

Superpluck Club vol. 6 Issho ni (一緒に)

In the sixth edition of the Superpluck contemporary music club series Rody van Gemert, Eija Kankaanranta and Assi Karttunen dive deep into the currents of newest music. Premieres by Chieko Doi, Juan Jose Eslava, Pilar Miralles and Yuna Kurachi will be accompanied by some of Superpluck favorites from earlier years. Besides musical treats the audience will be served small Japanese delicacies like mochi and umeshu. Special guests include Lasse Lehtonen, Academy Research Fellow in Asian research and musicology, Tuuli Lindeberg, artistic director of Musica nova as well as dance artist and choreographer Maarit Mammu Rankanen.

Superpluck is a Helsinki-based trio formed by Rody van Gemert (guitar), Eija Kankaanranta (kantele) and Assi Karttunen (harpsichord) focusing on contemporary music. The trio is inspired by the similarities and contrasts of the sounds and timbres produced by their unique line-up. Following their debut in November 2019, the trio has given concerts in Finland and toured twice in Japan. Collaborating with composers is at the heart of Superpluck's existence and the trio has commissioned and premiered over 20 works by Finnish and Japanese composers including Osmo Tapio Räihälä, Olli Virtaperko, Akira Kobayashi and Rica Narimoto. Since 2022 Superpluck has hosted a series of contemporary music clubs with the support from the Finnish Cultural Foundation and the Arts Promotion Centre Finland.

Performers:

Superpluck:

Rody van Gemert, guitar

Eija Kankaanranta, kantele

Assi Karttunen, harpsichord

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvpPDG2L4tBt19z9KXfTAaw>

Maarit Mammu Rankanen, dancer

Discussion (in Finnish):

Lasse Lehtonen, Research Fellow in Asian research and musicology

Tuuli Lindeberg, Artistic Director of Musica Nova Helsinki

In co-operation & supported by:

Finnish Cultural Foundation, Töölön kaupunginosat – Töölö ry, Musica nova Helsinki

Kuudennella Superpluck-klubillaan "Issho ni / Yhdessä" Rody van Gemert, Eija Kankaanranta ja Assi Karttunen sukeltavat 2000-luvun musiikin ja keskustelun pyörteisiin. Illan ohjelmassa kuullaan kantaesitykset Pilar Mirallesilta, Chieko Doilta, Yuna Kurachilta ja Juan Jose Eslavalta sekä aiemmin valmistuneet suosikkiteokset Natsuki Niwalta ja Mioko Yokoyamalta. Klubilla maistellaan myös japanilaisia herkkuja ja keskustellaan Aasian tutkimuksen ja musiikkitieteen dosentti Lasse Lehtosen ja Musica novan taiteellisen johtajan Tuuli Lindebergin kanssa. Klubilla vierailee myös tanssitaiteilija ja koreografi Maarit Mammu Rankanen.

Superpluck on kitaristi Rody van Gemertin, kantelemuusikko Eija Kankaanrannan ja cembalisti Assi Karttusen perustama helsinkiläinen nykymusiikkiyhtye, joka inspiroituu ainutlaatuisen soitinkombinaationsa yhteissoinneista, sävyistä ja kontrasteista sekä säveltäjien kanssa työskentelystä. Superpluckin ensikonsertti oli marraskuussa 2019 ja sen jälkeen trio on tehnyt Suomen esiintymistensä lisäksi kaksi kiertuetta Japanissa. Superpluck on tilannut ja kantaesittänyt yli 20 suomalaisten ja japanilaisten säveltäjien teosta, mm. Osmo Tapio Räihälältä, Akira Kobayashilta, Rica Narimotolta ja Olli Virtaperkolta. Vuodesta 2022 alkaen yhtye on järjestänyt omaa nykymusiikkiklubien sarjaa Suomen Kulttuurirahaston ja Taiteen edistämiskeskuksen tuella.

Lipunmyynti: <https://holvi.com/shop/hietsun-paviljonki/product/6ce37afd4da1683eaef2fa051ea61a3b/>

Esiintyjät:

Superpluck:

Rody van Gemert, kitara

Eija Kankaanranta, kantele

Assi Karttunen, cembalo

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvpPDG2L4tBt19z9KXfTAaw>

Maarit Mammu Rankanen, tanssi

Keskustelijat:

Lasse Lehtonen, Aasian tutkimuksen ja musiikkitieteen dosentti, japanilaisen musiikin tutkija

Tuuli Lindeberg, Musica novan taiteellinen johtaja

Tukijat ja yhteistyökumppanit:

Suomen Kulttuurirahasto, Töölön kaupunginosat – Töölö ry, Musica nova Helsinki

Programme

Natsuki Niwa: *Dislocated Resolution* (2019)

