

CV

PORTFOLIO: <https://half-half.es/>

Education

Ph.D. in Music Composition,

New York University

2017-2024

- Dissertation: IN power / OUT of control – Listening to the margins
- Advisor: Prof. Jaime Oliver

Masters, Interactive Telecommunications Program (ITP),

New York University

2010-2012

Telecommunications Engineering

Universidad Pública de Navarra (UPNA)

1997-2004

Fellowships, Awards

DAAD Fellowship in Sound & Music (2022-2023), Berlin

Fulbright Grant, MPS at ITP/NYU

FABRICA scholarship, Film Department, Venice

Dean's Dissertation Fellowship, NYU

Qubit's 2020 Innovator Lab award, NYC

McCracken Fellowship, PhD Student in Music Composition, NYU

NYFA Fellowship in Digital/Electronic Arts (2017), New York Foundation for the Arts

Sound Art Residency, Queens Museum, NYC

Margaret Guthman Musical Instrument Competition, People's Choice Award & Jury Prize, 2013, Atlanta

Harvestworks Scholarship (2017), NYC

Fabrica: Scholarship in the Video Department, Venice

Sound Art Residency at Queens Museum, NYC

Spanish embassy grant: Support for performances in Budapest, Prague and Washington

Selected Performances

Vibrant Strata, **THE SHED** // Sibyl Kempson: 12 Shouts to the Ten Forgotten Heavens: Summer Solstice, **Whitney Museum of American Art** // Através, **MaerzMusik**, Berlin Fauna, **Contemporary Art Museum, St Louis** // CAR[n]E, **Heroines of Sound Festival** // Fauna, **CTM Festival** // **The Arts Club of Chicago** // **MaerzMusik**, Berlin // **Issue Project Room**, NYC // **The High Line**, public participatory performances in 2015 and 2016, NYC // **Fridman Gallery**, NYC // Festival Propaganda, Barranquilla, Colombia // **SONAR Music festival**, Barcelona // **NIME conferences** // **NYCEMF Festival**, NYC // **Contemporary Art Museum, Santiago de Chile** // BLINK in Make Music NY, Dublin, Houston and Santiago de Chile // **Festival Tsonami**, Valparaíso, Chile // **EYEBEAM** // **Harvestworks**, NYC // **Hangar**, Barcelona – Sound Art Residency and performance // **Queens Museum of Art**, NYC – Sound Art Residency and performance // **Contemporary Art Center, Dundee**, Scotland - Performance and installations for “*Don’t Art, Fashion, Music*”, with Chicks on Speed // **Paris Fashion Week**, France – Performance with Chicks On Speed and Pelican Avenue // **MAPPING FESTIVAL**, Geneve // **SONIC CIRCUITS**, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington

Teaching Experience

Co-teacher – New Interfaces for Musical Expression (NIME), ITP, NYU

Teaching Assistant – Cuban Music, Handmade Electronics, Listening Globally, Department

Music, NYU

Instructor – Max/MSP for Dancers, Dance Department, NYU

Instructor – Soft Circuits & Wearable Sound Controllers, Harvestworks, NYC

Workshop Instructor – Contemporary Art Museum, Santiago de Chile // Pioneer Works, NYC // Hangar, Barcelona

Professional Experience

Visiting Artist – Sound Department, The School of The Art Institute of Chicago (2020)

Sound Designer – Gallagher & Associates (2018)

Sound Designer – TocaTV, Toca Boca (2018)

Composer – Anchor and Hope, Feature Film, Premiered at SXSW (2017)

Interactive Designer & Video Editor – Perch Interactive (2012-2016)

Medialab Coordinator - HANGAR (2007-2010)

Fauna

Video LINK (click to watch)

FAUNA is a live improvisation with a set of custom-made instruments/artifacts used to process field recordings, incorporating body movements and the live exploration of intricate material textures.

