



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release: 9th July 2020

Network Music Festival // 15-18th July 2020 // Communities Near and Far

Network Music Festival celebrates online music communities with a global festival exploring how music making and social connections are being transformed during COVID-19

The first ever fully online edition of the Network Music Festival will take place next week, responding to the way communities and music-makers have embraced virtual connections during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Taking place between **15-18th July 2020**, the festival will feature cutting-edge musical performances, workshops and discussions exploring the intersection of art and technology.

The main theme for 2020 is communities near and far. The pandemic has seen many people embrace borderless online spaces under coronavirus lockdowns and physical distancing rules. We stay in touch with friends and neighbours, but also find that collaborating across the world is not harder than collaborating across town. In this year's festival, we want to celebrate and strengthen the musical communities people have built with networking tools, as well as exploring the aesthetics, performance practice and technologies around topics such as web-streaming, multi-location performance, collaborative music making environments, accessible performance and sustainable art.

The festival will feature over fifty performances across ten concerts with musicians from more than 25 countries . They include interactive music pieces, multi-location pieces linking performers through video conferencing, live coding, laptop music ensembles, networked physical devices, AI bots, VR environments, mobile apps and much more.

They include veteran “cyber performance” group Upstage; composer Wendy Reid’s piece “Ambient Bird” which features her pet parrot as a performer as well as musicians collaborating across video chat; and Illest Preacha & Rambling Intellect who will collaborate between Canada and Sierra Leone on music and performance poetry via computer code.

The NMF is partnering with arts organisations such as Other Minds, San Francisco and AlgoRitmos collective, Medellín to host the concerts. We’re happy to be teaming up with the Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK) funded MIMIC project, who are developing a web platform for the artistic exploration of musical machine intelligence. We are co-hosting a special concert of new works developed with MIMIC tools, and a workshop offering the chance to get hands-on with their platform.

We are also running two Algoraves hosted in online VR environments designed by TOPLAP Mexico and TOPLAP Berlin who pioneered the VR Algorave format in 2020. Algorave is a global collective of artists who run club nights with live music and visuals generated from algorithms. Their events have been described as a meeting point of hacker philosophy, geek culture, and clubbing. The NMF x TOPLAP algoraves will feature more than 20 performers including algoravers old and new.

Our workshop programme offers the opportunity to explore the software and practices of network music including audio streaming, collaboration over the internet, browser-based performance and composition tools, and listening practices. Our six workshops will be led by researchers and artists in the field of network music and we have a number of workshops aimed newcomers to networked music making.

Alongside the live programme we will be hosting an online exhibition of video works and mobile-apps, and our interactive events showcase works that allow the audience to get involved in the music making through web interfaces facilitating audience participation. We also hope to bring the community of artists and audiences together with our post-concert Q&A sessions, and a discussion panel session on Network Music and Accessibility.

As we look to support artists, all our concerts will be free to view, but we are accepting donations to contribute to artist fees on a Pay What You Can principle. Through this form of mutual aid we can support each other through the exchange of culture, knowledge and funding.

Our programme of artists are approaching this year’s theme of communities near and far and contemplating new ways of interacting and making music. We look forward to meeting with them and our audiences online and exploring these ideas together.

NOTES FOR EDITORS:

Our entire programme will be delivered via our mainstage website which will be hosted at live.networkmusicfestival.org.

The Network Music Festival first took place 2012-2014 in Birmingham, UK, exploring music performances featuring some form of online or physical network communication. It is returning in 2020 as an online festival for the first time, in response to the growth of virtual connections during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Donations are accepted via the festival website: <https://networkmusicfestival.org/donate/>

Organisers: *Shelly Knotts, Charles Céleste Hutchins, Holger Ballweg.*

For further information or comment, please contact Shelly Knotts on 07872569712 or contact@networkmusicfestival.org

Further line-up details and information is available at the festival website, <http://networkmusicfestival.org/>



