

Matteo Fargion was born in Milan in 1961. In his teens he moved to South Africa where he wrote dubious prog rock concept albums, played bass guitar in a band and later, at university, studied composition with Kevin Volans. He moved to London in 1985 where he studied for a while with Howard Skempton, while writing music for the Balanescu Quartet, Robyn Schulkowsky, Noriko Kawai, London New Music and many other leading performers. In 1989, he won the Sonorities Composition Prize in Belfast. Around this time he also played bass guitar in Chris Newman's experimental rock band, Sexual Pleasure.

Matteo's interest in contemporary dance began in the late 1980s when he saw the Merce Cunningham dance company at Sadlers Wells in London. This moving experience inspired him to apply for the Gulbenkian International Course for Choreographers and Composers in 1989, where he first wrote music for dance and found he enjoyed collaborating with other artists. In the same year he met the choreographer Jonathan Burrows, with whom he has collaborated closely ever since.

At first he wrote music for Burrows' dance pieces, starting with *Dull Morning Cloudy Mild* (1989) and including a collaboration with Kevin Volans on Burrows' *The Stop Quartet* in 1996. In 2002, with the making of *Both Sitting Duet*, they redefined their collaboration on more equal terms and brought Matteo onto the stage as a performer.

Since then Burrows&Fargion have made a further 10 duets all conceived, choreographed, composed and performed together. *Both Sitting Duet* won a 2004 New York Dance and Performance 'Bessie' Award, and *Cheap Lecture* was chosen for the prestigious 2009 Het Theaterfestival in Belgium. The two men are still touring most of the pieces, having to date given over 500 performances over 35 countries.

More recently, Burrows&Fargion have brought other artists into their collaborations: *52 Portraits* (2016), a year-long online project, consists of short gestural dances by invited performers, set to biographical songs and filmed by Hugh Glendinning. The project has had almost 90,00 views to date. *Any Table Any Room* (2017) is a performance with objects which invites four artists to join Burrows&Fargion on stage in each new place the piece is presented. *Let us stop this mad rush towards*

the end (2019) for orchestra, dancer (Claire Godsmark) and singing pianist (Francesca Fargion) was a commission for the London Contemporary Music Festival. Their ongoing series, *Music for Lectures*, invites artists to write a talk which is then accompanied live by their rock band with Francesca Fargion on synth, Matteo on bass and Jonathan on drums. The series has so far featured Katie Coe (2018), Mette Edvardsen (2018) and Wendy Houston (2020, created during the Covid-19 lockdown and presented as a podcast as part of GIFT).

Throughout his career Matteo has collaborated with other artists alongside the Burrows&Fargion partnership. In 1996 he was awarded an artist residency at the prestigious Schloss Solitude in Stuttgart, where he lived for 18 months. In this productive period he wrote a chamber opera, *Le Bellezze d'Hortensia*, and a number of collaborations with the composer and violinist Marc Sabat, among many other projects. At Schloss Solitude Matteo also met the theatre director Elmar Goerden, for whom he wrote music for several productions at the Staatstheater Stuttgart, the Residenz Theater Munich, the Bochum Staatsspielhaus and the Theater am Josefstadt, Vienna. He also worked with Thomas Ostermeier on Jon Fosse's play *The Girl on the Sofa*, performed at the Edinburgh Festival in 2002.

Also round the mid-90s, Fargion began a close working relationship with the British choreographer Siobhan Davies. He wrote music for, and performed in, several of her pieces including the prizewinning *The Art of Touch* (1995). Matteo has also collaborated closely with choreographer Karl Jay Lewin since 1997. *Extremely Bad Dancing to Extremely French Music* (2013) and *Extremely Pedestrian Chorales* (2018) are two of their more recent pieces. In 2016 Matteo was commissioned by the newly formed Dance On company (Berlin) to create/direct their debut piece, *7 Dialogues*. Over the past couple of years he has also worked with Andrea Spreafico (Vive la Phrance in 2017 and *We have to dress gorgeously*, commissioned by the Borealis Festival 2019), Claire Croize on *Flowers (we are)* (2019) and Norwegian artist Mette Edvardsen on *oslo* (2016) and *Penelope Sleeps* (2019), and opera also featuring the soprano Angela Hicks.

Matteo is also an active teacher and since 2002 he has been a regular visiting lecturer at PARTS, Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker's dance school in Brussels. He has developed an approach to teaching composition to

choreographers set within a framework of music practice but built also on his experience as a performer. He leads several workshops each year and has made four pieces for students.

He lives in London.

Apartment House

The acclaimed group, created by cellist Anton Lukoszeviev in 1995, has been captivating audiences with performances of avant-garde and experimental music all over the World, from Moscow to Vancouver and from Barcelona to Vilnius, for over 25 years. Performances have included tours of Russia, USA, Canada and a nine-concert series in Melbourne, Australia. In 2012 they received a Royal Philharmonic Society Award for outstanding contribution to chamber music.

The ensemble has been a firm fixture on the British concert scene, with regular recidencies at Café Oto and a position as Associate Ensemble at the Wigmore Hall. Apartment House is the most frequently featured

UK ensemble in the history of the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival and its 2011 concert of music by John Cage sold out the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Southbank Centre. The ensemble has made a substantial number of live and studio recordings for BBC Radio 3 as well as live recordings for many European stations including Danish Radio DR, Swedish Radio 2, WDR Cologne, ORTF Austria, Radio France and Deutschlandfunk, Berlin.

Since its creation it has championed music by emerging or undeservedly little-known composers and has commissioned over 100 new works. Highlights along the way include Jennifer Walshe's radical 'Barbie' opera *XXX_LIVE_NUDE_GIRLS!!!*, with performances in six countries, and Saskia Moore's *Dead Symphony*, a fusion of social documentary, art, biological science and music on near death experiences. Notable portrait events have featured composers Christian Wolff, John Cage, Morton Feldman, Luc Ferrari, Christopher Fox, Clarence Barlow, Laurence Crane, Helmut Oehring, David Behrman, Linda Catlin Smith and Richard Ayres.

Unusually for a new music ensemble, Apartment House is equally at home at classical music venues (Wigmore Hall, Southbank Centre), crossover venues (Cafe Oto),

art galleries (Serpentine Galleries, Turner Contemporary, Whitechapel Gallery) and international festivals (HCMF, MaerzMusik, Wien Modern, Ultima, Witten New Music Days), demonstrating its appeal to a wide range of audiences.

Over the years Apartment House has gradually increased its recording output, focusing on key releases by experimental composers such as George Mačiuinas and Laurence Crane, which have received widespread acclaim ('compellingly beautiful' *The Guardian*). The group has long term relationship with the UK label Another Timbre, releasing albums by Jim O'Rourke, Joseph Kudirka, James Saunders, Chiyoko Slavnic, Linda Catlin Smith, John Cage, Olivier Messiaen, Cassandra Miller, Adrian Demoč, Luiz Henrique Yudo and Martin Arnold.

www.musicwedliketohear.com

St Mary at Hill
London EC3R 8EE