Through these devices, I attempt to establish a more horizontal relationship with audio technologies, distancing myself from parameters of precision, power, and control. I instead explore collaborative spaces where these instruments render audible unheard energetic forces, and offer a composition methodology in which my body and the live exploration of alternative materials are central elements.



Através

Video LINK (click to watch)

Composed at a time when individual and communal acts reverberate with deafening force across great distances, Através follows sound as it traverses bodies and matter, mapping the web of vibrating interconnections that hold and sustain us all. The work is crafted as a sequence of acts centered on a series of site-specific assemblages, which I created to extend the expressive capabilities of their performers beyond human limits. I hope that by amplifying the often invisible currents that flow from our actions, these systems can help us reflect on the reach and impact of our decisions, and on our vital need to listen.

Opening the piece, artist and performer Miriam Parker communicates with the space of St. Elisabeth-Kirche through live processed feedback, via the wearable instrument we developed together as a proxy for exploring our influence on, and responsibilities toward, the ecosystems we inhabit. Biliانا Voutchkova and Clara Levy, on violins, perform an intimacy which was negated during the pandemic, and upon which we depend for connection when words and logic break down. Weston Olencki and Matthias Müller, playing the trombone, sound directly through each other's bodies, the breath of one vibrating the flesh and bones of the other as they negotiate their configurations in space. In each exchange, the performers' interactions and the sounds they generate serve both as expressions of interconnection and as an invitation to consider how the design of our technologies, on which we increasingly rely, shapes relationships among all the various entities in conversation.



The final section of “Através” features the voices of Anna Clementi, Alessandra Eramo, Lorena Izquierdo and Ute Wassermann. Conceived as a diptych, the first half of the section confronts the disappearance of the human body in the design of standardised, button-heavy audio technologies. Four voices unite to perform as a polyphonic synthesizer, physical bodies merging into a unitary entity with the power to influence elements beyond its tactile reach. The second half of the diptych features the problematic reappearance of female bodies in the audio ecosystem of ASMR (Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response) – the sensory phenomenon of a tingling sensation in response to specific audio and visual stimuli. With its overwhelming presence of attractive young women performing acts of care (beauty treatments, auscultation sessions, sleeping aids), online ASMR channels signal how capitalist society – while promoting individualism and eliminating investment in social welfare – offloads the weight of care onto women's shoulders.

