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SONEMUS Fest 2022:

Transcultural Sonic Entanglement in the Disentangling World

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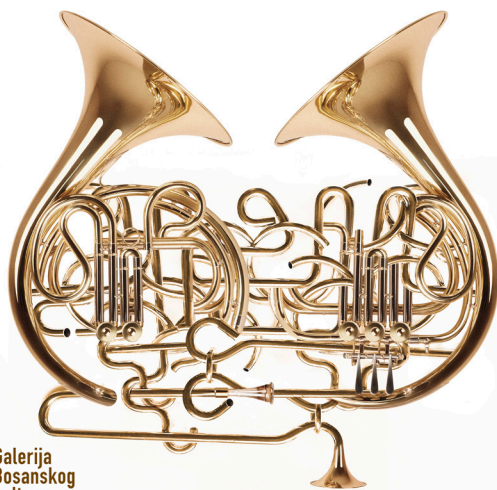
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SONEMUS FEST 2022: Transcultural Sonic Entanglement in the Disentangling World

**sonemus fest
(DIS)ENTANGLEMENT**



Galerija
Bosanskog
kulturnog
centra KS

17.10. | 20:00h
PHACE Ensemble (AU)

18.10. | 20:00h
SONEMUS ansambli (BiH)

19.10. | 20:00h
JUGENDSTIL – ansambli studenata

G. Benjamin, E. Carter, B. Ferneyhough, R. Fuchs, B. Furrer, M. Gološ, H. Hadžajić, C. Iannotta, A. Kasapović,
B. Mantovani, D. Rešidbegović, S. Sciarrino, A. Sijarić, T. Takemitsu, D. Terranova, A. Yazdani



The Society of New Music (SONEMUS) is an association founded in Sarajevo in 2001 with the aim of creating a platform for performance, promotion, and education in the field of contemporary artistic music. Motivated by initial ideas, this organization has established the SONEMUS Fest, the only festival of this kind in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As a crucial element of a global contemporary music network, the SONEMUS team today brings together internationally renowned composers and performers.

With the outstanding efforts of two key figures, Ališer Sijarić (artistic director) and Hanan Hadžajlić (executive di-

rector), from 15 to 19 October 2022, the first post-pandemic edition was held with a full capacity. The program of a five-day event, organized with the sup-

port of the University of Sarajevo – Academy of Music and the Bosnian Cultural Centre Sarajevo, included lectures and workshops by eminent composers and performers, as well as three concerts, which took place as major events.

SONEMUS Fest 2022 was realized under the name *(Dis)entanglement*. As stated in the program notes, the meaning of this term, which in quantum mechanics denotes the moment of the irreversible detachment of the perfect correlation between particles, entangled by their physical properties (position, momentum, spin, and polarization), became a model for the organization of musical structures, as well as a metaphor for the global historical moment we are living in. The perpetual shift of pandemics, wars, economic crises, and the rise of nationalism and other anti-universalistic ideologies are the symptoms of the disentanglement of globalized liberal capitalism.

The idea of framing the works by different generations of composers and performers, their specific aesthetic perspectives, and authentic artistic micro-universes as a reflection of the diversities of the disentangling world was the starting point in creating the concert program. However, all the compositions correlate with the tendency to rethink and recreate the current political, social, scientific, or artistic issues which create a global reality.

The three concerts took place from 17 to 19 October in the Gallery of the Bosnian Cultural Center Sarajevo. The performance of the innovative and versatile Austrian ensemble PHACE marked the first one. On this occasion, eminent musicians and members of this chamber group, Ivana Pristasova Zaugg (violin), Roland Schueler (cello), and Mathilde Hoursiangou (piano), appeared as a trio and demonstrated a high-level interpretation with marked precision and sensitivity for sound nuance.



Photo: Vanja Čerimagić

The repertoire included works by internationally established composers such as Reinard Fuchs, the artistic and executive director of this ensemble, and Ališer Sijarić, as well as the pieces by Hanan Hadžajlić, Clara Iannotta and Daniela Terranova, up-and-coming composers on the European contemporary music scene.

At the very beginning, PHACE performed Fuch's *Tox* for violin, cello, and piano (2012/22). The piece's title is derived from the *tox*, a word that appears in many languages with different meanings. Based on this concept of similarities, several ideas, figures and sounds keep recurring while they change their shape. The program featured *Capriccio Meccanico* for violin and piano (2000) by Ališer Sijarić. The nucleus is one melodic-rhythmic phrase during which the formal principle of composition continuously repeats the same path. At the same time, different aural and structural effects have been achieved by filtering the original phrase.

One of the most challenging moments of the concert was a performance of *MATH* for violin, cello, and piano (2021), a piece with exceptional metrical and gestural complexity by Hanan Hadžajlić. The second block of the program included *Variazioni sul bianco* for cello and piano (2019) by Italian composer Daniela Terranova, written in the area of extended sonic environments and pre-occupation with its material nature. The final piece of the evening was *Il colore dell'ombra* (2010), in which composer Clara Iannotta rebalances the ensemble, and instruments are alternately detuned, muted, and relegated to extreme registers, invoking sounds that signify instruments' materiality, creating unique textures and vibrations.

