

# ANDREW A. WATTS

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## Long Biography (500 words)

Andrew Watts' (b. 1989) works, from chamber and symphonic music to multimedia and electro-acoustic, are regularly performed throughout the US and Europe. His compositions have been premiered at world-renowned venues such as Ravinia, the summer home of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall; the Internationales Musikinstitut Darmstadt; and the Holywell Music Room, the oldest custom-built concert hall in Europe. In the past few years Mr. Watts has written works for a number of top musicians and ensembles including Distractfold Ensemble, RAGE Thornbones, Splinter Reeds, Quince Contemporary Vocal Ensemble, Line Upon Line Percussion, soprano Tony Arnold, cellist Séverine Ballon, and the Los Angeles Percussion Quartet (LAPQ). His recent work, *A Dialogue, In Absentia* for electronically augmented trombone duo, will be presented in IRCAM's Music and Hacking conference this November. In 2017-2018 he will be writing a new vocal ensemble piece for Ekmeles and a large chamber piece for Ensemble Proton Bern.

Mr. Watts is currently a doctoral candidate at Stanford University, studying with Brian Ferneyhough and working towards a D.M.A. in Composition. Mr. Watts received his master's with distinction from Oxford University and his bachelor's with academic honors from the New England Conservatory. He has also studied composition and theory at the Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University, literature through IU's Hutton Honors College, and economics at Brown University. He researches the compositional applications of language fragmentation, focusing on the ability to convey meaning through the voice even when syntax is lost, augmented, or otherwise unintelligible. His writing also actively explores musical extremes through gradients of freedom and restriction, ambiguity and detail, purity and distortion, along with sound and noise. Often he includes invented instruments to broaden the palette of what a performer can do. The treatment of microtonality in his pitch language focuses on the evolution of material under tightly constrained circumstances. For the past few years, Mr. Watts has sought to create highly precise surface gestures to serve as the impetus in his music. These can be thought of as cells; whereby, when taken individually, he exercises a great degree of control over nuanced parameters, but when taken together the texture sounds more spontaneous.

Mr. Watts teaches a summer workshop entitled "Algorithmic Composition with Max/MSP and OpenMusic" at the Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics (CCRMA). In 2017 he is a featured composer at the Cheltenham Music Festival (England). In previous years Mr. Watts also participated as a featured composer in the 48th International Summer Course for New Music at Darmstadt (Germany), the Composit Festival (Italy), the Biennial Ostrava Days Institute (Czech Republic), the highSCORE Festival (Italy), the Wellesley Composers Conference (USA), the Etchings Festival (France), Fresh Inc. Festival (USA), New Music on the Point (USA), and the Atlantic Music Festival (USA). As a performer, he has sang with the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Benjamin Zander in Symphony Hall, and played percussion with the Fifth House Ensemble in Chicago's Rush Hour Concert Series.

## ANDREW A. WATTS, COMPOSER

### **Short Biography (200 words)**

Andrew Watts' works, from chamber and symphonic music to multimedia and electro-acoustic, are actively performed throughout the US and Europe. His compositions have been premiered at world-renowned venues such as Ravinia, the MFA Boston, Jordan Hall, and the Holywell Music Room. In the past few years Mr. Watts has written for top musicians and ensembles including Distractfold Ensemble, RAGE Thornbones, Splinter Reeds, Quince, Line Upon Line Percussion, Tony Arnold, Séverine Ballon, and the LA Percussion Quartet. In 2017-2018 he will be writing new vocal ensemble piece for Ekmeles and a large chamber piece for Ensemble Proton Bern. He is currently a doctoral candidate at Stanford studying with Brian Ferneyhough and working towards a D.M.A. in Composition. Mr. Watts received his master's with distinction from Oxford and his bachelor's with academic honors from the New England Conservatory. He has been a featured composer at the Cheltenham Music Festival (England), the 48th International Summer Course for New Music at Darmstadt (Germany), the Composit Festival (Italy), the Biennial Ostrava Days Institute (Czech Republic), the highSCORE Festival (Italy), the Wellesley Composers Conference (USA), the Etchings Festival (France), Fresh Inc. Festival (USA), New Music on the Point (USA), and the Atlantic Music Festival (USA).