

**ECHOES FROM THE FUTURE**  
A project by Charlotte Spruit and Jérémie Queyras



For our application to the Goodmesh Concours 2021 we created a performance based on the relationship between paint, music, and time. We have worked together before as a duo, and we felt that our collaboration is something quite special. We saw this competition as the perfect opportunity to be able to share our work with more people.

Because of the pandemic, it was very hard to find a way to meet each other in person, as we live in Paris and London respectively. Therefore, we had to do the first round remotely, as there simply was no way for either of us to travel. Charlotte recorded by herself in London, and Jérémie then added his part just by listening to and watching the recordings. Although we were very happy that we had found a way to work at a distance, it was impossible for us to incorporate the two-way communication between the music and the painting.

For the final round we fortunately managed to meet in person in London, where we had only two days to film the entire project. We were able to do this project in a building made available to us by the Art Academy in London. Because we did not know what the building would look like exactly and what parts of the building we would have access to, we were unable to prepare much beforehand. On the first recording day, we walked in with only paint, brushes, a canvas, a violin, three cameras, and two books with music by Kurtág and Telemann, without a clear idea of what we would be able to create.



Left: The Old Newington Library currently operated by the Art Academy London  
Above: Newington Library burning in 2013

We very much improvised the creation of the performance, as we came up with new ideas during the process. The building we recorded in, the old Newington Library which burned partially in 2013, is very old and decaying, which on one hand was a challenge, but the character and atmosphere of it really inspired us. We wanted to use the space as well as possible and include its character in our narrative. The outcome of the project was a big surprise to us but we loved the freedom we had while creating and we think the spontaneity of it added a lot to the final result.



Our goal was to create something very personal and intimate, which is why we decided to do the entire process, including recording and editing, by ourselves. Recording and assembling the material without any expert help was an exciting challenge which contributed to our final work's unique feel.



We incorporated the theme 'Expectations vs Reality' by using time as an important factor in this project. Over the past couple of years our collective experience of time diverged, leaving some wondering if they just lost two years, and others with a new sense of time by breaking up daily routines. Furthermore, the building in which we filmed made us feel like we were in a different world. The whole experience was very surreal to us, a feeling we wanted to pass on to the audience. The audience expects to be told a full story when they start watching the video but will be left only with questions at the end of it. Moreover, the relationship between painting and music raises questions about artistic expression as a time-based experience. We want to challenge common assumptions of music being a linear experience in time and painting being a timeless medium.

We chose to record two movements from the Telemann Fantasias for solo violin and three pieces from Kurtág's 'Signs, Games and Messages'. Telemann wrote the Fantasias in 1732 and the pieces by Kurtág were written between 1994 and 2001. Style wise these works are on opposite sides of the spectrum, which gives the entire performance a wide range of different colours and contrasts. We created an arch in the story by starting and finishing on a white canvas, which is accompanied by the journey of the music which starts and ends with movements from the Telemann Fantasias. For the painting we agreed to use a bold red colour, as we wanted to create a stark contrast between the initial, timeless black and white image and the subsequent violence of the appearing colour. This way we attempt to heighten the viewers awareness of the impact of colours on the mind and our perception of sound.



Considering the obstacles that were to be overcome and the time constraints, this project is an honest and truthful reflection of our artistic process. It shows two people from different fields coming together to create and tell a story, to make people aware of what is yet to be discovered. It is our hope that this work leaves the audience with more questions than answers and that it is the starting point for further investigation into our relationship to time.



