

Benjamin K. Zervigón
Composer, Pianist, Music Educator
+1 (504) 265-2166 | bzervigon@gmail.com | bkz504.com

General Statement/Biography:

Born in 2000 in New Orleans, LA, B.K.Zervigón began composing at a young age. Often dealing with the challenges facing the Gulf Coast due to climate change and industrialization, his work conjures the interplay between heavy industry and ancient, sickly nature. His home landscape of Southeast Louisiana seeps into his work through its often massive architectural processes framed against intensely emotional and intuitive feeling. Much of his output could be described as landscapes which dilate time. When not writing about the natural world, his work is preoccupied with the ways in which memory filters history, place and culture.

His recent New York New Music Ensemble commission *Tattoo on Porcelain* was described as, “*a remarkable work, composed with great judgement and a sense of mystery, played with sharpness ... into a moody narrative of inner landscapes. The music had no predictable direction but the assured shape of a form that comes into view through time. NYNME was not just in command of the notes but seemed themselves ready to be as surprised by, and trust in, the composer as was the listener. This is music that uses spare means and careful, deliberate organization of events to create an abstract surface with communicative depths.*” by critic George Grella.

His output includes works for piano, retuned piano, instrumental solos, chamber works, vocal music, electronic music and installation work. In addition to writing, Zervigón is an active piano soloist, playing both notated and improvised music, as well as a concert organizer with the Alluvium Ensemble. His music can be heard regularly in New Orleans and has been played across the northern hemisphere. In addition to his creative pursuits, Zervigón is a dedicated piano teacher. Some of his mentors include Yotam Haber, Michael Hersch and Carla Kihlstedt among many others. His frequent collaborators include Chris Alford, Daniel Toledo Guillén, J.T. Hassell, William Lang, Eduardo Leandro and others.

Education:

- Private Composition Study
 - With Alexander Khubeev and Christopher Trapani
- Vermont College of Fine Arts (2022- 2024)
 - MFA in music composition studying under Carla Kihlstedt, Roger Zahab, Andy Jaffe and Lisa Mezzecappa.
 - Studies began July 2022, graduated July 20, 2024.
- Peabody Conservatory (2019-2021)
 - Bachelor of Music student studying under Michael Hersch.
 - Awarded the “Premiere Talent Scholarship.”
 - Studies interrupted by the pandemic; no degree conferred
- University of New Orleans (2016-2019)
 - Studying composition, orchestration and theory under Yotam Haber.
- Private piano study with Peter Collins (2016-2019)
- Benjamin Franklin High School of New Orleans (2019)
 - Graduated Summa Cum Laude.

Festivals:

- Sounds of Now, Vienna (2025)
 - Masterclasses with Dai Fujikura, Lukas Ligeti, Victor Bález, Daniel Moser and Adrián Artacho and a new work for Mivos Quartet.
- Hypercube’s CubeLab (2024)
 - A new work for Hypercube Quartet and masterclasses.
- International Divertimento Ensemble Academy (2023)
 - Masterclass and concert series with Tristan Murail.
- Birdfoot Festival (2023)
 - Featured composer.
- Synesthesia Composition Workshop (2023)
 - Organist Farida Nurulloeva for fall 2023 premiere.
- Community Vocal Workshop with Sarah Quintana (2022)

- Organized a public educational event in collaboration with vocalist and speech pathologist Sarah Quintana.
- 12th International Young Composers Academy in Tchaikovsky City (2022)
 - Masterclasses with Deqing Wen, Dmitri Kourliandski, Katharina Rosenberger, Francesca Verunelli and others.
- IX St. Petersburg International New Music Festival (2022)
 - Olga Demina performing *Standing in the Floodplains* for Solo Cello and masterclasses.
- IRCAM Forum Workshops (2021)
 - Presenting on “Reimagining Sound Design in Soundings in Fathoms.”

