

# Ioannis Mitsialis - Dissertation Recital

## Two compositions for solo instruments

Monday, November 22, 2021 - 7:00 p.m.  
Conrad Prebys Music Center  
Experimental Theater

*Fractures and permutations* for violin and live electronics (2021)

*Ioannis Mitsialis*

Ilana Waniuk, violin  
Ioannis Mitsialis, live electronics

*Monodromic* for solo piano (2021)

*Ioannis Mitsialis*

Kyle Adam Blair, piano

In my dissertation recital tonight, two solo pieces of mine are presented, which were composed under different circumstances and time periods. *Fractures and permutations for violin and live electronics* and *Monodromic for solo piano*, both explore in their own way the cyclical phenomena, which constitute the fundamental space of my interest in my most recent work. The violin piece makes use of the electronic medium for the first time in my creative practice and relates to the idea of the cycle more at a conceptual level, while the piano piece connects with it more substantially and develops it in its multiple dimensions. These works are the result of my close collaboration with the wonderful soloists Ilana Waniuk (violin) and Kyle Adam Blair (piano), over a long period of time.

### ***Fractures and permutations for violin and live electronics (2021) - 7'***

This is my first work that makes use of the electronic medium, and is based on the idea that a single phrase, composed by a sequence of metrical lengths, can be cut up to its constituent parts and produce the whole composition by their constant reordering. The initial phrase that I constructed for this purpose has a symmetrical form of seven bars with the following lengths in number of quarter beats: 3-4-3-1-3-4-3. The compositional idea that I put into practice is to repeat this symmetry a couple of times, while changing the position of the shortest central bar of 1/4 in a zig-zag motion inside this metrical grid. In this structure, a variety of short sonic gestures appear in the violin, which are shaped by pitch groupings from a total of 17 pitches and by intuitive rhythmic choices. These gestures confront each other in a violent manner, inside this closed space.

The main ideas that I explore in the electronic part of this piece are subtle manipulations of sound localities in the violin part and spatialization. For their realization I worked primarily with white noise, filters and reverberation. I also connected both of these ideas with the metrical structure of the piece and with the cyclic concept in a variety of ways. I developed a Pd patch that makes use of two loudspeakers and for its preparation I worked regularly with Prof. Miller Puckette to whom I would like to express my gratitude for his invaluable mentoring and support since the very beginning of this project.

### ***Monodromic for solo piano (2021) - 24'***

My second solo piano work is the first long form that I composed after a long period of time when I was producing shorter pieces. For this piece, I found strong inspiration from an imaginary visual space of abstract nature, which provided me with fruitful ideas especially for the structural design of the work in relation to the idea of cycle.

I am not in a position to know all the psychological factors that created this image in my mind. However, an aspect that most probably played a significant role was that it appeared at a period of social isolation and after a creative block. This happened in January 2021 during the lockdown in San Diego because of the pandemic. I imagined a closed dark room, which had objects lying on the floor that were barely visible. Inside this room, a big ray of light of conic shape was penetrating the space coming through a tiny crack of the ceiling. At the same time, light rays of a smaller size were entering the room from different directions and it was unclear where their origin points were located. Their sizes and conic diameters were very diverse, but certain distinctions of long, short, thick and/or thin rays could be made. However, it seemed to me that only the big one was coming from the ceiling and that all the rest were projected either from the four walls of the room or from the floor. The total number of rays was 12 and the general visual image was blurred, as some of them were hitting the hidden objects on the floor creating diffractions of light at spots of the four room's walls. This visual image was black and white and of a geometric abstract nature and the psychological effect that it was producing to me was a continuous and unresolved tension.

The form of the piece is a hybrid between *episodic* and *cyclic* and for its realization I made use of a simple idea. Each ray, which constitutes each “episode”, consists of two superimposed metric structures based on a specific proportion. These structures are assigned to the right and left hand of the pianist and create polyrhythms that constitute the core of the temporal domain of the piece. The idea of the circle is very central in them, as they are of unequal length and they converge after a number of their repetitions. Through this idea, and with the use of appropriate temporal speeds, the two hands of the pianist represent two roles in constant motion, which come to a temporal discord, thus creating an ever-lasting *friction*.

The title of the piece (*Monodromic*), does not relate to the algebraic term of monodromy, neither does it make use of such a model of function at a structural level. It is derived from the Greek word monodromos (μονόδρομος) which means one-way. This aspect is reflected in the unrelenting single force that characterizes the piece throughout, which is created by multiple layers of activity. The main idea is that despite the complexity and multiplicity of these layers, the piece cannot escape from itself, its unresolved tension and instability. In fact, its highly cyclic nature with all the recurring rhythmic and pitch elements of the textures creates this phenomenon.

---



### **Ioannis Mitsialis**

Ioannis Mitsialis was born in 1978 in Athens, Greece. His early music studies in piano and theoretical music education were pursued at the Hellenic National Conservatory. He went on to complete his Bachelors of Music at the Ionian University, Music Department, with a dissertation in music composition.

