

ultima

oslo contemporary
music festival

10-20 september 2014



the nation

wednesday 10 september

Book launch: *Music after 22 July*
5 pm — Loffet 13
A book on the importance of music after 22 July 2011
→ p 9

Opening concert
Luciano Berio: *Coro*
KORK / Det Norske Solistkor
7:30 pm — Oslo Cathedral 23
Monumental tapestry of folk music in Italian modernist fabric
→ p 9

thursday 11 september

ultima academy
Analysis of Kagel's *Exotica*
10 am — Loffet 13
→ p 11

ultima academy Othernesses:
Music in Contemporary Cairo
4 pm — Cinemateket 3
→ p 11

Liza Lim / Henrik Hellstenius
Cikada Ensemble
6 pm — Nasjonalgalleriet 16
Pan-cultural chamber music
→ p 10

ultima academy *Scelsi The Original*
6 pm — Italian Culture Institute 7
Lecture and presentation of Klangforum Wien's *Scelsi Revisited* concert
→ p 13

Scelsi Revisited
Georg Friedrich Haas, Tristan Murail, Ragnhild Berstad, Giacinto Scelsi
Klangforum Wien
8 pm — Kulturkirken Jakob 12
New works originating in the enigmatic composer's previously unheard sonic sketches
→ p 12

Ensemble NING: *Rikskonsert*
10 pm — Teatersalen, Bondeungdomslaget i Oslo 27
An alternative national music canon
→ p 13

friday 12 september

ultima academy
Scelsi Revisited + *Anahit* analysed
10 am — Loffet 13
→ p 16

OSLO CULTURE NIGHT

Bohman Brothers + Vilde&Inga
12 pm — nyMusikk 20
Lunch concert with the English eccentrics and improv duo Vilde&Inga
→ p 17

Ultima Remake: *Coro*
4 pm — Café MESH 14
Ultima's project for secondary school pupils. Includes launch of new Remake Recorder app
→ p 19

Arne Nordheim / Øyvind Mæland / André Jolivet / Asbjørn Schaathun
Håkon Austbø (piano)
5 pm — Nasjonalgalleriet 16
A celebration of Austbø's fifty years as an active pianist
→ p 16

Horisonter
Eirik Raude / Arve Henriksen / Bjarne Kvinnslund / Knut Bry / mmw arkitekter
6 pm — DogA 3
Performance to open an installation inspired by Sverre Fehn's architecture
→ p 19

Mauricio Kagel: *Exotica*
Ensemble Modern
8 pm — Riksscenen 24
Kagel's modern classic, critiquing Western music's cultural dominance
→ p 17

Jenny Hval & Susanna: *Meshes of Voice*
10 pm — Kulturkirken Jakob 12
Critically acclaimed duo play concert version of their collaborative project
→ p 18

saturday 13 september

Eivind Groven's just intonation organ
nyMusikk's Composers Group with specially written music for Groven's famous self-built organ
12 pm (bus from Youngstorget, at 11.45 am) — Groven's house 10, Ekebergvn 59 NB: limited space!
→ p 20

Erik Dæhlin: *Avstandsriiss*
Ingfrid Breie Nyhus
12 pm / 1 pm / 2 pm — Nasjonalbiblioteket 13
Folk music archive and concert installation
→ p 21

Bjørn Erik Haugen: *Utterances*
Nordic Voices
3 pm — Kulturkirken Jakob 12
New work influenced by Julia Kristeva, films with inarticulate speech and autism
→ p 21

Robert Schumann: *Dichterliebe*
Bernhard Schütz / Reinhold Friedl
7 pm — Nationaltheatret 18
Film and stage actor Bernhard Schütz and pianist Reinhold Friedl (Zeitkratzer) update Schumann's Romantic classic
→ p 22

Laibach / Edvard Grieg: *Olav Tryggvason*
Laibach
10 pm — Sentrum Scene 25
Slovenian avant rockers complete Norway's lost national opera
→ p 23

sunday 14 september

Ultima's Children's Day
11 am – 4 pm — Den Norske Opera & Ballett 6
We let kids take over the Opera House for a whole day to create their own music festival
→ p 26

ultima academy
The Concept of Nation
Antonio Negri, Laibach
12 pm — Cinemateket 3
→ p 26

Christophe Meierhans: *Some Use For Your Broken Clay Pots*
9 pm — Black Box Teater 3
Proposing a new constitution
→ p 27

monday 15 september

Ole Martin Huser-Olsen
12 pm — nyMusikk 20
Free guitar lunch concert
→ p 28

Natasha Barrett: *OSSTS Oslo Sound Space Transport System*
4 pm — Deichmanske hovedbibliotek 5
Interactive sound composition presenting Oslo as you've never heard it before
→ p 29

Johannes Kreidler: *Audioguide*
Ensemble neoN / Johannes Kreidler
6 pm — Dramatikkens hus 9
Several hours of musical interrogation in a talkshow format
→ p 28

Kjell Habbestad: *Nenia*
7 pm — Musikk & Scenehuset 26
Chamber opera in memoriam Fartein Valen
→ p 29

tuesday 16 september

ultima academy The Case of Wagner: Workshop on Music and Ethics
10 am — Loffet 13
→ p 31

ultima academy Badiou's Republic
Alain Badiou
2 pm — Loffet 13
→ p 31

Ludwig van Beethoven / Thomas Adès / Asbjørn Schaathun / Maja S. K. Ratkje
Det Norske Kammerorkester
7 pm — Universitetets aula 28
New and old works in the spirit of Beethoven
→ p 30

Helge Sten / Maja S. K. Ratkje / Kåre Kolberg: *Eastern Waves*
9 pm — Nasjonal Jazzscene 17
Report from Poland's legendary Warsaw electronic studio
→ p 30

wednesday 17 september

Korp, korp
10 am / 11 am — Dansens Hus 4 (also 18 & 19 September)
Interactive installation for little ones (age 0–3)
→ p 40

ultima academy Arv
Øyvind Torvund / Asbjørn Schaathun
Ingfrid Breie Nyhus (piano)
1 pm — Kulturkirken Jakob 12
New music for piano, plus panel on folk and modernity
→ p 39

New Music Incubator: Oslo Reunion
3 pm — Riksscenen 24
→ p 39

Electronic North I
Ida Lundén / Maija Hynninen / Osmo Tapio Riihälä
6 pm — OCA 21
Electronic music by Swedish and Finnish composers
→ p 40

David Brynjar Franzson: *Longitude*
Ensemble Adapter
8 pm — Vulkan Arena 29
Opera about Iceland's 'dog-days republic'
→ p 38

thursday 18 september

Korp, korp
10 am / 11 am — Dansens Hus 4 (also 19 September)
Interactive installation for little ones (age 0–3)
→ p 40

ultima academy Utopian North
10 am — DogA 3
Panel discussion with Nordic composers
→ p 43

Electronic North II
Risto Holopainen, Rikhardur H. Fridriksson, Thuridur Jonsdóttir
1 pm — OCA 21
Free lunch concert with Nordic electronic music
→ p 41

ultima academy New music online
2.30 pm — OCA 21
Panel on contemporary music and streaming with Music Norway, Nordic Playlist et al.
→ p 41

EMS Anniversary Concert
Hanna Hartmann / Erik Bünger
5 pm — Kulturkirken Jakob 12
One of the most important nodes in Scandinavian electronic music turns 50
→ p 44

Simon Steen-Andersen: *Buenos Aires*
Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart / Asamisimasa
7.30 pm — Den Norske Opera & Ballett 6 (also 19 September)
Cultural collision as Scandinavia meets Latin America in a new chamber opera
→ p 42

Marie Munroe & Panta Rei Danseteater: *On the Outside*
9 pm — Riksscenen 24 (Also 19 September)
New hybrid performance expressing the loneliness in togetherness
→ p 45

PechaKucha: Löffler and Lisinski
9 pm — Vulkan Arena 29
→ p 41

friday 19 september

Korp, korp
10 am / 11 am — Dansens Hus 4
Interactive installation for little ones (age 0–3)
→ p 40

ultima academy *Buenos Aires*: Simon Steen-Andersen, Neue Vocalsolisten, asamisimasa and Esteban Buch in conversation
10 am — Loffet 13
→ p 47

ultima academy A Supranational Anthem: *Beethoven's Ninth*
Esteban Buch
1 pm — Loffet 13
→ p 49

Øyvind Mæland / Johan Svensson / Kai Duncan David / Lisa Streich
Aksiom
5 pm — Kulturkirken Jakob 12
Chamber music concert featuring young Nordic composers
→ p 47

Verdensteatret: *Bridge Over Mud*
6 pm — Henie Onstad Kunstsenter 11 (Also 20–28 September)
New theatre work from internationally renowned ensemble
→ p 46

Anna Thorvaldsdottir / Simon Steen-Andersen / Ørjan Matre / Malin Bång
Oslo-Filharmonien
7 pm — Oslo Konserthus 23
Orchestral works from Iceland, Denmark, Sweden and Norway
→ p 48

Simon Steen-Andersen: *Buenos Aires*
Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart / Asamisimasa
7.30 pm — Den Norske Opera & Ballett 6
Cultural collision as Scandinavia meets Latin America in a new chamber opera
→ p 42

Marie Munroe & Panta Rei Danseteater: *On the Outside*
9 pm — Riksscenen 24
New hybrid performance expressing the loneliness in togetherness
→ p 45

Avanti! Ensemble: *HumppAvanti!*
11 pm — Vulkan Arena 29
Finnish contemporary music group whoop it up, humppa-style with Norwegian Disco Lovers (NDL) and DJ Mette
→ p 49

saturday 20 september

Eivind Buene / Karin Rehnqvist / Bent Sørensen
DR UnderholdningsOrkestret / Mattis Herman Nyquist / Andrea Bræin Hovig
2 pm — Universitetets aula 28
World premiere of Buene's new orchestral radio play, and more
→ p 50

Verdensteatret: *Bridge Over Mud*
2 pm — Henie Onstad Kunstsenter 11 (Also 21–28 September)
New theatre work from internationally renowned ensemble
→ p 46

Djuro Zivkovic / Hikari Kiyama / Morten Ladehoff / Sampo Haapamäki
Ensemble Ernst
6 pm — Kulturkirken Jakob 12
New works by Nordic composers
→ p 53

Ultima Finale
Ben Frost A U R O R A live / Karin Krog & John Surman / TCF / Jeppe Just Instituttet
10 pm – 2 am — Vulkan Arena 29
Cool jazz, militant post-classical electronica, barrel organs and 70s/80s synths
→ p 54

See also Ultima Festival's programme of films and installations
→ p 55–56

More information at ultima.no

① ATELIER NORD ANX

Olaf Ryes pl. 2, 0552 Oslo
ateliernord.no/anx/

② BLACK BOX TEATER

Marstrandgata 8, 0566 Oslo
blackbox.no

③ CINEMATEKET

Dronningens gate 16, 0105 Oslo
cinemateket.no

④ DANSENS HUS

Møllerveien 2, 0182 Oslo
dansenshus.com

⑤ DEICHMANSKE BIBLIOTEK

Arne Garborgs plass 4, 0179 Oslo
deichman.no

⑥ DEN NORSKE OPERA & BALLETT

Kirsten Flagstads plass 1, 0150 Oslo
operaen.no

⑦ DET ITALIENSKE KULTURINSTITUTT

Oscars gate 56, 0258 Oslo
iicoslo.esteri.it/II_C_Oslo

⑧ DOGA

Hausmanns gate 16, 0182 Oslo
doga.no

⑨ DRAMATIKKENS HUS

Tøyenbekken 34, 0188 Oslo
dramatikkenshus.no

⑩ EIVIND GROVENS
ORGAN HOUSE

Ekebergvn. 59, 1181 Oslo
orgelhuset.org

⑪ HENIE ONSTAD KUNSTSENTER

Sonja Henies vei 31, 1311 Høvikodden
hok.no

⑫ KULTURKIRKEN JAKOB

Hausmanns gate 14, 0182 Oslo
jakob.no

⑬ LOFTET

Skippergata 22, 0153 Oslo
sparebankstiftelsen.no/sentralen

⑭ MESH

Tordenskiolds gate 3, 0160 Oslo
meshnorway.com

⑮ NASJONALBIBLIOTEKET

Henrik Ibsens gate 110, 0255 Oslo
nb.no

⑯ NASJONALGALLERIET

Universitetsgata 13, 0164 Oslo
nasjonalmuseet.no

⑰ NASJONAL JAZZSCENE

Karl Johans gate 35, 0162 Oslo
nasjonaljazzscene.no

⑱ NATIONALTHEATRET

Johanne Dybwads plass 1, 0161 Oslo
nationaltheatret.no

⑲ NORGES MUSIKKHØGSKOLE
(NMH)

Slemdalsveien 11, 0363 Oslo
nmh.no

⑳ NYMUSIKK

Platousgt. 18, 0190 Oslo
nymusikk.no

㉑ OCA

Nedre gate 7, 0551 Oslo
oca.no

㉒ OSLO DOMKIRKE

Karl Johans gate 11, 0154 Oslo
oslodomkirke.no

㉓ OSLO KONSERTHUS

Munkedamsveien 14, 0115 Oslo
oslokonserthus.no

㉔ RIKSSCENEN

Trondheimsveien 2, 0560 Oslo
riksscenen.no

㉕ SENTRUM SCENE

Arbeidersamfunnets plass 1, 0181 Oslo
rockefeller.no

㉖ MUSIKK & SCENEHUSET

Nedre Slottsgate 1, 0157 Oslo
operatilfolket.no

㉗ TEATERSALEN,
BONDEUNGDOMSLAGET
I OSLO

Rosenkrantzgt 8, 0159 Oslo
bul.no

㉘ UNIVERSITETETS AULA

Karl Johans gate 47, 0162 Oslo
uio.no/om/kultur/aulaen/

㉙ VULKAN ARENA

Maridalsveien 13 b, 0178 Oslo
vulkanarena.no

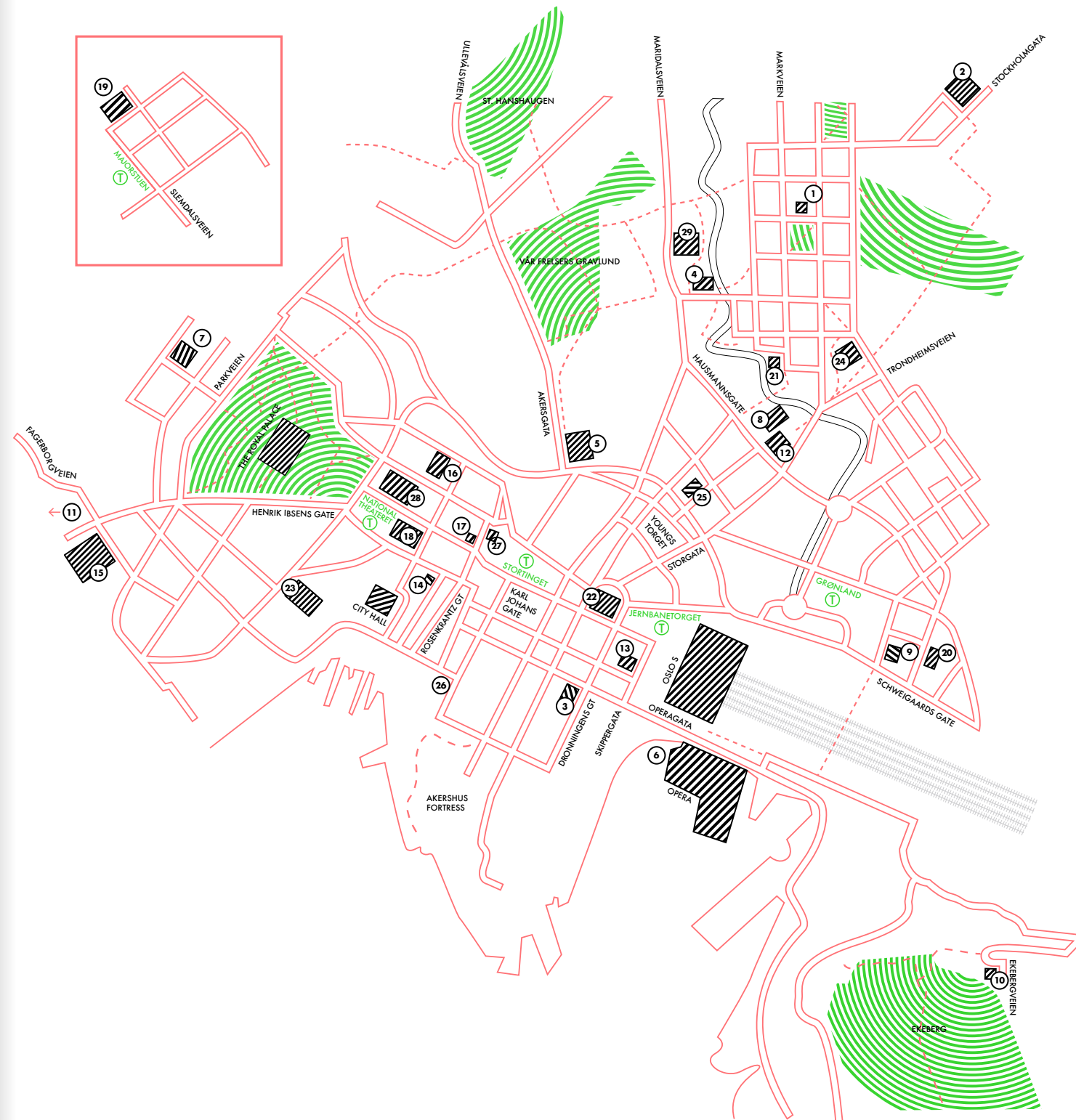
Ticket info

Buy tickets from billettservice.no
 T: (+47) 815 33 133

Pre-ordered tickets can be collected
 at the post office, 'Post i butikk',
 Narvesen, and 7Eleven. More info
www.ultima.no.

Full price and discounts (students,
 elderly, unemployment etc.)
 are available.

NB: Book early to avoid
 disappointment – performances
 can sell out fast.



The nation: Who do you think you are?



Lars Petter Hagen — Artistic Director, Ultima festival (Foto: Ultima / Henrik Beck)

Norwegian music history follows the development of Norway as a nation. In his book *Med spark i gulvet og quinter i bassen*, Harald Herresthal describes how music was used as a national and political tool in the years between 1770 and 1870. Music, art, and language were key elements in the discussion about how Norway could distinguish itself as an independent nation.

Since then, being a composer in Norway has also meant taking a position on the meaning of 'Norwegian'. Discussions about national versus international and about tradition versus modernity were highly relevant in the years after World War II,

and although this may at first seem as outdated as local issues, I would argue to the contrary: a universal issue that touches the core of making music and of being an artist today is an attempt to understand who we are. It's far from being a distinctly Norwegian project.

According to the African Ubuntu philosophy, 'You are who you are because of others.' Music is strengthened through its dependency on its environment. This perspective is the starting point for the theme of this year's Ultima. Reflections on identity, the function of music in a digitised, globalised, and individualised world; reflections on tradition and moder-

nity, on borders and infinity. The Ultima Festival is a forum for ideas in music across disciplinary boundaries. We are a meeting place, an arena for dialogue. Through our subsidiary programme Ultima Academy, we highlight the ideas behind the music, and this year Antonio Negri, Laibach and Alain Badiou among others will discuss topics such as power, ideology, and cultural identity and how they are related to artistic practice.

We are delighted to be hosting Nordic Music Days in cooperation with the Norwegian Society of Composers. Nordic Music Days has been organised through cooperation between Nordic composers since 1888,

and is one of the world's oldest music festivals. At the very first festival, which took place in Copenhagen, Johan Svendsen conducted a work by Edvard Grieg — with the composer himself in the audience. Eighty years after the festival was arranged for the first time, we are grateful that we, together with the Norwegian Society of Composers, can once again make Oslo a focal point of what is currently a truly exciting Nordic contemporary music scene.

