



trptk nine-year anniversary sampler



Dear listener,

If you're reading this, it means that you've gotten your hands on a copy of our special nine-year anniversary sampler. It means you're in for a treat; we've put 17 of our favourite delights in this little chocolate box of music, which means we've had to kill over 1300 of our darlings in the process.

It also means that our label TRPTK has been in existence for nine years, starting with three rebellious youngsters and a dream, growing into an extended family of seven crew members and 197 artists. Those 203 people have collectively recorded 97 albums, EPs and singles, and shared their music with hundreds of thousands of people all around the world. *(for those doing the math: we didn't miscount, one of our staff members is also an artist on the label)*

You having this album in your hands, about ready to play it in your hi-fi system also means that you, our dear listener, have been with us for a part or all of these years. Words cannot describe my gratitude for your support, your generosity, and your endless thirst for new and exciting music. Without this — without you — none of this would be possible.

What it doesn't mean is that we're leaving it here, at just nine years. If it's up to us, there will be a ten-year anniversary, a 25-year anniversary, ... Heck, we'll go on as long as we can, as far as the music takes us. Many more great projects await, many more releases we're so excited to share with you in the future.

But for now, thank you so much for being here, for unwrapping this album, our nine-year anniversary sampler, and hopefully enjoying the content on it as much as we've enjoyed recording, mixing and mastering it.

With love,



Brendon Heinst  
founder & recording/mastering engineer





## Introduction

It all started with Schnittke.

During the spring of 2014, I was asked by a cellist to record Alfred Schnittke's *Sonata for cello and piano No. 1* at a beautiful little church in Haarlem, close to Amsterdam. This piece, constantly avoiding resolution and at the same time alluding to it, brought up an innate sense of desolate, dystopian eeriness. To fully capture this atmosphere, we collaborated with a Dutch cinematographer to shoot a full-length video around the piece, in a moody film noir-esque style. The cellist? Maya Fridman.

So how did we end up at that recording? This all has to do with the research I did for my Master's Degree thesis in audio engineering at the Utrecht School of Arts and Technology.

You see, I've always been a big fan of multichannel surround sound. Back home where I grew up, we had two main music systems in our living room: a nice stereo system with Bowers & Wilkins loudspeakers and Marantz components, and a relatively basic surround system for a home cinema system by KEF — you know, those things with the small speakers, a little subwoofer, and an all-in-one receiver box. Although sonically the bigger stereo system won by a large margin, I was particularly drawn into the surround system and its capabilities for music on SACD and DVD Audio.

To me, it was all about the sense of sonic immersion, the feeling of *being there*, as it were, and less about having perfect timbral fidelity. In a way, I saw stereo sound as though looking upon a beautiful scene through a window. However clear the glass is, it is and will remain two-dimensional. Surround sound, and by extension, spatial audio, is as though stepping through that window, *into* that beautiful scene. You become part of it, rather than being a mere witness to it.

Through my studies at college, I began to notice I prefer a purist and minimal

approach to recording. Rather than trying to solve an issue by just adding more microphones, more EQs, more compression, and more gear, I would always start with the performance itself: the musicians, the instruments, the acoustics. Only when it was absolutely necessary I would resort to using additional tools. Through lessons with my professor Eelco Grimm (of Grimm Audio fame) I learned that adding microphone signals together may result in nasty effects such as comb filters and blurring of the impulse response and soundstage. This prompted me to develop a recording technique that would focus on recording a musical performance as accurately as possible, with as few microphones and tools as possible. And of course, because of my love for multichannel surround recordings, develop something that would work just as well in stereo as it does in 5.1 or even 7.1-channel surround sound.

After several months of simulation, experimentation and evaluation through informal blind listening tests with a wide spectrum of listeners, I developed what I now call the [OOA](#) (Optimized Omnidirectional Array) and set out to record an EP for my final project. But of course, one can't make a recording without musicians, so I designed a poster and hung it up at the Conservatory of Amsterdam. I chose this school specifically because of its forward-thinking and interdisciplinary approach, and with thousands of students studying there, I received a grand total of... one single response.

Only a few years ago I discovered why — the cellist I mentioned at the beginning of the story, Maya Fridman (now my dear wife), found the poster and, rather than writing down my phone number or email address from it, took down the poster to increase her chance at this intriguing recording. Later that day, she called me and suggested to record her and a pianist/singer-songwriter for my final project. And so we did.

About a year later, Maya called me again to see if I would be interested in doing another recording with her, which turned out to be the one I mentioned at the beginning of my story.

