

# NORDIC MUSIC DAYS: Final programme details revealed for one of the world's longest running contemporary classical music festivals



20th September 2024

## Glasgow: 30 October – 3 November

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From working with lung cancer patients on exploring breath as a source of sound, a computer game opera combining Greek mythology, internet culture and AI generated material, to a musical exploration of the intersection point between Shetland and Greenland at 60°N and connections between folk traditions, Nordic Music Days delves deep into the cultural and musical resonances between Scotland and the Nordic countries.

Established in 1888 by the NKR (Council of Nordic Composers), Nordic Music Days takes place outwith the Nordic countries – in Glasgow, a UNESCO City of Music – for only the third time in its 136 year-long history.

Uniquely curated by composers and creators, Nordic Music Days presents almost entirely contemporary classical music and sound, featuring artists from Greenland, Iceland, the Faroe Islands, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland – and, for the first time this year, Scotland. Partnership and exchange are key to the Festival's legacy which is also focused on sustainable practice and social responsibility.

Its 2024 curator team includes: Tróndur Bogason (Faroe Islands), Lauri Supponen (Finland), Guoste Tamulynaite (Norway), Gillian Moore (Scotland) and Pippa Murphy (Scotland). The Festival is an initiative of the NKR (Council of Nordic Composers) which works in collaboration with the lead partner in Scotland, Royal Scottish National Orchestra.

Set to take over Glasgow from 30 October until 3 November, the Festival sees concerts, sound installations, talks, screenings and participatory events as well as a wide-ranging industry programme happening across the city – from Glasgow Royal Concert Hall and The Old Fruitmarket, through the Centre for Contemporary Arts and City Halls to Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum and Glasgow Film Theatre.

The theme running through the Festival is **Word of Mouth**. It invokes something personal, informal and close: the passing on, movement and the spreading of ideas, stories, knowledge and traditions.

First wave of the programme was announced in June and can be viewed here:

Download Press Release [here](#)

Download PDF brochure [here](#)

It includes:

Opening Concert: *Qullaq* (30 October, The Old Fruitmarket), featuring, among others, Scottish Ensemble and Aidan O'Rourke's collaboration with Greenlandic musicians;

a world-wide, mass-participation project *phōnē*, a new work for massed choirs by

Finnish composer Tytti Arola, underlining the importance and value of communication between people and cultures;

major orchestral concerts featuring the **BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra** with *An Extraordinary Voyage!* (31 October, Glasgow City Halls), **Scottish Chamber Orchestra** with *Borealis* (1 November, Glasgow City Halls) and the **Royal Scottish National Orchestra** with *Dark to Light* (2 November, Glasgow Royal Concert Hall);

**Hebrides Ensemble** performing alongside Sámi vocalist Ánnámáret and Scottish composer / performer Clare Johnston (1 November, Glasgow Royal Concert Hall);

a daily programme of industry focused discussion and presentations, rooted in the concept of sustainability – both environmental and artistic – called **NordEX** which, among others, will bring Scotland, the Nordics and our neighbours in Canada, Ireland and the Baltics together to look at sustainability in the music sector.

The Nordic Music Days team is pleased to **announce further and final programme information** for the Festival and its accompanying events and collaborations.

#### **FURTHER PROGRAMME INFORMATION**

**Nordic Music Days Conference presented by University of Glasgow**

29 – 30 October

Detailed programme for the conference – which focused on areas such as **music education and community practice, instruments, sounds and technologies and impacts of innovation and experimentation** – is now confirmed as featuring panels on, among others:

Pushing Creative Boundaries in Amateur Music Making - Contemporary Music for All (CoMA);

Listen to your dog! What 200 primary school collaborators taught us about artistic honesty, joy, and what the world should look like;

A remote co-creation platform for musicians with disabilities;

Also presented is *Afterlife*, developed and performed by interdisciplinary duo **ONLY SLIME** (Tobi Pfeil and Claudia Cox), a **computer game opera which combines elements of Greek mythology, contemporary internet culture, AI generated material, and computer game narrative techniques**. This unique production uses real-time motion tracking alongside live vocals and electronics as two on-stage performers control two on-screen avatars in a game engine on their existential search for a higher meaning.

Conference tickets can be booked [here](#).

## **NordEX: Music Exchange Programme**

30 October – 2 November

A collaboration between various Nordic and Scottish composer societies, export offices, policy and diplomacy organisations, NordEX is dedicated to building connection, dialogue and international co-operation across the contemporary classical and sound scene. With a focus on sustainability, the programme will explore both culture's role in climate adaptation and innovative approaches to ensure a thriving cultural eco-system. Supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers, LiveMX and Creative Europe, NordEX will welcome delegates from across the UK, Nordics, Ireland, Canada and the rest of Europe. Some of the sessions' topics include, among many others:

Youth Access – a discussion on the access and engagement of younger audiences, composers, and players in the music industry;

A masterclass in accessible composition;

Nordic Council of Ministers' Green Roadmap – a session to guide participants through this invaluable resource designed to support cultural institutions and artists in taking actionable steps toward green transition;

**UNM x NMD Composer Exchange** (30 October – 3 November): curiosity, exchange and collaboration are central to the ethos of the Festival, and to a new exchange between the Ung Nordisk Musik (Young Nordic Music) festival and Nordic Music Days. Four Scottish composers visited the UNM Festival in Örebro, Sweden in August where they spent time with four UNM composers. In pairs, the composers then worked together to create new short works to be performed in Nordic Music Days. The line-up is now revealed to include **defunensemble**, **Finnish experts in electroacoustic music**, and **Riot Ensemble's Marie Schreer**, along with **Philharmonia Orchestra (formerly BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra) Principal Viola Scott Dickinson**, among others.

