

Same principle, new music - moers festival 2014

Ladies and gentlemen,

the 43rd moers festival marks a milestone in the event's history. Leaving four provisional venues behind it, the festival is finally gaining a hall of its own, and with it a permanent address.

What began in 1972 as a relatively small open air festival in the courtyard of Moers castle quickly evolved into a major international event in contemporary improvised music. The moers festival stood and stands for a willingness to take risks and the courage to explore new territory, thus making it a reliable source of non-mainstream musical discoveries. Though first-rate new music has always formed the core of the festival, changes in the circumstances under which this music is presented are an important part of the event's history. Over the decades, the moers festival has been held in the open air, in an ice rink and, most recently, in the big top.

The latest move to the new festival hall, the building on the "Solimare" site converted with the help of the state government of NRW and significant national funding, represents a major step forward into the future of the festival. The new venue will provide better production conditions for musicians and better reception conditions for audiences. It will be altogether more comfortable and both the acoustics and view of the stage promise to be much improved. A new area next to what used to be the open air swimming pool is available for use as a free campsite, and in front of the festival hall there are plans for an atmospheric "piazza" hosting a wide variety of craft and food stalls.

The most important thing, however, continues to be improvised music in all its variety, awkwardness, beauty, bizarreness and "nowness". On that note, this year's programme is intended to show just how rewarding it is to keep year by year tabs on developments in contemporary music. The four-day Whit bank holiday weekend is a prime opportunity to make new discoveries and enjoy encounters with "old" favourites (and their new projects). The festival will feature the latest work by musicians from all over the world, with a particular focus on Europe, the USA and Brazil. A one-off grant from the Federal Cultural Foundation has enabled us to invite seven big line-ups from Finland, Norway, France, the USA, Brazil and Israel. In contrast – superficially at least – the audience will also be treated to four duos half made up of drums. Parts of the bombastic opening concert will be dedicated to one of the founders of the festival, the late Wuppertal-based bassist Peter Kowald, who would have turned 70 this year.

The programme in its entirety can be downloaded alongside press texts and photos from the press section of our website.

Best regards from the festival office,

Reiner Michalke



moers festival 2014

Festivalhalle

Main programme survey

Friday, 6th June 2014, 19.00 h

Sebastian Gramss' BASSMASSE (de, us, it, no, mx, ch)

Marc Ribot "Protest Songs" (us)

Han Bennink & Oscar Jan Hoogland (nl)

Ricky-Tick Big Band & Julkinen Sana (fi)

Saturday, 7th June 2014, 15.00 h

Paal Nilssen-Love "Large Unit" (no)

Joey Baron & Robyn Schulkowsky (us, de)

Jean Louis (fr)

Orchestre National de Jazz Olivier Benoit (fr)

Sjur Miljeteig Group (no)

The Sun Ra Arkestra (us)

Sunday, 8th June 2014, 15.00 h

Julia Hülsmann with Theo Bleckmann, Hayden Chisholm, Moritz Baumgärtner (de, us)

Jaki Liebezeit & Marcus Schmickler (de)

Ideal Bread with Josh Sinton, Kirk Knuffke a.o. (us)

The Gravity Band with Fred Frith a.o. (us)

Arto Lindsay & Paal Nilssen-Love (br, no)

Letieres Leite & Orkestra Rumpilezz (br)

"night session 2.0": Sarah Neufeld & Colin Stetson / Tim Hecker / Greg Haines

Monday, 9th June 2014, 14.00 h

Avi Lebovich Orchestra (il)

Johanna Borchert "Wayside Wayfarer" (de, us)

Ava Mendoza "Unnatural Ways" (us)

Mostly Other People Do The Killing "Red Hot" (us)

Change of programmes remains reserved!



moers festival 2014

Festivalhalle Moers

Friday, 6th June 2014, 19.00 h

Sebastian Gramss' BASSMASSE (de, us, it, no, mx, ch)