We set out to record Schnittke's cello sonata with Maya and pianist Daniël Kool in the spring of 2014, and edited/mastered it soon after. Lastly, we shot some artwork photos in true Maya Fridman fashion, as you probably know her today. Maya, playing a lot of contemporary and classical music, comes from a background of pagan folk and even metal music, so you can understand this called for some less-than-typical cover photo. After that was done too, we proudly presented the masters and cover photo to a bunch of different classical labels, to hopefully bring Schnittke's masterpiece to the ears and hearts of listeners the world over.

The album was rejected by every single label we contacted. *"Nobody listens to Schnittke."*, *"That's not appropriate artwork for classical music."*, and even *"This is not debut album music."* were some of the friendlier replies back. We thought: well, maybe people don't listen to Schnittke because they just don't know about it, and maybe the artwork isn't appropriate for classical music, but Schnittke is not a classical composer and Maya is not a classical artist. It's contemporary art music, and Maya is a young contemporary artist.

Rather than getting ourselves down, we thought the only logical solution to this would be to do it ourselves: start our own music label where we get to decide what we record and with whom we record it. The three of us (myself, Nicky Regelink, the filmmaker who made the Schnittke video, and Luuk Meijssen, my classmate from college) were inspired by how in a triptych three seemingly separate panels combine into something greater than the sum of its parts, and called ourselves TRPTK.

But the triptych was more than just about these three people, it was about combining love for great sound and great music with fairness. Love for great sound for us means that for every album, EP or single, we strive to make a perfectly accurate recording. Perfect in that it not only seamlessly recreates the acoustic instruments in the space where the recording took place, but also that it perfectly aligns with the musicians' intentions and emotions behind the music.



The latter being easier said than done, is all about capturing the tiniest details that never enter the conscious mind yet are vital to the musicality of a recording. The former, perfectly recording and reproducing the soundstage of the acoustic performance, was something I've been working on since I started working on my Master's Degree thesis, which resulted in the aforementioned OOA technique.

But this love for sound is about much more than just a recording technique, or a singular piece of equipment: it's about knowing how to employ all those things, and balance them in such a way for them to work for you.

Musicophilia is all about love for music. Whatever kind in whatever form, created by whomever. A label shouldn't be concerned with having a market and finding music for it, but finding the most interesting new music and then finding a market for that. What we look for in artists is a certain way of thinking outside the box, finding repertoire that's just ever-so-slightly out of the ordinary, or comes with a distinct message. For this reason, we also love to work directly with composers. They, after all, are the creators of this music. And in a way, we have found ourselves in yet another triptych: that of the composer as the creator, the artist as the interpreter, and the audience as the receiver. As a label, we hope to create an everlasting connection between these three sides.

We're not concerned with what genre to file something under; we record everything from medieval music to 21st-century contemporary music, and from jazz to rock to electronic music. As long as there's a quality of innovation and a message in it, we'll find the audience for it. All for the love of music.

Fairness is more than just making fair agreements with our artists to make sure they have unbridled freedom to do what they do. It's about putting the musicians, the composers, and ourselves as a label at an equal level. Only if everyone's equal are you truly able to symbiotically cooperate in the production of a musical piece of art.

One of our main staples of every artist agreement is our no-exceptions 50/50 rule.

This means that our artists always get a guaranteed 50% cut of all revenue we make from recordings. No kickback fees or other hidden fees whatsoever are owed to us as a label. For those of you not in the know of how things work with labels: this is quite a rare thing — most labels have a royalty percentage of 5-15%, with kickback fees for everything the artists sell themselves, sometimes even on concert ticket sales.

Every year, our artists get a detailed sheet with a breakdown of all our sales on them — all physical sales, all downloads, all streams, where they were sold and through which channel. This way, everyone stays in the loop about everything, because transparency is key if you want a fair relationship.

And that, my dear reader, is how — and mostly, *why* — we founded this little label of ours.

We hope you've enjoyed this little abridged history of the label, as well as the sampler itself.



Antonio Vivaldi

**Juditha Triumphans, RV 644: Armatae face et anguibus**

Lotte Bovi & l'Ora Blu (from **Vibrant Venice**, TTK0116)

Always looking forward. This is the way we do things at TRPTK. Whatever we do, we keep looking towards the future, driven to improve ourselves with each step along the way. This is why we wanted to start with a yet unreleased track — to show you what the future might hold for us as a label, and for you as a label. This ride-your-horse-into-battle-anthem is considered one of the most difficult arias to sing, but Lotte Bovi is doing so beautifully. The orchestra is furiously and strikingly playing along, to create one definitely dramatic opening for this sampler.

