

Plastic

Jeffrey Morris¹, Virginia Figueiredo¹

¹Texas A&M University

College Station, Texas, USA

Composer: Jeffrey Morris; Performer: Virginia Figueiredo

For clarinet with live electronics; duration: 13 minutes

1. Programme Note

Plastic began as a reflection on ocean pollution—the convenient invention came to obstruct beauty, then animal functions, then microflora, and even our own cells. This piece stages that collapse: a beach party gradually overrun by synthetic obstructions, then by unseen damage to ecosystems and organisms, then internal torment from within the performer’s body. Each vignette zooms in, reflecting on a broader truth: modern discoveries—from microplastics to machine learning, from viral mutation to quantum uncertainty—confront us with progress that obscures understanding. New marvels become confounding at best, some menacing. Each news cycle’s answers feel inadequate. Even science leaves us wondering what to trust and what to do next. *Plastic* asks: How can we respond when every solution spawns new problems when our paradigms shift faster than our policies? In an age of disruption, perhaps the truest progress is learning how little we know—and how to act anyway.

2. Technical Rider

General description: Clarinet at or near center stage with computer attendant on the side, stereo sound, and optional projection from the onstage computer.

Note: A video accompaniment is now in production and will be used if accepted and allowed.

2.1. Venue should provide

- **At clarinet position (near center stage)**
 - Music stand
 - Monitor speaker
 - Microphone stand
 - XLR microphone cable
 - Stage lighting on this location for soloist, not to interfere with projection
 - Stand light or down light for performer to read the sheet music
- **At computer position (off to the side)**
 - Music stand
 - Small table for laptop and audio interface
 - Chair
 - Power
 - 2× male 6.35 mm TRS phone connectors (left and right) to house sound system
 - Male HDMI cable to house projection (if used)

2.2. Artist will provide

- Clarinetist and instrument
- Laptop computer with audio interface and microphone

3. Links

- MP3 synthesized demo (Google Drive)
- Score in PDF (Google Drive)

4. About the Artists

4.1. Virginia Figueiredo

<https://www.virginiacfigueiredo.com/>

Praised in *The Clarinet Magazine* for her “intense musicality . . . and unapologetic interpretations,” Los Angeles-based clarinetist Virginia Figueiredo is an internationally active performer, recording artist, and educator. She has toured extensively throughout the United States, Europe, South America, and Asia as a soloist and chamber musician, and her performances have been featured on radio broadcasts in both Portugal and the United States. In Southern California, she performs regularly with The Pacific Opera Project, the Luso-American Duo, and numerous other orchestras and chamber ensembles. As a recording artist, Figueiredo has released three albums to critical acclaim: her debut solo album, *Seule*, was a 2018 Global Music Awards silver medalist, while her 2014 album with The Divan Consort, *Refuge*, earned a first-round GRAMMY nomination in 2015 as well as a Global Music Awards gold medal.

A passionate advocate for new music, Figueiredo has commissioned and premiered works by Bill Kraft, Ken Walicki, Jenni Brandon, Christopher Bochmann, Luis Tinoco, Clotilde Rosa, Paulo Brandao, and Sergio Azevedo, among many others. As an educator, Figueiredo is a frequent clinician and teaching artist for clarinet festivals and masterclasses around the world. She also teaches clarinet at California State University, Dominguez Hills, Loyola Marymount University, Moorpark College, Pierce College, Long Beach City College, Cerritos College, and at the LACC Herb Alpert Music Center, El Camino College, and Texas A&M University. She is also a teaching artist with the Los Angeles-based Harmony Project.

Figueiredo holds a DMA in Clarinet Performance from the University of California, Los Angeles, in addition to degrees from the Lisbon Superior School of Music and California State University, Fullerton. Her principal teachers have included Olga Prats, Nuno Silva, Carlos Alves,

Håkan Rosengren, and Gary Gray. Figueiredo is a Silverstein, Vandoren, and Yamaha endorsed artist.

4.2. Jeff Morris

<https://www.morrismusic.org/>

Jeff Morris creates experiences that engage audiences' minds with their surroundings. His performances, installations, lectures, and writings appear in international venues known for cutting-edge arts and deep questions in the arts. He has won awards for making art emerge from unusual situations: music tailored to architecture and cityscapes, performance art for the radio, and serious concert music for toy piano, robot, Sudoku puzzles, and paranormal electronic voice phenomena. He has presented work in the Onassis Cultural Center (Athens), Triennale Museum (Milan), D-22 (Beijing's avant-garde music scene), the International Symposium on Electronic Art (Vancouver, Canada), the Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library and Museum (Austin), and the Chicago Architecture Foundation's "Open House Chicago."

His work has won awards in the Concours de Bourges (France), Viseu Rural (Portugal), "Music in Architecture" International Competition (Austin), the Un"Cage"d Toy Piano Competition (NYC), and the "Radio Killed the Video Star" Competition (NYC). He has two albums of live sampling improvisations forthcoming from PARMA Recordings (distributed internationally and online via Naxos). Writings about his works and their aesthetics have been presented at the International Computer Music Conference, Generative Art International Conference, and Computer Art Congress and are published by *Leonardo Music Journal*, Springer, and IGI Global. He has served as Editor-in-Chief of the *International Journal of Art, Culture and Design Technologies*, coordinates the Music Technology program at Texas A&M University (a Carnegie Tier One Research University and member of the Association of American Universities), and created the Fresh Minds Festival of audiovisual art from all over the world.