

Research day on Musical Curation

April 23 from 14:00 to 17:00

In today's art music landscape, curation is a concept of great scope and pressing significance. Far more than just a presenter's choice of program, an act of curation is an intricate aggregate of artistic choices that can be performed by every actor in the music industry. With these artistic choices, artists, presenters, and even audience members take position in a vast web of ramifications that run the gamut from questions of artistry, to philosophy, economics, and social issues.

This research day focuses on the topic of curation in the field of new music. It presents three perspectives: Featured speaker Jessie Cox is a composer, drummer, and scholar who inscribes his work in the aspirations of Afrofuturism; Tom De Cock and Maarten Stragier are performers all too happy to break out of their traditional role in the creative process; and Maarten Quanten is a contemporary music programmer at De Bijloke, one of Belgium's foremost concert halls.

(Nederlands)

In het huidige kunstmuzieklandschap is het begrip curatie zo veelomvattend als het pertinent is. Het gaat niet enkel om de repertoirekeuzes van programmatoren. Muzikale curatie is een complexe verzameling van artistieke keuzes die gemaakt worden door alle actoren in de muziekindustrie. Met deze keuzes positioneren kunstenaars, concertorganisaties, en zelfs luisteraars zich in een uitgestrekt web met vertakkingen die onder andere lopen door vragen rond kunstzinnigheid, filosofie, economie en sociale kwesties.

Deze onderzoeksdag focust zich specifiek op curatie in nieuwe muziek. Het doet dit vanuit 3 perspectieven: Jessie Cox is een componist, drummer, en onderzoeker die zijn werk inschrijft in de aspiraties van het Afrofuturisme; Tom De Cock en Maarten Stragier zijn uitvoerders die maar al te graag buiten hun traditionele rol in het creatieproces treden; en Maarten Quanten is programmator hedendaagse muziek in de Bijloke.

Schedule:

14:00-15:00

Interview with Maarten Quanten

On emancipating 21st century music from of the 19th century concert hall legacy

15:00-16:00

Presentation Jessie Cox (PhD candidate at Columbia University):

Afrofuturism's Implications on Musical Space-Time Travel

16:00-17:00

Conversation with Tom De Cock and Maarten stragier

Collective creation: the wide ramifications of changing relations in musical production

Interview with Maarten Quanten

Maarten Quanten is a researcher at KCB and the contemporary music programmer at De Bijloke in Ghent, one of Belgium's foremost concert halls. In a conversation with Maarten Stragier he discusses the vision behind his program choices, and the challenge of transforming a 19th century concert hall model to a creative environment for 21st century music.

Presentation by Jessie Cox:

"Afrofuturism's Implications on Musical Space-Time Travel."

From the speaker:

In this presentation I will describe my recent inquiries into space-time travel through musical processes. This work was initially inspired by practices of composers such as Sun Ra, Cecil Taylor, and King Tubby. Afrofuturism here is both an engagement with blackness and black lives, as well as a particular mode of relating to space and time, and with such also history, the world, and futures. The inquiry into space-time formation in music of course is also unsettling when transposed by Afro-, it remaps the world: Take for example how an instrument will sound differently when in an exoplanet's atmosphere. While the inclusion of questions of space has effects on the materiality of objects and subjects it also radically alters relations to time through the proximity and odd relationality of distant places. Consider for example how each planet has its own time and how the space-ship landing and leaving those planets starts intersecting with those timelines, while also having its own — what is called the andromeda paradox.

In this sense I see this music as something that can teach us, or be a field for experimentation of, how to live in a post-nation, post-planet, and extremely "fast," and in Sun Ra's words interplanetary, world.

Conversation with Tom De Cock and Maarten stragier

The institutional structures that determine production relations in new music, and the power structures that come with them, are an inheritance from a long-gone era in the classical music tradition. This anachronism leads to a number of structural failures of, and disconnects with the actual practice of creating new art music today.

In this conversation percussionist Tom De Cock and guitarist Maarten Stragier discuss how their recent artistic practice and research is fuelled by a desire to effect change in this situation through the radical embrace of a model of collective creation. They will broach questions around the connection between the classical score model and mass-distribution economy; how different concert venues influence power dynamics between performers and audience; the economic viability of the old commissioning model for musical composition; the importance of grass root developments; and much more.

More about guest speaker Jessie Cox

“...some of the most experimental music of not just the day but the season... held a listener’s attention with surprises and delights aplenty.”

— LA Times

Jessie Cox is a composer, drummer, and scholar, currently in pursuit of his Doctorate Degree at Columbia University. Growing up in Switzerland, and also having roots in Trinidad and Tobago, he is currently residing in NYC. He has written over 100 works for various musical ensembles including electroacoustic works, solo works, chamber- and orchestral works, works for jazz ensembles and choirs; including commissions and performances by LA Phil, Ensemble Modern, Heidi Duckler Dance, JACK Quartet, International Contemporary Ensemble, and more. As a performer he has played in Europe, Africa, the Caribbean and the USA; with musicians from all over the world. Jessie has participated at esteemed festivals all over the world and his music can be heard on Aztec Music’s Declic Jazz Label, Gold Bolus Recordings and Infrequent Seams, as well as others. His scholarly writing has been published in the journal *Sound American*, and *Castle Of Our Skins’* blog, a publication is forthcoming in *Critical Studies in Improvisation*; and he has presented his work at numerous conferences and festivals. Jessie Cox graduated summa cum laude from the Berklee College of Music on esteemed scholarships in 2017.