



New music on display

Melissa Portaels

Subject specialist music

KU Leuven Libraries Artes / MATRIX

KU LEUVEN

LIBRARIES

MATRIX

NEW MUSIC CENTRE



Music collection at Artes Erasmushuis

- Specialist literature on Western classical music
- From middle ages to 1950

Visited by:

- mainly students and researchers

Music collection at MATRIX

- Art music since 1950
- Priority on scores (+30 000) and recordings (+15 000), specialist literature
- Flemish music within an international context

- everyone with an interest in new music: from students to professionals (musicologists, composers, musicians, music teachers) to new music lovers with no professional background in music at all

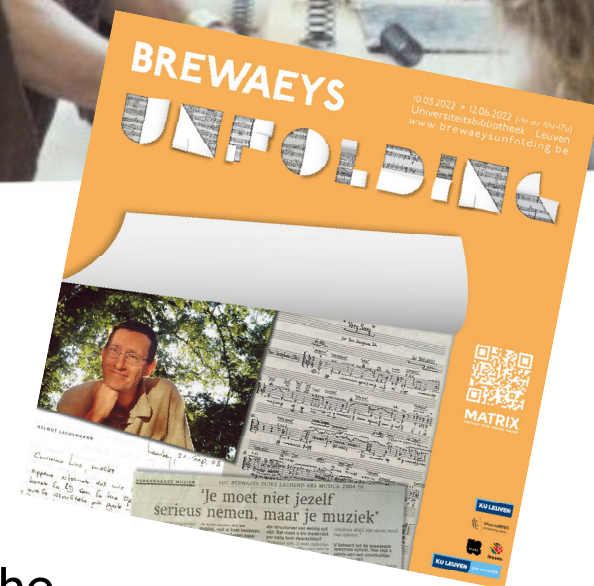
MATRIX [NEW MUSIC CENTRE]

**New music
for all ears**

[About MATRIX →](#)

- Documentation centre
- Music education
- Contemporary music heritage

=> MATRIX aims to position itself at the intersection of musicology as a science, the active musical life and the general public



Pop-up exhibitions: Open up our collections and archives

2017 / 2018 / 2023 **‘Goeyvaerts Gespiegeld’**
Pop-up exhibition about the life and work of Karel Goeyvaerts

2019 / 2020 **‘Nobody is perfect! (Luc Brewaeys Sixty)’**
Pop-up exhibition on the music of Luc Brewaeys



An exhibition about music...

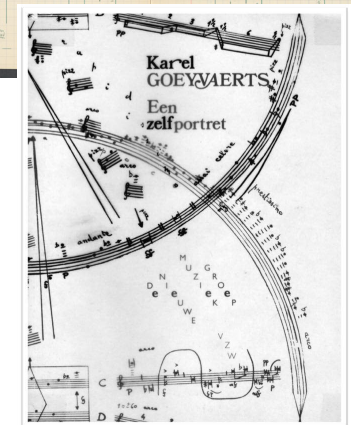
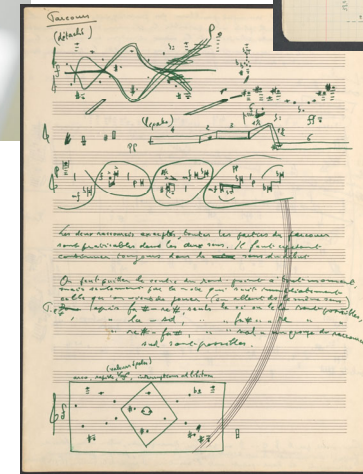
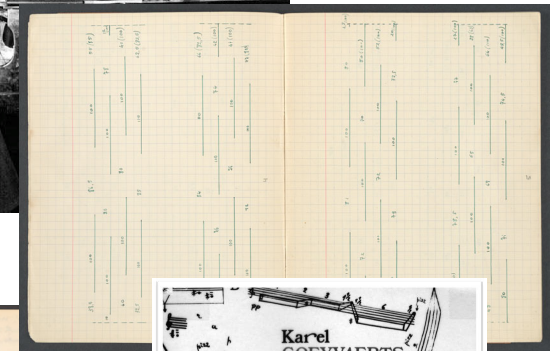
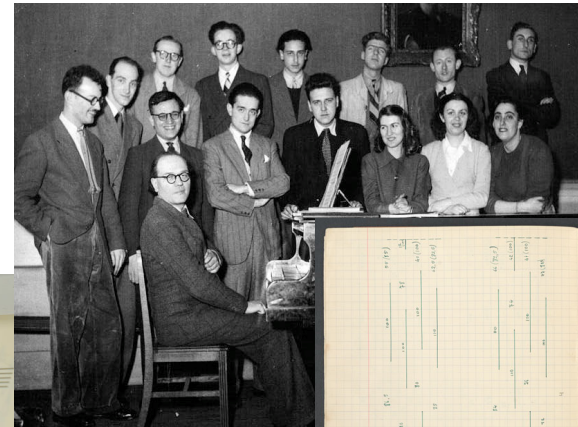
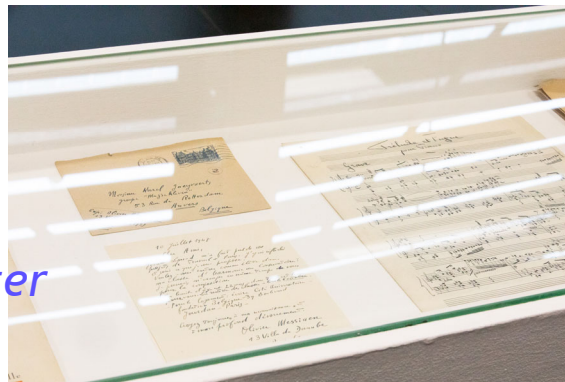
An opportunity to combine different media:

- sketches
- manuscripts
- letters
- newspaper cuttings
- Photos

⇒ *'Goeyvaerts Archive'*
at *KU Leuven University archive*

- video excerpts
- audio excerpts

⇒ *Archives of our public broadcaster*



An exhibition about music leads to...

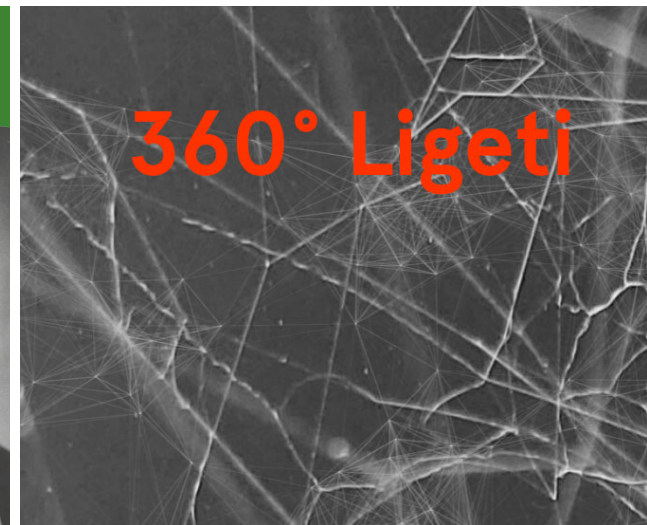
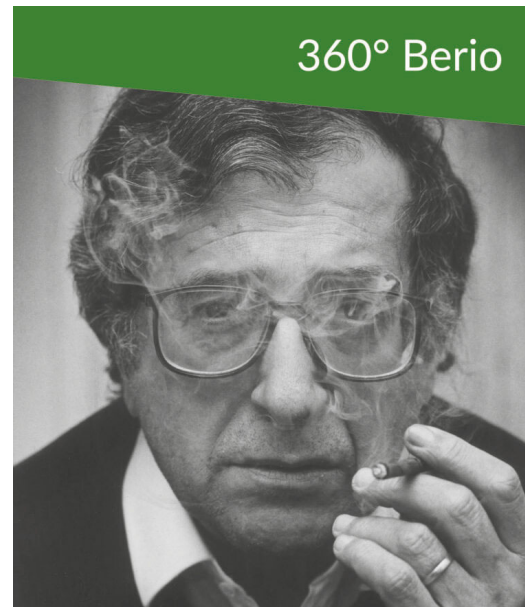
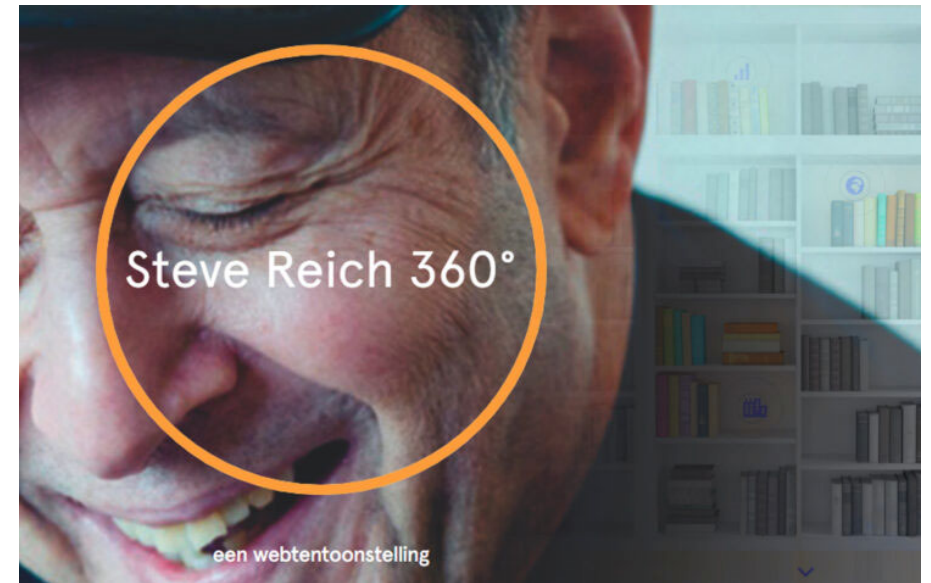
Concert visitors, music enthusiasts, experts, musicians, casual passengers diving into the composer's story and exploring the musical scores...



