

O.Professionals Programme || 16 - 18 May 2024
Full schedule

Morning session - Perspectives: 10:00-12:30

What perspectives are heard and amplified? And what are the voices that fall outside the norm and need space to grow the most?

For this morning, we changed the traditional format of presentation into a round space of exchange. In small groups moderated by women artists, directors, and decision-makers we will sit with what they bring to the table, a perspective that is near and dear to them.

Opening Performance: King Sisters

Table topics and moderators

1. **Devotion:** the existential fire behind your work in the arts. How strongly can it burn, and for whom? How do society and the art world react to it?



Andrea Voets is the artistic director of **Resonate Productions**. She makes musical journalism by combining in-depth social journalism with lots of original music. 2024 brings **FOR REAL**: a lauded theatrical radio show on human dignity, starting from an analysis of the intellectual undermining of women. Previous projects are **Millennial History** (Best of Human Interest Radio, AIB, and Best Podcasts of 2022, Avery Trufelman), **While We Live** (Best of Classical Music 2020, NRC) and **Wings & Roots**. Andrea writes for *De Groene Amsterdammer* and is undertaking a worldwide search into the question 'how to feel safe', with the support of the selective Dutch grant **FastForward**. The home-base of Resonate Productions is De Balie in Amsterdam, the main house for debate of the Netherlands, and Festival van Vlaanderen Mechelen in Belgium.

www.resonate-productions.com

2. **Collectivity in art:** What does collectivity mean to you? How do you relate to hierarchy? And does the structure of your organization influence your artistic expression?



Joske Koning is an actress, theater maker, writer and singer (Maastricht Theater Academy (2011) and T.I.M.E., the master's degree in musical theater by the Veenfabriek and the Royal Conservatory (2014)). With King Sisters, the collective she created with her sisters Annelie and Marthe Koning, she makes personal transdisciplinary musical theater. 2024 **Close to Harmony** is about

the search for, and the limits of, intimacy. She previously created [Rebuilding a Voice](#) in which they rebuilt the female voice; [Talking Songs](#) (in the language program Spr!tzi by Silbersee) and [Song of the Sisters](#). (Best of Fringe Award). King Sisters will be affiliated with Festival Cement, Via Zuid, PLAN Brabant, Muziektheater Transparant and O. Rotterdam for the next two years.

collectiefkingsisters.com

3. **From an artist perspective – How to develop a female vocabulary in opera?**

Classic source material always leads to a problematic representation of women on stage. Female roles are cornered and represented with the 'standard' and very limited palette of archetypes. How can we break free of what has been dictated for decades? How do we ALL feel included and are able to deeply connect with the characters on stage in the opera productions we create today?

Jorinde Keesmaat is a Dutch director of opera and staged classical concerts. From 2016 through 2019, she was Guest Director in Residence at the Center for Contemporary Opera in New York. From 2020 to 2022, Jorinde was appointed to the same position at National Sawdust in Brooklyn. Currently, she is Director in Residence at the Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ in Amsterdam. In her immersive multidisciplinary work, Keesmaat plays with the relationship between spectator and actor/musician, and boundaries between classical concerts, opera, and theater. She is known for her modern approach towards the art form and is specialized in creating opera from scratch.

jorindekeesmaat.nl



4. **A visionary composer by nature and nurture:** how to move and feel free in a space where you're under-represented? What do we bring ourselves into these creative processes from the strength gain out of the (self-)awareness of being seen or heard and use it as a part of our vision as a composer in the collective process?



Eva van Manen is a Dutch artist, poet, theater maker, music composer and producer. This year, she will take part in O. Festival with her own theatrical concert, combining compositions and poetry. Beside that, Eva composes music for Dutch theater companies like Theater Rotterdam and the National Theater. Next to her own work, Eva van Manen is the co-founder of the [rosetta.beats](#). - a platform for female and gender non-conforming music producers and composers in the Netherlands. She graduated in 2011 at the Amsterdam Theatre School and Performing Arts Academy. (ATD Amsterdam, Netherlands).

www.evavanmanen.nl

www.rosettabeats.com

Additional moderators:

5. **Bushra El-Turk** will both moderate a table and present her work at WOMAN AT POINT ZERO (MTNow competition winner) - a multimedia opera about emancipation, inspired by the book of the Egyptian author and feminist Nawal El Saadawi.

