

NEKO3 FESTIVAL (Genesis - Wanderer - Roots - Home)

A celebration of the past, the present, and the future

5-7 November 2026

Koncertkirken, Copenhagen

Night 1 - 5.11.2026

Genesis

Jeppe Just Christensen: Neko (2009)

Sophie Meyer: Plantae (2026 - WORLD PREMIERE*) - Gustav Piekut x NEKO3

Connor McLean: Endless City (2026 - WORLD PREMIERE*) - Jonathan Swensen x NEKO3

Night 2 - 6.11.2026

installation

Nanna Lysdahl Søgaard & Pernille Kaufmann x NEKO3: party/earth/museum/!!!! (2023-26 WORLD PREMIERE*)

Wanderer

Lemon Guo: where do old sounds go to die? (2025 DANISH PREMIERE*)

Ni Zheng: the nakedness of our naked laceration (2023 DANISH PREMIERE*)

Han Zhang: No_Input_Dev (2026 WORLD PREMIERE*)

Liepa Vozgirdaitė x NEKO3: Rotations (2026 WORLD PREMIERE*)

Roots

Simon Løffler: Solo for Snare Drum (2026 WORLD-PREMIERE)

Mads Emil Dreyer: Lament, Music Box Music (2025 DANISH PREMIERE*)

Jeppe Ernst: Bønnebrog: Treatment B (Ordinarium) - (2026 WORLD-PREMIERE)

Jeppe Ernst: Nocturnes (for a human body) - (2023)

Simon Løffler, Dreamwork, trio version (2018-2024*)

Night 3 - 7.11.2026

Home

Alexander Schubert x NEKO3, Angel Death Traps (2022-24*)

*commissioned by NEKO3

LIST OF ARTISTS, PERFORMERS AND COLLABORATORS

Lorenzo Colombo: artistic director, performer, producer (NEKO3)

Kalle Hakosalo: artistic director, performer, producer (NEKO3)

Jeppe Just Christensen, composer

Matilde Digmann, visual artist

Mads Emil Dreyer, composer

Jeppe Ernst, composer

Lemon Guo, composer

Erica Giacoletto, performer

Pernille Kaufmann, video-maker, director

Simon Løffler, composer

Connor McLean, composer

Nanna Lysdahl, composer

Sophie Søs Meyer, composer

Sebastian V Olsen, sound technician

Niklas Ottander, film maker, documentation

Gustav Piekut, performer

Marta Soggetti, performer

Alexander Schubert, composer

Jonathan Swensen, performer

Ni Zheng, composer

Han Zhang, composer, performer

Liepa Vozgirdaitė, composer, performer

About the festival

The first edition of the **NEKO3 FESTIVAL (Genesis - Wanderer - Roots - Home)** is simultaneously a celebration of the almost-decade-long (and counting) artistic legacy of the experimental music ensemble, and the introduction of a new chapter. Over the past nine years, NEKO3 has established itself as a vital force on the Copenhagen and international new music scene, presenting over 100 concerts, commissioning more than 30 new works, facilitating the work of over 100 young composers and artists with their workshop activities, releasing five records from singles to full-length albums, and performing on stages around Europe and the Americas. The festival honors this rich history of artistic activities whilst opening the door to what will come next, and representing NEKO3 as a laboratory for innovation, collaboration, expansion and freedom of musical expression.

From 2026 onward, NEKO3 takes on the model of a fluid ensemble, in which each project and production defines the necessary skillsets of the collaborators and, consecutively, the constellation of the ensemble. This approach embodies NEKO3's core philosophy of openness towards emerging artistic tendencies, fostering cross-disciplinary experimentation and positioning the ensemble as a hub for creativity, dialogue, and genuine human exchange.

The festival is conceived both as a celebration and a manifesto: a statement of NEKO3's artistic vision and a shared experience with the Copenhagen music community, marking the start of a new era. Its program intertwines selected highlights from the ensemble's past with ambitious new collaborations, forming a cohesive journey that reflects what has shaped NEKO3 and what will define its future. The thematic arc *Genesis - Wanderer - Roots - Home* acts as both a curatorial starting point and an invitation for audiences to engage in this journey, experiencing each concert as an essential part of a larger narrative. Each performance contributes to the arc, offering audiences a sense of continuity, discovery, and immersion in a unique musical ecosystem.

Over the years, NEKO3 has collaborated with a diverse range of artists whose work has profoundly influenced its development. The festival brings together some of the most inspiring collaborators the ensemble has encountered,

whose ideas and practice have been central to NEKO3's evolution and who help amplify the ensemble's mission to expand the possibilities of contemporary performance. Through this gathering, NEKO3 positions itself as a visionary platform, connecting innovative creators with audiences and cultivating new forms of artistic exchange that resonate locally and internationally.

NEKO3 FESTIVAL is more than a series of concerts; it is a dynamic articulation of the ensemble's past, present, and future - a festival that celebrates achievement, embraces experimentation, and invites audiences to witness the unfolding of contemporary music at its most adventurous and socially resonant.

