

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 his 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. Simon 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.

Last season, Simon Steen-Andersen celebrated great success with the world premieres of the opera *Don Giovanni's Inferno* in the versions for the Opéra national du Rhin (Festival Musica Strasbourg) and for the Royal Danish Opera in Copenhagen. He was awarded both the Danish national theatre prize, the Reumert Prize, and the Carl Prisen Composition Prize in 2024.

A highlight of the current season is the world premiere of the work *grosso* for amplified quartet, Leslie loudspeaker and orchestra, which was premiered by the Yarn/Wire quartet and the SWR Symphony Orchestra at the Donaueschinger Musiktage in autumn 2024 and will be performed again in spring 2025 at the ManiFeste festival with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France before also being heard with the Århus Symphony Orchestra in 2026. The current season will also see country premieres and performances of important pieces: The *no Concerto*, premiered by the WDR Symphony Orchestra in 2024, which offers surprising new perspectives on Beethoven's 4th Piano Concerto, has been presented as an Italian premiere at the MITO Settembre Musica Festival in Turin. *TRIO* for choir, orchestra and big band, which was awarded the SWR Symphony Orchestra Prize in Donaueschingen in 2019, will receive its Polish premiere at the Warsaw Autumn Festival in September 2024. The 2012 work *Black Box Music* for percussion, video and ensemble, in which both the conductor and the orchestra as well as the puppet theatre are deconstructed and examined, will be performed in October in Katowice as part of the Ars Independent Festival and in December at the Łódź Music Academy.

Commissioners of Simon Steen-Andersen's works include the Ensemble Modern, the ensemble recherche, Neue Vocalsolisten, the SWR Symphonieorchester, the Danish National Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Danish Opera, the Copenhagen Philharmonic Orchestra, the ManiFeste festival with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, the Århus Symphony Orchestra, the Ensemble Ascolta, the Jack Quartet, the Oslo Sinfonietta, the 2e2m, the Orchestre National de France, the Opéra national du Rhin, the Donaueschinger Musiktage, the Festival Ultraschall Berlin, ECLAT and the Wittener Tage für Neue Kammermusik. He has also worked with ensembles such as Klangforum Wien, Collegium Novum Zurich, ICTUS, the Arditti Quartet, the 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 Prisen (2024, 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 2024/25

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