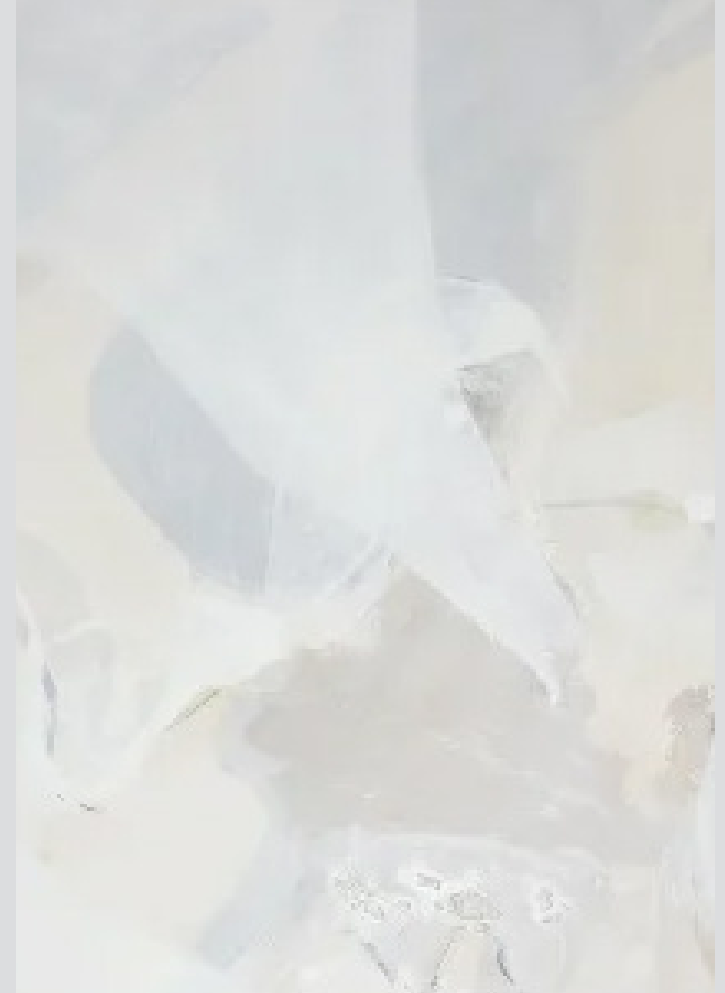
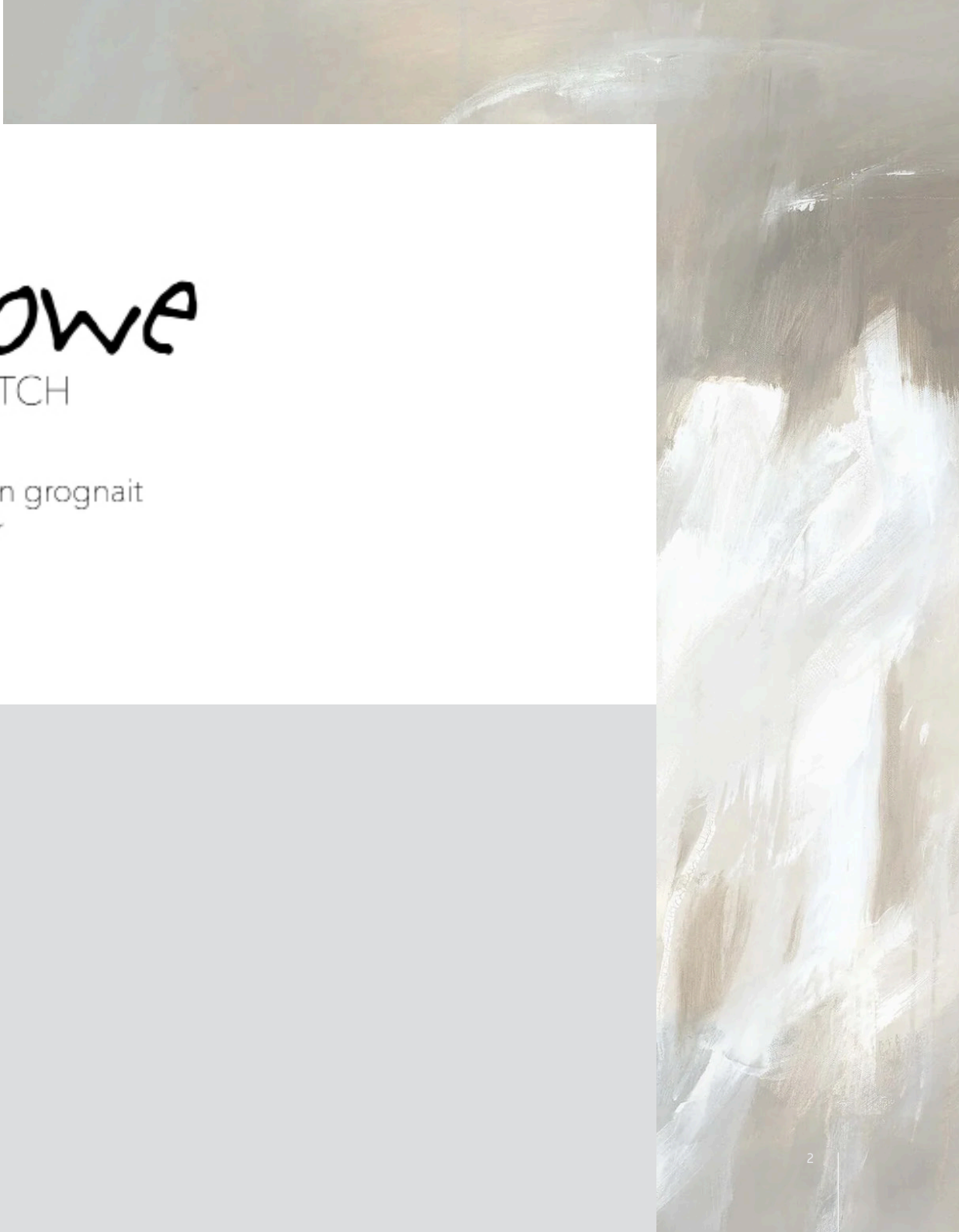




