

decoder

The **Decoder Ensemble**, founded in Hamburg in 2011, considers itself a “band” for contemporary music and is one of the most innovative and unpredictable young ensembles on the new music scene. Their fresh and energetic sound, stemming from their distinct combination of electric and acoustic instruments and voice, sets them apart from conventional contemporary chamber music ensembles.

Surprising collaborations, experimental instrumental music, multimedia elements and conceptual performance art all play a large role in Decoder’s programming. Decoder greatly stresses the contemporary format in the presentation of their concerts, incorporating carefully selected performance venues and an over-arching dramaturgy.

One of the main focuses of the ensemble is the collaboration with young composers and providing them with a platform to realize their works at the highest level. All of the members of Decoder specialize in the performance contemporary music, with 3 members doubling as the resident composers. This constellation, together with the extensive communication between the composers and interpreters in the development of the works, allows for the creation of unique and authentic performances.

The Ensemble performs internationally at festivals of contemporary music on a regular basis. In 2014 Decoder’s self-titled debut CD on *Ahornfelder Records* was produced in cooperation with German Radio Cologne. Since 2017 Decoder presents their own concert series at the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg. In 2019 Decoder’s second CD will be released by the label Wergo

members

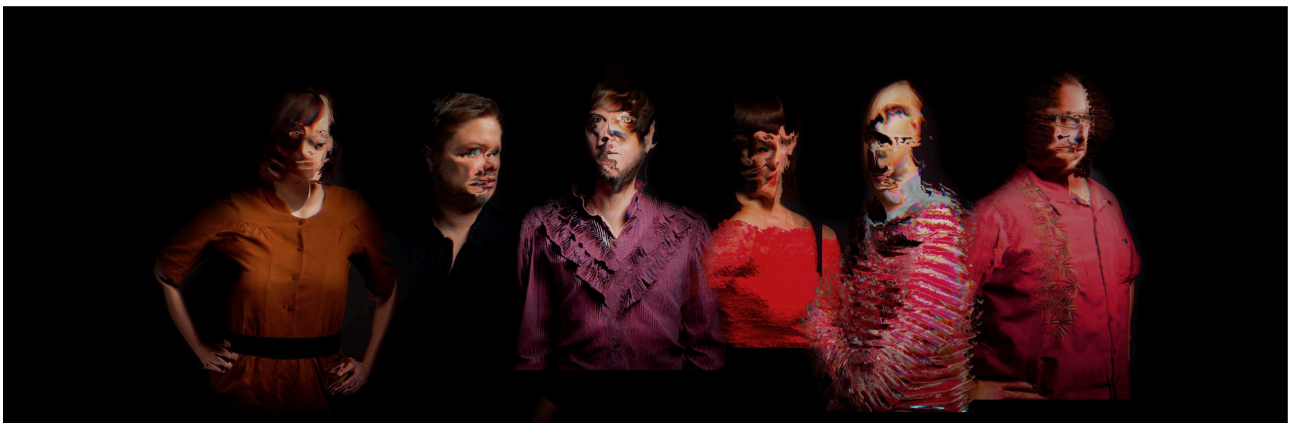
Leopold Hurt	(e-)zither, conducting, composition
Andrej Koroliov	piano, keyboards, composition
Carola Schaal	clarinet, bass clarinet
Sonja Lena Schmid	violoncello
Alexander Schubert	electronics, sound projection, composition
Jonathan Shapiro	drums, percussion

contact

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PAST PROJECTS (selection)

2012

Debut-Concert, Markthalle Hamburg / Club "Übel & Gefährlich", Hamburg / Festival "Hamburger Klangwerkstage", Kampnagel Hamburg / "E-Festival", Tunis (Tunisia) / Concert for the "Bach-Preis der Stadt Hamburg", Club Terrace Hill

