

# Sulawedic Sound Worlds

with the

## ENSEMBLE POLYSONO

**Christine Simolka**, soprano  
**Ursula Seiler Kombaratov**, flute  
**Igor Kombaratov**, clarinet  
**Markus Stolz**, violoncello  
**René Wohlhauser**, piano/baritone/cond.

With kind support from:

Lotteriefonds Basel-Stadt  
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Migros Kulturprozent

Sun, 10<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2010, 7.30 p.m.: **Basel**, Schmiedenhof, Rümelinsplatz 4  
Sun, 17<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2010, 6.00 p.m.: **Bern**, Ono, Kramgasse 6  
Sat, 23<sup>rd</sup> Jan. 2010, 8.00 p.m.: **Zürich**, Kulturhaus Helferei, Kirchgasse 13  
Sat, 30<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2010, 8.00 p.m.: **Luzern**, Marianischer Saal, Bahnhofstr. 18  
Tue, 09<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2010, 8.30 p.m.: **Berlin**, unerhörte Musik, BKA, Mehringdamm 34, Kreuzberg  
Sun, 14<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2010, 8.00 p.m.: **München**, Gasteig, Kleiner Konzertsaal, Rosenheimer Str. 5  
Sat, 27<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2010, 7.00 p.m.: **London**, The Warehouse, 13 Theed Street

*René Wohlhauser (\*1954):* «Sulawedische Lieder, Gesänge und Vokalstücke» on onomatopoeic texts by the composer for soprano, baritone, 1-2 musical speaking voices and tonally extended piano (2-5 players) (2005 / 2006 / 2008), Ergon 31, Nrs. 1-7: I. gelsüraga, II. hang gomeka, III. suragimanä, IV. Duett, V. flutching music, VI. sulla tastiera, VII. Ausklang für tiefes Klavier

«Klavierquartett», version for flute, clarinet, cello and piano (1979/83-84, rev. 1987)

*James Clarke (\*1957):* «Verstörung» for bass clarinet, cello and piano (1990)

*Klaus Huber (\*1924)* «Vida y muerte no son mundos contrarios» for soprano and cello (2007) after a text by Octavio Paz

*Heinz Holliger (\*1939):* «Contrechant sur le nom de Baudelaire» for clarinet (2007)

*Ursula Seiler Kombaratov (\*1973):* «Nischen I» for soprano, piccolo, bass clarinet and Violoncello (2009), lyrics by August Guido Holstein (WP)

*René Wohlhauser* «Iguur – Blay – Luup» on onomatopoeic texts by the composer for soprano and small Ensemble (bass flute, bass clarinet and violoncello) (2009) (WP)

The program „Sulawedische Klangwelten“ featuring solely contemporary classical music, offers a multifaceted, interesting selection of diverse contrasts in sound and compositional concepts. From the „Sulawedischen Liedern, Gesängen und Vokalstücken“ by the Swiss composer René Wohlhauser, which explore different possibilities of sound using the voice and piano, and the „Klavierquartett“, which illuminates the relationship between the piano and other instruments, through „Vida y muerte no son mundos contrarios“ by the doyen of Swiss composers and current Siemens Music-Prize winner 2009 Klaus Huber, a master of the „fragility of expression“, to „Contrechant sur le nom de Baudelaire“ by the also world famous Swiss composer Heinz Holliger, who elicits unusual sounds from the clarinet. The well-known English composer James Clarke represents structural musical approach as is practiced in England, whereas the last two pieces, world premieres of one piece by the young Swiss composer Ursula Seiler and the other by René Wohlhauser, document the search for new musical concepts in Switzerland.

This highly varied program is interpreted by the Ensemble Polysono Basel, which has been praised by the press with accolades such as "exquisite" (Der Bund, 15.01.08) and „subtle and unblemished“ (Mittelland-Zeitung, 16.01.08) and whose concerts have been recorded by Swiss Radio DRS 2 and the Bayerischen Rundfunk.

