

DR. GEORGE CHRISTOFI

Composer | Music Theorist | Researcher | Guitarist

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Profile

Dr. George Christofi is a Cypriot composer, music theorist and guitarist whose work has been performed in more than fifteen countries across Europe, America and Asia, and broadcast by BBC Radio 3 and CyBC. His music develops through the transformation of sonic material, with timbre, gesture and spectral thinking playing a central role in the articulation of musical form. He has been selected for major international programmes including the Voix Nouvelles Academy of the Fondation Royaumont, Centre Acanthes, IRCAM Academy, Centro Culturale San Fedele / Premio Niccolo Castiglioni, and the VICC Residency. His works have appeared at festivals such as the ISCM World Music Days 2018 in China and ISCM World Music Days 2025 in Portugal, LondonEar Contemporary Music Festival, Spontaneous Combustion New Music Festival, APNM Chamber Music for the 21st Century, International Review of Composers, Seoul International Computer Music Festival, and the Pharos International Contemporary Music Festival.

Education

PhD in Composition University of York, UK, 2005-2009.

MA in Composition, Distinction University of York, UK, 2004-2005.

MMus in Performance, Classical Guitar, Distinction University of Hull, UK, 2014-2015.

BMus, First Class Honours University of Hull, UK, 2001-2004. Major disciplines: Classical Guitar / Performance Studies, Composition, Orchestration, Stylistic Composition.

LGSMD, Licentiate Diploma in Guitar Performance Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London, UK, 2004.

Academic and Teaching Positions

Assistant Professor in Music Theory and Composition Music Programme, Department of Arts, European University Cyprus, 2015-2023.

Scientific Collaborator in Music Theory and Composition Music Programme, Department of Arts, European University Cyprus, 2011-2015 and 2023-2024.

Music Theory Instructor State High Schools and State Music Schools, Cyprus Ministry of Education, 2023-present.

Classical Guitar Instructor State Music Schools, Cyprus Ministry of Education, 2012-present.

Professional Highlights

- Internationally active composer with performances and broadcasts in more than fifteen countries, including presentations at major festivals and venues in Europe, Asia and the United States.
- Selected for leading composition academies and residencies, working with or attending classes by Brian Ferneyhough, Salvatore Sciarrino, Toshio Hosokawa, Olga Neuwirth, Georges Aperghis, Philippe Boesmans, Jonathan Harvey, Daniel D'Adamo, and others.
- Collaborated with internationally recognised performers and ensembles, including Mario Caroli, Sarah Leonard, Harry Sparnaay, Rohan de Saram, Domenico Melchiorre, Lorenza Ramou, Ensemble Musiques Nouvelles, Ensemble 360, Ensemble 10/10, Orchestre National de Lorraine, The Endymion, The Kreutzer Quartet, Ensemble Cairn, DissonArt Ensemble, Ensemble Transmission, Trio IAMA, and the Talea Ensemble.
- His work Diplophonia was presented at the ISCM World Music Days 2018 in Beijing, China; his music was also selected for ISCM World Music Days 2025 in Portugal.
- Active as a researcher and curator, promoting new music, artistic research and cultural collaboration through the Contemporary Music Lab (ConMus Lab) and technAI.
- Co-founder and active member of the Cyprus Guitar Trio, with performances in Cyprus and abroad, including repertoire written specifically for three guitars.
- Founding member of the European Guitar Teachers Association, Cyprus branch.

Selected Academies and Residencies

2007 Fondation Royaumont, 18th Voix Nouvelles Academy Paris, France. Selected among fifteen composers under thirty from around the world; classes with Brian Ferneyhough, Thierry Blondeau and Daniel D'Adamo; collaboration / performance by Ensemble Cairn.

2013 VICC Residency Visby, Sweden. Residency at Visby International Centre for Composers.

2012 Centro Culturale San Fedele Young Composers Programme / Premio Niccolo Castiglioni Milan, Italy. Workshops, seminars and rehearsals, followed by a commission for solo percussion.

2008 IRCAM Academy Glasgow, Scotland. Studies in OpenMusic, Max/MSP and AudioSculpt.

2006-2008 Centre Acanthes Composition Centre Metz, France and Mons, Belgium. Classes with Toshio Hosokawa, Olga Neuwirth, Georges Aperghis, Philippe Boesmans, Salvatore Sciarrino and Michele Reverdy; collaborations with Orchestre National de Lorraine, Ensemble Musiques Nouvelles and Ensemble BerlinPianoPercussion.