2013

Festival "Klub Katarakt", Kampnagel Hamburg / Festival "What's Next", Brussels (BEL) / Festival "blurred edges", Opera stabile Hamburg / Festival "Klang", Copenhagen (DNK) / Festival "aDevantgarde" Munich / Berlin, Haus der Kulturen der Welt / „Reeperbahn-Festival“ Hamburg, Nocht-Speicher / Kampnagel Hamburg, Program „blind spot“ / Festival "Klangwerkstatt Berlin", Club Berghain, Program „blind spot“ / Festival "Greatest Hits" Hamburg

2014

Festival "Klub Katarakt", Kampnagel Hamburg / „Unerhörte Musik“, BKA Theater Berlin / „Unerhörtes Brandenburg“, Theater Brandenburg an der Havel / Musikfest der KGNM, Alte Feuerwache Köln / „Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik“ Darmstadt / "Reverb" Festival, London (GB) / Frappant Hamburg, Program „into the wild“ / HfBK Hamburg, Program „Die gelehrigen Körper“

2015

Michael Maierhof: *EXIT G* (Music Theater, WP), Opera stabile Hamburg / Jagoda Szmytka: *LOST* (Music Theater, WP), Festival Warsaw Autumn (PL) / Festival „Klangwerkstatt Berlin“, Berghain / Festival „Greatest Hits“, Kampnagel Hamburg

2016

„Caravaggio – Decoder“, Resonanzraum Hamburg / Carreau du Temple, Paris (F) / Festival „Big Bang“, Kampnagel Hamburg / Konzert for the re-opening of the Kunsthalle Hamburg / Bach-Preis City of Hamburg, Opera stabile Hamburg / Portrait Concert Alexander Schubert, Kampnagel

2017

Festival „Schönes Wochenende“, Düsseldorf / Festival „Big Bang“, Kampnagel Hamburg / Festival Blurred Edges Hamburg / Festival „Big Data Weekend“ Hamburg / Composer's Forum Mittersil (A) / Festival Warsaw Autumn (P) / Elbphilharmonie Hamburg

2018

Elbphilharmonie Hamburg / Festival Pyramidale Berlin / Bayerische Akademie der Schönen Künste München / „Kammer Musik Neu“, Dresden-Hellerau / Resonanzraum Hamburg („Never Sleeps“) / Festival Musica Strasbourg (F) / Festival Ultima, Oslo (NOR) / Klang Festival Kopenhagen (DNK) / Kunstfestspiele Herrenhausen / Festival Blurred Edges / Festival Spor Aarhus (DNK)

BIOGRAPHIES

Leopold Hurt

(E-)Zither, Conducting, Composition



Leopold Hurt (born 1979 in Regensburg/Germany) studied composition with Manfred Stahnke at the Academy of Music Hamburg and zither / historical performance practice at the Richard-Strauss-Conservatory Munich.

His oeuvre ranges from instrumental to vocal music with a particular focus on works featuring the zither and/or electronics. As an instrumentalist, he has appeared with such orchestras as the German Broadcasting Corporation, the Orchestra di Roma and the Hamburg Philharmonic. Supported by the Goethe Institute he has appeared internationally on tours to China, Ireland and Lebanon.

Leopold Hurt has received several awards for his compositions, including the "Stuttgart Composition Prize" and the "Bach Prize Scholarship" of the City of Hamburg. As a cultural ambassador of Bavaria, he lived in 2003/04 at the "Cité Internationale des Arts" in Paris and during 2009/10 at the International House of Arts "Villa Concordia" Bamberg. In 2014 a portrait CD with his works was published by WERGO / Contemporary Music Series.

Andrej Koroliov

Piano, Keyboards, Composition



Andrej Koroliov was born in 1982 in Hamburg. He has received degrees in piano, composition and music theory at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater in Hamburg where he studied with Marian Migdal, Peter Michael Hamel and Manfred Stahnke.

His works, which span the gamut from acoustic to live electronic, solo to orchestral, have been awarded various prizes, including the Bach Promotion Prize of the city of Hamburg, Alfred Schnittke Composition Prize and Yamaha Young Composer's Award, and have been performed by Ensembles like Reconsil Vienna and the Freiburger Schlagzeugensemble. As a pianist, he has been active both as a soloist and as a chamber musician, performing with groups such as ensemble integrales and the Hamburger Symphoniker. Andrej Koroliov is also founding member of the Decoder Ensemble.