On the opening day, the Norwegian Academy of Music will launch its essay collection *Musikk etter 22. juli* (*Music after 22 July*). As the editors write, it is a book 'about powerful experiences related to music — experiences that move us and nourish us, that unite or perturb us. It's about music as a form of survival, in some cases quite literally: of young people fleeing from Utøya, singing together to find the strength to keep on swimming; it's about acting through music as part of individual and collective efforts to deal with the grief and to move on; it's about acknowledgement, faith in the future, and about existential dimensions of the interaction between music and human beings; it's about how music conveys the values and ideals of society, but also about the place of music within the destructive ideological ideas that formed the basis for the attacks that took place on that dark Friday in Norway's history.' The launch will be followed by a performance in Oslo Cathedral of Luciano Berio's *Coro*, a work in which forty individual voices and instruments fuse together a work inspired by folk music and text fragments from around the world.

A serious backdrop for this year's Ultima Festival, because that's how important music is.

Ultima Oslo Contemporary Music Festival
Official festival magazine
10–20 September 2014

Editor-in-chief: Lars Petter Hagen
Editors: Cathrine Nysæther and Rob Young

Contributors: Henrik Beck (photos), Philip Clark, Anne Hilde Neset, Audun Vinger, Roy Wilkinson, Ando Woltmann and Maren Ørstavik

Design: NODE Berlin Oslo
www.nodeoslo.com
Print: TS Trykk

ULTIMA OSLO CONTEMPORARY
MUSIC FESTIVAL
Address: Skippergata 22, 0154 Oslo
Postal address: c/o Sentralen, Pb 183 Sentrum,
0102 Oslo, Norway
E-mail: info@ultima.no

This magazine is published with support
from Fritt Ord, Association of the Freedom of
Expression Foundation, Oslo



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haakon
is the patron of Ultima

FIND US ONLINE
www.ultima.no
Facebook: www.facebook.com/ultimaoslo
Twitter: @ultimaoslo
Instagram: @ultimafestivalen

PROGRAMME ADVISORY BOARD
Per Boye Hansen, Anne Hilde Neset,
Thomas Schäfer and Mattis With

ULTIMA'S MEMBERS
BIT20 Ensemble
Black Box Teater
Den Norske Opera & Ballett
Det Norske Kammerorkester
Det Norske Solistkor
Henie Onstad kunstsenter
Institutt for musikkvitenskap, UiO
Kringkastingsorkestret, NRK
Kunsthøgskolen i Oslo
NICEM
Norges musikkhøgskole
Norsk Komponistforening
NOTAM
nyMusikk
Oslo Domkor
Oslo-Filharmonien
Oslo Sinfonietta og Cikada

ULTIMA IS SUPPORTED BY:



ULTIMA ACADEMY 2014
In partnership with the Norwegian
Academy of Music, the Oslo National
Academy of the Arts, Litteraturhuset,
NOTAM, Cinemateket, Italian Cultural
Institute in Oslo and the University of
Oslo — Institute of Musicology.

WITH THE FRIENDLY SUPPORT OF:



The universal anthem

Rob Young investigates how contemporary music has chased the dream of a universal sound.

In any land, when the national anthem comes on the radio, or is played in public, everyone is expected to stand, sing along, show respect. In this official setting, the national anthem reveals the undemocratic side of democracy: disapproving looks can be directed at those who don't sing out, but freedom must also mean the freedom to refuse to join in.

And so, as radio stations begin to close down for the night, or to move to automated playlists, the national song marks the transition to a new day. But what if something stranger, more alien, emerged from the air-waves? It might sound something like *Hymnen*, the massive electronic montage of national and political music realised by Karlheinz Stockhausen in 1967. *Hymnen* expresses the idea that culture could overflow national borders and represent the collective view of the citizens of the world, and it arrived at the exact historical moment in which Marshall McLuhan was proposing the notion of the global village, and interplanetary space travel was looking like a genuine possibility. Stockhausen appeared on the sleeve of The Beatles' *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* in mid-1967, and shortly after its release, the British group performed the first globally televised satellite broadcast in history, singing their new song 'All You Need is Love' —

a trans-national anthem if ever there was one — to a worldwide audience of 400 million in a programme called *Our World*.

These are natural products of the post-war radiophonic age, which also produced the extraordinary music of Giacinto Scelsi. It is a 'journey to an inaccessible place' based on the composer's intensive concentration on the physical sensations, overtones and

Scelsi's music is a 'journey to an inaccessible place' based on the composer's intensive concentration on the physical sensations, overtones and vibrations of a single note.

vibrations of a single note. Scelsi himself was both of the world and apart from it: an international traveller who lived in London and Paris before the war, stranded in peaceful Switzerland while it was raging. After the war, he described himself as a 'messenger between two worlds', sculpting elemental musical forms that eliminated divisions between Western harmony and Eastern modes, working in an apartment in Rome, which he described as 'the boundary between East and West... it runs right here, through my drawing room'. His music avoided being locked to a particular

place, and a single spectral note could wipe out the old divisions between ancient and modern, orient and occident. His cosmic music reminds the citizens of all nations that they are also citizens of a single, spherical supra-nation, orbiting the sun.

From the 1950s into the sixties, the ideas of universal harmony and political utopianism became even more closely linked in the arts. From Jasper Johns's abstract expressionist degradations of the US flag, to Buckminster Fuller's 'Fuller Projection' of the earth's land masses — part of the US architect's vision of an 'Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth' — and a little later, Swedish artist Öyvind Fahlström's work with maps that drew on United Nations and other data to show a world facing crisis. French musique concrète pioneer Pierre Schaeffer worked towards his ambitious theory of a solfège of sound objects, an infinite lexicon of all available sounds. The multimedia piece *HPSCHD*, by John Cage and computer musician Lejaren Hiller, sampled the NASA photographs that were showing Earth dwellers their home planet from outside its borders for the first time. In this utopian vision of Spaceship Earth, all citizens had the right to take the controls.

When did music first make a claim of universality? For the answer, we can look to the choice made by the European Union — then called the EEC — for its own European Anthem. The final movement of Beethoven's *Symphony No 9*, containing the choral setting of Schiller's poetry that has come to be known as the *Ode To Joy*, is the official anthem of the EU in a version recomposed by the German conductor Herbert von Karajan in the 1970s. Why wasn't a new anthem composed for this new coalition of countries? When various other nations turned to the classical tradition for an off the peg national anthem, the selections tended to be rather bland populist hits: Charpentier and fragments of Handel's *Messiah*, for instance, were among the early suggestions for the European project. 'They were all typical examples of political music but without roots in history, and all of them set out to express a notion of a new identity in an old way,' says Esteban Buch in his book-length study of the ways in which Beethoven's ninth, with its sentiments of universal brotherhood ('*Alle menschen werden Brüder*') has been appropriated by competing factions over two centuries. 'The paradox of the whole proceeding resided in the fact that in building the new, men were turning toward the old,' Buch observes.

Nevertheless, there is an appropriateness in selecting a piece of late Beethoven. By the time he composed the ninth, Beethoven had conjured up an idea of the 'Empire of the Mind', immersing himself in Immanuel Kant's *Universal History of Nature And the Theory of the Heavens* and the writings of British orientalist William Jones, who was interested in the all-encompassing energies of Brahma from his studies of ancient Indian texts. Closer to home, a petition to the composer encouraging him to perform his new symphony in his adopted country of Austria pleaded, 'Beethoven's name and his creations belong to all contemporaneous humanity and every country that opens a sensitive heart to art...'

'A national anthem is the mirror of a people's character', wrote Richard Wagner in a moment of astonishing wishful thinking. Of course, the music of Wagner, along with Beethoven, was among the favourites of the Nazi regime, which appealed to the emotions of a mass audience via the grand classical tradition and the spectacle of mythological opera. The first half of the twentieth century saw composers of many nations — Vaughan Williams, Ives, Tveitt, Sibelius, Ravel, Stravinsky, Albeniz, Villa Lobos, to name a few — striving to create their own national musics, beyond the merely patriotic, that stirred deep and emotive connections with landscape, memory, folklore and literature. That didn't have to mean that the viewpoint was narrowed. Ralph Vaughan Williams, an English socialist, believed that a passion for one's own culture was a necessary thing to bring to the international table.

But after the shock and awe of the second world war, music often turned away from expressions of national mythology towards the idea of sound that would harmonise the planetary nation.

'National anthems are more than national anthems,' said Stockhausen, 'they are "charged" with time, with history — with past, present and future.' A piece such as *Hymnen* was only possible in the post-war age of musique concrète, collage, sound as physical object, and in an age where music was mostly experienced in recorded form. This allowed a long range perspective upon the world of historical sound which informs Luciano Berio's *Coro*, which takes the folk and ethnic musics of many world tribes and cultures as its launch pad. *Coro*, premiered in 1976 — the same year the Voyager spacecraft blasted off with a golden record containing greetings in fifty-five languages and ninety minutes of music from Spaceship Earth — is based upon 'a development of folk techniques and modes which are combined without any reference to specific songs', said the Italian composer. Literally throwing its singers and instrumentalists together,

Berio creates a chaotic multiplicity that mirrors the development of a multicultural world metropolis such as São Paulo, Mexico City or Los Angeles, where planned grids dissolve into anarchic hinterlands. In amongst

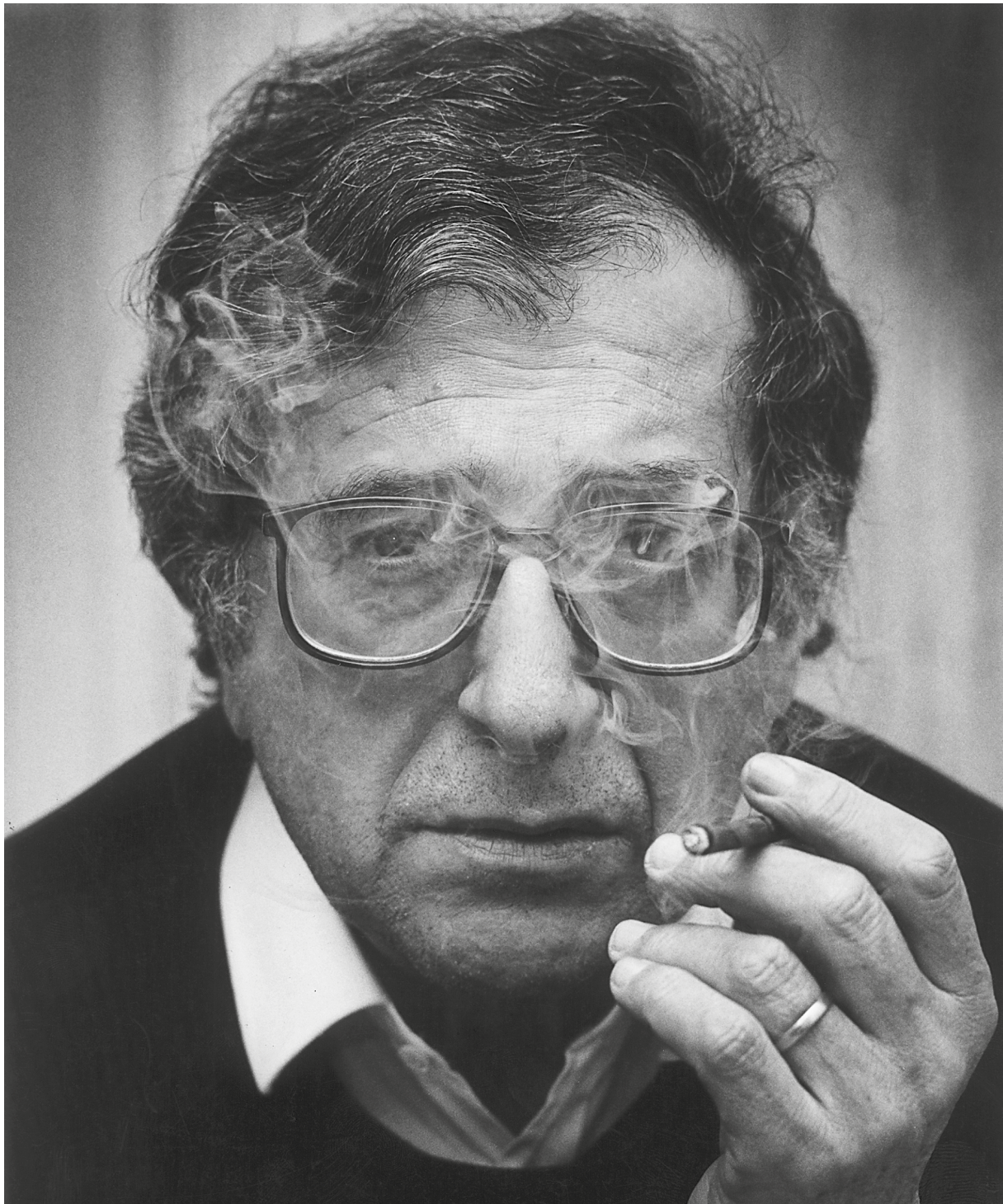
'National anthems are more than national anthems,' said Stockhausen, 'they are "charged" with time, with history — with past, present and future.'

the hybridity, lines of Pablo Neruda's poetry drift in and out of focus, as if asking the question, how much power can an individual voice hold on to among the chaos and noise of the modern world? Through these dynamics of the single voice inside (or against) the larger common voice, *Coro* dramatises the key relationship between individual and state.

'Give me your hearts / I'm ready / There's only one direction / One world, one nation / Yeah, one vision...' When Slovenian group Laibach commandeered Queen's hit single 'One Vision' in 1987, they retitled it 'Geburt Einer Nation' ('Birth Of A Nation'). Slowing Queen's original down to a slug-paced crawl, they unpicked the fascistic fantasies at the song's core, while the renaming inevitably pointed to the DW Griffith film which so unashamedly celebrated the racism of pre-civil rights America. As products of the former communist Yugoslavia, Laibach have deep insight into the double edged nature of universalist propaganda when allied to savagely repressive politics.

A true citizen of the world recognises no place and every place as home. Works such as Mauricio Kagel's *Exotica*, the omni-music of composer Liza Lim, or the omnivorously multi-national scenarios of Verdensteatret, are all products of the global village, a village that has swelled in the internet age to a town, a city, a gigantic supra-nation of billions whose only borders are the rim of the planet.

Luciano Berio's Folk Odyssey



Luciano Berio

Luciano Berio: *Coro*
 KORK + Det Norske Solistkor
 Oslo domkirke
 7:30 pm
 200,- / 150,-

Italian modernist Luciano Berio's monumental work for choir and orchestra matches its pan-cultural subject matter with a choral and orchestral setting of epic proportions.

Berio (1925–2003) was closely associated with the Novissimi literary movement alongside Umberto Eco and Italo Calvino. Their belief in incorporating vernacular forms of literature led Berio to write his first music piece involving folkloric material, *Folk Songs*, for his wife, vocalist Cathy Berberian, in 1964. After a development period lasting most of a decade, *Coro* was finally premiered in 1976.

The massed forces of forty instruments and forty singers are paired up and seated together during the performance, entangling the vocal textural elements in a way rarely attempted by any other piece of music. The sung texts are an 'anthology', as Berio put it, of folk musics and songs drawn from ethnic cultures and societies all around the world on the themes of love and work, from Native Americans and Peruvian Indians to Pacific Rim islanders, Yugoslavia and street-cries of London. The line repeatedly threaded through the work, 'Come, see the blood in the streets', is taken from Pablo Neruda's lengthy poem cycle *Residencia En La Tierra* (*Residence On Earth*).

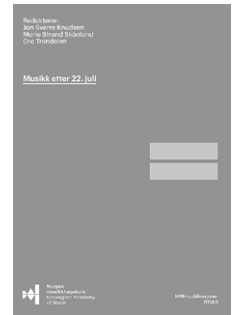
Without actually sampling folk material directly, Berio explained that 'there is a development of folk

techniques and modes which are combined without any reference to specific songs. It is the musical function of those techniques and modes that is continuously transformed in *Coro*.'

On another occasion he commented: 'It is like the plan for an imaginary city which is realised on different levels, which produces, assembles and unifies different things and persons, revealing their collective and individual characters, their distance, their relationships and conflicts within real and ideal borders.' We could easily replace 'city' with 'country', and see *Coro* as an attempt to imagine a hymn for mankind that would transcend political boundaries while channelling historically deep rooted social impulses and desires. RY

Produced in cooperation with KORK and Det Norske Solistkor.

ultima academy: *Music after 22 July*



Book Launch:
Music after 22 July
 Loffet
 5 pm
 Free

The tragedy at the Labour party youth camp at Utøya and in the centre of Oslo on 22 July 2011 placed Norway in mourning and alerted the country to the dangers of political extremism. Music played a cathartic role in the aftermath, and in *Music after 22 July* (edited by Jan Sverre Knudsen, Marie Strand Skånland and Gro Trondalen, and published by Norwegian Academy of Music, Centre for Health), researchers from the fields of music, healthcare, media, literature and religion write about how music helped cope with grief and anger, how it brought together people and musicians from different social and ethnic backgrounds, as well as about its use in public and official ceremonies to express the vision of a more inclusive society.

The book launch is in collaboration with Centre for Music and Health at Norwegian Academy of Music.

Weaving Fictions

Cikada Ensemble

6 pm

150,- / 100,-

Liza Lim: *Winding Bodies:*

3 *Knots*

The Heart's Ear

Philtre

Henrik Hellstenius: *Places Of
Sounds And Words*

Cikada Ensemble

Elisabeth Holmertz (soloist)

Christian Eggen (conductor)



Liza Lim (Photo: Astrid Ackermann)

‘Belonging and not-quite-belonging, or belonging in ways where you can see the gaps or multiplicity in identity has been an important impulse in my artistic work,’ explains composer Liza Lim about her relationship to ideas of nationhood. Born in Australia to Chinese parents — who were themselves born in Brunei (where she spent parts of her childhood) — she now lives in Manchester and naturally has a multifaceted sense of home. ‘But I don’t think this is particularly unusual in the times in which we live — a time of great mobility and global flux,’ she adds. ‘Cultural difference is an enormously political theme and I would resist romantic notions of national or multicultural identity since that somehow tends to lead into compromising positions where you have to ignore or deny some pretty nasty parts of history — slavery, colonialism, genocide and other repressions, especially of indigenous peoples,’ she explains. ‘A basic and ongoing challenge to narratives of nationalism as unity’ are facts of inclusion and exclusion — who

holds power and who does not; how is that dynamic regulated, represented and performed.’

Folklore is part of any country’s sense of identity, so it seems prescient that Lim has chosen to investigate one such narrative for Ultima’s commissioned piece for Cikada Ensemble, *Winding Bodies: 3 Knots*. The piece takes its starting point in an old Nordic folk tale where one knot can be untied to make a light breeze, a second knot opened would cause a storm, and the third knot must never be opened — it holds a hurricane. ‘It’s an intriguing story because it shows the magic of seemingly ordinary objects and how these everyday things are invested by people with powers, stories and intentions,’ explains Lim. ‘I’m interested in ‘fictions of tradition’ because I find it helpful to look at so-called tradition and what people do with ideas of continuity and authenticity, seeing these things as performative impulses that belong to a much wider framework of cultural meaning-making and social transformation.’

Lim’s ties to Norway and Cikada Ensemble go back to 1988 where she first met conductor Christian Eggen and Cikada’s pianist Kenneth Karlsson at the ISCM festival in Hong Kong. The new piece is a work exploring frictions and tensions in materials — bow hair, strings and air. By using the folktale as a fabric for the composition, Lim is taking an oblique view of Nordic conditions, with a more obviously Norwegian element through the inclusion of the Hardanger fiddle in the ensemble.

Exclusion and inclusion are not, course, terms only applicable to nationhood but also to gender. Liza Lim is a non-white female in the white male-dominated world of contemporary classical music. ‘I’m aware that it would have been simply impossible for someone like myself to have had any kind of artistic voice in music in the mid-twentieth century or even forty years ago; but purely from the point of view of representative expressions from across humankind, we’re really missing something when

there are far fewer women than men finding platforms for their creativity, imagination and artistry,’ Lim explains. And what is her advice for young female composers today? ‘The same as for any composer, which is to really strive to craft something that is authentically one’s own.’

