



Photo: Eric Marintich

*"I could compare my music to white light which contains all colours. Only a prism can divide the colours and make them appear; this prism could be the spirit of the listener."*

## PRISMATIC PERSPECTIVES on MUSIC & NATURE

Inspired by ARVO PÄRT

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Three webinars and a field trip to the  
Arvo Pärt Centre in Estonia.



*"I had to get rid of everything unnecessary...  
in order to save myself."*

## O/Modernt Academy

At the heart of O/Modernt is a core group of very special musicians who come together with artists and thinkers from many disciplines to expand the boundaries of music-making. The O/Modernt Academy is an educational platform where young musicians are mentored by world-class professionals in their respective instruments as well as by the leading thinkers and voices of our time: historians, philosophers, ecologists, theologians, monks and poets to name just a few.

With its aesthetic ideals echoing those of the ancient Greek academies, the O/Modernt Academy aims to nurture the artists of tomorrow to become what the citizens of Ancient Greece called 'musicians' – honest, well-rounded, cultured, intellectually open and creative members of society. The academy's broad range of subjects, teachers and speakers reflects O/Modernt's creative philosophy of music as an art that has its roots in a web of diverse activities. It's an approach that we call **Interconnected Musicking**.

[omodernt.com/academy](https://omodernt.com/academy)



*"It is enough when a single note is beautifully played."*

## Three Aspects of Pärt

### God, Nature and History

Three webinars focus on themes that are intimately linked to the music and philosophy of Arvo Pärt. [Ben Quash](#) discusses the theological underpinnings of Pärt's epiphanic soundworld, while [Elizabeth Wilson](#) gives some fascinating insights into the Soviet-era context of Pärt's formative years. Stepping sideways into the realm of nature, [James Canton](#) reflects on the wisdom and joy of a sympathetic connection with trees.

Friday 22 April 17.30 | Ben Quash

### PURGATION AND ILLUMINATION

*A Theological Appraisal of Pärt's Deep Surfaces*

Arvo Pärt's music has an intensity of concern with venerable traditions of Orthodox iconography, music, and mystical theology, offering an alternative framework for understanding and inhabiting the physical world. Responding to the frequent analogies drawn between his compositions and the painted icon tradition, I will first explore the way that both of them seem to see the divine realm not 'gestured to' in the works made (and thus distinct from what they depict, as imitations are distinct from originals) but as conduits of a dynamic

and personal relationship with the heavenly realm: a sign that heaven and earth are reciprocally related in the here and now. Second, I will look at the tradition of 'apophatic' theology in its affinities with Pärt's music. Pseudo-Dionysius's (5th/6th c.) advocacy of a necessary process of purgation so as to permit a further stage of illumination (with the final consummation of both these stages being a state of union with God) offers resources for interpreting both the pared-backness and the musical 'luminosity' of much of Pärt's work.

Friday 13 May 17.30 | James Canton

### THE PATIENCE OF TREES

In the years that James Canton spent researching his most recent book, *The Oak Papers*, when he sat for long periods in the embrace of an eight-hundred-year-old oak tree, he learnt something of the patience of trees. In this talk he shares some of those insights, musing on the manner in which humans and oaks have lived so close to one another since prehistoric

times, and contemplating the ways in which trees can enhance our existence on this planet – if only we find the time and the patience to sit with them and seek to know their ways. Taking the form of an extended dialogue with Hugo Ticciati, the presentation will unfold as a series of questionings and wonderings about the connections between trees and humans.

Friday 20 May 17.30 | Elizabeth Wilson

### THE AVANT-GARDE ON THE PERIPHERY

*Musical experiment in the republics of the Soviet Union during the 1960s and 1970s*

After the years of cultural isolation under Stalin, Soviet musicians and the arts in general benefited from a phase of exciting innovation during the so-called 'Thaw' period. The rediscovery of the New Viennese School, and gradually increasing contacts with the Western European avant-garde, inspired a new generation of Moscow composers to experiment with a variety of techniques, not least dodecaphony. As the distinction between 'official' and 'non-official' art infiltrated

all branches of culture, some of the most radical composers started making names for themselves in the Soviet republics. They included the Estonian Arvo Pärt, the Ukrainian Valentin Silvestrov, the Armenian Tigran Mansurian and the Georgian Giya Kancheli, who all expressed themselves as original thinkers, while also questioning the influences that they absorbed. This lecture discusses the many paradoxes that defined Soviet music of the post-Stalin era.



