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Internationale
Gesellschaft
für Neue Musik

Call for Papers

Contemporary Concepts – Future Visions

International Symposium on the Occasion of the Centenary of the International Society for New Music

8–10 November 2023, Vienna

The International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM) is celebrating its centenary in 2022/23. In accordance with the founding idea of a musical association that transcends national borders for the promotion and dissemination of the most current tendencies of the musical present, 48 ISCM sections exist to date in countries and regions on all continents of the globe – with the sole exception of Antarctica – to implement these goals.

But what constitutes the musical present – what its most current tendencies are, and what future they point towards – is less certain today than ever before. The normative claim resonating in the founding ideas of the ISCM, that an international, borderless music can exist, can be explained in retrospect, but can hardly be redeemed in the present. A centenary review of the propagation of New Music thus also means an examination of the Society's horizons of expectation and their respective (non-)fulfillment in art.

Our present, which is characterized by global crises, orders that have become fragile, and the dissolution of firmly held beliefs in boundaries and categories, leads us to ask about the relevance of the arts and how they deal with concepts of the future: How do the (musical) arts react to potential catastrophes, to threats to the basis of life, fundamental rights, to wars, and pandemics? What contributions do the arts make to current discourses on posthumanism, artificial intelligence, and hybridity? How can the idea art's society-changing potential be updated for the twenty-first century? On the other hand, where and with what arguments can a utopia of beauty be articulated? Which artistic forms of expression address the fragility of the present, and which, on the other hand, counter it with technologically and/or ideologically formatted escapisms?

Against the background of current upheavals and technical, political, and ecological developments, artistic imaginations of the future are diversifying and yet are simultaneously under pressure to legitimize themselves. Meanwhile, a dystopian undertone seems pervasive, particularly in the face of such self-legitimizing statements.



Utopias and dystopias draw contrasting, yet interrelated images of the future from their respective historical presents. Whether they continue to do so with the aim of naming and treating the symptoms of the time – as the historical avant-gardes did in the founding years of the ISCM – or whether the associated promise of art's relevance has become obsolete, is only one of the questions that the symposium aims to address.

Possible topics of contributions include, but are not limited to:

- Aesthetic programming and tendencies toward marginalization (not limited to the history of the ISCM)
- Positionings of contemporary composition: reflections on current problematic situations and images of the future by composers
- (Post)-apocalyptic aesthetics in contemporary composition
- Forms of participation of new music in contemporary social discourses
- The role of technologies in the fields of musical action

All interested parties are invited to submit abstracts of max. **300 words** for a **free paper** (20 minutes + 10 minutes discussion) or **lecture recitals** (45 minutes) in **German** or **English** to IGNMconference2023@gmail.com by **June 15, 2023**.

Notification of acceptance will be communicated by mid-July.

A cooperation between the Institute of Musicology of the University of Vienna, the Institute of Musicology and Interpretation Research of the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna and the Austrian Section of the International Society for Contemporary Music, the conference will take place at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna.

The publication of a conference proceeding is planned.

Programme Committee:

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