The Norwegian composer Henrik Hellstenius’s work *Places Of Sounds And Words*, written for solo vocals and ensemble, will have its world premiere. Hellstenius’s works have been performed several times at Ultima in collaboration with ensembles such as Cikada, Oslo Sinfonietta, BIT20 and Ensemble Court Circuit. His first opera, *SERA*, for which he was given the Edvard Award, was performed for the first time at Ultima in 1999. His latest opera, *OPHELIA: Death By Water Singing*, which was composed in collaboration with Cecilie Løveid, premiered at Ultima in 2005. This versatile composer has written music for chamber ensembles, orchestral works, opera, electroacoustic music as well as for film, ballet, and theatre, including first performances of plays by Jon Fosse.

Places Of Sounds And Words is for vocalists, ensemble and sounds from the ‘real’ world, familiar sounds from urban landscapes, from parks, squares, stairways, conversations and arguments. Music, text and sounds of reality are combined to form brief music-theatrical encounters that touch on the subject of how we are present in the world yet do not necessarily participate in it. Henrik Hellstenius has written this piece for vocalist Elisabeth Holmertz and Cikada. It also features video by Peter Knutsen specially made for this first performance at Ultima. AHN

Produced by Cikada. In collaboration with Nasjonalmuseet for kunst, arkitektur og design

ultima academy Exotica

Exotica (lecture/workshop)

Loftet

10 am

Free

Jörn Peter Hiekel, Ensemble
Modern, NAM students

The 1972 Munich Olympics — known as ‘the Happy Games’ — were the first to be held in Germany since the fall of the Nazi regime. Seizing the chance to show the world a more democratic face, the country commissioned artists from all nations to create works for a parallel exhibition. One of those was Mauricio Kagel, whose piece *Exotica* critiqued the dominance of Western culture with characteristically subversive humour and irony: classically trained musicians are required to grapple with unfamiliar, non-European instruments.

Beginning with an analysis of *Exotica*, eminent musicologist Jörn Peter Hiekel (Professor at Hochschule für Musik Dresden) and percussionist Rainer Römer (Ensemble Modern) talk about Kagel’s view of music as realist art, and, more generally, about the process of acculturation — the meeting between two cultures and the experience of the Other — through music composition and performance. The event includes a performance workshop for musicians.

På At all Ultima Academy events at our new Loftet space (Skippergata 22), you can begin each festival day with coffee and a free lunch (yes, there is such a thing)!

ultima academy Othernesses

Othernesses: Music in
Contemporary Cairo
(concert/panel)

Cinemateket

4 pm

Free

Ramz Sabry Samy, Yara
Mekawei, Fady Galal, Joachim
Kwetzinsky, Jörn Peter Hiekel
and Andreas Engström

1 pm Yara Mekawei & Fady
Galal: *Peacock* (live video &
electronics)

1.30 pm Ramz Sabry Samy:
Akhenaten's Last Papyrus
(Joachim Kwetzinsky, piano)

2 pm Discussion

Ramz Sabry Samy composes orchestral, chamber and solo instrumental works; Yara Mekawei and Fady Galal use video art, electronics and new media in social-minded projects. Both live in Cairo and are active participants in the city’s cultural life. As Swedish journal *Nutida Musik* launches a special Egypt edition, we have invited them, plus editor Andreas Engström and musicologist Jörn Peter Hiekel, to present their work and talk about the role of contemporary music in Egypt. What does it mean to work with art forms rooted in Western tradition? Is colonial discourse still present today, in what way, and how does it affect the arts?

Scelsi Revisited

Klangforum Wien

Kulturkirken Jakob

8 pm

200,- / 150,-

Georg Friedrich Haas:

Introduktion und Transsonation

Tristan Murail: *Un Sogno*

Ragnhild Berstad: *Cardinem* (WP)

Giacinto Scelsi: *Anahit*

The music of Italian composer Giacinto Scelsi (1905–88) is beyond category within twentieth century classical music. Rejecting post-war serialism in favour of highly personal sonic explorations, he created one of modernism's rawest, most uncompromising bodies of work. His music often involves rich, hovering clouds of textured sound that unfold at the speed of continental drift — no wonder director Martin Scorsese used some of it to frame the menacing atmospheres of his 2010 film *Shutter Island*.

Born into an aristocratic family, Scelsi lived the comfortable and glamorous life of an international traveller and playboy Count. After spending most of the second world war stranded in neutral Switzerland, he effectively disappeared for four years after the war due to a mystery illness. Scelsi reputedly set himself on the path of healing by listening repeatedly and hypercritically to the overtones and microtones of a single piano note for hours at a time. Later, in his apartment in Rome, he began assembling a collection of electronic instruments on which he pursued his obsessions with the mystic resonances of drones and overtones. Using the

Jenny Ondioline, an electric keyboard invented in 1941, and reel-to-reel tape recorders, the composer captured his improvised keyboard playing on tapes which he would then listen back to and transcribe into work for orchestras, chamber groups and solo instrumentalists, as well as choral pieces. Composer Vieri Tosatti assisted him with this monumental and complex task, but claimed after Scelsi's death that he was in fact responsible for more composerly input into certain pieces than he had previously been given credit for.

Whatever the truth of the matter, it is Scelsi's genius that is responsible for the overall working method which produced such memorable and utterly unique music. While Scelsi's compositions have become increasingly well known, studied and understood since his death, and particularly influential on the European spectralist movement, the original tapes — featuring improvisations, sketches and experiments with electronic textures — always remained out of hearing, guarded by the Scelsi Foundation. Until now. Austrian ensemble Klangforum Wien have been given access to the Scelsi audio archive and commissioned various living composers to make new work based on the fragments they found there. The Scelsi Revisited project highlights three pieces created as part of this programme, plus a performance of Scelsi's riveting violin concerto *Anahit* (1965), subtitled *Lyric Poem Dedicated To Venus*.

Austrian spectralist Georg Friedrich Haas compares Scelsi's intuitive tape-sketch method to Beethoven's notebooks. Scored for seventeen instruments, *Introduktion und Transsonation* (2012) attempts to find contemporary electronic ways of

rendering Scelsi's spontaneity.

Tristan Murail, one of the original French spectralists, knew Scelsi personally in the 1970s and his *Il Sogno* (*The Dream*) re-synthesizes one of the master's old electronic tapes to make it 'blossom and flourish'.

Cardinem, a new work by Norway's Ragnhild Berstad, means 'turning point', and uses Scelsi's techniques of 'twisting' tones in its exploration of a robin's birdsong.

Klangforum Wien are one of Europe's leading contemporary ensembles, and their unprecedented Giacinto Scelsi Revisited project offers a rare opportunity to encounter the intimate soundworld of a modernist legend. RY

Klangforum Wien:
Johannes Kalitzke – conductor
Gunde Jäch-Micko – violin solo
Vera Fischer – flutes
Zinajda Kodrič – flutes
Doris Nicoletti – flutes
Markus Deuter – oboe, cor anglais
Olivier Vivarès – clarinets
Bernhard Zachhuber – clarinets
Gerald Preinfalk – saxophone
Christoph Walder – horn
Reinhard Zmölnig – horn
Anders Nyqvist – trumpet
Andreas Eberle – trombone
Daniel Riegler – trombone
Annette Bik – violin
Uli Mertin – viola
Dimitrios Polisoidis – viola
Benedikt Leitner – violoncello
Andreas Lindenbaum – violoncello
Nikolaus Feinig – double bass
Uli Fussenegger – double bass
Florian Müller – piano
Peter Böhm – sound design
Florian Bogner – sound design

Klangforum Wien is kindly supported by ERSTE BANK.

Supported by Komponistnes Vederlagsfond.

En Rikskonsert (A National Concert)

En Rikskonsert (WP)

Ensemble NING

Teatersalen, Bondeungdomslaget

i Oslo

10 pm

150,- / 100,-

Ensemble NING present a Rikskonsert — or national concert — which embodies the spirit of musical fellowship in Norway in an age of globalisation, self-realisation and commercialism.

Challenges related to the nation state, globalisation and multiculturalism are key issues today, both in Norway and around the world. Music defines identity, belonging, and distance, which is precisely what makes a study of musical fellowship in contemporary Norway so inter-

esting and potentially controversial. Ensemble NING highlights some of the modern-day challenges connected to the relationship between the individual and society, between multiculturalism and national fellowship, and between a free market and cultural refinement.

Rikskonsert is a mix of talk show, concert causerie, and lectures, with elements of archive material and current politics — but first and foremost it is, of course, a concert.

Rikskonsert is a show made and performed by Ensemble NING.

Amund Sjøli Sveen, Erik Dæhlin, Tora Ferner Lange, Ignas Krunglevicius, Alwynne Pritchard, Kristin Norderval, Trond Reinholdtsen, Gildas Le Pape, Vestre Aker musikkorps, and more

Supported by Arts Council Norway, Fond for lyd og bilde, Det norske komponistfond.

Produced in cooperation with Ensemble NING and Bondeungdomslaget.



ultima academy Scelsi The Original



Scelsi The Original (lecture)

Italian Cultural Institute

6 pm

Free

Alessandra Carlotta Pellegrino

Reclusive and eccentric, Giacinto Scelsi's personal life was an enigma. Alessandra Carlotta Pellegrino, scientific director of the Fondazione Isabella Scelsi in Rome and editor of Scelsi's autobiography, *Sogno 101*, lectures on the composer's life, work and legacy as an introduction to Klangforum Wien's Scelsi Revisited concert.

Provocative agents

Contemporary music has always had a healthy tradition of questioning tradition, and this year's Ultima reflects that. Philip Clark looks at the festival's subversive elements, from Mauricio Kagel to Johannes Kreidler:

We don't often look through the eyes of a dead composer, especially not at a reconstruction of their own music room. But in 1970 Ludwig van Beethoven was brought back to life in the year of his bicentenary by renegade Buenos Aires-born composer Mauricio Kagel, whose satirical film *Ludwig van* was built around the conceit that Beethoven had returned to Bonn to oversee his own birthday celebrations.

And, at the Beethovenhaus, something terrible happens. A meddling doorman fails to recognise Our Hero and demands he pay an entrance fee — Beethoven is charged to enter a museum celebrating his own genius.

Now inside, though, we follow his gaze as he walks into his music room, where surrounded by decomposing busts of his own image, a Beethovenian montage is generated by musicians playing off fragmented scores draped around the room, sonatas folded around concertos overlaid by symphonies and serenades, and then poetic fantasy slams into stark reality. During a mock-up of a late-night television arts discussion show, Kagel and his panel of guests mock the conductor Herbert von Karajan. His palpable disdain for modern composition and his obsession with manufacturing a 'beautiful' orchestral sound leads them to conclude that Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic are interested only in preserving culture: they care little for the future.

A strand running through this year's Ultima Festival throws up

some weighty, even uncomfortable questions about the nature of classical tradition, exposing the necessary tension that exists between composers whose instinct is to 'protect' tradition, and those, like Kagel, who believe that the most traditional thing about tradition is the tradition of questioning tradition.

'People today fear the future and so they flee backwards, hearing Beethoven and Mahler as an escape from today's problems'

Right at the point where formerly fresh, malleable ideas solidify into what feels suspiciously like lazy orthodoxy, that is where such composers, invariably termed agents provocateurs, enfants terribles or iconoclasts, choose to intervene. The pop histories would have us believe that composers are either 'traditional' or 'provocative', a logic that falls apart once the actual nature of tradition is examined. Helmut Lachenmann summed up the paradox well: 'People today fear the future and so they flee backwards, hearing Beethoven and Mahler as an escape from today's problems,' he said during an interview in 2003, 'but this music was written not to flee — it was written to awake!' In English, at least, there isn't a word to convincingly define an artist on a mission to advance the radical core of tradition. 'Tradition' has become synonymous

with 'heritage', a linguistic muddle that the classical music establishment has been eager to embrace. Dead German composers sell — even if some of them happen to be Austrian — especially as myths about Beethoven's deafness and Mozart being a step away from God himself have such good PR potential.

As acts of provocation go, *Ludwig van* is barbed and deadly. Kagel's film obliges us to reconsider what it is composers do, why they might do it, and blows apart the apparent absurdity of using the apparatus and customs of a three hundred year old tradition to build art with contemporary relevance. A fundamental question immediately presents itself: why is this composer choosing to express his thoughts on Beethoven through film? After all, in the popular imagination Beethoven represents the ultimate, superhuman composer and those who choose to follow in his footsteps are supposed to cower at the very mention of his name. But Kagel pricks that veneer of sentiment and deification with his sly opening joke. Rather than following in Beethoven's footsteps, Kagel *shows* us Ludwig's footsteps. His dainty, buckled 18th century shoes gingerly dismount the train at Bonn Station. And then a moment of pure Monty Python mischief: Beethoven walks into some roadworks and we see his camp little feet hotfooting it over a fence.

Forever the composer, Kagel cunningly underscores his narrative with an ambiguous sense of time. Even

though we, his audience, are observing everything through Beethoven's eyes, we never see the great man's face. We can become familiar with Beethoven, we can enter his mind through his music, but always there will be a part of him we can't have; a part that will forever remain faceless and marooned in history. Yet as Beethoven walks into his music room for the first time in two hundred years, we empathise with his emotions. This sanctuary where his creative spirit once ran riot is now a grimy cobweb-filled museum that is clearly on the brink of collapse. But new art emerges from the dust. Kagel's Beethoven montage — the overlaps we hear between different works are determined by the twists and turns of a rostrum camera — can be extracted as a standalone concert hall piece. But within the context of the film this fantasy music becomes a commentary on Kagel's underpinning philosophical themes. And when the studio panel start to chew over those same themes, which were initially spelled out through visual allusion, and then through music, they become formalised in language.

Ludwig van was a new kind of piece altogether: an unclassifiable hybrid of film, music, satire and documentary held together through persuasive argument, sheer wit and not a little chutzpah. I sometimes amuse myself with another decidedly Kagelesque fantasy: the most rebellious, dastardly act ever perpetrated by Elliott Carter was his failure to return his copy of Walter Piston's *Orchestration*, the essential orchestral primer for every budding composer, to the New York City Public Library on time. Doubtless I'm being unfair. Elliott lived to be one hundred and three — he must have had his racier moments. But the distinction between Kagel, who looked inside tradition to structure pieces as a commentary on their own existence, and a figure like Carter, who wrote bespoke retro-modernism to order, is well worth thinking about. In a festival that aims to unleash multiple forms of musical provocation, Carter's music simply wouldn't cut the mustard.

Provocation is in the eyes, the ears and the mindset of the provoked. Casual classical hangers-on — those whose listening begins with Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* and ends with Barber's *Adagio for Strings* — might well find themselves provoked by the piss 'n' vinegar stentorian surface of Carter's music and therein lies that much heralded disconnect between modern composers and their audience, the paradox being, of course, that Carter's music was entirely accepting of classical tradition. His music spun out of Schoenberg and Webern, who were themselves rooted in Brahms, Mozart and Beethoven. He was systemically incapable of writing an ill-behaved, naughty piece that, as Kagel did so often, questioned *why* the world needed another string quartet or orchestral piece.

Provocation should not be confused with posturing. Erik Satie and Morton Feldman provoked with hushed opulence that challenged our body clock's sense of scale and pacing, the apparent gorgeousness of the soundworld inviting you inside structures designed to disorientate and shift conventional ideas of structural

'Tradition' has become synonymous with 'heritage', a linguistic muddle that the classical music establishment has been eager to embrace.

markers; in our own time Christopher Fox and Gloria Coates similarly override our expectations of what a piece can be. Kagel's *Exotica* unpicks the very foundations of instrumental technique, the tools that operate classical performance. By requiring classically trained instrumentalists to play instruments from outside Western tradition, Kagel reminds us that classical tradition can be crushed by the weight of its own formality. This piece, he says, 'goes back to the primeval origins of music making, when singing was still at one with making sound out of simple, everyday objects.'

Exotica spotlighted the possible limitations of classical tradition by embracing the big world outside. For Kagel, testing time and place was typical: his *Music for Renaissance Instruments* built lunar soundscape sounds from obsolete instruments; in *St Bach Passion* form met content as Bach narrated his own life story. In our own time, German composer Johannes Kreidler (born 1980) moves those ideas a logical step beyond. The principle of authorial voice and control over text sits at the heart of Western tradition. In classical music-speak, the score is 'the music', while reviews in classical music magazines strive to find the benchmark performance of those tablets of stone.

When Kreidler accepted a commission from the Berlin based Ensemble Mosaik in 2009, he outsourced the job, trawling the internet for composers and programmers in China and India who might be willing to prostitute themselves by imitating Kreidler's style. The result was a piece, *Fremdarbeit*, for ensemble, sampler and moderator. Unlike composers who unapologetically ape the styles of totemic figures like Feldman, Ligeti and Nancarrow, the point could be pressed that at least Kreidler is being upfront about what some might consider opportunistic cynicism. His new piece for Ultima, *Audioguide*, is described as a series of talk-shows about music, which puts you in mind of like the final scene of *Ludwig van*: 'music theatre about music,' Kreidler tells us, 'about its relationships to politics, psychology, technology and terrorism, with Shakespeare motifs and Derrida thoughts in the background. The hypermodern state of the art is examined, subliminal messages are sent through music, instruments get destroyed, people fall into air pianos, we'll talk about the tragic consequences of MP3 with one of its programmers and we'll built a hyper-instrument out of the hall.'

All of which suggests provocation in music has little to do with how the music actually sounds — it's the ideas that count.

ultima academy Scelsi Revisited

Scelsi Revisited (panel) plus
Anahit: From Tape to Score
(workshop)

Løftet

10 am

Free

Klangforum Wien (Uli
Fussener, Johannes Kalitzke
and Sven Hartberger), Ragnhild
Berstad, Emil Bernhardt,
Alessandra Carlotta Pellegrino

Giacinto Scelsi was deeply interested in foreign cultures. An early perception of the microtonal qualities of Egyptian music inspired his developing philosophy of sound. He conceived of sound as a three-dimensional prism whose innumerable planes are made visible by the work of the composer.

In connection with Scelsi Revisited, (see page 12), this conversation will seek connections between Scelsi's work and the new pieces, technical and interpretation challenges, and present Scelsi's archives in Rome.

Plus: An analysis workshop, led by project initiator Uli Fussener and conductor Johannes Kalitzke, will give composers and musicians insight into Scelsi's *Anahit* (performed on Thursday 11 September): listening to tape fragments, detecting them in the score, and understanding basic composition techniques and Scelsi's notation system.

Håkon Austbø: A Celebration

Håkon Austbø (piano)

Nasjonalgalleriet

5 pm

Free

Arne Nordheim: *Listen*

Øyvind Mæland: (new work)

André Jolivet: *Mana*

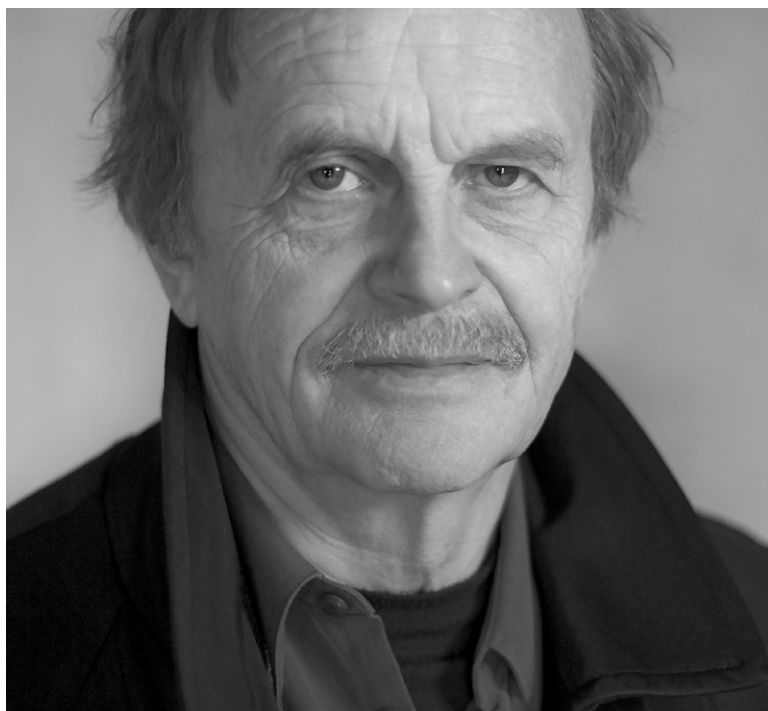
Asbjørn Schaathun: *Physis*

What makes a musician Norwegian? Håkon Austbø is one of those pianists we willingly highlight as one of Norway's greats, but the truth is that Austbø has lived most of his life abroad — in France, the USA, Germany and The Netherlands. As well as being one of the most celebrated interpreters of piano repertoire

by Grieg and other Norwegian composers, he has distinguished himself internationally as an interpreter of Messiaen, Scriabin and Debussy.