:ContraFlowe

FREE & GUIDED VOCAL IMPROVISATION WORKSHOPS
Making Polyphony form Scratch

by Dimitri Arnauts - Founder, Composer

An abstract painting on the right side of the page, depicting a person in a white shirt with visible brushstrokes in shades of brown, grey, and white.

:ContraFlowe

POLYPHONY FROM SCRATCH

aux commencements, on criait, on grognait
puis on s'est mis à parler, disputer

un jour, un ciel, nous chanterons

its Name shall be **:ContraFlowe**

:C from the Fa-key

Contra: from contrapunctus/coun-
terpoint – as we will (also) focus on
'ancient' music styles and feelings

Flowe: from flow and flower: jazz
inspirational concept and diversity
of colors and people

we: from creative together: no
stress, much bliss



VALUES

3/3

Ethics and values proposal

I commit to always ground myself upon a **respectful, nuanced polite, considerate, generous and understanding spirit** when interacting with participants and assistants, be it through teaching, mentoring, discussing, rehearsing, or conducting - with a constant eye for the human aspect of all artistic activity, for the well-being participants, but always with a focus towards quality, commitment and involvement.

I will appreciate, recognize, elevate, and value everyone's (musical) skills and experience, and try to help each person in growing further. **Everyone's artistic and human contribution is welcomed with respect and gratitude.**

Respect and fair treatment, physical and emotional safety, openness, full freedom of opinion and feelings - in their polite, nuanced and civilized expression forms, artistic commitment and enthusiasm towards excellence are fundamentals for successful collective and individual achievement .

