

HIGH ANGLE MUSIC was founded in 2014 by Bosworth Music and ANNETTE GENTZ MUSIC ARTS, an artist and music production agency based in Berlin. Our work focuses on composers who, though trained in classical music, feel most comfortable on the cutting edge, moving between genres and investigating different formats of presentation.

HIGH ANGLE MUSIC is defined by artistic insight, excellence and innovation. Our open-ended approach to the artistic process has seen HIGH ANGLE MUSIC generate some of the most talked-about and acclaimed music of recent times.



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JOHN KAMEEL FARAH

John Kameel Farah is a composer, pianist and electronic musician based in Toronto and Berlin. A virtuosic keyboardist simultaneously using piano, synthesizer sound sculpture, computer sequencing, Toronto's *NOW* Magazine named him *Best Pianist 2006* for his unique fusion of Renaissance and Baroque counterpoint, experimental improvisation, Middle-Eastern texture, ambient minimalism, and all forms of Electronic Dance Music.

An artist whose work reaches beyond the confines of modern definitions, he has the unique fortune of being reviewed by the *Toronto Star's* classical critic one day, gigging at an avant-garde jazz festival the next, and performing at an underground electronic event a few days later.

Classically trained in composition and piano performance at the University of Toronto and the Royal Conservatory, John received the Glenn Gould Composition Award twice during his studies. The influences of the classical and avant-garde works he performs can be felt in his music, mixing with forays into free improvisation, minimalism, jazz, Arabic rhythms and microtonal scales, and electronic genres such as Drum & Bass, Dubstep, Techno and IDM.

In 1999, after meeting minimalist composer/pianist Terry Riley in NYC, he had private lessons with him in California and studied Middle-Eastern classical music at the Arabic Music Retreat in Hartford twice. In 1998 he performed the complete solo piano works of Arnold Schönberg in Toronto.

Farah performs regularly in Toronto and Berlin, and has toured throughout Europe and the U.K., United States, Canada, Brazil, South Korea, the Middle-East and Mexico, once even

playing a concert atop the Aztec "Great Pyramid of Cholula" with visuals created by astronomer John Dubinski. In 1999 and 2002 he visited the Edward Said National Conservatory in the West Bank, giving concerts and masterclasses in Ramallah, Bethlehem and Jerusalem. Farah was given the 2011 K.M. Hunter Artist Award by the Ontario Arts Council. He has released four albums, *Creation*, *Unfolding*, *Pieces of the Earth* and *Between Carthage and Rome*. Farah was the 2013 SoundMakers-Composer-in-Residence with Canadian new-music organization SoundStreams and is a member of the Canadian Electronic Ensemble.

His recent works include a collaboration with the Bermuda4 String Quartet, consisting of members of the Bochumer Symphoniker, as well as a commission by Berlin's Haus der Kulturen der Welt, which was presented again at a concert celebrating the HKW's 25th anniversary. In December 2014, Farah released his album *Between Carthage and Rome*, a book of fugues and fantasies for piano and electronics, and synthesizer landscapes. He is currently working on a large-scale collaboration with Canadian dance icon and choreographer [Peggy Baker](#) for her work *Locus Plot* that creates dance movement developed from the contours of mathematical formulae. Farah was commissioned to write a 50-minute composition which will premiere at the Betty Oliphant Theatre in Canada's National Ballet School in spring 2015.

Selected quotes, reviews and interviews

THE WHOLE NOTE review on [Between Carthage and Rome](#) February 2015

MUSICAL TORONTO review on [Between Carthage and Rome](#) January 2015

FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG review [State Festival Berlin 2014](#)

RHEIN-NECKAR-ZEITUNG concert review [Enjoy Jazz Festival 2014](#)

EXCLAIM MAGAZINE [interview April 2013](#)

MUSICAL TORONTO review on [Distances](#)

NATIONAL POST [interview](#) with Peggy Baker and John Kameel Farah

THE WHOLE NOTE review on [Unfolding](#)

EXCLAIM MAGAZINE [portrait 2007](#)

"There is another salient element: Farah's unique composer voice. Particularly convincing is his sure-handed shaping of overall form, adventurous harmonic movement, counterpoint, rhythmic vitality and sheer melodic inventiveness. [...] A transcultural historically informed narrative, suggested by the title, is manifest in the vigorous interaction between the European and Middle Eastern musical vocabularies employed here. It argues for the exploration of, as the composer put it, "ties and intertwining developments of many civilizations on both sides of the Mediterranean." Throughout, Farah's sensitive, brilliant touch on the piano keyboard, as well as his plucking and muting its strings with fingertips, is a luxurious listening pleasure." **Andrew Timar, The Whole Note, 2015**



"John Kameel Farah represents the antithesis of the all-too-common "superficial modernist", making deep connections between all the elements that go into his music... translating into unified performances that have a symphonic scope. From Renaissance William Byrd, to avant-garde Stockhausen, free improvisation, Middle Eastern scales, sampled beats and ambient soundscapes, all are subtly combined in an enveloping sonic experience of genuine artistic vision." **Glen Hall, Exclaim Magazine, 2013**

"Unable to find an assessment of John Kameel Farah's music that doesn't use vague terms like "cutting edge" and "genre busting", we thought JKF might like to enlighten us in his own words. Classically trained, sonically obsessed and at a cultural crossroads, he reluctantly offered: 'Post-Modern... but after that'." **Ted Niles, Wheel Me Out Magazine, London, U.K., 2011**

"One of Toronto's most eclectic pianists and improvisers, electronic composer John Kameel Farah has gained a diverse following across several genres, merging his backgrounds into one unified voice. Farah brings his tour-de-force to his NYC debut; an 80-minute concerto for piano and electronics filled with cascading keyboard work and lush electronic orchestration." **New York Daily News, April 2010**

"John Kameel Farah made sure the "I" in IDM was written in 72-point boldface, with his insane, baroque keyboard and electronic compositions. This new release sees him paired with equally pyrotechnic pianist Attila Fias and their incredible dexterity is much more than mere flash. You've never heard a piano duo like this." **David Dacks, Exclaim Magazine, 2011**

"JKF makes light work of blending Squarepusher-esque electro basslines and drum 'n' bass, with deft jazz and classical keyboards [...]" **Time Out, London, July 2010**

"Farah is redefining electronica [...] a force connected to the living, breathing, cutting edge of music [...] Farah is bravely, imaginatively forging new sonic ideas at the remote point where the starchy concert hall and dance club could possibly intersect. His barrier-busting mix of electronic, acoustic composition and improvisation contains everything from early Middle Eastern and Western Baroque to 20th-century serialism and minimalism, as well as the deep, complex percussion loops of the dance floor. It's a crazy mix. But it has the power to mesmerize even listeners who have no idea about the complex theories behind how these sound waves came to be [...]" **John Terauds, TORONTO STAR, 2007**

"Eastern and Western, traditional and avant-garde, electronic and acoustic – to Farah these are all puzzle pieces to be arranged, rearranged and deranged to create fascinating new permutations of music [...]" **Rupert Bottenberg, Montréal MIRROR Magazine, 2006**

"A trance-inducing landscape inspired by the vast history of music, from 16th-century English pavaues, to techno, to Arab influences. The interaction of looped beats and repeating sound samples has the power to pull us out of ourselves - a measure of great music... For Farah, it's a quest to understand how and why the world is as it is. To do this with sounds that appeal to club kids and new music fans equally is a major achievement." **John Terauds, TORONTO STAR, 2006**

CONTACT

Annette Gentz Music & Film Arts
Torstr. 175
10115 Berlin
info@annettegentz.com