This year Håkon Austbø celebrates fifty years as a musician. In 1964, aged fifteen, he debuted with a Ravel recital in the Aula, about which pianist and critic Reimar Riefling commented in *VG*: 'He mastered impressionism's modern, refined figuration and harmonization with ease. Perhaps this is the field in which the young pianist will find his powers?' He got that right, and more besides. At that time he was billed as the boy from Kongsberg. These days he's the Norwegian international pianist. MØ

In collaboration with the National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design.



Håkon Austbø (Foto: Ivan Tostrup)

So near, so far



Sleeve of the original 1972 LP of *Exotica* on Deutsche Grammophon

Mauricio Kagel: *Exotica*

Ensemble Modern

Riksscenen

8 pm

Free

Mauricio Kagel's own background was highly diverse. Born in Argentina in 1931 to Jewish parents who had fled from Russia, and raised in Buenos Aires, he studied music, literature and philosophy before moving to Cologne as a student, where he lived for the rest of his life.

Exotica was commissioned for the Munich Olympic Games in 1972. It is written for a range of 'non-European instruments', which the ensemble of six must manoeuvre between as best they can. For the listener the soundscape poses questions: is this a parody of Asian, Arabic and African music? Or is it a genuine attempt to replicate authentic fragments from multiple

cultures? Even the title becomes a question. Is the music exotic from the point of view of Western culture, or does the opposite apply: are the Western structures exotic for the non-Western collection of instruments?

At the same time the musicians are also challenged vocally and encouraged to prioritise the voice above the instrument whenever the exercise hits a conflict. In Western music culture — unlike some others — pure instrumental music has achieved the highest status, even though it's really human song that is the one common ground shared by everyone. By prioritising the voice over instruments, Kagel tries to go beyond exoticism, and looks back on music's true origins: the song.

Ensemble Modern is an internationally recognised contemporary ensemble, and has recorded music by Karlheinz Stockhausen, Steve Reich, Heiner Goebbels and Hans Werner Henze. They performed pieces by Frank Zappa at Ultima 2013. MØ

Lunch with the Bohman Brothers

Bohman Brothers

Vilde&Inga

nyMusikk

12 pm

Free

London based Jonathan Bohman and Adam Bohman, aka The Bohman Brothers, are known for their unique experimental sound based live performances which use found objects, text and an innumerable array of sound sources. Their humorous visual set-ups, resembling hardwired fleamarkets, are the basis from which the duo, in the spirit of Fluxus, musique concrète and sound poetry, create their often grotesque soundscapes freely quoting from any source available to them. Found texts such as advertising spiel are juxtaposed with sounds ranging from amplified shoe brushes to a tape cut-up of seventeenth-century instruments.

By exploring non-traditional approaches to their instruments, Vilde Sandve Alnæs (violin) and Inga Margrete Aas (double bass) greatly expand their timbral palette. They are classically trained musicians from Norway, but as the duo Vilde&Inga they are taking on free improvisation. Their debut album was released on ECM earlier this year, to great international acclaim.

Produced by nyMusikk.

Mythical beasts

Jenny Hval & Susanna:

Meshes Of Voice

Kulturkirken Jakob

10 pm

200,- / 150,-

'I find the groundbreaking aspect of surrealism liberating and fascinating, and I used this interlacing of exchanges between Jenny and me to explore internal processes through bodily images, symbols from mythology, and Gaudí's undulating architecture,' says Susanna Wallumrød about *Meshes Of Voice*, a collaborative project with Jenny Hval which brings together two of the strongest and most independent voices around today.

Asked to write a piece for Ladyfest 2009, the project began as an exchange of letters in which the two artists used each other's texts, and

gradually melodies. The project has been released this autumn on SusannaSonata, Susanna's own label.

A kind of mythological mist hangs over *Meshes Of Voice*, where melodies glide in and out like ships passing in the night; they come and go, are repeated and transformed, meet again, and slide away. The title references Maya Deren's film, the surrealist masterpiece *Meshes Of The Afternoon* (1943), with its cyclical themes and powerful, surreal images (such as the film's recurring character, who is dressed in a black cape and with a mirror for a face). 'I was really into mythological animals and female creatures at the time,' says Hval, 'both because I read a lot of mythological texts and because there is something mythological about collaborating with someone, especially vocally. We had to sing together. Susanna and Jenny are neither the one nor the other;

we were more like a shifting creature with two voices.'

'I think we looked at Medusa, Athena, and Harpy as examples of ideas about woman, the ugly, the divine, the horrific... Athena is the goddess of reason, intelligence, art, and literature. She also happens to be a virgin,' explains Susanna.

'I also remember that I had seen a picture of the mirror replacing the face when I studied film long ago, but I didn't know it was from *Meshes Of The Afternoon* before I saw the film in 2008. So it was an image that had made quite an impression,' says Hval. 'A Mirror In My Mouth', one of the album's many highlights, repositions the mirror in the mouth. Hval explains: 'In the *Meshes* project it was only natural that the mirror was inside the mouth... after all, it's from there we reflect the world when we sing and write music.' AHN



Jenny Hval & Susanna (Photo: Ultima / Henrik Beck)

New horizons



Horisonter performed by Eirik Raude, Arve Henriksen og Bjarne Kvinnslund (Photo: Knut Bry)

Eirik Raude / Arve Henriksen /

Bjarne Kvinnslund /

Knut Bry / mmw arkitekter:

Horisonter

DogA

6 pm

Free

An installation surrounded by sound and vision, derived from a series of concerts in 2013 in five buildings designed by Sverre Fehn, one of Norway's most accomplished and renowned architects. From within a spatial and sound installation by audio artist Bjarne Kvinnslund, and surrounded by Knut Bry's photographs of rural Norway, trumpeter Arve Henriksen and percussionist Eirik Raude can be heard performing improvisations inspired by Fehn's structures, spaces and his unique melding of modernism and landscape. The opening will be marked by a concert featuring those musicians playing live in the installation.

In collaboration with DogA. Supported by Norsk kulturråd, Komponistfondet, MFOs vederlagsfond, Fond for Utøvende Kunstnere and Fond for Lyd og Bilde, EGD.

ultima remake Coro

Ultima Remake (concert/sound installation)

Café MESH

4 pm

Free

Remake is Ultima's secondary schools outreach project. Remake presents a piece of music considered a 'contemporary classic', and through a mixture of careful listening, reflection and creative analysis, explores how the social, political and artistic context in which the work was composed relates to students' own present day experience and their artistic understanding.

This year's Remake work is Luciano Berio's *Coro* (featured in Ultima's opening concert on 10 September). Inspired by Berio's folk music collage, participants will develop their own sample/folk music based installation, which will be presented alongside the launch of a specially designed app for field recording, Remake Recorder, and Remake's online sound map.

Participants: Students from the music department of Manglerud Secondary School (MU2A/2B).

With: Daniel Teige (sound scenography)/ Heloisa Amaral (music)/ Petr Svarovsky (app development)/ Magnus Bugge (production)/ Kristian Skaarbrevik and Otto Graf (composition teachers, ManglerudVGS.)

In collaboration with NOTAM. Supported by Sparebankstiftelsen DNB.

Eivind Groven's organ house

Eivind Groven's just intonation organ
Guided tour and concert in Eivind
Groven's house, Ekebergveien 59
12 pm (Bus from Youngstorget,
at 11:45, seating limited)
Free

Rebecka Sofia Ahvenniemi:
Organic Encounters
Karstein Djupdal:
Groven spiller Jondølen
Peter Edwards: *Boulez Springar*
Agnes Pettersen: *New work*
Eric Skytterholm Egan: *New work*
Eivind Groven: *Two organ pieces*
Sara Aimée Smiseth (organ)



Vital organs: inside Eivind Groven's instrument (Foto: Ultima / Henrik Beck)

It is tempting to believe that Bach's great work *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, with a preludes and fugue in every key, marks a distinct advance in both the instrument's construction and the problematics of tuning. It is written for the so-called tempered piano, in which the octave is the only just-intoned interval, and the distance between the twelve notes of the octave have been adjusted so as to be virtually identical.

But not everyone would call it a step forward. The tempered scale is only one way of solving the problem: the natural tuning that sets the notes of the scales in relation to the key at equal intervals is actually a pain to use when you move further away from the fundamental tone. To establish a new base note in an instrument in just intonation leads to murky frequency ratios and acid tones — and has created headaches since ancient times.

Composer, musician, acoustician, collector and researcher Eivind Groven (1901–77) was never satisfied with the inaccuracies of equal temperament. Placing equal distance between the notes 'vulgarises music' and 'creates

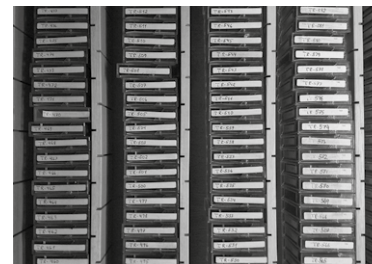
psychic disturbances', according to Groven himself, and he began developing a system that could adjust a note's tuning automatically, based on whichever key you were in. In the organ house at Ekeberg can be found more of Groven's complex constructions, which allow the the thirty-six notes between octaves to be adjusted automatically. It's not perfect, but it's a step closer to just intonation, and attracted interest from, among others, Albert Schweitzer, Alois Hába and Arne Nordheim.

Tuning remains an issue for composers and musicians today, and many have taken Groven's ideas further. Musicologist David Code has created a digital version of Groven's machine, and NOTAM has developed a portable just intonation system for computer and sampler. This concert presents a selection of Groven's own music, as well as works by several frequency-sensitive composers from nyMusikk's Composers Group. MØ

Produced by NOTAM in collaboration with nyMusikk's komponistgruppe (NMK).

See also Ultima Academy: Arv (page 39).

Distant traces



Ingfrid Breie Nyhus and Erik Dæhlin: *Avstandsriis*
National Library of Norway
12, 1 and 2 pm
Free

Ingfrid Breie Nyhus and Erik Dæhlin have spent the past few months working at the Norwegian Collection of Folk Music, listening to numerous recordings of Norwegian folk music dating from 1910 to the present day. By combing through the archive material — which constitutes thousands of hours of recordings — and examining recording techniques, political and cultural ideas that have guided the archiving, and, not least, all the musicians whose works are stored there, they have studied memory in the form of 'frozen' sound, time, and events. They particularly noted how encountering the archived material creates musical trails and acoustic memories. By making new 'notches' in the material, a 'live' archive is created, which Breie Nyhus and Dæhlin reproduce, interpret, and play together with some of those musicians. This concert installation is an archive project at the Norwegian Folk Collection, National Library of Norway.

Supported by Arts Council Norway and the Norwegian Artistic Research Programme.

Nordic utterances

First/ Burst / Entrance

Film still from Utterances

Bjørn Erik Haugen: *Utterances*
(WP)
Nordic Voices
Kulturkirken Jakob
3 pm
150,- / 100,-

How do you relate to and communicate with your surroundings via utterances? Bjørn Erik Haugen expounds on this question in his new work by, among other things, using the transcription of an interview with Julia Kristeva about linguistics, transcriptions of sounds from twenty-eight films portraying different emotions and situations with inarticulate use of voice, and a third section based on a documentary on how autistic people relate to the world around them by communicating with objects.

Bjørn Erik Haugen is an inter-media artist working with video, music, sound and image. As well

as exhibiting regularly in his native Norway, he has had solo shows in the USA, Sweden and France, and has taken part in many group shows including Berlin Transmediale, Brazil's Hipersonica, and Biennales in Poland, Romania and the UK. In 2012 he received a special mention in the Digital Music and Sound Art category at Prix Ars Electronica.

The six-piece group Nordic Voices are one of the leading international vocal groups. Formed in 1996, they tackle a versatile range of musics from Lassus to Ligeti.

Schumann renewed



Reinhold Friedl and Bernhard Schütz

Robert Schumann: *Dichterliebe*
Bernhardt Schütz (voice), Reinhold
Friedl (piano), Maximilian Brauer,
Fucking Famous
Nationaltheater/Amfiscenen
7 pm
200,- / 150,-

Dichterliebe, Robert Schumann and Heinrich Heine's quintessential cycle of poems of the high Romantic era, has been recorded and performed many times over the years with bel canto and soft piano tone from the opening to its final wunderschöne tones. The story of the poet who sits alone in his study all day long, only able to meet his young faery love by night, is based on a poem by Heine,

and has been a part of the standard repertoire of both musicians and music theorists since it was published in 1844.

Actor Bernhard Schütz and pianist Reinhold Friedl (Zeitkratzer) therefore have a long performance history with heavy traditions to contend with when they enter Romanticism's inner sanctum.

Schütz is best known to German audiences as a respected actor in film and theatre. He is no classical singer, but he lets rip on Schumann with an actor's urge to tell a story: convincingly and full of expression. Now it is quiet and intimate, later it is explosively extrovert with a full band, and sounds more like expressive pop/rock than a stylised classical masterpiece.

With slightly untuned piano and aching, soaring vocals, the lines between Schumann's manic drug abuse

and the modern artist are drawn, and many questions emerge: What is the work and what is interpretation? Who is the artist, and can it really be that we can get closer to the music by doing something completely different from what the composer himself intended? MØ

Produced by Volksbühne am Rosa-Luxemburg
Platz, Berlin. Dramaturgy: Henning Nass.

Borders are in the mind

Laibach / Edvard Grieg
Olav Tryggvason
Laibach/NSK
Sentrum Scene
10 pm
350,- / 250,-

More than a century separates the classic romanticism of Norway's national composer and the bombastic provocations of Slovenia's internationally notorious avant rock art collective. But both, in very different ways, are linked through their concern with the problem of representing national consciousness through music.

Specially commissioned by Ultima 2014, Laibach present their unique interpretation of Grieg's opus 50, the unfinished opera *Olav Tryggvason*. Based on the writings of poet Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, who in turn drew on the medieval sagas of Snorri Sturluson, the opera was intended to recount the story of Olav Tryggvason, the warrior king who ruled Norway at the turn of the first millennium. As a young man Olav made it his mission to wipe out paganism from Scandinavia, after fighting on the side of the Holy Roman Emperor against the heathen peoples of Denmark and Sweden. Returning from a long residence abroad in 995, he was crowned as king and began a systematic programme of converting the Norwegian people to Christianity, often with the use of force. He thus had a significant impact on the development of Norway as a nation, as well as founding the city of Trondheim and building the land's oldest church. Eventually he baptised Leif Ericson, before the explorer embarked on the trip that would take



Laibach (Photo: Maja Slavec)

him to the New World. He died in battle in the year 1000.

The surviving fragments of Grieg's opera — which he abandoned in 1873 — are set among the Vikings of Norway as they await King Olav's entrance to the pagan temple. The action is steeped in ritual, with rousing choruses, prayers to the Norse gods, and a pagan prophetess conjuring malevolent magic to persuade her tribe to defend their beliefs. Even these small passages contain savage and hair-raising music, with the third approaching Wagnerian feverishness. If completed, the work would have claimed national opera status, but it remains a little known curio among Grieg's oeuvre.

Since their formation in Tito's Yugoslavia in 1980, Laibach and their dissident art collective NSK (Neue Slowenische Kunst) have been responsible for some of the most extreme artistic representations of

nationalism. By focusing their energies on music, they have emerged into a wider international consciousness via record releases and live appearances, even if their ironic use of fascist imagery and confrontational, militaristic performances have often confused critics and listeners alike. From their maximalist cover versions of Opus's 'Live Is Life', Queen's 'One Vision' and The Beatles' *Let It Be* album to the national anthem covers on *Volk* (2006) and the brutalist Bach interpretations of *Laibachkunstderfuge* (2008), this is music that takes totalitarian ideologies so seriously that it tips over into total absurdity.

Laibach will present their take on Norway's lost national opera as a multimedia presentation, followed by a concert featuring a selection tracks from the whole of their career, right up to the album they released earlier this year, *Spectre*. RY

Artists in uniform

Within Ultima's 2014 theme of *The Nation*, it's hard to imagine a more fitting presence than Laibach — Slovenia's self-proclaimed 'monumental retro-avant-garde' sound and vision collective. Roy Wilkinson hears their plans for a digitally disrupted version of Norway's lost national opera.

Laibach formed in 1980 in the small industrial town of Trbovlje in what is now Slovenia. Laibach's early music was an austere industrial avant-garde, incorporating gramophones, electronics and homemade acoustic instruments. Later they included visual references to the socialist realist styles that had surrounded them in their youth, and also to what Laibach describe as 'Nazi-kunst'. There was a brutally pragmatic approach to concert production — ex-army smoke bombs instead of dry ice.

Laibach began to make a real international impact with their *Opus Dei* album (1987), which included a version of Queen's 'One Vision'. This was followed with further examples of stylistic invasion and occupation — a method they have applied to compositions by artists from The Rolling Stones and Serge Gainsbourg to Blind Lemon Jefferson and Wagner.

Laibach's take on Wagner came under the wonderfully disruptive title *Volkswagner*; they infused the German composer's music with the jazz styles that were banned as 'degenerate' in Nazi Germany. But maybe Laibach's most stunning cover version device came with 2006's *Volk* album — 14 reworkings of 'imperial' national anthems and national songs. Philosophically potent and sonically gorgeous, *Volk* is perhaps the best point of entry for anyone new to Laibach.

And now, for Ultima, Laibach tackle Edvard Grieg's unfinished opera *Olav Tryggvason* (see page 23).

Laibach's version of Grieg is sure to ask fascinating questions — such as certainly the case with Laibach's 2014 album *Spectre*, a work that foregrounds the phenomenon of whistle-blowers such as Edward Snowden, proving Laibach's idealistic liberal credentials.

For some, another question may linger. Are Laibach fascists? It seems fair to say the answer is no. Would Nazi supremacists really find perfection in Freddie Mercury, a gay drug fiend from Zanzibar? Laibach's 'Kampf' is part of something much larger — one of the most profound, and profoundly entertaining agendas in popular culture today.

Here, Laibach talk about Grieg and their own career. The interview was conducted via email, with Laibach answering questions in a collective voice.

At Ultima this year you will present a performance based on Edvard Grieg's unfinished opera Olav Tryggvason. How much were Laibach already aware of Grieg?

We were aware of Grieg, but only superficially. We pretty much knew the works that are generally known. Lars Petter Hagen, the artistic director of Ultima, first asked us to interpret *Peer Gynt*, but we avoid interpreting great works that have been covered by so many other artists. We asked Mr Hagen to suggest a less known but important work, so he had the idea to do *Olav Tryggvason*, which we knew very little about.

Laibach deals with the inter-dependence of ideology and art. Art and music are expressions of ideology; this is seen nowhere better than in European classical music. Composers devote their lives to studying the delicate rules of rhythm, harmony and counterpoint. Then they craft their music with the greatest care, only to fulfil the mission that ideology has given them. The great Romantic nationalistic composers — Grieg being one of the finest representatives — are among the most brilliant examples of the phenomenon. Grieg struggled to develop an authentic Nordic tone, to create music which would distinguish itself from the dominant continental classical tradition. That he succeeded in that quest only by yielding to the fundamental principles of musical expression, such as the absolute dominance of harmony, the tyrannical metrical scheme, etc, is a great source of inspiration for Laibach, as well as a great historical irony.

Can you tell us about the nature of your interpretation of Olav Tryggvason?

It should be read in context with Laibach's other adaptations of classical works: Bach's *Die Kunst Der Fuge* and *Volkswagner*. In *Kunst Der Fuge* we used the computer as the key instrument, thus emphasising the already complex mathematical algorithms behind the original composition. With *Volkswagner* we re-contextualised the Teutonic nature of Wagner — adding jazz rhythms and some electronics.

