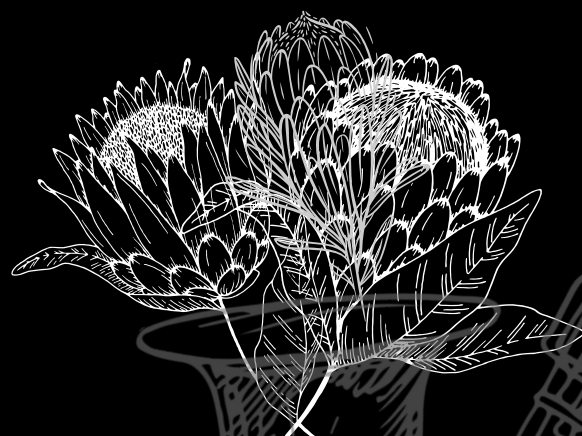




A COLLABORATION BETWEEN
JOSIE MCCLURE AND SEUNG-REE LEE

FINDING HOME

AN EXPLORATION OF NEW SOUTH AFRICAN SAXOPHONE MUSIC



14 JULY 2023

19:00

ERIN HALL RONDEBOSCH, CAPE TOWN





PROGRAMME

TURBULENCE (2023)

O. DALTON

UZOVUKA NINI? (2023)

ALLAN X. CHEN

"WHEN WILL YOU WAKE UP"

PHAMBILI: INGOMA YA NGOMSO (2023)

KARL LOBI

8 MINUTE SAXOPHONE

CLARE LOVEDAY

THREE NOCTURNES FROM AFRICA

ARTHUR FEDER

I. IMPUNDULU'S FLIGHT

II. MARIMBA'S ARIA

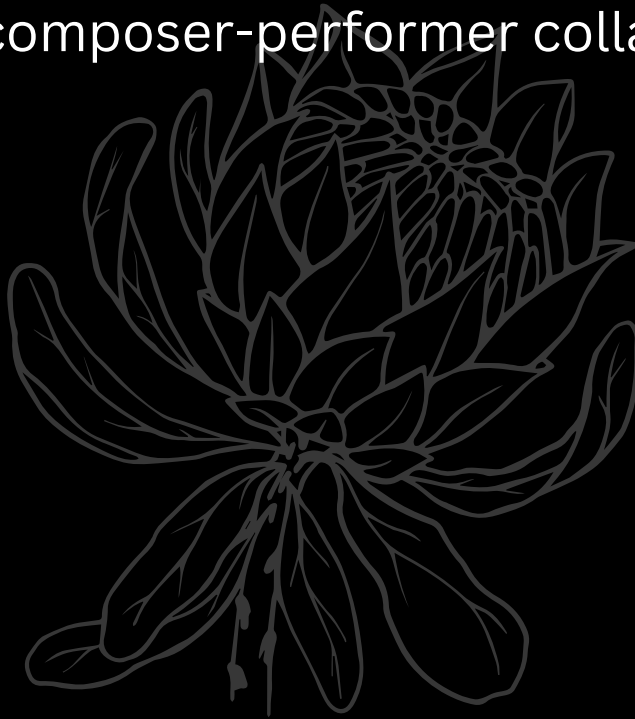
III. CEREMONIES AND DANCES



ABOUT THE WORKS

All the works that will be performed tonight are new commissions and this is the first time they will be premiered.

The majority of the works have been created through composer-performer collaboration.



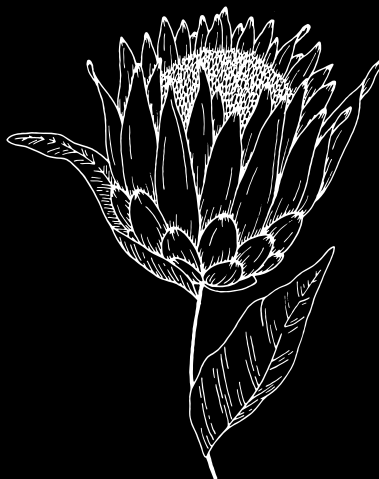
TURBULENCE (2023)

This short work for alto saxophone and piano was commissioned by UNISA in collaboration with Josie McClure's postgraduate research on South African saxophone repertoire.

