

University of California, Santa Barbara
College of Letters and Science, Division of Humanities and Fine Arts
UCSB CREATE (Center for Research in Electronic Art Technology)
and the Department of Music present



Philippe Manoury
composer
Christophe Desjardins
viola
Christophe Lebreton
sound engineer
in a
Lecture
and Performance
of "Partita 1"
for solo viola and electronics



"Philippe Manoury's **Partita I**, a 2006 work for viola and electronics, expands on the solo tradition that stretches back to Bach's partitas and sonatas for violin. It calls upon advanced technology and rigorous compositional processes, details that may scare off many fans of classical music. But those who opened their ears to Thursday's performance at La Maison Française experienced the timeless thrill of a masterful composition being interpreted by a devoted and well-equipped performer.

Manoury studied and composed at France's renowned music technology center, IRCAM. He has continued his research at the University of California at San Diego, focusing on the real-time interaction of electronics with human performers. For **Partita 1**, Manoury equipped Desjardins with a futuristic sensor on the index finger of his bow hand that sent instructions to a computer, manned by sound engineer Christophe Lebreton. Sophisticated software then manipulated live and prerecorded sounds and fed them instantly to six speakers surrounding the audience. The aural effect was like being embedded in a heavenly viola choir, and the 45-minute work often felt more like a concerto backed by an invisible orchestra than a solo. Besides ample sparkling harmonies and lyrical melodies, there were devious electronic chuckles and moments of pure sorcery, such as when Desjardins launched alien sounds into dizzying spirals with the flick of his bow.

For all its tricks, **Partita 1** succeeds by virtue of its beautiful and well-crafted music. Manoury has simply employed the latest technology to further a profound vision, just as Bach and all great composers since have done." *The Washington Post* (web-only review by Aaron Grad)

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