Grieg shares common ground with both composers. It was in 1876 that Grieg attended the first complete performance of Wagner's *Ring*. There can hardly be any doubt that this event left strong traces in Grieg's music. Wagner's own motives originate from Nordic mythology — the very same Nordic illusion of exclusiveness that Grieg himself was striving so hard to give voice to. On the other hand, Grieg's music was performed in 1906 on Thaddeus Cahill's telharmonium — the world's first synthetic instrument. Grieg's music is, like Bach's, very suitable for electronic performances. Laibach's adaptation of *Olav Tryggvason* will therefore be rooted in the digital domain, with outbursts of electronically manipulated orchestral themes. There will also be relics of the most primitive and primordial instruments: the voice and drums.

Does the the historical figure of Olav Tryggvason, a king from Viking times, interest you? Could Laibach be seen as Vikings of pop culture — ranging over the world and taking ownership of various sacred relics from pop history like Beatles and Queen songs?

Laibach certainly are a kind of Vikings — not as Christian as Olav was, but still baptising anyone and anything that we come across.'

Ultima's theme this year is The Nation. How much 'local musical

identity' is there in Laibach?

We started very locally, in 1980, in our hometown of Trbovlje. We had nothing but industrial sounds all around, and that was our initial musical inspiration. Everything else came later, in the context of an international, digital world.

Laibach's own work around the theme of The Nation has been fascinating. Can you give us an update on the NSK?

The NSK State was created in 1992, as a project from an organisation called Neue Slowenische Kunst, which was built around Laibach when we were officially forbidden in the former Yugoslavia. Between 1990–92, with the political, ideological and economic reorganisation of Europe — the fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of Germany, the decline of the Eastern Bloc, war in Yugoslavia and the birth of new national entities — Neue Slowenische Kunst reinvented itself, changing from an organisation into a state.

The reason for the creation of the NSK State was to keep utopia alive in a time of great expectations. NSK confers the status of a state not to territory but to the mind, whose borders are in a state of flux. Besides the members of the historic NSK, thousands of people have NSK citizenship around the world — people of different religions, races, nationalities, sexes and beliefs. The right to

citizenship is acquired through the ownership of an NSK passport. We do not control the state, we invite citizens to create the substance of the state by themselves.

Do Laibach have any thoughts here on the Norwegian nation — its history, or its reality today?

Great country, fascinating history, excellent music, literature and art, but like every other country it has a dark side. In fact Norway is quite big on the dark side. But who are we to judge?

Are Laibach nationalists or internationalists?

This is a tough question — Slovenia is definitely the nation with the best location, and in this respect we are hardcore nationalists. But because the country is so small, our nationalism is very small too.

People sometimes have the idea that Laibach are obsessed with the Nazis. To balance this, can you tell us the story of what happened when Laibach dressed in the two different sets of military uniforms while promoting your WAT album?

We are a bit obsessed by Nazis — they had the best uniforms, designed by Hugo Boss. But we never wore Nazi uniforms until 2003, when we were fed up with these accusations. We decided to borrow fake Nazi uniforms from the film museum in Zagreb. We then went 'shopping' and took photos in a mall in Ljubljana. We also did photos dressed in Second World War American military uniforms. We sent photos from both sessions to the press, but the editors always published the 'Nazi session' photos... This is the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help us God!

Alongside the interpretation of Olav Tryggvason at Ultima, you are also playing another set of more familiar Laibach music?

Yes, another set of music relating to our latest album *Spectre*, and some additional songs from the history of Laibach. What to expect? Expect the unexpected!



Laibach (Foto: Maja Slavec)

Kids take charge



Ultima's Children's Day
The Norwegian National Opera
& Ballet
11 am – 4 pm
Free

Ultima takes over the Norwegian National Opera & Ballet to stage Ultima's Children's Day. Rooms for concerts, rooms for work, and nooks and crannies both inside and outside will be filled to the brim with exciting concerts, installations, and drop-in workshops for children and adults of all ages.

How can a chest of drawers play music all by itself? What does a drawing actually sound like? Can a game of chess be transformed into a song? And what will the music festivals of the future look like?

The answers to these questions can be found at Ultima's Children's Day, a mini-festival programmed by a team of curators consisting of children aged between seven and twelve. Under the supervision of musicians and producers, the children have prepared a day that will inspire wonder and amazement and maybe challenge our thoughts about how music should sound and how it should be experienced.

Ultima's Children's Day will be rounded off with a viewing of 'Vårt

visuelle verk' (Our visual works), the Norwegian National Opera Orchestra's concert workshop with a focus on music note pictures and pictures as notes.

Pupils from cultural arts schools interacting with musicians from the Norwegian National Opera Orchestra, opera singer Hege Høisæter, visual artist Helle Kaarem, composer Ole Henrik Moe and workshop manager Jon Halvor Bjørnseth will be finding out if it's possible play and compose music using symbols other than normal notes. They work together to invent new symbols, new sounds, and new pictures for the concert to be held on Sunday at 3pm in Hall 2 of the Opera House. During this project we will see examples of other composers who have mixed images and notes together in exciting ways to make graphic scores, and Hege Høisæther will sing *Stripsody* by Cathy Berberian.

Educational consultant: John Vinge.

In cooperation with the Norwegian National Opera & Ballet. Initiated with the support of Sparebankstiftelsen DNB.

Ultima's Children's Day is free
and open to all ages.
For full programme please visit
ultima.no + Facebook.

ultima academy The Concept of Nation

The Concept of Nation
Cinemateket
12 pm
Free

12 pm Laibach /
Petr Svarovsky (discussion)
2 pm Antonio Negri: *A Revolt
That Never Ends* (film)
3 pm Antonio Negri (lecture)

Slovenian collective Laibach are an example of how artists can mobilise themselves to find innovative methods of defying prevailing political ideologies.

Formed in 1980 in Tito's Yugoslavia, the group soon became known for their controversial use of political symbols in cover versions of iconic rock, pop and classical music. With a strategy 'to take the system more seriously that it takes itself', they appropriate elements of totalitarian political systems and dogmatic art movements, and, as in a game of rock, paper, scissors, juxtapose them in order to reveal the emptiness of radical ideologies. With their Ultima commission — a version of Grieg's unfinished opera *Olav Tryggvason* — as a starting point, the group will talk to media artist Petr Svarovsky about how they select the elements to construct their audiovisual presence.

Retracing the origins of European nation states from the late Middle Ages via their evolution to the present, philosopher, political theorist and activist Antonio Negri, co-author of the acclaimed



Antonio Negri

Empire (2005), explains the spiritual and political construction of an ideology that prepared the ground for democracy while at the same time endorsing power struggles and oppression.

Pre-Renaissance society was controlled by the church and subjugated to natural laws. Reacting to this, humanist thinkers such as Dante, Galileo and Spinoza drew heavenly powers down to earth and advocated knowledge and human action. Technology and the liberal arts became tools for bringing nature under control, and the old theological state was gradually replaced by a secular society with spiritual foundations based on national identity.

Negri's rereading of history uncovers the power structures that underpin contemporary global society and raise questions about our own participation in the configuration of a new world order.

Some Use For Your Broken Clay Pots

Christophe Meierhans:
*Some Use For Your Broken
Clay Pots*
Black Box Teater
9 pm
150,-

Developed in collaboration with a team of experts from Belgian universities, *Some Use For Your Broken Clay Pots* is a theatre piece whose script is the constitutional text for a democratic state that does not yet exist. Like a work of speculative fiction, this one-man performance aims to give an insight into possible futures by providing us with the code underpinning the life of an imagined society.

Some Use For Your Broken Clay Pots is structured as a debate between Swiss born, Brussels based artist Christophe Meierhans and the audience about a proposal for a fictional constitution. He presents elements of what that democratic system is, and attempts to convince

the audience that his option is better than any other. As the audience questions and criticises him, more of the constitution is gradually unveiled.

The piece takes its title from the ancient Greek notion of political ostracism, in which the names of election candidates were inscribed on broken pot shards (ostraka) or oyster shells and drawn out at random. 'Broken clay pots are considered useless, garbage,' says Meierhans. 'But we can actually reuse them, just as we can recycle the idea of positive disqualification. I want to devise an imaginary constitution that is not based on election — voting based on promises for the future — but on disqualification — elimination based on past actions. I hope it will reveal that the real constitution we have is also a fiction, an invention. It was constructed some time ago and is just a tool like any other.'

NB The performance lasts c. 90 minutes.
In collaboration with Black Box Teater.



Christophe Meierhans

Audioguide

Johannes Kreidler:

Audioguide

Ensemble neoN, Johannes Kreidler

Dramatikkens hus

6 pm

100,-

Imagine a series of live talk shows about music and its relationship to politics, psychology, technology and terrorism, with motifs from Shakespeare and the deconstructionist theories of Jacques Derrida in the background. A 'theatre installation' with added video elements, and a music theatre about music. This is Johannes Kreidler's *Audioguide*: a performance / installation / video art piece in which the state of the art of music is held up for scrutiny.

Johannes Kreidler has certainly made a name for himself in recent years. Provocateur, agitator and enfant terrible are just a few of the labels he has had slapped on him. Yet Kreidler is a modern composer who knows how to place important musical, political and social issues on the agenda through a language that makes sense today. Much of his work has the kind of activist angle you might normally associate with the environmental movement and other political groups.

Johannes Kreidler is not afraid to adopt radical positions in the relationship between music and art and their socio-political impact. An example is the work *Fremdarbeit für vier Instrumente und Moderator* (*Foreign Work For Four Instruments and Moderator*), which was performed at Ultima in 2010 and attracted considerable attention for its musical 'outsourcing'. For a tiny fee, Kreidler paid a Chinese and an Indian composer to write music to

his own specifications. This was not just a way of saving labour time and money, but also a way of posing big questions about the role of the composer today, Third World exploitation and — Kreidler's particular hobby-horse — digital copyright issues.

Kreidler's new piece, *Audioguide*, is a marathon evening of talk shows. This theatrical installation is not just a piece for the stage which includes music, but also a piece of music theatre about music and music's relationship to politics, psychology, technology and terrorism. Motifs from Shakespeare and Derrida's philosophy lurk in the background, while ultra-modern technology is examined, subliminal messages are transmitted through music, instruments are destroyed, a programmer speaks about the tragic results of the MP3 format, and a hyperinstrument is constructed in the performance space.

Audioguide expands on Kreidler's earlier piece *Feeds. Hören TV* (2010), in which he produced an anarchic two-hour talk show in a television format. Like any other talk show, *Audioguide* has its own host (Tammo Messow) and sidekick (Tom Pilath). More unusually, it features its own psychologist (Andrea Seitz), coder (Peer Blank) and two interpreters (Wieland Hoban and Philipp Blume). Felix Dreher provides sound and vision, and the talk show guests are Stefan Fricke and (naturally) Johannes Kreidler himself.

Oslo based Ensemble neoN, with their innovative attitude to music, are attracting increasing attention internationally: Karin Hellqvist, Yumi Murakami, Heloisa Amaral, Kristine Tjøgersen, Ane Marthe Sørlien Holen and Inga Byrkjeland. AW

Co-produced by Darmstädter Ferienkurse für Neue Musik, Ultima Oslo and Fonds expérimentelles Musiktheater NRW.
Supported by Arts Council Norway.

Guitar reinventions

Ole Martin Huser-Olsen

nyMusikk

12 pm

Free

Charlotte Piene: *Turn back to that point where (you think) you were that day*

Dagfinn Koch: *Hud* (WP)

Martin Rane Bauck: *fretted with golden fire – 1. Sats* (WP)

Rainer Rubbert:

Aus Snowdens Zeit (WP)

Simon Steen-Andersen:

Beloved Brother

'We should not assume that we are eligible to live in our time simply by being born into it,' says Ole Martin Huser-Olsen. 'In his recently released memoirs, Dag Solstad says that every cultured person must have a five-hundred-year perspective on contemporary culture: two hundred years before his birth and two hundred years after. But that may be too short, and maybe we'd do better to turn to Goethe, who says that our historical perspective should be at least three thousand years if we're not to walk in the darkness of ignorance.'

It is this quest for his own time that Huser-Olsen places at the centre of this guitar recital. Based on his first performance of Rainer Rubbert's work *Aus Snowdens Zeit* (*From The Age Of Snowden*), he draws on the artist's longing to meet the spirit of the age.

'The title is therefore not only an allusion to Edward Snowden,



it is more an expression of a 'longing for contemporariness', which we could call this *immediate relevance* that is inherent in all great art, regardless of chronology,' he says.

His quest is expressed in pieces by Martin Rane Bauck and Simon Steen-Andersen, who rework material from Shakespeare and Bach's *Capriccio in B flat major*, respectively. Charlotte Piene and Dagfinn Koch also touch on the relationship between the past and the present: Piene through her translation of a specific person's actions in a period of time, and Koch through his musical rendition of the poem entitled *Hud*.

Ole Martin Huser-Olsen is a classical guitarist trained at the Norwegian Academy of Music who performs music from the Renaissance to newly composed contemporary music. He made his orchestral debut as a soloist in 2012, and performs chamber music with Ensemble Ernst and Ensemble Aksiom, among others. MØ

In collaboration with nyMusikk.

Natasha Barrett OSSTS



Natasha Barrett:

OSSTS (Oslo Sound Space Transport System)

Deichmanske hovedbibliotek

4 pm

Free

The Oslo Sound Space Transport System invites you to explore Oslo like a 3D computer game. With its interactive form, the installation allows you to re-make the sound of Oslo. As you move around the city, you can hear your own voice or other performed sounds 'activate' Oslo's real acoustic architecture. It may be a quite surreal journey through a specially made electroacoustic landscape that you'll be creating on the move. OSSTS's travel guide, programmer and designer is British composer Natasha Barrett, who lives in Norway.

Lament for Fartein Valen

Kjell Habbestad: *Nenia*

Musikk & Scenehuset

7 pm

200,- / 150,-

Nenia borrows its title from one of the central orchestral pieces by Fartein Valen, composed in 1933. *Nenia* means 'lament' or 'commemoration song', making it a natural title for an opera commemorating him. The time frame is set over a single day during the Second World War in 1943, between winter and spring.

We meet Valen and his sister Sigrid, whose simple everyday life soon is interrupted by the horrors of war and their fear of the future, not to mention some haunting memories, from the Madagascar of his childhood to his time as a grown man living the life as a composer in Berlin. Images from the past intrude upon his daily life, and the intimate and trivial stand up against the grand and the unimaginable.

He sees his past life, but also dreams of things he did not let into his life. We finally return to Valen's everyday life in Valevåg.

The opera is composed by Kjell Habbestad, but with a subject like *Nenia*'s, it is natural to let Valen's musical universe resonate, as a reminder and a tribute.

Libretto: Paal-Helge Haugen
Director: Mira Bartov
Producer: Gjøril Songvoll
Ensemble directed by Magnus Loddgard

In Beethoven's shadow



Anthony Marwood (Photo: Pia Johnson)

In Beethoven's Shadow

Det Norske Kammerorkester
University Aula

7 pm

395,- / 120,-

Maja Ratkje: *Tale Of Lead And Frozen Light* (WP)

Ludwig van Beethoven: *String Quartets op. 127 & op. 135* (selected movements)

Asbjørn Schaathun: *Beethoven Singt (Beethoven Sings)* (WP)

Thomas Adès: *Violin Concerto*

Works by the winner of
Nordheim's Composer Prize 2014

Det Norske Kammerorkester /
Anthony Marwood (violin) /
Christian Eggen (conductor)

Anthony Marwood is what you might call a total violinist: a brilliant soloist, a fine chamber musician and one of the few who masters the function of a performing leader. Here he takes on all of these roles in a programme comprising the old and new. The Norsk Kammerorkester have invited two Norwegian composers in each generation to write music for them with Beethoven's late string quartets as the foundation. Both Maja Ratkje and Asbjørn Schaathun took on this challenge with their shared fascination for this old but eternally fascinating material.

Marwood will be the soloist in the last part of the concert playing the *Violin Concerto* by Thomas Adès. At the age of forty-three Adès has already received commissions from the Metropolitan Opera, premieres with Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra and conducted many of the world's leading orchestras. This concerto was first performed by Marwood at the BBC Proms in 2005.

The concert will also feature the announcement of the winner of Arne Nordheim's Composer Prize 2014 and work by the winner.

Produced by Det Norske Kammerorkester.

Polish sound waves

Maja S. K. Ratkje / Helge Sten /
Kåre Kolberg *Eastern Waves*

Maja S. K. Ratkje / Helge Sten
Nasjonal jazzscene

9 pm

150,- / 100,-

Kåre Kolberg: *Omgivelser*

Helge Sten: *Monochrome*

Maja Ratkje: *Dialogue With*

Rudnik – Concert Version

Studio Experymentalne in Warsaw was the 'office' for Arne Nordheim, Kåre Kolberg and many other sonic experimentalists in the 1960s and seventies. Some of their best known music from that period was created in the legendary Polish studio.

Eastern Waves sheds light on the studio's electronic legacy with commissioned works by Helge 'Deathprod' Sten and Maja S. K. Ratkje. Ratkje's work *In Dialogue With Rudnik* is inspired by the Polish electronic music pioneer Eugeniusz Rudnik, who was Nordheim's technician in Warsaw. In the live version, Ratkje plays together with Rudnik's music. Sten's composition is based on recordings of two of the Polish radio studio's other pioneers: Bohdan Mazurek and Tomasz Sikorski.



Maja S. K. Ratkje (Foto: Ultima / Henrik Beck)

Maja Solveig Kjelstrup Ratkje is one of Norway's leading contemporary composers and performers. Her music has been performed worldwide by ensembles and musicians such as Klangforum Wien, The Norwegian Radio Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Fretwork and Arve Tellefsen. In 2001 she was the first composer ever to receive the Norwegian Arne Nordheim prize. Maja Solveig Kjelstrup Ratkje has performed her own music for films, radio play, dance and theatre, installations, and numerous other projects. In 2013 she was nominated for the Nordic Council Music Prize as performer.

Helge Sten, best known by his Deathprod alias, is a musician and producer with connections to various band projects including Motorpsycho and Supersilent. He makes music which falls at the intersection of noise, jazz, modern composition, electronica and rock, but he is most often described as a noise artist. Deathprod has released a string of recordings and is much in demand as a producer.

The concert is a cooperation between Ultima, Nasjonal Jazzscene, Stiftelsen 4.99, Bolt Records and NOTAM.



Helge Sten (Photo: Ultima / Henrik Beck)

ultima academy
The Case of
Wagner

The Case of Wagner:
Workshop on Music and Ethics

Loflet

10 am

Free

Alain Badiou and Nanette
Nielsen

How and when can music play a part in radical social change? Building on the chapter 'Discourse' from music philosopher Nanette Nielsen's *Music And Ethics*, the workshop will explore the extent to which French philosopher Alain Badiou's own work on Wagner involves ethical engagement. What are the ethical ramifications of Badiou's reading of Wagner? How do music and ethics interact?

In collaboration with the University of
Oslo's Institute of Musicology.

ultima academy
Badiou's Republic

The Republic Of Plato /
Inaesthetics (reading session/
lecture)

Loflet

2 pm

Free

Alain Badiou, theatre students
from Oslo National Academy
of Arts

In *The Republic*, Plato discusses the genesis of the ideal state. Together with theatre students, Alain Badiou reads and comments on excerpts from his book *The Republic Of Plato*, in which he proposes a new interpretation of Plato's work from a contemporary perspective.

Afterwards, Badiou discusses the role and ethics of art in contemporary society and introduces the notion of 'inaesthetics'. With this concept, Badiou distances himself from traditional didactic, therapeutic or hermeneutic approaches, and delineates an alternative mode of thinking about art and philosophy.

In collaboration with Oslo National
Academy of the Arts.

På At all Ultima Academy events at our new Loflet space (Skippergata 22), you can begin each festival day with coffee and a free lunch (yes, there is such a thing)!

Sounding the Nation

What is the meaning and role of national music in a land like Norway and the Nordic region, where the idea of nationality is less complicated than elsewhere? Maren Ørstavik explores ideas of nationalism as portrayed in the music at Ultima and Nordic Music Days.

