

## 500 Word Bio - Gibson Mahnke

The music of Gibson Mahnke (b.2004) explores ideas of human connectivity while crossing genres and pushing sonic boundaries. A Los Angeles-based composer, his work explores ideas of spirituality, humanity, and nature while providing a genuine account of the human experience.

Mahnke's work can be described as reflective, meditative, and at its core raw and human. His music is characterized by a unique blend of influences, including experimental performance practices, minimalism, and ambient music. This combination results in art that is accessible to a wide audience and suited for a variety of mediums. Mahnke aims not just to create music, but to construct sonic spaces in which audiences can immerse themselves. Additionally, as both a composer and active performer, he challenges the role of music in society by striving for performer-focused music that breaks down traditional performer-to-audience barriers in order to create shared musical experiences. Hailing from colorful Colorado, nature also plays a large role in Mahnke's art and he is constantly searching for ways to present ideas of nature in similarity and contrast with humanity.

Mahnke's music has been performed by a variety of ensembles and chamber groups including the University of Southern California Symphony Orchestra, the Boulder Philharmonic, the Mivos Quartet, Ensemble PHACE, and Transient Canvas. He is currently the Composer in Residence with the Greater Boulder Youth Orchestra, both arranging and writing original works for the ensemble. He is an alumnus of the Valencia Performing Arts Festival Composition Program, Vienna Contemporary Composers Festival, Alba Music Festival Composition Program, and the University of Colorado Boulder's Emerging Composers Program.

A large body of Mahnke's work involves collaborations within movement spaces. He works in both electronic and acoustic mediums with the goal of promoting cross-disciplinary commissions and collaborations involving music and dance. Over the last year, Mahnke has worked with several choreographers from around the world. In April of 2024, Mahnke, alongside choreographers Irena Yin, Rhaine Marquardt, and Tyler Chang, premiered their work *Shrinking Spaces* for Fixed Media and Dance. In the fall of 2024, Mahnke and Chang began work on their dance film *i see*, which is set to premiere in January of 2025.

Mahnke is currently pursuing his B.M. in Composition at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music. He has studied composition with Camae Dennis (Ayewa), Brian Head, Sean Friar, and Max Wolpert, and is currently studying under the tutelage of Veronika Krausas. In addition to composing, Mahnke maintains an active performance life. He currently studies oboe with Joel Timm and is a member of the University of Southern California's new music ensemble "EDGE". Mahnke is also an active percussionist trained in both marching and concert percussion. Additionally, Mahnke performs and produces ambient music as part of a duo with guitarist and fellow composer Evan Williams.

Aside from music, Mahnke loves to travel, cook, and spend time outdoors.