



MUSICA NOVA HELSINKI

Media release

Embargo until 31 January 2019

Finland's biggest festival of contemporary music, Musica nova Helsinki begins on Friday, 1 February

The festival programme comprises over 30 concerts and several premieres by Finnish and international composers. Visiting performers include, for example, former member of experimental rock group Battles Tyondai Braxton, The National guitarist Bryce Dessner and the German electronic music group Mouse on Mars. The festival is held on 1-10 February.

The Musica nova festival examines musical dialogues across the Atlantic. The international guest composers represent the most interesting art music of our time from both sides of the ocean. The festival's opening concert on 1 February will feature the piece *Delta* by **Jay Schwartz**, an American composer based in Europe. It will be performed by the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by **Peter Rundel**. Another American at the festival is **Tyondai Braxton**, whose massive electronic piece *TELEKINESIS* will finally premiere in Finland. It will be performed on 8 February by the Radio Symphony Orchestra, conducted by **André de Ridder**, the Artistic Director of the festival. Another guest is the Icelandic **Daníel Bjarnason**, whose violin concerto will get its Finnish premiere at the RSO concert. The soloist will be **Pekka Kuusisto**, for whom Bjarnason composed the work.

The American composer and guitarist **Bryce Dessner** will perform his own work *Wires* on 7 February with the Tapiola Sinfonietta, conducted by **Baldur Brönnimann**. The Estonian **Liisa Hirsch** will play the piano for her piece *4 Glides* at the Zagros Ensemble concert on 10 February. Hirsch's music is also featured in the Estonian Ensemble U's virtual reality concert *Look around you, look inside yourself* on 5 February.

A wide variety of premieres by the most interesting composers from Finland and around the world

As usual, Musica nova will feature a variety of premieres by Finnish composers. Ireland's leading contemporary music group Crash Ensemble will perform the Canadian-Finnish **Matthew Whittall's** new piece *Resonance Orbits* in their concert on 2 February. **Minna Leinonen's** new work *Sirri* will be performed by Uusinta Ensemble on 3 February, and **Paavo Korpijaakko's** *Siivet (Wings)* will premiere at the concert of The Polytech Choir and the Saxophone Quartet Aava on 4 February. Teosto Prize winner **Antti Auvinen's** new, video-enhanced work *Digital Madrigal* will be heard at the Tapiola Sinfonietta concert on 7 February. The work includes video and audio of electric guitars being destroyed. The electric guitar also takes centre stage in Sami Klemola's new work for the electric guitar

quartet Sähkökitarakvartetti. The performance will take place at G Livelab on 6 February. The opera event *FLASH FLASH - the two deaths of andy warhol* by composer **Juhani Nuorvala** and librettist **Juha Siltanen** will also premiere at the festival.

International premieres include *Nothing Else - Nothing More* by the Icelandic-German **Steingrímur Rohloff**, which will be heard for the first time at the Helsinki Chamber Choir concert on 2 February. Irishman **Sam Perkin**'s brand new *Grey Area* surprisingly blends orchestral music with a night-time skateboarding video. The work will be premiered by Crash Ensemble on 2 February. Video is also utilised in the solo concert of flautist **Lina Andonovska** on 7 February, during which a new piece by Irish composer **Donnacha Dennehy** will be premiered as well.

The festival also hosts a number of Finnish premieres of significant compositions, for example, **Louis Andriessen**'s *De Snelheid*, **Morton Feldman**'s *For Samuel Beckett* and several pieces by Icelandic composer **Anna Thorvaldsdóttir**.

Tyondai Braxton, the electro group Mouse on Mars and robotic instruments programmed by Sonic Robots introduce a new twist to an undeniable contemporary music classic with their unique interpretation of **Terry Riley**'s piece *In C*. The *In C (Off Sea)* concert can be experienced at Ääniwalli on 9 February. A classic in its own right is Ensemble intercontemporain, this iconic contemporary music orchestra returns to Helsinki after a decade away and performs under the direction of the German contemporary music star **Enno Poppe** at the Helsinki Music Centre on 9 Feb as well.

The entire festival programme is available at musicanova.fi
Festival tickets are sold for each concert individually.

Further information and interview requests:

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Images for the press are available at musicanova.fi/media

Musica nova Helsinki is one of the leading contemporary music events in Europe. Held every other year, the festival presents the most interesting new music from Finland and abroad. Musica nova was launched in 1981 under the name Helsinki Biennale. The Artistic Director of the festival is the 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).