



MUSICA NOVA HELSINKI

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Contemporary art music meets modern electronic at Musica nova Helsinki, February 1–12, 2017

The programme for Finland's biggest contemporary music event has now been announced

Alongside new classical music the festival, under the theme of Open Spaces, will also be focusing more strongly than before on electronic music and avant-garde pop. The chief guests are Grawemeyer Award-winning Michel van der Aa from the Netherlands, American composer, guitarist and multimedia artist Tyondai Braxton, the stargaze collective of the festival's German Artistic Director André de Ridder, percussionist-composer Lukas Ligeti, and American composer-drummer Qasim Naqvi of Dawn of Midi trio fame.

With over 20 concerts, the festival features a number of premieres of works by both Finnish and international composers.

“Space, and the different possible connotations of the word, are all mirrored in the programme,” says new Artistic Director **André de Ridder**. “It refers not only to musical elements and physical spaces, but to a sense of openness in relation to different music spaces - it's a good image of how I see music, and the music scenes of today, developing.” In the opening concert, by the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, elements of orchestral music meet modern electronic in the premiere of a work by American **Tyondai Braxton**. Braxton sprang to fame as a member of the cult instrumental rock band Battles and is known for his experimental work that ranges from intimate solo pieces to large-scale symphonic works. He will also perform a solo production at Nova.

Another item on the programme for this concert is *Spaces of Blank* by **Michel van der Aa** (Netherlands), winner of the 2013 Grawemeyer Award and the festival's Composer-in-Residence. The 3D opera *Blank Out*, by this leading classical music innovator will have its Finnish premiere at the festival, and his *Hysteresis* can be heard at the concert by the Tapiola Sinfonietta.

Electronic Nova at the G Livelab

The first Nova weekend, February 3–5, is dedicated to various aspects of electronic music, at Helsinki's recently-opened mecca of live music, G Livelab.

Taking the stage at Sunday's Super-Nova will be the experimental stargaze collective led by André de Ridder. This border-crossing group will be performing a new work by **Qasim Naqvi**,

drummer of the Dawn of Midi trio from Brooklyn but appearing at Nova as a composer, along with the full version of his recently-released *Preamble*. Stargaze will also be starring with **Teppo Mäkynen**, number one Finnish jazz-drummer. Their unique joint concert will present a new angle on the legendary EP *Hi Scores* by the Scottish duo Boards of Canada now enjoying cult status.

Nova will also be paying homage to another pioneer of electronic music, British experimental producer and musician **Matthew Herbert**, whose latest album, *The Music*, has been released as a book. The text, to be read out loud at the event, describes what it would be like as an album.

The weekend will also give a chance to catch an experimental, partly improvised performance by German **Jan St. Werner** of IDM duo Mouse on Mars fame together with the Finnish Ears Open Ensemble. St Werner's latest composition *Felder* already received various electro-acoustic treatments and interventions upon its release and the concert at Nova will continue in this special performance.

The space theme is very pronounced in the concert by the Finnish Uusinta Ensemble. The programme for this concert will consist of works by young Nordic composers based on field recordings in their immediate surroundings.

The Legacy of Ligeti

The legacy of classic contemporary composer **György Ligeti** occupies a big role in the programme for the closing weekend, February 10-12. The guest of honour at this concert will be György's son Lukas, who has beaten out a path of his own in the world of music, as a composer, performing artist and jazz drummer. Works by **Lukas** can be heard during the weekend at his own profile concert, and in performances by Avanti! Chamber Orchestra and the Kamus String Quartet.

The festival will be presenting some of the best-known works by György Ligeti, such as the choral *Lux Aeterna*, music by some of his foremost pupils and other composers whose styles reflect his influence, such as **Georg Friedrich Haas**.

Finnish premieres of works by Gérard Grisey

Another major name on the programme for Musica nova Helsinki 2017 is **Gérard Grisey**, a French composer who has drawn on the legacy of György Ligeti and has earned himself the title of 'initiator of spectral music'. His best-known work, and one that enjoys cult status, is *Les espaces acoustiques*, and it will now be heard in full for the first time in Finland. The percussion ensemble Osuma will also be giving the Finnish premiere of his *Le Noir de L'Étoile*. Other works by Grisey at Nova 2017 include *Passacaille* for accordion, performed at a recital by **Veli Kujala** on the quarter-tone instrument developed by this Finnish accordionist.

For the full programme see www.musicanova.fi

The festival will also include talks and meetings with artists. Details to be announced later.

Tickets for Musica nova Helsinki 2017: see www.musicanova.fi

Further info, press photos, accreditation:

musicanova.fi/en/media

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Musica nova Helsinki, successor of the Helsinki Biennale founded in 1981, is one of Europe's leading contemporary music events. Held every other year, it showcases some of the most interesting new music in the world today. The Artistic Director for Nova 2017 is conductor André de Ridder. The chief organisers are the Helsinki Festival, the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, the Finnish National Opera, the Tapiola Sinfonietta and the Finnish Broadcasting Company (Yle).