Selected Commissions:

- *New Work*
 - A collaborative composition with bassist Brandon Lopez. Evening length work for String Quartet and improvising bassist.
 - Winter 2027 Premiere
- *Tattoo on Porcelain*
 - Commissioned by the New York New Music Ensemble. Premiere performance 18 May 2026, in New York City.
- *Care Forgot*
 - For trombonist William Lang. Premiere performance 5 May 2026, in New Orleans, LA.
 - New York Premiere at *June in Buffalo*, 6 June 2026
- *Gone to Water* (2024)
 - A song cycle for voice, trombone and seven string players commissioned by Ensemble Ekkip.
 - Premiere January 16th, 2024 in Regensburg, Germany.
- *Moon Pools* (2024)
 - For Saxophonist Ingrid Laubrock, Electronics and Piano.
 - Premiere January 2024 in Susquehanna, Pennsylvania.
- Loadbang Commission Competition (2023)

- Runner Up
- Commissioned work premiered spring 2024 at Opera America. Second performance at Louisiana State University, November 2024.
- Tributaries (2022) [Moscow Contemporary Music Ensemble]
 - Premiered at the Moscow Philharmonic Chamber Music Hall, Summer 2022.
 - Performed twice at Bird Foot Festival in New Orleans, March 2023.
 - Performed at Batture Contemporary Music Festival in New Orleans, October 2025.
- Rivers of Sand (2021) [Stony Brook University]
 - Premiered at “Stony Brook Premieres!” concerts, followed by a repeat performance at the Dimenna Center in New York City, Fall 2021.
 - Performed by the Alluvium Ensemble at the Historic New Orleans Collection, April, 2024 (conducted by the composer)
- Elm Hall Canals (2020) [Collide-O-Scope Music]
 - Premiered in New York City, Spring 2023.
- Soundings in Fathoms (2020) [New York New Music Ensemble]
 - Digitally released during the COVID-19 Pandemic.
 - Live premiere in New York City, winter, 2022.

Musicology:

- Guest Lecture at Boston University (2025)
 - A composer's guide to intonation and microtonal practice.
- Creole Awakening (2024)
 - An Article on classical music and opera in 19th century New Orleans. Published via Vermont College of Fine Arts Center for Arts and Social Justice.
- Vermont College of Fine Arts Center for Arts and Social Justice Community Engaged Fellowship (2024)
 - Including a lecture on 19th century New Orleans' music history as well as archival work.
- Historic New Orleans Collection Presents Alluvium Ensemble (2024)

- A concert and lecture sponsored and presented by the Historic New Orleans Collection and the Vermont College of Fine Arts.
- Guest Lectures at Merrimack University (2022, 2024)
 - Discussions of tuning practice, history and composing in the 21st century.
- Guest Lecture at Stony Brook University (2021)
 - On microtonal practice and form in “Rivers of Sand.”
- Historic New Orleans Collection Presents the Music of New Orleans (2019)
 - A solo piano concert by Peter Collins tracing exploring 20th century and contemporary New Orleans piano repertoire. Featured composer.

Multimedia Installation work:

- New Music USA’s Creator Fund Recipient (2024)
 - For a new multimedia work with photographer Luca Hoffmann.
- Into the Gulf at the Contemporary Arts Center of New Orleans (2022)
 - A multimedia installation featuring three generations of New Orleans artists in collaboration.
- Louisiana Contemporary Exhibition at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art (2022)
 - Featured installation artist in collaboration with Luca Hoffmann.
- Contemporary Arts Center of New Orleans Annual Open Call (2021)
 - Installation of multimedia work “IDA” in collaboration with Luca Hoffmann.

Selected Piano Repertoire:

By the Composer - Complete Esquisses, Floodgates I and II

Ellis Marsalis Jr. - The Fourth Autumn

Erik Satie - Complete Gnossienes, Gymnopedies, Pièces Froides, Sports et Divertissements

Leo Ornstein - Poems of 1918

Michael Hersch - Suite from Vanishing Pavilions

Tristan Murail - Cloches d’Adieu et un Sourire

Various preludes and medium sized pieces by François Couperin, Jean-Phillipe Rameau, Frederic Chopin, Claude Debussy and Béla Bartók