Everyone's well-being - within a colorful and polyphonic group spirit, thoughtful solidarity leaving room to keep one's own personality, freedom to engage, to advise, to criticize or to opt out - are very important to me.

I will strive to foster a **positive and constructive work ethic and spirit**, which ensures a good interpersonal atmosphere.

I realize that, as **a mentor or collaborator, I must be exemplary** in all this.

In response, participants are asked to empathize with the **values that this Art Studio wants to embody and propagate during my research time**, which are - as for me - grounded in foundational values bringing fertile blessings:

Truthfulness, Integrity and Openness

Empathy, Compassion and Justice

Care, Service and Solidarity

Human Dignity and Purpose

Freedom within Responsibility

This value list is certainly not a severe, exhaustive or dogmatic 'all-or-nothing' checklist. It is rather a **living and agile collective agreement basis** that should allow us - in any case and at all times, and despite potential setbacks or occasional divergences - to serve and radiate Truth, Beauty and Goodness to the best of our capacities, and to praise whatever we believe in with joyful singing and music making!





EVERYBODY COMPOSER!

1/3

You shall overcome

"I haven't understood
a bar of music in my life,
but I have felt it."

– Igor Stravinsky

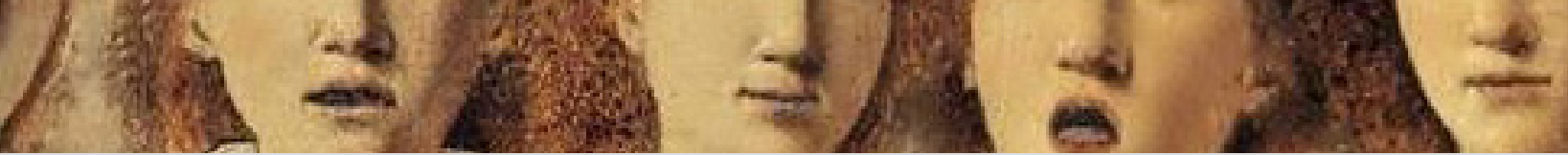
My principal research objective is to conceive, develop and evaluate – along a sustained tuition journey – a practical pedagogy and exercise set to unleash the too often hidden – but very probably universal and innate ! – **creative capacities of human intuition and emotion.**

I have indeed myself experienced and leveraged those neglected or underestimated human mental capacities as **prime inspirational sources** to feed a quite prolific and in my view fairly qualitative written compositional output, during my ongoing development as a composer.

I want in particular to **include, motivate, enable and empower people without any prior academic training** in music theory, instrumental practice, or composition skills: the 'a-didacts'.

More precisely, I will a priori focus on **voice development and vocal improvisation fluency**, as well as on **harmonic sensibility and tonal context awareness** – always in a very broad spirit, open to all meaningful contemporary developments and innovative stylistic flavours.

I want to integrate and **support the broadest possible variety of musical tastes, schools and aesthetics** present among participants, and devise education principles and methods that are flexible enough to serve them all.



EVERYBODY COMPOSER!

2/3

Gradus ad Parnassum

“Music is the divine way to tell beautiful, poetic things to the heart.”

