

PORTUGAL

Gonçalo Gato



Vacuum Instability - for octet
(2013) [dur. 7'10"]

Performed by Guildhall School of Music & Drama students and musicians of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, conducted by **Richard Baker**

Recorded by the BBC at BBC Maida Vale Studios on the 15th of March 2013.

Instrumentation: flute, clarinet in B flat (also bass clarinet in B flat), bassoon, trumpet in B flat, tenor trombone, viola, double bass, piano.

Vacuum Instability is a work for an ensemble of eight musicians. The title is derived from a recent news article related to the probable scientific discovery of the Higgs boson: "A concept known as vacuum instability could result, billions of years from now, in a new universe opening up in the present one and replacing it." - BBC News, 19th February 2013. The idea of the inner workings of the Cosmos always fascinated me, and the fact that the universe could 'renew' itself in such a way is just so surprising. I guess these ideas are very similar to ideas about music material's variation and contrast.

Gonçalo Gato was born in 1979, in Lisbon. His works have been performed in the UK, Germany, France, Portugal and Brazil. As a composer, Gonçalo has worked with some of UK's foremost orchestras: the BBC Symphony Orchestra, whose musicians premiered his octet *Vacuum Instability* (2013), and the Britten Sinfonia, developing the piece *Colour Matters* (2016) after having been shortlisted in OPUS 2016 competition. He has also worked with distinguished ensembles such as Ensemble Recherche (Germany), for which he was commissioned to write *A Walk in the Countryside* (2016), Chroma Ensemble (UK), for which he wrote *Dégradé* (2012), and Sond'Ar-te Electric Ensemble (Portugal). Before moving to London in 2011, Gonçalo was awarded first prize on two occasions: in 2011 with the piece *Vectorial-modular*, for orchestra, and in 2008 with the piece *Derivação*, for piano. His short opera *Mudos* (2008) was also distinguished and staged in one of Lisbon's main theatres.

As a composer-researcher, Gonçalo has been most active in the field of computer-assisted composition. He recently finished his doctoral degree at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama under the supervision of Julian Anderson, researching how the use of computerised processes affects compositional decision-making. This research led to the publication of a chapter in the *OM Composer's Book 3* (2016), published by IRCAM (Paris), an institution where he has received training and where he was invited to present ongoing research in the past. He is now exploring computer-assisted orchestration as the orchestra has become an important medium to express his musical ideas.

Notes and biography provided by the composer and current to 2017
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