

NITheCS Colloquium
Monday, 4 April 2022, 17h00 – 18h00 SAST
Emeritus Professor Hans Roosenschoon (Stellenbosch University)

'The man who (unknowingly) mistook his music for mathematics'



ABSTRACT

Philosopher and mathematician Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz wrote in a letter to Christian Goldbach on 17 April 1712 that music "is a hidden arithmetic exercise of the soul, which does not know that it is counting." This somehow encapsulates my thoughts on music as well.

My aim is to share how I use mathematics in my music, an approach that is rather intuitive; it is not based on intricate mathematical formulas.

BIOGRAPHY

The composer Hans Roosenschoon is well known for his poly-stylistic music, including his contribution to cultural life and academia in South Africa. Roosenschoon was Chair of the Music Department and Director of the Conservatory at Stellenbosch University from 1998-2006.

From 2007 until his retirement in 2017, he established a vibrant course in composition and orchestration, producing a number of innovative young composers who have established themselves locally and abroad.

Transcultural awareness - a belief in the intrinsic value of all music - emerged as a philosophy early

in Roosenschoon's career and many of his works are testimony to that.

In addition to ongoing performances in SA, seven works for symphony orchestra, two for string orchestra, chamber music and several choral pieces have featured at events in the USA, Europe, Australia and the UK.

More recent performances that should be mentioned are his work for piano quartet, *The Man Who (unknowingly) Mistook His Music For Mathematics* (2018), and a work for string ensemble, 3 – J S Bach's Brandenburg Concerto reimagined (2019).

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