*Rodrigo López Klingenfuss_cond, Sebastian Gramss, Mark Dresser, Dieter Manderscheid_solo bass
Reza Askari-Motlagh, Stefan Berger, Dietmar Fuhr, Volker Heinze, David Helm, Constantin Herzog, Jakob Kühnemann, André Nendza, Joscha Oetz, Christian Ramond, Stefan Schönegg, Nicolai Amrehn, David Andres, Alexander Dawo, Matthias Debus, Svenja Doeinck, Hendrika Entzian, Johannes Frisch, Elisabeth Fügemann, Lelio Giannetto, Florian Herzog, Lukas Keller, Bernd Keul, Alexander Linster, Robert Lucaciu, Johannes Nebel, Conrad Noll, Johannes North, Matthias Nowak, Ulla Oster, Daniela Petry, David Sánchez García, Sebastian Schaffmeister, Stefan Scheib, Jörg Spix, Daniel Studer, Christian Meaas Svendsen, Jan Tengeler, Georg Wolf, Georg Wolf, Moritz Götzen,_b*

What makes a fitting way to open a new festival hall? Something involving a tonne of wood and steel and over four tonnes of musician? There would, admittedly, have been easier ways of ringing in this new era for the moers festival, but it wasn't just the sheer mass we were wowed by (stretching the limits of the technically and logistically feasible), it was the promise of really good music. Sebastian Gramss, who has performed this experiment before – successfully - in 2012, is stepping up to write festival history with an orchestra made up of double bassists from all over the world. Part of the concert will be dedicated to the Wuppertal-based bassist Peter Kowald, whose instrument Gramss himself will play. Kowald was one of the founders of the moers festival and would have turned 70 this year.

Marc Ribot "Protest Songs" (us)

Marc Ribot_git

And on to the next problem. What kind of act can possibly follow something as colossal as the one above? It had to be a soloist, clearly, and preferably someone requiring no equipment more elaborate than a guitar and a chair. Ribot, one of the stars of last year's Zorntag, will "sing" (or at least vocalize) "songs" (some of which are songs, and other's of which aren't, and some of which start out as songs and wind up not as songs and vice versa) of "protest" (against the state, the condition of post-modernity, 'nature', technology, capitalism, his body, and other misfortunes) while accompanying himself on the acoustic guitar.



Han Bennink & Oscar Jan Hoogland (nl)

Han Bennink_dr, Oscar Jan Hoogland_p

There are many fascinating and admirable things about the Dutch music scene, but one stands out in particular – the fluidity of the generations. Take the case in hand, in which "first" generation musician Han Bennink teams up with "fourth" generation musician Oscar Jan Hoogland without it being suggested to them and just because they want to! Hoogland has been to Moers before, in 2011 with Ambush Party, and living legend Han Bennink has appeared a total of ten times - the first being in 1972 with Peter Brötzmann. Incidentally, today's set is also a tribute to the best concert venue in the world, the amazing Bimhuis in Amsterdam, which is celebrating its 40th birthday this year.

Ricky-Tick Big Band & Julkinen Sana (fi)

Valtteri Laurell Pöyhönen_cond, p, Paleface_rap, Redrama_rap, Tommy Lindgren_rap, Jukka Eskola_tp, Mikko Karjalainen_tp, Kalevi Louhivuori_tp, Jose Mäenpää_tp, Antti Hermaja_tb, Kasper Sarikoski_tb, Jay Kortehisto_tb, Juho Viljanen_btb, Ari Jokelainen_sax, Petri Puolitaival_sax, fl, Antti Hynninen_sax, fl, Ville Vannemaa_sax, Linda Fredriksson_sax, Sami Koskela_perc, Antti Lötjönen_b, Jaska Lukkarinen_dr

Finally, an export from Finland with the particular charm we've grown to expect from the country in the far north with the funny sounding language. Though "export" might be overstating it a little. Despite reading like a who's who of the current Finnish scene and having brought out two successful albums which are highly regarded in Finland, the group, which was set up by Valtteri Pöyhönen in Helsinki in 2009, will be making its first appearance outside its home country when it performs in Moers today. Don't let initial appearances deceive - the thing that sets this combo apart is only apparent when you scratch the surface a little. Far from being conventional, this crew is as street-savvy as they come and, supported by "Julkinen Sana" - three acclaimed Finnish hip hop pioneers, looks set to raise the roof.