Selected Festivals and Venues

ISCM World Music Days 2025 (Portugal); ISCM World Music Days 2018 (Beijing, China); Athens Concert Hall / Megaron; APNM Chamber Music for the 21st Century (New York); Spontaneous Combustion New Music Festival (USA); LondonEar Contemporary Music Festival; International Review of Composers (Serbia); Seoul International Computer Music Festival; International Music Festival Heidelberger Frühling; Attention Musiques Fraîches! Festival (Brussels); Pescara Fiera Festival; Nuova Musica a Treviso; Phonos – Fundació Música Contemporània (Barcelona); Festival Aucarré – Petites Formes Opératiques (Belgium); Pharos International Contemporary Music Festival (Cyprus); Festival of New Music – Centre of Cypriot Composers.

Selected Commissions (2009 onwards)

- Talea Ensemble (USA, 2024)
- Triptycho Ensemble (Cyprus, 2023)
- ESML Saxophone Orchestra (Portugal, 2021)
- CNU Wind Ensemble (USA, 2019)
- GuitART for Italian guitarist Andrea Monarda (Italy, 2018)
- The Pharos Trust for Ensemble C Barre (France, 2017)
- Transmission Ensemble (Canada, 2013)
- Centro Culturale San Fedele for Swiss percussionist Domenico Melchiorre (Italy, 2012)
- European Contemporary Orchestra (Belgium / France, 2011)
- Trio IAMA (Greece, 2011)
- L'Arsenale for Italian flutist Mario Caroli (Italy, 2009)
- Hull Sinfonietta and the Vaughan Williams Trust for soprano Sarah Leonard (UK, 2009)

Selected Scholarships, Awards and Distinctions

- Winner of Spontaneous Combustion of New Music (USA, 2017).
- Nominated composer for the Cyprus Theatre Organisation prize for music composed for Aristophanes' Ekklesiastouses / Prova Generale (2016).
- Niccolo Castiglioni Prize, Milan, Italy (2011-2012).
- Shortlisted composer by the Society for the Promotion of New Music / Sound and Music, UK (six consecutive years).
- Sir Jack Lyons Research Grant, UK (2008).
- Voix Nouvelles Composition Fellowship, Fondation Royaumont, France (2007; selected among 200 applicants).
- A.G. Leventis Foundation Research Scholarship (2006-2009).
- Association pour la Creation et la Diffusion Artistique Grant, France (2006 and 2008).
- University of York, The Vinson Award (2005).
- University of York MA Scholarship and Scholarship from the Ministry of Education and Culture, Cyprus (2004-2005).
- Prize of Academic Excellence, Department of Music, University of Hull (2004).
- Cyprus State Scholarship Foundation / Ministry of Education and Culture Scholarship for undergraduate studies (2001-2004).

Research, Curatorial and Leadership Activity

- Founder and director of the Contemporary Music Lab (ConMus Lab) at European University Cyprus, through which he has organised international composition workshops, lectures, concerts and research symposia.
- Co-founder and director of technAI, a research centre concerned with intersections between technology, creativity and culture.
- Coordinator of Action 51: Young Performers Repertoire within the Creative Europe Interfaces project (2017-2019), in collaboration with the Onassis Foundation and Klangforum Wien. The action curated and commissioned pedagogically oriented contemporary repertoire for young performers and made it available online under a Creative Commons licence.
- Participated in the Erasmus+ project EUTERPE, supporting international collaboration between student composers and performers and contributing to composer-performer workshop activity connected with the Ionian University in Corfu.
- Vice-Chairperson of the Department of Arts, European University Cyprus (2019-2021).
- Coordinator of the Bachelor of Music Programme, Department of Arts, European University Cyprus (2015-2021).
- Music Coordinator during the preparation of the bid book for Pafos 2017 European Capital of Culture candidate city (2011-2012).

Interdisciplinary Projects

- Composed music for several theatrical plays, including music for Aristophanes' *Ekklesiastouses* / *Prova Generale*, which was nominated for a Cyprus Theatre Organisation award for the 2015-2016 productions.
- Collaborated as composer-in-residence with choreographers at the Northern School of Contemporary Dance (UK), including the work *Up into the Silence...* with Danish choreographer Peter Fonss, based on the e.e. cummings poem of the same name.
- Collaborated with L'Opera National du Rhin on the mini-opera *Sirens*, in collaboration with Canadian director Matthew Jocelyn, conductor Jean-Paul Dessy, Ensemble Musiques Nouvelles and Jeunes Voix du Rhin; the work was presented in Mons and Metz in 2007 and in Brussels in 2008.
- Participated as composer-guide in the Weill Music Institute at Carnegie Hall / El Sistema Cyprus Lullaby project, supporting maternal health, child development and the parent-child bond through music.