CREDITS

Merche Blasco – concept, composition, live electronics, custom-instruments

Miriam Parker - movement, wearable instrument

Clara Levy, Biliana Voutchkova – violin

Matthias Müller, Weston Olencki – trombone

Anna Clementi, Alessandra Eramo, Lorena Izquierdo, Ute Wassermann – voice

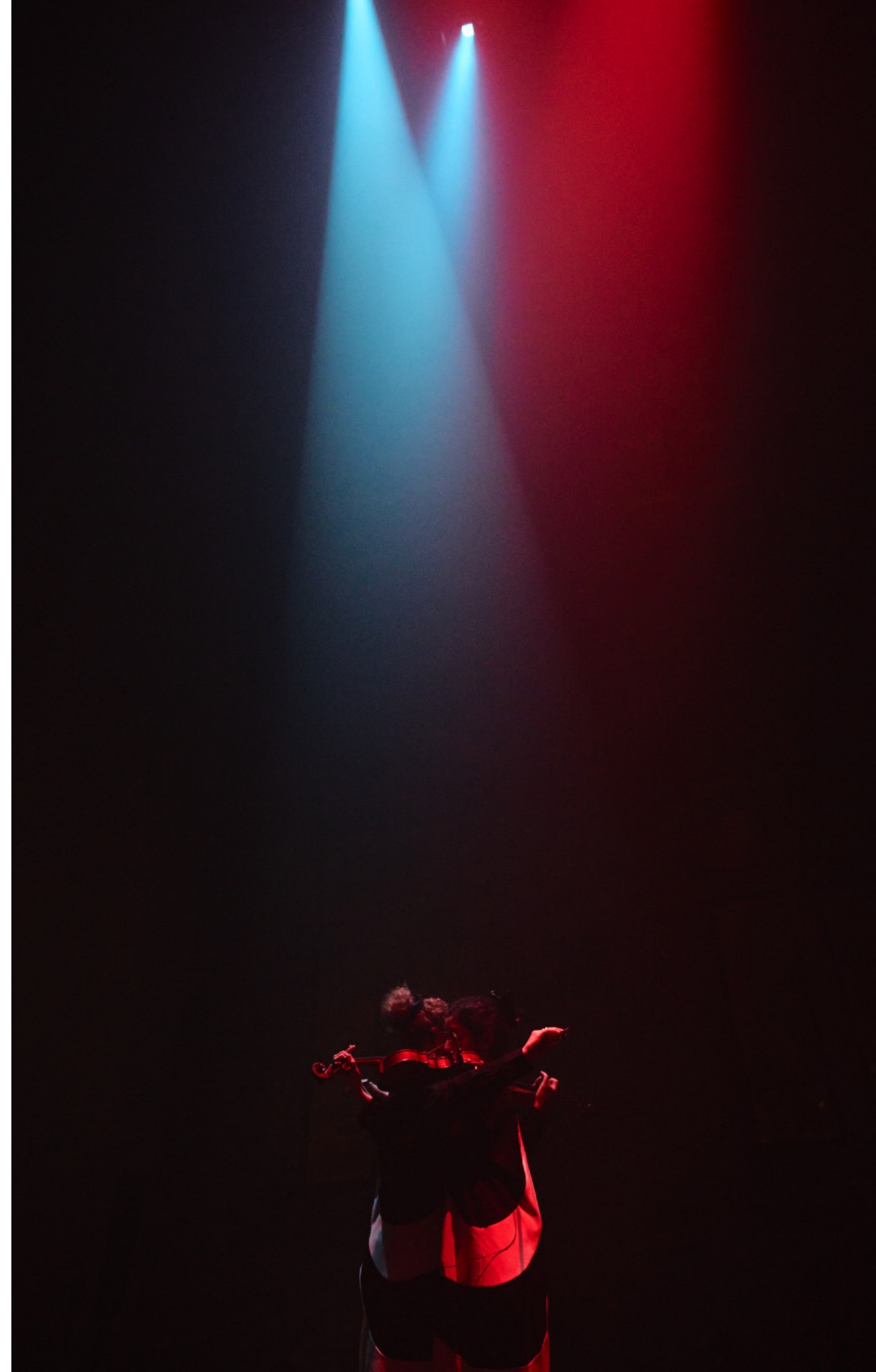
Don Aretino & Muyao Zhang, threeASFOUR – costume design

Quirin Obermaier – live sound engineer

Domenik Engemann – light design

Através was premiered in **MaerzMusik** 2024 and commissioned by and developed with the support of the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Programme and MaerzMusik.

An early part of the project premiered at Heroines of Sound Festival in Berlin in July 2023.





VIBRANT STRATA

Merche Blasco

with Shelley Hirsch,
Dafna Naphtali, Anaïs
Maviel, Dennis
Sullivan, Jean Carla
Rodea, Erin Rogers,
Miriam Parker,
Anette

THE SHED, NYC



Vibrant Strata is an experimental music performance exploring the nature of our world as a constant flux of vibrant energy. Merche Blasco amplifies the vibrations of animate and inanimate life to reveal the swirl of forces that bind us inextricably to each other and to our environment.

Act 1 opens our senses to the electromagnetic waves coursing through The Shed itself. The audience experiences an eight-channel electronic backdrop composed with the electromagnetic sounds that Blasco recorded throughout the building. Against that sonic backdrop, performers Anaïs Maviel and Jean Carla Rodea sing and sonify the live electromagnetic energy in the space with two antenna-rackets. The quartet is completed by Popebama (Dennis Sullivan and Erin Rogers) performing on electronic toothbrushes and electric guitars.

