

Not-the-L8Nite Performance

**Performing in the 21st century Salon  
Reactivation of (Lost) Sociability**

Inheriting Western art music values from the 19th century, modern concert halls have promoted a culture of contemplating music in silence (Small 1998). This is in stark contrast to the performing and listening practices of the eighteenth and early- nineteenth century, when musical events were far more interactive and left room for spontaneous reactions and social contact among all the partakers (Weber 1997; Klorman 2019), and in which music tended to be tailored to the performance ritual (Haynes/Burgess 2016). While historically informed performance practices (HIP) propose the performance of a piece in the style of its original time, as an expression of our contemporary historical restoration they bring new experiences and insights into our world. It is not just in terms of a different way of thinking about music but also as an alternative to a performance practice governed by the work concept. Still, HIP musicians perform in anachronistic environments; purpose-built concert halls filled with silently respectful audiences.

In comparison with concert hall events and other public musical institutions, musical salons that have not survived or survive only in highly modified forms, served as a mediating force and the site of musical experimentation, innovation, retrospection, introspection, and, perhaps most importantly, musical sociability (Cypess 2022). Although the specific proceedings of eighteenth and nineteenth-century salons, as well as their role in a broader social and cultural landscape were highly variable, at their center were the salonnières; women who acted as cultural agents by providing a time, place, and impetus for elite amateurs and professional musicians to come together to work out musical issues through conversation and collaboration.

Trying to reconsider the possibilities for accomplishing sociability *within* the performance, I will put myself in multiple roles, equivalent to those of a salonnière (music curator, performer, producer) during the performance. Within an experimental framework (assembling old repertoires and archival materials with crossing-over between modern and period instruments, the use of performance space and the engagement of audiences as co-players) this intermedia performance will open a dialogue between present and past, showing at the same time our current relations with the past and inherited (or lost) practices and rituals.

The proposed performance which is devised as a workshop (equivalent to salon gathering) will include recorded video performances, live performance on the piano, spontaneous reactions and conversation among all the partakers (audience members and performer). As an experiment, it will show the process of my own artistic research through the performance, in order to answer the following questions: How can we reenact (lost) historical practices in order to re-contextualize our established rituals of performing and listening? What are the possible roles of a 21st-century salonnière? How can she establish a new dynamism within the performance?

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Ivana Jelača (Croatia) is a pianist, creative leader, and a PhD student. She graduated from Music Academy, University of Zagreb. She furthered her education within the postgraduate specialization studies (Academy of Music in Ljubljana and Zagreb) with the work *The Art of Playing Piano Sonata in the Context of Cultural Change* with which she has committed herself to performance on both historical and modern instruments.

Ivana Jelača works as a freelance artist and music teacher, performing regularly in Croatia and abroad. She is a creative leader of The Rest is Music NGO and a PhD student (artistic research in music) at Orpheus Institute and KU Leuven (Belgium), doctoral project *Dubrovnik Salons Reenacted: Rethinking Performative Concepts and the Rituals of Performing 18th- and 19th-Century Music*.

**Performance:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZuwtZbnWc4>

