

**The 7th Biennial International Conference
of the Project Network for the Study of
Progressive Rock**

PROGRESSIVE ROCK TODAY: MUSIC, PEOPLE, POLITICS

**27-29.05.2026 · Université de Strasbourg
9:00 am - 6:00 pm**

PROGRAMME Lectures and concert

**MISHA | 5 allée du Général Rouvillois
Collège Doctoral Européen (CDE) | 46 Boulevard de la Victoire**

Université
de Strasbourg

Laboratoire **Approches contemporaines**
de la **création** et de la **réflexion artistiques** | ACCRA | UR 3402
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des sociétés contemporaines

École doctorale
Humanités | ED 520
Université de Strasbourg

Progressive Rock Today: Music, People, Politics

We are delighted that The 7th Biennial International Conference of the Project Network for the Study of Progressive Rock is held in the University of Strasbourg!

What is progressive rock today, and what is its relationship to its half-century-plus-long history? What are the connections between music, audiences, and cultural industries in the world of progressive rock? Knowing that it is impossible to answer these questions with simple formulas or definitions, we look forward to welcoming at the University of Strasbourg researchers from a variety of disciplines - musicology, social sciences, political science, economics, cultural studies, philology and so on - who can provide new perspectives to illustrate the countless articulations of the 'prog phenomenon'.

We have invited researchers representing a wide range of disciplines: musicology, sociology, media studies, performance studies, philology, culture studies, etc. The language of the conference is English.

PROGRAMME COMMITTEE :

- **Marion Brachet** (Université Évry Paris-Saclay, FR)
- **Jacopo Costa** (Université de Strasbourg, FR)
- **Florian Iochem** (Université de Strasbourg, FR)
- **Sébastien Lebray** (Université de Strasbourg, FR)

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE :

- **Chris Anderton** (Solent University, UK)
- **Lori Burns** (University of Ottawa, CA)
- **Agnieszka Draus** (Krzysztof Pandercki Academy of Music, PL)
- **Philippe Gonin** (Université de Bourgogne, FR)
- **Sarah Hill** (University of Oxford, UK)
- **Andrzej Madro** (Krzysztof Pandercki Academy of Music, PL)
- **Thomas Olsson** (Lund University, SW)
- **Christophe Pirenne** (Université de Liège, BE)

CONFERENCE VENUES :

MISHA | 5 allée du Général Rouvillois

- **Foyer:** Welcome and coffee breaks
- **Salle de conférences:** sessions A, plenary sessions

Collège Doctoral Européen (CDE) | 46 Boulevard de la Victoire

- **Amphithéâtre:** sessions B

Karmen Camina | 4 Cour des Cigarières (concert and quiz)

Programme

27.05 - Wednesday

Registration (Foyer, MISHA)

Welcome

Session A: Politics MISHA Salle de conférence Chair: Thomas Olsson	Session B: Rhythm Collège Doctoral Européen (CDE) Amphithéâtre Chair: Ivan Tan
Chris ANDERTON (UK) – ‘You get used to it’: the Personal and the Political in (Neo-) Progressive Rock	Andrzej MADRO (PL) – The Joy of Motion – Polyrhythms in Animals as Leaders Music
Guillaume BERINGER (FR) – Krautrock put to the Test of Critical Theory	Tomer BOROCHOV (ISR) – ‘Time and a World’: The Interrelationship between Rhythm and Musical Form in 1970s Progressive Rock
Maciej KUSTER (PL) – When Prog Becomes Retro. The (Post)Politics of Nostalgia in Contemporary Popular Music	Chuxin DING (ES) – Progressive Rock in Motion: Rhythmic Evolution in King Crimson’s Archiphonography

Lunch

Session A: Artificial Intelligence MISHA Salle de conférence Chair: Sébastien Lebray	Session B: Genre and Legacy Collège Doctoral Européen (CDE) Amphithéâtre Chair: Marion Brachet
Marcin STRZELECKI (PL) – Stylometry and Artificial Intelligence in the Aesthetic Analysis of Progressive Rock	Gabriela WOLEK (PL) – An Unobvious Legacy of Progressive Rock? Sigur Rós and the Case of Post-Rock
Ivan TAN (USA) – ‘...lay down your tools and wait’: Artificial Intelligence in Contemporary Prog	Sarah HILL (UK) – Terms of Reference: Placing The Smile on the genre Spectrum

Coffee break (Foyer, MISHA)

Keynote adress: **Philippe GONIN (FR)**

Does a *Real* French Prog Rock exist? An Overview of a few French Bands and their (Non)Submission to the English Model in the 1970s.

