

Francis Battah – Biography

English – Long version

Francis Battah is a Montreal-based Quebec composer. After college studies in classical and jazz piano, Francis earned a bachelor's degree in composition from the Université de Montréal and a master's degree in composition from McGill University. He studied with Denys Bouliane, Alan Belkin, Denis Gougeon and Ana Sokolović.

His catalogue includes works for solo instruments, chamber ensembles and orchestra. He has received commissions from, among others, the Orchestre métropolitain, the Orchestre de l'Agora, the Société de musique contemporaine du Québec, the Bozzini Quartet, the Cobalt Quartet, Quasar, the Voix parallèles choir of Vincent-d'Indy, the Bakarları collective, and pianists Philippe Prud'homme and Michel Raymond.

His music has been performed at events including the Festival Montréal Nouvelles musiques, the aDevantgarde Festival in Munich, the composition residency of the Chapelle musicale du Bon-Pasteur, the Canadian Music Competition, the Nouvel Ensemble Moderne Composition Forum, the Prix d'Europe, the composition residencies of the Orchestre de la Francophonie, the final of the Graham Sommer Competition and Festival Soir.

His interests are wide-ranging: the intersection of jazz and contemporary music, microtonality, piano writing, and the creation of an imaginary folklore centred on melody and modality.

In 2025, Francis was nominated at the Prix Opus as Composer of the Year. A grantee of the Canada Council for the Arts, the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec and the Conseil des arts de Montréal, Francis has won a dozen competitions, including the Prix collégien de musique contemporaine in 2018–2019 and 2022–2023, the Orchestre métropolitain composition competition L'Héritage de Beethoven (2020), the SOCAN Foundation Grand Prize in 2021, the Andrew Svoboda Prize in 2022 and the Pierre-Mantha Scholarship at the Prix d'Europe in 2023.

In Europe, he won five prizes at the Antonin Dvořák International Composition Competition, in 2019 and 2023, including special prizes for Best Fugue and Best Orchestral Composition. In 2023, he also won both first and third prizes at the international Free Range competition, organized by the Alvarez Chamber Orchestra and Universal Edition.

Interested in the relationship between music and literature, Francis has composed melodramas on poems by Pierre Nepveu and Fernand Ouellette, in collaboration with pianist Philippe Prud'homme and actors Dany Boudreault, Béatrice Picard and Monique Miller. In February 2018, his melodrama for piano, violin, cello and narrator was presented as part of the Conseil des arts de Montréal en tournée.

As an independent producer, Francis has organized numerous concerts. He has also recorded and released several of his works for piano and chamber ensemble. His scores are published by Doberman-Yppan, Nouveau Théâtre musical and the Canadian Music Centre.

Since 2023, he has taught ear training at Cégep de Saint-Laurent.

English – Medium version

Francis Battah is a Montreal-based Quebec composer. Trained in classical and jazz piano, and later in composition at the Université de Montréal and McGill University, he studied with Denys Bouliane, Alan Belkin, Denis Gougeon and Ana Sokolović.

His catalogue includes works for solo instruments, chamber ensembles and orchestra. He has received commissions from the Orchestre métropolitain, the Orchestre de l'Agora, the Société de musique contemporaine du Québec, the Bozzini Quartet, the Cobalt Quartet and Quasar. His music has been performed at the Festival Montréal Nouvelles musiques, the aDevantgarde Festival in Munich, the Nouvel Ensemble Moderne Composition Forum and the final of the Graham Sommer Competition.

His work explores the intersection of jazz and contemporary music, microtonality, piano writing and the creation of an imaginary folklore rooted in melody and modality.

In 2025, Francis was nominated at the Prix Opus as Composer of the Year. He has won a dozen competitions, including the SOCAN Foundation Grand Prize in 2021, the Andrew Svoboda Prize in 2022, the Pierre-Mantha Scholarship at the Prix d'Europe in 2023 and the Prix collégien de musique contemporaine.

In Europe, he won five prizes at the Antonin Dvořák International Composition Competition, including awards for Best Fugue and Best Orchestral Composition. In 2023, he also won first and third prizes at the international Free Range competition.

His scores are published by Doberman-Yppan, Nouveau Théâtre musical and the Canadian Music Centre. Since 2023, he has taught ear training at Cégep de Saint-Laurent.

English – Short version

Francis Battah is a Montreal-based Quebec composer. Trained in classical and jazz piano, and later in composition at the Université de Montréal and McGill University, he studied with Denys Bouliane, Alan Belkin, Denis Gougeon and Ana Sokolović. His catalogue includes works for solo instruments, chamber ensembles and orchestra.

His music has been performed in Canada and Europe, including at the Festival Montréal Nouvelles musiques, the aDevantgarde Festival in Munich, the Nouvel Ensemble Moderne Composition Forum and the final of the Graham Sommer Competition. Winner of a dozen competitions, he has received the SOCAN Foundation Grand Prize, the Orchestre métropolitain composition competition L'Héritage de Beethoven and several prizes at the Antonin Dvořák International Composition Competition. In 2025, he was nominated as Composer of the Year at the Prix Opus.

He has taught at Cégep de Saint-Laurent since 2023.