



International Workshop for Young Composers - XI edition

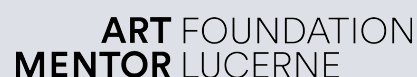
# Divertimento Ensemble concerts

Artistic Director  
**Sandro Gorli**

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**Saturday, August 2, 2025**  
**19.00 - Concert**

**Sofia, National Academy of Music "Prof. Pancho Vladigerov"**



Since 1977, Divertimento Ensemble has been promoting contemporary music, nurturing new talent, and creating art for an ever-wider audience. A regular presence at major international contemporary music festivals, in 2004 they created "Rondò", a season of concerts and encounters featuring contemporary music held annually in Milan.

Divertimento Ensemble follows two guiding principles that inform much of their choices and activities: youth engagement and education. This commitment has led over the years to the creation of IDEA, the International Divertimento Ensemble Academy, which brings together the tools used to pursue these goals: competitions, calls, workshops, masterclasses, and courses organized annually for young composers, performers, and conductors.

From July 26th to August 3rd, it is holding, in collaboration with the National Academy of Music "Prof. Pancho Vladigerov" in Sofia and the Italian Cultural Institute in Sofia, the 11th edition of the International Workshop for Young Composers. Previous editions have always been held in Italy, but for the 2025-2027 period, thanks to the support of the Art Mentor Foundation, the Workshop has been brought to three European countries: Bulgaria, Georgia and Latvia. The initiative also includes four concerts open to the public: the first, held in Sofia on July 26<sup>th</sup> 2025, was dedicated to Italian repertoire; the other three showcase the results of the Workshop, performing pieces commissioned by the Divertimento Ensemble and written by the 21 young international artists selected for the Workshop. One concert is dedicated to compositions for solo instruments, and two feature compositions for ensemble. The Workshop's composer tutors are Peter Kerkelov, Mauro Lanza, and Fabien Lévy. To enhance the cultural exchange of this collaboration, Divertimento Ensemble is hosting Bulgarian instrumentalists on stage for the Workshop and the two concerts on August 3rd.

## Program

### **Vassa Atanasova**

*Time machine* for oboe

### **Ioannis Kesmiris**

*hit and run* for solo violin

### **Daiwei Lu**

*wer bin ich? II* for flute

### **João Pinto**

*filigrana* for prepared viola

### **Jakob Stillmark**

*oberflächenverspannt* for percussion

### **Pinelopi Oikonomea**

*give me a break* for cello

### **Marko Vesić**

*sim(plix)* for piano

### **Yuto Obata**

*Puripuri Piano* for prepared piano and fixed media

### **Divertimento Ensemble soloist:**

**Carlotta Raponi** flute

**Luca Avanzi** oboe

**Maria Grazia Bellocchio** piano

**Elio Marchesini** percussion

**Lorenzo Gorli** violin

**Daniele Valabrega** viola

**Martina Rudic** cello



Luca Avanzi

## Vassa Atanasova

### *Time machine* for oboe

We study history in hopes of learning from the wisdom of our ancestors and avoiding the mistakes they made. Yet the distance in time blurs the images, idealizes the past, and diminishes the pain. That is why we turn to the idea of a time machine – not simply to observe the past, but to feel the emotions that shaped the human experience.

We travel through the Baroque period, where the outlines of an old sonata form appear, and we faintly hear the march of military forces. We pass through Classicism and drift toward modernity through the passions of Romanticism. Throughout this journey, we reshape a single musical theme through the lens of its time. The same longing, fear, and hope echo through every age. We arrive in the fast and distractive present. We blend dodecaphony with rhythms borrowed from the Baroque - the past reemerging in the present. While our ancestors somehow managed to avoid annihilation, the outcome today remains uncertain.

#### Bio

Vassa Atanasova was born in 2009 in Sofia, Bulgaria. She began her musical education at the age of 6 with piano lessons, and at age of 8, she took up the harp as a second instrument. She is currently a 12th-grade student at the National High School of Mathematics

and Natural Sciences "Acad. Lyubomir Chakalov" in Sofia, with a major in Physics and Mathematics. She is enrolled in the piano courses of Prof. L. Angelov at New Bulgarian University and has been studying composition and orchestration with Prof. S. Dragostinov since the age of 13. She also attends courses in recording, sound design, microphone technique, and polyphony. Vassa accompanies the Choir for Ancient Music of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", conducted by K. Tsutsumanova, PhD. Vassa is a laureate of numerous national and international piano competitions. Among others, in 2022 her first solo recital was held in Porto Torres, Italy, where a year later she performed with orchestra with conductor E. Maschio. In 2024 she has performed with the Haskovo Chamber Orchestra. She has taken part in various masterclasses in both piano and harp, working with renowned musicians.