Bushra El-Turk was born in London and has written over 60 works for the concert hall, the stage, film, TV and live art performance. Her work is often defined by the integration of music and musicians from different cultural traditions, and the compulsion to highlight and challenge socio-cultural issues. Her works blur written and improvisational elements, forbearing the influence of her Lebanese roots all the while leaning towards the theatrical, creating works that are '...ironic...', '...arresting...' (The Guardian) and of 'limitless imagination'.


www.bushraelturk.com

Photo by Kurst Vander Elst



6. **Sarah Crabtree** is the creative producer of Royal Opera House, London – UK. She will talk about [Engender](#), the Royal Opera's initiative to address gender imbalance in opera and music theatre and drive towards gender equity in all areas of the opera field.
7. **Stefanie Vermeiren** with her passion for art and culture and the world behind the scenes, worked at various theaters, talent incubators and with artists and community workers. This grew her admiration and respect for creative makers, and she saw a need for support and connection in order to make a lasting impact. She founded IMPACT that offers development space and a learning environment for new makers and their ideas, so that they can create and inspire and progress on their professional path with self-confidence and purpose. Based on the necessity of the maker, she builds bridges with the professional field and connects the artistic with the business. Because it takes more than talent to make an impact!

maakimpact.co

 **LUNCH: 12:30-13:30**

*participants that join only for the session (with no conference ticket or speaker on the same day), we kindly ask you to buy lunch upfront so we would fit everyone in to stay connected with other participants between discussions, speed dating, and presentations.

Price: €20 in advance (available until May 10)

[Thursday 16 May lunch](#)

SPEED DATING: 13:30-14:30

We will arrange the best match making between makers and programmers, potential collaborators and more based on what you filled in the form about your motivation for participating in the O. Professionals Programme and who you are willing to meet, and what we know about you!.

Afternoon session: CURARE**14:30-15:30**

In a conversation about insights from the selection process by MTNow competition jury members, 4 women from 4 corners of the globe, who navigated 200 applications:



Sarah Crabtree – creative producer Royal Opera House, London – UK

Tisa Ho – veteran arts manager & former executive director of Hong Kong Arts Festival – Hong Kong

Marlene Le Roux – producer of various Performing Arts Genre and an Activist for the rights for Persons With Disabilities – South Africa

Andrea Caruso Saturnino – general director Teatro Municipal, São Paulo – Brazil

15:30-16:00 coffee break ☕

16:00-17:00

Two **MTNow**-selected projects collaborating with non-professionals will share their work.

Halleluja by Fleur Khani & the Khani Foundation

Fleur Khani is a musician, music performance maker and collective collaborator. Her practice centres around voice, music and physicality in theatre and performance, and is fundamentally polyphonic and community based. Khani studied Dramatic Arts at the Royal conservatory in Antwerp and at a.pass (Advanced Performance and Scenography Studies) in Brussels. In 2023 Khani created her first big theatre work Halleluja - a vocal theatre piece that gathers 28 local people to create a jubilee feast of joy. It premiered in May 2023 in Antwerp. Halleluja will be touring throughout 2024 and 2025.

[@fleur_khani](#)

Fleur will talk us through the methodologies and approaches she created to work with such a large group of people on such short notice, from recruitment, rehearsal, creation and performance, outlining the strategies for collective voice practice and movement that are at the basis of the material for Halleluja.

**At Your Doorstep** by MarketTheatre & Theater Bielefeld

Robert Lehmeier works as a freelance director and librettist, his productions - including many premieres and first performances - have been in Berlin, Munich, Hamburg, Vienna, Barcelona, Braunschweig, Mainz, Schwerin, Wiesbaden, Dresden, Chemnitz, Oldenburg, Krefeld/Mönchengladbach, the Netherlands and South Africa (Cape Town and Johannesburg).