Fruitful collaborations with ensembles and concert halls.

Online exhibitions - advantages

- Whenever, wherever
- Explore at own pace
- Multiple layers of in-depth content
you can include longer texts, articles or extended videos
- Visitors can explore their own paths
- Illuminate the subject from various perspectives
- Build upon existing material and insights, putting them in a contemporary context
- Creating much needed material on new music in Dutch



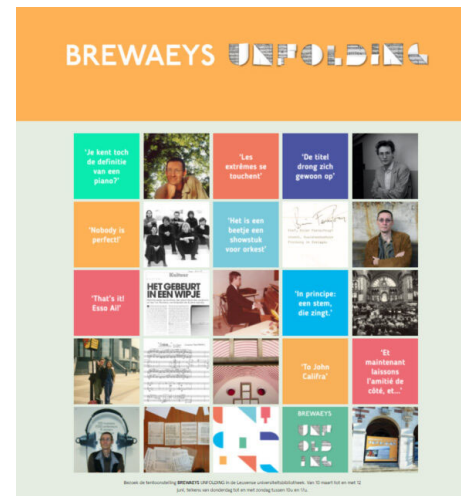
Online exhibitions - challenges

- No control over the conditions: distraction, poor quality sound devices,...



BREWAEYS UNFOLDING

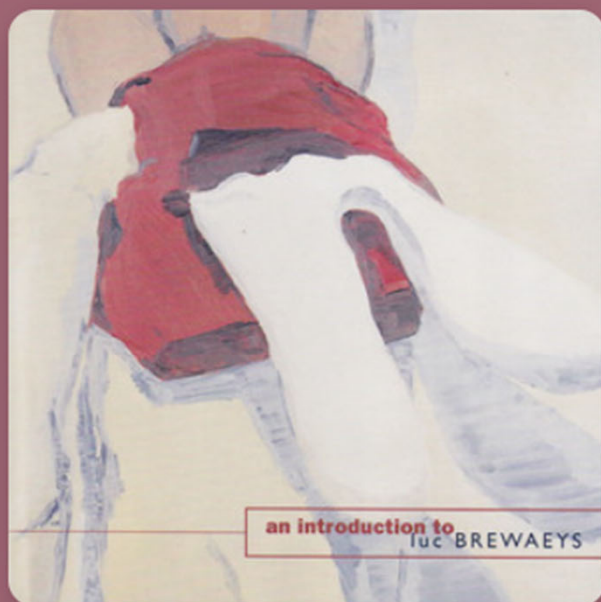
- Exhibition
10.03.2022 > 12.06.2022
at the KU Leuven University Library
- Online exhibition
www.brewaeysunfolding.be
- Publication



LUC BREWAEYS (1959-2015)

- One of the most important Flemish composers of his generation with international recognition
- Studied with André Laporte, Franco Donatoni, Brian Ferneyhough. Had contact with Iannis Xenakis, Tristan Murail and a lifelong friendship with Jonathan Harvey
- Spectralism with a distinctive personal twist





an introduction to
luc BREWAEYS



Nobody is Perfect! -...

Champ d'Action

PREVIEW



...