Composition is a vital part of her musical life. She believes that music should not only evoke emotion but also carry meaning, transmit ideas, and support causes. Music, in her view, must interweave historical memory with the pulse of the present, forming a contemporary vision of art and values. She believes the essence of composition lies in the message—the idea behind the music. Vassa sees the good musician as a multifaceted person—both a skilled instrumentalist and a thoughtful interpreter, capable of expressing and defending his own identity through the music he composes and performs. At the same time, the performer must have freedom in interpretation – dynamics, articulation, and phrasing, because only when the performer is fully sincere, the emotion and the message can be truly conveyed.



## Ioannis Kesmiris

### *hit and run* for solo violin

When starting with this piece, I knew I wanted to compose something powerful, but the limitations of a violin to loudness, excess, and inherent technical difficulty proved to be great motivation for me to study the instrument further. The main idea was to compose a piece that deals with a strong presence that comes in with power and then fades out, hence the title *hit and run*. The strange connection that this piece has with Greek civil war history was a deciding factor for the composition - the inner detail of the actions and the final result. The Greek civil war (1946-1949) was fought between the army of the King and the communists, with the latter being called *αντάρτες* (*antartes*) in every-day language. Their tactic to fight the right-wing army, which was better equipped, supported by global superpowers, and stronger in numbers, was to hide in mountainous areas and serve surprise strikes, then vanishing in different locations. While I am not a war enthusiast, this element of *hit and run* evoked me a will to investigate musically, ways that its features can be expressed. The piece explores these features in a non-programmatic way, as it is constructed without extra-musical influence, at least consciously. The interplay between presence and absence is evident throughout the piece on the wider and the smaller spectrum.

#### Bio

Ioannis Kesmiris was born in Thessaloniki, Greece in 1998. During his school years, he studied classical guitar while composing on his own. He later decided to quit the classical guitar and change to electric, since he was already profoundly engaged in a lot of local rock-punk bands at the time, as he still is. In 2016 he started studying composition at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki with Prof. M. Lapidakis, gaining multiple influences of different variety and taste in music, which ultimately led to the creation of his musical language. This language can be described as gestural, with a clear tendency towards loud volumes, density and intensity. The continuous engagement he has with rock and punk music from his childhood isn't one he is trying to make evident for the listener while composing, regardless of his mindset that does not distinguish band practice from composition as artistic actions. In his personal experience, these worlds have more to share than to disagree upon, so he traverses them with the same meticulousness and attention to detail, always discovering more common aspects between them. The loudness, the density and intensity of his composed music though, are derived from his experience in the rock world and are unquestionably significant features of his musical taste. Until now, he composed music for a total of 11 different albums released from bands, and music for chamber music concerts, festivals, film and theater. He is now studying master's in composition at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater München with Prof. I. Mundry.