Pilar Miralles: *Nana* (2024, kantaesitys / first performance)

Juan Jose Eslava: *el otro lado de las cuerdas* (2025, kantaesitys / first performance)

Chieko Doi: *Morpho* (2024, kantaesitys / first performance)

Yuna Kurachi: *Density Flow* (2021, kantaesitys / first performance)

Mioko Yokoyama: *Gear Type Fauna* (2022)

Natsuki Niwa: *Dislocated Resolution* (2019)

Dislocated Resolution (2019) is constructed on the idea of conflicting rhythms interrupted by pauses and fermatas of different length, making the overall feel of the music agitated and jumpy. In the middle of the trio there is a short ethereal and subtle period of tranquility.

Niwa writes: “不即不離—FUSOKU FURI— is a Japanese concept that refers to mismatched (dimensional) relationships. I changed this concept to describe the musical relationships between the instruments. I tried to compose the structures of time that don't coincide”. For the Superpluck, the composition seemed at first almost impossible to figure out, but eventually it became one of their favorite pieces.

Natsuki NIWA (1991*) was born in Aichi, Japan. She has completed the Doctor of Music degree at the Aichi University of the Arts receiving the University's prestigious Kuwabara Prize. Niwa has studied composition under Tomoyuki Hisatome, Andrián Pertout, Jean-Luc Hervé and Rica Narimoto. She has received several awards including the first prize in the 34th Japan Society for Contemporary Music Composition Award. Niwa's music has been performed in many countries including Japan, Malaysia, Germany, Canada, France, Australia, and Finland.

“Dislocated Resolution” for kantele, guitar and harpsichord was collaborated work with Superpluck. Her compositions take inspiration from her close engagement with traditional Japanese music. She researches its history and special treatment of heterophony. She is a lecturer in composition at the Aichi University of the Arts.

Pilar Miralles: *Nana* (Lullaby) 2024.

Sleeping together.

Acknowledging that we are collectively tired.

Allowing others to rest.

Pilar Miralles (* Almería, 1997) is a Spanish researcher and artist focused on sound. She is a doctoral candidate at the DocMus Doctoral School of the Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki. In her artistic research, she wonders how to experience presence through the development of a situated practice in a world in which immediacy prevails. Pilar has recently participated in artistic programs at the ULYSSES Network (EU), the FCAYC Foundation (Spain), and SPAIN arts & culture (US), among others.



Photo by Giang Tran

JuanJose Eslava: *el otro lado de las cuerdas* (2025) for classical guitar

Program note

El otro lado de las cuerdas is dedicated to the memory of my mother, Isabel Cabanellas, and has been possible to write thanks to the commitment and creativity of guitar player Rody van Gemert. All the musical materials come, like living reflections, from the La Perla guitar (Antonio de Torres 1882), this incredible historical instrument from which everything that makes up this piece has been found.

As if, by the first chord, the guitar player was moved and La Perla, freely sounding, showed, as if opening its petals, all those complex interactions between the strings and the other parts of its musical body, and the string's shadow when hit, their resonances, their other side...

They all open a transparent and infinite mirror where time, released from passing, opens a space of presence.

Photo by Toni Sasal



Juan José Eslava focuses his work on the relationship between body, sound and space, and on the exploration of traditional instruments and natural materials from a sound and symbolic point of view. His catalogue includes orchestral, chamber, vocal and electronic music, an opera, installations, performances and collaborations with theatre and dance.

Present at the festivals ICMC (Regional Prize in 2008), Transitio (finalist in 2008), SICMF, Time-of-Music, Ensembles or ISCM World New Music Days, he works with performers like Nicholas Isherwood, Norio Sato, Nomad Ensemble, Neopercusión, Trio Zukan, Pilar Fontalba, Rody van Gemert...

Eslava received his diploma in 2000 at Paris Conservatory under the guidance of Emmanuel Nunes, Michaël Lévinas and Marc André Dalbavie, and followed the IRCAM's Coursus on Composition and Computer in 2004. He also has worked with Gérard Grisey, Jonathan Harvey, José Manuel López-López and Brian Ferneyhough. Nowadays he teaches Composition and Orchestration at High Conservatory of Music of Navarra, Spain.

<https://www.babelscores.com/es/JuanJoseEslava>

Chieko Doi: *Morpho for solo harpsichord* (2024)

Morpho is a harpsichord solo work based on the idea of a morpho butterfly symbolizing transformation and rebirth. Composer Doi says: “The overall theme of my composition is the blue morpho butterfly’s wings’ visual flickering, which appears as blue, green, and iridescent.” Furthermore, Doi says that she wanted to compose a work including continuous breathing movement, organic, colourful, and meditative throughout the piece. For a harpsichordist, the work is filled with challenging textures and rhythmical patterns. It contains a microtonal idea of an octave of the other 8’-register tuned to a microtone higher pitch. The flickering of the colours is ingeniously realized by an extremely fast, double figure passage in the end of the solo.

