

## **EDITORIAL**

### **ECLAT Festival Neue Musik Stuttgart - digital from the Theaterhaus Stuttgart**

With care, inventiveness and playfulness

Actually, it should have been long overdue in times when technical possibilities are exploding and climate change at the same time encourages us to adopt moderate strategies of international cooperation: namely, to invent forms with the help of the unimaginable wealth of digital media that connect our Stuttgart audience with worldwide "fans" and make our projects available internationally.

Now the pandemic forces us all into isolation and challenges us to creative action in order to continue to enrich our cultural landscape and to preserve the artists' scope of action.

ECLAT is to take place. As always, at the beginning of February. And we would like to take you through our newly created web portal to the Theaterhaus Stuttgart, to seduce you, as it were, to concentrated listening pleasure and attentive perception of 35 very different works (including 24 world premieres). And invite you to our hybrid experiment of developing an attractive festival on the internet.

Together with a team of young communication designers, a film team, our wonderful colleagues from SWR and all the musicians involved, we are developing a web portal that goes far beyond "informal streaming" and allows us to respond to the special features of each individual work and concert and to find the best form of presentation for it. With care, inventiveness and admittedly also a portion of playfulness, we are rebuilding our festival like a sandcastle after the flood - and despite all the pandemic impossibilities, we are trying to convey as much as possible of the familiar flair in the Theaterhaus.

So let yourself be seduced to follow ECLAT in its 41st year just as attentively as in analogue times and to immerse yourself in the most diverse refinements, provocations, poetries, in "strange sounds from a strange, incoherent year", as Ricardo Eizirik calls it in his work "Placeholder", which, like many an enigmatic fragment, but also works full of urgent impatience or unapproachable sublimity, refers to the special situation of us all.

So the pandemic would not have been necessary to invent something that digitally enables global participation in artistic creation, connects the local audience with worldwide participants and invites interactive interventions and "playing along". And so - embedded in chats, background discussions, interviews, personal encounters with artists, games and certainly also culinary concert breaks - the 13 concerts direct our gaze to major themes of global relevance.

One focus is Belarus, and it is dedicated to Maria Kalesnikava, who has accompanied ECLAT in recent years as a social media expert and who, as a leading figure of the Belarusian democracy movement, was kidnapped in Minsk on 7 September and has been imprisoned ever since. On the Sunday of the festival, she will receive the Human Rights Award donated by Gerhart and Renate Baum. In ECHOES - VOICES FROM BELARUS, Belarusian performers, artists and activists together with international

musicians make a differentiated artistic statement on the drama in our European neighbouring country. And the digital art exhibition "Belarus - the way to oneself" impressively tells of the parallel worlds with which the country is confronted.

The VOICE AFFAIRS project also bears witness to the explosive power of artistic creation. It initiates border crossings in which European art music is infected by the diversity of Lebanon's experimental music scenes and focuses on a tremendously lively art scene that, in the midst of an apocalyptic situation, tells of the diversity, contradictoriness, explosiveness and poetry of the Lebanese cultural space from the perspective of contemporary composition, electronic music, sound art, improvisation and avant-pop. An exciting project, situated between existential distress and artistic desire for freedom and exploration.

So you can experience and enjoy digitally a festival ECLAT looking in many directions - an experiment full of explosiveness and artistic discoveries!

Finally, a structural note: even if you are watching the festival from home, we charge a fee for entry to our digital portal, which will take you to the live action at the Theaterhaus. Digitally mediated art also costs (not a little) money and we go to great lengths to ensure the best possible professional reproduction.

However, you decide how much you want to pay - depending on your means. My tip: Think of the artistic achievement that underlies everything - but also afford yourself something, namely a really good pair of headphones, so that, for example, you can also hear the many space pieces that are in the programme. It's worth it!

Last tip: Our varied and really interesting interval programme is also an ear relief programme. So: put down your headphones, free your ears, pour a glass of good water (or pure wine), switch on your computer speakers and enjoy.

I look forward to welcoming you with us soon!

Christine Fischer  
Artistic Director festival ECLAT