## Daiwei Lu

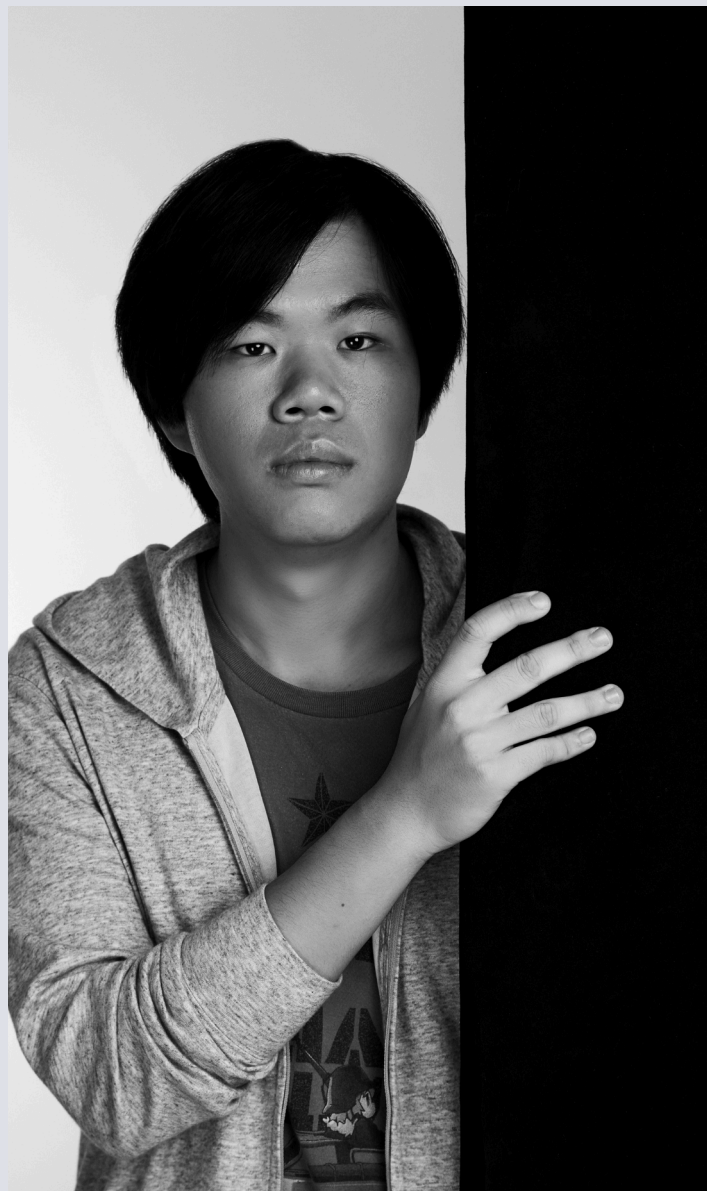
### *wer bin ich? II* for flute

*wer bin ich? II*, for solo flute, was composed in June 2025 and dedicated to Carlotta Raponi. This piece continues the exploration begun in my earlier work *wer bin ich?*, composed for VOCALOID voice synthesizer and fixed media in 2021. It aims to depict a constantly shifting sense of self through the presentation of continuously evolving motifs. The musical character reflects my recent interest in the unconventional development of materials, which often undergoes dramatic transformations triggered by the introduction of new elements. These shifts disrupt the formal structure of the piece, resulting in a fractured and irregular sense of subjectivity.

#### Bio

Daiwei Lu is a composer currently based in Tokyo, where he is pursuing a doctoral degree at Tokyo College of Music. Since 2020, his work has explored the cultural tensions and interplay within contemporary East Asian urban life, focusing on themes such as multiculturalism, subcultural “otherness”, symbolization, recontextualization, and derivativeness. Drawing on his international background, Daiwei integrates non-Western instruments such as the Biwa and Pipa into new sonic environments, creating works that span chamber, orchestral, electronic and game music. A graduate of the Boston Conservatory at Berklee (summa cum laude, 2019) and Tokyo College of Music (M.M., 2022), Lu has studied under Toshio Hosokawa, Eun Young Lee, Felipe Lara, Curtis Hughes and currently with Ichiro Nodaira, Keiko Harada and Sumihisa Arima.

His music has been performed in over 15 countries across Asia, Europe, and the Americas. He is a recipient of the 40th JSCM Award for Composers and the 1st Sound Way International Composition Competition Grand Prize.



Carlotta Raponi

## João Pinto

### *filigrana* for prepared viola

*filigrana* takes its name from the ornamental technique of filigree: a form built from fine threads, carefully twisted into delicate patterns. The piece follows a similar principle. It uses a limited set of musical gestures that are woven together into a flowing, symmetrical form. Sounds return in new variations, and the transitions between gestures are smooth and organic, as if one shape folds into the next. The viola is prepared with a tightly stretched elastic band, tied around the strings near the scroll. This acts as a kind of secondary bridge, subtly altering the instrument's natural harmonic landscape and opening up new sonic possibilities. Many of the gestures involve rounded movements, quiet textures, and fragile sounds — chirping fragments, thin high harmonics, airy noise — interrupted now and then by sharp accents. Everything is light, detailed, and slightly unstable, like a piece of threadwork that holds itself together through tension.