Carola Schaal

Clarinets



Carola Schaal (born 1982, Tübingen, Germany) studied clarinet in Darmstadt, Düsseldorf and Hamburg. She completed her Master's Degree with Professor Alexander Bachl at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hamburg in 2009. In addition to her conservatory studies she has also taken part in Masterclasses with Ernesto Molinari, Jean-Marc Foltz, Ralph Manno, Martin Fröst and Shizuyo Oka as well as Jennifer Walshe's Performance Workshop.

From 2011-2013 she was the recipient of a grant from the Anni-Taube-Foundation Hamburg. She recently gave a masterclass at the XIV. Festival Internacional de Música Contemporánea/Santiago de Chile.

In her work in the classical chamber music genre, she performs regularly together with the pianist Anne von Twardowski, the cellist Sonja Lena Schmid and the violinist Hibiki Oshimi. The concert ambience play a special role for their concerts enhance by their collaboration with the projection and lighting artist Kathrin Bethge.

Sonja Lena Schmid

Cello



Sonja Lena studied cello and chamber music in Hamburg, Amsterdam, Den Haag and Lübeck and is the recipient of awards and grants such as the ZEIT Stipendium from German foundation Musikleben, Dutch National Huygens Grant, 1st prize in the Charles Hennen Concours International Chamber Music Competition and a special prize in the international competition “Schubert and the Music of Modern Times”.

Sonja is a member of Salut Salon and involved in numerous chamber music and theatrical music projects. She has performed in productions at the Thalia Theater (Hamburg), Deutsches Schauspielhaus and the Biennale in Munich. In 2014 Sonja initiated in conjunction with Anne von Twardowski the project Rauschen, which combines classical chamber music with live electronics. Since 2012 she has been a member of Decoder Ensemble. Sonja occasionally gives performance training workshops as guest lecturer at, among others, Hochschule der Populären Künste Berlin.

Alexander Schubert

Sound, Light, Electronics, Composition



Alexander Schubert (1979) studied bioinformatics and composition. Schubert's interest explores cross-genre interfaces between acoustic and electronic music, combining different musical styles (like hardcore, free jazz, popular electronic music, techno) with contemporary classical concepts. Schubert has participated in his youth and early career in the above-mentioned genres both in groups and as a solo artist.

Furthermore performance pieces are a major focus in his work. The use of the body in electronic music and the transportation of additional content through gestures are key features in his pieces, which aim at empowering the performer and at achieving a maximum of energy. This is done both through the use of sensors and visual media.

Apart from working as a composer and solo musician Schubert is also a founding member of ensembles such as “Decoder“. Since 2011 he teaches live-electronics at the conservatory in Lübeck. His works have been performed more than 400 times in the last few years by numerous ensembles in over 25 countries.

Jonathan Shapiro

Drums, Percussion



Jonathan Shapiro is an advocate for new music and the percussionist for the Decoder Ensemble and RADAR ensemble. He appears frequently as a guest performer with such ensembles as Ensemble MusikFabrik, Ensemble Resonanz, Alarm Will Sound, Signal and Newband. Jonathan has also performed with such groups as the Percussionists of the New York Philharmonic, Argento Chamber Ensemble, International Ensemble Modern Akademie and in performances of Terry Riley's classic work In C with the Bang on a Can All-Stars.

Jonathan has appeared in performance at such festivals as the Bang on a Can Marathon, Darmstadt Ferienkurse, Festival Internacional Cervantino, Salzburg Biennale, Klangspuren June in Buffalo, ECLAT Ultraschall, and the New York Philharmonic Charles Ives Festival (NY).

Jonathan holds degrees from the Interlochen Arts Academy, Manhattan School of Music, SUNY Stony Brook and the Musikhochschule Lübeck. Jonathan is an endorser for Black Swamp Percussion, Mike Balter Mallets, and Zildjian.