It is comprised of two main ideas. The first being a rhythmic pattern based on morse code, and the second being a four-chord progression that repeats in different directions.

The rhythmic pattern is formed from the morse code for J-O-S-I-E (heard clearly in the opening bars) while the chord progression is an expansion of a chord found in Schnittke's Choir Concerto - a Gsus4 chord that moves stepwise eventually landing on a Bb⁷ chord.

The nature of the piece is turbulent, hence the name, and briefly explores the erratic side of human nature through contrasting tempos, rhythms, and harmonies.

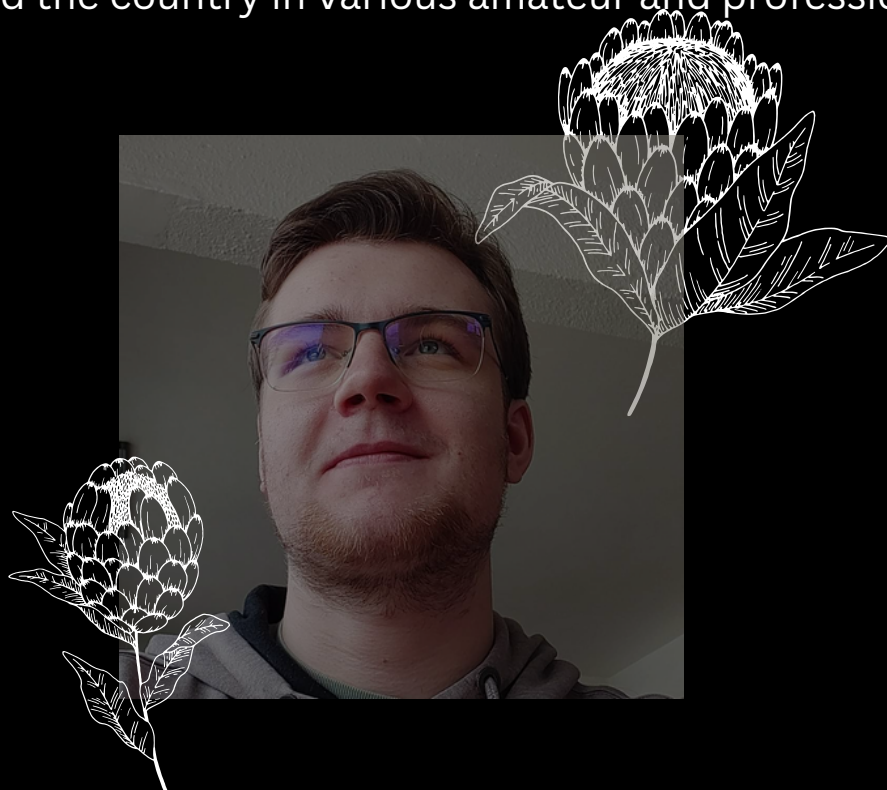


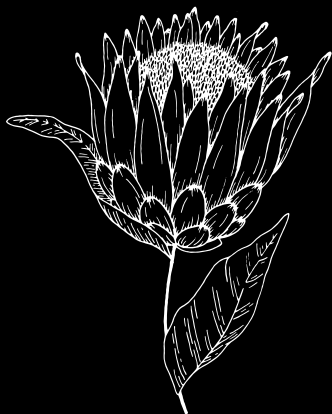
OWEN DALTON (B. 1998)

Owen Dalton (1998+) is a young South African composer and oboist. Currently, he is completing his master's in composition at the University of Stellenbosch researching on the sonic capabilities of the reed quintet. Earlier this year, he was the runner-up (2nd place) in the inaugural South African Composition Competition where the Cape Town Philharmonic performed and recorded his work 'An Animal Suite'.