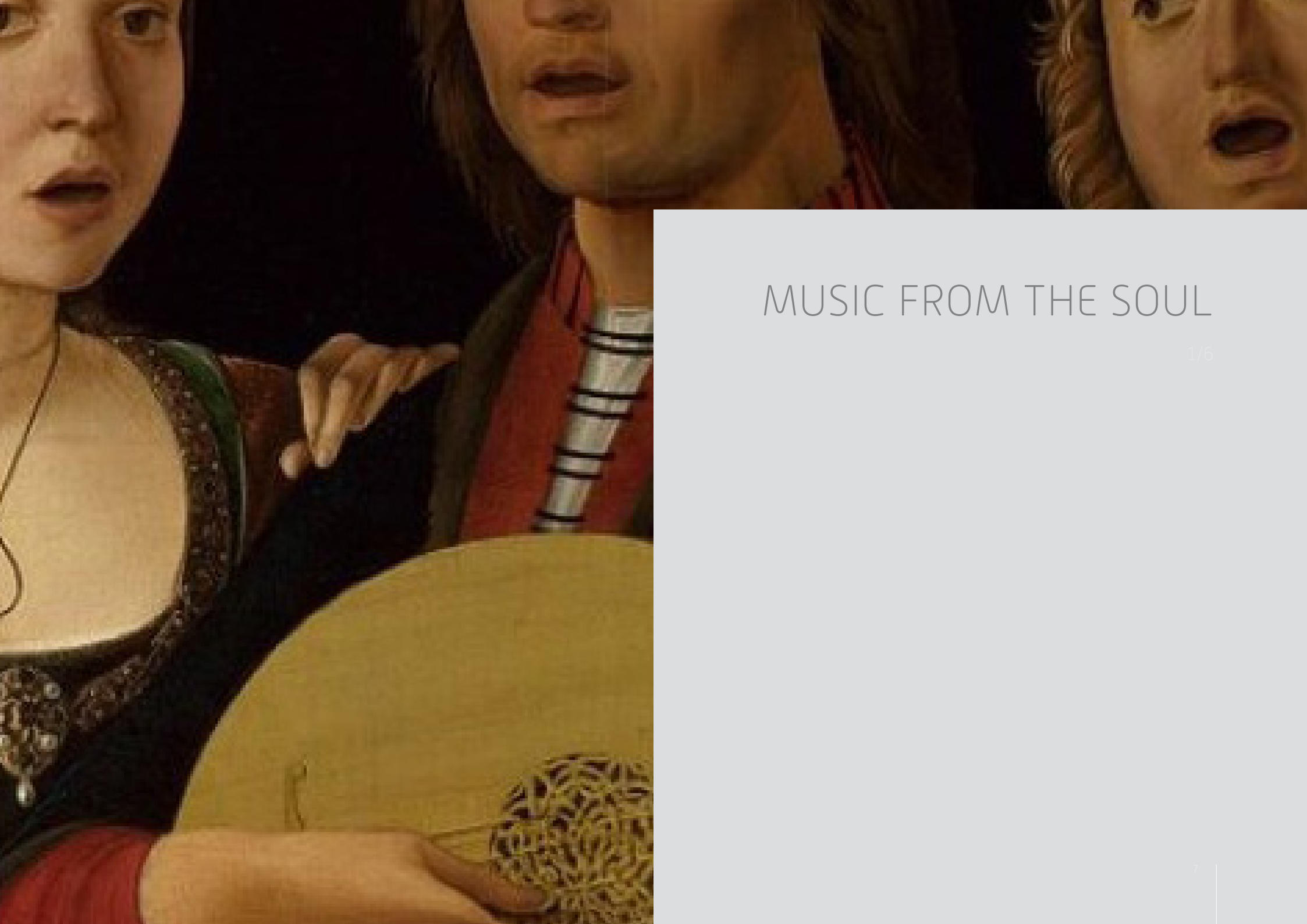
– Pablo Casals

Notwithstanding the very open approach explained before, my workshop tuition and practice would be strongly **embedded in the aural universe of classical western tonal harmony.**

The proposed improvisation workshops would also be designed with the goal of **acquiring and applying in one’s music writing contrapuntal excellence and clever polyphonic textures**, going from ascetic lines to flourishing abundance – within free forms or more sophisticated and tried structures.

This choice is made mainly out of personal sensibility, originates in my early musical discoveries, experiences and growth curve as a composer, and corresponds to my hands-on expertise of tonal worlds built up during my artist’s life.

However, I have a substantial track of works composed for performers and instruments from very **different civilizations, faiths or cultures** : I have worked with African, South American, Asian, Eastern European artists and with lyrics written by poets from around the world.



