stone*, available on the Campion label and other recordings of wind music recordings feature the University of Indiana on the Klavier label. A long relationship with the Unicorn Theatre produced many new scores, notably his music for a series of plays based on Beatrix Potter's

children's stories. These have been very successfully made into the *Beatrix Potter Suites* recorded on Chandos by the BBC Concert Orchestra with Imelda Staunton.

In 2005 he became Composer in Residence with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra where principal conductor Marin Alsop gave premieres of three new symphonic works, *Heiligenstadt*, *Secret Destinations* and the *Sinfonia*. Other works for the BSO included *Weathers* for chorus and orchestra, and *Echoes and Reflections*, premiered by Yan Pascal Tortelier. He also completed works for the BSO's new music ensemble, notably *LUX* and *Counting 1* and *2* (premiered in an exchange with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra's Ensemble 10/10). *The Chalk Legends*, an opera oratorio with over 2300 performers, was commissioned by the BSO for London 2012. Other orchestral commissions include *Near Avalon* for the Ulster Orchestra and a *Double Percussion Concerto* for the O Duo and BBC Symphony Orchestra (both Radio 3 commissions). His new orchestration of Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* was performed at Sadler's Wells Theatre and was unanimously praised by the London critics as a landmark development in approaches to the opera. It was nominated for a Royal Philharmonic Society Award. For Rambert Dance he adapted Ravel's *L'enfant et les sortilèges* into *Seven for a Secret* and last year there was a transatlantic revival of a newly revised version of *The Secret Garden* at Trinity Laban Conservatoire and the Banff Festival of the Arts.



Johannes Kretz, born 1968 in Vienna, studies (composition, pedagogy) at the music academy Vienna with Francis Burt and Michael Jarrell and mathematics at the University Vienna • 1992/93: studies at IRCAM, Paris with Marco Stroppa and Brian Ferneyhough • co-founder of NewTonEnsemble Vienna, of the international composers group PRISMA, of ikultur.com and of aNOther festival Vienna • teacher for music theory

and composition at the conservatory of Vienna • since 1997: teacher for for computer music at the university for music and performing arts Vienna, since 2001 also music theory, since 2004 also composition,

since 2009: habilitation in composition, associate professor • Since 2008: Head of ZiMT ("center for innovative music technology") of the university for music and performing arts Vienna, since 2013 dean/head of department of the Institute for composition and electro-acoustics • Founding member of NewTonEnsemble Vienna, of the European Bridges Ensemble, the international composers group PRISMA, of the performance duo TOUCHING, and of ikultur.com. Co-curator of aNOther festival Vienna together with Wei-Ya Lin und Mahdieh Bayat.

Performances in Austria, Germany, Poland, France, Czechia, Turkey, Latvia, Lithuania, Argentina, Mexico, Canada, USA, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, China • regular broadcasts in Austrian and German radio • commissions of work & performances at/with Festival Ars Electronica, Konzerthaus Wien, Klangforum Wien, Ensemble On Line, Vienna Flautists, quartett22, Internationale Lemgoer Orgeltage, Haller Bachtage, Triton Trombone Quartett, Wiener Kammerchor • numerous grants and prizes.

He lives and works in Vienna and created various compositions in the fields of new music, among those: music theatre, orchestra works, chamber music, sacred music and works with electronics. In the works of Johannes Kretz a lot of attention is given to the shaping of timbre and harmony, to achieve a unification of them. Sounds are interpreted as chords, chords fused to let them appear as sounds.

Generating synthetic sound material with help of the computer has led to the following procedure:

- Analysis of instrumental sounds (FFT) helps to understand the inner structure of sounds and allows to create models for generating synthetic sounds, but also to derive the harmonic structure of the piece.
- "Computer Aided Composition": simplifies handling of lots of complex, microtonal chords.
- Control and performance of sound synthesis: Transitions, deviations, modifications ... of sounds are described in a clear syntax.

Understanding of psychoacoustic effects and the ability of describing and formalizing ideas of art has helped to develop a new craftsmanship in composition. This skills and techniques can also be found in Johannes Kretz' purely instrumental works.

So he succeeds in creating a strange - but wonderfully structured - world of sound, that invites the listener to find shapes in the area of timbre, which one was only used to find in the area of harmony before.



Born in Chicago in 1960, **Sidney Corbett** studied music and philosophy at the University of California, San Diego, and continued his study of composition at Yale University, where he earned his doctorate in 1989, and at the Hamburg Academy of the Arts with György Ligeti. Corbett has been active primarily in Europe since 1985. His output includes works for the stage, orchestral compositions, instrumental chamber music and a large amount of vocal music. His works

have earned him numerous national and international awards and prizes and have been performed and broadcast worldwide.