The second concert was a retrospective of some crucial works from the second half of the 20th century to the present day, interpreted by soloists from the SONEMUS Ensemble. A remarkable Ukrainian-German pianist Vitalii Kyiany-tisa performed two masterpieces of the contemporary piano repertoire: Beat Furrer's *Drei Klavierstücke* (2004), based on resonance as the main sound event and resonating effect as a central compositional model, and Brian Ferneyhough's *Lemma-Icon-Epigram* (1981) for piano solo, a very famous "musical epigram" with dynamic, register, and articulation extremes.

On this occasion, flutist and composer Hanan Hadžajlić played *Flight* (1979) for solo flute by one of today's most prominent British composers, George Benjamin. This was the Bosnian premiere of this piece, which implies producing clear, dramatic structure and harmony within the flute monody, evoking the sight of birds over the peaks of the Swiss Alps. Eminent violinist Violeta Smailović-Huart gave an integral performance of *6 Capricci* by Salvatore Sciarrino, written as a comment on Paganini's *24 Capricci* with an entirely new musical vocabulary enriched by the authentic extended techniques.

The most impressive moment was the performance of *Aphorism* for flute, clarinets, piano, violin and cello (2016) by Arash Yazdani, an Iranian compos-

er based in Estonia. Throughout the piece, different lines from texts of varying origin literature have been used. The musicians are asked to contemplate and meditate on the lines, both in figure and essence, and to apply them in different orders and combinations to the indicated musical lines. This vivid sonic experience, based on the combination of Iranian and European tradition of microtonal music and deep minuscule meditative weaving of various pulsations, was created by the interpretation of the SONEMUS Ensemble under Yazdani's direction.

The final evening was held under the title *Jugendstil* and brought together a young generation of contemporary music performers. After the intensive rehearsals guided by Kyianytsia, Smailović-Huart and Hadžajlić, the podium took Jelena Filipović (flute), Sara Barbara Bilela (violin), Zoja Vuković (tenor saxophone), Mirza Gološ (piano), whom joined Armin Smriko (clarinet), Belma Alić (violoncello) and Hanan Hadžajlić (flute), the teachers at the Academy of Music and members of the SONEMUS Ensemble.

Photo: Vanja Čerimagić



The repertoire mainly consisted of contemporary music classics but also included two pieces by young Bosnian composers. Cellist Belma Alić performed *Perpetual Possibility* for cello and voice by Azur Kasapović. The initial idea of this work is the perception of time as the incalculable simultaneous presence and interweaving of the past, present, and future, which reveals the existence of infinite possibility.

With saxophonist Zoja Vuković, Alić presented *(DIS)ENTANGLEMENT* for saxophone and cello, composed by the principle of the action and reaction in the correlation of the particular sounds in both – their synchronization and the phase of completely opposite characteristics. The author of this piece is Mirza Gološ, a composer and young pianist who performed Beat Furrer's *Voicelessness. The Snow Has No Voice* (1986) on the *Junedstil* concert. Named by the final line of Sylvia Plath's poem *The Munich Mannequin*, Furrer's composition consists of a unique form of notation with a complex polyrhythmic counterpoint.

Young flutist Jelena Filipović demonstrated the array of extended techniques and theatrical elements of *Voice* (1971) for the flute solo by the most renowned Japanese composer Toru Takemitsu, while Armin Smriko performed Bruno Mantovani's virtuoso *Bug* for clarinet solo (1999), a work written as a musical metaphor for the disarray caused by an imaginary computer break-down reflected through rapid music. Duo Smriko and Hadžajlić interpreted Elliot Carter's *Esprit Rude/Esprit Doux*, composed to express two opposite characters simultaneously, as an ironical dedication to great French composer Pierre Boulez for his sixtieth birthday.

The concert program was rounded up by the appearance of the *Jugendstil* Ensemble, which represented Jelena Filipović, Armin Smriko, Sara Barbara Bilela, and Mirza Gološ. They performed the piece named *For SONEMUS* by Dino Rešidbegović, in which the composer frames different sonic atmospheres and instrumental gestures projected through his innovative compositional principle *Recuuctional Music Complexity*. This year's SONEMUS edition was symbolically completed with this musical dedication.

SONEMUS Fest once again proved its significance in the Bosnian artistic context, which can be considered on many levels. As the only local festival of contemporary artistic music, every edition expands the perspectives and capacities of the local art scene and audiences. Unique high-level interpretations by internationally renowned musicians break the monotonous repertoire routine and have an emancipatory impact in the context of musical life in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Another important aspect of the festival is its educational part, based on efforts of affirming young musicians in the domain of contemporary artistic music and creating a platform for their interpretative and intellectual growth. *(Dis)entanglement* edition presented a group of students who have demonstrated their



Photo: Vanja Čerimagić

potential to evolve into relevant representatives of the Bosnian contemporary music scene at the international level and (maybe) the future members of a sustainable resident professional ensemble.

The cosmopolitan essence and progressive character of SONEMUS are reflected in the constant tendency to rethink the present moment in all its complexity. This year's motif *(Dis)entanglement* deals with the essential issue of the purpose of art in times of crisis. Connecting the composers and performers from different backgrounds and varying musical contexts in reconsidering the disentangling world from a more human perspective, SONEMUS (Fest) made another step forward in the legitimation of the transcultural language as an alternative to the permanent global crisis when the (individual) skills and knowledge (maybe) are the (only) certainty.

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