



**DUTCH**  
**COMPOSERS**  
**NOW**

Adventures  
in Dutch  
music

## Dutch Composers NOW

Dutch Composers NOW is a collaboration between Nieuw Geneco (Dutch Composers Association), Donemus Publishing, Deuss Music/Albersen, VMN Dutch Music Publishers Association and Buma Cultuur to promote the creation of new music. Together we represent the composers living and working in the Netherlands; creators of both complex and accessible, conventionally as well as unconventionally composed music. In this brochure we show you some adventures in Dutch music.

Dutch Composers NOW 2018

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[www.dutchcomposersnow.nl](http://www.dutchcomposersnow.nl)

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**DUTCH  
COMPOSERS  
NOW**

## Reimagining the concert practice

ESSAY BY MASA SPAAN  
CURATOR AND PROGRAM DEVELOPER IN  
CLASSICAL AND NEW MUSIC

The traditions and conventions associated with classical music came into being in the nineteenth century. Drawing on the powerful and related principles of formalism and musical autonomy, such principles still hold sway over much of today's classical concert practice. As twenty-first century human beings, this ritual seems to have become an old-fashioned straitjacket. It leads us to ask how the revitalization of classical music concerts should be carried out, and why the issue is now so urgent. Belonging to a new wave of post-postmodern thinkers, the philosopher and musician Alessandro Baricco hypothesizes that a profound change, a mutation no less, is taking place in contemporary culture. In his book *The Barbarians: An Essay on the Mutation of Culture* (2006), Baricco examines how information technology is altering the way we experience the world and its arts. He argues for new forms of signification, meaning, and value, in which the old Romantic "vertical" ideals of depth and profundity are joined by "horizontal" modes, galvanized by an ever-broader network in which stories from different worlds come together and shape new concert experiences.

Baricco's book makes a bold case for the future of our culture. His ideas chart how program developers (curators, musicians, composers) can reimagine their concert practice: how they can create concert programs which are true to music, but which also have a sensibility of today and make real connections to our twenty-first

century world. International research among outstanding artists and institutions points to a way of working that can be analyzed as Baricco's horizontal way of signification. In fact, they are already underpinning his ideas. Without seeming to have completely discarded old-fashioned profundity, their programming exposes ideas, which give the material, that is intrinsically musical, a relevant connection with the spirit of our times.

Taken together, it points to a comprehensive strategy, from idea to audience, in which programmers make connections with various target audiences on qualitatively substantive grounds. And it gives rise to a far-reaching concert dramaturgy, in which we start with the music but revise and also expand the range of concert ingredient into a deliberately shaped ensemble of mutual reinforcing elements. The resultant determining factors are delicate choices like the programme format, musical themes, the handling of repertoire, collaboration of program developers with high-quality creative and communicatively talented soloists and ensembles, links to other genres and disciplines, characteristics of the venue, the set-up, staging, choreography, and the direction of a concert. To illustrate this I would like to refer to a beautiful Dutch example of this way of working. Last year the young composer **Morris Kliphuis**, librettist Otto Wichers (a.k.a. Lucky Fonz III), singer Nora Fischer and the Ragazze Quartet developed *The Secret Diary of Nora Plain*. The haunting song cycle depicts the intimate and modern life of the imaginary Nora Plain through her personal diaries and deals with actual themes like privacy, surveillance and erotic obses-



sion. For Fischer, daughter of the conductor Ivan Fischer, the classics were always going to be at the root of her artistry. She always knew what she wanted to sing, but all of the previously carved-out paths were just not for her, she felt. Making her own way has meant constant invention. In this project Kliphuis gave space for her own genre-crossing sound and her all-round performing skills. Supported by a slightly and refined stage direction, the program reflects a daring overarching dramaturgic arch that remains true to the essence of the music, but also connects to themes of our own living environment, and really gets hold of people. The result is a very innovative program that is appealing to new audiences, but which is also very appreciated by classical music lovers.

Of course, this is merely one example and there are infinite ways to implement this kind of far-reaching concert dramaturgy. It shows, once again, that it makes sense to reimagine the concert practice and create vibrant forward thinking programs. As renowned opera intendant Gerard Mortier argues: 'Real tradition isn't consolidated, it consolidates. Tradition doesn't mean we have to stay fixed to the rules that were created in the past, but it enables us to invent new rules to design the future.'