René Wohlhauser  
(Translation: Gail Makar)

# Luup

auf eigene lautpoetische Texte  
für Sopran und kleines Ensemble  
(Baßflöte, Baßklarinetten und Violoncello)  
Ergon 40, III (Musikwerknnummer 1527)  
(2009)

René Wohlhauser

$\text{♩} = 112$  ( $\text{♩} = 56$ )  
(klingend notiert)

Baßflöte

The score is divided into three systems, each marked with a double bar and a number (2, 4, 6).  
System 1 (measures 1-13):  
- Soprano: Rests, then notes in 3/4 time. Dynamics: *pp*.  
- Bass Flute: *Flz.* (flute), *stimmlos: Sch.* (pitchless: Sch.). Dynamics: *pp*.  
- Bass Clarinet: *Flz.* (flute), *(klingend notiert)* (sounding notation). Dynamics: *pp*, *p*.  
- Cello: *pont.* (ponticello), *trem.* (trill). Dynamics: *p*, *pp*.  
System 2 (measures 14-17):  
- Soprano: Rests, then notes in 4/4 time. Dynamics: *pp*.  
- Bass Flute: *p*, *pp*.  
- Bass Clarinet: *(pp)*, *gliss.* (glissando). Dynamics: *p*, *pp*.  
- Cello: *(pp)*, *gliss.* Dynamics: *p*, *pp*.  
System 3 (measures 18-21):  
- Soprano: Notes with lyrics: "No - mi - a bram - bo - ra mi - ha - mo". Dynamics: *mf*, *p*, *mp*, *p*, *mp*, *p*, *mf*, *p*.  
- Bass Flute: *non Flz.* (non-flute), *(pp)*, *pp*. Dynamics: *sfz*, *pp*.  
- Bass Clarinet: *pp*, *pp*. Dynamics: *sfz*, *pp*.  
- Cello: *pont.*, *trem.* Dynamics: *p*.

**Vocal lyrics**

(The onomatopoeic texts follow the german pronunciation.)

**René Wohlhauser: Sulawedische Lieder, Gesänge und Vokalstücke (Sulawedish Lieder and Vocal Pieces)** on onomatopoeic texts by the composer for soprano, baritone, 1-2 musical speaking voices and tonally extended piano (2-5 players) (2005 / 2006 / 2008), Ergon 31, Nrs. 1-7

**gelsüraga**

gelsüraga promu kose  
kuragara maru frabu

togeriso wira setu  
lesamiro kuma fere

**hang gomeka**

hang gomeka nik mara  
sik nurima sang hak

mek nikora sem kira  
lem warina rek tak

**suragimanä**

suragimanä lamanirago  
gimanäsura niragolama

näsuragima golamanira  
ragimanäsu maniragola

**Duett**

... uo uä ...

**flutching music**

... flp flöppö fl fölö  
löpp  
rgg rggö rigg ggrs ...

**sulla tastiera**

... sg tapi ...

**Klaus Huber: „Vida y muerte no son mundos contrarios“** for mezzosoprano and violoncello (2007)

Vida y muerte no son mundos contrarios,  
Somos un solo tallo con dos flores gemelas,  
Hay que desenterrar la palabra perdida,  
Soñar hacia dentro y tambien hacia afuera,  
... volver al punto de partida, ...  
hacia allá, al centro vivo del origen, más allá de  
fin y comienzo. –

**Ursula Seiler Kombaratov: Nischen I**

for soprano, piccolo, bass clarinet and Violoncello (2009)

Lyrics by August Guido Holstein

Wandernd  
erlebst du die Welt.  
Blicke um dich  
koste und prüfe.

Packe aus die  
Schätze  
dieser Erde.  
Sprich mit ihnen.

Wir besitzen nur  
was wir im Innern  
bergen  
in unserer Seele.

Schreite aus  
gelassenen Sinnes  
ohne Hast  
und verweile.

**René Wohlhauser: Iguur – Blay – Luup**

on onomatopoeic texts by the composer for soprano and small ensemble (bass flute, bass clarinet and violoncello) composed in 2009, opus 40

**Iguur**

No-mi-a bram-bo-ra mi ha-mo ro-ma  
Ta-re-ga-mi ma mo-re ma  
Sa-lo ri-ma-no pe-ri  
E-ma-lo-ra Ra-bi-lo  
Ma-ha-ge-ra-bo la-mi-mo ra-bo-la  
Mi-ra so-ga po-ra  
So-ra-mi lo-re fi-ga si-ra-mo  
Ta-re-ga-mi mo-re ma ta-ma re.

