

Stone Age (2022)

for cello and electronics

Duration ca.9' minutes

Stone Age for cello and electronics was commissioned by the Music Current Festival 2022 and premiered by cellist Ilse de Ziah at the Project Arts Centre in Dublin. The performer uses a custom-designed bow created by the composer, featuring a complex gripping section and unique acoustic and mechanical properties inspired by instruments such as the rasp stick, guiro, washboard, ratchet, cog rattle, and scraper.

The piece is structured in four main sections: the first is lyrical, incorporating glissandi and clicking sounds; the second blends an imagined soundscape with the cello mimicking amphibian calls; the third intensifies with vigorous rasping gestures on the cello and synthesized, heavily processed electronics, including resampled material from Stravinsky's *The Firebird*. This section builds to a climax and transitions into the final part, which features instrumental resynthesis of Doppler effect sounds reminiscent of a car race.

The title, *Stone Age*, references the scraper as a musical instrument, its use, and its history. A scraper is a percussion instrument with a serrated surface that is rasped with a stick, known since the Stone Age and often linked to magical powers and rituals, with a broad geographical distribution.

Stone Age was awarded a Honorable Mention at the MA/IN Electroacoustic and Digital Arts Festival 2022 in Italy.