



PRESS INFORMATION

Music of the present at »Elbphilharmonie Visions«

The successful festival returns for second edition from 7 to 16 February

Hamburg, 6 December 2024: Together with the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra, the Elbphilharmonie is set to celebrate contemporary music and its significance for concert life. In the week from 7 to 16 February, the »Elbphilharmonie Visions« festival takes us on adventures into new worlds of sound. All of the works were composed in the 21st century and can be heard in the iconic Elbphilharmonie Grand Hall. Alan Gilbert, the festival founder and principal conductor of the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra, describes the festival as a »snapshot of the contemporary music world«. Now in its second edition, it once again showcases some of the most exciting orchestral works of recent times. Among the composers performing are Clara Iannotta, Mark Andre, Francesca Verunelli, Magnus Lindberg, Bernhard Gander, Olga Neuwirth and Helmut Lachenmann. The young British artist Alex Paxton, who brings together video game soundtracks, virtuoso chamber music and jazz improvisation, receives the specially endowed Claussen-Simon Composition Prize and his new orchestral work will be premiered at the opening concert. »Elbphilharmonie Visions« is a showcase too for some of the best radio orchestras from Germany and Austria, which consistently work in tremendous service to contemporary music. The compact concerts offer audiences the chance to get up close and personal with the artists' visions, with the composers and musicians set to take part in short stage talks on all festival evenings. Tickets are available at www.elbphilharmonie.de.

The festival opens with the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra under Alan Gilbert. Following the world premiere of Alex Paxton's new work, Bernd Richard Deutsch's »Urworte«, based on Goethe's poem of the same name, is also set to be performed for the first time (7 February). Keys, screws and hammers: Alberto Posadas explores the tonal possibilities of the piano. The SWR Symphony Orchestra conducted by Emilio Pomarico contrasts his »Königsberger Klavierkonzert« with Johannes Maria Staud's percussion concerto »Whereas the Reality Trembles« (8 February). The WDR Symphony Orchestra performs Olga Neuwirth's orchestral work »Masaot / Clocks Without Hands«, completed in 2014, in which she moves compositionally around »the polyphonic singing« of her »fragmented origins«. Georges Lentz's violin concerto »... To Beam in Distant Heavens ...« was inspired by the violinist Arabella Steinbacher, who is required to demonstrate both lyrical expression and breakneck virtuosity during her performance at the Elbphilharmonie (9 February). Under the direction of the Dutch conductor Bas Wiegers, the ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra presents Francesca Verunelli's work »From Scratch«, premiered in 2024, where the music is literally built »from the ground up«. The soloist on percussion is Vanessa Porter, who was celebrated as a »Rising Star« at the Elbphilharmonie in 2023. For his »Echographien«, Mark Andre measured the acoustics of four church rooms and constructed sensual sound studies from the unique »fingerprints« of each room. Bernhard Gander has a definite soft spot for heavy metal – as can be clearly heard in the pounding rhythms and orchestral sounds reminiscent of guitar riffs in »Blood Beat« (13 February).

The NDR Radiophilharmonie and conductor Pierre Bleuse perform the work »Moult« by the Italian composer Clara Iannotta, which fluctuates between giving space to fleeting and fragile sounds and wanting to »let the music bleed«. In Arnulf Herrmann's »Tour de Trance« for soprano and orchestra, the opera singer Anja Petersen takes on the solo part, just as she did at the world premiere (14 February). Under the direction of Matthias Hermann, the Frankfurt Radio Symphony opens its concert



with orchestral music reminiscent of the sound of an Indian long-necked lute: in »Sympathetic Resonance«, the British composer Christian Mason reinterprets the orchestra as a giant tambura. He places a grand piano in front of the orchestra, but it is not played. Trumpets and trombones blow their notes into it instead, resulting in a unique sound. Brass instruments also take centre stage in the second half of the programme, with Helmut Lachenmann's »My Melodies« for eight horns and orchestra (15 February). Finally, the last concert in »Visions« combines a solo concerto by the Finnish composer Magnus Lindberg, written for the viola star of contemporary music Lawrence Power, with two orchestral pieces filled with an extremely vivid sound language: »Responses« by Dalit Warshaw is a declaration of love to the music of Johannes Brahms. And the work »Tocar y Luchar« (»Playing and Fighting«) by the British-Japanese composer Dai Fujikura, originally composed for the orchestra of »El Sistema« in Venezuela (16 February).

