

## **Translating Spirit into Sound: on the Methodology used in the Composition Cycle *Ethica* (2017-2021)**

The artistic research project *Sounding Philosophy*, supported by the Norwegian Artistic Research Program (2021-2024) integrates music composition research with philosophical and scientific inquiry. The goal is to understand how theories of reason and the mind can be approached from creative, metaphysical and scientific standpoints, and how these theories can be holistically understood from various research perspectives.

The question of reason and the mind has been dealt with in the fields of art, philosophy and science and this has given way to contemporary theories of emergence, e.g. by the Nobel-Price Winner in Physics Robert Laughlin. Emergence can be described as the condition of an entity having properties distinct from the properties of the parts of the system from which it emerges, an important concept within the theoretical framework of complex systems. While philosophers have described thinking, doing and perception as different “states of mind,” scientists have not only concerned themselves with the question of how intelligence in the universe is possible, but also how intelligence plays a role in the evolution and emergence of nature. Philosophers, such as Spinoza and Kant, regarded both philosophy and art not merely as rational modes of explanation but also as expressions of spirit (*spiritus*) and intelligence (*Geist*). While such questions of spirit relate to new developments in emergence theories in physics, psychology and philosophy, my current compositional work looks to how such concepts of mind and emergence can be expressed via artistic creation. Dealing with questions of the mind and consciousness, involving a philosophical approach to music composition, the project looks into how concepts of intelligence and the mind can be translated into music domains.

In my talk, I will present a series of works based on philosophical texts by Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), discussing the production process of this compositional work, which serves to re-enact Spinoza’s philosophical thinking via musical analogy. Creating a compositional methodology and craft based on recent developments in emergence theory, I will show how Spinoza’s philosophical ideas are translated and transformed via musical parameters, tuning and through the use of music technology, done in conjunction with the Experimentalstudio in Freiburg, Germany.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=2yu5Tg4LagE&feature=emb\\_logo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2yu5Tg4LagE&feature=emb_logo)

[www.researchcatalogue.net/view/634973/634974](http://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/634973/634974)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6AX9p9FFdQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6AX9p9FFdQ)



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**Dániel Péter Biró** studied in Hungary, Germany, Switzerland and Austria before receiving his Ph.D. from Princeton University in 2004. From 2004-2009 he was Assistant Professor and from 2009-2018 Associate Professor for Composition and Music Theory at

the University of Victoria in Victoria, BC, Canada. In 2010 he received the Gigahertz Production Prize from the ZKM-Center for Art and Media. In 2011 he was Visiting Professor at Utrecht University and in 2014-2015 Research Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University. In 2015 he was elected to the College of New Scholars, Scientists and Artists of the Royal Society of Canada. In 2017 he was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship. He is currently Professor for Composition at the Grieg Academy in Bergen, Norway. He is currently directing the project *Sounding Philosophy* as part of the Norwegian Artistic Research Program (2021-2024). His music is published by Edition Gravis (Berlin).  
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