So-ra-mo pa-ri-to-la so-me  
Ma-ri-o-la-o ko-ra  
Lo-ga-re mam-se ri-a nagg so-ri-lo fi-ra  
la-me  
So-le mam leggnock si-lo-ma regg se-lo.  
Se-ri-a-ma-lo fi-la-re-so-la me-ra  
Si-ri gigg hi-ri-mi-li si-la  
Se-ro-la so-le se-ra-me-lo  
So-mo-re lo-po-mo lo-go-re me se re na  
Na-ha-ra-ma-la ra sa na ru sö me-o so-i-  
gu-ro.  
No-a sa-o ma-o-e  
Ra-le ma-do  
Hu-ma wa-la nor.  
Fa-bat-to ja-tor-re me-re bi-ji-ma-re so-ne  
so-ra la so-ne re Ra.

Se-ma no ro-me re-mo-ra-mo ro-ma  
Mar-si-ga-ri mo-re-mo  
No-a mi-ma so-ga-re  
Lo-ga-re Se-ri-a-ma-lo mo-la So-le Si-ri  
gigg hi Ra  
Se-ne-ma sogg la-ma  
Sek-ha-na-mi lo-re Ma-ri-sa-bo-ra  
Long I-guur bo-sak.

**Blay**

Bla-y  
Ha-na-go-mo ri-mo la-bo ra me so-ro-si?  
Na-ro-me ka-ra-mi lop-pi ra  
Som-me ka-ma la-ri-ba no  
Sek nok ma-ri-o so-ra le-ma  
Ro-ban-dan-gan  
Ble-y

Ha-go-na-mo mo-ri-bo-la ra-la-me bi-mo  
ro-si?  
So-ra-ka me-ro-na mi-ra lop-pi ra-mo  
Ma-ka la-ba rip-pi-lo mi-ro-la-no  
Mo-ra no-ma ri-o-mu ra-so ma-le  
Ro-ban-dan-gan  
Blo-y

s, t g t g t g, r t, ch, schi ro, s g to re, ma-  
rgg  
se se rög-tschügg, ra-ma-la-ba-ra, mi-la  
ko sek, ma-ro-ke wragg

O-si me-a-ma  
La-re-mo-no  
O-me no-ra no do ro no-mo me pa ra-me  
Do-mo ro ro-ra da-ma-la ra  
O-re-o ka-ra do-re-me-a lo-ga-me me lo-  
go  
Do-ro Do-re-me Su-gi-mo-to-ra

Ma-si-o-me mo-gi-a-me ra-pa di-o-ma  
Lam-mo no ri-o  
Do-me do-no-me-ra ra-me-no  
Do ro mo-no me me-ra pa-ra ra-pa-me  
Do-mo do-no-mo-ro ra-ma da-ma da-ra  
la-ma re-o  
O-re do-me ro-me me-ro do-mo me re-  
me me  
Se-ne-me Do-ro Do-re-me Su-gi-mo-to-ra

ülp tschar og matsch, sa-ra-ba po-mi  
bi-ri-ba so-la-po üp-mo-rem ma-ra-go

Re-mi kun tö-wi be ge-la do-zi-a qu-a.

**Luup:** see „Iguur“

## Commentaries on the works

**René Wohlhauser: Sulawedische Lieder, Gesänge und Vokalstücke (Sulawedish Lieder and Vocal Pieces)** on onomatopoetic texts by the composer for soprano, baritone, 1-2 musical speaking voices and tonally extended piano (2-5 players) (2005 / 2006 / 2008), Ergon 31, Nrs. 1-7

The seven-part cycle is designed in such a way that each piece features a different aspect: transparency, chord structure, resolution/punctuality, on the fringes of singing, musical speaking, playing on the surface of the keys, obscurity. At the same time, the progression of the pieces shows the direction the development is taking. The order of the pieces is as follows:

1. „gelsüraga“ for soprano and piano (2005)
2. „hang gomeka“ for soprano and piano (2005)
3. „suragimanä“ for soprano and piano (2006), version b
4. „Duett“ for soprano und baritone a cappella in the 3rd version (2008) or in the version for baritone solo
5. „flutching music“, a spoken musical piece for 2 persons or for 2 persons in the version for one person alone
6. „sulla tastiera“ for musical speaking voice and claviature player, alternatively as a virtual duet for a speaking claviature player alone (2005)
7. „Ausklang für tiefes Klavier“ ("Finale for Deep Piano") (2006)

The voice undergoes a process of transformation from normal singing via so-called new singing techniques, to different combinations of musical speech, whereas the piano begins with normal tones, arriving after pauses at sounds/noises produced on the key surfaces. Through the metamorphosis which goes hand in hand with the changing, i.e. varying instrumental/vocal combinations (vocal duo or solo, musical speaking duo or solo, sound duo, dark-piano solo; thus the differentiations in the title), the initially still traditional piano-accompanied song, resp. Lied duo, aesthetically dissolves - in particular the onomatopoetic texts, which gradually disintegrate, falling totally silent in the last piece.

Each onomatopoetic text in the cycle has its own respective self-contained colouring and rhythm of speech, as well as something similar to the grammatical structure of an artificial language. They become semantically charged, primarily through the musical gesture. They thus sound like a language that one sometimes believes to understand, but then doesn't quite totally comprehend. (One notices already upon reading the title that it's not called „sulawesisch“(sulawese), but „sulawedisch“ (sulawedish).) This manoeuvring on the edge of comprehensibility and thus also on the borders of controllability between the conscious and the unconscious, where one can perhaps imagine the vision of another world of sounds, is something that really intrigues me.

René Wohlhauser  
(Translation: Gail Makar)

**René Wohlhauser: Klavierquartett**, version for flute, clarinet, violoncello and piano (1979 / 83-84, partially revised 1987), Ergon 9

This piece illuminates the relationship between the piano and the other instruments.

The contrast between the instruments is heightened to the point of irreconcilability through the antithetic assignments of instrument-specific material, so that in the end, the only chance of reconciliation the instruments have is to find each other in the noise.

Whereas both of the high instruments are at times allied, the cello seeks contact with the piano. As a result, the different layers drift apart, shifting the levels against each other, causing a kind of „transitive overlapping“.

This overlapping was an attempt on my part to integrate the dimension of structural depth into the composition, which led to a compacted duration of the music, to a kind of „polyphony of texture“.

Through a network of proportional relations (reflected in unusual sub-time-signatures, set asynchronously in relation to each other), I attempted to suggest a feeling of "time-warp".

René Wohlhauser  
(Translation: Gail Makar)

**James Clarke: Verstörung** for bass clarinet, cello and piano (1990)

*Verstörung* has a literary genesis, at least so far as its title is concerned. It is taken from a novel by Thomas Bernhard and, Clarke says, reflects an inner perturbation (*Verstörung*) in the wildness and oppressiveness of its melodic lines. Although its scoring is unusual, Clarke effectively uses the trio as one collective sonority, focused on one line of thought without individuated colours or characters.

That perturbation is self-evident right from the start. The ferocity of the opening section continues unmitigated, eventually involving all three players. And when it is not agitated in this way, the music sits at the opposite polarity – in a tense stasis which shimmers and shivers at single pitches, distorted in some way or other by the pressure of either bow or breath. The piano, for its part, adds to the distortions by interjecting tight clusters of notes whilst continuing to echo the clarinet's opening figurations. These periods of stasis – though they increase in length as the work progresses – offer no respite however, and at its end, the piece appears to reach no point of reconciliation.

© Andrew Kurowski 1998

*Verstörung* was commissioned by Harry Sparnaay, Frances-Marie Uitti and Polo de Haas with funds from the Arts Council of Great Britain.

**Klaus Huber: „Vida y muerte no son mundos contrarios“** for mezzosoprano and violoncello (2007)

In my new work, I use both the equally-tempered scale and the following tonal systems with their own intervallic relationships:

### 1. QUARTER TONES

In my music, splitting the chromatic half tone into two equal intervals doesn't have a superchromatic function, as much as one of extended harmonic space. Since I rely on different Arabian modi (MAQAMAT) as a starting point, I indicate only raisings of notes, following the Arabian tradition.

The basic, essential interval in Arabian music is the THREE-QUARTER TONE, resulting from the division of the minor third.