Chieko Doi (* 1978): Chieko Doi has already established her composer’s career and published compositions for 24 years. Her compositions are organically constructed and intelligently dramatized. After completing her postgraduate studies in Tokyo, Chieko Doi entered *Hochschule für Music, Theater und Medien Hannover* in Germany under the guidance of Johannes Schöllhorn receiving her Diploma in 2008. In 2013, she completed the doctoral program at the Elisabeth University of Music in Japan under Koji Tomotani and Toshio Hosokawa. She received her Doctorate of Musical Arts (D.M.A.) in 2017. Currently she is working as an associate professor of Composition at the Okinawa Prefectural University of Arts, Japan. Since 2021 she also represents the *Ensemble Naha*. Doi was a laureate in several competitions like the 1st Yamakyo Prize 21 competition for orchestra (2005), Akutagawa Award for Music Composition (finalist) (2007), ISCM World New Music Days in Košice, Bratislava, Vienna (finalist) (2013). <http://doichieko.strikingly.com>



Chieko Doi.

Yuna Kurachi: *Density Flow* (2021)

Since composers directly incorporate their musical aims or images into their works, the works often become complex and difficult for performers to play freely and creatively. Therefore, I came up with the idea of programming my work so that when a performer plays the work, my musical aim and image are “automatically” generated.

Density flow, also known as Density current is a flow that is produced by differences in density depending on temperature, salinity, or concentration of suspended sediment. I combined musical elements such as tempo and pitch with scientific parameters such as buoyancy and volume to create an original correlation, and tried to express the flow of density.

By doing this, my image of Density flow like deep and bottom ocean currents and the inflow of meltwater into lakes is closely tied to music, and “automatically” generated. On the other hand, a unique musicality of the performer is retained. For example, the tempo of this work changes many times according to the above correlation, but it is up to the performer to decide how rit. or accel. to play, that is, what kind of “flow” to express. In addition, tuning is programmed to gradually become ‘open string’ throughout the work, - thus resulting in more relaxed resonance by proceeding from sharps to flats.

Yuna Kurachi (* 1995) represents the interesting young generation of Japanese composers. She completed her Bachelor’s and Master’s Degrees in music at the Aichi University of the Arts, and has also studied at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden. Kurachi has studied composition with Yukari Sakurai, Akira Kobayashi, Andrián Pertout, and Malin Bång. Since she started composing music influenced by Internet culture such as VOCALOID, she also researches music related to technology and pop culture. She presents her musical works in Japan and other countries. Her work “Kello” was premiered by Superpluck at the concert for the 100th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Finland and Japan, 2019. She was awarded the 2021 Juurilla Commissioning Grant by Versoi Ensemble, with support from the U.S. Embassy in Finland, and her string trio was performed at both the U.S. Embassy and the Helsinki Music Centre. In recent years, Kurachi has been involved in transdisciplinary art, including the use of objects other than musical instruments and collaboration with media artists.

<https://yunakurachi.wordpress.com>



Yuna Kurachi

Mioko Yokoyama: *Gear Type Fauna* (2022)

Composer Mioko Yokoyama says she named her trio *Gear type fauna* based on an idea of a fictional creature, which moves with the help of gears, kind of like sprocket wheels. “I wanted to combine the sonorities of the three plucked instruments so well that the listener won’t necessarily detect which sound is actually played by which instrument. According to my imaginative idea this creature, created by all the members of the trio, starts gradually moving with the help of the gears.

Mioko Yokoyama (* 1989) is a Japanese composer based in Helsinki. After studying at the Tokyo University of the Arts, she obtained her second Master's degree in composition at the Sibelius Academy with top grades, under the guidance of professor Veli-Matti Puumala. Currently, she teaches at the Sibelius Academy.

Yokoyama is interested in deriving new timbres from instruments to surprise the listeners and provide enjoyable experiences through music. Her music has been commissioned by ensembles, musicians, and festivals such as IMPULS Festival für neue Musik Sachsen-Anhalt (DE), Avanti!:n Suvisoitto (FI), Time of Music (FI), Gaudeamus (NL), Warsaw Autumn (PL), Tampere Biennale (FI), and Musica nova Helsinki (FI).

<https://www.miokoyokoyama.com/>



Yokoyama's photo by Maarit Kytöharju.