He was also recently commissioned to write a work for the University of Pretoria Symphony Orchestra that was performed in May this year. Just last week he was announced as one of the five finalists in the 2023 South African Strings Foundation Composition Competition in collaboration with Stellenbosch University, the Composer's Symposium, and the Flat Mountain Project.

Dalton prides himself in his ability to write for winds and enjoys writing for chamber groups or larger ensembles that include them. He also frequently performs as an oboist and English hornist around the country in various amateur and professional orchestras.

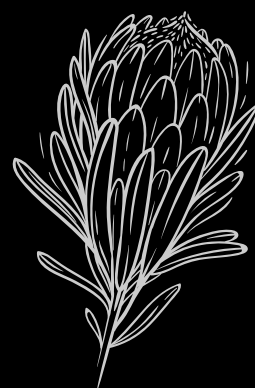




UZOVUKA NINI? (2023) WHEN WILL YOU WAKE UP?

**Please read only after the performance – much of Allan’s music is narrative in nature, however, he believes that the narrative is only truly for him and his compositional process. Whether the audience understands or experiences the piece in the way he derives it, is unimportant to him. What he does find important is that each individual audience member has their own personal experience with it.*

This piece is the first part of a series of pieces to come. At its core idea, it is a commentary on the state of saxophone music in South Africa. Saxophone music’s dominance in the jazz sphere in South Africa is one to be celebrated – it is a beautiful thing, especially considering its ties to political commentary and social movements in the arts during apartheid. However, it is also one that should also be critiqued. The dominance of the jazz scene for the saxophone has meant a stifling of its real origins – a classical instrument. Around the world at this very moment and over the past decade, incredible experimental and contemporary techniques are being applied to, and popularised in, the saxophone repertoire...we are seemingly behind here... “Uzovuka Nini” is both a critique of this current climate in SA saxophone music, while also hinting at a beautiful future for it. In this short part, we quote a popular SA jazz tune by Hugh Masekela – we twist it, squeeze it, disrupt it, so far that we present something suggestively “new”



ALLAN X. CHEN (B. 1993)



Allan's contemporary classical work has been performed by ensembles and orchestras across the globe, including the RSNO, JACK Quartet, ALEA III Ensemble, Quartetto Indaco etc. and he has had the privilege of working with conductors Ryan Bancroft and Teddy Abrams.

Through fulfilling and active collaborations, he has enjoyed beautiful premieres of his music at venues and festivals such as Usher hall (Edinburgh), the Royal Concert Hall (Glasgow), Cheltenham International Music Festival, Avanti! Summer Music Festival etc. In all of his work he brings in narrative and storytelling, even in the experimentalism of the classical

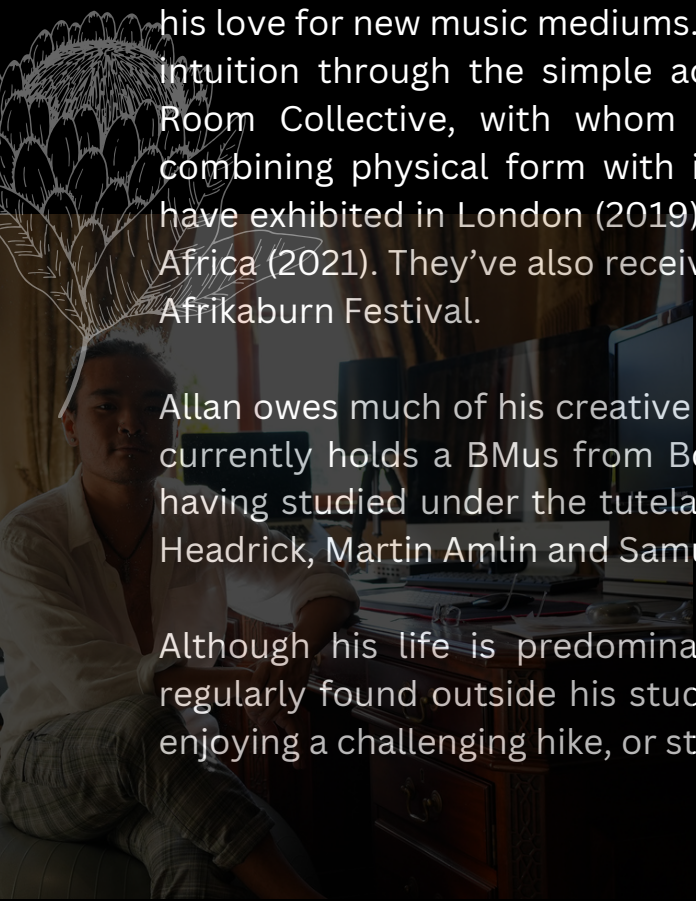
world. This story-telling is most evident in his film music. An active film composer, Allan has worked on a number of award-winning short films. The most recent of which, "An Original Voice", which explores the currently-popular-topic of AI in art.