## Annelies Van Parys *Usher*

CHAMBER OPERA / MUSIC BY CLAUDE  
DEBUSSY / ANNELIES VAN PARYS

Since her 2015 opera *Private View*, based on an Alfred Hitchcock film, Belgian composer Annelies Van Parys has established her reputation as one of the most innovative composers of contemporary music theatre. Starting with the material of an uncompleted opera – Debussy left behind several libretto drafts, a musical fragment of about 20 minutes and some sketches – in *Usher* Van Parys develops a chamber music theatre that probes the category of the uncanny in a specific musical and theatrical way. Commissioned by Staatsoper Unter den Linden and Folko-peran Stockholm, selected for the Fedora award. World Premiere on 16 October 2018. [staatsoper-berlin.de](http://staatsoper-berlin.de)  
[anneliesvanparys.com](http://anneliesvanparys.com)



## Rob Zuidam *In my end is my beginning*

CHAMBER OPERA / NEW MUSIC &  
ELECTRONICS: ROB ZUIDAM

Mary Stuart: vile murderess or proud heroine? Interpretations of the tragic life of probably Scotland's most famous monarch (1542-1587) vary widely. In this production Rob Zuidam and the musicians of Imago Mundi take the com-

plexity of these differing views as the starting point for this new production. Rob Zuidam brings together arrangements of music from the time of Mary Stuart and music of his own, in which electronic sounds have a role to play. Zuidam draws on the sonnets of Joseph Brodsky about exile and the feeling of being uprooted and misunderstood. World Premiere: 24 May 2018

[robertzuidam.com](http://robertzuidam.com) / [elsandtheartists.be](http://elsandtheartists.be)



IMAGO MUNDI

## Monique Krüs *Anne & Zef*

CHAMBER OPERA / MUSIC BY MONIQUE KRÜS

Zef, A 15 year-old Albanian boy is the victim of a blood feud. He meets Anne Frank in the afterlife and they find out that they have a lot in common. Anne loves writing, Zef likes to act, both had trouble with their parents. They tell each other about their lives and grow more and more fond of each other. Monique Krüs gathered fame as a soprano excelling in ultra-modern repertoire, then started composing and has since taken up conducting as well. Currently she composes for the European Cultural City Malta and Leeuwarden 2018. Commissioned by Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra and Opera Spanga Performed by Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia (Rome), Theater Bielefeld and ISCM World Music Days Beijing 2018.



[moniquekrus.nl](http://moniquekrus.nl)

## Richard Ayres *The Garden*

ENSEMBLE: ASKO | SCHÖNBERG

*The Garden* is Richard Ayres' newest work commissioned by Asko|Schönberg and London Sinfonietta. This song cycle tells the story of a man's dissatisfaction with life, which compels him to start digging in his garden to the center of the earth, before beginning an equally surrealistic journey into the heavens. Artist filmmaker Martha Colburn, known for her hallucinatory and kaleidoscopic work, creates the animations for *The Garden*. Premieres 5 September 2018, Gaudeamus Muziekweek in Utrecht (NL). Commissioned by Asko | Schönberg with the support of Dutch Performing Arts (NL).

[richardayres.com](http://richardayres.com) / [askoschoenberg.nl](http://askoschoenberg.nl)



ADA NIEUWENDIJK

## Kate Moore *Space Junk*

ENSEMBLE: ASKO | SCHÖNBERG

*Space Junk* by Kate Moore also refers to the heavens and universe. However, the composer approaches the subject from the 'space junk' problem: the environmental impact of this waste is enormous. For this work Moore is inspired by an interactive 3D model that maps out spatial waste left by humans. The work is a sweltering harmony of the spheres, but also the sound of an environmental disaster – an exciting spatial story told with graphic novel techniques. Premieres on 3 April 2019 Minimal Music Festival in Amsterdam. Commissioned by Asko | Schönberg with the support of Dutch Performing Arts (NL). [katemoore.org](http://katemoore.org) / [askoschoenberg.nl](http://askoschoenberg.nl)

