

Porto International Conference on  
***Musical Gesture as Creative Interface***

Porto, Portugal, March 17–19, 2016

***PROGRAM***

***and***

***ABSTRACTS***

**William Teixeira** | Universidade de São Paulo, BR[teixeiradasilva.william@gmail.com](mailto:teixeiradasilva.william@gmail.com)**Silvio Ferraz** | Universidade de São Paulo, BR[silvioferrazmello@gmail.com](mailto:silvioferrazmello@gmail.com)*Musical Gesture: from Composition to Performance*

## ABSTRACT

In an interview to Richard Toop, Brian Ferneyhough proposes a threefold comprehension of music listening and composing: figure, texture and gesture. In his point of view, gesture and texture are both articulated by a figural substrate. It means that gesture and texture are both resultant of a figural manipulation, which comprehends a parameterization of the sonic fluxes according to articulations, instrumental activities and notes parameters. In this sense, it is not possible to separate gesture from other musical aspects. In this paper we will present the idea of an unfolding gesture in two aspects: motor or energetic aspect (performance gestuality) and symbolic aspect (historical dimension of a specific sonic flux). If the first aspect can be related to Ferneyhough musical thought, the second one has Luciano Berio as a main reference. After that, we will present an interpretation of gesture as a non-abstract musical aspect and as a compositional and performance tool. It means that we shall include time as a main feature for musical analysis.

One of the most important issues for contemporary music is the gestural heterogeneity of its repertoire, that makes parametric dimensions differ greatly from composer to composer and piece to piece. On the one hand this kind of variety makes rich the listening within the symbolic aspect, on the other, it makes understanding more difficult in the energetic aspect to the interpreter, impeding, thus, the *prägnanz* of sense that the gesture carries within. This is important, therefore, to establish an analytical pattern to consider the individuality of compositional processes, enabling performance that takes into account each of those figural manipulations, thereby generating even greater wealth within the motor or kinetic aspect of gesture. We believe so that understanding musical structures after those three elements could establish a better communication between composition and performance, resulting in a actual gestural performance. To effectuate this, we will use as the main object of analysis, to illustrate those relationships, the Sonata for Solo Cello by Bernd Alois Zimmermann, making use also of writings by the composer himself as an analytical background.

KEYWORDS: musical figure; gesture; musical performance; contemporary music; Bernd Alois Zimmermann

**William Teixeira** holds a BA in Cello Performance by São Paulo State University (UNESP) and a MA in Musicology by Campinas University (UNICAMP). He was professor of cello and music history at Fukuda Institute and principal cellist for São Paulo University Chamber Orchestra beyond his work as soloist and contemporary music performer. He is currently a candidate for PhD at São Paulo University (USP) with scholarship by FAPESP.

**Silvio Ferraz** studied composition at São Paulo University (USP) with Gilberto Mendes and Willy Corrêa de Oliveira, completing his studies at Foundation Royaumont with Brian Ferneyhough and James Dillon and at IRCAM's "Académie d'Été", with Gerard Grisey and Jonathan Harvey, Doctor in Semiotics by the Catholic University of São Paulo (PUC/SP) with a thesis about difference and repetition in music. Currently, he is professor of musical composition at São Paulo University (USP) and researcher of FAPESP and CNPq.

---

**Tatiana Tsaregradskaya** | Gnesins Russian Academy of Music, RU  
[Tania-59@mail.ru](mailto:Tania-59@mail.ru)

*Visual Gesture and Music: on Kaia Saariaho's "Nymphéa"*

#### ABSTRACT

Kaia Saariaho's approach to composition is an interdisciplinary one: it embraces a number of art forms – visual, literary and musical – in works that explore a creative dialog between image, continuity and time. Being a synesthetic person, Saariaho often takes her musical inspiration from visual stimuli and one of her most explicit “visualizations” is “Nymphéa” string quartet (1987). The source of inspiration was famous series of Claude Monet's paintings known as “Nymphéas”. This sort of ekphrasis raises a lot of questions, among them is: where the resonance between painting and music happens? In our presentation we propose a rather specific list of factors to be considered as provoking the imagination of a composer by visual stimuli. The most important one is the gestural character of Monet's paintings with their exquisite technique of brush strokes which themselves form complex entities on different levels. This approach makes possible to consider brush strokes as micro gestures with their own dynamic, direction, intensity and density. Therefore the idea of “temporal narrative” acquires a new impulse. In Saariaho's piece music arises from tiny musical gestures shaped by string bowing technique.

Another level of Monet's technique is a special sort of stroke combination. Monet places them one onto another thus making multilayered vibrating texture. Saariaho's compositional technique tends to develop this factor into polyphonic layering of four lines with a sophisticated design of sounds and