

## **2024 Bauhaus Music Festival**

**Music festival on freedom and exile**

**17-19 October 2024**

Artistic direction: Michal Friedländer, Kai Hinrich Müller and Karl-Heinz Steffens

### **Concert programme**

**Thursday, 17 October, 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm and 7 pm**

**Lunch concert and opening concert with works by Marc Blitzstein and Cathy Milliken**

The festival opens with a sensational discovery: While researching the musical life at the Bauhaus, scholars unearthed the 1929 avant-garde opera “Parabola and Circula” by the American composer Marc Blitzstein. It was supposed to debut at the Bauhaus theatre in Dessau, but the opera never made it to the stage. At the opening of the 2024 Bauhaus Music Festival at the temporary bauhaus-archiv, excerpts of the opera will be performed for the very first time. Inspired by Blitzstein’s occupation with Constructivist Art, “Parabola and Circula” tells the story of a romance between a square and a dot, accompanied by many other geometric shapes. Marc Blitzstein, along with Kurt Weill, was one of the most influential composers of anticapitalistic and antifascist theatre.

The second highlight at the opening will be a live performance of the 2017 radio play “Driving with Fatima” by singer Jocelyn B. Smith and composer Cathy Milliken on piano. “Driving with Fatima” is dedicated to the writer Fatima Dike who grew up in the South African township of Langa where she lives again today. On a drive through Langa, she relates stories of home and exile, modernity and tradition, which Cathy Milliken intertwined to create a radio play.

Mark Blitzstein: Parabola and Circula (excerpts)

Cathy Milliken: Songs from “Driving with Fatima”, with vocals by Jocelyn B. Smith

Direction: Michal Friedländer

Moderation: Cathy Milliken, Kai Hinrich Müller, Karl-Heinz Steffens

Performers: Michal Friedländer, piano, Alma Sadé, soprano, Noam Heinz, baritone, Cathy Milliken, piano, Jocelyn B. Smith, vocals

Venue: the temporary bauhaus-archiv

**Free admission** with [registration](#), event language: German

**Friday, 18 October 2024, 7:30 pm – 9 pm**

**Concert with works by Béla Bartók, Alban Berg and Johann Sebastian Bach**

On Friday evening, works by Alban Berg and Béla Bartók will be performed alongside Johann Sebastian Bach’s Brandenburg Concerto No. 3, presented by the Deutsches Kammerorchester in the Church of St Elisabeth.

Both Alban Berg and Béla Bartók maintained close contacts with numerous members of the Bauhaus and were regular guests at the school. They were among modernist pioneers in music who disregarded musical conventions and called for the equal treatment and “liberation” of all tones. Similar to the debates surrounding art and design at the Bauhaus, these composers questioned the validity of time-honoured certainties in music.

The meticulously structured music of Johann Sebastian Bach stands in stark contrast to these modern compositions. However, many members of the Bauhaus and the musical avant-garde regarded Bach

as a role model. It was the formal stringency of Bach's masterful fugues that they found especially liberating.

Johann Sebastian Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 3, BWV 1048

Alban Berg: Violin Concerto, solo violin: Kolja Blacher

Béla Bartók: Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta, Sz. 106

Direction: Karl-Heinz Steffens

Moderation: Kai Hinrich Müller

Performers: Kolja Blacher, solo violin, Deutsches Kammerorchester Berlin, Gabriel Adorján, concert master of the Deutsches Kammerorchester, Michal Friedländer, piano, Yael Kareth, celesta and harmonium, Ryoichi Masaka, oboe, Lara Meyer-Struhoff, harp, Mario Kopf, bassoon, Martin Münzberg, percussion, Eloy Pérez, trumpet, Ruth Ron, flute, Yaron Rosenthal, piano, Parisa Saeednezhad, clarinet, Jan Schlichte, percussion, Leonard Weiss, percussion

Venue: St. Elisabeth

[Advance ticket sales](#), event language: German

## **Saturday, 19 October 2024**

### **Stefan Wolpe, Arnold Schönberg, Kurt Schwitters, Ruth Crawford Seeger**

Many Bauhaus-affiliated artists and musicians were persecuted by the National Socialists and forced into exile, including the Bauhaus student and composer Stefan Wolpe. The moderated concert at Villa Elisabeth on Saturday afternoon is dedicated to his work. The performance focuses on the important chapters of his life – from the Weimar Republic to Israel to the United States – and reveals how his early experience at the Bauhaus shaped his path to becoming a composer and instructor.

Arnold Schönberg, a prominent figure of the New Music scene, also lived in American exile. His melodrama "Pierrot lunaire" was performed at the Bauhaus in Weimar at Walter Gropius' behest in 1922. Schönberg's characteristic atonal music and innovative recitatives made it a key work of musical modernism. Claudia Barainsky will perform it for the Bauhaus Music Festival.