## Jan-Peter de Graaff *De Grens*

ENSEMBLE: BUT WHAT ABOUT

The year is 1918: World War I is nearing its end. The German emperor, Kaiser Wilhelm II, arrives at the Dutch border as an exile from his own country, seeking asylum in the Netherlands. However, the Dutch government was not notified in advance of the Kaiser's arrival and takes its time to decide whether the royal visitor is welcome. A historical event with a contemporary twist, wrapped into a compact chamber opera:



*De Grens* is an attractive performance of 25 to 45 minutes that brings new music close to the audience. The length is flexible because the two scenes can be performed separately. Due to its small setup – two singers and five instrumentalists – *De Grens* can be performed both in concert halls and on less traditional locations, such as industrial buildings or living rooms, and even multiple times on the same day. The chamber opera makes use of unique film material from 1918, supplemented with new footage.

[butwhatabout.nl](http://butwhatabout.nl) / [janpeterdegraaff.com](http://janpeterdegraaff.com)

### Rieteke Hölscher *Disturbing Light*

*Disturbing Light* is an experience in sound and image, where a naturally moving installation of a cloud of figures is floating in the air. Human-like figures pass by in an ever-changing movement, accompanied by acoustic instruments – violin and piano – and electronic music with the sounds of nature, like seagulls, thunder, waves and wind. While the cloud rotates, accelerates and slows down, the music emphasizes the movement as in developing seasons, sometimes sympathetic, sometimes threatening. *Disturbing Light* is a co-production of visual designer Marij



Janssen and composer Rieteke Hölscher. Inspired by the "Dutch Light", Marij Janssen designed a cloud of people which confuses the light and creates strange shadows on the wall. The composer reacts and interacts with the artwork. Two musical layers – an acoustic and electronic – engage in a dialogue with the image. By electronically converting instrumental sounds into sounds of nature like flapping of bird wings, raindrops and stormy weather – a reversed 'musique concrète' was created. First try-out: Saturday May 19th, Muziekhuis Utrecht. [rietekeholscher.nl](http://rietekeholscher.nl) / [youtube.com/watch?v=W\\_ZS3hhpfqQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W_ZS3hhpfqQ)

### Peter-Jan Wagemans

ENSEMBLE: DOELENSEMBLE

The Rotterdam based DoelenEnsemble brings listeners classical music of the 20th & 21st century. A broad and striking repertoire is played within continuously changing specifications ranging from chamber music to large scorings with regular presentations of theatre music. DoelenEnsemble concerts are of an internationally recognized high standard challenging audiences with new music. Last season included new compositions in different set-ups and with different collaborations among David Lang, Sarah Kirkland Snider and a new opera from Robin de Raaff. Last year the ensemble invented the Jukebox-concert. The audience is involved, they choose the program of the evening using an app that presents the actual concert in real time! In 2019 Dutch composer Peter-Jan Wagemans will present a new series of pieces for solo-instrument and electronics. Peter-Jan: 'I chose for electronics to put the instrument in a certain environment, like in a movie. The soloist becomes an actor.' The second piece,



released during Jukebox in 2019, will be for barok English oboe. It's about a child in his room, who hears his family having a party in the living room. Peter-Jan considers electronics as a special effect, comparable with computer effects in a movie. "You know it's not possible, but it sounds like it's made on stage." In the end there'll be nine pieces for soloist and electronics.

[peter-janwagemans.nl](http://peter-janwagemans.nl)  
[doelenensemble.nl](http://doelenensemble.nl)

### Jan Vriend *Calefactotum*

INSIDE THE HEAD OF A COMPOSER

ENSEMBLE: CALEFAX REED QUINTET

How does music originate? Where do the notes come from? Do composers just make up a tune or does the melody impose itself? Are strong emotions the breeding space of impassioned music or



is silence a condition for a musical storm? When the arrangers of Calefax are getting into a score, in a way they are taking a look inside the head of a composer. When composing, sometimes love or madness are playing roles, but also self-assertion or money worries can be big incentives.