THE SOUND OF THE NATION

The year marking the two hundredth anniversary of Norway's constitution is already approaching its end. Perhaps the most fun was to be had during the first few months, leading up to the big national day on 17 May, and easily forgotten in the midst of summer heat and major international events. But the party is not quite over — there is still some music to come.

Most of the country's more historically established cultural institutions have already dealt with the issue; partly at the request of the funding authorities, partly out of their own natural interest. Our oldest theatrical, musical and cultural institutions have influenced Norwegian society since the constitution and even earlier, and strictly speaking it is only fair that they should look backwards — or at least glance in the mirror — and actively examine their role as participants in a national public debate.

Even though modern music, avant garde culture and experimental art plays an important role in its own time, it's equally self-evident that a contemporary music festival can embrace the concept of The Nation. Many decades have gone by since the most uncompromising modernism tried to steer art towards the international and universal, away from the parochial (and especially, perhaps, the national), and although today's music is far less bound by such thinking, it is still what characterises ideas about the place of art in society: it is primarily international; art and music are a universal language; and you cannot use them to express a particular national attitude.

So it feels almost perverse to go with The Nation as the theme for a contemporary music festival. It runs contra to what many have been fighting against for the whole of their artistic, academic and political lives, and might almost be suspected of being an ironic label — for if there's

one thing contemporary music is *not*, surely it's nationalist?

MUSIC AS NATION

In a year when Norway is celebrating its own nationhood with an abundance of both historical and newly created cultural events, it is natural to reflect on the chicken-and-egg question of which came first: the culture or the nation. It's not completely absurd to point out that some historical artworks are the result of conscious nation-building, because that can sometimes undeniably appear to be true.

Other countries than Norway have been characterised by nationalism and the search for their own national cultural identity in much of the modern era. A great deal of the music we now think of as nationalistic, or romanticising the national, stems from countries which have been ruled by others in the past: Polish, Czech and Hungarian national cultures were



dominated by the great powers of Russia and Germany-Austria, while in Scandinavia, the histories of Norway's and Finland's unions with Denmark and Sweden have created strong national identities.

Even in larger, more powerful countries like Germany, France and Britain — where national independence has never been so challenged as it has, for example, in Norway — cultural identity has been the subject of attention.

It might look simple — anyone who has had their identity challenged needs time to re-establish it, while those who have never been ruled by others will not experience identity as a problem. Nevertheless, it does appear that countries with long, continuous periods of independence and power soon reach for culture when turbulence threatens, in search of confirmation of a shaky identity.

But to what extent can British imperialism or German National Socialism really be found within early twentieth century classical music? It's clear that the national is used as a pretext for cultural production, especially in popular culture, but is it wrong to use culture as a pretext for national pride?

AGAINST THE NATION

In Norway, the national has occupied a central position in culture and music during several periods: from the 1814 constitution up to 1905; in the strikingly anti-modernist and nationalist Norwegian music in the interwar period; and especially in the rhetoric of the post-war social democratic landscape. The idea of nation has been explored by any artist with a certain feeling for identity issues from a personal to a global perspective, and has been expressed in different ways at different times: first as a quest towards the national community, later as a quest away from it.

But the belief that a national music is music that arises out of the nation — whether that's folk traditions, references to nature or constitutional anniversaries, is bound to be a wild

goose chase. Art rarely waits for the rest of society to fire the starting-gun — and the times when it does the results are accordingly predictable and planned, artificial and forced. To quote Professor Erling Gulbrandsen, who has written about Norwegian-ness in Gerhard Schjelderup's second symphony: 'The task of art is not to imitate what already exists, but to create the representations that they apparently mimic.'

This is not unthinkable in the Norwegian context: perhaps clichéd imagery of fjords, mountains and folk tunes are not our real common reference point, but the relationship we have developed with them through a great cultural awareness in several periods over the last two hundred years.

'The task of art is not to imitate what already exists, but to create the representations that they apparently mimic.'

This year, as we celebrate the constitutional anniversary and focus on the national one more time, it is mediated via completely different portals and expressive tools than in the Romantic era and the period following 1814. For us, the fenced-in nation is not necessarily the ultimate utopia, and in our contemporary globalised world, efforts to create a clearly defined national culture are long since over. But the questions remain the same: what binds us together? Who is the 'us' we should connect with? Is there really something we, as citizens, share more than others?

AMBIVALENCE AND NATURE

Norway's music history abounds with titles redolent of folk culture and nature. At times it can be a genuine homage to the idea of a distinctively Norwegian identity characterised by the landscape and historical folklore; alternatively it can be a critique of exactly those aspects. In many cases you can see the representation of

Norwegian-ness as something utopian, non-existent, a dream more than a reality. There is an ambivalence that makes the idea of national romanticism slightly more palatable for analytically minded modern listeners. This is also a perspective that can be used to support Norway's immersion in a national music even throughout much of the last century.

Eivind Groven (1901–77) is one of those who held folk music close until well into the twentieth century, and is perhaps best known for his *Hjalarljod*, the winning entry in the competition to compose a piece for Oslo's 900th anniversary in 1950. As a player of the seljefløyte (willow flute) and the Hardanger fiddle, he took inspiration from folk music and the Norwegian landscape in his compositions throughout his career, from *Symphony No 1 (Inward Plateaux)* and the tone poems *Fjelltonar (Mountain Tunes)*, via adaptations of melodies and medieval ballads, folk songs and national romantic poems.

While Groven was a distinctly nationalism-inspired composer, he also strove to solve a problem which he believed had affected 'thousands of musicians' throughout the ages: the dream of the just intonation system.

Using his own custom-built, painstakingly tuned organs, he took practical steps to move beyond one of the main features of the folk tradition, namely temperamental differences between the notes of different scales and instruments, and towards a universal, utopian idiom. In Groven's Organ House at Ekeberg, in Oslo's east side, there are several examples of the instruments he designed for this purpose — as a link between a national historical past and an approaching but still unachieved common future.

CENTRAL CULTURE AND IDENTITY

'Common' may not be the correct term when talking about Western art music culture, with its heartland in the countries and cities of central Europe.

But as a point of origin, which has overwhelmingly dominated centuries of art music, it has largely become a kind of common heritage, both historically and in the sense that a great deal of its music is still played extensively around the world.

Nevertheless, although such music can be branded as German, Austrian or French, it lacks the kind of 'national' character found in much of the music of, for example, Scandinavia, Eastern Europe or Latin America. In addition, works from the German-Austrian musical lineage are seldom viewed as an expression of a particular national culture — quite the contrary. Instead, the major classical pillars have been cast as part of a common European heritage. Although Bach was German and Schubert Austrian by birth, both are undeniably experienced as less 'national' than Sibelius, Dvorak or Piazzolla.

Robert Schumann's song cycle *Dichterliebe* is one of the great wonders of this central European canon, and is a highlight of the Lieder tradition. Its Heinrich Heine text certainly makes the work German, but to what extent? In the German-speaking world, the word Lied (song) has a natural connection to German folk culture, from medieval troubadours through industrial work songs to modern pop. However, the Lieder tradition is well established throughout Europe — and the genre term 'song', or the line-up of vocalist plus single instrument, can hardly be attributed to one geographical origin. *Dichterliebe* is now compulsory repertoire for classical singers the world over, and stands as a symbol of a musical lineage that has become international.

Bernhard Schütz and Reinhold Friedl place a huge question mark around this musical identity, by toning down the classical aesthetics we associate with the Lieder tradition. With a [tekstnær] voice more like a pop singer's, Schütz brings *Dichterliebe* closer — much closer — to today's singing style. Paradoxically, it being in German makes it far more

important to the listening experience. Since Western classical music has moved more and more towards the purely instrumental as the most sublime music, the text — even when part of the work — has often had to take second place. In practice this means that a listener can freely appreciate a German song cycle without understanding the language, an approach that becomes more difficult in Schütz's intensely oral interpretation. With strong references to singer-songwriter songs and story based folk songs and ballads, Schütz places text and narrative in the centre, and the language suddenly becomes a more important priority.

THE INTER-NATION

Although it's easy to think of the use of national traditions, folklore and folk instruments as glorifying nationalism, that is not always the case. Mauricio Kagel, who is otherwise best known for his interest in music drama and the theatrical possibilities music provides, wrote his piece *Exotica* for the twentieth Olympic Games in Munich in 1972. The starting-point — a selection of 'non-European' instruments — seems pretty obvious at first: when instruments don't have their own names, but are defined by what they are not, the dominant Western perspective is pulled away and challenged.

What does it really matter if a musician is Norwegian or Chinese, when the core repertoire is Western classical music and experimental international avant garde?

At the same time, by listening to music you can experience other things. Kagel also permits the use of recordings of indigenous music from different cultures, which musicians can play along with and against on all their non-European instruments. Thus a point is made about similarities and differences, relationships and contradictions, and for the listener

the distinctions between real cultural differences and cultural prejudices become increasingly difficult to distinguish.

MUSIC AS NATION (REPRISE)

So maybe it's not possible — at least, not any more — to see music as an expression of one nation. Grieg stands for nationalism in a world that no longer exists; for modern listeners Beethoven's symphonies belong to more of a world culture than a German one, and in a time where the main challenge is to get nations to actually unite as a global community, it is hard not to look down at your feet, slightly ashamed, at any sign of jingoism — especially when jingoism enters the arts.

Although we can easily pat our musical compatriots on the back when they make it big abroad, it is worth noting that what they are doing is more of an international rather than a national nature. What does it really matter if a musician is Norwegian or Chinese, when the core repertoire is Western classical music and experimental international avant garde? Do Russian pianists interpret Rachmaninov better than American ones; do the Japanese play Takemitsu best? Hardly.

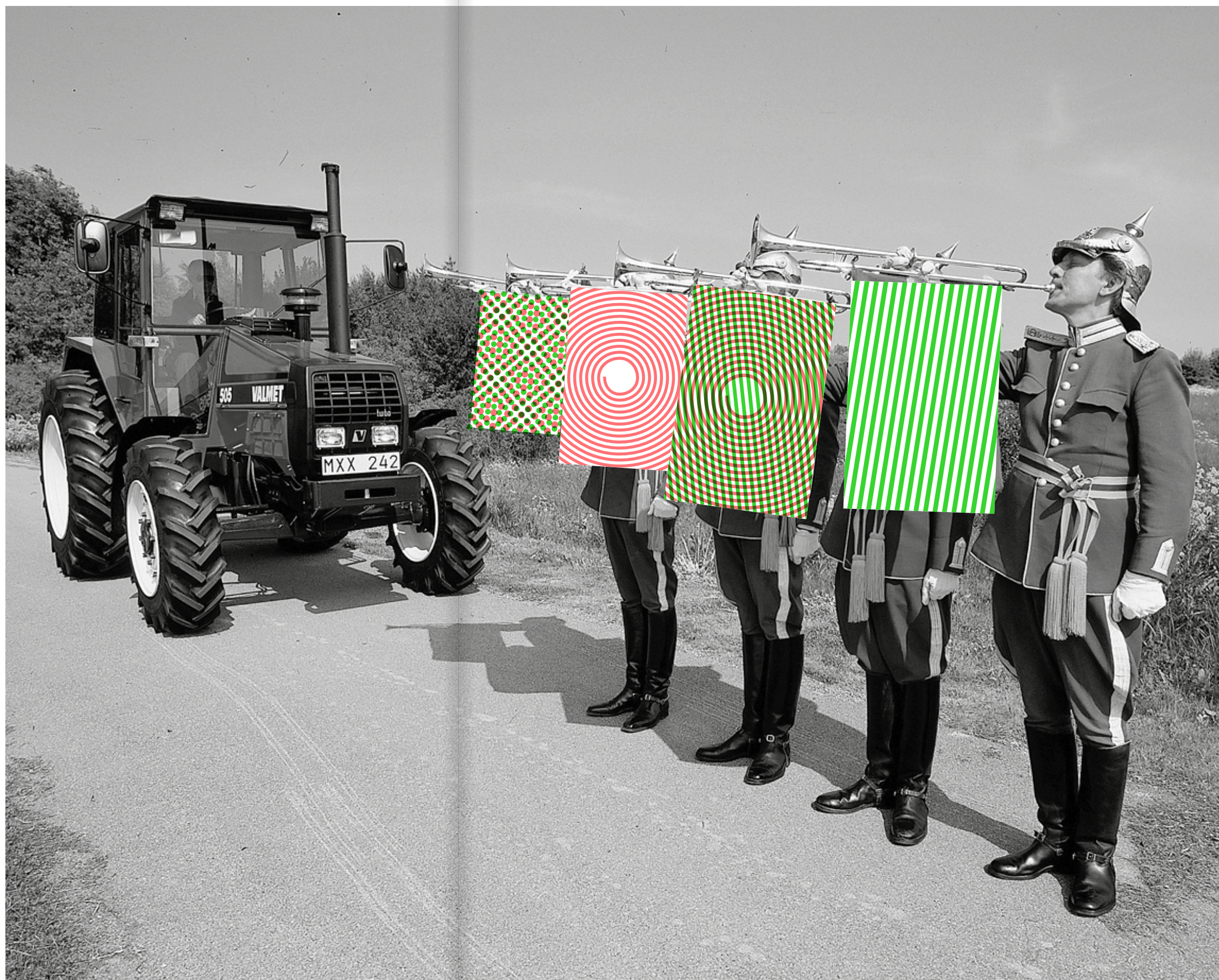
Thus, there remains an almost insurmountable gap between a nation's culture and its political identity. One can draw on the other, but to try to justify one with the other simply does not compute, however you look at it. It's a difficult exercise, but considering a nation's arts and culture as something apart from its political institutions can help put both in perspective. Such thinking might get in the way of a straight-up celebration of The Nation, but allows for the possibility of seeing other contexts, communities and structures than those that are finished, laid bare and easily available. That's what art at its best can do.

nordic music days 2014

In 2014, the Ultima Oslo Contemporary Music Festival will host Nordic Music Days together with the Norwegian Society of Composers. Nordic Music Days, established and run continuously since 1888, is one of the oldest music festivals in the world. The Nordic Composers Council manages the festival, and the national composers societies in the different Nordic countries take turns arranging it.

Today, Nordic Music Days serves as a platform for international exchange between ensembles, musicians and repertoires in order to spread the music of Nordic composers.

We welcome everyone to join us in the largest network meeting for Nordic contemporary music.



The Dog-days republic



Longitude (Photo: Davyde Wachell)

David Brynjar Franzson: *Longitude*
Ensemble Adapter
Vulkan Arena
8 pm
200,- / 150,-

In 1807, at the height of the Napoleonic Wars, the royal Danish watchmaker presented his son, Jørgen Jørgenson, with his own warship, intending that he should use it to defend Denmark against the English fleet. Jørgen — who was already a devoted Anglophile — was captured by the English, and while under house arrest in London, he managed to persuade an English merchant, Joseph Banks, that it would be profitable to begin trading with the Danish colony on Iceland, in defiance of Denmark's monopoly. Eventually he sailed to Reykjavik, took the Danish governor prisoner and declared himself the island's protector. Jørgenson's

attempt to run an American-style liberated republic lasted forty days, after which the Danish navy arrived to deal with him.

Longitude, a radical new installation-like chamber opera, is inspired by the extraordinary yet little known story of the man Icelanders remember as 'the dog-days king'. Scored for five instruments and three performers, the libretto consists entirely of words that can be reproduced by instruments, and the staging involves manipulated props, lighting and projections. Rather than presenting the subject as a historical narrative, colonisation and ideological failure are explored as process, action and physical material.

Longitude was created by David Brynjar Franzson (music/electronics), Angela Rawlings (text), Halldór Úlfarsson (set/robotics) and Davyde Wachell (stage direction / video).

David Brynjar Franzson is an Icelandic composer based in New York. His works have been performed by ensembles such as the Arditti

Quartet, Ensemble Surplus, Avanti!, Eighth Blackbird, Yarn/Wire, Oslo Sinfonietta, asamisimasa and more. At Stanford University he worked with Brian Ferneyhough and Mark Applebaum as well as with Tristan Murail at Columbia. He is a founding member of the Icelandic composers collective s.l.a.t.u.r. and co-runs Carrier Records, a label for new and experimental music.

Ensemble Adapter is a German/Icelandic contemporary music group based in Berlin. RY

Supported by the Norwegian Society of Composers.

New Music Incubator



New Music Incubator Oslo Reunion
Riksscenen
3 pm
Free

In April 2014, twenty professional composers, musicians and sound artists from the Nordic and Baltic countries met for four days at Nida Art Colony on an island in Lithuania. Every day the participants created new music pieces in close collaboration, which were premiered the same evening. All concerts were internal, with no audience. The project design ensured that every day new groups were created, and no one worked with the same person twice. Via this meeting, New Music Incubator hopes to promote mutual professional development, skill sharing and the development of networks for future projects.

The participants meet again in Oslo during the Ultima Festival, to

redevelop, rehearse and perform some of the works for a public concert. The participants are: Alexandra Nilsson, Jan Liljekvist, Benjamin Quigley, Johannes Bergmark (Sweden); Annika Cleo, Carly Lake (Finland); Austėja Valušytė, Julija Karaliunaite, Jurgis Baltrušaitis, Leonardas Pilkauskas, Sandra Kazlauskaite, Viktorija Smailyte (Lithuania); Elo Masing, Robert Jürjendahl (Estonia); Erik McKenzie, Geir Sundbø, Steinar Yggeseth (Norway); Line Tjørnhøi, Nikolaj Kynde (Denmark); Jason Alder (USA).

Oslo Reunion Concert is part of NMI Neringa, which is arranged by Uruppförandeklubben, and is generously supported by Nordic Culture Fund, Nordic Culture Point, Lithuanian Council for Culture, Musikalliansen, Elektron-musikstudion EMS and Ultima Festival. The project is facilitated by Ruta Vitkauskaitė (Lithuania/UK) and Martin Q Larsson (Sweden).

Supported by the Norwegian Society of Composers.

ultima academy
Arv

Arv (piano recital/panel)
Kulturkirken Jakob

1 pm
Free

Asbjørn Schaathun: *Nations*
(WP)

Øyvind Torvund: *Det abstrakte i folkeunsten* (WP)

Ingfrid Breie Nyhus (piano)

Ingfrid Breie Nyhus, Asbjørn Schaathun, Erik Dæhlin, Øyvind Torvund, Notto Thelle, Rob Young

The starting point for this recital and discussion is a series of works commissioned by pianist Ingfrid Breie Nyhus as part of her research project Arv (Inheritance).

Composers Øyvind Torvund and Asbjørn Schaathun are all intrigued by the question of national identity and folk music. Torvund's piano/video piece is inspired by Norwegian folk ornaments and the paintings of Gerhard Richter. In *Nations*, Schaathun electronically stirs up music from all over the world in virtual centrifuges.

Afterwards both composers join a panel moderated by British music writer Rob Young on reinventing the past with new technologies. Also taking part are Erik Dæhlin, whose *Avstandsriss* (performed on 13 September) recombines thousands of Norwegian folk music samples, and Notto Thelle (NOTAM), who will present the work of composer and instrument builder Eivind Groven (see page 20).

Nordic wonderland

Korp, korp
 Dansens Hus
 10 am / 11 am
 120,-
 (Also played 19 September)

Korp Korp is an interactive performance for children aged six months to three years, where the children enter and explore a landscape.

The children meet two dancers in this environment. Two peculiar shapes, birdlike and identical. Maybe human, maybe birds, maybe both. These bird twins land in the unknown landscape together with the children, and together they embark on discovering a new world. The installation is sculptural, three dimensional, and filled with objects. We focus on experiencing the room with our senses: the children can see, smell, look, hear, touch, move and be present. Within a set performance framework, there is freedom for improvisation and discovery.

The abstract landscape draws inspiration from our Nordic heritage. But how can one define 'the Nordic landscape'? It's diverse and varied:

plateaus, volcanic rocks, green moss-covered islands, forests, fields, coast, mountains, fjords, lakes, snow and ice. The Nordic countries have such a rich and diverse landscape that it proves hard to draw a common line. Still, most would agree that there is something particular and definable about 'the Nordic landscape'.