“Opera is truthfulness. It shows human beings in all their terrible beauty. Staging is an act of authentication. Opera is rebellion”.

www.robert-lehmeier.de

Friday 17 May**Morning session: PLACE**

Creating site-specific work includes physical space, its stories, and its people. When does a work contribute to a place, and when does it become extractive? How can we foster reciprocity? How do we give value to meaning that is already in place? We give the stage to a dialogue with a place that hosts a performance and inspires it.

Opening performance: Women Connected
Presentations by:



Mees Vervuurt (2000) is a composer & director, creating transdisciplinary site-specific music performances. In 2022 he graduated from BA Music & Performance Art at Utrecht Conservatory with Honours in Composition, and studied at the Alternative Conservatoire in London (2024). His works are transdisciplinary: image, movement, music and location intertwine in poetical and stilling worlds in which the audience disappears for a while. His most recent, highly praised and reviewed works VACUÛM (2023), STABAT MATER (2022) and 'Sometimes I visualize myself back in the belly of my mother' (2021) are characteristic for their site-specific, ambiguous and breathtaking character.

meesvervuurt.com

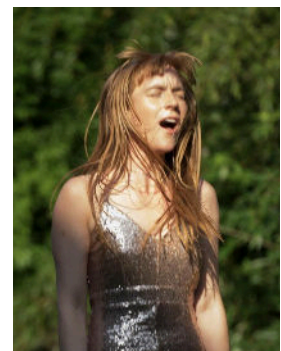
Hooligan Art Community is a group of artists from Ukraine, the UK and Germany, founded in Kiev in 2019. They create site-specific interdisciplinary performances rooted in theatre, music and film. Their work takes place in non-theatre spaces and creates meeting places between artists and audiences. This year, the Hooligan Art Community is artist-in-residence at O., where they research and develop material for a future performance about the power of the masses on the individual. As part of their takeover of de Goot, the collective presents an installation in a store front in collaboration with young Rotterdam artists.

www.hooliganart.org

Women Connected creates art with, about and for women from all layers of society in order to connect them. They are working towards a movement in which women from diverse backgrounds collectively create art about their stories. The artistic process increases mutual understanding and connection. In this way, they strive for high-quality art that is supported by the whole of society. www.womenconnected.nl



Janneke van der Putten is a Rotterdam-based artist holding a BDes in TXT (Textile), Gerrit Rietveld Academy (Amsterdam, 2009), and a MMus in Artistic Research, Royal Academy of Art & Royal Conservatoire (The Hague, 2013). In 2023 her solo album 'JNNK' was released on vinyl and featured in The Wire with an article by Abi Bliss. That same year, Janneke's long-term research 'Cycles' about the day and night rhythm was supported by CBK Rotterdam. Together with composer Sajjra Xhrs



Galarreta, she is currently preparing a new music publication of their project 'Invisible Architecture', recorded in a water reservoir.

jannekevanderputten.nl

topic

Annelinde Bruijs (1991) is a composer, singer and actor. Her compositions are made for a theatrical context where the music is seen as a co-player that has its own dramaturgy. Her vocal music is characterized by her non-poetic language. Due to the many bar changes and changes in key signatures, which follow from language and theatricality, her music becomes erratic and unpredictable. She works in theatre mainly in the Netherlands and she previously worked with, among others, Suze Milius (*Solitude Hotel*, *Ground Floor*), Floor Houwink ten Cate (on: *Sea of Silence*, *Battlefield of Dreams*) and Performance collective URLAND (on: *de Gabber Opera*).

[@annelindebruijs](https://twitter.com/annelindebruijs)



MTNow's selected work presentation: **[The Urban Tale of a Hippo](#)**

Concert with a choreographic tail is a playful definition of the work *The Urban Tale of a Hippo* – suggesting a multidisciplinary take on the post-human condition in contemporaneity.

operomanija.lt

In conversation:

11:30-12:00

Programmers from 3 different organizations will share their experience working in the city, outside theatre venues.