BREWAEYS



- Transfer of Luc Brewaeys' artistic archive to the KU Leuven University Archive
- Objectives:
 - approach Brewaeys' music from various angles
 - layered storytelling
 - combining various partners (having each a unique perspective on the subject)
 - combining various 'genres' (from hardcore music analyses to fascinating anecdotes)
 - Combining various presentation forms: an exhibition, online exhibition with podcast and a publication

BREWAEYS UNFOLDING

the exhibition

KU Leuven University Library





SOURCES:

• BREWAEYS ARCHIVE

- Manuscript scores
- Unfinished scores
- Recordings
- Video documentaries
- Letters
- Cuttings from journals and magazines
- Program booklets
- Posters and flyers
- Photos
- Personal calendars

• VRT ARCHIVE

- Radio interviews
- Music recordings
- Video documentaries

• PERSONAL BELONGINGS FAMILY AND FRIENDS

- Birgit Van Cleemput, André Laporte, Johan Huys

WHISKY AND SCORES



BREWAEYS

UNFOLDING

Prof. Brian Fennel
 Boston, MA
 20. Feb. 1982

Dear Mr. Brewaeys,
 thank you for your letter and your scores. I am afraid my response to your queries will have to remain quite brief since my own affairs are threatened by approaching dates of delivery for works with which I have as yet not progressed as far as I would like. Nevertheless here are a few comments on and prompted by your pieces.

Looking at your scores, one appreciates the usually appropriate employment of instrumental resources. On the other hand, it is not always clear to me why some techniques are inserted. Multiphonics, for example, are characterised by the curious quality of seeming complex on paper but, in practice, of scaling down the flow of information to equal that, perhaps of a bass drum stroke, by which I mean that the information remains on the level of confirmation of mere identity (in German, das So-Sein). Naturally, a bass drum stroke may be perfectly capable, in context, of transmitting more information, but usually as an adjunct to other elements presented at around the same time. Such sounds seem to me to be simple signs, pointing only to themselves as pure material: this is not the case with sounds capable of transmitting more differentiated information, if one is set at all on one's guard against the consequent loss of immediate "aura" be balanced out by means of increased focus of semantic and conceptual control. If such phenomena are intended as disturbing elements, designed to dislocate, to rupture the continuum, that is a different matter but, even there, one must aim at ensuring a minimum common denominator of coherence such that the blow to ~~some~~ ^{the} ~~whole~~ ^{coherence} be really felt as dangerous and not something merely nailed on.

This point makes, for me, your clarinet, piano and percussive composition something of a puzzle. Your reference to the ideas of Lucas Foss in this context does not make my task easier, since, although I have heard one or two of his orchestral and chamber compositions, I cannot say that I have an adequate apprehension of his aesthetic tenets. Still, and all; talking of "free, but composed-out" reminds me of some of the major arguments of Th.W. Adorno, particularly those expounded in his "Vers une musique informelle". Do you know it? Although it refers principally to the "free atonal" period of the 2nd Viennese School it seems to me to be largely applicable to any and all species of intentionally system-free composition. All forms of music are ideologically loaded, aren't they? Both the decision to dispense with systems and to notationally fully define the results bring with them many consequences which are all too often ignored, as if this would make their subterranean influence any the less! In a sense, "free" music is - or needs to be - much stricter than music constructed according

-6-

Let me deal rather aphoristically with the brass piece: this is rather well put together, particularly as far as the varied overlapping and interpenetration of textures is concerned. In a work with even a moderate number of instruments it is often useful to have some prior idea of what sort of, how many and what combination of layers are to be employed. Sometimes it is even instructive to compose layers according to quite contrasted dramatic rules of play in the first instance, allowing them to coincide or clash at clearly pre-conceived moments in the overall form. This offers the composer a palette of tension-modulating possibilities which is most necessary when (as in this case) the materials themselves are not particularly rich or informative. The interaction of the individual "stories", their resemblances, their mutual "infections" on whatever level and oppositions together with their mutual contributions to the flow of the global discourse throw a complex web of time-shadows over our perceptions far richer than any or all of the materials themselves. Music should be complex, but must not be complicated! This principle can also be taken onto the microlevel: the reaction of individual instruments comprising a particular layer, the harmonic or rhythmic crossplay, the prominence of each figural device and so on. I often think that one should attempt to formulate the layout of a work as a hologram. Each splinter of the whole reflects in some unique fashion the aesthetic concerns and evaluations of that same whole. Variation is not then a process restricted to succession in time, but is distributed throughout the interstices of the entire entity, the "Eigenzeit" which the work sculpts out of objective (but formless) "real time". This is the equivalent, in terms of individuality, specificity, to "soul"... This by no means implies serial or quasi-serial procedures, for reasons which I have already mentioned. What it does imply, though, is an awareness of the inner life of all materials, it implies, further, a listening to what they themselves demand, as well as a celebration of one's "compositional freedom" at their expense, or via their opposition (which latter, to be sure, can be an instructive exercise in itself...)