The performance lasts thirty minutes, with time afterwards for further exploration of the room.

Concept, idea, choreography and dance: Annika Ostwald, Ida Uvaas
 Composer and sound design: Jens L. Thomsen
 Scenographer and sculptor: Carl Nilssen-Love
 Electronics development: Hans Wilmers, NOTAM
 Technician: Cato Langnes, NOTAM
 Character development: Nancy Mannes
 Costume design: Elena Becker & Maria Melinder
 Lighting consultant: Martin Myrvold
 Photography: Anja Elmine Basma

Collaborators and co-producers: Dansarena Nord, Nord-Trøndelag Teater, Dans i Nord-Trøndelag and Notam Norwegian Center for Technology in Music and the Arts.

Supported by: Kunstløftet (Arts Council Norway), Nordic Culturepoint and Fund For Performing Artists.

Produced in collaboration with Dansens Hus. Supported by the Norwegian Society of Composers.



Korp, korp (Photo: Anja Elmine Basma)

Electronic North I



Ida Lundén

The Electronic North I
 OCA
 6 pm
 Free

Ida Lundén: *Songs My Mothers Taught Me*
 Maija Hynninen: *Borrowed Tunes: 1. Dead Man Theme*
 Osmo Tapio Räihälä: *Seurat I*

The first Nordic Music Days 2014 event features a selection of contemporary electronic music. Composer and performer Ida Lundén presents *Songs My Mothers Taught Me* for female cellist is inspired by and celebrating famous and successful ancestors and forebears.

Maija Hynninen's *Borrowed Tunes 1: Dead Man Theme* builds on Neil Young's mesmerising soundtrack for Jim Jarmusch's film *Dead Man* from 1995. Osmo Tapio Räihälä's *Seurat I* combines violin, kantele and live electronics.

Supported by the Norwegian Society of Composers.

Electronic North II



Rikhardur H. Fridriksson

The Electronic North II
 OCA
 1 pm
 Free

Risto Holopainen: *Speilraum*
 Rikhardur H. Fridriksson: *Three Works On The Nature Of Iceland*
 Thuridur Jonsdóttir: *INNI – Musica Da Camera*

In Thuridur Jonsdóttir's *INNI*, the fragile harmonics of a Baroque violin interact with a soundscape generated from an infant's murmur, with an ancient lullaby woven into the texture. Risto Holopainen's algorithmic composition *Speilraums* employs systems associated with computer games. Rikhardur H Fridriksson's *Three Pieces On The Nature Of Iceland* examines the extraordinary sonic qualities of Iceland's natural environment.

A talk on new music and streaming with Music Norway, Nordic playlist et al will follow.

Supported by the Norwegian Society of Composers.

PechaKucha: Six minute sound odysseys

PechaKucha
 Vulkan Arena
 9 pm
 Free

Simon Løffler: *C*

PechaKucha:
 Trevor Cox
 Nwando Ebizie
 Ragnar Berthling
 Mads Lindström
 Anne Hilde Neset
 Arnbjörg Maria Danielsen
 Lars Kynde

Victor Lisinsky: *Intersecting Pulses*

Isak Edberg / Mats Erlandsson /
 Victor Lisinski

PechaKucha — a Japanese word meaning 'babbling' — is a system designed to help speakers stick to the point. Experienced speakers and novices alike are allowed twenty slides with twenty seconds on each, with a total of six minutes and forty seconds, to present their project or idea. PechaKucha nights are also informal social gatherings for creative people who want to exchange ideas. At the PechaKucha night during Nordic Music Days, contributors will be presenting ideas, projects and concepts related to contemporary music, serving as a showcase and mingling opportunity for delegates and audience alike.

Speakers include Trevor Cox, professor of Acoustic Engineering at the University of Salford, presenter of many science programmes on the BBC, and author of the acclaimed

recent book *Sonic Wonderland: A Scientific Odyssey Of Sound*. He will talk about 'sonic wonders' and why you should bring a tape recorder with you on holiday. Nwando Ebizie will give a talk on Nonclassical, a London based club concept the *Financial Times* described as 'a fresh approach to the presentation, dissemination and consumption of classical music'. From Sweden, Mads Lindström will take us behind the scenes at Stockholm's EMS electronic studio, which he directs, and Ragnar Berthling guides us around the festival Sound Of Stockholm.

The PechaKucha sessions will be bookended by two musical performances. Beforehand, Simon Løffler presents *C*, a sonic installation in which musicians and audience members generate sounds by taking an electronic device between their teeth. The piece seeks to make our body the medium in which the music arises, and tries to establish a context where we are all connected through listening.

Afterwards, Victor Lisinsky's *Intersecting Pulses* juxtaposes traditional Balinese gamelan instruments and specially designed live electronic instruments to explore how expressions from different nations and cultures can be used to create a new locality. Put in a new context, the strong traditions of the different expressions create something new. The piece is a collaborative work involving composers/performers Isak Edberg, Mats Erlandsson and Victor Lisinski. It was composed collaboratively by playing and creating software solutions together.

Supported by the Norwegian Society of Composers and FINNO.

A Breath of fresh air



Buenos Aires as seen by Simon Steen-Andersen

Simon Steen-Andersen:
Buenos Aires (WP)
 Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart /
 Ensemble asamisimasa
 Den Norske Opera & Ballett
 7:30 pm
 350,- / 250,-
 Also performed 19 September

Buenos Aires is a chamber opera about identity, ambivalence, communication and the many paradoxes that arise when cultures meet. Or did Simon Steen-Andersen simply make an opera about good air?

A brand new work by Simon Steen-Andersen is a momentous event. The Dane has recently attracted attention on the European music scene with his multimedia works, known for their original and uncompromising content. His work has revolved around the physical and choreographic aspects of performing music with instruments. This time it is the voice that stands in the centre.

The prolific composer's works are located along the borderlines between music, performance, theatre and video, and in *Buenos Aires* the composer even takes on the roles of librettist, stage designer and director in an attempt to integrate the various elements further. 'Instead of conceiving individual ideas for the stage, the music or props, and so on,' he says, 'I can look for ideas that are already affecting several of the different categories. In this way the different levels are indistinguishable from each other.'

Apart from himself, the crew will consist of the Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart and Norwegian outfit asamisimasa, ensembles the composer

has worked with closely over the past eight years.

The theme revolves around the type of experience Steen-Andersen considers part of Scandinavia's internal dictatorship. Our own evasiveness and self-censorship becomes painfully evident in encounters with more open cultures. A terrible burden this might be, but it can also reveal a very special intimacy, intensity and beauty. The paradox lies in the fact that the most explicit cultures often have their own particular history in relation to dictatorships, like Argentina, for example. Steen-Andersen has himself lived and studied in Buenos Aires: 'I lived in Buenos Aires for a year and love the city,' he says. 'The first ideas for the opera came during my stay there and I chose to name the project after the city primarily because of the paradoxically literal meaning of its name. A city with a bit of a pollution problem called 'fair winds'... It captured perfectly the general tendency to ambiguity and contradiction that, at least in my eyes, seems forever present in Argentina and Argentine culture. Ambivalence or contradictory meanings and values is the theme of the opera, in a way.'

Buenos Aires is also about indirectness and resistance in communication — the absurdity of communicating through song. In the first scene, one of the characters is confronted with the operatic genre as a child, and comes up with three solutions to the 'opera problem':

- 1) Just let the characters sing when they should actually be singing in the story.
- 2) Set the story in a different reality, where the song is accepted as a form of communication.
- 3) Find alternative ways to communicate, with other musical by-products.

An opera about the absurdity of opera, in other words. *Buenos Aires* is a work that probably raises more questions than it answers. With its location-specific title and clear cultural conflict, there's an inevitable question about the composer's relationship to the 'Nation' theme of this year's Ultima. 'Well,' says Steen-Andersen, '*Buenos Aires* is a kind of subjective interpretation of stiffness, indirectness and bodily resistance that I always felt was a part of my Scandinavian identity.'

The cast is the German vocal ensemble Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart and the Norwegian Ensemble asamisimasa, with whom Steen-Andersen has worked for many years. AW

In collaboration with Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart, Asamisimasa and The Norwegian National Opera & Ballet.

Supported by the Norwegian Society of Composers and Arts Council Norway.

ultima academy Utopian North

Utopian North (panel)

DogA

11 am

Free

Eivind Buene, David Brynjar Franzson, Ida Lundén, Simon Løffler, Morten Eide Pedersen

What are the advantages and disadvantages of living as a composer in the well funded Nordic states? In this forum, a handful of composers from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden comment on their works for Nordic Music Days 2014 and discuss artistic life in the Nordic countries, and their approaches to funding possibilities, career building and everyday life.

Fifty years of EMS



EMS Electronic Music Studio, Stockholm

EMS 50th Anniversary Concert
Kulturkirken Jakob

5 pm
100,-

Hanna Hartman: *Mezcal no. 8*
Erik Bünge: *The Third Man*

Swedish music has generally enjoyed a confidence and international status of the rest of us Nordics can only admire. Our neighbours even played a vital role in electroacoustic music. This year the EMS (Elektronmusikstudio) celebrates its fiftieth year, but is by no means a sleeping giant. The centre still functions as a national and international resource as well as being an active studio. Ultima is celebrating

the anniversary with performances by Hanna Hartman and Erik Bünge.

EMS was founded in 1964, with Norwegian composer Knut Wiggen and civil engineer Tage Westlund in key roles. The studio was run by Swedish Radio, which was responsible for its operation and financial support. For most people, this type of electronic music was pure science fiction (and many saw it as a waste of public funds), but with the encouragement of the likes of Karlheinz Stockhausen and the Cologne school, the facility quickly became a vital unit. In 1967 the studio became the first in the world to have its own computerised sound system and digital recording capabilities.

Over the years the studio has been based at several different offices in Stockholm. Nonetheless, EMS has managed to retain its position as an

independent, non-profit operation. Today the centre, under the leadership of Mads Lindström, is a separate part of Statens Musikkverk, and experiencing an enormous amount of interest from around the world. Past visitors have included Stockhausen and Philip Glass, and more recently Mark Fell, Lustmord and Stephen O'Malley of Sunn O))). Hanna Hartmann and Erik Bünge are two Swedish composers associated with EMS in recent years. Hartmann works with authentic sounds from around the world, which, taken out of their original context, can be perceived in their pure form. Bünge's work revolves around the human voice and its contradictory relationship to the body, as well as to language, music and technology. AW

Supported by Arts Council Norway.

On the Outside

Marie Munroe / Panta Rei
Dansteater: *On the Outside*
Riksscenen
9 pm
200,- / 150,-
Also performed 19 September

Is this a choreographed concert or a musical dance performance? The simple answer is that it's both. *On The Outside* is an encounter between artist Marie Munroe and Panta Rei Dansteater, with costumes by Hanne Iveland Henriksbø and visual design by Anastasia Isachsen. It is a production in which four forms of expression tell the story and where compromise and intransigence go hand in hand.

The starting point for the performance is a quote by American writer Dave Eggers: 'You have what I can afford to give'. It is taken from the critically acclaimed novel *A Heart-breaking Work Of Staggering Genius*, and the performance attempts to convey not only the pain, but also the beauty encapsulated in this sentence. The sentence is a bearer of courage; it renders intimacy harmless, and reminds us that we are all autocratic beings — or lonely beings, if you like.

"You have what I can afford to give" says something about human beings' existential loneliness, where we as individuals will never gain an identical understanding of life, where we can accurately recount stories to each other, but anyone who was not there there at the time have only the words to rely on. So to some extent, knowing others and the sense of belonging will always be based on differentness. That may be an unpleasant train of thought to pursue if you don't want to feel alone,' say



Marie Munroe (Photo: Ultima / Henrik Beck)

Panta Rei and Marie Munroe.

Many contemporary dance enthusiasts will already have heard of Panta Rei, one of the most popular dance companies in Norway, and one that is becoming increasingly popular internationally, too. Panta Rei's performances are known for their high level of artistic quality and their ability to engage audiences at different levels.

Marie Munroe is better known as Hilde Marie Kjersem, an artist with a long list of solid releases and collaborative projects to her credit over the past twenty years. Marie has studied jazz and sung rock and pop. Under the artistic name of Marie Munroe, she has taken her distinctive experimental electro pop music to a new level of perfection. The new name signifies the start of a new and

exciting phase in Munroe's musical career.

Costume designer Hanne Iveland Henriksbø has long experience in designing costumes for film and TV. She has created sculptural costumes for exhibitions and the stage, and her costumes play a key role in this production. Lighting and video by Anastasia Isachsen, one of Norway's foremost video artists. Isachsen has collaborated in numerous projects involving concerts, dance productions, music, theatre, installations and exhibitions, in Norway and abroad.

Production: Panta Rei Dansteater.
On stage: Kari Vikjord, Robert Guy, Erlend Ringseth, Ole Myrvold, Erlend Dalen, Marie Munroe.

On The Outside is presented in cooperation with CODA Oslo International Dance Festival.

The world's a stage



Verdensteatret (Photo: Ultima / Henrik Beck)

Verdensteatret *Broen over Gjørme*
(*Bridge Over Mud*)

Henie Onstad Art Center (HOK) /
Studio

6 pm

160,- / 120,- (includes entry to
Josef Alber exhibition *Små grep*
Stor effekt)

A world premiere by one of Norway's most innovative and experimental art constellations.

Verdensteatret consist of artists from different artistic professions who for almost thirty years have been making installations, performance art, concerts and related works. Their productions are presented widely

international in different art contexts and locations. New work by the group, which in 2006 received the prestigious Bessie Award in New York, is always met with high anticipation.

The works of Verdensteatret often appear as a journey through different forms of landscapes. This new piece are right now entering its last phase towards completion after a long and winding road. Among a great diversity of material to surface this time there are some imprints from their last stay in India in 2011. Moving through different landscapes simultaneously might be a result of Verdensteatret's nearly three decades of nomadic practice.

Nevertheless it is still not possible to predict which direction the work will take in the time to come

before the opening at Henie Onstad Art Center in September. The new piece is a hybrid between concert, performance and installation, where the whole space is played as one polyphonic audiovisual instrument.

Broen over Gjørme (Bridge Over Mud) is created and performed by the artists: Lisbeth J. Bodd, Asle Nilsen, Piotr Pajchel, Eirik Blekesaune, Ali Djabbar, Martin Taxt, Benjamin Nelson, Elisabeth Gmeiner, Torggrim Torve, Espen Sommer Eide, Kristine R. Sandøy and Thorolf Thuestad.

A collaboration between Ultima Oslo Contemporary Music Festival, Henie Onstad Art Center, Black Box Teater, BIT Teatergarasjen and Verdensteatret. Verdensteatret is supported by The Norwegian Art Council.

Also showing 20–21 & 23–28 September (2 pm)
More information at verdensteatret.com

Aksiom stations

Aksiom

Kulturkirken Jakob

5 pm

100,-

Kaj Duncan David:

Computer Music (WP)

Øyvind Mæland: *Nytt verk* (WP)

Lisa Streich: *Papirosn*

Johan Svensson: *Shiver* (WP)

Aksiom

Stine Janvin Motland – vocal

Kai Grinde Myrann – conductor

Many ensembles that are formed during college days at music academies and conservatories the world over rarely manage more than a few concerts before they disband. Aksiom student ensemble, formed by students at the Norwegian Academy of Music in 2010, is one of the exceptions to that rule. Comprising instrumentalists driven by a passion for contemporary music and with strong ties to Nordic composers of their

generation, Aksiom has become an important vehicle for performances of the latest music from budding new composers.

This concert is devoted to them. Lisa Streich from Sweden has already attracted international attention for her music, which is characterised by an orientation towards the religious and the philosophical, and for which she has won several awards and stipends. Aksiom continues its collaboration with Øyvind Møland and solo vocalist Stine Motland, who also performed at Performa13 in New York. It will also be performing new works by Johan Svensson and Kaj Duncan David. David's audiovisual computer music is performed in almost complete darkness, illuminated only by the glow from the computer monitors. MØ

The concert is supported by the Fund for Performing Artists, Norwegian Society of Composers, Norwegian Composers Fund and Arts Council Norway.



Aksiom (Photo: Martin Rane Bauck)

ultima academy Buenos Aires

Buenos Aires (discussion)

Loflet

10 am

Free

Simon Steen-Andersen,

Esteban Buch, *asamisimasa*,

Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart

The voice is a symbol of liberation and self-expression. But a voice can also remain silent, or be forcibly silenced. In *Buenos Aires*, performed at this year's Ultima (18 September), innovative Danish composer Simon Steen-Andersen deals with the cultural shock experienced during a long stay in the Argentine capital, and issues of artistic censorship under one of Latin America's more unfortunate historical episodes, the Argentinian dictatorship.

Argentine musicologist and librettist Esteban Buch (École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris), specialises in the relationship between music and politics. Here he hosts a conversation with Steen-Andersen, singers from Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart and musicians from *asamisimasa*, following the different phases of putting on a stage work, from conception and composition through to rehearsal, performance and interpretation.

New Nordic champions

Oslo Philharmonic

Oslo Konserthus / Oslo Concert Hall

7 pm

300,- / 100,-

Malin Bång: *Avgår; pågår* (WP)

Ørjan Matre: *Violin concert*

Hlynur Adils Vilmarsson: *bd*

Anna Thorvaldsdóttir: *Dreaming*

Simon Steen-Andersen: *Overtures*

For Guzheng, Sampler And

Orchestra

Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra

Ilan Volkov (conductor)

Peter Herresthal (violin)

Liu Le (guzheng)

Ultima and Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra present five new orchestral works by a star-studded line-up of Scandinavia's most distinctive young musicians. Malin Bång's *Avgår; pågår*, commissioned jointly with Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, is a world premiere. The work is a fascinating noise-inflected wander through the streets of her native city, Gothenburg.

Ørjan Matre's violin concerto will have its Norwegian premiere just a week after its world premiere in the Netherlands.

In 2012 Iceland's Anna Thorvaldsdóttir was awarded the Nordic Council Music Award for *Dreaming*. The music is reminiscent of a shifting landscape that gives the impression of time standing still, as if in a dream.

Simon Steen-Andersen's *Overtures*, a work for the traditional

Chinese guzheng, samplers and symphony orchestra, had its breakthrough when it earned him first prize at the Shanghai Spring International Music Festival in May 2009.

The conductor for this evening is Ilan Volkov. Born in Israel in 1976, Volkov began his conducting career at the age of nineteen. In 2003 he was appointed Principal Conductor of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and subsequently became its Principal Guest Conductor in 2009. Volkov took up his new appointment as Music Director and Principal Conductor of the Iceland Symphony Orchestra at the beginning of the 2011/12 season. In March 2012 he curated and directed a three-day festival of contemporary music, Tectonics.

Produced by Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra.



ultima academy A Supranational Anthem

A Supranational Anthem
(lecture)

Loftet

1 pm

Free

Esteban Buch

Beethoven's *Ode To Joy* has been the anthem of:

- a) Rhodesia
- b) The European Union
- c) The UEFA European Football Championship

The answer: all of the above — and more. Why? What is it about the final movement of Beethoven's *Symphony No 9* that makes it so universally appealing? Where does it get its symbolic force?

The Ninth symphony was composed at the height of the European Restoration, but Beethoven adopted Schiller's poem in order to convey a truly revolutionary experience: a community of free people sharing common dreams, united in brotherhood. How has it come to mean so different, even contradictory, things, since its first performance in 1824?

Esteban Buch, author of the acclaimed *Beethoven's Ninth: A Political History* (2003), tells the controversial story of a work that became a political symbol in spite of itself, and discusses the incorporation of music into the political realm.

Get the Humpp!

Avanti! Ensemble
HumppAvanti!

Vulkan Arena

11 pm

150,- / 100,-

'The roots of humppa can be found in the popular dance music of the 1920s and thirties: foxtrot, tango and waltz, played by orchestras in restaurants and dancehalls,' says Pekka Gronow, a Finnish musicologist and ethnomusicology lecturer, explaining the peculiar Finnish musical genre humppa.