Photo: Tõnu Tunnel, Arvo Pärt Centre

## Three Aspects of Pärt

### Musical Field Trip to the Arvo Pärt Centre

To complement the series of webinars taking place in May 2022, O/Modernt will lead a group of students on a field trip to the Arvo Pärt Centre in Estonia, located in the coastal village of Laulasmaa, some 35km to the west of Tallinn. The centre is a tranquil meeting place, where musicians, researchers and music lovers can explore Pärt's music and his complex spiritual and intellectual universe, and also inquire into their own relationship with art, nature and life itself. The programme of events and educational activities will include:

#### Improvisation workshop

with cellist Matthew Barley

#### Chamber music masterclasses

with Matthew Barley, Ivar Berix & Hugo Ticciati

#### In-depth conversations

with composers Tõnu Kõrvits & Dobrinka Tabakova

#### Thinking through writing and walking

with Mark Tatlow

#### Facing fear & creating trust

with Ivar Berix

#### Lecture on the music of Arvo Pärt

by musicologist Kristina Kõrver

#### Expressing creatively through body & voice

with Emma Bonnici

#### Qigong, breath-work & sound practices

with Simon Tandree

#### Meditative practices

with Hugo Ticciati

#### Closing concert

with participating students and mentors, including improvisations and works by Arvo Pärt, Tõnu Kõrvits & Dobrinka Tabakova.



## Guest Speakers and Artists

### MATTHEW BARLEY



With cello playing at the heart of his everything that he does, Matthew Barley has forged a unique international career that is rich in improvisation, new music, cutting-edge computer technology, collaborations with jazz and Indian musicians, education, and arranging. He has played with some of the finest orchestras of our time (including the Frankfurt Radio Symphony, the BBC Philharmonic and the Scottish and Czech Philharmonics) in some of the greatest concert halls, where he has premiered the works of major composers (notably, MacMillan, Dusapin and Larcher), and appeared on TV and radio worldwide. He counts himself blessed to be able to dream up unusual projects and (usually) make them happen, and also to pursue his own personal dreams of spending time with his family and in nature. He lives in London with his wife, the violinist Viktoria Mullova.

### IVAR BERIX



Ivar is a Dutch clarinet player who has enjoyed an extraordinary international chamber music career. With the Calefax Reed Quintet, he performed for thirty-three years in leading concert halls and at some of the most beautiful festivals in the world. As a musician, Ivar has become a very experienced listener. That is the skill he uses and continues to develop as he follows his current path, coaching teams and ensembles. Working especially with young professional musicians, Ivar guides the process of artistic development. He is almost uniquely qualified to shed light on the ways individual performers can negotiate group dynamics in order to form an ensemble that is capable of distinguishing itself in a way that is both natural and convincing. Ivar teaches at the Utrecht Conservatory and tutors at the Amsterdam String Quartet Biënnale.

### EMMA BONNICI



As an actor, singer and teacher, Emma Bonnici has worked with award-winning, internationally renowned performance and dance companies, as well as with acting schools, in both her native England and internationally. Key collaborations include Song of the Goat Theatre, Clod Ensemble, Fabien Prioville Dance Company, Two Women Machine Show, Mechanimal, Manchester Metropolitan University and Cabuia Teatro. Emma, who teaches performance, voice and movement, traces the origins of her work back to the Polish physical theatre inspired by Jerzy Grotowski, with particular emphases on performance integrity, polyphonic music and the immemorial narrative power of musical stories that are rooted in people, the landscape and ancient traditions.

