

## **Petra Strahovnik (SI/NL)**

<http://petrastrahovnik.eu/>



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 has collaborated with leading musicians, ensembles, and orchestras, such as Rei Nakamura, Saskia Lankhoorn, Luka Juhart, Primož Sukič, Ensemble Modern, Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart, Nieuw Ensemble, Ives Ensemble, Asko|Schönberg, neuverBand, Slagwerk Den Haag, Ensemble Modelo62, WESPOKE, Neofonia, Slowind, MD7, Kompulz, Slovenian Percussion Project STOP, RTV Slovenia Symphony Orchestra, Dissonance String Quartet, Matangi Quartet, and the Slovenian Philharmonic Choir, among others. She has worked with conductors including Steven Loy, Rossen Milanov, Bas Wiegers, Gregory Charette, Lucie Leguay, David Niemann, Martina Batič, and Jerica Bukovec. Her compositions have been performed at prestigious international festivals and concert venues, such as the MATA Festival New York, Ultraschall Berlin, Muziekgebouw Amsterdam, Gaudeamus Music Week, Dag in de Branding, Orgelpark Amsterdam, Amsterdam Dance Event (ADE), Muzički Biennale Zagreb, International Ankara Music Festival, LSO St Luke London, ECCO Festival, Ljubljana Festival, November Music, Tromp Percussion Eindhoven, International Review of Composers in Belgrade, Festival Internacional de Música y Danza de Granada, Gare du Nord Basel, Bamberger Kurzfilmtage, Festival der Performance Art Frankfurt, ORF Festival Musikprotokoll in Austria, Alte Oper Frankfurt, Der Sommer in Stuttgart, Cankarjev Dom, and the Slovenian Philharmonic. She has received commissions from prestigious institutions, including Diamant Fabrik, Experimentalstudio SWR, Gaudeamus Muziekweek, Orgelpark Amsterdam, ORF Festival Musikprotokoll, Ensemble Modern, RTV Slovenia, Festival Slowind, and Tromp Percussion Eindhoven.

In the Netherlands, where Petra has lived and worked since 2011, she is known for her pervasiveness and uncompromising approach 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 4 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'?" The first part, a series of five works entitled 'Through the looking glass', which took place over several days, took place at The Hague Galleries. The second part, a set of three works entitled 'A Fractured Mind?' was hosted by the Gaudeamus Festival and the Korzo Theatre. The sequel was inspired by the newly created diptych opera Balerinailerab and BallerinaBallerina, inspired by the work Ballerina, Ballerina by Marko Sosič. The final artistic work of this collaboration, the opera project BallerinaBallerina, was successfully premiered at theatre Vaillant in The Hague in June 2022.

Her creative mind and unique art works brought her several grants and awards. Petra's piece *Prana*, for symphony orchestra, won the 66<sup>th</sup> 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. 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."

In 2021, Petra received the prestigious Berlin Art Prize for Music, awarded by the Academy of Arts in Berlin (Akademie der Künste), further cementing her international influence and contribution to contemporary music. She was also awarded a fellowship and artistic residency at the International Artists Villa Concordia in Bamberg for 2020–2021. This renowned residency, granted by the Bavarian State Ministry of Science and the Arts, is considered one of Germany's most significant awards for lifetime achievement in the arts. In 2026, Petra received the Prešeren Fund Award, one of the highest national recognitions in the Republic of Slovenia for achievements in the field of artistic creation. During her residency at Villa Concordia, Petra recorded *Amaranthine* for piano and electronics, released by the Unsounds record label. The work was issued in both video and audio formats, with the binaural audio version offering a deeply immersive listening experience. The video, directed by Vida Habjanič, provides a unique insight into the powerful and precise performance of pianist Saskia Lankhoorn.

In recent years, Petra has increasingly focused on performance art. In 2021, she collaborated with the Black Market International collective, where she presented a five-hour sound installation *Impuls-es* at the BMI – Exploring festival in Frankfurt. Through this project, Petra explored the connections between sound art and performance, investigating how sound and performance art can create new dimensions of artistic expression. As part of her project *The Eternal Now*, she installed a 20-day live performance piece in a gallery in the heart of Bamberg, allowing visitors to observe her creative process in real-time, while composing her new piece Sense.

Petra Strahovnik is a complete Artist, who delves fearlessly into all Artforms, discovers new connections between musical disciplines, other artforms and even outside the world of Art with experts from those fields. With research and experimentation enriches the musical language, listens to the language of imagination and brings her visions into reality.