Saturday, 7th June 2014, 15.00 h

Paal Nilssen-Love "Large Unit" (no)

Thomas Johansson_tp, Mats Äleklint_tb, Børre Mølsted_tuba, Kasper Værnes_sax, Klaus Holm_sax, Lasse Marhaug_elec, Ketil Gutvik_git, Jon Rune Strøm_b, Christian Meaas Svendsen_b, Andreas Wildhagen_dr, Paal Nilssen-Love_dr

Paal Nilssen-Love is without doubt Norway's most prolific drummer and one of the highest profile percussionists in Europe, regardless of whether he is performing with The Thing, Scorch, Peter Brötzmann (with whom he has already appeared in Moers) or one of his many own ensembles. It is difficult to describe his playing style and the particular energy that makes him so unique. Nilssen-Love set up Large Unit last summer with a

number of colleagues from the younger generation of Norwegian musicians. The group's first appearance was last August at the jazz festival held in Nilssen-Love's birthplace Molde. All the pieces are composed by the drummer himself but are open enough to give his co-musicians the freedom they need.

Joey Baron & Robyn Schulkowsky (us, de)

Joey Baron_dr, perc, Robyn Schulkowsky_dr, perc

Christian Wolff, the last living member of the "New York Four", that legendary group which also comprised John Cage, Morton Feldman and David Tudor, composed two pieces especially for this duo which were premiered at MaerzMusik in Berlin last year. Robyn Schulkowsky is one of the great percussionists of the international New Music scene, while Joey Baron is one of the most celebrated drummers of the contemporary jazz scene and a favourite of John Zorn, Bill Frisell and many others. The two have been collaborating since 2002 in a quest to redefine the role of the drums. Playing together with the sounds of percussion, with combinations of wood and metal and skin, beating on objects, or bowing them, they are creating new harmonies and melodies that take them into a sound world free from the system of the normal 12 tones.

Jean Louis (fr)

Aymeric Avice_tp, Joachim Florent_b, Francesco Pastacaldi_dr

Every now and again you come across groups which, intentionally or unintentionally, have somehow managed to remain undiscovered or overshadowed. What other explanation could there be for why a group like Jean Louis hasn't played in Moers before? The band, made up of three musicians from France, Belgium and Italy, has actually been together since 2006 after meeting at the Conservatoire National in Paris. In the first few years of their existence they practiced every day to establish a common musical basis. Jean Louis is a power trio made up of an unusual instrumentation. Each piece has a quite different feel and celebrates a different aspect of creative madness. "It sounds like noise, kraut, industrial, jazzcore..., a sound bath, for sure!"

Orchestre National de Jazz Olivier Benoit (fr)

Olivier Benoit_cond, git, Fabrice Martinez_tp, Fidel Fourneyron_tb, Hugues Mayot_sax, Alexandra Grimal_sax, Jean Dousteyssier_sax, Théo Ceccaldi_viol, sax, Sophie Agnel_p, Paul Brousseau_elec, Bruno Chevillon_b, Eric Echampard_dr

Since the beginning of this year, France's Orchestre National de Jazz (set up in 1986 under the then-minister of culture Jack Lang) has had a new leader – the Lille-born guitarist Olivier Benoit who recently caused an uproar with his production "Feldspath". Benoit has been everywhere and done everything, which makes him an attractive leader of the ONJ, an official institution with unusually close links to the scene. Benoit is not just an excellent player and experienced composer who can fill large ensembles with life, he is passionate about music. As someone who



grew up on rock and pop, he has left categories such as "jazz" behind him. Benoit's plan for his time at the ensemble's helm is to compose a series of musical portraits of cities. The first, naturally, is dedicated to Paris, and the orchestra will present a taste of it in Moers.