In respect of your comment on "not having as yet found your style": style emerges from compositional concerns and activities, it cannot be successfully be imposed from without as an abstract museum, simply because a successful style is a sign of compositional intent. I myself am quite catholic in such matters. It is not important to me, generally, what vocabulary a composer employs as long as, within it, his creative personality is deployed at full stretch. On the other hand, the entire question of stylistic plurality is one best not started upon here, since it is too vast. One cannot, I believe, teach composition; all one can do is to act as a passive projectional and refining prism for that which each individual brings with him.

I was glad to hear that you are attacking my Lemme-Icon-Edipem. Maybe you will let me know if you have chance to perform it in public? As far as my orchestral music is concerned: I think it would be good if you looked at the scores first, in particular "Firecycle Beta" (Ricordi) and "La Terre est un Homme" (Peters, London). One could talk about them at a later time.

Best Regards

Brian Fennel

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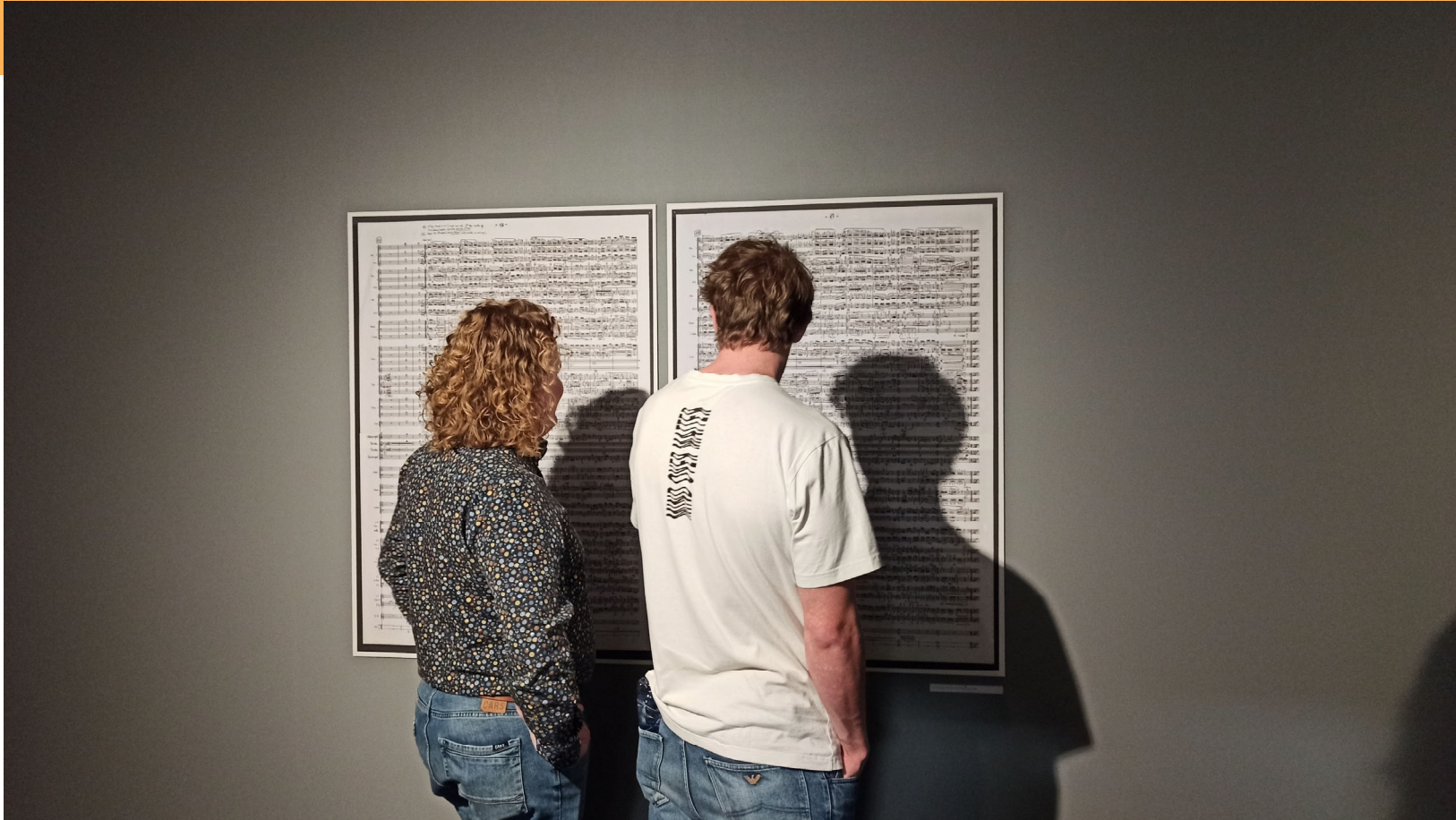


