

I N S Δ M

JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC, ART AND TECHNOLOGY



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INSAM Journal of Contemporary Music, Art and Technology

No. 13, December 2024, pp. 9–10.

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SONEMUS FEST 2024: VARIATIONS

**From the Festival Booklet,
Introductory Note from the Artistic Director**

It is our honour and pleasure to invite you to this year's edition of the SONEMUS Festival, the only festival of contemporary art music in Bosnia and Herzegovina!

Immersed in a world of vapid spectacle created by the collision of power politics and technology, we have gradually become devoid of the ability to create and hear meaning in sound (whether it be speech or music), as well as the possibility of hearing the Other (and/or otherness).

Sealed off in our own internal (spiritual) echo chambers, in which external auditory stimuli reverberate infinitely in a temporal loop (which we mistakenly hear as our own identities), we have created a dystopian world akin to Bruegel's vision of hell, where war and violence are the only possible outcomes. [P. Bruegel the Elder: El Triunfo de la Muerte]

The form of musical variation, as a fundamental expression of rationalism and the Enlightenment in music, in this context becomes "variations" [an amalgamation of:

war + (var)iation].

Art (and thus artistic music), understood as “a lie (illusion) that reveals the truth” (P. Picasso), is one of the few remaining areas of human activity in which true communication (facing the Other and otherness) is possible. This year’s SONEMUS Festival is being held in that spirit, as well as in the spirit of resistance to the existing condition humaine marked by variations.

At the first concert of the festival, *Solilokvijii* (*Soliloquies*) [October 31 2024; Academy of Music (J. Štadlera 1/II, Sarajevo) at 8 p.m.] musicians from the SONEMUS ensemble will perform a series of compositions for solo instruments by renowned composers Karlheinz Stockhausen, David Lang, Elo Masing, Liza Lim, and others.

The second concert [November 1 2024; Bosanski Kulturni Centar (Branilaca Sarajeva 24, Sarajevo) at 8 p.m.] features the Estonian Ensemble for New Music Tallinn (ENMT) with a program focused on post-spectral music—a musical style that takes the physical and psychophysical characteristics of tone/sound as its basic compositional model/paradigm, thus revealing a completely new musical world that has always been “hidden” in traditionally understood music. The concert will also feature the premiere performance of the composition *Ghetto 2024: دومص* by the internationally active Bosnian-Herzegovinian composer Hanan Hadžajlić.

The concert *Monochromophonia* [December 9 2024; Academy of Music (J. Štadlera 1/II, Sarajevo) at 8 p.m.] will present the premiere of the eponymous composition by prominent Bosnian-Herzegovinian composer Ališer Sijarić for saxophone quartet and live electronics, along with a piece by renowned Austrian composer Georg Friedrich Haas, both based on microtonality (the use of musical intervals smaller than the standard division of the octave into 12 degrees that create specific auditory effects), performed by the Sarajevo Saxophone Quartet.

No to Variation, welcome variations!