A particular emphasis in his recent work has been in the area of music theatre. His chamber opera, "X UND Y", which was premiered at the Eclat Festival in Stuttgart in February 2002, the scenic work "Paradiso", after Dante, for speaker and string quartet, which also premiered in 2002, in Basle, the large scale opera, NOACH, after an original libretto by Christoph Hein, which ran very successfully in the 2001/2002 season at the Bremen Opera and his third opera, KEINE STILLE AUSSER DER DES WINDES (No Silence but that of the Wind), after texts by Fernando Pessoa, which premiered in the Concordia Theatre Bremen in January 2007 are all examples of this recent focus.

The opera UBU, after Alfred Jarry with a libretto by Simone Home de Mello premiered at the opera house in Gelsenkirchen in April 2012. His most recent opera, "Das Große Heft", after the novel by Agosta Kristof, premieres at the Osnabrück Opera in March, 2013.

A further emphasis has been on vocal music. Cycles on poems by Christina Lavant, Barbara Köhler, Paul Klee and others have emerged in recent years. Literary and theosophical subjects also inspire and inform his works. "Yael", for solo violin and orchestra, draws upon the writings of Edmond Jabès and his Symphony No. 3, "Breathing the Water", commissioned by the Staatskapelle Berlin employs texts by the Iraqi poet Amal Al-Jubouri and the late American poet Denise Levertov. "Rasch", commissioned by the Tonhalle in Düsseldorf employs texts by Roland Barthes. Corbett has also received commissions from the Berlin Philharmonic, MusikFabrik, West German Radio, Radio Symphony Orchestra Stuttgart among many others. He is currently at work on a piece commissioned by the Siemens Foundation for Ensemble Aventure.

CDs featuring Corbett's music have been released on Cybele, CRI, Mode, Zeitklang, Ambitus, BIS and Kreuzberg Records. In 2011 a CD with his music for violin was released on Blue Griffin records, performed by Sarah Plum. In 2013 a new portrait CD will be released on the label, Edition Kopernikus, performed by the Modern Art Ensemble. Corbett's music is published by Edition Nova Vita,

Berlin, and distributed worldwide by C.F. Peters. Sidney Corbett is currently professor for composition at the University of the Performing Arts in Mannheim. Corbett currently resides with his wife and three children in Berlin, Germany.



Erica E. Bisesi was born in Gorizia (Italy). She completed a Ph.D. in Mathematics and Physics at Udine University in 2007. She had contributed to several large-scale research projects (theoretical astrophysics, experimental elementary particle physics, physics education). She also taught acoustics and psychoacoustics at the Udine Conservatory from 2004 to 2006. Her career as a systematic musicologist began in 2007, first at the Department of Speech, Music and Hearing at KTH, Stockholm, and then in

several projects on the psychology of music, psychoacoustics, expressive music performance, music analysis and music information retrieval at the Universities of Lugano (CSI), Bologna, Milan, Padua, Udine and Montréal. In October 2009, Erica was awarded a Lise Meitner postdoctoral fellowship for a two-year project entitled “Measuring and modeling expression in piano performance” by FWF Austria. In December 2011, FWF funded her three-year Stand-Alone project “Expression, emotion and imagery in music performance”. In recent years, she presented the results of her research in conferences and lectures at leading institutes in Austria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Finland, Germany, Greece, India, Israel, Italy, Serbia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, and the United States. Her career as a pianist began at the age of five, and she completed a M.A. Degree in Piano Performance at Trieste Conservatory in 1996. Over the following ten years, she studied with the conductor Francesco Mander, the pianists Bruno Canino in Milan, Aquiles Delle Vigne in Salzburg, Florence and Rome, Vladimir Krpan in Zagreb, Anna Kravtchenko in Rovereto, and Andreas Woyke in Graz. She now performs as a soloist and in chamber music ensembles in Austria, Italy and abroad. Erica is currently a postdoctoral researcher at the Centre for Systematic Musicology at the University of Graz, where she is lecturer on psychoacoustics and music cognition. Her research lies mainly in the area of music performance, expression and emotion. In her research, she primarily investigates the perception and performance of her concert repertoire.

Organization:

UL Academy of Music

with a help of

UL Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television,
Students' Council of UL AG and
Students' Organization of UL AG

Leadership:

doc. Dušan Bavdek (UL AG)

in collaboration with

doc. Žanina Mirčevska (UL AGRFT)