### JAMES CANTON



James Canton is a writer and lecturer who has written widely in creative non-fiction forms and taught on the MA in Wild Writing at the University of Essex since its inception in 2009 – exploring the fascinating ties between the literature and landscape of East Anglia. His first book, *From Cairo to Baghdad* (2011), explored the writings of British Travellers to Arabia from 1882 to 2003. *Out of Essex: Re-Imagining a Literary Landscape* (2013) was inspired by rural wanderings in the county. *Ancient Wonderings: Journeys into Prehistoric Britain*, which was published by William Collins in 2017, tells some remarkable tales of life in ancient Britain. His latest book, *The Oak Papers*, was published by Canongate in July 2020, and a new book, *Grounded: A Journey into Place*, is due for publication in March 2023.

## KRISTINA KÕRVER



Kristina Kõrver joined the Arvo Pärt Centre in 2012. She was attracted by the opportunity to study Arvo Pärt's work in a framework that combines music history with a range of other disciplines. Kristina researches archival materials related to Pärt's compositions, documenting their role in the creative process and using the composer's own accounts to uncover the rich layers that make up each work. She leads the centre's educational programmes, lecturing on Pärt and liaising with visiting students. She also helped to curate the centre's first permanent exhibition, *If you seek from almost nothing..* (2020), and she has edited and written works on Pärt. Having studied at the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre, and Tallinn University, Kristina previously taught music history and worked for Muusika magazine.

## TÕNU KÕRVITS



Photo: Kaupo Kikkas

Tõnu Kõrvits, who was born in Tallinn in 1969, is a leading figure in Estonian contemporary music whose work is performed regularly in Estonia and around the world. A graduate of the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre, he later studied in the Netherlands and Poland, and since 2001 he has been a professor of composition and instrumentation at the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre. His *Moorland Elegies* was named Best Classical Album at the Estonian Music Awards (2017), and in 2015 he was made an honorary citizen of Clarksdale, Mississippi in recognition of his own music and his work in aid of preserving the Blues.

## BEN QUASH



Ben Quash joined King's College London in 2007 as its first Professor of Christianity and the Arts. Prior to that, he was a Fellow of Fitzwilliam College and then of Peterhouse, Cambridge, and a lecturer in the Faculty of Divinity in the University of Cambridge. He is currently directing a ten-year project to create an online Visual Commentary on Scripture ([thevcs.org](http://thevcs.org)). He runs an MA in Christianity and the Arts in association with the National Gallery, London, and broadcasts frequently on BBC radio. He is Canon Theologian of both Coventry and Bradford Cathedrals. His publications include *Abiding: The Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 2013* (2012) and *Found Theology: History, Imagination and the Holy Spirit* (2014).

## DOBRINKA TABAKOVA



Photo: Candide Rietdijk

Described by the Washington Times as 'exciting, deeply moving', the music of the Bulgarian composer Dobrinka Tabakova has been featured at festivals and concert halls around the world. The first album of her work, *String Paths*, was nominated as the Best Classical Compendium at the 2014 Grammys, and a CD of her choral music (performed by Truro Cathedral Choir and the BBC Chamber Orchestra) was Gramophone Magazine's Critic's Choice in 2019. She was honoured for her anthem for Queen Elizabeth II's Golden Jubilee, and won first prize at the Sorel Choral Composition in New York. In 2021 she completed her orchestral *Earth Suite* for the BBC Chamber Orchestra, and her violin concerto *The Patience of Trees* was premiered at Manchester International Festival with Hugo Ticciati and Manchester Camerata. Dobrinka has lived in London since 1991.

## SIMON TANDREE



After years of exploring different healing modalities and body works, Simon teaches Qigong as a way of resetting the body, along with Theta and vortex energy healing as paths to emotional and psychological well-being. He also trains craniosacral therapists at the London College of Craniosacral Therapy. Simon is fascinated with inner process and how they play out in our lives. His background in classical music has honed his innate knowledge of the mental, emotional and physical stresses and strains associated with demanding lifestyles. Over the years, Simon's work has taken him around the world and given him insights into different peoples and cultures – experiences that have fuelled his desire to help people who are in search of healing and a feeling of security in their own bodies. He trusts deeply in the innate capacity of all of us to heal ourselves and is dedicated to creating the safety and trust that are needed in order for this to arise effortlessly in each and every one of us.