Act 2 presents musical collaborators Shelley Hirsch and Dafna Naphtali on voice, Dennis Sullivan and Anaïs Maviel on percussion, and a 3-D printer named Anette. The human performers listen and react to Anette's electromagnetic voice, amplified through the custom-built antenna/thimbles that Blasco wears on her fingers. The resulting human-machine dialogue constitutes a call for an ecology of nonhierarchical relationships amongst people and other organic and inorganic materialities.

Vibrant Strata culminates with Act 3, a collaboration with interdisciplinary artist Miriam Parker, wearing a piece by fashion designers threeASFOUR. Parker traverses The Shed's McCourt space with two custom wearable instruments: the first connects her to the building through processed acoustic feedback, and the second, designed as a ring, generates a sonic landscape as she moves and interacts with different materials. The audible ripples her actions incite in the space invite reflection on ourselves as connected points on a universal vibrant continuum, each of us wielding immense power to influence all that surrounds us, all of us sharing the urgent responsibility to listen.





CREDITS

Act 1

Popebama (Erin Rogers & Dennis Sullivan) ... Electric guitar + electric toothbrushes

Anaïs Maviel ... Antenna, piezoelectric collar, voice

Jean Carla Rodea ... Antenna, piezoelectric collar, voice

Act 2

Shelley Hirsch ... Voice

Dafna Naphtali ... Voice, electronics

Anaïs Maviel ... Percussion

Dennis Sullivan ... Percussion

Merche Blasco ... Anette

Act 3

Miriam Parker ... Movement, Wearable Instruments, and Co-creator of Act 3

threeASFOUR... Costume design for Act3

Yuri Tachi (@yuritachi)... Makeup

Vibran Strata was commissioned by the program OPEN CALL at THE SHED, NYC





Plankturutaña

Ute Wassermann, Marina Cyrino y Merche Blasco



Video LINK (click to watch)

Composer-Performers **Merche Blasco**, **Marina Cyrino** and **Ute Wassermann** create an ever-evolving immersive sonic landscape that blends human, animal, and technological voices.

Plankturutaña is a new performance by the trio of composer-performers Ute Wassermann, Marina Cyrino, and Merche Blasco. The piece explores sonic interactions between invented and expanded instruments, DIY electronics, field recordings, and voice, creating a speculative environment that interweaves human and non-human sounds. Merche Blasco uses custom thimble microphones to capture electromagnetic activity from household appliances, combined with hydrophones and contact mics that amplify the resonant properties of different organic materials. Marina Cyrino plays extended flutes made out of disassembled parts and objects, and “Urutau,” a rotating wheel that amplifies dried leaves and twigs, creating rhythmic patterns. Ute Wassermann expands her voice with bird whistles and sings into an aquarium that serves as a miniature habitat, where underwater vibrations are transformed into a metallic-technological soundscape, creating an imaginary acoustic



ODDKINS

Felicity Mangan & Merche Blasco



Video LINK (click to watch)

Oddkins presents a new collaboration between Felicity Mangan and Merche Blasco alongside Luisa Pereira's customised Machine Learning powered tool. Through a spatialised electroacoustic performance with custom-made instruments, Mangan and Blasco combine live processing of field recordings with biophonic hybrids generated through the aid of Pereira's musical software, transporting the audience into imagined sonic realms inhabited by fruitful couplings among animals, plants, and technologies, inviting contemplation on the possibilities of symbiotic relationships in the face of environmental challenges.

Oddkins premiered at **Silent Green**, Kuppelhalle, Berlin on November 2024.

Supported by the Music Fund e. V. with project funds from the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, the Berlin District Culture Fund and the Senate Department for Culture and Social Cohesion. Additional support for mobility was granted by the Culture Moves Europe project, funded by the European Union and implemented by the Goethe-Institut.