MUSIC FROM THE SOUL

1/6



Everybody has a voice

"The easiest way to avoid wrong notes is to never open your mouth and sing.

What a mistake that would be."

– Pete Seeger

"Works of art make rules; rules do not make works of art."

– Claude Debussy

A capacity that all expected participants – be they unschooled autodidacts, amateur composers, keen improvisers, singers or instrumentalists, or very well trained and skilled ones with music degrees or other qualifications – evidently share is:

the human voice.

Our voice is also the **most unique and personal aural signature, and the most accurate expression mode**, close to our feelings, emotions, inner struggles, joys, hopes, fears and pains:

*The voice is, with the eyes,
a door to our soul.*

For these reasons, I want to use the **human voice as the entry point and common expression mode for all individual or collective exercises** during the composition workshops – so everybody can join and start his own growth path at his pace.

I am convinced to take this path, based on my own experience as a composer, slowly evolving from a total lack of skills towards prolific and efficient written output in various styles, without any theoretical training or study: only via podium-acquired insight and by sturdy intuition-driven writing over the years.

My experience in overcoming my own psychological handicaps or motivational setbacks, creative blocks and technical hurdles will help me quickly debug work processes, and thus **speed up the learning curve of the workshop participants.**

I want them to achieve much higher accomplishments, in a smoother and faster way, than I have been myself able to.



MUSIC FROM THE SOUL

2/6

1000 ways to enable

"You have to take a deep breath. And allow the music to flow through you.

Revel in it,
allow yourself to awe.

When you play,
allow the music to break
your heart with its beauty."

– Kelly White

The workshops not imply or require strong vocal or lyrical skills at start – but the ongoing practice of their innovative exercises will greatly develop those:

*grounded breath and based appoggio,
comfortable range with even color,
precise intonation and stable pitch,
fluency with melisma's and ornaments,
good diction and text expressivity
well-shaped musical phrasing
strong projection for performance,
linking with rhythm patterns*

More fundamentally, for the creative purpose of the workshop, these exercises and growing vocal skills will lead to:

*increased tonal sensibility
better feeling of harmonic context
anticipation of harmonic progression,
a broader palette of emotional colors,
higher melodic inspiration
more rich variation vocabulary
more advanced phrase development*

Alltogether, these capacities will enable the participant to **generate a steady and prolific inner improvisation flow** that expresses itself accurately, uniquely and expressively through each one's voice.

A.k.a. 'Inspiration' ...



MUSIC FROM THE SOUL

3/6

Workshop menu

"How is it that music can, without words, evoke our laughter, our fears, our highest aspirations?"

– Jane Swan

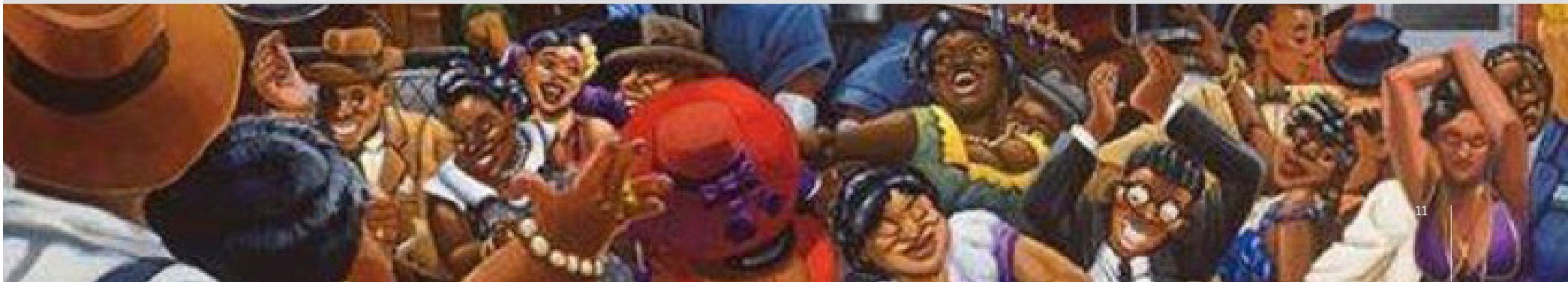
Introduction exposé

I intend to deliver a **concise but very dense, reference-rich opening speech** to create a powerful appeal, intellectual curiosity, involvement with the theme – even to the point of quitting the comfort zone or of challenging common assumptions and prejudices.

