

(revised February 2012)

biography

Canadian composer Marc Sabat (*1965) has been based in Berlin since 1999. His work with acoustic instruments and electronics draws inspiration from investigations of the sounding and perception of Just Intonation, folk and experimental musics, and the relations between musical and visual artforms. His pieces have been presented internationally in radio broadcasts and at festivals of new music including the Donaueschinger Musiktage, MaerzMusik, Darmstadt and Carnegie Hall. Recordings and scores are available from Plainsound Music Edition. The CD “wave piano scenery player” was recently released by World Edition (Köln) and a new album is planned from mode records (New York).

Sabat studied at the University of Toronto, at the Juilliard School in New York, as well as working privately with Malcolm Goldstein, James Tenney and Walter Zimmermann. He teaches at the Universität der Künste Berlin, and has been a guest artist at the California Institute of the Arts, at the Escola Superior in Barcelona and the Paris Conservatoire. In 2010, he was an artist-in-residence of the Villa Aurora in Los Angeles, followed in 2011 by a one year residency at the German Academy in Rome, Villa Massimo.

teaching, residencies, studies

- 1982-86 • University of Toronto (Bachelor of Music)
- 1987/8 • Juilliard School of Music, New York (Master of Music)
- Canada Council study grants; Chalmers Performing Arts grant
- 1989 • Banff Centre for the Arts, Canada
- 1990 • guest workshops at Memorial University of Newfoundland (St. John’s, NF, Canada)
- 1991 • studies in computer music and composition at McGill University (Montreal, QC, Canada)
- 1996 • Chalmers Foundation Performing Arts grant
- 1997 • guest workshops and concert at University of Victoria (BC, Canada)
- 1997/8 • residency at Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart (Germany)
- 1999 • guest workshops and concert at Musikhochschule Münster (Germany)
- 1999 • Canada Council grant to reside and work in Berlin as composer
- 2000/1 • seminars on Just Intonation for musicians at the Hochschule der Künste (Berlin, Germany)
- 2001 • workshops at California Institute of the Arts (Valencia, CA, USA)
- 2004 • guest lecturer at the Universität der Künste Berlin (Contemporary Development of Harmony)
- 2005 • guest lectures: HfM Hanns Eisler, Berlin; Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya, Barcelona; Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hamburg
- 2005– • lecturer at the Universität der Künste Berlin (Applied Acoustics and Intonation for Composers)
- 2006/7 • visiting professor of composition at the California Institute of the Arts
- five-month residency stipend at the Herrenhaus Edenkoben
- 2008–9 • postgraduate fellow of the Graduiertenschule für die Künste und die Wissenschaften, UdK Berlin
- 2010 • three-month residency stipend at the Villa Aurora (Los Angeles)
- 2011 • one-year residency stipend at the German Academy Villa Massimo (Rome)

brief chronology of projects

- 1991–2 • work in Montreal with Malcolm Goldstein on experimental violin improvisation
- music/film collaborations co-produced with brother Peter Sabat
- 1992–7 • moved to Toronto, developed a version of Harry Partch’s adapted viola for Just Intonation
- co-founded microtonal ensemble *Critical Band*, performances of experimental music
- various projects, tours, performances with the ensembles ARRAYMUSIC and Continuum
- 1997–8 • residency at Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart
- collaborations and performances with Matteo Fargion, Chiyoko Szlavnic, Stephen Clarke (Ensemble Da Noi, Sabat/Clarke Duo); first recording for mode records (New York); festival performances including Eclat (Stuttgart), Darmstadt, June in Buffalo
- 1999 • moved to Berlin
- 2000–2 • began collaboration with Wolfgang von Schweinitz, founding of PLAINSOUND MUSIC EDITION, development of the Helmholtz-Ellis JI Pitch Notation, continued research into Just Intonation on acoustic and electronic instruments
- co-organised the Festival Neue Stimmungen ‘One does not find free vibrating air just anyplace’ (Musikinstrumenten-Museum, Philharmonie Berlin)
- 2002 • resumed collaboration with Peter Sabat with the video production: *Three For Magister Zacharias*, made at Skywalker Sound (California) and later presented as installation at MaerzMusik (2004)
- established Plainsound Orchestra (Berlin), ensemble for intonation research and new music; first performance at the festival “Intonations” (Podewil Berlin)
- 2003 • Plainsound Orchestra: portrait concert of music by Marc Sabat (Bregenzwald, Austria)