Humppa was invented in Finland in the fifties, originating with the celebrated radio personality Antero Alpol's comedy programme Kankulan Kaivolla ('Kankkula' means a mythical place — the Finnish equivalent of 'Hicksville, USA'). His house band, made up of an older generation of musicians, parodied pre-war popular music by performing it on 'folk' instruments like tuba, banjo, accordion, violin and saxophone. Alpol himself came up with the name, a variation on the German 'oompah' style.

The programme and its music were immensely popular. Beyond the sixties, the music spread like an epidemic throughout Finland. Specialist festivals were set up, dancehalls filled up and the style became the standard for most self-respecting dance bands. What began as a musical revival and parody was widely believed to be the real thing. Although the humppa wave died down after the seventies, it was still common for a long time to hear dance bands embracing this music style.

With HumppAvanti! the genre has been revitalized and expanded once more. The Avanti! chamber orchestra has a long tradition as an

interpreter of traditional and 'serious' music, but has also been widely known for its musical excursions into everything from jazz and Soviet avant garde to heavy metal. Under the artistic leadership of Kari Krikkku, the twenty year old orchestra have made it their goal to blow away musical and social boundaries and, in defiance of their critics, have become a respected and award winning orchestra in Finland and the rest of the world. By taking up the humppa genre they are showing respect to several generations of Finnish popular music.

'Finnish listeners will immediately recognise the original versions of these songs, even though their attitudes to them may vary,' jokes Gronow.

HumppAvanti! is not a blueprint for a genre that has repeatedly been revived, but rather a platform for Avanti! to suspend the musical rules and humorously add traces of jazz, klezmer and any other styles they see fit to melt into the genre. For many listeners, it's also a meeting of tradition and innovation in a genre that, in spite of good neighbourly relations between the countries, has never officially come to Norway until now. A distinctively Finnish invention that has proved to withstand the test of time. On many levels.

Before the HumppAvanti! concert you can hear ethnomusicologist Pekka Gronow talk about humppa as a musical form. In addition, HumppAvanti!'s 'father of the band', Timo Hietala, will reveal the story behind the Avanti! Ensemble's flirtation with humppa. DJ collective Norwegian Disco Lovers present DJ Mette (Norway's oldest DJ, and its first female one, too) before the concert, and will guarantee a great atmosphere on the dancefloor afterwards. AW

Supported by FINNO and Norwegian Society of Composers.

The magic mountain



Eivind Buene (Photo: Ultima / Henrik Beck)

DR UnderholdningsOrkestret

Universitetets aula

2 pm

200,- / 150,-

Karin Rehnqvist: *Breaking the Ice*

Bent Sørensen: *Papillon Mignon*

Eivind Buene: *Blue Mountain* (WP)

DR UnderholdningsOrkestret,

Mattis Herman Nyquist, Andrea

Bræin Hovig

Conductor: Baldor Brönnimann

Many artists today seek to cross the borders between art genres, though few manage it as elegantly as composer Eivind Buene. His orchestral pieces, ideas, and commissioned works all display a distinct musical intuition, whether it be contemporary, orchestral or pop.

He recently added 'writer' to his already extensive list of talents, thanks to the well-received novels *Enmannsorkester* and *Allsang* and the collection of essays, *Dobbeltliv*, published earlier this year, which makes a closer study of the crossing paths between music and literature. Where the one begins and the other ends is no longer easy to see; nor is it important. He problematises the significance of music in lyrics, though he does the same when composing music. After *Blue Mountain*, which premieres on the final day of Ultima, he can now add 'playwright' to his resumé. This work seems to be a continuation of the explorative aspect of his texts.

We asked him about the significance of memory when experiencing music, the death motifs that seem so alive for us, the idea of the orchestra performing bygone music, Marcel Proust, Mahler, Tor Ulven ...

How did this come about? Is it an old idea you rediscovered and decided to develop?

No, not at all. Quite the opposite, actually. The festival asked if I would like to compose a work for which I wrote both lyrics and music. And I did. That method is quite common for songwriters, but contemporary composers rarely write their own lyrics. In the old days, it was quite common. For example, Wagner wrote his own librettos. The preference today is for canonised and 'patinated' lyrics, particularly in opera. I thinks

that's a rather defensive attitude to take. Then of course I discovered how incredibly difficult it is to juggle between lyrics and music. When I immerse myself in the lyrics, the music fades to the back of my consciousness, and vice versa. Both elements have an inherent desire to comply with their own natural laws, if you get what I mean. But when lyrics and music are to work in unison on stage, they have to balance. We're used to dealing with this balance in the song format. But I soon decided that I wanted a dialogue and that it should not be sung. This gave rise to other problems and, well, I had to try and learn a whole new way of thinking.

'A concert is a bit like being in a haunted house: all that dead music coming alive.' is a line from the work. Are you mostly interested in memories and artistic events from bygone days?

Keep in mind that it's the character in the piece that says it, not me. And memories constitute the elements on which a lot of art, whether it be music, literature or film, is based. But I often find that old music living a life of its own on the sheet music shelves can suddenly seem to come to life in the concert ritual. Music that was dead yesterday can come to life tomorrow. And I think that orchestras have their own memories, their own experiences, and that entering into a dialogue with them can produce good results when one is writing new music. Naturally, there is a danger of appearing sealed off, like a universe that is open only to the initiated, but an orchestra is also like a massive sensual machine, with an abundance of colours and textures. You must always try to harness that energy and avoid composing your way into a musical mausoleum.

The music in the work is mainly based on fragments of the past greatness of others ...

Well... Both the music and the text are based on Mahler's song 'Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen'. But I would say that I have composed a new work which only I could have written, because the quotations and fragments that flow out in the form of text and music originate in my personal reservoir of memories. And it is the pressure of this flow of memories that has given rise to the new music and to the way in which I combined the memory material. It must be said that long sections of the music are also brand new compositions, and frictions clearly arise between the old and the new when listeners suddenly hear fragments of music they recognize without quite knowing why. But when I compose, I derive as much pleasure from making up surprising combinations of textual and musical events as from writing hundreds of bars of completely new music. Assigning new meanings to old music by creating an interesting context is also part of the composition process.

You call it a radio play; how do you characterise that genre?

By radio play, I mean a radio genre, a play for the ears. When combined with the genre 'orchestral concert', something which — hopefully — transcends the radio theatre format, it evolves by assigning the music a much stronger function. The music should not just serve as background sounds for the text; it must also carry part of the narrative development. And hearing a radio play unfold live on stage makes a big difference. I've been very conscious of basing *Blue Mountain* on the situation in which we as musicians, actors and listeners find ourselves: we are attending an

orchestral concert, and that is the setting for the story being told. That's why I used the term 'orchestral radio play', as it points beyond the traditional radio play. We haven't seen much of this in Norway, but Germany has a long tradition in creating musically ambitious radio plays. For example, Nobel laureate Elfriede Jelinek and composer Olga Neuwirth have written a radio play for German radio.

Ingrid Bolsø Berdal and Mattis Herman Nyquist, two of Norway's foremost young actors, are taking part in this production. What's so special about them?

I was looking for someone with specific musical qualities, actors who could become part of the orchestra's time flow. I already knew Mattis Herman, and I knew that he was good. In fact, we've even sung together on a few occasions, in a very low-threshold male quartet! Fortunately, he had time to squeeze in this project between performances of *Peer Gynt* at the National Theatre. I found Ingrid after doing some research in actors' circles, and I realised that she was a real find even at the first reading audition. She is highly responsive to and enthusiastic about this approach to interaction between stage, text, and music.

Could you say a few words about the orchestra and the conductor performing Blue Mountain?

I hadn't heard of the orchestra before, it's one of the Danish Radio orchestras. Meeting a new orchestra is always associated with a mixture of dread and anticipation: it's like meeting an organism with thirty, fifty or a hundred heads that can eat you alive if you don't get it right. The conductor takes care of the practicalities; the composer should preferably sit in the

auditorium and listen, then have close dialogue with the conductor and let him or her take care of the dialogue with the musicians. In this instance, we have a conductor with whom I have already collaborated on several occasions. Baldur Brönnimann has that rare ability to be both extremely alert and relaxed at the same time. And he possesses an intuitive understanding of what I'm trying to achieve with an orchestra. Composers often have no say in the choice of conductor; they just have to cross their fingers and hope for the best. When I heard that Baldur was going to conduct *Blue Mountain*, it was a huge relief. It meant I had one thing less to worry about in what is a rather complex project.

Will Blue Mountain and this method be a one-off event?

I hope not. I hope that other orchestras will see this format as something which their audiences might enjoy. But it is in the nature of new music that a first performance may be the last, especially when one is trying to find new ways of staging an orchestra. Working with actors who must interweave with the orchestra rather than just talk alongside it requires other working methods than those used when working on a traditional orchestral concert. But I like the idea of working experimentally in the sense of testing a hypothesis and not being able to predict the outcome. That's the essence of trying again, failing again, and failing better, as Beckett once put it. AV

In collaboration with DR Underholdnings-Orkestret. Supported by Norwegian Society of Composers.

Worlds apart



Ensemble Ernst
Kulturkirken Jakob
6 pm
200,- / 150,-

Djuro Zivkovic: *On The Guarding Of The Heart*

Hikari Kiyama: *Shamisen*
Morten Ladehoff: *APART*
Sampo Haapamäki: *Velinikka*

Ensemble Ernst has evolved into one of Scandinavia's leading contemporary music ensembles. Thomas Rimul been the ensemble's artistic director since its formation in 1997, and Ernst has played Ultima many times and garnered critical acclaim from the international press. New Norwegian music is an important part of the ensemble's repertoire, and Ernst has presented several commissioned works and first performances by leading Norwegian composers

throughout its lifetime. Ensemble Ernst is a group of talented musicians with great expressivity, an innovative programme, and an important place in the contemporary Norwegian music scene.

This year's programme includes Serbian-Swedish Djuro Zivkovic's *On The Guarding Of The Heart*, which was awarded the prestigious Grawemeyer Award for Music Composition in 2014. In the tension between the social collective and the individual, Zivkovic explores a personal depth he calls 'the heart of the spiritual'. Soloist is Veli Kujala.

The title of Hikari Kiyama's *Shamisen* plays on the Japanese three-string instrument of the same name, but is performed here for string quartet with the following instructions from the composer: 'This is not so-called contemporary music: this is noise rock.'

Morten Ladehoff's work *APART* explores the concept of separation in different ways. The first form of

separation is located in the instrument itself; a violin has been split into four and had a microphone attached, creating four new instruments that produce sounds having little in common with the original instrument.

Finland's Sampo Haapamäki's *Velinikka* for quarter-tone accordion and orchestra, is part of Haapamäki's doctoral studies in composition at the prestigious Columbia University in New York. Haapamäki developed the quarter-tone accordion together with Veli Kujala, and this work has been performed several times since its premiere in 2008. Kujala is tonight's soloist. MØ

Supported by Norwegian Society of Composers.

Ultima Finale



Ben Frost (Photo: Borkur Sigthorsson)

Ultima Finale

Ben Frost: *A U R O R A* live /
Karin Krog & John Surman /
TCF / Jeppe Just Instituttet
Vulkan Arena
9 pm – 2 am
100,-

Since his recording debut in 2003, Australian Ben Frost has made a mark with his intense, structural, minimalist sound art with roots in militant post-classical electronic music. Born in 1980 in Melbourne, Australia, Frost relocated to Reykjavík in 2005 and helped form the Bedroom Community record label / collective. In 2010 he was chosen by Brian Eno as part of the Rolex Mentor and Protégé programme for a year of collaboration. 2013 also marked his debut as a director with the premiere of his first opera, based on Iain Banks's infamous 1984 novel *The*

Wasp Factory. At the Ultima Finale he will perform from his latest album *A U R O R A* (Mute).

One of Norway's leading, internationally acclaimed jazz vocalists, Karin Krog, helps Ultima round off with a grand finale concert at Vulkan Arena. Krog is mainly known as a great jazz singer, but has strong roots in the avant garde through her work with Kåre Kolberg among others. Karin Krog and English multi-instrumentalist John Surman began working together in the late 1960s when the first wave of avant garde was sweeping through the jazz scene. Their shared interest in the developing area of electronics resulted in the release of a ground-breaking LP, *Cloud Line Blue*, which appeared in 1979. Throughout the following decades Krog and Surman have continued their exploratory collaborations both in concert and also in a series of LPs and CDs. Their work continues to develop over a wide range of musical idioms that defy stylistic barriers.



Karin Krog and John Surman

For the current series of concerts in 2014, they are joined by Surman's son, Pablo Benjamin Surman, to add the elements of live sampling and electronica to their programme.

With a ramshackle musical aesthetic mixing barrel organ and vintage analogue synths, unintentional theatre, sincerity, nostalgia, musical mismatch and anarchy, Danish dance company Jeppe Just Instituttet's repertoire comprises everything from nursery rhymes to drinking songs orchestrated for homemade instruments.

TCF is artist and musician Lars Holdhus, who explores codes and cryptography in relation to musical composition. The musical references are taken from electroacoustic music, hardcore, poetry, and digital noise.

In collaboration with nyMusikk and NATT&DAG. Supported by Norwegian Society of Composers.

ultima academy film programme

Art War

Thursday 11 September 6 pm &
Wednesday 17
Cinemateket
Free

2013
Director: Marco Wilms
Arabic, English & German, English subtitles
DCP, colour, 90 min

As a former rebellious artist in his childhood East Germany, who joined the euphoria when the Wall fell, the fearless documentary film maker Marco Wilms was perfectly placed to point his camera at street artists during the Egyptian revolution. By night he followed graffiti artists, designers, artists and musicians who each played their own part in the uprising, such as Hamed, who says, 'Changes are never produced by the majority of the population. It's always been minorities who have fundamentally changed societies because they are the most active.' Such daring, inspiring work made its mark on Cairo and gave the opposition movement an artistic front.

Antonio Negri: A Revolt That Never Ends

Sunday 14 September
2 pm
Cinemateket
Free

Germany 2004
Directors: Alexandra Weltz, Andreas Pichler
With: Antonio Negri
English/Italian, English subtitles
DigiBeta, colour, 52 min

Antonio Negri's name is well known to philosophy and politics aficionados, while for others it has been inextricably linked to dramatic developments in recent Italian history. This is a film about a man blamed for the kidnapping and murder of former Italian prime minister Aldo Moro in 1978. It chronicles Negri's political awakening, via his tireless efforts to improve conditions for Italian factory workers, to his arrest in connection with the Moro affair and his exile in Paris to escape sentencing. There he was associated with philosophers Deleuze and Foucault, and wrote *Empire*, the book that made Negri an important figure in the emerging anti-globalisation movement.

Victory Under The Sun (Pobjeda pod suncem)

Sunday 14 September 6 pm
Cinemateket
Free

Yugoslavia, 1988
Director: Goran Gajic
With: Laibach
Slovenian, English subtitles
35 mm, colour, 64 min

'Laibach is a mission that requires fanaticism,' says lead singer Milan Fras during *Victory Under The Sun*, the lightly fictionalised film from 1988 where Laibach demonstrate where they come from, what they stand for and who they are. As in everything Laibach do, their art is a form of deeply serious exaggeration, which forces you to make a decision, to think for yourself. Thus they have consciously left themselves open to misinterpretation, which has created much controversy during the

band's history. Their creative reuse of symbols from extreme ideologies has created a unique visual expression, a mixture that is also reflected in their music.

The Pervert's Guide To Ideology

Sunday 14 September 9 pm,
Wednesday 17 September 8 pm, 18
September 9 pm
Free entry for Ultima Academy
delegates
Cinemateket
Free

UK/Ireland, 2012
Director: Sophie Fiennes
With: Slavoj Žižek
English, no subtitles
DCP, colour, 134 min

'We are responsible for our dreams. This is the ultimate lesson of psychoanalysis — and fiction movies.' The creators of *The Pervert's Guide To Cinema* are back. Philosopher Slavoj Žižek and film maker Sophie Fiennes use his interpretation of famous movie scenes to present a captivating cinematic journey into the core of ideology — the dreams that shape our collective faith and practice.

Philosophy provocateur Žižek is the star. He examines clips from more than 20 films, spooling through capitalism, fascism, consumption, Stalinism, religion and more. Fiennes follows the successful formula of the first film, which physically placed Žižek within reconstructions of famous film sets. Thought-provoking and guaranteed to be entertainment.

Installation

Conrad Schnitzler: *Mobile*
Audiovisual installation by
Conrad Schnitzler

Atelier Nord ANX, Olaf Ryes
pl. 2, 0552 Oslo (entrance from
Sofienberggt.)
10 – 28 September 2014
Opening: Tuesday 9 September
7 pm

10 pm: Conrad Schnitzler
– Kassetten-Konzert with
Wolfgang Seidel

Atelier Nord presents Conrad Schnitzler's (1937–2011) audiovisual installation *Mobile* during this year's Ultima festival. The installation is based on a combination of Schnitzler's experimental videos and audio from the German musician's cassette-concert project. The videos, in which Schnitzler worked with the lighting and movement of black and white objects, are produced in the simplest way possible, without cuts or the use of effects, and are reminiscent of Hans Richter's films or László Moholy-Nagy's light-based works.

The six accompanying compositions are based on 50 cassette tapes that Schnitzler produced for his cassette project, where he made recordings of each of the individual voices that make up an orchestra, cassettes being the simplest and cheapest recording method at the time. When Schnitzler died in 2011 he left more than 800 hours of material from this project, but practical and financial constraints meant that only the 50 cassettes were ever produced — the cassettes that the compositions in this



Conrad Schnitzler

installation are based on. The variety of voices and Schnitzler's collage-like approach means that this material has a huge compositional potential.

Conrad Schnitzler was an artist who defied any attempt at categorization. Influenced by the Fluxus movement, he combined visual art and music, and later to an increasing degree performance, video and music. In the 1960s he moved to western Berlin where he was among the founders of the influential concert venue for experimental music, Zodiak Free Arts Lab as well as the band Kluster. In Norway Schnitzler is best known for having contributed to the black metal band Mayhem's debut album *Deathcrush* with the composition *Silvester Anfang*.

The exhibition is curated by Carsten Seiffarth and arrangements by Wolfgang Seidel.

Ultima thanks:

Atelier Nord
Café Mesh
Cinemateket
CODA Oslo International Dance Festival
Danmarks ambassade i Oslo
Dans i Nord-Trøndelag
Dansens Hus
Dansearena Nord
Deichmanske hovedbibliotek
Det norske komponistfond
Dextra Musica
DOGA
DR UnderholdningsOrkestret
Dramatikkens hus
Drivhuset
EGD
Eivind Grovens Orgelhus
Elektronmusikstudion EMS
Ernst von Siemens Musikstiftung
Finsk-norsk kulturinstitutt (FINNO)
Fond for lyd og bilde
Fond for utøvende kunstnere
Fonds Experimentelles Musiktheater NRW
Institusjonen Fritt Ord
Internationales Musikinstitut Darmstadt
Islands ambassade i Oslo
Komponistfondet
Komponistenes vederlagsfond
Kulturdepartementet
Kulturkirken Jakob
Kulturkontakt Nord
Kunsthøgskolen i Oslo (KHiO)
Kunstløftet
MFOs Vederlagsfond
Morgenbladet
Music Norway
Nasjonalbiblioteket
Nasjonal jazzscene
Nasjonalmuseet for kunst, arkitektur og design
NATT&DAG
Nationaltheatret
NISS (Nordisk Institutt for Scene og Studio)
NODE Berlin Oslo
Nordisk Kulturfond
Nord-Trøndelag Teater
Norsk folkemusikksamling
Norsk komponistforening
Norsk kulturfond
Norsk kulturråd
Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart
nyMusikks komponistgruppe
OCA, Office for Contemporary Art Norway
Oslo domkirke
Oslo kommune
Oslo Konserthus
Oslo kulturnatt
PechaKucha Oslo
Riksscenen
Rockefeller
Scandic Hotels
Sentrum Scene
Sparebankstiftelsen DNB
Studio 4.99
Sveriges ambassade i Oslo
Teatermuseet
Teatersalen, Bondeungdomslaget i Oslo
Universitetet i Oslo, institutt for musikkvitenskap
Universitetsbiblioteket
Universitetets aula
Utenriksdepartementet
Verdensteatret
Vulkan Arena