

Mutations in the Composable

Compositional Practice as a Space of Experimentation,
Tension, and Uncertainty

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Abstract:

At the core of this artistic research project is the idea that composing music can entail more than structuring sonic material; it may involve constructing the very space in which musical thoughts take shape. This space, the *composable*, is understood not as a fixed, pre-existing framework but as a space in flux—shaped by instruments, devices, spatial configurations, and performative gestures—where musical form materialises through recursive interactions between micro- and macro-levels and between sonic textures and their larger temporal organisation. Within this composable space, musical composition is approached and explored as a dynamic field of interaction where musical knowledge emerges through engagement with sound, technology, and performance.

Through this framework, a central question has emerged: how does musical composition function as an epistemic act—not merely as the organisation of sound but as a process of discovery? In response, this work draws upon a constellation of theoretical frameworks, including Francisco Varela's enactive cognition, Hans-Jörg Rheinberger's notion of experimental systems, and Horacio Vaggione's multi-scale approach to compositional time. These perspectives support a vision of music-making as the construction of contexts in which new aesthetic, sonic, and conceptual possibilities can emerge through material negotiation and artistic action.

The creative part of the thesis consists of a series of new, experimental musical works for instruments, acoustic objects coupled with transducers, microphones, and electronic systems. Each work departs from particular artistic approaches and methods, including hybrid instruments within multidimensional diapositives, instrumental feedback, symbolic granulation, and sonic translation. These methods are approached as operational logics that mutate across projects, depending on the material behaviours, performance conditions, and technologies engaged. The composable space is a space of tension—between control and contingency, between symbolic systems and acoustic phenomena, and between abstraction and embodiment. The works discussed serve as case studies through which the composable is enacted and articulated, each one constructing its own field of operations, relationships, and emergent structures.

Ultimately, this research suggests that to compose is to think with sound, to make sense through provisional articulations. Composition is shown to be both a speculative and practical endeavour, one that produces knowledge through friction, failure, intuition, and transformation. In this way, the thesis contributes to the discussion on contemporary and experimental music within the field of artistic research, offering a model of composition as a mode of knowledge-making and aesthetic inquiry.

Key words: Art Music, Musical Composition, Composable Spaces, Audio Feedback, Multidimensionality, Symbolic Granulation, Sonic Translation, Hybrid Instruments, Experimental Systems, Multi-Scale, Composed Emergences

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