

De Nederlands
Mus

Concerto for iPad & Orchestra

‘Rotterdam Concerto II’

Ned McGowan

The **world's first** concerto for iPad

A dramatic interaction between iPad and orchestra

Ned McGowan:

"I don't see the iPad as a gimmick, but as a unique electronic instrument with new possibilities for expression."

"Rotterdam Concerto 2 creates not just a new role for a gadget of the Apple firm, but for electronics in the concert hall in general."

Three movement concerto

The iPadist plays a traditional concerto soloist role in front of the orchestra, visually amplified by live close-up video of the performance. Each movement explores different realms of possibilities of the iPad, such as virtuosity, expression, visual music and sampling. The orchestral music ties together various musical characters in order to exploit those realms, being at times introspective, bombastic, romantic, polyrhythmic, contemporary or minimalist.



"It's just outright phenomenal when she resamples recordings from orchestra members on the screen."

Floris Solleveld



questions for composer Ned McGowan

A concerto for orchestra and... iPad! What can we expect?

You can expect the soloist to play the iPad in front of the orchestra, just as if it was a piano or violin concerto. Also, at one point the screen of the iPad will be projected on a large screen behind the orchestra so that the audience can see what the soloist sees – 'een kijkje in de keuken.'

Can you tell something about the possibilities of the iPad as an musical instrument?

This is where it gets interesting. Various people have designed apps (programs for the iPad) with new graphical interfaces where one can control sound through gestures on the touchscreen. Throughout the Concerto I use eight different apps, each of which has its own approach.

Is it possible to play the iPad part of the composition by yourself? Or do you really need a pianist to do this?

Well the first movement is all about expression and there are also a lot of notes to play, sometimes quite fast. Dexterity and subtlety of touch are very important. I choose Keiko to play it because she had those qualities as a pianist and I was thankful that Keiko was able to easily work out some quite sophisticated fingering patterns for the passages, and also she is naturally very expressive with her hands. But in the meantime, recorder specialist Susanna Borsch has also played the Concerto superbly, so its not limited to just piano players. I guess just good finger technique and musical experience are the only real requisites.

Can you define the style of your compositions? [I read something about a mix of styles for your new composition; jazz, rock, minimalism]

On the surface one might say that my music sounds American with its influences from rock, jazz and minimalism, but classical, avant garde and Indian music have also had big influences on my style. Rhythm always plays a large role.

Did classical composers influence your new composition? And if so, which one(s)?

Sure. John Adams and Michael Gordon. Will you hear that? Not sure.

Comments from the public

"Beautiful Concerto!"

- PR manager

"I heard it... Legend."

- Violinist

"On-the-edge-of-your-seat concert."

- Concert programmer



"A technical and musical tour de force."

- Pianist

"A pleasantly surprising piece on so many levels: exciting, engaging, and magical. McGowan has created a symphony that makes the integration of the iPad seem so natural, so 'of course', that you wonder why it hasn't been done before or more often.

The iPad, with literally infinite possibilities, proves to be a worthy addition to the spectrum of orchestral instruments, and Keiko Shichijo demonstrates magnificently how musicianship and expressiveness can be conveyed via this new instrument.

The projection of the instrument on a large screen contributes to the work's accessibility – commonly lacking in contemporary music – and the integration of sounds with the traditional orchestral instruments results in a piece that is both pioneering and an instant classic. *"*

- Director of Culture Fund



Photo: Jolien Jonker

"Thank you again for the wonderful evening. Moreover: even though your iPad concerto might well be the first one in music history, there's one more thing which is a first. It's the best possible integrated cadenza ever in a concerto!"

The screen projection is not a gimmick... It's the ultimate solution of having a soloist perform while the orchestra is silent and still the latter is engaged. The soloist becomes the super soloist dominating the orchestra in a way no other instrument ever can. Also this needs to become part of the written history of western music."

- Composer

"I have heard it twice now and what struck me, if I recall correctly, this composition develops with the development of the instruments – in this case the apps. In that sense, in future performances, you should add the title of the version in the program: iPad Concerto version 2015."

- Director city public library

"...approaches the idea of a soloist in new and surprising ways, especially in the third movement (...) because it challenges the audience's expectations about her role within the group"

- Composer

"Just want to say that I really enjoyed the iPad Concerto. It was interesting, inspiring and at times very moving!"