The film premiered at the Runway AI Film Festival in New York, receiving the Honoree Award. Some of Allan's other films have premiered at the São Paulo Film Festival, Los Angeles Int. Shorts Festival, Nantucket Int. Film Festival, as well as numerous Comic-Con events in the US.

Allan's passion for the concert hall and entertainment screen is matched by his love for new music mediums. Hoping to develop in his audiences musical intuition through the simple act of play, Allan also founded The Willow Room Collective, with whom he develops and builds art installations combining physical form with interactive music. Their installation pieces have exhibited in London (2019) and at the Spier Light Art Festival in South Africa (2021). They've also received a grant to bring a new installation to the Afrikaburn Festival.

Allan owes much of his creative fulfilment and success to his educators. He currently holds a BMus from Boston University and MMus from the RCM, having studied under the tutelage of composers Kenneth Hesketh, Samuel Headrick, Martin Amlin and Samuel Adler.

Although his life is predominated by the art of composing, he can be regularly found outside his studio playing with his Aussie shepherd, Sirius, enjoying a challenging hike, or stuffing his face with oysters.





PHAMBILI: INGOMA YA NGOMSO (2023)

TENOR SAXOPHONE AND PIANO



A work written for solo tenor saxophone and piano, "Phambili" is an exploration of syncopation and agility. Through a flurry of notes, the work is written to invoke a sense of forward momentum, hence the title of the composition: "phambili" is the Xhosa word for "forward". With that in mind, the subtitle "ingoma ya ngomso" is a phrase which simply means "a song for tomorrow".

KARL LOBI (B.1998)

Born in the township of Gugulethu just on the outskirts of Cape Town, Karl Lobi is an emerging African non-binary composer. They grew up with music around them, having even been a part of the Orff Orchestra at their primary school, they officially began their trajectory into musical studies in 2010 with piano lessons in the suburbs of Kuils River. Although they had almost no exposure to a piano prior to their lessons in 2010, they managed to play their first official piano exam - ABRSM Grade 4 - in September of that year and pass.

Despite this jolting start, Lobi's strengths always remained in music theory and thus decided to concentrate their abilities into composing, with ambitions of becoming a film composer and scoring for visual media. Going by they/he pronouns, Karl studied music at Stellenbosch University's Konservatorium under the tutelage of Arthur Feder, completing their studies in 2021 with distinctions in both Orchestration and Composition.



During their undergraduate studies at the institution, they switched instruments from playing piano to pipe organ after their first year, something which the composer believes to have been instrumental in shaping their creative insight.

They also achieved recognition from music communities locally and abroad for their compositions. In 2017, their work "Gupti Aga", which was a collaboration to help grow the repertoire of South African brass and saxophone music, was premiered by the Phax Trio at the university's infamous Endler Hall.

