

Nadar Ensemble & Stefan Prins  
*Der Wanderer 2.0* (2023–...)

*Background*

In 2023 we premiered with the Nadar Ensemble an evening-length event for a "wandering audience", centered around the music of Stefan Prins, called *Der Wanderer 2.0*. In this project, the audience is equipped with wireless headphones, and follows a parcours inside and outside the organising concert venues. What does "inside" and "outside" mean in days over increasing virtualization? Through this walk and the performed audio-visual music, many different connection points and transformations between the inside and the outside are created. The architecture of the concert venue as well as its surroundings is confronted with a virtual layer that is placed on top of it.

*Detailed project description*

The walk is articulated through 4 "stations" where 4 different compositions of mine are performed. The first performed work, *FITTINGinSIDE* (2008, 2023) for trombone, walking audience with headphones and live-electronics, starts as a walk outside the concert venue, in which the audience hears a carefully composed soundtrack on the headphones, which includes sounds recorded at the very locations the audiences is walking past. As the audience enters the performance space after the walk (they keep on the headphones), the soundtrack slowly transforms from trombone sounds to urban sounds, while the live-trombone player is performing the contrapunctus to the soundtrack. By the end of this composition, an inversion has taken place: what was originally heard closeby (the trombone sounds on the headphone) and far away (the urban sounds during the walk) is now inverted: closeby, on the headphones you hear urban sounds and further away you hear the trombone player. (On [THIS](#) link you can see a version of the "corona lockdown" version of *FITTINGinSIDE* we did in 2020)



Image: audience walking towards first location (here in Antwerp @ DE SINGEL) while listening to the first part of “FITTINGinSIDE” on the headphones



Image: audience at the first location (here in Antwerp @ DE SINGEL) while listening to the second part of “FITTINGinSIDE” on the headphones and live-performance by Thomas Moor (Nadar Ensemble)

From here the audience is guided to the next performance space, where they are seated very closely to an open grand piano, surrounded by loudspeakers. Here they will take off the headphones for the first time and experience a very intimate version of *Piano Hero #3* (2016), for piano and live-electronics, in which, apart from computer controlled feedback, field recordings are used to create ever changing sonic landscapes, from the vastness of an open field to the claustrophobic narrowness of the Berlin underground and intra-aural beatings. ([HERE](#) is a recording of *Piano Hero #3* made in a more traditional frontal setup [password to view the video: *phdhero*])



Image: audience at the second location (here in Antwerp @ DE SINGEL) while listening to *Piano Hero #3* performed by Elisa Medinilla (Nadar Ensemble)

From there the audience is guided to yet another performance location, where *Generation Kill – Offspring #2* (2023) for game controller performer & live-video is being performed. During this walk the audience will listen to another soundtrack on the headphones, creating an acoustic overlay onto the physical journey they are making. In *Generation Kill – Offspring #2*, the performer (the clarinet player Dries Tack) plays with himself on the screen. On the video recordings of himself –



which he is live manipulating with the game controller – we see him in 5 different urban locations, playing different clarinets. While making those video recordings, we gradually moved away from the performer and let the clarinet sounds fade out more and more and let the surrounding urban sounds and events become more and more the protagonist. ([HERE](#) is a recording of a performance of this piece)



Image: Dries Tack performing *Generation Kill – Offspring #2* (here in Antwerp @ DE SINGEL)

The final transition, which guides us through many hidden locations in the building, is towards a performance space in which 5 musicians of the ensemble perform the composition *Mesh* (2023) for bass clarinet, trombone/euphonium, percussion, electric guitar, cello, live-electronics & audience with headphones. In this 30 minutes long "grande finale", the audience is invited to put back on the headphones. An interaction between the performing musicians on stage, the soundtrack which is played back on the speakers on stage and the soundtrack played back on the headphones, creates ever changing shifts between foreground and background, between close and far, between field recordings and instrumental sounds. The audience is given the freedom to "play" with the headphones themselves, put them on or off ad libitum, or listen to one ear or two ears etc, creating their own pathway through the multidimensional sonic landscape. [HERE](#) is a recording of a performance of *Mesh*. (On this recording it's of course not possible to reproduce the changes in depth that one experiences through the interaction between headphones, and the sounds heard on stage).



Image: Nadar Ensemble performing *Mesh* in Antwerp (@ DE SINGEL)

For every new a performance of *Der Wanderer 2.0*, we could consider adapting the videos used in *Generation Kill – Offspring #2* and making new videos in Venice itself, which would then be used in the performance of the composition. Also for *FITTINGinSIDE* we could re-record some of the field recordings in situ, to create an even more disorienting confrontation between reality (what you see during the walk) and virtuality (what you hear on the headphones). It could also be interesting to consider 4 different concert locations (ideally within walking distance from each other), to give the urban architecture an even more prominent role, and tailor-make the performance for the hosting venue and city.

Yours sincerely,  
Pieter Matthyssens & Stefan Prins  
Nadar Ensemble