In this program, Calefax is showing the audience how music is being born, is developing itself and finally is showing itself in full glory to the world. The pieces of music will be framed by spoken words, written by stage director Titus Tiel Groenestege – Calefax worked with him before with great success. Completely in the style of Calefax, the program exists out of arrangements of (existing) compositions (we are looking into the heads of Bach, Debussy and Schumann) but also of a brand new composition, written by dutch composer Jan Vriend, titled Calefactotum.

Concerts: December 6, 9 and 16, 2018

[calefax.nl/projects/in-het-hoofd-van-de-componist/](http://calefax.nl/projects/in-het-hoofd-van-de-componist/)

### Maxim Shalygin *Todos los fuegos el fuego*

ENSEMBLE: SAXOPHONE OCTET (AMSTEL QUARTET & KEURIS QUARTET)

For the second chapter of his life-long Similar cycle (where the first one is: Lacrimosa or 13 Magic Songs for 7 violins), Shalygin draws inspiration from *Todos los fuegos el fuego*, arguably the most enigmatic book by the great Cortázar. All short stories in this collection share an exit into a parallel, magic reality, sometimes near to ours, sometimes strikingly different from it. Their forms provoke peculiar musical dramaturgic solutions, whereas an abundance of pseudo-musical forms enables for the creation of a unique atmosphere, using an enlarged variety



of performance techniques. The cycle's overall structure consists of eight parts, performed by eight saxophone players – as many as there are stories in the book. The saxophone is chosen for a reason: it is involved in many mystical moments in music, literature, and cinema. As an instrument, it contains a plethora of possibilities to be discovered – more than any other, it can play the most silent, subtle, and mysterious chorals, at the same time being able to churn out furious, at times completely unearthly sounds. *Todos los fuegos el fuego* is a musical cycle that immerses the listener for one hour in a mystical act, sparking off the imagination and opening up unknown emotional conditions.

[www.maximshalygin.com](http://www.maximshalygin.com)

**Joost Kleppe, Aspasia Nasopoulou, Lucas Wiegerink**  
***Victory! – from Bingen to Boogie***

ENSEMBLE: WISHFUL SINGING

New York, 1944: Piet Mondrian is feverishly in search of the ultimate composition of lines and colours. Will the artist let go of the boundaries he has set for himself as he lives out his final days? Or do they in fact provide the ideal framework for the creation of his *Victory Boogie Woogie*?

Hildegard von Bingen composed superb melodies from within the confines of thick monastery walls. The Beatles hits do not deviate from pop music's conventional format. And in composing his brilliant music, Bach tested the boundaries of what was viewed as acceptable in his day. Truly wonderful things can be created out of the restrictions laid down by strict rules!

At Wishful Singing's request, the composers Joost Kleppe, Aspasia Nasopoulou and Lucas Wiegerink sought inspiration from Piet Mondrian's dynamism and play of lines. In a musical triptych they shed light on the painting *Victory Boogie Woogie*, each from his or her own perspective.

[www.wishfulsinging.nl](http://www.wishfulsinging.nl)



MERLIN DOORNIK

**Joey Roukens, Willem Jeths, Spinvis, David Dramm, JacobTV, Brechtje, Wouter Snoei, Yannis Kyriakides**  
***WannaPlayground***

"We bring contemporary music of living composers to the audience with an interactive playground for adults."

Based on years of experience in creating music theatre, opera director Caecilia Thunnissen and scenographer Jan Boiten felt the need to find a new way to bring classical music to a broad audience. They wanted to involve the spectators in a for-



mat which would move them out of the passive seat of the darkened theatre: they developed *WannaPlayground*.

The WannaSwing, an installation with 12 swings, was released in 2014. Around 160.000 active participants already created compositions, from among others Joey Roukens, Willem Jeths and Spinvis.

The WannaSeeSaw is planning to be released next summer 2019. The first line up will be new interactive composition by David Dramm, JacobTV, Wouter Snoei, Brechtje and Yannis Kyriakides.

The aim is to give at least one composition assignment for each new event so the *WannaPlayground* repertoire will be growing over the years.

