

Simon Steen-Andersen, Composer

Biography

Simon Steen-Andersen is one of the pioneers in a generation of composers that since the turn of the millennium have incorporated the world around them into their music and given it a more extroverted and contemporary form of expression. In Steen-Andersen's music the idea is always clear and directly present as something we can experience without preconditions. At the same time the thorough and imaginative exploration of his ideas lends the works a depth and complexity that keeps the audience captivated throughout the experience. Steen-Andersen's works live in the passages between the simple and the complex - in a cross-aesthetical field where orchestral music, video art, choreography, performance, music theatre, and installation are mixed with pop-cultural elements and game-aesthetics in surprising and thought-provoking ways. His works therefore present a pronounced expansion of music, where no material is too fine or too simple to be given careful attention, taken apart, and assembled anew.

The current season begins with a highlight for the composer: in September 2023, his new opera *Don Giovanni's Inferno* will receive its world premiere at the Opéra national du Rhin as part of the Festival Musica Strasbourg. As a co-production with the Royal Danish Opera in Copenhagen, the work will be shown there in May 2024. There will also be premieres and revivals of several important pieces: his *Trio* for Choir, Orchestra, and Big Band, awarded the SWR Orchestra Prize in Donaueschingen in 2019, will be performed with the Basel Sinfonietta at both the Ruhrtriennale and in Basel. His sensational production of Stockhausen's *Music in the Belly*, which premiered at the Festival Musica Strasbourg in 2022, will be performed by the Percussions de Strasbourg at Klangspuren Schwaz, the Transart Festival Bolzano, and DeSingel Antwerp. The 2012 work *Black Box Music* for percussion, video, and ensemble, in which the conductor and the orchestra as well as the puppet theatre are deconstructed and investigated, will be performed in Copenhagen and Chicago. And *Inszenierte Nacht*, premiered by Ensemble Ascolta in 2013, with surprising new perspectives on night music by Bach, Schumann, Mozart, Chopin, and Ravel, can be experienced again in Basel, s'Hertogenbosch, and Schwetzingen.

Commissioners of Simon Steen-Andersen include ensembles, orchestras and festivals such as Ensemble Modern, ensemble recherche, Neue Vocalsolisten, SWR Symphony Orchestra, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, Copenhagen Philharmonic Orchestra, Ensemble Ascolta, Jack Quartet, Oslo Sinfonietta, 2e2m, Orchestre National de France, Donaueschinger Musiktage, Ultraschall Berlin, ECLAT, and Wittener Tage für Neue Kammermusik. He has also worked with ensembles such as Klangforum Wien, Collegium Novum Zürich, ICTUS, Arditti Quartet, London Sinfonietta, Ensemble intercontemporain, asamisimasa, and NADAR.

Simon Steen-Andersen studied with Karl Aage Rasmussen, Mathias Spahlinger, Gabriel Valverde, and Bent Sørensen in Aarhus, Freiburg, Buenos Aires, and Copenhagen. His work has received a number of honours and awards, including the Carl Prize (2020, 2015), SWR Symphony Orchestra Composition Prize (2019, 2014), Mauricio Kagel Music Prize (2017), Ernst von Siemens Music Foundation Sponsorship Award (2017), Nordic Council Music Prize (2014), Carl Nielsen Prize (2013), the Art Prize of the Academy of Arts Berlin (2013), first place at the International Rostrum of Composers (2010), a DAAD Berlin Artist Residency (2010), and the Kranichsteiner Music Prize (2008).

Since 2018, Simon Steen-Andersen has taught composition and music theatre at the Bern University of the Arts. He is also an associate professor at the Royal Academy of Music in Aarhus, Denmark, as well as a member of the German Academy of Arts and the Royal Swedish Academy of Music. He lives and works in Berlin.

www.simonsteenandersen.com

Season 2023/24

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