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- 2004–6 • development of a tuning method for the 6-valve F-tuba, collaborations with Robin Hayward
- 2006 • residency at Herrenhaus Edenkoben, beginning of collaboration with visual artist Lorenzo Pompa on various projects combining sculpture and music
- performances and recordings with Aki Takahashi (piano) and Rohan de Saram (cello)
- 2007 • sculpture *wave piano scenery player* (Pompa/Sabat) commissioned by the SWR to open the Donaueschinger Musiktage
- video and music work *AUTOMAT* (Sabat/Sabat) presented at Carnegie Hall, New York
- 2008–9 • began development of a computer music instrument (Micromæloleon) capable of making intonation decisions in real time
- 2009 • video ballet *Father's suit and watch* (Pompa/Sabat) presented at the KlankKleurFestival Amsterdam
- first collaboration with performer and painter Wolfgang Betke, *Garden Songs*, American Dreams Festival Mouvement, Saarbrücken (Saarländische Rundfunk)
- 2010 • CD release *wave piano scenery player* (World Edition)
- Pompa/Sabat sculpture *Epistolae Cucumeris* (Akademie der Künste, Berlin) and publication of a leporello/CD edition about the sculpture
- 2011 • residency in Rome at the Accademia Tedesca Villa Massimo (various projects: concert at Museo Casa Scelsi, composer portrait at Villa Massimo, and final concert with Ensemble Modern)
- Pompa/Sabat performances of *FSW* and *Leaving Santa Barbara* (The Stone, New York); LP dubplate edition *Loss / Gain*

editions (sound / video)

- 1998 • Marc Sabat: *Field Recordings* (compilation, Plainsound Edition)
- 1999 • Marc Sabat: *Chamber Music* (compilation, Plainsound Edition)
- James Tenney: *Music for violin & piano* - Sabat/Clarke (hat [now] ART 120)
- 2000 • Morton Feldman: *Complete music for violin and piano* - Sabat/Clarke (mode records 82/3)
- 2003 • Marc Sabat *Change in your pocket* – DVD-PAL (Plainsound Edition)
- Maria de Alvear: *Thinking* - Sabat/Clarke (World Edition)
- Christian Wolff: *Complete music for violin and piano* - Sabat/Clarke (mode records 126)
- 2004 • Marc Sabat: *Three For Magister Zacharias* – DVD-PAL, 5-ch audio (Plainsound Edition)
- 2006 • Marc Sabat: *Father's suit and watch* – video-ballet, DVD-PAL (Plainsound Edition)
- 2010 • Lorenzo Pompa/Marc Sabat: *Epistolae Cucumeris* (Plainsound Edition)
- Lorenzo Pompa/Marc Sabat: *wave piano scenery player* (World Edition 0016)
- Morton Feldman: *Trio* (mode records 216)
- 2011 • Marc Sabat: *Erbesen* — part of the compilation *electronic counterpoint* by Lucia Mense (satelita 004)
- upcoming • Marc Sabat: *Suit & Watch* (mode records)

publications

- 2005 • *The Extended Helmholtz-Ellis JI Pitch Notation: eine Notationsmethode für die natürlichen Intervalle* (in "Mikrotöne und Mehr: Auf György Ligeti's Hamburger Pfaden", herausgegeben von Manfred Stahnke, von Bockel Verlag, Hamburg)
- 2006 • *Towards an Expanded Definition of Consonance: Tuneable Intervals on Horn, Tuba and Trombone* (with Robin Hayward, to be published by the Staatliches Institut für Musikforschung, Preussischer Kulturbesitz Berlin, ed. Timour Klouche & Thomas Noll)
- 2007 • *Three Crystal Growth Algorithms in 23-limit Constrained Harmonic Space* (Contemporary Music Review, Volume 27 Part I, 2008, "The Music of James Tenney"; also published in a German-language version in *Musiktexte* 112, February 2007)
- 2008 • *An algorithm for real-time harmonic microtuning* (5th Sound and Music Computing Conference, Berlin)
- 2009 • *On the Notation and Performance Practice of Extended Just Intonation* (Smith Publications, Baltimore)
- 2010 • *Some Reflections about Sound, Music and Art* (Positionen—Texte zur aktuellen Musik, Mühlenbeck)
- 2011 • *Stay Still / Still Stehn* (Positionen—Texte zur aktuellen Musik, Mühlenbeck)
- upcoming • *Tuning Feldman* (Musiktexte)

interviews / radio features

- 2008 • *Marc Sabat's Musik für Menschen und Maschinen* by Matthias Entress, 60-minute feature for DeutschlandRadio Berlin
- 2009 • *An Interview with Marc Sabat* by Daniel Veza
- 2010 • *Lautstrom 1: with Marc Sabat* by Anna Bromley and Jeremy Woodruff, 60-minute feature for reboot.fm
- 2012 • *Intonation ist Komposition* by Thomas Groetz, 60-minute feature for Bayerischer Rundfunk