However, I will always **take into account and respect the emotional or cultural sensitivities of my audience.**

This will be the typical structure of this short incipit:

- definition of the workshop **theme/issue**, and of the **goals of related artistic output** to be delivered
- **personal or societal relevance of the theme**: how does the theme resonate with the participants?
- **philosophical roots or faith-based grounding, scientific data and knowledge**
- selection of major **historical or contemporary expressions across cultures and art forms** (attuned to the workshop attendance backgrounds)
- **useful information** about sources and references, reading suggestions, didactic resources online...



MUSIC FROM THE SOUL

4/6

Skills practice session

From a prepared collection, I will select those exercises most relevant to the work assignment of the month.

They will have increasing levels of complexity - as induced by their aural backdrop or structure:

1. An **increasingly elaborated harmonic context** supported by prepared audio material: from flat and static sound-scapes, over faster harmonic rhythm, over evolutive tonal arches with modulation phases, to dense polyphonic structures asking for quick and reactive contrapuntal fluency.

They will also have **increasing levels of generative difficulty** asked from the participants:

2. Requiring a **build-up of generative fluency and density**: going from simple bass drone intonation, over harmonic enrichment and coloring, to leading melodic responsibility or concertant interventions

3. Proposing a **growing personal engagement and exposure** to each participant (if they wish so): going from collective expression modes (choral-type) to more daring individual expression (solo-type)