Selected Research Outputs

- Petroudi, G. and Christofi, G. "Artistic Freedom and State Censorship during the Greek Military Junta (1967–1974)." In *Music, Aesthetics, and Politics in the 20th Century*, Biblioteca di Athena Musica, Italy, 2026.
- Christofi, G. (2026). "Listening, Plurality, and Reflection: Rethinking Democratic Education through the Teaching of Harmony and Aural Skills." Poster presentation, European Association for Music in Schools (EAS) Conference, Vienna, Austria.
- Christofi, G. "The end justifies the means: unorthodox playing techniques in Sciarrino and Lachenmann." Paper at MODUS-MODI-MODALITY, International Musicological Society Conference, Nicosia, Cyprus, September 2017.
- Christofi, G. "A Coloured Theatre: non-conventional instrumental techniques and audio-visual continua in Sciarrino and Lachenmann." Paper at *From Xenakis to the Present Day: The Continuum and its Development in Music and Architecture*, Rouen, France, November 2015.

Selected Scores and Recordings

- Music PhD thesis: *Music Folio* (eight scores, one music CD and commentary-analysis), Raymond Burton Library, University of York.
- Music dictionary entry: Andrea Monarda, *Dizionario di musica contemporanea per chitarra*, GuitArt, 2020.
- *Palindromon en palindromo* for bass clarinet: music excerpts included in Harry Sparnaay, *The Bass Clarinet: A Personal History*, Periferia Music, 2011, ISBN 978-84-938845-0-5.
- *DIPLOPHONIA* per flauto, ARS Publica Edizioni Musicali, Italy.
- *L'Ame du Vin*, in *Progetto Niccolò Castiglioni*, Trio Magritte with Paolo Beltramini and Domenico Melchiorre, Edizioni Suvini Zerboni / SFM, 2012.

Broadcasts, Lectures and Committees

- Broadcasts: Hear and Now, BBC Radio 3 (UK); Entechnos, CyBC (Cyprus).
- Guest lecture at the University of Hull: “Compositional Approaches and Aspects of Modus Operandi” (2018).
- Composition presentation at Centro Culturale San Fedele, Milan (2012).
- Lecture “Movement and Direction: A composer’s perspective” at the 3rd NO BODY Contemporary Dance Festival, Nicosia (2011).
- Series of weekly lectures at the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute on “Using Music Technology in the Class” (2010).
- Open lecture “On recent works” at Fondation Royaumont, Paris (2007).
- Member of the Scientific and Organising Committees of the MODUS-MODI-MODALITY International Musicological Conference (IMS), 2017.
- Adjudicator for Pancyprian songwriting contests for high schools and student songwriting contests in Cyprus.

Reviews / Comments

World New Music Magazine 2018, Vol. 28 (p.52 and p.64):

“ George Christofi’s deft mixture of traditional and extended flute techniques in his Diplophonia (Cyprus). ”

“ Western cultural ideas of structured craftsmanship were present in the well-structured sonic arch of Cypriot composer George Christofi’s Diplophonia (solo flute); here, the flautist Gao Xiping effortlessly handled the virtuosic flute writing and breath interruptions to bring the work to climax as if human breath were involved in an ecstatic moment. ”

Harry Sparnaay in his book The bass clarinet – a personal history BOOK and CD, ISBN: 978-84-938845-0-5 (p.92, when commenting on a technique in Christofi’s work):

“...en la obra del joven compositor chipriota de gran talento George Christofi...”

(Translated from Spanish: “... in the work of the highly talented young Cypriot composer George Christofi...”)

Translated from the French version as appeared in Belgian newspaper Le Soir:

“...One quivered in bewitching ‘Sirens’ of the Greek Cypriot George Christofi, who plays with all the resources of the voice and their timbre interlaced with the instruments to create an astonishing dramatic tension...”

[Le Soir, 17/07/07 – after the premiere of ‘Sirens’ in Mons/Belgium]

Translated from the French version as appeared in French newspaper Le Républicain Lorrain:

“... giving an effect of ‘ebb and flow’ the Greek composer George Christofi very successfully describes the spirit of the ‘four elements’ as appeared in the concept of Tetrasomia...”

[Le Républicain Lorrain, 20/07/08 – after the premiere of ‘Tetrasomia’ in Metz/France]

Public announcement of the Hull Sinfonietta for the ‘Ursula Vaughan Williams project’:

‘...emerging as the talented new generation...’

Performance Activity

In 2015, Christofi co-founded the Cyprus Guitar Trio with Vasilios Avraam and Socrates Leptos. The trio explores and presents repertoire written specifically for three guitars in Cyprus and internationally. Notable activity includes the world premiere of Maximo Diego Pujol’s Concierto para tres guitarras, cuerdas y timbal with the Cyprus Symphony Orchestra conducted by Miltos Logiadis, and appearances at festivals including the Guitar Festival at Lake Plastira organised by the Greek Guitarists Association.