

9th June 2025

Press Release

54th moers festival 2025: Between Silence, Sonic Explosions and International Solidarity

Preliminary Review After Four Intense Days

Moers. The 54th edition of the moers festival - a federally funded event and one of the most prestigious international festivals for jazz, avant-garde, and experimental music - has drawn to a close after four packed days of artistic activity. Under this year's theme, "Silence", the festival presented a vibrant mix of loud, wild, bold, offbeat - but also quiet and subtle - expressions of experiment, musical daring, improvisation and global contemporary art. A particular success was the newly introduced solidarity-based ticket model, which proved popular with audiences and resulted in record attendance across all venues.

Silence as a Space, a Stance, a Sign of Hope

Around 250 artists from approximately 20 countries delivered a richly diverse, multi-genre programme of international calibre, comprising concerts, sessions, artistic interventions, exhibitions, discussions, the children and youth project "...plötzlich still im Unimoersum!?" as well as open-format events both in the town centre and the festival village. The theme of "Silence" was not interpreted as retreat or absence, but rather as a counterpoint to noise, overstimulation and digital restlessness - a means of fostering attentive listening, deeper engagement, and creative expression. Tim Isfort, Artistic Director and Managing Director, commented: "Moers isn't a place of ready-made answers - it's a laboratory of listening, surprise, and joy. The fact that so many people embrace, celebrate and help shape this space of possibility is a real gift."

Strong Attendance Despite Weather Challenges

Despite unpredictable weather conditions, audience response was enthusiastic. The enni.Eventhalle, the open-air stage on the Solimare meadow, and the town centre venues all enjoyed excellent occupancy. Notably, ticket sales saw a significant rise compared to the previous year: while approximately 1,250 tickets were sold by the end of the 2024 festival, the provisional figure for 2025 - at the start of the final day - stood at around 2,000. This growth, despite the mixed weather, reflects the festival's expanding reach and sustained appeal. The new solidarity-based pricing model ("Pay What You Want"), designed to balance accessibility with fair funding, was also well received and is seen by festival management as a key factor in this year's success.

Programme Highlights & New Artistic Perspectives

Among the standout performances this year were Australian artist Marco Fusinato with his performative noise piece "Deleterious Exhalation" - an audiovisual experience on the boundary between music, light and conceptual art, previously featured at the Venice Biennale for Music - and American pianist Angelica Sanchez, who captivated audiences with complex soundscapes blending structure, improvisation and jazz tradition.

The XN - Experimental Encounters project, a collaboration with the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival (hcmf//), featured four cross-genre productions from the UK, including a world

premiere with Angharad Davies, performances by David Sappa, Charlotte Keeffe and Ashley John Long, as well as an interdisciplinary trio comprising Cath Roberts, Kate Carr and Iris Colomb. A particular highlight was the XN Creative Workshop Concert led by Welsh improvisation musician Angharad Davies, joined by Verena Barié, Adrian Thieß, Aaron Rosenow and Carolin Schnabel - all selected from over 50 applications. XN is supported by GVL, PPL and the Goethe-Institut.

International Collaborations: Spotlight on China & Rwanda

In 2025, the moers festival placed a special focus on China's vibrant music scene. Artists from different regions contributed works ranging from electroacoustic experimentation and traditional instrumental practices to radical explorations of silence. Among them were Zhao Cong, Sun Yizhou, Tan Shuoxin and Zhou Wenbo (Northeast & Beijing), Li Daiguo and Lao Dan (Sichuan), and Mamer (Xinjiang). In line with the theme, many of the pieces explored the tension between sound and silence.

Rwanda featured as part of the festival's "Africa" series, which spotlights a different African musical landscape each year. Following Ethiopia, Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Namibia, the focus in 2025 shifted to Rwanda's East African scene. Music journalist Sophie Emilie Beha conducted on-site research and invited a group of musicians who presented "URWEREKA", a world premiere developed specifically for Moers. Additional Rwandan contemporary culture was showcased through more projects, workshops and a DJ set.

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Press Photos

Press photos from the 2025 moers festival, organised by festival day, can be downloaded via the following link. Images are being uploaded on a rolling basis:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/18BZZA-INv8bJrGDF_L0E9C39w-QhhtOV?usp=sharing

Please note: Photos are authorised for editorial coverage of the moers festival. Always credit: © moers festival / Photographer's Name.

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About the moers festival

The internationally renowned moers festival has taken place every Whitsun since 1972 and has been organised by Moers Kultur GmbH since 2005. Over the past five decades, the festival has repeatedly opened up and expanded from a pure new jazz festival; in 2025 it will bear the subtitle 'Jazzfestival für Musik / Miteinander / Freysinn und: Klangfriede!'. Other formats, institutions and series such as the moers sessions, the improviser in residence (since 2008), the discussions (since 2017), changing youth projects (since 2018) or hybrid formats (@the same time or the VR moersland, since 2021) expand the festival cosmos.