



Press Release | Amsterdam, 25 June 2025

**A powerful fourth edition of the Day of the Composer
Next edition set for Saturday 20 June 2026**

The fourth Day of the Composer took place on and around Saturday, 21 June 2025. Dutch composers took centre stage through over 200 live events across more than 20 cities, seven train stations and aboard the bright red New Music NOW Express. Eight city composers were appointed. The New Music NOW Express travelled across the country, connecting local programmes and audiences throughout the day.

The full programme is available at newmusicnow.nl. Dutch public radio station NPO Klassiek dedicated multiple broadcasts to the Day of the Composer. TV recordings of selected concerts will be shared via New Music NOW's channels later this year. The next edition will take place on Saturday, 20 June 2026.

"We can look back on a highly successful Day of the Composer. This event highlights the importance of new music and the individuals who create it. Composers enrich our musical lives through their talent and dedication. By celebrating them, we acknowledge the impact, versatility and inspiration of their work."

– Esther Gottschalk, founder and director of New Music NOW and the Day of the Composer

A world-first festival celebrating new music of living composers countrywide!

The Day of the Composer, initiated by New Music NOW, is unique in the world. The festival celebrates the relevance and joy of live new music by living composers. It brings together composers, ensembles, festivals, venues, and a wide network of organisations dedicated to new music. Concerts will take place not only in theatres and concert halls, but also outdoors and on the music train. Through this annual event, New Music NOW aims to inspire a movement that puts creativity and curiosity at the heart of musical life.

Nationwide celebration with over 200 concerts in 20 cities

The participating cities were Amsterdam, Arnhem, Utrecht, Rotterdam, The Hague, Den Bosch, Eindhoven, Tilburg, Heerlen, Maastricht, Almere, Zwolle and Groningen. Partners from across the country included TivoliVredenburg, the Concertgebouw Orchestra, Amare, De Doelen, Musis & Stadstheater Arnhem, Gaudeamus, Intro in Situ, De Link, Orkest De

Ereprijs, and numerous choirs, ensembles, conservatoires, music schools, publishers, and artist collectives.

The New Music NOW Express connected it all

Throughout the day, audiences could hop aboard the bright red New Music NOW Express. Departing from Amsterdam, the train stopped in Arnhem, Utrecht, Rotterdam and The Hague before returning to Utrecht. Each carriage featured live Dutch music performed by leading ensembles, soloists, and emerging talents, including the Maat Saxophone Quartet, the Kana Trio, Fuensanta, Ben van Gelder, Martin Fondse with Femi Dawkins, and teenage composers Reo Pramana and Nanja Blom. As the scenery passed by, passengers had the opportunity to meet composers and experience the music first-hand.

Opening at sunrise and anthem premiere at Amsterdam Central

The day began at 5:19am with 'Song of the Sun', a sunrise concert by the city composer, Kate Moore, performed by the Herz Ensemble on the waterfront at Amsterdam's Marineterrein. Swimmers and early risers gathered on the quay. At 9:00, the first station concert took place at Grand Café 1e Klas on Amsterdam Central Station, where the VU Chamber Choir premiered Moore's new city anthem, *Growing Against the Wind*.

City Composers and Station Concerts

Festive station concerts were held at each stop of the New Music NOW Express. In each participating city, a City Composer was appointed to create a new city anthem. These anthems were performed in collaboration with local choirs, musicians, conservatoires, and cultural organisations.

Appointed City Composers included:

- Kate Moore (Amsterdam)
- Andries van Rossem (Arnhem)
- Saskia Venegas (Rotterdam)
- Maxim Shalygin (The Hague)
- Nawras Altaky (Utrecht)

Heerlen, Tilburg and Maastricht opted for two-year terms with Angela de Weijer, Nicoline Soeter and Hans Leenders respectively.

NS Orchestra performance at Utrecht Central

The 70-member NS Orchestra performed to a large audience in the main hall of Utrecht Central Station. Conducted by composer Léon Vliex, they performed original compositions and arrangements by Dutch composers for over an hour.

Matthijs Vermeulen Award at Museum Speelklok

Composer Trevor Grahl was awarded the Matthijs Vermeulen Prize 2025 by the Performing Arts Fund NL during a festive concert at Museum Speelklok in Utrecht. The award was presented by the Fund's director, Viktorien van Hulst. Performances included pieces by the Maat Saxophone Quartet, Nawras Altaky, HIIIT and Maya Fridman, as well as Grahl himself, who performed his award-winning organ piece, *Śpiewnik*.

New workshop by the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra

Ahead of the festival, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra hosted its very first Composer Workshop on 12 June in the Main Hall of the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. Four up-and-coming composers — Catharina Clement, Thomas van Dun, Primo Ish-Hurwitz and Annija Anna Zarina — had their orchestral pieces performed and analysed in a public rehearsal with conductor Jurjen Hempel. The aim was to bridge the gap between the composer's creative vision and the practicalities of orchestral performance.

Media reach and national exposure

NPO Klassiek provided extensive coverage of the Day of the Composer over the course of ten days, featuring interviews, live studio performances, and playlists on programmes by NTR Klassiek, AVROTROS, and VPRO Vrije Geluiden. NPO Radio 1's Met het Oog op Morgen interviewed Nawras Altaky, Utrecht's City Composer. The event was also featured in numerous newspapers, podcasts and cultural platforms. New Music NOW recorded performances throughout the day and will present them in dedicated broadcasts later this year.

Other highlights

- Event trailers screened nationwide on NS intercity trains for two weeks
- Official statements of support from Mayor Sharon Dijksma (Utrecht) and Alderman Saskia Bruines (Culture, The Hague)
- Participation by a visiting delegation from Flanders
- Preview concert in April with the Radio Philharmonic Orchestra and Maat Saxophone Quartet in collaboration with Stichting Omroep Muziek

Full event recap: <https://newmusicnow.nl>

Partners and supporters

The 2025 Day of the Composer was made possible thanks to the support of numerous funders and municipalities, including Buma Cultuur, Cultuurfonds, the Reinbert de Leeuw Foundation, the Dioraphte Foundation, the Sena Performers Fund, the Amsterdam Fund for the Arts, the municipalities of Rotterdam, Utrecht and Arnhem, the K.F. Hein Fund, the Society for the Promotion of Music and the Berch Heemstede Fund, as well as media partners NTR Klassiek, VPRO Vrije Geluiden, AVROTROS and Concertzender. The closing concert and Matthijs Vermeulen Prize ceremony were co-produced by New Music NOW, the Performing Arts Fund NL and TivoliVredenburg.

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Press kit: <https://newmusicnow.nl/info/perskit-dag-van-de-componist-2>

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