Sjur Miljeteig Group (no)

Sjur Miljeteig_tp, elec, Marte Eberson_keys, Øystein Skar_keys, Olav Torget_git, Per Oddvar Johansen_dr, elec

Like Paal Nilssen-Love's Large Unit, the Sjur Miljeteig Group is a brand new set-up, created last summer by the musician who rose to fame in these parts predominantly as Solveig Slettahjell's trumpeter. Though the project immediately attracted the attention of the Norwegian scene, this concert in Moers will be their first outside Norway. After a very long time in the making, the group eventually premiered in August 2013 at the Oslo Jazz Festival. Its music encompasses everything from the epic synth aesthetic of the 1980s to the genre-busting musical variety of the current decade. "To blow life into this Frankenstein's monster, Miljeteig adds red-blooded modal jazz from the 60s, a touch of Messiaen and programmed LinnDrum beats à la Prince."

The Sun Ra Arkestra (us)

Marshall Allen_sax, fl, director, Tara Middleton_voc, KNoel Scott_voc, sax, James Stuart_sax, Danny Ray Thompson_sax, Cecil Brooks_tp, Dave Davis_tb, Vincent Chancey_flugelhorn, Dave Hoteb_git, Farid Barron_p, Tyler Mitchell_b, Stanley Morgan_perc, Elson Nascimento_perc, Wayne Anthony Smith Jr._dr

Freizeitpark Moers, Whit Monday 1979: while the audience waits for the legendary Sun Ra to appear, a dull rumble announces the approach of a storm. The musicians come onto the stage one by one and take up their threads in the carpet of sound being laid down for the arrival of the sun god. Suddenly, the immortal Sun Ra is there, dressed in a glittering red cape. At the precise moment he raises his arms beseechingly to the sky, the thunder and lightning start and rain pours down over the heads of the delighted audience...

Sun Ra would have turned 100 this May. Marshall Allan, the only band member to have been present back then, and today leading the ensemble, is turning 90 in 2014. This may be a "Jubilee Tour" for the The Sun Ra Arkestra, but the band is as fighting fit and raring to play as it was in its early days.

Sunday, 8th June 2014, 15.00 h

Julia Hülsmann with Theo Bleckmann, Hayden Chisholm, Moritz Baumgärtner (de, us)

Julia Hülsmann_p, Theo Bleckmann_voc, Hayden Chisholm_sax, Moritz Baumgärtner_dr



Julia Hülsmann is the Improviser in Residence in Moers this year - an institution now in its seventh year and one of which we are more than a little proud. Changing annually, the Improviser is a musician who lives and works in Moers for a year and whose task is to involve themselves and their music in the life of the town. So far, our Improvisers have each approached this challenge in very different ways! One of the highlights of the residence is a performance at the festival, and Hülsmann is currently writing new pieces especially for the occasion. All we know is that some of them will be settings of poems by Margaret Atwood and Emily Dickinson, and that the working title is "Not Fast Enough". Julia Hülsmann, one of the highest-profile jazz pianists in Europe, will be accompanied by three other first-rate musicians in the form of Theo Bleckmann, Hayden Chisholm and Moritz Baumgärtner.

Jaki Liebezeit & Marcus Schmickler (de)

Jaki Liebezeit_dr, Marcus Schmickler_elec

Although these two titans of contemporary music have known each other since the mid 1990s, when Jaki Liebezeit joined Marcus Schmickler's project "Pluramon" for the studio recordings of a couple of tracks, they didn't actually perform together until 2012. The musical concept behind the duo is inspired by the Shepard Arpeggios, which, broadly speaking, are the auditory equivalent of M.C. Escher's staircases – an acoustic illusion in which certain tones appear to ascend or descend continually in pitch. The phenomenon was discovered in 1964 by the American cognition scientist Roger Shepard, and Marcus Schmickler has been exploring it for a long time. Needless to say, the unmistakable playing style of Jaki Liebezeit adds yet another dizzying dimension!

