

ANDREW A. WATTS

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Long Biography (500 words)

Dr. Andrew A. Watts is a composer of chamber, symphonic, multimedia, and electro-acoustic works regularly performed throughout North America, Europe, and Asia. His compositions have been premiered at world-renowned venues and famed cultural events such as Burning Man; Ravinia, the summer home of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra; Boston's celebrated Jordan Hall; The Kitchen in New York City; the Internationales Musikinstitut Darmstadt; and the Holywell Music Room, the oldest custom-built concert hall in Europe. He has written works for many of the top new music groups today including Ensemble Dal Niente, Ekmeles Vocal Ensemble, Proton Bern, Distractfold Ensemble, RAGE Thormbones, Splinter Reeds, Quince Vocal Ensemble, Line Upon Line Percussion, as well as members of the International Contemporary Ensemble, Elision Ensemble, and Talea Ensemble. Recently, in December 2023, Watts premiered a large-scale work, *AI and the Heat Death of the Universe*, which utilizes video and multichannel audio to ponder how an artificial intelligence would react to or interpret a timeline of our distant future.

He completed his doctorate at Stanford University, studying with Brian Ferneyhough, Chris Chafe, and Jaroslaw Kapuscinski. Watts received his master's with distinction from Oxford University and his bachelor's with academic honors from the New England Conservatory. Watts's music mines the expressive and dramatic ramifications of technology and the post-human. His research examines the compositional applications of language desemanticization, focusing on the ability to convey expression through the voice even when specific meaning is lost, augmented, or otherwise unintelligible. His writing also actively explores musical extremes through gradients of freedom and restriction, ambiguity and detail, purity and distortion, along with sound and noise. Often, he includes invented instruments to broaden the palette of what a performer can do. The treatment of microtonality in his pitch language focuses on the evolution of material under tightly constrained circumstances. Watts has sought to create highly precise surface gestures to serve as the impetus in his music. He exercises a great degree of control over nuanced parameters, creating systems to model dramatic real-world behaviors and relations.

Watts is currently on the Music Composition faculty at the University of California Santa Barbara's College of Creative Studies. From 2017-2022, he co-taught the summer workshop "Algorithmic Composition with Max/MSP and OpenMusic" at the Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics (CCRMA). He has been a featured composer at the MATA Festival (USA), impuls International Composers Academy (Austria), Rainy Days Festival (Luxembourg), Young Composers Meeting (Netherlands), Delian Academy (Greece), Cheltenham Music Festival (England), Summer Courses for New Music at Darmstadt (Germany), Composit Festival (Italy), Ostrava Days Institute (Czech Republic), highSCORE Festival (Italy), Wellesley Composers Conference (USA), Etchings Festival (France), Fresh Inc. Festival (USA), New Music on the Point (USA), and Atlantic Music Festival (USA). Furthermore, he has given guest lectures on his compositional practice at IRCAM, Harvard University, UC Berkeley, UC San Diego, McGill University, CalArts, Ithaca College, and other leading music programs. Lastly, from 2018-2019, he co-hosted the interview series *Composer OverTime* featuring discussions and works by innovative composers across the world today.

ANDREW A. WATTS, COMPOSER

Short Biography (200 words)

Andrew A. Watts is a composer of chamber, symphonic, multimedia, and electro-acoustic works regularly performed throughout North America, Europe, and Asia. His compositions have been premiered at world-renowned venues such as Burning Man, Ravinia, Boston's Jordan Hall, Darmstadt, and the Holywell Music Room. Watts has written for many of the top new music groups today including Dal Niente, Ekmeles, Proton Bern, Distractfold, RAGE Thormbones, Splinter Reeds, Quince, and Line Upon Line. Recently, Watts premiered a large-scale work AI and the Heat Death of the Universe, which utilizes video and multichannel audio to ponder how an artificial intelligence would react to or interpret a timeline of our distant future. He completed his D.M.A. in Composition at Stanford, received his master's with distinction from Oxford, and his bachelor's with academic honors from the New England Conservatory. He has been a featured composer at the MATA Festival, impuls Academy, Rainy Days Festival, Delian Academy, Young Composers Meeting, Cheltenham Music Festival, Internationales Musikinstitut Darmstadt, Composit Festival, Ostrava Days Institute, highSCORE Festival, Wellesley Composers Conference, Etchings Festival, Fresh Inc. Festival, New Music on the Point, and Atlantic Music Festival. Watts is currently on the Music Composition faculty at UCSB's College of Creative Studies.