Born in Manchester in 1990, Alex Paxton is a composer and improvising trombonist. He studied Jazz and Composition at the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music in London. His music has been performed by a host of renowned orchestras and ensembles, including Ensemble Modern, the London Sinfonietta, the London Symphony Orchestra, the London Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Nouvel Ensemble Contemporain. In 2021 he was awarded the Ivor Novello Composer Award and in 2023 he received the Hindemith Prize. His works include »NOW ER ARE DUH-DUR« for a large ensemble, »RAINY RAIN RAIN« for six singers and piano, and »PRAYER with Strings«. Alex Paxton has written six operas to date, including »NOGGIN and the WHALE«, »WOOLF MUSIC« and »BEL and the DRAGON«. His music is published by Ricordi (Berlin).

On 2 December, Paxton presented his album »Music for Bosch People« with a quartet line-up in Kaistudio 1 of the Elbphilharmonie, along with live projections by the Hamburg-based artist collective »visuell«. As part of »Elbphilharmonie Visions«, he is awarded the Claussen-Simon Composition Prize.

The Claussen-Simon Composition Prize

The Claussen-Simon Composition Prize is intended to enable an emerging composer to premiere a large-scale work in a musically excellent setting, while offering them support during the composition process both musically relating to the work itself and in terms of organisational matters. Thanks to the partnership between the three renowned institutions, the prize-winner receives extensive support, valuable experience and active assistance in establishing themselves as a professional composer. A central focus is on the direct exchange with the conductor, orchestra, concert hall and foundation. At the first edition of »Elbphilharmonie Visions« in 2023, the award-winning work »Flügel« (»Wings«) by the Swedish composer Lisa Streich was met with enormous enthusiasm by audiences and critics alike.

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Concert Overview

FRI, 7 FEBRUARY 2025, 20:00, ELBPHILHARMONIE GRAND HALL

€ 12 / 18 / 30 / 41 / 54

VISIONS 1 – OPENING CONCERT

NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra

NDR Vokalensemble

MDR-Rundfunkchor

Conductor, Alan Gilbert

Alex Paxton

New Work (2025) (World premiere)

Bernd Richard Deutsch

Urworte. Nach Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (2024) (World premiere)

SAT, 8 FEBRUARY 2025, 20:00, ELBPHILHARMONIE GRAND HALL

€ 13 / 17 / 35 / 46 / 53

VISIONS 2

SWR Symphony Orchestra

Florian Hölscher, Piano

Christoph Sietzen, Percussion

Conductor, Emilio Pomàrico

Alberto Posadas

Königsberger Klavierkonzert (2024)

Johannes Maria Staud

Whereas the Reality Trembles (2023)

SUN, 9 FEBRUARY 2025, 20:00, ELBPHILHARMONIE GRAND HALL

€ 13 / 17 / 35 / 46 / 53

VISIONS 3

WDR Symphony Orchestra

Arabella Steinbacher, Violin

Conductor, Ryan Bancroft

Olga Neuwirth

Masaot / Clocks Without Hands (2014)

Georges Lentz

... To Beam in Distant Heavens ... (2018)

THU, 13 FEBRUARY 2025, 20:00, ELBPHILHARMONIE GRAND HALL

€ 13 / 17 / 35 / 46 / 53

VISIONS 4

ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra

Vanessa Porter, Percussion

Conductor, Bas Wiegers



Francesca Verunelli

From Scratch (2024)

Mark Andre

Vier Echographien (2022)

Bernhard Gander

Blood Beat (2016)

FRI, 14 FEBRUARY 2025, 20:00, ELBPHILHARMONIE GRAND HALL

€ 12 / 18 / 30 / 41 / 54

VISIONS 5

NDR Radiophilharmonie

Anja Petersen, Soprano

Conductor, Pierre Bleuse

Clara Iannotta

Moult (2019)

Arnulf Herrmann

Tour de Trance (2020)

SAT, 15 FEBRUARY 2025, 20:00, ELBPHILHARMONIE GRAND HALL

€ 13 / 17 / 35 / 46 / 53

VISIONS 6

The Frankfurt Radio Symphony

Conductor, Matthias Hermann

Christian Mason

Sympathetic Resonance (2015)

Helmut Lachenmann

My Melodies (2018/2023)

SUN, 16 FEBRUARY 2025, 20:00, ELBPHILHARMONIE GRAND HALL

€ 12 / 18 / 30 / 41 / 54

VISIONS 7 – FINALE

NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra

Lawrence Power, Viola

Conductor, Alan Gilbert

Dalit Warshaw

Responses (2016)

Magnus Lindberg

Violakonzert (2024)

Dai Fujikura

Tocar y Luchar (2011)