

Parallel Session

## Playgrounds

### Gamified Audience Participation through Embodied Interaction in Multimedia Composition for Western Art Music Ensembles

This project was a practice-based research of gamified approaches to audience participation in contemporary Western Art Music composition and performance, with a focus on the incorporation of embodied gaming devices, as well as exploring competitive, collaborative, and cooperative play dynamics.

The main questions articulating the inquiry were:

- How could interactive gamified composition strategies change the audience's role during musical performances?
- How would competitive and collaborative play dynamics affect the audience's perception of the piece and the performers' musical and theatrical interpretation?
- What are the most effective ways to design embodied gaming interfaces that could create meaningful audience-performer interactions?

The research addressed the following issues: understanding how gamified approaches influence audience engagement and perception of the music, incorporating embodied gaming interfaces to facilitate active audience interaction, examining the impact of competitive and collaborative play dynamics on both the audience listening experiences and the performers interpretation, and developing experimental methods for integrating gamified elements into my musical compositions.

Creative practice was central to the project. The inquiry drew upon my experience with the [GAPPP](#) (Gamified Audiovisual Performance and Practice) project, led by Marko Ciciliani in 2020, which investigated the integration of interactive video game elements into audiovisual composition. For that project, I contributed *String Mask Overflow*, a piece critically commenting on a VR-mediated string ensemble setup. *Playgrounds* builds on that experience, emphasizing audience play as an active compositional element. The audience functions as a "playing group," whose competitive and collaborative embodied interactions directly influence the music and performance progression.

The methodology is built on an iterative, critically reflective approach. Audience-performer interactions are designed and tested in structured "playground" spaces, with each iteration evaluated for its aesthetic, performative, and participatory impact. This includes both quantitative and qualitative methods, such as observational analysis of audience responses, feedback loops with performers to gauge interpretative shifts, and structured audience members feedback sessions.

The presentation will be accompanied by examples of performances, software, and scores. These are four video documentations of pieces I will comment on:

Playgrounds III: <https://www.pedrogonzalezfernandez.com/playgrounds.html>

Duel: <https://www.pedrogonzalezfernandez.com/duel.html>

One, Playing Group: <https://www.pedrogonzalezfernandez.com/one.html>

String Mask Overflow: <https://www.pedrogonzalezfernandez.com/stringmaskoverflow.html>

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Pedro González is a Spanish violinist, composer, and researcher specialized in multidisciplinary and intermedia art projects. He received his bachelor's degree from Escuela Superior de Música de Catalunya and later participated in the European joint Masters program in Contemporary Performance and Composition (CoPeCo) in Tallinn, Lyon, Stockholm, and Hamburg. Since 2018, he has been working on his PhD in composition at HfMT Hamburg under the guidance of Prof. Alexander Schubert. His compositions have been performed at various prestigious festivals in Europe, including Internationales Musikfest Hamburg, International Computer Music Conference, SMC, the Centre National de Création Musicale (GRAME), or the Musica Festival in Strasbourg, among others. In March 2021, Pedro was appointed Professor for Contemporary Music at ESMUC in Barcelona. In 2023, he was the recipient of a Fulbright visiting scholar grant at CCRMA, (Stanford University). He also gives seminars on live electronics and multimedia at the Musikhochschule Lübeck and works as a freelance composer and violinist in Spain and Germany.

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