

24—27/09/2026



COLOGNE/GERMANY

EUROPEAN JAZZ CONFERENCE

WHO WE ARE

W H X O X



WHAT WE STAND FOR



Co - Organized by:

EUROPE JAZZ NETWORK


STADTGARTEN
EUROPEAN CENTER OF JAZZ AND CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

Monheim Triennale

**COLOGNE
JAZZWEEK**

**JAZZSTADT
KÖLN**

Funded by:

 **City of Cologne**

Ministry of Culture and Science
of the State of
North Rhine-Westphalia



LVR
Qualität für Menschen

**INITIATIVE
MUSIK**

 Federal Government Contribution
for Culture and the Media



Co-funded by
the European Union



12th European Jazz Conference
24—27/09/2026
Cologne/Germany

Whenever we meet these days, we share stories of our professional struggles: struggles to make ends meet, cope with soaring costs, stay afloat as cultural priorities shift, keep staff motivated, retain audiences and remain optimistic in the face of it all.

The new reality is that our sector is in crisis: the geopolitical climate is worsening each day, with governments in the US and parts of Europe using culture as a tool to drive nationalistic, divisive agendas and to retain power. At the same time, organisations are losing funding, staff and audiences, bringing an increased risk of drained energy and motivation.

In such times, we need strategies to secure our economic and artistic survival, effective tools to influence policymakers and to anchor our role within cultural agendas, and guidance on how to cope with mounting pressures and to renew our sense of purpose. We must strengthen our collective voice as upholders of democratic values and position jazz and improvised music as vital spaces for civic engagement and cultural enrichment. Our duty is not merely to find ways to survive, but to be instrumental in advancing social and democratic prosperity in our societies.

Our actions must reflect what defines us. By reclaiming our sense of mission in a world facing ethical challenges, and by taking strength in numbers, we can continue to assert the value and power of culture. We must recognise what is at stake: hold on to our vision and commit to our role in shaping a more open, democratic and culturally vibrant society. In essence: who we are and what we stand for.

Thursday, 24 September 2026

FOR EJN MEMBERS ONLY

14:00

Registrations for EJN members

/ 25hours Hotel

15:00—16:00

Welcome session for new members and '30 under 35'

/ 25hours Hotel

16:00—17:15

Brainstorm on EJN strategy & next activities (split groups)

/ 25hours Hotel

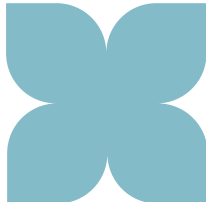
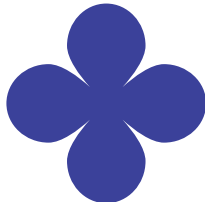
17:15—17:30

Coffee break

18:00—20:30

FORMAL EJN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

/ Volksbühne



OPEN TO ALL

21:30—22:00

SHOWCASE: Florian Herzog's Almost Natural

/ LOFT

Sebastian Gille – sax

Chaerin Im – p, synth

Florian Herzog – b, comp

Leif Berger – dr

22:30—23:00

SHOWCASE: Sera Kalo's eX . II

/ Stadtgarten Concert Hall

Sera Kalo – voc, eb, comp

Marius Max – sax, efx

Sofia Eftychidou – b

Lukas Akintaya – dr

23:30—23:50

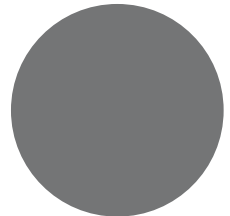
SHOWCASE: MALSTROM

/ JAKI, Club at Stadtgarten

Florian Walter – sax

Axel Zajac – gtr

Jo Beyer – dr



Friday, 25 September 2026

09:30
Registrations for everybody
 / 25hours Hotel

10:30—11:00
Official opening and welcome speeches
 / Sartory Hall

11:00—11:20
KEYNOTE SPEECH: Alexander Hawkins (UK)
 / Sartory Hall

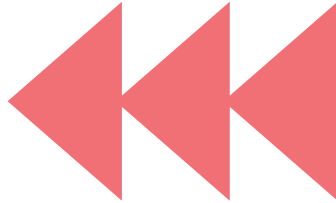
11:30—12:30
PANEL DEBATE: So Who Are We , and What Do We Stand For?
 / Sartory Hall