Ideal Bread with Josh Sinton, Kirk Knuffke a.o. (us)

Josh Sinton_sax, Kirk Knuffke_cornet, Adam Hopkins_b, Tomas Fujiwara_dr

Josh Sinton is one of the most sought-after musicians. There's hardly a large ensemble in New York that dares to hit the stage without him. As a result, the baritone saxophonist has been to Moers twice already, as a member of bands led by Darcy James Argue (2009) and Andrew N D'Angelo (2012). Now, however, he's coming to Europe for the first time with a group of his own creation. Ideal Bread was set up in 2006 in collaboration with the trumpeter Kirk Knuffke and currently has two albums to its name. A third, "Beating the Teens", will appear just in time for the festival. The point of reference for Ideal Bread's music is the late American soprano saxophonist Steve Lacy, who died in 2004 aged 69.

The Gravity Band with Fred Frith a.o. (us)

Fred Frith_cond, git, b, Kaethe Hostetter_viol, Kasey Knudsen_sax, Aaron Novik_cl, Marië Abe_acc, Jon Leidecker_samples, Dominique Leone_p, keys, Ava Mendoza_git, Lisa Mezzacappa_b, Jordan Glenn_dr, William Winant_perc, Myles Boisen_sound

The origins of this band date back to the Fred Frith album "Gravity", the second solo release under the artist's name. "Gravity" was described

back then as "avant-garde dance music" and the album is regarded today as a key work in Frith's oeuvre. He was persuaded to revive it by certain musicians from the San Francisco Bay Area, where Frith now teaches at Mills College. The Gravity Band plays the whole album, with some additional pieces from the period thrown in for good measure. Played live, the tracks have a whole new dynamic, and though close to the originals they have been rearranged to leave more room for improvisation. The musicians of the Gravity Band are among the best the USA's West Coast has to offer and include the guitarist Ava Mendoza, who will be presenting her own group on the Monday of the festival.

Arto Lindsay & Paal Nilssen-Love (br, no)

Arto Lindsay_voc, git, Paal Nilssen-Love_dr

Another duo in a class of its own: Brazilian-raised Arto Lindsay, the producer, singer, guitarist and moers festival all-time hero, meets Norwegian super-drummer Paal Nilssen-Love, the front man of "Large Unit", seen here on Saturday. The two met for the first time in July 2013, when Nilssen-Love gave two concerts at Rio de Janeiro's avant-garde club "Audio Rebel". By all accounts a brief exchange of greetings between the pair was followed by a 35 minute set that knocked everyone off their feet - a high-energy mixture of Brazilian songs, splintering guitar and hard drumming. Luckily, the two agreed to continue collaborating and we are delighted to have the chance to present the duo today in Moers. Incidentally, a recording was made of the concert in Rio which recently appeared on Nilssen-Love's label PNL Records.

Letieres Leite & Orkestra Rumpilezz (br)

Letieres Leite_sax, fl, Rowney Scott_sax, fl, Leonardo Rocha_sax_fl, André Becker_sax, fl, Paulinho Andrade_sax, fl, Joatan Nascimento_tp, flh, Guiga Scott_tp, flh, João Teoria_tp, flh, Rudney Machado_tp, flh, Hugo Santos_tb, Vanilson Lemos_tb, Juracy Machado_tb, Vinicius Feitas_sax, Erison Moreira_tuba, Adailson Rodrigues_btb, Gabi Guedes_perc, Icaro Sá_perc, Ricardo Braga_perc, Kaina do Jeje_Perc, Wallace Alves_perc

No other Brazilian ensemble combines Afro-Brazilian rhythms with the latest pop and jazz sounds quite like Orkestra Rumpilezz does. At home in Salvador de Bahia, birthplace of the world's two most famous *blocos afros* Ilê Aiyê and Olodum, founder and band leader Letieres Leite has managed here to create a unique "amalgam of sound". Composed almost like a classical big band, the Orkestra has fourteen wind players, four percussionists and a "candomblé drum master" who plays atabaques. The band gave a few European concerts in 2011, but is appearing today for the first time in Germany.

In collaboration with Music Meeting Nijmegen



Sunday, 8th June 2014, 24.00 h

**„night session 2.0“: SARAH NEUFELD & COLIN STETSON /
TIM HECKER / GREG HAINES**

On Whitsun Sunday night we go into overtime and present three additional acts in our main programme: the duo of the Canadian violinist and composer Sarah Neufeld and the American saxophonist Colin Stetson, the Canadian sound artist Tim Hecker and the Berlin-based English musician Greg Haines. These three additional concerts are made possible by the great acoustics of the new venue and will open up adventurous worlds of sound in which electronic, drone and ambient merge.

