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Small Creatures, Extraordinary Voices

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Chuchchepati Orchestra's "Flight of the Bumblebee II" brings a proposition to Wien Modern: the smallest creatures can expand our understanding of music. Presented in the Wiener Konzerthaus, this installation for eight loudspeakers, insects and orchestra combines instrumental sound with scientific recordings, making an often overlooked world the centre of artistic attention.

Created in 2025, it honours threatened insect life through listening rather than visual spectacle. At its heart are 59 scientific recordings documenting the vibrational communication of insects and spiders. The material ranges from delicate aphid duets to the distress calls of predatory bugs. Drawn from biotremology, the study of communication through vibrations, these recordings reveal sophisticated exchanges that ordinarily escape human awareness. Patrick Kessler directs the installation, Ludwig Berger shapes the insect recordings compositionally, and Fabian Lanzmeier provides technical direction.

From a contemporary-music perspective, the project's strength lies in its refusal to treat nature merely as picturesque accompaniment. These creatures become sources of rhythm, texture and communicative complexity. The encounter invites questions: where does a signal become a musical gesture, and how might scientific documentation change when heard within an artistic framework? The eight-loudspeaker format adds a spatial dimension to that enquiry. Rather than offering a single frontal viewpoint, it proposes a listening environment in which attention can move between sonic relationships. Its promise is not simply novelty, but a reconsideration of musical scale.

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