Hannah Falvey, International Partnerships Manager, Factory International, Manchester

Rainer Simon, head of the outer venues, Komische Oper Berlin

Rikke Frisk, Executive Producer, Copenhagen Opera Festival

LUNCH: 12:00-13:00 🍴🥗

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Price: €20 in advance (available until May 10)

[Friday 17 May lunch](#)

Afternoon short session: Music Theater Now & Creators Connection Programme

13:00 - 13:45

We will get to learn about [MTN](#) in several ways
From [Aïda Gabriëls](#) MTN artistic coordinator



About **Creators Connection Programme members**

Each year the Music Theatre Now selects 5 to 8 of the most promising emerging music theatre makers (composers and stage directors). We identify the most promising new work by emerging music theatre artists and then promote it with our network. The network of worldwide partners enables these younger creators to bring brand-new works to brand-new audiences.

Former MTNow winners, [Opera Aperta](#) (UA) who perform the O.'s opening will share how being awarded by MTNow 2021 impacted their trajectory. [Illia Razumeiko & Olga Diatel](#).

grygoriv-razumeiko.com

Saturday 18 May

Morning session: Exploration, 10:00-12:30

Exploring and expanding media requires a trial and error mind, a learning process through which one acquires new skills to convey an artistic idea in arenas that are beyond comfort zones. Different artists share their journey in overcoming the challenges, and discovering the possibilities in creating with technologies and media.

Presentations by:

[Paul Boereboom](#) is a scenographer living in Amsterdam. He studied scenography at the Amsterdam School of the Arts. After having been on stage for a long time, Paul decided to no longer question space (on stage) with his body, but as a designer. His work includes theatre design, installations and costume design, as well as video design and work in virtual reality.

www.paulboereboom.com



[Leon Rogissart](#) (1995) is a Belgian theatre director. He graduated from the directing course of the Academy for Theater and Dance in Amsterdam in 2021. For him, the theatre is the ultimate place to create a collective experience where intuition and resonance prevail. In addition to theatre, music and Virtual Reality (VR), these are also important pillars in his

work. The combination of the three gives him, as a director, the opportunity to unravel abstraction in reality and to deconstruct the concept of time. In 2021, Leon, together with his colleague Paul Boereboom, received the award for best VR production at the KABOOMFestival in Utrecht with the VR prototype 'Ascension'.

@leonrogissart

They will present [Conversations with the Inner](#), a musical theatre ritual combining VR technology and live performance; a participatory meeting for eighty people in which current themes such as self-reflection and inner dialogue are discussed.



Maria Fusco is a working-class writer and director born in Belfast, Northern Ireland. She is Professor of Interdisciplinary Writing at the University of Dundee, Scotland. She works across performance and theory and her award-winning works are translated into ten languages. She co-directed MTNow selected Film Opera *History of the Present* with artist-filmmaker Margaret Salmon.

Maria will discuss what is at stake in interdisciplinary working, focussing on the experimental, embodied socio-political voice.

mariafusco.net

Rachel Krehm is the co-founder and General Director of Opera 5. She works in opera, new music, art song, improvisation, voice and web-series acting, and is also a writer and producer. Rachel co-wrote, produced, and performed in [Threepenny Submarine](#), Opera 5's web series combining opera and puppetry in collaboration with Gazelle Automations. Rachel will be performing Miss Jessel in Opera 5's [The Turn of the Screw](#) in June 2024 in Toronto. Rachel is passionate about commissioning, workshopping, and creating Canadian art songs and opera. The show is presented several times during [Q](#).