They then went on to have their composition "False starts." (2020) achieve second in California Baptist University's 2021 Graduate Fellowship in Composition competition. Later in the same year, Lobi's solo piano work "Ndahamba Ndabuya" was selected to be a part of the New Music Workshop curated by the South African Society for Research in Music.

Since graduating from Stellenbosch University, Lobi went on to obtain a sound engineering qualification at Cape Audio College in 2022, and graduated at the top of their class. It was during this time that the aforementioned "Ndahamba Ndabuya" was performed by world-renown pianist Megan-Geoffrey Prins in virtual concert at the University of Pretoria's School of the Arts in May 2022.


Currently Lobi is a freelance composer and sound engineer based in Cape Town, still pursuing their ambitions of working in film composition and audio production.





8 MINUTES FOR SAXOPHONE

This work formed part of Josie's research into performer-composer collaboration.

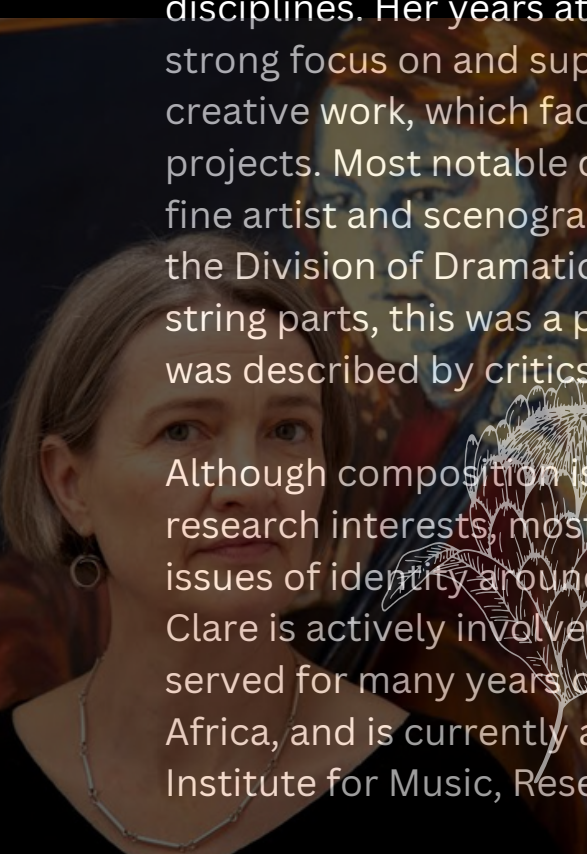


CLARE LOVEDAY

Clare Loveday is a Johannesburg-based composer whose works have been performed on four continents. Striving to convey through music the complications of life in a post-colonial society, her works have been described by critics in turn as 'obstinate and fierce, big-boned and raw', 'subtle' and 'elusive'. She has been described as having 'a quite individual post-tonal harmonic language' and of writing works that are 'exciting to listen to and yet obviously also enjoyable to play'.

The saxophone has continued to fascinate Clare. She has, for example, written three saxophone octets. Her 2nd octet was performed at the Royal College of Music in London and the Nordic Saxophone Festival in Arhus. The most recent was performed at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire in 2017, the World Saxophone Congress in 2018 with further performances scheduled.

Clare has worked on numerous collaborations over the years, and relishes the process of working with creative artists from different disciplines. Her years at the Wits School of Arts coincided with a strong focus on and support for interdisciplinary and innovative creative work, which facilitated a number of Clare's collaborative projects. Most notable of these was The Collision Project, created with fine artist and scenographer Gerhard Marx who lectured at the time in the Division of Dramatic Arts. Featuring a car wreck with attached string parts, this was a part installation, part concert performance and was described by critics as "provocative" and "wickedly innovative".



Although composition is her main focus, Clare is also developing research interests, most particularly in the straight saxophone and issues of identity around art music composition in the global south. Clare is actively involved in the new music scene in South Africa. She served for many years on the executive committee of NewMusic South Africa, and is currently a Research Associate at the Africa Open Institute for Music, Research and Innovation.

