

Biography - Large

Petra Strahovnik (SI/NL): *'Esoterically speaking I see myself as a passenger in current time and space, open to appearing thoughts, creating ideas, collecting pieces for artistic work, which quivers minds.'*

Petra was born in Celje, Slovenia in 1986 and has been living in the Netherlands since 2011. Since her beginning Petra has been following her path of searching for new sounds and she has never been barred by traditional way of how we think about sound and music. Many times, the source of her inspiration comes from topics outside of Music, such as the issues of modern society and human experiences. While attending her study of Composition and Music Theory with Uros Rojko, at the Academy of Music in University Ljubljana, Petra attended festivals and seminars across Europe, where she gained new knowledge and opened her views and philosophies. She finished Master in Composition with Martijn Padding and Peter Adriaansz at the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague.

Petra collaborated with outstanding musicians such as Rei Nakamura, Saskia Lankhoorn, Luka Juhart, ensembles like Nieuw ensemble, Ives ensemble, Asko|Schönberg, neuverBand, Slagwerk Den Haag, WESPOKE, Slowind, MD7, Kompulz, Slovenian Percussion Project STOP, RTV Slovenia Symphony Orchestra, choirs like APZ Tone Tomšič, Slovenian Philharmonic Choir, conductors as Steven Loy, Rossen Milanov, Bas Wiegers, Gregory Charette, Matina Batič, Jerica Bukovec and more. Commissioned among others by Diamant Fabrik, Experimental studio SWR, Gaudeamus Music week, Dag in de Branding, Orgelpark Amsterdam, RTV Slovenia, Festival Slowind and performed on podiums, festivals as Ultraschall Berlin, Muziekgebouw, Slovenian Philharmonic, Music Biennale Zagreb, International Ankara Music Festival, LSO St Luke London, ECCO festival Brussels.

In the Netherlands, where Petra has lived and worked since 2011, she is known for her pervasiveness and uncompromisingness in creating her visions. In 2013, her first opera entitled 'Becoming the System' came to life, which received rave reviews in Amsterdam and experienced three more repetitions, including at the Gaudeamus Festival in Utrecht. In 2018 Petra was selected as 'Nieuwe Makers' by the Fonds Podiumkunsten for her 2 years project 'disOrders' with Ensemble Modelo62 on the topic "Mental DisOrders". The Dutch National Theatre described the project as: "The composer uses music, sounds, performance art, video and electronics to paint the implications of afflictions such as ADHD, autism, anxiety, depression and bipolar disorder. She confronts her audience with the inner world of a person who is forced to walk a different path through life than most of us. Can we find it in ourselves be emphatic and redefine our concept of 'normal'?"

Her creative mind and unique art works brought her several grants and awards. Petra's piece **Prana**, for symphony orchestra, won the 66th international ROSTRUM of composer prize, organized by the International Music Council, in Argentina in 2019. It was selected by the delegates as the most outstanding. The work was premiered by RTV Slovenia Symphony Orchestra with Rossen Milanov as a conductor. The inspiration for this work stems from the idea of creating and capturing the atmosphere of attraction between two contrasting poles (e.g., magnetic resonance). The concept of capturing "Prana" as inspiration; in Hinduism, it represents the breath of the life force. "Prana is understood as a universal energy that flows in currents in and around the body."

Her achievements among others brought her Fellowship and Art Residency at Villa Concordia Bamberg, granted by Bavarian State Ministry of Science and the Arts and the BERLIN ART PRIZE for Music 2021, awarded by the Academy of Arts – Akademie der Künste Berlin.