

Press Information

KunstFestSpiele Herrenhausen 2012

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Mankind and art in fragile balance in the Herrenhausen Gardens

In its third year of its existence, the KunstFestSpiele Herrenhausen once again brings innovative art and music projects to Hanover's finest gardens. The internationally oriented festival will present around twenty events themed to the motto "Fragile Balance". The Artistic Director Elisabeth Schweeger provides space for innovative creativity within a wide range of artistic disciplines and the linking of different genres to new artistic forms. The programme for 2012 will also include the well-proved blend of ancient and new music, music theatre, film concerts, discussions and installations.

The Artistic Director Elisabeth Schweeger comments: "We repeatedly forget the instability and fragility of mankind and all its constructions built for survival. Art taps this instability for its inspiration and opens doors onto new visions."

The opening festival speech will be given by the human rights activist Bianca Jagger. The festival highlights include a weekend devoted to the 100th anniversary of the birth of the composer John Cage, a series of percussion concerts given by Evelyn Glennie, Martin Grubinger (open air) and the ensemble Percussions de Strasbourg and cross-genre projects involving artists from the fields of classical music and pop culture with collaborations between the Ensemble Resonanz and the HipHop Academy Hamburg and the American slam poet Saul Williams with the well-known Arditti String Quartet.

A number of artists who performed to national and international acclaim in previous years will be returning to the KunstFestSpiele: Ludger Engels, who staged the "Semele Walk" in 2011 with couture by

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Vivienne Westwood will return to direct a staged choral concert with works by John Cage and Domenico Scarlatti, and Alexander Charim, who staged the opening event in 2010, “Orfeo – Love Will Tear Us Apart”, will again direct the opening event of the 2012 festival: “Geometry of Love”. The Austrian ensemble Musicbanda Franui will be celebrating the première of a new music theatre project: this ensemble created a sensation at last year’s festival in Herrenhausen with their performance of lieder by Gustav Mahler “with the equipment of an Alpine village band”. This year, they will be focusing on works by Robert Schumann.

The festival seeks active participation with its audiences in adherence to the traditions of the philosopher Wilhelm Leibniz whose life work remains closely linked to the Gardens of Herrenhausen. This year, the discussion sessions organised by the VolkswagenStiftung [Volkswagen foundation] will be augmented by the project "Twin Talk" created by the concept artist Olaf Nicolai which circles around irritation generated in discussion with a double opposite – a conceptual exchange of ideas with identical twins during a walk through the Großer Garten.

A tonal installation by Tamara Grcic and a video installation by Michael Whelan can be visited at all times of the day.

Following the resounding success of the Akademie der Spiele [Academy of Games] in previous years, workshops involving artists and young persons will also be held at this year’s festival and will be curated by Leonore Leonardy.

The Artistic Director Elisabeth Schweeger will present the programme to the press on 1 March and advanced booking opens on the same day at all CTS/Eventim box offices and the Künstlerhaus box office in Hanover. The newly redesigned web site www.kunstfestspiele.de provides access to all information including press and photo material on each individual event.

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