The „Gamme fondamentale arabe“ is based on the Greek theoreticians, who call it „Diatonique egal“. This division of the fourth is attributed to Ptolemy. Thus the Arabian theoreticians inherited it from the ancient Greeks.

NB: The Arabian intervals (three-quarter tone intervals) match the natural overtones, being thus less dissonant than our half tones!

### 2. THIRD TONES

These are equidistant (but not equally-tempered!) intervals, which result from the division of WHOLE TONES. Since we in Europe are bound to the chromatic notational code, I write, for the purpose of easier readability, all third tone intervals as SIXTH TONES.

There are parts which are composed exclusively third-tonal, where quarter tones are not used. Analogously, no third (sixth) tones are used in quarter-tonal sections. Wherever increased amounts of third tone intervals are played, a commensurate amount of BEATS will result, which are intended be audible.

Klaus Huber  
(Translation: Gail Makar)

**Heinz Holliger: „Contrechant sur le nom de Baudelaire“** for clarinet solo (2007)

*Contrechant* consists of five stanzas (I-V), each made up of 5 "verses" originating from the ten letters of the name BAUDELAIRE and each divided by bar-lines, whereby the final "verse" of the fifth stanza has been augmented by an Epilogue (VI) which is again assigned to the ten letters and consists of ten sections (a-k) which can be selected in any order at will (Number V therefore consists of only four "verses").

In the interpretation, it must be kept in mind that the five "verses" which begin at the extreme left margin and are possibly continued in further indented lines and also each of the five stanzas form a single entity. Additionally, the frequently abrupt tempo and character changes and the wide range in forms of articulation must be greatly differentiated from one another in order to produce the greatest possible contrasts. In the epilogue, the order of the sections a) to k) can be decided at will, but all ten secti-



ons must be played. In the case of several variant versions (ossia), only one version should be selected. This particularly applies to section i) in which a selection must initially be undertaken between the principle variants i (I) and i (II). The work must culminate with one of the sections with || (i.e. a, g, h, i or k).

This work, which is also available in a version for bass clarinet (KLB 70), was inspired by an anagram on the name BAUDELAIRE by the fascinating Rumanian-German poet Oskar Pastior (1927 - 2006).

Heinz Holliger  
(Translated by Lindsay Chalmers-Gerbracht)

**Ursula Seiler Kombaratov: Nischen I** (Niches I) for soprano, piccolo, bass clarinet and Violoncello (2009)

Lyrics by August Guido Holstein

Preventing a final determination of the lyrics for this composition, I was seeking for a drawn from life without precise thematic interpretation.

Effective sounds and diffuse noises of the instruments reflect the above mentioned contents.

A translucent and nearly soloistic instrumentation accentuates the forlorn leading voice throughout all four episodes of the poem.

By recurrent exertion of the initial and interlude motive, the violoncello appears to assume the role of a niche.

The brief tutti finalises the piece and anticipates the second part (Niches II) of the poem.

Ursula Seiler Kombaratov  
Translation: G. Hoenger

**René Wohlhauser: Iguur – Blay – Luup** on onomatopoeic texts by the composer for soprano and small ensemble (bass flute, bass clarinet and violoncello) composed in 2009, opus 40

„Iguur“, in the emblematics of the fictive language Sulawedish, refers to a metaphor which in „Blay“ is enigmatised through an unexpectedly induced resonance, and is resurrected in „Luup“ in a changed, quasi refined form, and in a different context.

The most important distinguishing feature of the first piece, „Iguur“ for soprano solo is its variety in types of texture: in the beginning, surging cries of distress are flung into the silence, separated by suspenseful pauses. Gradually, dialectical contrasting material (quasi spoken) is infiltrated. After an accentuation of the contrasts in the second part, the third part becomes more dense and agitated, counterbalanced by ending with sustained tones followed by a whole measure's rest. The glissandi form the beginning of the 4th part, which is of a more particular and experimental nature, with the first actually spoken texts marking the beginning of the last section, in which differing types of textures come together.