## **Word of Mouth: Sound Routes II**

30 October – 3 November

Alongside Olga Szymula's (Denmark) *directly to directly from* Sound Routes in the Glasgow Necropolis and Cathedral area, the Festival also presents Duncan MacLeod's (Scotland) *Machair*. Developed in partnership with the local community on the **North and South Uist**, this sound route combines spoken narratives, field recordings, and compositions with archival sound, and explores the agricultural traditions and ecology of Uist's *machair*. **Machair is one of Europe's rarest yet most species-rich habitats** – a fertile, low-lying grassy plain only occurring on the exposed west-facing shores of Scotland and Ireland.

## **Music for Silk and Strings**

30 October - 2 November

Rosali Grankull's *Music for Silk and Strings* is an experimental collective improvisation, where resonant stringed instruments are placed throughout and across a space, extended by silk threads that connect their strings to a single point, **turning the display room into a gigantic harp**, with participants finding themselves inside it, and able to create a sonic dialogue by pulling on the silk threads.

## **Festival Club at the Centre for Contemporary Arts**

CCA becomes the Nordic Music Days' official **Festival Club with its spaces crammed with performances, installations and films from 10pm each evening** and its **Third Eye bar** seeing composers, creators, performers, programmers, producers and audiences mix, socialise, and find new musical experiences behind every door.

The Festival Club programme will feature artists including Catriona McKay, Chris Stout, Joanna Nicholson, Red Note Ensemble, Michael Francis Duch, Norwegian improvising group Lemur, and hardanger fiddle expert Sivert Holmen.

## **Singing the Wooden House**

30 October

In April 2023, **Scottish film-maker Kirsten Adkins** travelled with a camera to a wooden house near the border town in Eastern Finland. The area was fought over during wars between 1939 and 1944. Some 400,000 people were evacuated as the border between Finland and the Soviet Union shifted. A 30-minute film installation blends film, family interviews, archive photographs, poetry and traditional song. The film project comprises **original poetry by Max Mulgrew**, and **composed song by Finnish singer and composer Karoliina Kantelinen**.

## **Bálvosbáiki**

31 October

Anna Näkkäljärvi-Länsman's (Finland) *Bálvosbáiki* (meaning place of worship) is a work in which indigenous **Sámi yoik** (traditional song) is combined with electronic music, Carelian bowed lyre, and video art. Based on the yoiks of the Sámi artist **Ánnámáret**, this work explores and expresses how the Sámi relationship with nature, the ancient religion of nature, and the Sámi worldview continue to manifest themselves in Sámi life today.

## **Word of Mouth: Breathing**

1 November

**Composer and filmmaker Aron Dahl** collaborated with **experimental trombonist Henrik Munkeby Nørstebø** to create *a copy of a copy* which uses the concept of the traditional children's game where a phrase is passed around a circle until it mutates into something unrecognisable. With Henrik's unique playing as a starting point, both the video and audio take their own paths.

Kirstine Lindemann's *Breath* is a powerful work for amplified voices and field recordings of **interviews with lung cancer patients**. Working with breath as a sound source and a means of communication, the piece connects us with our primal traits and our common grounds. It travels through us, through our relations and our daily life.

## **Chaos String Quartet**

2 November

The Vienna-based Chaos String Quartet, BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artists for 2024-25, are fast establishing themselves as one of Europe's leading quartets. In their first visit to Scotland, they are joined by **soprano Stephanie Lamprea** and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra's **Principal Double Bass, Kai Kim**, for the UK premiere of a new work from Greenland's Arnanguaq Gerstrøm, commissioned by Nordic Music Days in partnership with ISCM World Music Days Faroe Islands. **Danish composer Sandra Boss** adds the influence of a pop music staple – the E-Bow – to her piece and Leevi Räsänen's quartet reflects on unhappy childhood memories. The late Kaija Saariaho's second quartet, Terra Memoria, completes the programme.

## **Nordic Viola: Arctic Edgelands**

3 November

Inspired by a year travelling in the Far North, **RSNO's viola player Katherine Wren** founded **Nordic Viola** in 2016 with the goal of exploring cultural connections between Scotland and the North Atlantic region. *Arctic Edgelands* is a collaborative music project featuring **Katherine Wren, Greenlandic composer and flautist Arnanguaq Gerstrøm** and **Shetland-based percussionist, composer and sound recordist Renzo Spiteri**.

Taking as its starting point the intersection between Shetland and Greenland at 60°N, the programme explores the stories and experiences of humans, mammals and birds as they traverse the North Atlantic to Sisimiut on the Arctic Circle in a sonic melting pot of flute, viola, percussion, electronics and field recordings.

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