

Biography New European Ensemble

The New European Ensemble was founded in 2008 in the Netherlands by dedicated and passionate musicians from across Europe. The ensemble has built up a national and international reputation for imaginative programming, 'great enthusiasm' (Nutida Musik) and 'excellent performances' (de Volkskrant). The musicians regularly tour internationally. Some of today's leading composers like Kaija Saariaho and Magnus Lindberg enjoy working with the group. In 2018 Sofia Gubaidulina will be featured.

The ensemble's musicians showcase a diversity of talents. They perform new music but are also active as soloists, chamber musicians and orchestral leaders. They present new music in exciting ways by combining music with other art forms like film, literature, theatre, dance and visual art and performing in alternative venues outside the concert hall. The musicians want to share new music with a broad audience while challenging themselves artistically.

The ensemble has increasingly profiled itself with critically acclaimed music theatre productions. In 2014 the musicians played a central role in *BARE* choreographed by the Japanese artist Kenzo Kusuda. In 2016 the ensemble coproduced *Dr. Miracle's Last Illusion* with OPERA2DAY in which romantic performance practices heard on recordings from around 1900 were brought to life. For 2017 the ensemble will tour with the Javanese *L'Histoire du Soldat*, in which Stravinsky's masterpiece will be situated in today's Java together with three stars of traditional Indonesian dance. In *Eisler on the go*, a theatre piece about Hanns Eisler's trial and deportation from the United States, the musicians will perform Eisler's music as well as small theatrical character parts in the play.

From 2009 till 2014 Christian Karlsen was conductor and artistic leader of the ensemble.

Past projects have included performances connected to social themes. In 2010 and 2012 the ensemble performed *Voices* by Hans Werner Henze as part of a project around human rights organised with Amnesty International. In 2012 the ensemble performed *Strange News* in collaboration with the International Criminal Court. This multimedia production by Josse de Pauw and composer Rolf Wallin studies the fate of African child soldiers. *Strange News* was performed again in the 2014/15 season. In 2010 the ensemble collaborated with New Opera Amsterdam on *Moonstruck Intoxication*, a double bill with Schönberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* and Peter Maxwell-Davies' *Miss Donnithorn's Maggott*.

The ensemble wants to show that new music is deeply connected to and embedded within musical traditions. Many of the group's concerts examine this by combining new and old music. Composers from the Netherlands and around the world write new work for the ensemble. Established composers like José María Sánchez-Verdú, Klas Torstensson and Peter-Jan Wagemans as well as many younger composers. Justin Christensen, Đuro Živković and Benjamin Staern were awarded prestigious composition prizes for works written for the ensemble.

The New European Ensemble has performed in all of The Netherlands' major concert halls among them the Concertgebouw and Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ in Amsterdam, De Doelen in Rotterdam, Musis Sacrum in Arnhem, Tivoli Vredenburg, The Royal Theatre in The Hague and others. The ensemble performed at numerous festivals like Gaudeamus, Grachtenfestival, Chamber Opera Festival Zwolle, The White Crow Music Festival in Leiden, The NJO Muziekzomer, Dag in de Branding.

Internationally the ensemble performed in the UK, Germany, Belgium and Sweden. In 2010 the ensemble toured Sweden, in 2012 the group was ensemble in residence at the Sounds of Stockholm Festival, in 2013 the ensemble performed a number of concerts at the Connect Festival in Malmö, in 2014 the ensemble presented multiple programs at the Made Festival in Umeå, as part of the cultural events the city organised as 2014 European Capital of Culture.

The ensemble is active in producing educational projects for elementary school and high schools. The musicians regularly work with and give masterclasses to young composers and performers at the conservatory level. Many of the ensemble's concerts have been broadcast on radio and television across Europe. *Outside Time*, a programme with works by Klas Torstensson, Benjamin Staern and Arnold Schönberg, was broadcast live on the Dutch Radio 4 and on the Swedish radio channel P2.