- Shabnam Parvaresh (IR/DE), artist & artistic director of Morgenland festival
- Isabel Pfeiffer-Poensgen (DE), former State Minister for Culture for North Rhine-Westphalia
- Eric Birath (SE), director of Fasching club & Stockholm Jazz Festival
- Daniel Zimmermann (DE), former Mayor of Monheim

MODERATOR:
 Annefleur Schipper (NL), journalist, presenter, online & TV creator

12:30—13:00
Group photo

13:00—14:30
Lunch
 / 25hours Hotel



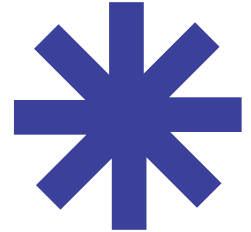
15:00—16:30
Five parallel DISCUSSION GROUPS
 / 25hours Hotel

- #1 Resourcing our activities in an increasingly uncertain political & economic environment / FOR LARGE FESTIVALS/VENUES
- #2 Resourcing our activities in an increasingly uncertain political & economic environment / FOR SMALL SCALE CLUBS/FESTIVALS
- #3 Resourcing our activities in an increasingly uncertain political & economic environment / FOR NATIONAL/REGIONAL SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS
- #4 Who's in the room? Embedding diversity through community-led practice & participation
- #5 From radio to influencers: analysing the changing relationship between jazz & media professionals

17:00—17:30
SHOWCASE: Olga Reznichenko Trio
 / Stadtgarten Concert Hall
 Olga Reznichenko – p, comp
 Lorenz Heigenhuber – b
 Maximilian Stadtfeld – dr

17:40—18:10
SHOWCASE: CHEEL
 / JAKI, Club at Stadtgarten
 Luise Volkmann – sax
 Keisuke Matsuno – gtr
 Max Andrzejewski – dr

18:10—19:00
Free time / networking



19:00—21:00

Dinner

/ 25hours Hotel

21:00—21:40

SHOWCASE: Zola Mennenöh's A LABOUR OF LOVE

/ Sartory Hall

Zola Mennenöh – voc, comp

tba – viol

Emily Wittbrodt – cel

Kathrin Pechlof – harp

Gintė Preisaitė – p, synth

Phil Donkin – b

21:50—22:30

SHOWCASE: Holly Schlott's Unique

/ Sartory Hall

Holly Schlott – lead, comp

Eric Leuthäuser – voc, efx

Zuza Jasínska – voc, efx

Julie Sassoon – p

Benjamin Geyer – synth, efx

Leah Phillips – gtr

Olga Amelchenko – sax

Birgitta Flick – sax

Tanja Becker – trb

Orlando de Boeykens – tub

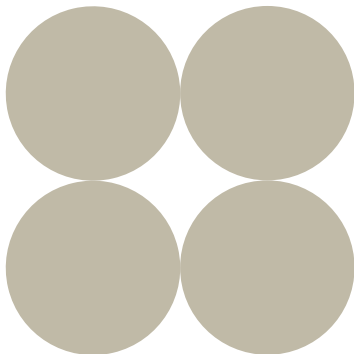
Julius Apriadi – vib

Tilo Weber – dr

22:30

Wind-down / social gathering

/ 25hours Hotel



Saturday, 26 September 2026

09:30

Registrations for everybody

/ 25hours Hotel

10:30—11:00

Celebration of the EJM Awards 2026

/ Sartory Hall

11:00—11:30

SHOWCASE: Hyphen Dash / Ukrainian Jazz Prize Winners 2026

/ Sartory Hall

Polina Maiboroda – keys

Dmytro Startsev – keys, fx

Yevhen Puhachov – gtr, b

Mykhailo Birchenko – dr

11:45—13:00

Five parallel DISCUSSION GROUPS

/ 25hours Hotel

- #1 Maintaining values & defending artistic freedom in music programming
- #2 Fair play: shaping a Fair Practice Charter for the creative music sector
- #3 Scene development: cherishing artists, promoters, talent incubators & audiences
- #4 Wellbeing & mental health: setting good practice in our daily work
- #5 Understanding how digital tech is reshaping live music, process and communities

