

Charlotte Hug singer, violist, performer, composer, improviser, visual artist

What: Her [musical-visual solo performances](#) are stunning, her sound drawings Son- Icons and her Live-Scoring with [Temporary-Son-Icons](#) are innovative, and she created a new genre of transdisciplinary music and art. With her [intermedia-compositions and Spatial-Scores](#) with Son-Icons she offers compositional settings where [intercultural and artistic resources](#) of the musicians and artists can be integrated, flourish, and constantly evolve.

«Charlotte Hug is perhaps the most innovative artist in Switzerland: viola player, voice artist, performer, composer, visual artist.» Pirmin Bossart JazzNMore 2019



Bio: With her innovative musical-visual performances in distinct locations and with her Spatial-Scores she created an international furor. She allowed herself to be flooded by the rising waters at the dockyard in Coph on the Atlantic coast of Ireland while singing and playing for five hours, she sang in the Sterkfontein Caves (strong springs in Afrikaans) in South Africa, and she recently spent several weeks in vocal resonance with the Brazilian jungle Mata Atlântica. For years, she has played in the Rhone Glacier, making its beauty and disappearance visible and audible. Her musical and visual research often takes her to powerful places in nature that are also fragile and threatened with extinction.

The musician of extremes breaks boundaries. She has developed the “Soft-Bow-Technique” among other innovations, which allows her to play up to eight voices at the same time on the instrument and is reinventing the viola. As a vocalist, she has a range over four octaves, from undertones to the highest falsetto. With vibrating glottal stops, multiphonics and speech-like articulations, Hug oscillates between the human voice and hybrid siren songs. Her specialty is a blend of viola and vocals resulting in an unmistakable and unique tonal language.

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Having completed her studies in Classical Music and Fine Arts, she won various awards, including Artist-Residencies in London, the Cité internationale des Arts Paris, in Berlin, Johannesburg, and Shanghai, the international fellowship of the Civitella Ranieri Foundation, etc. She was “Artiste Étoile” at the world-renowned Lucerne Festival in 2011, nominated for the Classic:Next – Innovation Award in 2019, and won the Swiss Music Prize in 2025.

Son-Icons (Visual-Music) are at the core of her artistic research and work. With her Intermedia-Compositions, Spatial-Scores, and self-developed InterAction Notation, she offers compositional settings that are structurally shaped and inspired by the Son-Icons and at the same time open up scope for precise interdisciplinary and intercultural interactions. Her works are performed by international ensembles, choirs and orchestras, as well as interdisciplinary ensembles (including the Moscow Contemporary Music Ensemble, Ensemble SuperMusique Montréal, Via-Nova Chor München, Lucerne Festival Academy, the Ensemble of the Lucerne Festival Contemporary Orchestra, and the Dance Company FATC from Johannesburg etc.). Son-Icons are hybrids between musical notation and art and have gained international recognition in both the art and music worlds.

Hug was a long-standing member and has since been a frequent guest of the London Improvisers Orchestra. She develops open concepts for the LIO as well as for various improvisers' orchestras such as the KIO in Krakow, the STIO in Graz, and the SPIO in São Paulo. Important interdisciplinary collaborations include theatre and opera director Jossi Wieler, photographer and filmmaker Alberto Venzago, choreographer PG Sabbagha, and various cross-science projects with sleep researcher Dr. Prof. Peter Achermann, music anthropologist Dr. Prof. Adel-Jing Wang, glaciologists, biologists, etc. Hug has recorded an extensive discography, including duets with Elliott Sharp and Lucas Niggli, trios with Maggie Nicols and Caroline Kraabel, several albums with the improvisational London Stellari String Quartet (Philipp Wachsmann, Marcio Mattos, John Edwards), Son-Icon Music with her choral and orchestral compositions, and four solo albums on international labels.

In addition to exhibitions in galleries and museums, she is fully active as a performer, improviser, soloist, composer, and conductor of her works at major festivals in Europe, North America, Latin America, Canada, Russia, South Africa, and China. (Berliner Festspiele, MaerzMusik, Ruhrtriennale, Donaueschinger Musiktage, FIMAV Festival International Musique Actuelle Victoriaville, San Francisco International Arts Festival, Festival Infecting the City in Cape Town, Festival international musica SESC São Paulo, etc.)

Hug is a professor of contemporary improvisation and musical-scenic creation in interdisciplinary contexts at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts/Music and is the head of the international postgraduate programme Creation & Scenario in Music at the Zurich University of the Arts. Hug has given masterclasses at various Art Universities (McGill University Montréal, CNMAT, University of California, Berkeley, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, China Academy of Art, Hangzhou, etc.).

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