In 2008, he was awarded a scholarship from the Hellenic State Scholarships’ Foundation (IKY) and he moved to Germany, where he graduated with a Masters in Composition from the Hamburg University of Music and Theatre with Peter Michael Hamel in 2010. In 2013, he graduated from the University of Music and Theatre “Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy” in Leipzig, having acquired the highest title awarded by German universities, the “Meisterklassenexamen” in Composition, with Dr. Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf. Mitsialis has worked regularly with many important teachers, notably Clarence Barlow in The Hague and Anargyros Deniozos in Athens.

He has also attended seminars and workshops with the following composers: Hans- Jürgen von Bose, Gunther Schuller, Edith Canat de Chizy, Nikolaus Brass, Adriana Hölszky, Georgios Apergis, Steven Kazuo Takasugi, Anargyros Deniozos, Philippe Leroux, Raphaël Cendo, Hans Thomalla and Hilda Paredes.

Mitsialis works in a number of different genres (symphonic, chamber, vocal and solo music) and his compositions have been performed repeatedly in the USA, Canada, England, France, Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Greece. Ensembles and soloists, which he has collaborated with include Palimpsest, ECCE, Schallfeld, Loadbang, Greek Ensemble of Contemporary Music, Barbara Lüneburg, Paul Hübner, Mari Kawamura, Ilana Waniuk and Kyle Adam Blair. Conductors such as Steven Schick, Christian Ludwig, Theodore Antoniou and Jean-Phillip Wurtz have performed Mitsialis’s work.

In 2009, Mitsialis won the Annemarie und Hermann Rauhe Prize for his piano trio “Interaktionen” in Hamburg.

Since September 2016, he is a Ph.D. student in composition at the University of California San Diego with Prof. Roger Reynolds. He is going to complete his studies with his dissertation defense in December 9, 2021.



### **Ilana Waniuk**

Ilana Waniuk is a versatile violinist with interests ranging from improvisation to visual arts. Along with pianist Cheryl Duvall, Ilana is a founding member and co-artistic director of Toronto-based contemporary music ensemble/presenter Thin Edge New Music Collective (TENMC) now in its eleventh season and *Balancing on the Edge* (multidisciplinary production melding circus arts with new music). As a member of TENMC, Ilana has premiered over 70 new chamber works and performed on concert stages across Canada, Italy, Argentina, Poland, Japan and most recently Germany. She has toured Cape Breton and Ontario with the Bicycle Opera Project, performed at contemporary music festivals including SoundOn in San Diego, Suoni per Il Popolo in Montreal, Open Ears in Kitchener/Waterloo and the Royal Conservatory's 21C festival as well as with the Madawaska String Quartet, Adam Rudolph's Go Organic Orchestra, and Chicago's Ensemble Dal Niente and Noise (San Diego). She has held artistic residencies at the Banff centre for the Arts, Avaloch Farms Music Institute and been a fellow at the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival New Music Workshop. Ilana was a winner of the 2014 Orford String Quartet Award and most recently is the curator/performer behind 'Filaments', an evolving concert program dedicated to collaboratively creating and commissioning new interdisciplinary works for violin, electronics and multimedia made possible with generous support from the SOCAN Foundation, Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, and Canadian Music Centre. Ilana is currently a doctoral candidate in contemporary performance at the University of California San Diego.



### **Kyle Adam Blair**

Lyricism, complexity, and dissonance characterize the musical interests of pianist Kyle Adam Blair. His artistic focuses include the co-creation of new musical works in collaboration with living composers, as well as the American art music repertoire of the 20th and 21st centuries, in particular the music of Charles Ives, Donald Martino, Elliott Carter, and Stuart Saunders Smith.

Outside of his frequent engagements as a solo and collaborative pianist in southern California, Blair's most memorable performances have included world premieres of Bruno Ruviaro's twelve Post-Tudos piano etudes, Stuart Saunders Smith's *Family Portraits: Sylvia at 70*, and multiple appearances with Bang-On-A-Can All-Stars.

Beyond concert music, Blair's curiosities regarding text and theatre spark frequent collaborations with actors, singers, and dancers. Most recently, he has worked closely with Grammy-winning soprano Susan Narucki as the repetiteur for premieres of contemporary operatic works, most notably Lei Liang's *Inheritance* and Stephen Lewis's *Noon at Dusk*.

Blair can be heard on New World Records, Edgetone Records, and has produced for Bridge Records. He received his D.M.A. in Contemporary Music Performance from the University of California San Diego in 2018, under the mentorship of Aleck Karis.

---

Contact us for information on upcoming concerts: Music Box Office: (858) 534-3448 | [music.ucsd.edu/concerts](http://music.ucsd.edu/concerts)  
Watch upcoming livestreams: [music.ucsd.edu/live](http://music.ucsd.edu/live)

This performance will be live streamed, with audio and video documentation for archival purposes, only. Audience members are reminded to please silence all phones and noise generating devices before the performance. As a matter of courtesy and copyright law, no unauthorized recording or photographing is allowed in the hall. UC San Diego is a non-smoking campus.

#### **Department of Music, Production:**

**Jeremy Olson**, Theatrical Production Specialist  
**Andrew Munsey**, Recording Engineer  
**Jeffrey Xing**, Recording Assistant

**Sherry An**, Marketing & Promotions Coordinator  
**Jessica Flores**, Production Manager