[www.wannaplayground.com](http://www.wannaplayground.com)

**Eric Vloeimans, Raaf Hekkema**  
***Dido & Aeneazz***

ENSEMBLE: CALEFAX & ERIC VLOEIMANS AND FRIENDS

Baroque music often has a clear pulse, an intrinsic 'drive'. It also invites each performer to give it his own, very personal interpretation, with unexpected melodic colouring and spicy chords. That you can benefit from using a contemporary set of instruments and a totally new approach, is something Raaf Hekkema already proved in his unique versions of (early) baroque

compositions, such as Monteverdi, Dowland and Bach. In 2016 he composed the striking opera *Dijkdrift* for Calefax and the singers of Silbersee, inspired by the *Maria Vespers* of Monteverdi.

In *Dido & Aeneazz*, this approach is further investigated in collaboration with trumpeter Eric Vloeimans, bringing his seductive and agile trumpet sound to the musical palette, in this case inspired by the famous opera of Purcell.

Vloeimans on his turn will compose a cycle of songs that is commenting to the mythical story in a typical fresh, light and dancing Vloeimans sound.

Next to Vloeimans the band will be completed with a rhythm section coming from Vloeimans' top band Gatecrash: Gulli Gudmundsson (bas) and Jasper van Hulsten (drums).

*Dido and Aeneas* is considered as one of Purcell's master works and is telling the story about the love between Dido, the queen of Carthago and the Trojan hero Aeneas, and about Dido's despair when Aeneas is leaving her. Tour: April 11 – May 12, 2019

[calefax.nl/en/projects/dido-aeneazz/?noredirect=en\\_US](http://calefax.nl/en/projects/dido-aeneazz/?noredirect=en_US)



BOWIE VERSCHUREN

## Five tips by Mayke Nas, Composer Laureate of the Netherlands



### Mayke Nas & Wouter Snoei: *I Delayed People's Flights By Walking Slowly In Narrow Hallways* (2008)

BY SLAGWERK DEN HAAG

[vimeo.com/48908822](https://vimeo.com/48908822)

In the famous stage play *Self-Accusation* (1966) by Peter Handke a first-person narrator puts on the hair shirt. In a sheer endless enumeration of wrongdoings the human morality is cool-headedly dissected and exposed. In *I Delayed People's Flights In Narrow Hallways*, Mayke Nas has adapted the idea of Handke's text into a music theatre piece for four performers rhythmically writing new confessions on four blackboards as if they were lines of punishment. Electronic wizard Wouter Snoei has transformed the contact sounds on the boards into a rich pallet of electronic sounds.

### Janco Verduin: *muurverf, papier en karton op paneel* (2015)

BY REED QUINTET CALEFAX

[youtube.com/watch?v=\\_2BQ5WvikB4](https://youtube.com/watch?v=_2BQ5WvikB4)

In 2015 Janco Verduin won the yearly international composers competition organised by Reed Quintet Calefax with his piece inspired by the monochromatic artwork of Dutch artist Jan Schoonhoven. Simplicity without any frills. The notes form

chords that pass by in constantly changing inversions. This results in subtle shifts in timbre and variations within returning chords. The composition is accompanied by a 3D animation made by Janco Verduin himself: a pill form in a slow metamorphosis, in which the shadow also transforms.



### Yannis Kyriakides: *Correspondance* (2015)

<https://vimeo.com/146822516>

Based on the famous correspondence between Pierre Boulez and John Cage in 1949 - 1954 Yannis Kyriakides designed a concept for "Correspondance". The then young composers Boulez and Cage were equally fascinated by the implications of non-traditional playing techniques and in search for new forms of structuring sound. But during the five years they corresponded their paths diverged into irreconcilable views on chance and indeterminacy. Together with a collective of composition students, Yannis developed the piece with sound material chosen from the works mentioned in the letters. It resulted in a piece with an aleatoric form that can sound differently with each new performance.

### Michel van der Aa: *The Book of Sand* (2015)

BY KATE MILLER-HEIDKE AND HET NEDERLANDS KAMERKOOR CONDUCTED BY MANOJ KAMPS.