Rembrandt Frerichs

**Piano concerto No. 1: Elasticity**

Rembrandt Frerichs, Alma Quartet, Dominic Seldis & Vinsent Planjer (from **Frerichs: Piano Concertos Nos. 1 & 2**, TTK0088)

From furious to funky. Putting these two tracks after one another really showcases what we love about our work here at TRPTK. We're not a classical music label per se; we like to record improvised music and jazz too! We have such fond memories of this recording session — two days in Studio 150 (Amsterdam, NL) with some of the most talented and free-thinking musicians we've ever worked with. This track really captures that spirit as well: it's groovy, punchy, and it combines music written down with totally free improvisation.

Franz Schubert

**Winterreise, Op. 87 D 911: Gute Nacht**

Michael Wilmering & Daan Boertien (from **Schubert: Winterreise, Op. 87 D 911**, TTK0078)

This one is a bit of a personal one for me — I still have fond memories of listening to the Winterreise cycle with my late father, now decades ago. This hauntingly beautiful song cycle about love, loss, and a personal journey of discovering oneself is something I think we can all relate to. Baritone Michael Wilmering makes it an incredible performance with almost operatic flair, in perfect symbiosis with pianist Daan Boertien.

Francis Poulenc

**Violin sonata, FP 119: Intermezzo**

Pieter van Loenen & Tobias Borsboom (from **The Silence Between**, TTK0058)

Another personal choice was the second movement of Poulenc's now-famous Violin sonata, FP 119. It was recorded during the 2020 coronavirus pandemic, when the entire world was engulfed in an overwhelming silence. This second movement seems to perfectly capture that period in time where everything stood still. Also not unimportantly: Poulenc just so happens to be the favourite composer of Maya and myself.

Johann Sebastian Bach (arr. Kersten McCall)

**Sonata in A major, BWV 1032: Vivace**

Kersten McCall, Tjeerd Top, Benedikt Enzler & Olga Matieva (from **B.ACH**, TTK0096)

As an artist, Kersten McCall is the embodiment of what we aim to be as a label: forward-thinking and with a completely unique way of working within the confines of the classical music sphere. This sonata, splendidly arranged by Kersten, is one such example, played fantastically by himself and other members of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, in the absolutely amazing acoustics of the Waalse Kerk in Amsterdam. But be aware: the theme of this sonata will be stuck in your ears for a long time to come!

Mieczysław Weinberg

**Rocking the Child, Op. 110: The child was left alone**

Channa Malkin & Artem Belogurov (from **This Is Not A Lullaby**, TTK0069)

Another recording made during the pandemic, Channa Malkin's album *This Is Not A Lullaby* is an one all about motherhood in all its aspects. This first song of Weinberg's cycle *Rocking the Child, Op. 110* is hauntingly beautiful, and the combination of Channa's impeccable voice and the acoustics of the Philharmonie's Grote Zaal (large hall) in Haarlem make that all come through even more.

Giovanni Bottesini

**Gran Duo Concertante**

Luis Cabrera, Sylvia Huang & Justyna Maj (from **Canto Interno**, TTK0072)

After this somewhat heavy Weinberg piece, we thought you'd be in for something more light-hearted. This chamber rendition of Bottesini's Gran Duo Concertante should bring a smile to your face, even though this sampler only contains an excerpt from it. The entire piece is about 16 minutes, so we unfortunately couldn't fit the entire thing on this album.

Anonymous

**Roses et lis ay veu (Var.)**

Irene Sorozábal, Pedro Ivo Ferreira & George Hadow (from **Kurkuma**, TTK0090)

What's not to love about an improvisation based on a Medieval chant, with deep, thick double bass, thundering drums, and Irene's beautiful voice? This track has been played everywhere at high-end hi-fi conventions ever since its release, so we couldn't not put it on this sampler album.

Hans Henkemans

**Concerto for piano and string orchestra: Presto**

Mattias Spee, The South Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra & Ed Spanjaard  
(from **Eclipse, Vol. 2: Hans Henkemans**, TTK0102)

Another artist that we think truly embodies the TRPTK spirit is Mattias Spee. This young pianist has an undying passion for unknown, forgotten or hidden gems of pieces and composers, and even composes and arranges himself. After a great collaboration uncovering music by Joseph Wölfl, Mattias set out to record works by Dutch composer Hans Henkemans, who was sadly forgotten by the world of music. This piano concerto shows the rebellious nature of Henkemans, played amazingly by Mattias with the South Netherlands Philharmonic conducted by Ed Spanjaard.