The second piece, „Blay“ for soprano-bariton duo is formally divided into three clearly distinguishable parts by different types of textures as well, separated from each other by short, spoken interludes, and gradually accelerating through a system of tempo modulations. While the first two parts of the piece are canons, the third part is derived from the transformation of a duo by Pierre de la Rue, master of canons from the 15th / 16th century, which was the period of the origins of emblematics in European art. The tripartite form of the middle part gives reference to the three-part cycle in the style of a triptych.

In the third piece, „Luup“ for soprano und small ensemble, the soprano takes up the structures of „lguur“ including the third-tones in a changed form, and initiates a musical dialog with the other instruments. The third-tones are initially used solely by the soprano, without any reaction from the instruments until measure 48, the point of golden ratio, marked by the only tacet measure in the whole piece, after which the instruments begin implementing third-tones as well. At this point, the soprano contrarily gives up its changes and remains the same as in „lguur“. The title „Luup“ has nothing to do with the English word „loop“. My use of this title is in fact a conscious resistance against the appropriation of certain combinations of sounds through trendy use of language.

René Wohlhauser  
(Translation: Gail Makar)

# Nischen I

2009

## Quartett

für Sopran, Piccolo, Bassklarinette, Violoncello

Text: August Guido Holstein

Ursula Szilger Kombaratov

Violoncello

$\text{♩} = 52$

*pizz* 3

*f* *pp* *f* *p* *pp* *p*

Mit Fingerkuppen flach auf linke, vordere Seite beim Cello "trommeln",  
in unregelmässigen Tempi und in versch. Dynamik.

*mf* *f* *f* *f*

Vlc.

5

3

3

*f* *p* *pp* *pp*

*ff* *p* *ff* *pp*

## Sopran & Bassklarinette

Bass Kl.

$\text{♩} = 48$

9

*pp* *p* *f*

Bass Kl.

11

*mf* *f*

Klangfarbe ändern,  
dunkler ord.

## Biographies of the composers

### Klaus Huber

Born in Bern (Switzerland) on the 30th November 1924

studies composition with his godfather Willy Burkhard in Zurich and with Boris Blacher in Berlin

1959 international breakthrough as a composer: first performance of the chamber cantata "Des Engels Anredung an die Seele" at the World Music Days of the IGNM in Rome

1964-73 director of the composition class at the Academy of Music in Basel

1966/68/72 director of the composition seminars at the Gaudeamus Foundation in Bilkoven/Netherlands

1969 founds the international composers' seminar in the Künstlerhaus Boswil (Switzerland)

1970 Beethovenpreis of the city of Bonn (for "Tenebrae")

1973-90 director of the composers' class and of the Institute for contemporary music at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik in Freiburg

1978 Art Prize of the city of Basel

1979-82 president of the Swiss Composers' Association

1984 starts his international activities as a guest composer

1991 retires from teaching in Freiburg, working from now on exclusively as a guest professor

Klaus Huber is member of the "Bayerische Akademie der Schönen Künste", of the "Akademie der Künste Berlin" and of the "Freie Akademie der Künste Mannheim", honorary member of the ISCM as well as honorary doctor of the University of Strasbourg. He lives in Bremen and Panicale (Perugia/Italy).

Since 1975 his works have been published by Ricordi Munich. The autographs are available in the Paul Sacher Foundation, Basle.

His complete writings titled "Umgepflügte Zeit" are published by MusikTexte Verlag, Cologne.

### Heinz Holliger

Heinz Holliger studied oboe with Émile Cassagnaud and composition with Sándor Veress, both at the Berne Conservatory. From 1958 onwards, he continued his studies in Paris with Yvonne Lefébure (piano) and Pierre Pierlot (oboe). Between 1961 and 1963, he studied composition with Pierre Boulez at the Basle Music Academy. After winning first prizes at international music competitions (Geneva in 1959, then the International Music Competition of the ARD in 1961), Holliger began an intensive international concert career as an oboist. Contemporary composers such as Henze, Penderecki, Ligeti, Carter, Lutoslawski, Stockhausen and Berio wrote works for him to perform. Today, Heinz Holliger belongs among the conductors most in demand across the world, and he conducts all the big orchestras. His compositional oeuvre comprises works in all genres, from stage works to orchestral, solo and chamber music works, and also numerous vocal pieces. Almost all his works offer proof of his tireless search for the boundaries of sound and language. His music is often the result of an intensive engagement with the biographies of artists and poets, and with lyrical texts. Time and again, he has been fascinated by artists situated at the boundaries of

society or on the verge of death. Holliger has been awarded numerous prizes, of which just a few can be mentioned here: the Frankfurt Music Prize of 1988, the Ernst von Siemens Music Prize of 1991 and the first-ever Zurich Festival Prize, awarded in 2007. [www.schott-international.com](http://www.schott-international.com)