Chair :**Pierre Michel**

Karmen Camina (concert venue: 4 Cour des Cigarières)
Concert: **Frankenstein Concerto**

28.05 - Thursday

Registration (Foyer, MISHA)

9:00 AM - 9:30 AM

09:30 AM - 11:00 AM

9:30-10:00 AM

10:00-10:30 AM

10:30-11:00 AM

11:00 PM - 11:30 AM

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM

11:30-12:00 PM

12:00-12:30 PM

12:30 PM - 2:00 PM

2:00 PM - 3:00 PM

2:00-2:30 PM

2:30-3:00 PM

3:00-3:30 PM

Session A: Prog and Local Identity MISHA Salle de conférence Chair: Chris Anderton	Session B: Prog Creation and Reception in Europe Collège Doctoral Européen (CDE) Amphithéâtre Chair: Richard Worth
Chen JIAQI (CN) – From 'Progressing Toward' to 'Sinicised Form': An Initial Exploration of the "Progressive" Form in Chinese Rock Music	Thomas OLSSON (SW) – Private Spaces, Progressive Sounds: The Role of Non-Commercial Home Studios in European Prog Rock Practice
Ramona SARACENI (IT) – Fragmentation of Unity: Analyzing Italian Progressive Rock Vocality Through their Local Geographic Identity	Jonas CIURLIONIS (LT) – Progressive Rock Development Challenges in Lithuania: from the Local Niche to International Cooperation
Di FANG (CN) – Progressive Rock in China. From Sonic Experimentation to Existential Practice	Phil HOWITT (UK) – Fandom and the Role of the Cultural Intermediary within the Canterbury Movement

Coffee break (Foyer, MISHA)

Session A: Intertextuality MISHA Salle de conférence Chair: Jacopo Costa	Session B: Storytelling Collège Doctoral Européen (CDE) Amphithéâtre Chair: Florian Iochem
Julia LIBOR (DE) – Nature: The Intertextual Element in Progressive Rock Performances	Jianlin WEN (CN) –The Prologue of Memory: Musical and Narrative Analysis of Dream Theater's 'Overture 1928'
Fabien DESSET (FR) – Karfagen and Transtextuality: the Cases of Stevenson, Longfellow and Blake	Leonardo MASI (PL) – Progressive Storytelling: Techniques and Styles in Concept Albums and Lyrics of English Progressive Rock

Lunch

Session A: Progress in question MISHA Salle de conférence Chair: Massimiliano Raffa	Session B: Prog Narratives Collège Doctoral Européen (CDE) Amphithéâtre Chair: Leonardo Masi
Edward CLIJSEN (UK) – Microtonality as Aspect of Progressiveness: Investigating the Notion of a 'Progressive Ideology' through a Microtonal Lens	Agnieszka DRAUS (PL) – Music of Lunatic Soul from the Perspective of Narrative Theory and Hauntology
Xiaodang ZHANG (CN) – The Weight of a Word: The Historical Burden of 'Progressive' in Progressive Rock	Krzysztof ZBIGNIEW ZIELIŃSKI (PL) – The Portrayal of Childhood, Youth and Adolescence in Progressive Rock - The Fears, The Hopes and The Supernatural

03:00 PM - 03:30 PM

Coffee break (Foyer, MISHA)

03:30 PM - 05:00 PM

Session A : Prog Under Socialism	Session B : Collective and Individual Identities
MISHA Salle de conférences Chair : Christophe Pirenne	Collège Doctoral Européen (CDE) Amphithéâtre Chair: Marion Brachet
Padraig PARKHURST (AUS) – ‘Everything Changes’: Panta Rhei and the Prog Rock Wooing of Early- Honecker-Era East Germany, c.1971-1974	Xin GUO (CN) – Cultural identity of Progressive Rock: Chinese Folk Culture Elements in The Omnipotent Youth Society
Rasmus HEINSAR (EST) – Progressive Rock Concert Venues and Audiences in the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic – Challenges and Strategies Under Soviet Rule	Rose BARRETT (FR) – Mapping Individual Sound in the Finnish Prog Scene: how Individual Artists drive Collective Sound Identities
Joanna SKOLIK (PL) – Between Poetics and Politics: Julian Matej, SBB, and the Contradictions of Progressive Rock in Socialist Poland	

6:30 PM

Karmen Camina (concert venue: 4 Cour des Cigarières)
The World Famous Prog Quiz
Quizmasters: **Sarah Hill** and **Thomas Olsson**

29.05 - Friday

Registration (Foyer, MISHA)