## MARK TATLOW



English-born conductor Mark Tatlow is currently writing a doctoral thesis at the University of Gothenburg on the decolonising of eighteenth-century vocal music. Previously Artistic Director at Drottningholms Slottsteater and Professor of Musical Studies at the University College of Opera, Stockholm, Mark is a co-founder of Performing Premodernity, a research project based at Stockholm University. Recent performances include compiling and conducting *Georgiana*, a new award-winning eighteenth-century opera pasticcio (Buxton, UK), conducting and staging Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* for the Stift Festival (NL), performing Rousseau's *Pygmalion* and *Le Devin du Village* at Confidencen (SE), and conducting at the Trigonale Festival (AT). In June he will lead the first modern revival of Philip Johnsen's *Æglé* (1774) at the Stockholm Early Music Festival. Mark was awarded the honorary medal of the Friends of Drottningholms Slottsteater in 1996, the Wallenstam Prize in 2008, and this year received the prestigious Gustavian Scholarship from the Swedish Academy.

## HUGO TICCIATI

Photo: Kaupo Kikkas



As violinist, leader and conductor, Hugo Ticciati imbibes all possible forms of creativity, whether it be performing world premieres in prestigious venues, improvising with monks in India, or devising innovative programmes for O/Modernt. Alongside his passion to discover and learn from the music of previous epochs and non-western traditions, Hugo embraces the world of contemporary music. To date, over forty works have been written for and dedicated to him by a host of eminent composers, including Erkki-Sven Tüür, Pēteris Vasks, Victoria Borisova-Ollas, Albert Schnelzer and Dobrinka Tabakova. Hugo frequently gives masterclasses and lectures on music-related subjects both at Scandinavia's leading specialist music school Lilla Akademien, where he holds the post of Deputy Artistic Director, and other educational institutions around the world.

## ELIZABETH WILSON



At the age of seventeen Elizabeth Wilson travelled to Moscow, where she studied the cello with Mstislav Rostropovich at the Moscow Conservatoire. Seven years later she returned to her native London to pursue a career as a soloist, chamber musician and teacher. With a particular focus on contemporary music, she has worked with numerous prominent composers, including Arvo Pärt, and has had works dedicated to her by Edison Denisov, Alexander Raskatov and Vladimir Tarnopolsky to name just three. A founder member of the Xenia Ensemble, she has lived near Turin for twenty years. As a musicologist, Elizabeth has written about Shostakovich, Rostropovich and Jacqueline du Pré, and she has given talks, masterclasses and seminars around the world.

*"The silence must be longer. This music is about the silence.  
The sounds are there to surround the silence."*

## How to Apply

### WEBINARS

To apply for one or more webinars, please write to Elisa Tabò at [academy@omodernt.com](mailto:academy@omodernt.com) at least one week before the webinar you would like to attend.

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### FIELD TRIP TO THE ARVO PÄRT CENTRE

Dates: [28 June to 2 July 2022](#)

Full costs: €600 to include\*:

- Five nights of accommodation in shared rooms at [La Spa Hotel](#)
- Home-cooked seasonal lunches and dinners at the Arvo Pärt Centre
- Transfers in Estonia
- Participation in all course activities

\*International travel is not included

To apply for a place on the field trip to Estonia, please write to Elisa Tabò at [academy@omodernt.com](mailto:academy@omodernt.com). Closing date for applications is 29 April 2022.

All applicants should provide details of how they would like to take part in the programme, for example as an instrumentalist, composer or researcher.

**Scholarships (part and full) will be offered to selected participants, subject to a successful application.**

To apply for a scholarship either write a short essay of about 500 words reflecting on the music of Arvo Pärt or send a live video performance of a work by Arvo Pärt. Please also provide relevant information about your financial circumstances.