

## ***Performing Precarity (PP)***

To be a contemporary music performer today is to have a deeply fragmented practice. The performer's role is no longer simply a matter of mastering her instrument and executing a score. Music practices are increasingly incorporating new instruments and technologies, methods of creating works, audience interaction and situations of interdependence between performer subjects. The performer increasingly finds herself unable to keep a sense of mastery over the performance. In other words, performing is increasingly precarious.

*PP* investigates this new paradigm by abandoning notions of mastery and instrument-specificity in favour of the idea of the network and its ensuing precarity: What kinds of practices emerge when traditional conceptions of beauty and perfection are relinquished in favour of precarity, fragility, risk, instability, failure, and mutual dependence between performers, composers, technologies, and audiences? What kinds of reflections will emerge out of this repositioning of the performer from "master" to a mutually dependent agent in such a network?

Applied by Heyde to describe the mechanics of instruments, the notion of the network suggests new ways of thinking about the interdependencies of musical performance. Unlike the solid conception of instrumental identity implied by the notion of idiomaticity, that of the network suggests a relational conception of performance practice which embraces and potentially affects all aspects of musical performance, highlighting a wholly different set of performative qualities - interdependence, fragility, unpredictability, risk. We should like to pursue such qualities guided by an ethical performativity founded upon precarity. Being constantly exposed to the risks of performative collapse or failure, and to dependency on others or on technology, the performer embracing this must also surrender to these hazards, ultimately risking transforming their very conception of self.

Members will conduct individual methods with the aim of reflecting upon *PP* through their own practices. Ugelvik/Torrence will cooperate with composers developing new works problematizing and/or cultivate precarity in performance. They will experiment with reflection through *storytelling*, experimental dialogue, audio papers and video documentation. Førisdal will produce text and deepen the theoretical understanding of the topics. Crane will develop new works and produce text contextualizing the topic as a composer.



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Ellen Ugelvik is a pianist and researcher from Norway, working as deputy at NordART at the Norwegian Academy of Music (NMH). She completed her Ph.d. in 2017 with the project 'The soloist in contemporary piano concerti' consisting world premieres of five new concerti written for her. Jennifer Torrence is a percussionist and researcher from the US, based in Oslo and working as a freelance musician worldwide besides her teaching and research career at NMH. In 2019 she completed her Ph.d in artistic research with the project 'Percussion Theatre: A Body in Between'. Laurence Crane is a British composer of

international acclaim. He is Professor of composition at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Anders Førisdal is a guitarist and researcher from Norway with an international career as musician besides his scientific research in music. In 2017 he completed his Ph.d. thesis 'Music of the Margins' at NMH.