Kurt Schwitters also incorporated novel linguistic elements – though far more radical – into his famous "Ursonate" (Sonata in Primal Sounds). In his sound poem, created between 1923 and 1932, he reduces language to its primal sounds and blurs the boundary between music and poetry. Schwitters recited his "Ursonate" at one of his guest performances at the Bauhaus. On Saturday evening Gunnar Brandt-Sigurdsson will recite excerpts from the Dada poem.

The evening will close with Ruth Crawford Seeger's "Music for Small Orchestra", a work of the American avant-garde. Her study of acoustic timbres and atmosphere is one of the few works by this radically modern composer who withdrew from the public eye after some initial success and devoted herself to studying folk music. Seeger composed "Music for Small Orchestra" shortly before she visited the Bauhaus Dessau – an experience she found especially freeing. It is this sentiment that inspired the Bauhaus Music Festival to also focus on "freedom" in 2024.

### **3 pm – 5 pm: Moderated concert "Portrait of Stefan Wolpe"**

Works by Stefan Wolpe:

"Suite from the Twenties" for mixed ensemble (arrangement: Geert van Keulen)

"An Anna Blume" for piano and musical clown, op. 5, 3

"Die Herren der Welt", op. 12, 4 /

"Was ist 'Aufruhr'?", op. 7, 3

"From here on Farther" for violin, clarinet, bass clarinet and piano

"The Man from Midian", ballet music in two parts for 2 pianos

Direction: Michal Friedländer, Karl-Heinz Steffens

Moderation: Kai Hinrich Müller, Michal Friedländer

Performers: Gunnar Brandt-Sigurdsson, tenor, Johan Bossers, piano, Michal Friedländer, piano, Christhard Gössling, trombone and trumpet, Yuval Herz, violin, Yael Kareth, piano, Alexandra Kehrle, clarinet, Gur Liraz, banjo, Anastasia Maschkowski, violin, Norbert Nagel, alto saxophone, Yaron Rosenthal, piano, Toni Rymer, violoncello, Parisa Saeednezhad, bass clarinet, Karl-Heinz Steffens, clarinet

Venue: Villa Elisabeth

**Free admission** with [registration](#), event language: German and English

## **6:30 pm – 8 pm: Concert with works by Kurt Schwitters, Arnold Schönberg, Ruth Crawford Seeger**

Kurt Schwitters: Ursonate (excerpts)

Ruth Crawford Seeger: Music for Small Orchestra

Arnold Schönberg: "Pierrot lunaire", op. 21

With: Gunnar Brandt-Sigurdsson, Claudia Barainsky

Direction: Karl-Heinz Steffens

Moderation: Kai Hinrich Müller

Performers: Claudia Barainsky, soprano, Gunnar Brandt-Sigurdsson, tenor, Karl-Heinz Steffens, conductor, Susanne Behrens, violin, Michal Friedländer, piano, Yuval Herz, violin, Fiona Jäntti, violin, Yael Kareth, piano, Sibylle König, cello, Mario Kopf, bassoon, Anastasia Maschkowski, violin, Ruth Ron, flute, Toni Rymer, violoncello, Parisa Saeednezhad, clarinet and bass clarinet

Venue: Villa Elisabeth

[Advance ticket sales](#), event language: German

## **Saturday, 19 October 2024, 20.30–21.30 Uhr**

### **Jazz and bebop at the Bauhaus**

The Bauhaus Orchestra was founded in 1923 by Andor Weininger and Heinrich Koch and performed during the historic Bauhaus Week 1923. The legendary orchestra, which existed until 1933, was known for performing all night long to enthusiastic party-goers. It drew inspiration from Dadaist elements – as one of its titles "Bo-la-bo" tellingly suggests – and combined eastern European folk music with jazz and wild improvisation. Conductor Karl-Heinz Steffens brings the Bauhaus Music Festival to a close with a combo of danceable jazz and bebop, inspired by Stefan Wolpe and his myriad connections to the New York music scene of the 1940s and 1950s.

Direction: Karl-Heinz Steffens

Performers: Tal Balshai, piano, Heinrich Köbberling-Udo, percussion, Norbert Nagel, saxophone and trumpet, Jan Roder, bass, Karl-Heinz Steffens, clarinet

Venue: St. Elisabeth

**Free admission** with [registration](#)

### **Event venues**

the temporary bauhaus-archiv  
Knesebeckstraße 1  
10623 Berlin-Charlottenburg

St. Elisabeth + Villa Elisabeth  
Invalidenstraße 3  
10115 Berlin-Mitte

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**Cooperation and media partners: DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program, Deutsches Kammerorchester Berlin, Kulturagenten, Kultur Büro Elisabeth, Monopol, Thomas Mann House, Tip Berlin, Radio 3**