### **James Clarke**

James Clarke was born in London in October 1957. His work includes a highly regarded series of abstract expressionist paintings, one play (Royal Court Theatre, London, 1974) and approximately ninety musical compositions characterised by extreme virtuosity and unpredictability, written for symphony orchestra, solo musicians and ensembles. A critic wrote of one of his musical works that it "...was obsessive chiefly in its manner, which was that of someone determined to break through to a new sound, a new feeling, a new zone in the psyche. The piece seethed and glittered, bursting from silence with pungent tutti respirations, arraying its speedy surface melodies (whether heard as tune, ornament or symptom) like broken glass. It was rock music by other means..." Another has written "Remnants of chords were set upon, deconstructed, torn and attacked with external ferocity and a sense of barely imaginable inner torment."

Among his works are two string quartets written for the Arditti Quartet, for whom he also wrote an "Oboe Quintet", and "Untitled No.4", for voices and quartet; four works for large ensemble – "Final Dance", "Landschaft mit Glockenturm II", "Untitled No.1" and "2006-K" – written for *Klangforum Wien*; a large-scale composition for nine actors, solo musicians and orchestra, entitled "Voices", written in collaboration with Harold Pinter; "Untitled No.2" for piano and orchestra, premiered in Darmstadt in 2008 with Nicolas Hodges as soloist.

Prestigious commissions have come from the BBC, French Ministry of Culture, Ars Musica Brussels, the Beethovenfest Bonn, the city of Darmstadt, Gaudeamus Foundation, MaerzMusik Berlin, Musik i Skåne, Southwest German Radio and the University of Cambridge, as well as festivals in Bludenz, Dresden, Huddersfield, Leuven and elsewhere. Important premieres have taken place at the Venice Biennale, in Donaueschingen and at many other major venues.

James Clarke has led composition courses at the Time of Music Festival in Viitasaari, Finland, where he was featured composer in 2000, and at the Festival junger Künstler Bayreuth. He was composer-in-residence at Queen's University, Belfast, from 1994-97, and has lectured in Austria, Germany, Holland, Italy, Russia and Azerbaijan. He was a featured composer at the 2004 Ars Musica festival in Brussels, where ten works were performed.

Recent CD releases include the complete piano music since 1981, performed by Nicolas Hodges (for whom three of the pieces were written), and the "Oboe Quintet" performed by C. Redgate and the Kreutzer Quartet. Other works are available on the CD 'Donaueschingen 2003', on a portrait CD on the Zeitklang label, and on a CD by *Trio Fibonacci* on the label NMC .

For Ursula Seiler Kombaratov and René Wohlhauser please see below.

## **Biographies Ensemble Polysono**

### **Christine Simolka, soprano**

Born in Basel, she completed an eight-year course of vocal training in Basel with Nicole Andrich and Raymond Henn. During this time she also attended numerous courses with Kurt Widmer, Andreas Scholl and Hanno Müller-Brachmann, as well as opera classes at the Music Academy Basel. Further studies with Marianne Schuppe and Robert Koller. Regular concert performance. Christine Simolka's repertoire includes a wide range of musical styles. Besides Lieder of the baroque and classical periods, one of her specialities is Schubert. In addition, she improvises in diverse styles (jazz, klezmer, blues, free improvisation). She has recently begun to devote herself more and more to contemporary music (e. g. Berio, Holliger, Henze, Rihm, Fernyhough, Wohlhauser). She is a member of the Lied duo „Christine Simolka, soprano, and René Wohlhauser, piano“ and of the ensemble Polysono.

### **Ursula Seiler Kombaratov, flute**

A native of Burgdorf. After graduating as a ceramic painter, she began her musical studies at the „conservatoire de musique“ in La Chaux-de-Fonds. She earned her teaching diploma with the comprehensive grade "very good" under Kiyoshi Kasai in Basel.