Monday, 9th June 2014, 14.00 h

Avi Lebovich Orchestra (il)

Avi Lebovich_cond, tb, Arthur Krasnobaev_tp, Dan Varon_tp, Yair Slutzki_tb, Yaron Ouzana_tb, Amit Friedman_sax, Alon Farber_sax, Tal Varon_sax, Yuval Tabachnik_sax, Yonatan Albalak_git, Mickey Warshai_b, Ron Almog_dr

If you thought that all Israeli jazz musicians had emigrated to New York, you'd be wrong. They are to be found in not insignificant numbers in both Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, though some, like the trombonist and composer Avi Lebovich, spent the formative years of their careers elsewhere in the world. Lebovich's orchestra was set up ten years ago upon his return to Tel Aviv from New York. Since then, it has played its way indefatigably to the top of the Israeli music scene. The group combines twelve of Israel's most interesting musicians, who with a wild mixture of funk, Afro, jazz and rock really do create something verging on a "new Israeli sound". We are delighted to be welcoming this band to Moers for their first concert in Germany.

Johanna Borchert “Wayside Wayfarer” (de, us)

Johanna Borchert_p, voc, Fred Frith_git, Shazhad Ismaily_b, Julian Sartorius_dr

We're welcoming Johanna Borchert to Moers for the third time this year following appearances in 2010 with Schneeweiß & Rosenrot and 2011 with Little Red Big Bang. Though neither project plunged Borchert into the limelight, she left a striking impression on both occasions. This time, the Berlin-born pianist and composer is coming to the festival with "Wayside Wayfarer", a production of her own which involves a band made up of some very prominent musicians and features her as the lead singer. Johanna Borchert explores the feared no man's land between pop and jazz, concept and improvisation, and complements the music with visuals. Sometime in the second half of this year, the production is to be released on CD. Before that, though, there is the premiere of the live version to look forward to, in Moers and featuring the original cast.



Ava Mendoza “Unnatural Ways” (us)

*Ava Mendoza_git, voc, Tim Dahl_b, Nick Podgurski_dr
Guest: Dominique Leone_keys*

The Californian guitarist Ava Mendoza can hardly be termed a rising star any more – the list of recordings and live performances to her name is simply too long. Her recent move from the West Coast to Brooklyn, though, will undoubtedly land her new attention. She appears in Moers with her current band project "Unnatural Ways" which began life at the beginning of 2012 in Oakland. Today's line up features the New York-based musicians Tim Dahl (Child Abuse etc.) and Nick Podgurski (seen in Moers in 2009 with Extra Life) – a choice which perhaps reveals the direction Medoza is heading in. She values the particular energy of early free jazz and develops her own vocabulary by picking and mixing from "complex heavy rock, avant jazz and warped, noisy blues".

The trio will be joined at times by keyboarder Dominique Leone, like Mendoza a member of the Gravity Band and one of the founding members of "Unnatural Ways".

Mostly Other People Do The Killing “Red Hot” (us)

*Steven Bernstein_tp, Jon Irabagon_sax, Dave Taylor_btb, Ron Stabinsky_p,
Brandon Seabrook_banjo, Moppa Elliot_b, Kevin Shea_dr*

"The new jazz subversives are paying tribute to the original jazz subversives." What better way to sum up this group than in the words of S. Victor Aaron? It was evident during their first appearance on European soil at the moers festival in 2009 that Mostly Other People Do The Killing would go a long way. Now in reshuffled and expanded form (no longer a quartet but a septet) and calling themselves Red Hot, they continue with verve, charm and incredible musicianship to lampoon the opera magna of the jazz canon. Having already paid their particular form of homage to jazz classics such as Ornette Coleman's "We are the Music", they are now, in the closing concert of the festival, setting their irreverent sights on the music of the early years – on "hot jazz" (or whatever the seven's warped idea of hot jazz may be)...