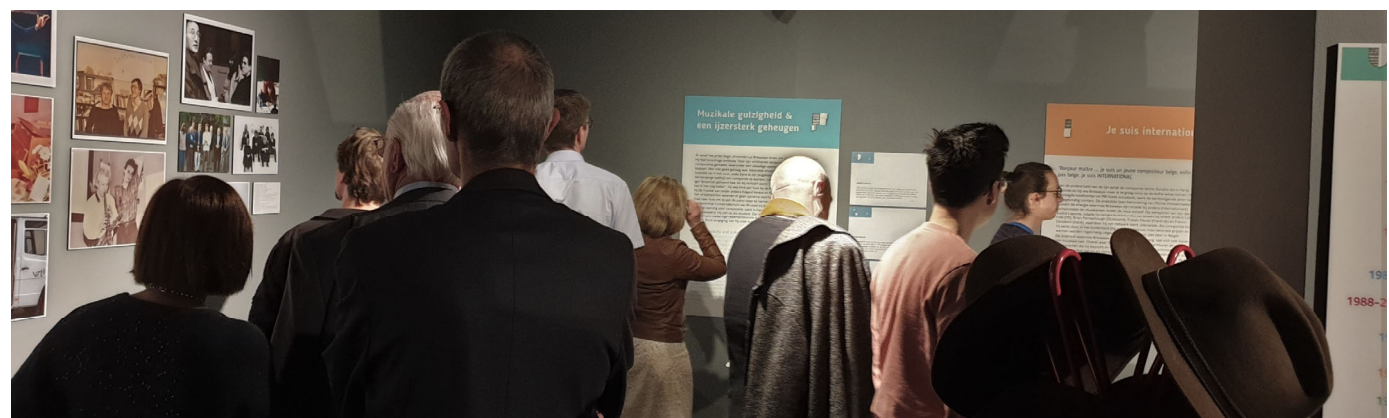
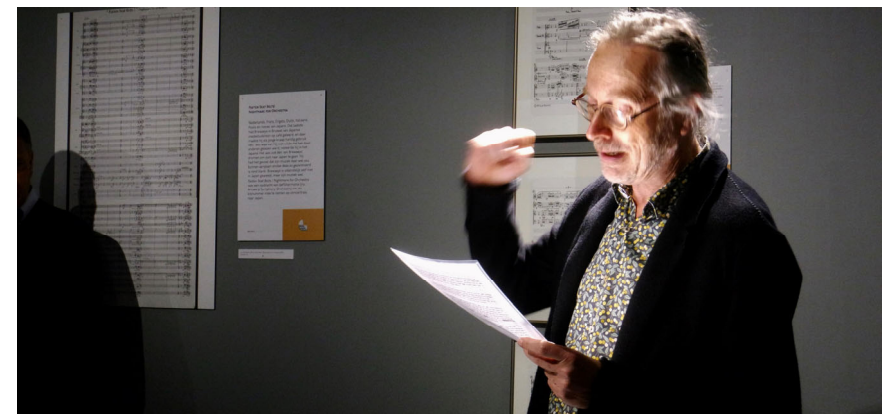
BREWAEYS UNFOLDING



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BREWAEYS

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the web exhibition

‘Je kent toch
de definitie
van een
piano?’



‘Les
extrêmes se
touchent’

‘De titel
drong zich
gewoon op’



‘Nobody is
perfect!’



‘Het is een
beetje een
showstuk
voor orkest’

A handwritten signature in dark ink, which appears to read 'Brian Ferneyhough'.

Prof. Brian Ferneyhough
Staatl. Musikhochschule
Freiburg im Breisgau



BREWAEYS UNFOLDING

the publication





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Subject specialist music

KU Leuven Libraries Artes / MATRIX

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