Master classes in London and Switzerland with Aurèle Nicolet. Further studies with Philippe Racine and Felix Renggli. Conducting classes.

From 2001 until 2006, Ursula Seiler Kombaratov studied composition with René Wohlhauser at the Musik-Akademie Basel. Since 2002, Premieres in Switzerland, Germany and Austria (including „12 Miniaturen für 2 Flöten“, „Motive in Bewegung“ for flute, violin and violoncello, „Anblicke im Wasser“ for flute and clarinet). Live concert recordings by Swiss Radio DRS 2.

She teaches in Basel, and at the youth music schools in Schlieren and Huttwil. In addition to her diverse chamber music activities, she performs regularly with the pianist I-Mei Lu, the clarinetist Igor Kombaratov, and as a member of the Ensemble Polysono.

### **Igor Kombaratov, clarinet**

Born in Nischni Novgorod, Russia. Clarinet lessons from age 9, also at the music school for gifted children in Nischni Novgorod with Prof. Mark Rovner. Début at age 10 as soloist with the Academic Philharmonic Orchestra M. Rostropovich, Nischni Novgorod. Prize winner at various Youth Music Competitions and in the national promotion program „New Names“. He began his studies in 2000 at the Musik-Akademie Basel under Prof. François Benda and graduated in 2006 with the comprehensive grade "very good". Currently studying with Ernesto Molinari at the Hochschule der Künste in Bern, he has received scholarships from the Regio Basel, the Kiwanis Clubs Basel and the Georg Wagner Foundation. In 2002 he was awarded Second Prize at the International Clarinet Competition in Turin.

He performed in the Russian National Orchestra. Along with activities in various chamber music formations, he performs regularly in concerts with the flutist Ursula Seiler Kombaratov and the clarinetist and pianist Raof Mamedov. He is a member as well as a soloist in various ensembles, including the Youth Symphony Orchestra of the Regio Basiliensis and the Ensemble Polysono. He teaches in Germany and in Basel.

**Markus Stolz, violoncello**

Born 1958 in Gelterkinden (Baselland), he studied cello at the Conservatory in Basel with Reine Flachot and barock violoncello at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis with Hannelore Müller. Further training as a "Musik-Mentaltrainer" with Tatjana Orloff. At present, he combines multifaceted music-pedagogical activities with diverse concert performances. As a soloist, chamber- and orchestra musician, (e.g. Linde Consort and Ensemble Polysono), choir director, "Musik-Mentaltrainer" and bass player in the „Les Asonsörs,, band, he covers the whole musical spectrum. His repertoire reflects an interest in little-known works from the barock to the romantic periods and historical performance practice. Through personal contact with composers, he aims to bring the current trends in new music closer to the public. His training in Franklin movement pedagogy provided the inspiration for improvisatory experiments.

**René Wohlhauser, piano, baritone**

Born in 1954 and raised in Brienz, René Wohlhauser is a very versatile musician with a broad stylistic spectrum, who has created a voluminous compositional oeuvre that includes over 1000 works. Long experience as a rock- and jazz musician, improviser, Lied accompanist, as well as composer of radio drama music have accompanied his main profession as composer of contemporary music. Since finishing his studies at the Music Academy Basel and with Klaus Huber and Brian Ferneyhough in Freiburg, he has been teaching composition, music theory and improvisation at the Music Academy Basel. Further piano studies with Stéphane Reymond and vocal studies with David Wohnlich, Robert Koller and Christine Simolka. Several international prizes for composition. Numerous international performances. Lectures, publications, culture-political commitment.

The **Ensemble "Polysono"** is a variable chamber music ensemble, performing mainly contemporary music, also in combination with other artforms such as literature and painting. Of particular importance is the performance of music for smaller and less common ensembles, exploring their subtle possibilities. The variety in combinations - from solos to duos up to full ensemble - correlates to the structural contrasts and stilistic openness of the programs, which draws its tension from a dialectical dispute between different aesthetic positions.

The programs include world premieres as well as repeat performances of seldom-performed works. Composers of different origins are presented in comparison, showing the different structural aspects of each chosen individual scoring.

R. W.

(Translation: Gail Makar)