



*MERGE CORP.* by Artun Çekem, for *Moving Strings*

*MERGE CORP.* is a **multidisciplinary** work that draws inspiration from **post-human science fiction** and **internet subcultures**. At its core, it is a **movement** based **contemporary music** piece that imagines the ensemble as a singular, **fused entity** consisting of multiple limbs and bodies. This conjoined entity behaves like a **sculpture** in motion, constantly changing shape and adjusting its form to the music. The result is a grotesque yet captivating **theatrical act**, reflecting on the themes of **collectivism** and **unchecked growth**, with a critical perspective towards both their allures and dangers.

*“And so the musicians are packed into a gigantic robe, functioning as one musical body. Playing doesn’t seem that easy, although these excellent musicians don’t seem to have any real difficulty with it. Impressive and exciting sound mists, surreal side paths, but also a great diversity of sounds, including clearly dance-based rhythms and avant-garde noise, characterize this piece.” - [Concert review](#) by Ben Taffijn, Nieuwe Noten*

*MERGE CORP.* premiered at the **2023 Gaudeamus Festival**, where Çekem was among the five award nominees. We are proud of the initial twelve-minute performance and are now planning a new, extended version that will be at least twice as long and **broader in scope**.

After the premiere and positive audience feedback, we realized there was more to explore in our concept. The choreography, costumes, drama, and music have much potential for a larger vision. We want to take *MERGE CORP.* out of the conventional performance hall and into an **immersive space** like a **shopping mall** for more intimate audience engagement. The expanded version would be a 30 to 60-minute standalone concert, depending on the programming slot. We believe there is a bigger story to tell and are now seeking platforms and funding to achieve this.