THREE NOCTURNES FROM AFRICA



Each movement from this work is based on a African folktale.

IMPUNDULU'S FLIGHT

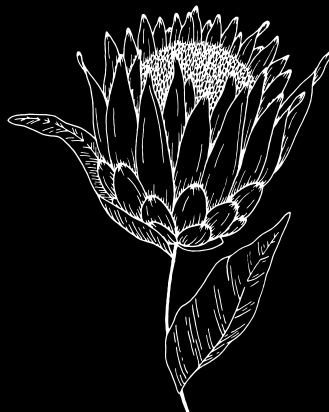
The name impundulu means 'lightning-bird,' so-called because the shapeshifting spirit prefers to appear as a roc, a mountain-sized bird of prey that can devour an elephant in a single gulp. Its massive wingspan blots out the sun, plunging villages into darkness and confusion before it destroys them with lightning summoned from its outstretched talons. It is said to be immortal, as neither bullets, blades, nor poison can harm it—although some say that a spirit flame from the underworld can burn it to death.

MARIMBA'S ARIA

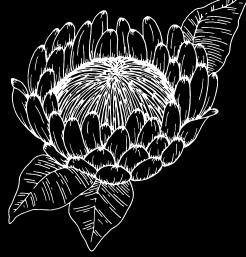
Marimba is a female immortal, and leader. Baba Credo Mutwa, a famous Zulu sangoma's story. At one point, however, Marimba's village is attacked by the Night Howlers. The mortals are frightened and poorly defended. They do not yet know, but the Night Howlers have come to take away their beloved queen, Marimba. Marimba's son, devoted to his mother and doggedly determined that she should be safe, drags her into a cave which he seals with a large boulder before he returns to the fight. Right when the King of the Night Howlers raises Marimba's son in one of his talons, in order to kill him because he would not give up his mother to the wicked wizard that wanted her soul: "It was just then that a miracle happened – a miracle in the form of a song that came floating through the night air like a ghost of pure mercy and deliverance. This song had a magical spell about it. It stunned the fiendish Night Howlers. There was a musical instrument in the singer's hands which in future years became known as the karimba or kalimba. This unearthly music sent a haunting melody through the night and wove a mighty spell around the squatting Night Howlers. It paralysed them – destroyed them.

CEREMONIES AND DANCES

Here Feder is imagining fictional war dances, circle dances, and other lighter dances. This movement also uses Konnakol as an inspiration



ARTHUR FEDER



Arthur Feder holds an MMus in Composition (with a focus on orchestration) cum laude from Stellenbosch University. He is particularly passionate about composition, pedagogy, and the promotion of new music, and as part of the managerial team for the student initiative KOMPOS, he assisted in premiéring more than 80 orchestral and chamber works.

Currently, Arthur lectures in Music Theory, Composition, and Orchestration at Stellenbosch University. As a composer, Arthur's multifaceted output includes work in jazz, film, mixed media and art music idioms, and he regularly receives commissions from leading ensembles and organisations in South Africa and abroad. Arthur's film scores range from feature-length to short films, animations and documentary series. Together with his colleague, Arthur managed an annual collaboration with The Animation School in Cape Town that involves students from the Music Technology and Composition programs that garnered the production of over 20 scores for these animations. Arthur has had performances by the Axelson Nielsen duo, Sounding Cities project in Birmingham, the Stellenbosch International Chamber music festival, the Stockholm saxophone quartet, Intoga Reed quintet, Pianist Megan-Geoffrey Prins, the Stellenbosch University Big Band and Windband, the Odeion string quartet, but to name a few.

Arthur's current focus is exploring his identity within a multicultural-multigenre playground.