#### Bio

I am a Portuguese composer and pianist based in Vienna, currently studying instrumental composition with C. Iannotta and M. Ivičević, and electroacoustic composition with K. Essl at the mdw. My background lies in sound art and piano performance, but composing became vital once I realized I had things to say that other people's music couldn't express. It's not simply a career, but a necessity — something I do to stay connected to myself, and to the world around me. My work revolves around timbre, texture, gesture, and the elasticity of time — how it stretches, folds, collapses, and affects our sense of presence. I'm interested in how long a moment can be sustained before it becomes tedious, or how quickly something can move without losing weight. Composing for me involves an ongoing dialogue with musicians; I consider the rehearsal room part of the writing process, where I reshape material based on who the performer is and what they bring into the space. While my relationship with the audience is less direct, their role is no less important. They turn the music into something real — an artwork that exists in the space between sound and listening. I often play with expectations, allowing familiarity to unravel, or silence to linger just long enough to disorient. I'm inspired by people, by

natural environments, by everyday sounds and philosophical tensions. What drives me is not just the music itself, but the possibility of transformation that exists within it.



Daniele Valabrega

## Jakob Stillmark

### *oberflächenverspannt* for percussion

The sound of percussion instruments is fundamentally shaped by the tension of their surfaces. Yet this does not make them shallow. Rather, the complex vibrations emanating from these tensioned surfaces release invisible energies that open up space and depth – sometimes even abysses. Rhythms that seem deceptively shallow enter into ever-shifting relationships, creating tension between each other, forming new constellations, shaping landscapes. The appearance of the surface deceives, however; its promise of unwinding, of the flat, smooth, and frictionless, would lead directly to dissolution – to falling mute.

#### **Bio**

Jacob Stillmark is a composer and artistic researcher who often reflects philosophical thought through music. He studied composition with Isabel Mundry in Munich and received further impulses from Toshio Hosokawa and Marco Momi. His works have been performed by the Deutsche Radiophilharmonie, the Munich Chamber Orchestra, and Trio Abstrakt, among others. He was awarded a residency at the Cité des Arts in Paris and has been pursuing a PhD at the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK) since 2020. Stillmark was a fellow of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation.



## Pinelopi Oikonomea

*give me a break* for cello



“I don’t force myself to do anything.  
Except exist.”

A friend told me this recently. I think it captures everything I feel—and I hope it speaks to you, too.

Daily life seems to repeat itself, over and over. But in truth, nothing ever happens exactly the same way.

Even in repetition, no moment is ever truly the same.

Chaos, time, and subtle change ensure that each cycle bears a different weight.

### **Bio**

Pinelopi Oikonomea was born in Athens, Greece, in 2001. She started piano and music theory lessons at the age of 8. She currently lives in Thessaloniki, studying Music Composition with M. Lapidakis, in the Department of Music Studies of the Aristotle University. Her music has been performed in different venues in Thessaloniki, including Thessaloniki Concert Hall, Department of Music Studies and Transcendence Studio. She has composed music for the theater performance "When we cease to understand the world" which has been performed at the Department of Theater Studies in Thessaloniki. Since 2024 she is an active member of "Post-Sonic Experiment" an independent collaboration for contemporary music, that organizes contemporary music concerts and other related events.





## Marko Vesić

### *sim(plix)* for piano

*Keep it simple!* – is the central “credo” of the composition and the author's point of departure, eventually leading to a range of more or less complex musical solutions based on the core melodic-rhythmic material. The urge to extrapolate this basic material across various voices, formats, timbres – pushing the limits of both perceptual & kinesthetic endurance for performers and audience alike – stems from the composer’s research in evolutionary biology and neuroscience in the context of music. Ultimately, the most important aspect of the piece is a quintessentially evolutionary one – to bring people together through music and entertain them!... but not in a trivial way: music always represents a “point of intersection” between heritage, neurobiology, technology, and the present moment – which, through the fusion of these elements, offers an authentic experience. It speaks loudly to the idea that the original *does not exist*, but rather that what we encounter are always-new *[re]constructions*.

