



Two worlds in fusion

The String Theory α Project

*composed by Stéphane Orlando
for the Stéphane Mercier Trio
and the Edinburgh Quartet
paintings by Fabienne Verdier
texts by Yvan Tjolle*

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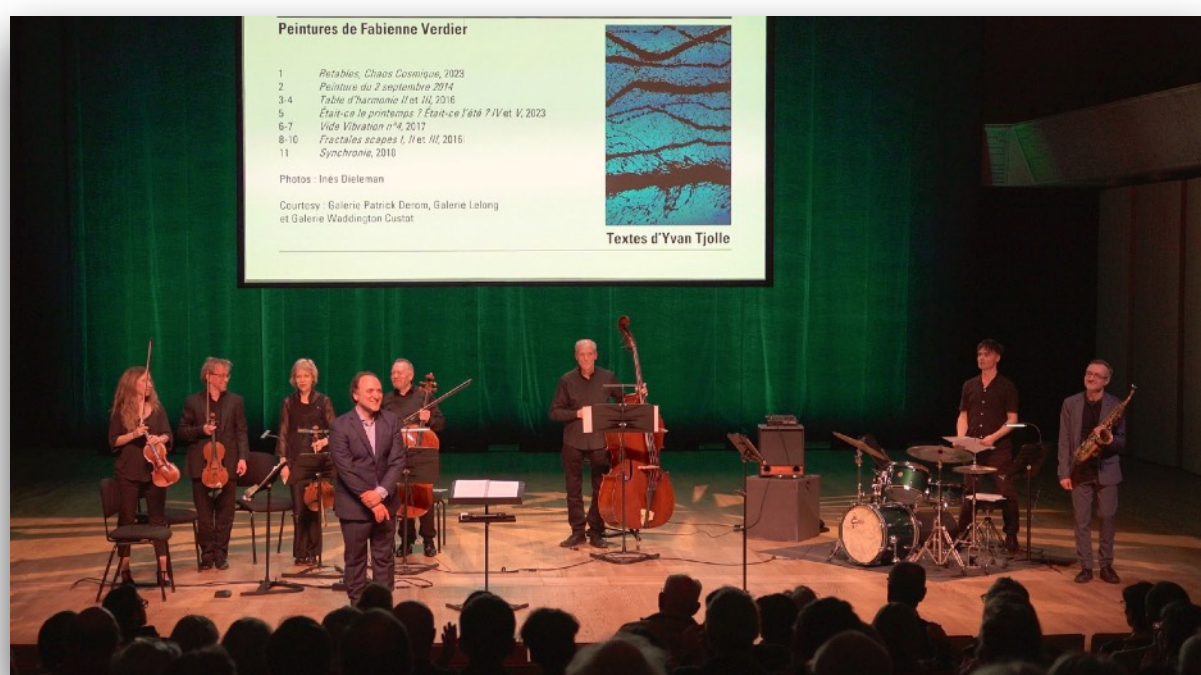
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The String Theory Alpha Project brings together a contemporary jazz trio and a classical string quartet in a unique musical encounter. Composed by **Stéphane Orlando**, this first installment of a creative cycle initiates a dialogue between the **Stéphane Mercier Trio** and the **Edinburgh Quartet**, resulting in music where refined composition and free improvisation nourish one another.

Drawing on the tradition of great fusions between jazz and strings—from Charlie Parker to Roy Hargrove—the project asserts a resolutely contemporary aesthetic. The saxophone, double bass, and drums provide the breath and freedom of jazz, while the strings offer the elegance and depth of the classical world.

On stage, these two universes do not merely overlap; they merge. The strings deploy a harmonic landscape through which the trio moves and expresses itself, creating a truly organic septet. The project invents a common language—sensitive and vibrant—where every instrument finds its place and every silence carries weight.

alpha Project

This first opus is a poetic and sonic exploration of the "geometry of being." It is structured as a journey through the 11 dimensions of **M-Theory**—which seeks to unite general relativity (the infinitely large) and quantum mechanics (the infinitely small)—starting from primordial unity to reach final unification.

To provide a complementary visual approach based on a sensitive vision of the world—spanning the infinitely small and the infinitely large—**Fabienne Verdier** has contributed several of her paintings to further deepen our emotional field.

Beginning from a singularity—the point—the texts by **Yvan Tjolle** unfold a minimalist cosmogony where mathematical concepts (line, surface, volume) are transmuted into sensory and metaphysical experiences.

The work questions the very fabric of our reality: time standing still, light folding in on itself, and a vacuum that, far from being an absence, becomes the fertile ground for all possibilities. Ultimately, the project dissolves the obsession with form, leaving only the "bond" behind. It is an invitation to inhabit the space between the map and the territory, where poetry becomes the only gravity capable of holding us.



The String Theory Alpha Project

Textes d'Yvan Tjolle

1. Singularité Alpha

Un tout sans point	<i>A whole without point</i>
Un point c'est tout	<i>A point, and that is all</i>
Le point rayonne	<i>The point radiates</i>
Vibration	<i>Vibration</i>

2. Horizon des événements

Deux points, un lien, une ligne, une corde	<i>Two points, a link, a line, a string</i>
Et comme elle change de direction	<i>and as it shifts its course</i>
Vers l'horizon	<i>toward horizon</i>
Une surface en action	<i>surface in motion</i>

3. Couches Glissantes

Touche, touche-moi	<i>Touch, touch me</i>
Couche, couche-toi	<i>Lie, lie down</i>
Un et un font trois	<i>One and one makes three</i>
Le volume a-t-il un poids ?	<i>Does volume have a weight?</i>

4. Trame Temporelle

Si tu ne bouges pas, je ne saurai pas que le temps passe.
Si le temps ne passe pas, je ne te verrai pas bouger.
Où es-tu quand meurt le temps ?