13:00—14:30

Lunch

/ 25hours Hotel

15:00—16:00

Speed meetings for EJN members or free time/networking

/ Stadtgarten restaurant

16:15—16:45

SHOWCASE: Rabih Lahoud's MASAA

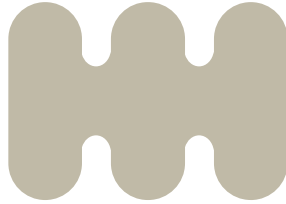
/ Stadtgarten Concert Hall

Rabih Lahoud – voc

Reentko Dirks – gtr

Demian Kappenstein – dr, perc

Marcus Rust – trp, flg



16:45—17:15

Wrap-up and presentation of the European Jazz Conference 2027

/ Stadtgarten Concert Hall

17:30—18:00

SHOWCASE: Sheen Trio

/ JAKI, Club at Stadtgarten

Shabnam Parvareh – bclla, cla, efx, comp

Ula Martyn-Ellis – gtr

Philipp Buck – dr

18:15—18:45

SHOWCASE: NEON DILEMMA

/ Stadtgarten Concert Hall

Elias Stemeseder – p, synth

Robert Landfermann – b

Leif Berger – dr

19:00—21:00

Dinner

/ Stadtgarten beer garden



21:00—21:30

SHOWCASE: Evi Fillipou's InEvitable

/ Stadtgarten Concert Hall

Zuza Jasinska – voc

Evi Filippou – vib, perc, voc, comp

Keisuke Matsuno – gtr

Robert Lucaciu – b

Jim Hart – dr

21:45—22:15

SHOWCASE: GANNA

/ JAKI, Club at Stadtgarten

GANNA – voc, synth, gtr

Vojta Drnek – acc

Laura Robles – cajon, congas, perc

22:30—23:10

SHOWCASE: BIG BREEZY's MUMBLE MAFIA

/ Stadtgarten Concert Hall

Fabian Dudek – sax

Victor Fox – sax, comp

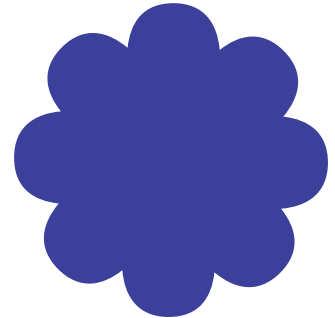
Roger Kintopf – eb

Joshua Knauber – dr

23:15

Wind-down/afterparty

/ Stadtgarten



Sunday, 27 September 2026

10:30—13:00

Cultural tours & activities (TBA)

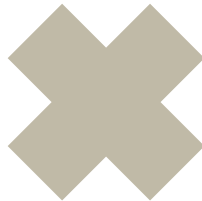
Europe Jazz Network

Europe Jazz Network (EJN) is a European non-profit association of promoters specialised in creative and improvised music. EJN's mission is to encourage, promote, and nurture the growth of jazz and creative music across Europe, facilitating opportunities for artists, organisers, and audiences from diverse backgrounds to meet, collaborate, and exchange ideas. Its membership comprises 208 organisations, including festivals, clubs, concert venues, and national/regional support organisations, from 38 countries both within Europe and internationally.

The European Jazz Conference stands out as a leading annual gathering for professionals in the creative music sector, particularly promoters, cultural managers, booking agents, and support organisations. Organised each year by Europe Jazz Network in collaboration with one of its members, the Conference fosters long-term relationships, inspires new artistic projects and partnerships, and provides a platform for sharing expertise and exploring current trends in management and programming. Additionally, it serves as a vibrant forum for discovering international music scenes and exchanging best practices from around the globe.

Previous editions of the European Jazz Conference took place in Bari, Italy (2025); Ghent, Belgium (2024); Marseille, France (2023); Sofia, Bulgaria (2022); Tallinn, Estonia (2021); Novara, Italy (2019); Lisbon, Portugal (2018); Ljubljana, Slovenia (2017); Wrocław, Poland (2016); Budapest, Hungary (2015); and Helsinki, Finland (2014).

www.europejazz.net



Programme committee 2026:

Karolina Juzwa – chair (Wytwórnia Foundation, PL), Raluca Baicu (North Sea Round Town, NL), Alex Carr (Cheltenham Festivals, UK), Francesca Cerretani (Europe Jazz Network, IT), Reiner Michalke (Monheim Triennale, DE), Steve Mead (Manchester Jazz Festival, UK), Annamaija Saarela (G Livelab Tampere, FI), Giambattista Tofoni (Europe Jazz Network, IT), Janning Trumann (Cologne Jazzweek, DE), Kornelia Vossebein (Stadtgarten Köln, DE), Stefano Zucchiatti (Europe Jazz Network, IT)

