



presentation dossier

# The Once and Future



# expanded cinema experience

combining hi-power laser tracking, cross-over vocal performance, and AI-assisted libretto, with the virtuosic artistry of the Berliner Philharmoniker members and a new film shot in 12K by acclaimed Singaporean director Yeo Siew Hua.







The earth is dying and we are rushing off to space - a final unknown more welcoming than what we have made of our home. In the face of an imminent planetary exodus, what are we willing to leave behind? How will we make sense of ourselves on such an occasion?



Contemplating our bodies and the borders between us, geographically, physically, spiritually, *The Once and Future* is meant as a sensuous proposal to the ways humanity can be, and the ways by which we can learn new ways of being – finding kinships and intimacies between ourselves and our non-human peers.

Through cinema, through music, through lasers, through performance, the work explores the visceral nature of multidisciplinary performance, capturing an essential element of living and existing together. Over the course of 75 minutes, we see a kaleidoscopic impression of life on Earth, interpreted simultaneously by ourselves as audience and a 'higher power' AI system performed by a novel laser tracking choreography.





**"The most stunning and divisive work at the festival...Yeo Siew Hua's ambitious and multidisciplinary epic that features film, theatre, laser display...and Berliner Philharmoniker's gorgeous postmodern music composed by Eugene Birman."** - Business Times (SG)

**"The production does not aim at sensory overload; rather, it sneaks up on the viewer, delivering a string of unexpected pleasures."** - Straits Times (SG)

**"Arresting and original."** - NVAF (HK)







Hailed as a child prodigy, **Anandi Bhattacharya** featured in the album Beyond the Ragasphere conceived by her father, Pandit Debashish Bhattacharya, alongside the likes of John McLaughlin, Jerry Douglas, Pt. Bickram Ghosh and Pt. Tanmoy Bose, which won the Album of the Year (2014) at WOMEX.



**Eugene Birman** is the Guggenheim-winning composer and creator of numerous highly awarded international multidisciplinary productions, with commissioners and partners extending far beyond the concert hall to major international bodies such as the European Union, Hong Kong SAR, the United States Department of State, and others.





**Stanley Dodds** is the Principal Conductor of the Berlin Symphony Orchestra since 2014. He is the founder of the ZeMu! Ensemble Berlin dedicated to the performance of works by living composers.



**Yeo Siew Hua** is a visual artist and filmmaker from Singapore. His fiction feature, *A Land Imagined* (2018) won the Golden Leopard grand prize at the 71st Locarno Film Festival.



1. The **ZeMu! Ensemble** is the latest ensemble to emerge from the ranks of the world-famous Berliner Philharmoniker, dedicated to pursuing groundbreaking technology and new media crossover projects in classical music. "The Once and Future" is its debut project.





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