Rachel will discuss Threepenny Submarine from its conception to creation; how the different art forms enhanced each other and created a whimsical world that could introduce families to the wonderful world of opera and classical music.

www.rachelkrehm.com

www.opera5.ca

www.threepennysubmarine.com



Rebekka Sofie Bohse Meyer is the artistic director of Jakobe Performing Arts. The company creates and produces immersive and experimenting performances with sound and new technology. With her musical background, sound lies at the core of her work, having worked with spatial sound, generative sound and sounds for A.I. This has further led to her interest in new technology and research into the immersive qualities of virtual reality. Recently, she has combined sound, performance and new technology into the VR opera [MORTALITIES in](#) a new opera format, inspired by necroaesthetic. Furthermore, Bohse Meyer curates the

interdisciplinary and performative exhibition space platform BUNKER in Copenhagen, Denmark. Her new work explores LARP and gaming for opera & music experiences. rebekkabohsemeyer.com

Sigrún Gyða Sveinsdóttir, originally from Iceland, holds a BA in Fine Arts from the Iceland Academy of the Arts and an MA in Fine Arts and Design from the Sandberg Instituut in Amsterdam. Trained in classical singing, she mixes opera and visual arts to subvert traditional operatic norms, focusing on socially engaged themes such as gender inequality and societal issues. Founder of the performance group TTS, Sigrún produces innovative stage works that incorporate extensive bodily movement and visual narratives. Notable among her projects is the operetta **HLAUPA**, presented in Amsterdam in 2021, which demonstrated her interdisciplinary approach.



In her presentation, Sigrún will discuss her earlier work as a visual artist and stage director, culminating in her current opera, **Skjóta**, to debut during Reykjavik's Arts Festival in June 2024. Drawing upon her background in conceptual performance art and classical singing, she founded the performance group TTS, dedicated to developing stage works and operas that predominantly feature female and non-binary individuals, both on stage and behind the scenes. sigrungyda.com



Stacie Dunlop is a multi-hyphenate artist. Focusing on the reimagining of performative work in a collaborative, process-driven way, she is inspired by the cross-pollination of contemporary opera, contemporary circus, and contemporary theatre. Her creative process begins with the goal of reimagining an existing work, and revisioning that work into a new form by taking a thought/dream/vision and animating it. The Lonely Child Project is her current collaborative focus with contemporary circus artists Angola Murdoch and Holly Treddenick. Her next focus, **Letters**, in collaboration with

composer Frank Horvat, is a multi-disciplinary music theatre work spanning the bridges between theatre and opera.

Stacie will share the challenges and possibilities of a creative capture vs a chronological capture and the challenges and magic of bringing a work onto the stage that has not been fully realized. Our creation process: collaborative devised theatre approach vs. the standard theatre model. staciedunlop.com

David T. Little - A natural musical storyteller with “a knack for overturning musical conventions” (The New York Times), composer David T. Little is known for stage, concert, and screen works permeated with the power of the unexpected. Little’s broad catalog speaks to the mix of light and dark that we



experience in life, unafraid to invoke the mythical, bewitching, disturbing, surreal, or comedic. His new work *Black Lodge* was nominated for Best Opera Recording in the 2024 GRAMMY® Awards.

David T. Little has drawn acclaim for operas including *Dog Days*, *JFK*, and the comedy *Vinkensport*, or *The Finch Opera* (all with libretto by Royce Vavrek), as well as his GRAMMY-nominated opera, *Soldier Songs*. Little's *Black Lodge*, a metal-infused opera with a libretto by poet Anne Waldman, was premiered by Beth Morrison Projects at Opera Philadelphia, with a soundtrack released by Cantaloupe Music. Upcoming and recent projects include the world premiere of *SIN-EATER* by The Crossing at Penn Live Arts; monodrama *What Belongs to You*, developed for tenor Karim Sulayman and Alarm Will Sound; and a commission from the Metropolitan Opera / Lincoln Center Theater New Works Program. Little's music is published by Boosey & Hawkes.

www.davidtlittle.com

Photo by Daniel Welch

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[Saturday 18 May lunch](#)

Special screenings in **Theater Rotterdam** from the presentation this morning - no tickets required:

History of the Present by Maria Fusco

Lonely Child by Stacie Dunlop

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