Showcase curators 2026:

Marie Blobel, Reiner Michalke, Louis Rastig, Annika Sautter, Janning Trumann, Kornelia Vossebein



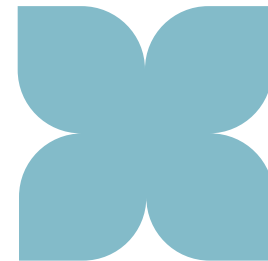
Stadtgarten Köln

Stadtgarten Köln is internationally recognised as one of Europe's leading venues for contemporary and improvised music. Today, it hosts more than 400 events each year, spanning the full breadth of current musical expression. Its international reputation is rooted above all in the strength of its ambitious and experimental programming. Alongside leading international artists and ensembles, outstanding projects from Cologne's local scene and the wider North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) region receive dedicated support and a prominent platform.

Since 2017, in partnership with the City of Cologne and the state of NRW, Stadtgarten Köln has been developed into the 'European Centre for Jazz and Contemporary Music'. A key component of this initiative is the NICA artist development programme, established at Stadtgarten in 2019 and realised by the venue. Funded by the state of NRW, NICA supports exceptional artists working in jazz and contemporary music at pivotal stages in their careers. Beyond its diverse concert and cultural programme, Stadtgarten serves as a vital production hub and meeting point for the jazz and improvisation scenes in Cologne and across NRW. It regularly commissions new works and provides rehearsal and production space for premieres.

In September 2026, Stadtgarten Köln celebrates its 40th anniversary.

www.stadtgarten.de





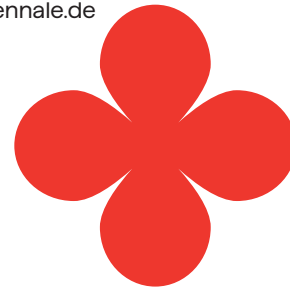
Monheim Triennale

The Monheim Triennale was an international music festival held in Monheim am Rhein. A key feature was its three-year cycle comprising the editions The Sound, The Prequel, and The Festival. The final edition of the Monheim Triennale took place in 2025.

For The Sound in 2023, fifteen internationally renowned artists developed site-specific sound art works and presented them in public spaces for four weeks. In 2024, five international curators, together with festival director Reiner Michalke, invited sixteen musicians and composers to the small town of Monheim am Rhein. The result was an incredibly diverse cross-section of the contemporary music scene, spanning all national and genre boundaries. These musicians first met at the workshop edition The Prequel 2024 and performed in various constellations over the course of three days. They then developed specific projects, the so-called signature projects, for bands and ensembles, which they presented at The Festival 2025.

In addition, through diverse collaborations with local ensembles, schools, and other educational institutions, the Monheim Triennale offered all interested parties the opportunity for direct engagement through artistic workshops, artist talks, and concerts.

www.monheim-triennale.de





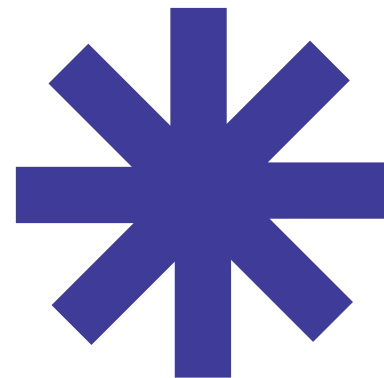
Cologne Jazzweek

Founded in 2021, Cologne Jazzweek has rapidly established itself as one of Europe's leading festivals for jazz and improvised music. Emerging from Cologne's vibrant and internationally connected jazz scene, the festival reflects the city's reputation as a hub for innovative music.

Each year, Cologne Jazzweek presents more than 50 concerts across over 20 venues, ranging from major concert halls to independent clubs and interdisciplinary spaces. Its program brings together internationally acclaimed artists and emerging voices, creating a platform that connects local identity with global perspectives.

The festival operates with a rotating curatorial board, whose members serve two-year terms, ensuring a continuously evolving artistic perspective. Artistic director Janning Trumann oversees the overall vision. Cologne Jazzweek focuses on artistic exchange, new productions, and sustainable collaboration, strengthening Cologne's role as a key meeting point for the international jazz community.

www.jazzweek.de



12th EUROPEAN JAZZ CONFERENCE
24—27/09/2026
COLOGNE/GERMANY

REGISTER NOW



@europejazznet
www.europejazz.net