Robert Schumann

**Dauidsbündlertänze, Op. 6: Frisch**

Nicolas van Poucke (from **The Schumann Collection, Vol. 2**, TTK0107)

We continue with some more piano, albeit from a very different composer, Robert Schumann. This light-hearted little piece ("Frisch" translates to "Fresh" in English) is played by Nicolas van Poucke, dubbed "the young free-thinker among pianists". We couldn't agree more — Nicolas' renditions of Schumann's music are young, free, and Frisch indeed!



Yannis Kyriakides

**Once There Was: On a wall, in a beck**

Konstantyn Napolov & Eke Simons (from **The Collectors**, TTK0027)

In preparation for this sampler album, we wanted to remaster a number of tracks that were previously mastered using our old workflow. The reason for this is that we've now upgraded our entire recording and mastering chain to such an extent that we believe we can pull even more detail, liveliness and musicality out of the same recordings by simply using better digital signal processing. And The Collectors by percussionist Konstantyn Napolov and pianist Eke Simons might be one of the most fun remastering projects we've done — Konstantyn has a great knack for finding interesting and fun music, and he performs it amazingly together with Eke on piano. This is also a great test for your hi-fi system, see if it can handle these transients and low-end punches...

Marion von Tilzer

**Hajej mŭj andilku**

Bella Adamova & Maya Fridman (from **Into Eternity**, TTK0104)

What can be said about this track? It's a simply beautiful Czech lullaby performed by two kindred spirits, contralto Bella Adamova and cellist Maya Fridman. Recorded at Galaxy Studios in Mol (BE), the acoustics give it a warm, intimate kind of closeness that really suits this little lullaby. After a track of big percussion and electronics, we thought you'd deserve to drift away in dreams for a bit, before...

Dmitri Shostakovich

**Cello sonata in D minor, Op. 40: Allegro non troppo**

Dmitry Ferschtman & Mila Baslawskaja (from [Innermost](#), TTK0089)

Dmitry and Mila have been playing together for over 50 years and it shows. They have a symbiosis unlike anyone we've ever worked with, and both play this cello sonata by Shostakovich just so amazingly. The small, intimate acoustics of the Westvest90 church in Schiedam (NL) really help bringing this dark and cynical music closer to you, the listener. This first movement really captures the pieces well, but please do have a listen to the entire piece. It's simply magical.

Aart Strootman

**Obscure Atlas CG-3: Crust**

Helena Basilova, Konstantyn Napolov & Maya Fridman (from [Obscure Atlas](#), TTK0068)

Obscure Atlas is a piece by Aart Strootman that combines piano, percussion and cello, with electronics and tape tracks. It's one of those pieces that just captivates you — you begin playing it and within seconds you're drifting away to this deep, dark, imaginary world. We've selected one of the movements of the piece for the sampler, but do check out the entire piece as well. It's one of the best 20 minutes of listening you can do, we promise.

Maya Fridman

**Mayim**

Maya Fridman (from **The Power of Indifference**, TTX0001)

Last year, we set out to create a new label under TRPTK, where everything is possible. Total and utter creative freedom both musically and production-wise. We call it TRPTK X, and it features some of the more cutting-edge music and production techniques we've been working on. The first release on this album was made by, who else, Maya Fridman, our own A&R manager and first artist on the label. After *Obscure Atlas*, Mayim keeps you in this big, deep dark for a little bit more, before we continue with the last two pieces.

Carlos Gardel

**Gorjeos ('La Mariposa')**

Jonatan Alvarado & Jessica Denys (from **Voces de Bronce**, TTK0099)

Words cannot describe the bittersweet beauty of this one song, sung by the amazing Jonatan Alvarado and accompanied by Jessica Denys. Just sit back and listen to its words and melodies, recorded in the warm and intimate acoustics of Galaxy Studios.

Pietro Locatelli

**Sonata II (from Sonata e Tre, Op. 5): Allegro**

Postscript (from **à Amsterdam**, TTK0097)

We wanted to end the sampler with a live recording. Why? Because live music is what it's all really about, being part of a performance, seeing the music being created before your eyes... This performance by Amsterdam-based Baroque ensemble Postscript features pieces written in Amsterdam, played on instruments built in Amsterdam. We don't think it can get any more Dutch than this.







## Credits

Curated by

Maya Fridman, Ben van Leliveld, Brendon Heinst, Thijs Muijs & Hans Erblich

Recording engineer

Brendon Heinst

Assistant recording engineers

Hans Erblich & Antal van Nie

Editors

Hans Erblich & Ernst Spyckerelle

Mastering engineers

Brendon Heinst & Antal van Nie

Artwork

Brendon Heinst