[thebookofsand.net](http://thebookofsand.net)

Multitalent Michel van der Aa shows his titillating inventiveness in this online, interactive song cycle. Inspired by the allusions to infinity and the use of mazes and mirrors in the fantastical stories of Jorge Luis Borges, he almost invents a new genre. The viewer and listener can find their own way through the narrative of three simultaneous film layers in which a young woman collects up sand which is being moved between the layers by a mysterious machine. A labyrinthine world full of beautiful images and wonderful music to wander through.



### Louis Andriessen & Martijn Padding: *Gesprek* (2012)

BY NIELS MELIEFSTE AND JOEY MARIJS

[youtube.com/watch?v=kyNqpKvqFvA](https://youtube.com/watch?v=kyNqpKvqFvA)

Once they were teacher and pupil, Louis Andriessen and Martijn Padding, but for many years now they are colleagues and friends. Based on a short private conversation between them which they recorded, they turned the exchange of personal information into a composition for two

percussionists who transform the original dialogue into imaginary percussion. It is evocative, it is funny and it makes you wonder what the conversation was about. It does not just appeal to the player's imagination, but also the audience's. New works by Richard Ayres and Kate Moore, commissioned by AskolSchönberg: an auditory and visual experience that excites the senses and boldly goes where no man – or woman – has gone before

*The Garden* is Richard Ayres' newest work commissioned by AskolSchönberg and London Sinfonietta. This song cycle tells the story of a man's dissatisfaction with life, which compels him to start digging in his garden to the center of the earth, before beginning an equally surrealistic journey into the heavens. Artist filmmaker Martha Colburn, known for her hallucinatory and kaleidoscopic work, creates the animations for *The Garden*. Premieres 5 September 2018, Gaudeamus Muziekweek in Utrecht (NL).

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[askoschoenberg.nl](http://askoschoenberg.nl)

## Our Composer Delegates

### Aspasia Nasopoulou

(1972) Composer and pianist. Her music ranges from solo instrumental and ensemble pieces to dance and vocal works and her classical background gives her work a poetic, profound and dynamic contemporary expressiveness.

Praised by the New York Times as “especially empowering”, the music of composer/drummer

**Brendan Faegre** (1985, USA) is performed at major festivals, including Huddersfield, November Music, Beijing Modern, Aspen, and Bang on a Can.

Dutch Australian composer **Kate Moore** creates captivating monumental works that delve deeply into the psychology of sound, memory and storytelling. Her works involve acoustic and electro-acoustic instruments, sculpture, original instruments and installation that

are frequently incorporated into her score-based practise featuring opera and orchestral scores as well as music for ensembles and soloists.

### Vanessa Lann

(New York, 1968): she uses the repetition of recognizable figures, as well as structures based on number ratios and patterns, to explore concepts of continuity, infinity and silence to place everyday sounds and gestures in unusual contexts.

### Maxim Shalygin

(1986): His compositions include chamber, vocal, symphonic, electro-acoustic music, as well as music for theatre, ballet and film. His works are drenched with a spirit and penchant for the transcendent.

Dutch composer/soprano/conductor **Monique Krüs** focusses mainly



on vocal music with opera being at the top of her list. Her opera *Anne&Zef* has been performed in Amsterdam, Rome, Bielefeld and soon in Beijing and Albania.

### Ned McGowan

(1970) is a flutist and composer, born in the US. Known for rhythmical vitality and technical virtuosity, his music has won many awards and been performed at Carnegie Hall, the Concertgebouw and many other halls and festivals around the world.

### Sonja Schwedersky

(1963): her accessible compositions include pieces commissioned by both professional and amateur musicians. She writes for numerous ensembles, various instruments and such different genres as voice, opera, choral and orches-

tral music, children's recitals and others.

### Wilbert Bulsink

(1983) enjoys discovering new combinations of sounds and structures in music. His knowledge of and experience in classical and avant-garde music, music theatre, pop and improvisation influence his work. He combines new and old ways of listening to create music which places a centuries old tradition in a new context.

### Mayke Nas

(1972) enjoys creating music for musicians breathing simultaneously, for moving chairs, wired blackboards and open bridges. She considers herself lucky to have worked with Nieuw Ensemble, Asko|Schönberg, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, B!ndman, Neue Vocalsolisten and other musical wizards.