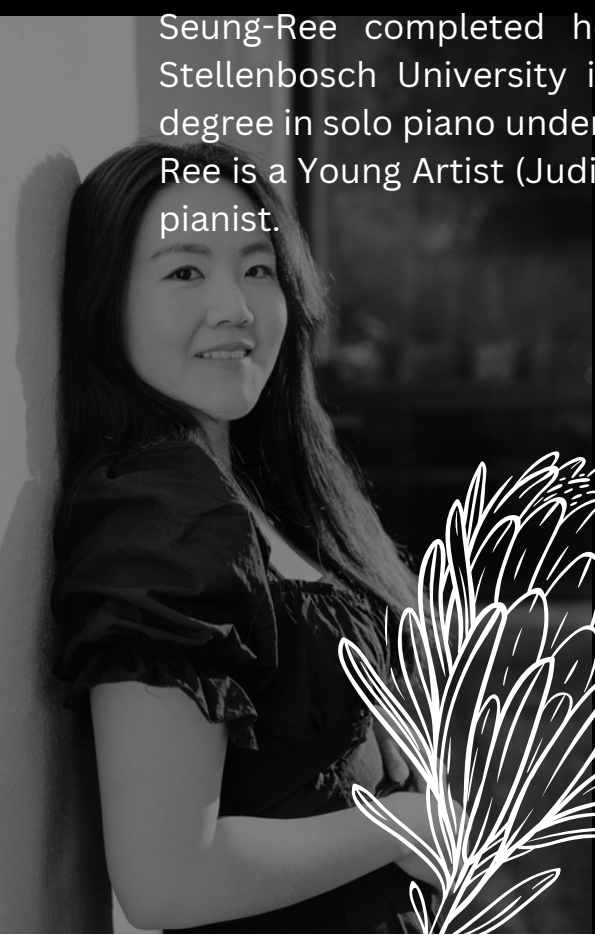


SEUNG-REE LEE

Seung-Ree Lee began her piano tertiary studies at the University of Stellenbosch with Professor Luis Magalhães since 2016. Before her studies, Seung-Ree won first prize at the Music Maestro Competition in the Senior Classical section, both in 2013 and 2015. During her BMus studies she participated in numerous competitions and was the recipient of many awards. In 2016 the University of Stellenbosch awarded her a departmental scholarship, in 2017, she formed part of the percussion ensemble group, Six of US, which became the overall winner of the US Ensemble Competition. In 2018, she received the Betsie Cluver prize, awarded to the third year BMus student with the overall best achievement in piano. In her final year of BMus, she was selected as a finalist in the 2019 International Yamaha Piano Competition, hosted in Dubai. In 2021, she was a finalist in the Mabel Quick Overseas Bursary competition, and in 2023, she was selected as one of the semi-finalist in the International MANSH Piano Competition.

During the course of her life, and especially during her studies, Seung-Ree took part in various music festivals such as the International Summer Academy, hosted by the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna, where she received masterclasses with renowned pianist and pedagogue, Boris Berman. She has also received masterclasses with other renowned pianists such as Antonio Pompa-Baldi, Aviram Reichert, Gottlieb Wallisch, Emanuil Ivanov, and Albert Mamriev.

Seung-Ree completed her BMus and BMus (Honours) cum laude at Stellenbosch University in 2020 and is currently pursuing her master's degree in solo piano under the tutelage of Professor Luis Magalhães. Seung-Ree is a Young Artist (Judith Neilson Young Artist) at Cape Town Opera as a pianist.



THANK YOU

Thank you to the *De Zaaier Stichting Foundation* for making this concert a possibility.

Thank you to the UNISA Music Foundation for funding *Turbulence (Owen Dalton)* and *Uzovuka Nini? (Allan Chen)*

Thank you to Liam Burden for his guidance and wisdom and always willing to go the extra mile.

Thank you for all the composers and their willingness to be apart of this project.

Thank you to Seung-Ree for embarking on this collaborative journey with me.

Thank you to Joshua for all his help and support.

Thank you for coming to this concert - it means so much to me.