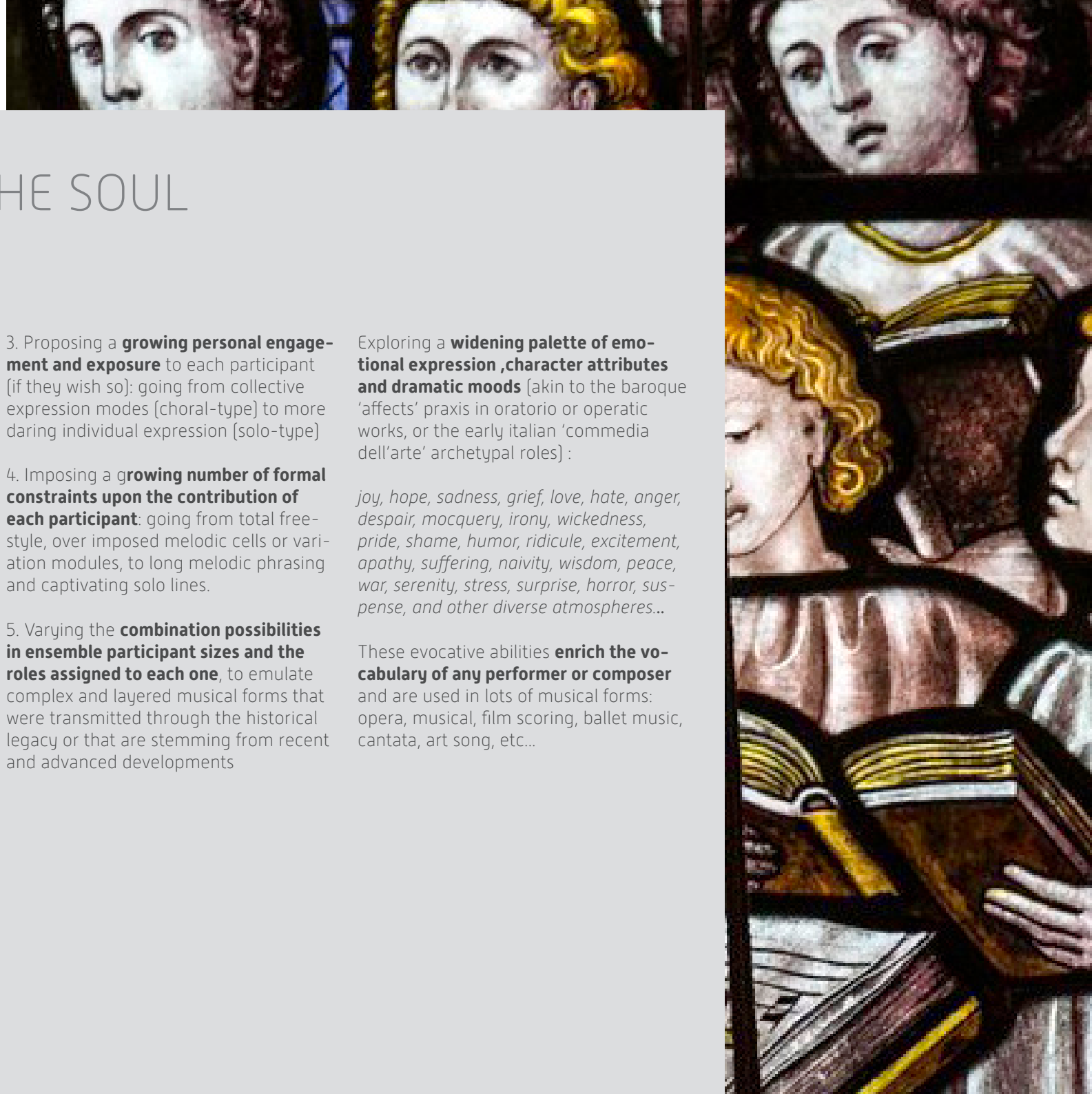
4. Imposing a **growing number of formal constraints upon the contribution of each participant**: going from total free-style, over imposed melodic cells or variation modules, to long melodic phrasing and captivating solo lines.

5. Varying the **combination possibilities in ensemble participant sizes and the roles assigned to each one**, to emulate complex and layered musical forms that were transmitted through the historical legacy or that are stemming from recent and advanced developments

Exploring a **widening palette of emotional expression ,character attributes and dramatic moods** (akin to the baroque 'affects' praxis in oratorio or operatic works, or the early italian 'commedia dell'arte' archetypal roles) :

joy, hope, sadness, grief, love, hate, anger, despair, mockery, irony, wickedness, pride, shame, humor, ridicule, excitement, apathy, suffering, naivety, wisdom, peace, war, serenity, stress, surprise, horror, suspense, and other diverse atmospheres...

These evocative abilities **enrich the vocabulary of any performer or composer** and are used in lots of musical forms: opera, musical, film scoring, ballet music, cantata, art song, etc...





SOCIAL, CONTACT & STREAMING



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COMPOSER

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- ▶ Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/dimitri-arnauts-composer/>
- ▶ Music streaming: <https://ffm.bio/dimitriarnauts>

Music Streaming Online

- ▶ <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5izGGn8KzKnc62i-TFYQbg>
- ▶ <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCH4LYG7VfBp9NPVNgSCVRmg>
- ▶ <https://deezer.page.link/ZT1QLHdp6apeHSyv5>
- ▶ <https://open.spotify.com/artist/5PpEZI5Eljz6FChB8xLCZq>
- ▶ <https://tidal.com/browse/artist/15387799>
- ▶ **'All of Dimitri' Spotify Playlist (364 tracks)**



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POLYPHONY FROM SCRATCH

aux commencements, on criait, on grognait
puis on s'est mis à parler, disputer

un jour, un ciel, nous chanterons

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