Téntere, Nublo

Video LINK (click to watch)

Téntere, nublo is a site-specific public performance for Tudela's historic district, in the North of Spain, culminating in a participatory sound performance in La Casa del Almirante.

The piece is based on an ancient local incantation meant to protect crops against violent weather. Using this ritual as a starting point, the piece expands into a sonic choreography of the old city of Tudela inspired by local flora and fauna, performed by women from the region.

Like the original ritual from which the piece takes its name, *Téntere, nublo* is a dialogue between local human and nonhuman elements, an act of listening to the natural landscape and responding in kind: percussionists play to the storks nesting in Tudela's cathedral, horn players adopt the calls of Ebro river birds, and artichokes are given a chance to sing.

At the center of the performance is the historic diversity of Tudela's human landscape. Women of Tudela, each of whom began their lives in different countries and cultures, will sing songs from their own native traditions, combined with the traditional sounds of their adoptive Navarra. This multicultural chorus asks us to reflect on how a region's heritage is defined, and which voices are recognized as a part of it.

For the closing section of the piece, the audience is invited to join in the chorus facing Bardenas in a modern reimagining of the ancient ritual, chanting to the forces of nature to banish hail and bring the gentle rains that nourish the soil and all who depend on it.





L'Encanyissada

[Press video LINK](#) (click to watch)

Site-specific participatory performance for Eufònic Festival 2023.

Participants were invited to navigate in puntonas (traditional fishing boats of this region) a pre-mapped sailing route divided into two sections: a circuitous route through natural canals where participants were given guidelines for deep listening to the Encanyissada soundscape; then a second section which began once all the puntonas arrived in an open lake. Here, drifting freely in the morning breeze, participants listened with headphones to a piece they had previously downloaded on their phones, which I composed using sounds I had recorded from the waters directly beneath them.



HONK 210Hz

Video LINK (click to watch)

Honk 210Hz is a site-specific participatory sound performance in the observation space of NYC's High Line, presented in June 2015 with the support of Friends of the High Line and Make Music New York.

Nine singers— Sarah Small, Dafna Naphtali, Jessie Lauren Stein, Bridget Hogan, Emilie Weibel, Fjóla Evans, Charlotte Mundy, Catherine Provenzano and Megan Schubert — standing in an observation window above 10th Avenue, created a live sound composition in response to the shifting traffic patterns down below. The singers were arranged in groups corresponding to each lane of traffic, and the performance was conducted spontaneously by random traffic events, which triggered specific audio responses according to a prewritten score. For example, a passing yellow cab would cue the singers assigned to that lane to sustain one specific note, while a motorcycle in another lane would cue an overlapping figure from another group of singers.

Small percussive instruments were distributed to the audience along with a pictographic score, allowing them to participate in the spontaneously evolving soundscape.



BLINK

Video LINK (click to watch)

Participatory performance that gathers the city's seasoned and casual cyclists to perform a piece for bicycle bells. Riders travel through a selected location, following a score transmitted from the lead bike via a special helmet pre-programmed with lights that cue bicycle bells of different pitches. Through the piece, riders collaborate with each other and generate music that interacts with the soundscape of the area.

Premiered in December 2013 with the support of MAKE MUSIC NEW YORK as part of MAKE MUSIC WINTER: 2013

New York Times article

Wall Street Journal video

Wall Street Journal article

Also presented in:

Houston Texas, April 2014 // Dublin, Ireland, May 2014, as part of Giro D'Italia // Santiago de Chile, December 2014, as part of Tsonami Festival in collaboration with Anilla Cultural and the Contemporary Art Museum in Santiago // New York, NY, December 2015, as part of Make Music Winter: 2015 and presented as a sound trilogy in collaboration with Nissim Schaul's "Wheels" from MMW 2014 and "RPM" by P. Spadine