- IT specialist



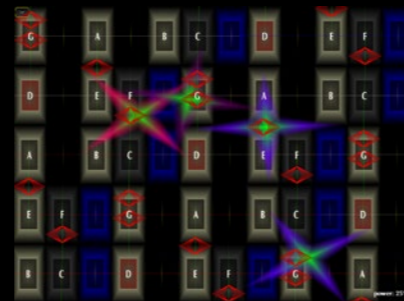
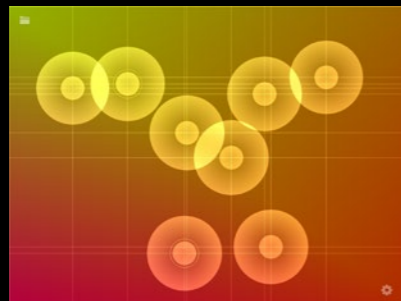
Concerto for iPad & Orchestra *'Rotterdam Concerto II'*

Duration: **25 minutes**
3 movements

Instrumentation: **1-1-1-1, 1-1-1-0, percussion, piano, strings (4-4-3-3-1 minimal), solo iPad**

With **live video projection and amplification** of the iPad.

Concerto for iPad & Orchestra *'Rotterdam Concerto II'* was commissioned by De Doelen Concert Hall, Rotterdam, the Netherlands for Sinfonia Rotterdam.



Apps: Geo Synth, Bowls HD, TC-11, Monolith LOOP, MadPad, SampleWiz and Animoog.

Score

"...there's still plenty of life in old-fashioned virtuosity"

Steve Smith, New York Times

Photo: Michel Marang

Ned McGowan

"If you are having a slow day, his samples will wake you right up!"

Alex Ross, The Rest is Noise

Known for rhythmical vitality and technical virtuosity, the music of Ned McGowan has won awards and been performed at Carnegie Hall, the Concertgebouw and other halls and festivals around the world by many orchestras, ensembles and soloists.

McGowan was born in the United States in 1970 and has been living in the Netherlands since 1994. His works have been performed by the Radio Kamer Filharmonie, Sinfonia Rotterdam, Valdosta Symphony Orchestra,

American Composers Orchestra, musikFabrik, Calefax, Zapp4, Flexible Music and the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, among others. Ned McGowan teaches composition at the HKU University of the Arts Utrecht.

Commissioners include the festivals Acht Brücken, Grachten, Klankleur, MATA, Nederlandse Muziek Dagen, Voorwaarts Maart. In 2014, he was awarded the Alumni Achievement Award from the Cleveland Institute of Music.

"McGowan's music strives for an idiom in which various musics – American popular, European classical and avant-garde, Carnatic, a fascination with proportionally intricate rhythms, the use of micro-tones in the search for new subtleties of melody – and many others, rub against each other and generate new meanings."

Bob Gilmore



Photo: Michel Marang

Keiko Shichijo

Pianist & iPad soloist



Photo: Donald van Hasselt



Photo: Jolien Jonker

“During her stunning premiere of the iPad Concerto, Keiko Shichijo played with grace, made the iPad sing and was ferocious in the percussive moments.”

“Keiko had the audience gasping at her brilliance and effortless finger work”
The Hindu

Keiko Shichijo is a pianist and fortepianist based in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. She is active around the world, performing solo recitals and chamber music, with a focus on both historical performance and on music from the 20th and 21st century. Keiko is known for her expression and technical command in live performances.

Hailing from Japan, she is a prizewinner in many international competitions, including twice the International Early Music Competition (solo and duo) in Brugge, Belgium, The International Early Music Competition “A Tre” in Trossingen in Germany and the Minkoff Prize.

Recent performances include the festivals Printemps Des Arts (France), Utrecht Oude Muziek Festival (Holland), MA Festival (Belgium), Biennial Ostrava Days (Czech Republic) and Midis-Minimes (Belgium), a Mozart piano concerto with the Stradivaria orchestra, a historical setting of Schoenberg’s *Pierrot Lunaire*, a program of Satie at the Concertgebouw Amsterdam with mezzo Antje Lohse and a solo concert of Feldman in Brugge and tours throughout India and Japan. In 2012 Hamamatsu Museum of Musical Instruments in Japan released her first fortepiano solo CD of works by Schubert.



Susanna Borsch illustrating iPad techniques in TEDx lecture by Ned McGowan

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Links

[Video preview](#)

[Sample score](#)

[TEDx lecture by Ned McGowan](#)



nedmcgowan.com