Meeting with: Maartje MEESEN from Lesoir

Chair: **Marion Brachet**

Lunch

Session A : Yesterday and Today MISHA Salle de conférences Chair : Sarah Hill	Session B : Progressiveness Outside the Canon Collège Doctoral Européen (CDE) Amphithéâtre Chair: Philippe Gonin
Richard WORTH (UK) – Where have I known you before? The Multiple Aesthetics of Progressive Rock: Yesterday and Today	Pwyll AP SIÔN & Richard WITTS (UK) – Prog Rock- Minimalist Misalliance or Masterpiece? A Reconsideration of John Cale and Terry Riley's Church of Anthrax
Marek JEZIŃSKI (PL) – Mapping Progressive Rock of Today. On Reflection on Reading the Prog-Related Journals	Massimiliano RAFFA (IT) – Construction in Its Turn: Progressive Architectures of Meaning in Chico Buarque's Construção
Christophe PIRENNE (BE) – Is Prog Rock Today (mainly) Yesterday's Prog Rock?	Glen BOURGEOIS (CA) – Omnipresence Through Invocation: the Co-opting of Progressive Rock Moves Into Québec Popular Music

Closing Remarks & End of Conference

Special guests during the conference

Philippe Gonin

Université de Bourgogne Europe, LR3S (FR)

Does a *Real* French Prog Rock exist? An Overview of a few French Bands and their (Non)Submission to the English Model in the 1970s.

From the beginning, in France as well as in the UK and the United States, the notion of progressive rock encompassed psychedelic rock, prog folk, free rock, symphonic rock, and, more broadly, all music deemed 'experimental'. In that way, experiments like those made by Richard Pinhas (with Heldon) who used the voice of philosopher Gilles Deleuze in *le voyageur* aka *Ouais marchais mieux qu'en 68* and who composed a piece inspired by the minimalists Philip Glass and Terry Riley, or Brian Eno's Ambient music, along with Etron Fou Leloublan, Dashiell Hedayat (with the album *Obsolete*) or Brigitte Fontaine (who collaborated in the album *Comme à la radio* with the Art Ensemble of Chicago) could all be considered as progressive music alongside bands like Mona Lisa, Pulsar, Wapassou, or Atoll, to name but a few. While an aesthetic unity seemed difficult to find, if not impossible to achieve, forceful lines emerged, and, in a restrictive sense, 'progressive music' brought together French bands playing jazz- or classical-inspired music.

But is there a specific identity for French rock prog?

This paper, through three examples drawn from bands with a sizeable audience in the 1970s, aims to highlight what, if anything, might distinguish French prog from its British and, potentially, American models.



Philippe Gonin is a Senior Lecturer at the Université Bourgogne Europe. His research focuses on the creative process, analysis and reception of rock, jazz and film music. He has written books and papers on Magma, Robert Wyatt, The Cure, Pink Floyd, John Williams, Antoine Duhamel, the Cartoons... He had co directed (with Jérôme Rossi) *Le cinéma populaire et ses musiciens en France* (EUD, 2020).

He is also a guitarist and composer. His latest work, entitled "A Floyd Chamber Concerto" is available at <https://philippegonin.bandcamp.com/releases>

Special guests during the conference

Maartje Meessen

Lesoir (NL)



Maartje Meessen (1984, Maastricht) is a Dutch singer, lyricist, and multi-instrumentalist, best known as the frontwoman of the progressive/art-rock band Lesoir. Within the band, she is responsible for vocals, lyrics, and a wide range of instrumentation—including flute, piano, guitar, and string arrangements—contributing significantly to Lesoir’s distinctive, genre-blending sound. Her songwriting is often characterized by socially engaged and poetic themes, combining personal reflection with broader societal concerns.

Alongside her musical career, Meessen is active in the cultural and educational field. She is currently involved as a programme manager at CNME Maastricht (NL), where she contributes to initiatives focused on sustainability, environmental awareness, and education.

Special guests during the conference

FRANKENSTEIN CONCERTO

Collectif Oh! (Strasbourg)

This piece in 3 movements is an evolution of an ancient form of classical music: the concerto. It offers a written framework for a group of improvisers - imbued with current music - who navigate among the written parts thanks to improvisation.

The concerto is performed by a soloist and an accompanying ensemble. Frankenstein was created so that everyone is an improviser and accompanist. Every piece has its part.

It is from this pool of possibilities that Frankenstein's Concerto wants to draw its strength and originality. Each performer becomes a soloist by following the plot of the concerto. Thanks to improvisation, each musician develops the thematic material of the piece and becomes, beyond being a performer, a composer in real time.

We experience the very essence of a story written several centuries ago in a modern musical context.



Phillip Klawitter - Double Bass and Composition

Francesco Rees - Drums

Kalevi Uibo - Electric Guitar

Jean-René Mourot - Piano and Synthesizer

Michael Alizon - Tenor Saxophone

Pascal Beck - Trombone

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