

ARTIST STATEMENT

I am first a human being. First and foremost. Then I am an artist and after that I am a musician. And even then I am first a performer, in service of all the great music out there. Composing only comes after that for me and it comes influenced by existing music and as a logical extension of what I have been doing much longer, what people refer to as *real-time composition* and what in its broader sense is present in the lives of all the people – improvisation.

The composition part of this observation is not a universal truth; it is how I feel about it. The beginning, however, is in my opinion true for most if not all the artists. Who you are as a person, your qualities, interests, habits will leak into the art you create and infuse it with a unique extract of you.

I am a perfectionist by nature and that gets reflected in my music. Mostly away from the public's eye but that much clearer to myself - during compositional process as dilemmas or struggles and as personal criticism in performances and recordings, but also in very specific ideas for and notation of certain elements of my music. Being aware of that characteristic, I sometimes try to deviate from overdoing and overthinking, which brings contrast to the music, resulting, for example, in some tunes having elaborate, complicated improvisational sections, while others leaving a lot of space.

I find it hard sometimes to please my own expectations about the artistic value of music I create. I want each piece to have something special about it, whether apparent to a layman's ear or not (perhaps only known to me) and be it in terms of harmony, rhythm, melody, feel, form or a combination of these. It is in fact often harmony, which is something that fascinates me, but might not be that fascinating or meaningful to an average listener. Again, knowing this tendency brings my attention to balancing my own artistic satisfaction with audience accessibility.

I believe a good composition and a good performance engage the audience and evoke emotions. They speak to the people and, more importantly, make people speak to their inner self. As an artist of many dimensions, Maya Angelou said: *"People will forget what you said; people will forget what you did; but people will never forget how you made them feel."*