#### Bio

Marko Vesić (1999) is a doctoral student of composition and research-associate at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade, creating in the field of contem-



Maria Grazia Bellocchio

porary artistic and theatre music, poetry and post-conceptual artistic practices. Also, he directed his theoretical research towards applied aesthetics and philosophy of science, and he is the author of the scientific monograph *Logic of [Un]Scientific Discovery*. He attended masterclasses of V. Lann, J. Bali, M. Padding and others, and he was a participant of many projects, academic and other international programs in art and philosophy. His current research focuses primarily on the evolutionary aspects of music, as well as the cultural context in which musical cognition develops. Marko has won several awards for musical and essay writing, he moderates art evenings, writes scientific-popular articles in magazines and gives public lectures. Marko’s music has been performed in many European and non-European countries. He began composing during his early years of studying guitar at elementary music school, without a clear sense of what he was doing – he simply found the activity engaging. While simultaneously attending both a gymnasium and a secondary music school, he realized that what interested him most was the creative aspect of music, and his compositional talent was soon affirmed through composition competitions. Encouraged by this, he enrolled in composition studies. In his music, he explores the questions, textures, and logics of indeterminism; in fact, through investigating eventfulness and the density of events, Marko seeks to articulate various musical images, where auditory contact with information and its transformation is of crucial importance to him.

## Yuto Obata

### *Puripuri Piano* for prepared piano and fixed media

In *Puripuri Piano* I set aside the conventional playing techniques of the piano, an instrument that is most familiar to me, and selected and structured sounds that I found more sensual and intuitively interesting. The piece features a prepared piano with various “tools” placed inside, as well as the material sounds of the piano itself (such as the sound of pedals being stomped or nails scraping across the keys) as its primary characters. The fixed media processes these pre-recorded “noises” offering a new perspective on the piano’s inherent qualities as an instrument. The word from the title “Puripuri” is a Japanese onomatopoeia that conveys diverse meanings such as “angry expression” or “fresh, chewy texture.” The title is appropriate for this work, which departed from convention and adopted a more intuitive approach at its inception. This piece has a continuous sequence and subtle changes of “puripuri” sounds.

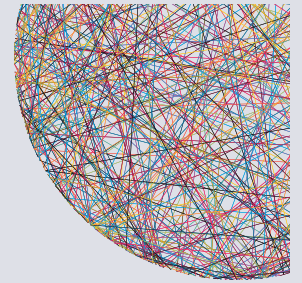
#### Bio

I’m a Japanese composer based in Helsinki, Finland. In December 2024. I hold a Bachelor’s degree in Composition from Kunitachi College of Music in 2020 and a Master’s degree from the University of the Arts Helsinki in 2024. As a composer, I always consider the relationship between the music and its audience. Composition is my most vital tool for communicating. Music is not only for entertainment or relaxation. It can also surprise, even shock, and invite the audience to focus on microscopic sound textures. Contemporary music, my main field, allows me to use such experimental forms of communication and open new possibilities for listening. My greatest interest in composition is delicate sound color and the exploration of new instrumental techniques. I focus on highlighting subtle sounds that are usually ignored, and I aim to uncover overlooked forms of communication. This approach also opens up new possibilities for blending instruments through the discovery of tonal similarities. In my recent works written in 2024-25, such as “Blue Toe for Two Guitarists with a Prepared Guitar” and “Mini Opera: Piggy Sparkle,” I have extended these ideas by incorporating performers’ physical expressions and exploring diverse vocal styles.



Maria Grazia Bellocchio

# Tomorrow concerts



**Sunday, August 3, 2025**

Sofia, National Academy of Music  
"Prof. Pancho Vladigerov"

**1st Concert - 17.00**

**2nd Concert - 19.00**

**Divertimento Ensemble**  
**Sandro Gorli** conductor

Music by:

Dea Ahma, Mattia Aisemberg-Pham,  
Jules Bastin-Fontaine, Ana Creangă,  
Vadim D. Genin, Tea Radi Georgieva,  
Svetlin Ognyanov Hristov, Stevan Jocić,  
Lasha Kharkhelauri, Lily Koslow,  
Minzuo Lù, Tomohiro Suzuki, Wang Shuyi



*National Academy of Music Hall: Divertimento Ensemble concert, July 26, 2025*