*If you do not move, I will not know that time is passing.
If time does not pass, I will not see you move.
Where are you when time dies?*

5. Les Replis de la Lumière

Sur le Soi, Seule, se replie la Lumière.	<i>Upon Self, Alone, Light folds back.</i>
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6. Quantum beat

Mise au point, une pulsation	<i>Focus, a pulse</i>
Trois petits points	<i>Three little dots</i>
En suspension...	<i>In suspense...</i>

7. Echos du Vide

Le vide n'est pas le néant, c'est une promesse qui bourdonne.

Void is not nothingness, it is a humming promise.

8, 9 et 10. Mondes Parallèles

La carte n'est pas le territoire et la direction n'est pas le sens.
Est-ce d'une grande gravité ?

*Map is not territory, direction is not meaning.
Does it carry great gravity?*

Sur la trame du vide s'efface l'obsession des formes.

Upon lattice of void, obsession with form fades.

Quelle est la différence entre un point ?

What is the difference between a point?

11. Intrications Secrètes

« Je est un autre », ... le même autre que le tien ?
« Je est un autre », ... L'autre est en jeu... Reste le lien.

*"I is an other,"... same other as yours?
"I is an other,"... Other is in play... Bond remains.*

Premiered at Grand Manège in Namur (Belgium) on March 11 2026, during de Focus New Music and as part of Stéphane Orlando's residency as a composer.

The CD album will be released by Homerecords.be in July 2026, with the support of the International String Quartet Festival 'Les Voix Intimes' in Tournai.



Stéphane Orlando - compositeur



Active internationally, **Stéphane Orlando** is an award-winning contemporary music composer who builds bridges between disciplines. He favors a dialogue between gesture, text, sound, and image within open forms, ranging from poetic ciné-concerts to contemporary operas and transdisciplinary creations.

Currently **composer-in-residence** at the **Grand Manège in Namur (CAV&MA)**, he is developing ambitious vocal and instrumental projects. This tenure follows his residency with the **Liège Royal Philharmonie Orchestra (OPRL)** from 2022 to 2025, where he explored a broad symphonic spectrum, from musical theater to a bassoon concerto. His work was honored in 2020 with the **SABAM for Culture Prize** and, in 2023, received several international awards for "**Best Original Score**" (San Francisco, Tokyo, Toronto).

An expert in the relationship between sound and image, he has accompanied silent films at **CINEMATEK** since 2001, with over 500 performances to his credit. This practice of "the moment" informs his teaching: he serves as a Professor of Improvisation at the **Geneva Haute Ecole de Musique (HEM)**. A musicologist (ULB) and graduate of the Brussels and Mons Conservatories, he chaired the **Belgian Society for Music Analysis** (2009–2016) and the **Forum de la Création Musicale** (2015–2023), demonstrating a long-standing commitment to musical life in Belgium.

www.stephaneorlando.com

Stéphane Mercier Trio



Stéphane Mercier - alto saxophonist
Dave Redmond - contrebasse
Darren Beckett - batterie

Introducing the dynamic jazz trio of Stéphane Mercier on alto saxophone, Dave Redmond on double bass, and Darren Beckett on drums. This powerhouse ensemble showcases a unique blend of innovative compositions and masterful improvisation.

Their debut album (release by Step By Records) in March 2024, is a testament to their musical prowess. Stéphane Mercier's emotive saxophone leads, coupled with Dave Redmond's resonant double bass and Darren Beckett's dynamic drumming, create a captivating sonic landscape that transcends traditional jazz boundaries.

Listeners can expect a rich tapestry of sound, where each track unfolds with a perfect balance of structure and spontaneity. Mercier's and Redmond's compositions, characterized by intricate melodies and thoughtful arrangements, provide the perfect canvas for the trio's collective improvisation.

www.stephanemerciermusic.com

Edinburgh Quartet

The Edinburgh Quartet, founded in 1960, has long been celebrated as one of Britain's foremost chamber ensembles, appearing regularly at prestigious venues across the UK and touring extensively across Europe, the Far and Middle East, and North and South America.

In addition to a busy concert schedule the Edinburgh Quartet is frequently featured in radio broadcasts for the BBC and other stations. The Edinburgh Quartet is committed to nurturing talent and has been resident at the University of Stirling, University of Glasgow, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, and University of Edinburgh.

The Quartet has always been a champion of new music and has worked with many important and prolific composers of our age including James MacMillan, Michael Tippett and Howard Blake, and they regularly commission, perform, and record new works.

The Edinburgh Quartet has an extensive discography available on various labels such as Delphian, Linn, Meridian and RCA. Their recordings regularly feature in UK and foreign press and have received widespread critical acclaim.

'perky and pristine in the Haydn, gutsy and attitudinal in the folk-inspired Prokofiev, movingly sustained in the grim delights of the Shostakovich... richly considered, rigorously balanced and, ultimately, a musical treat'. (The Scotsman)

'absolutely essential listening' (The Herald)

www.edinburghquartet.com