Night 1 - 5.11.2026

Genesis

Jeppe Just Christensen: Neko (2009)

Sophie Meyer: Plantae (2026 - WORLD PREMIERE*) - Gustav Piekut x NEKO3

Connor McLean: Endless City (2026 - WORLD PREMIERE*) - Jonathan Swensen x NEKO3

The festival's opening concert retraces the genesis of NEKO3, returning to the ensemble's point of departure in contemporary chamber music. The concert features two of the most virtuosic and promising instrumental soloists from the Copenhagen music scene - Jonathan Swensen (cello) and Gustav Piekut (piano) - paired with NEKO3 in two new commissions by Sophie Søs Meyer and Connor McLean. The intention is to return to "point zero," revisiting NEKO3's origins in 2017 as a forward-thinking new music ensemble grounded in acoustic performance. By foregrounding classical instruments and traditional ensemble formats, the program highlights the musical identity and technical strength of NEKO3 as an experienced contemporary classical music ensemble.

The concert opens with **Neko** by **Jeppe Just Christensen**, the first piece NEKO3 ever performed publicly and the origin of its name. The piece was written in 2009 for two self-combined double-flexatones. The structure of each of the movements follows an additive/subtractive sequence of motives, that are presented as rhythms in the first movement and then translated into chords in the second and melodies in the third - all with the same duration. The two flexatones repeat the same rhythms and melodies, with one playing forwards and the other backwards.

Sophie Meyer's *Plantae* engages with ideas drawn from the contemporary philosopher Emanuele Coccia, who argues that metamorphosis - the phenomenon that allows the same life to exist across different bodies - is the relation that binds all species together and unites the living with the non-living. Bacteria, viruses, fungi, plants, and animals are all metamorphs of the same life. Based on this perspective, the work seeks a musical form that expresses organic coexistence. Each phrase develops as a reflection of the others, inhabiting a new body in relation to the preceding phrase. The form unfolds organically while simultaneously creating juxtapositions between phrases, mirroring the separation enacted by bodies within existence. With the instrumentation of two percussionists and piano, the work has been composed for NEKO3 and pianist Gustav Piekut.

The concert concludes with a new collaboration that points clearly toward NEKO3's future. In this work, the cellist Jonathan Swensen joins the ensemble for the premiere of ***Endless City*** by **Connor McLean**. This new work of multimedia music theater opens a window into a fantasy city with its own geography, characters, history, culture and soundscape, showing the audience just a fraction of its vastness. The imaginary city is outside of our time resembling both past and future and outside of our culture, both familiar and strange, taking particular interest in the city of Rome with the naive symbolism in the epithet of the "eternal city." Structured as a kind of living encyclopedia or map, ***Endless City*** will unfold through sounds, videos, staging, and physical objects. The world will be constructed as a collage of found sound and footage, captured, manipulated, and recontextualized by the composer, alongside staged video of the performers in various roles, composed music, and text, which will be either read aloud or presented visually. Through this dynamic multimedia presentation, audiences will be guided into the piece as if it were a hybrid guidebook/theater/ map/history into the past, present and future of an entirely new world.

Night 2 - 6.11.2026

installation

Nanna Søgaaard & Pernille Kaufmann x NEKO3: party/earth/museum/!!!! (2023-26 WORLD PREMIERE*)

On festival day 2, **Nanna Lysdahl Søgaaard & Pernille Kaufmann's *party/earth/museum/!!!!*** is presented as an audiovisual installation in the venue's basement. The work allows audiences to enter, linger, and explore the space at their own pace throughout the evening. The project was initially created as an audiovisual performance featured in NEKO3's Micro-workshop season of 2023. It reflects the sustainability of the initiative: following the premiere performance of the work 2023, the artists continued collaborating with NEKO3 to develop a fixed-media version of the work, enabling it to exist independently in museums and other non-concert contexts.

party/earth/museum/!!!! is an intermedia exploration of observation, presence, and the poetic textures of everyday life. The work is centered around Kaufmann's archive of raw video footage captured over the past year across Copenhagen, Bonn, and Paris. The videos offer intimate, slow investigations of mundane yet revealing moments through the lens of an observant outsider. Simultaneously, the video functions as an open score, fostering experimental and collaborative interactions between performers and media. The sonic world draws inspiration from the texture of 1980s punk, reimagined in a slower, porous, and percussive language that balances moments of fragmentation with instances of stability. The performance investigates the dynamic between immersion and rupture, exploring how performers and video can co-exist in real time, shaping a space where sound and image unfold simultaneously.

Wanderer

Lemon Guo: where do old sounds go to die? (2025 DANISH PREMIERE*)

Ni Zheng: the nakedness of our naked laceration (2023 DANISH PREMIERE*)

Han Zhang: No_Input_Dev (2026 WORLD PREMIERE*)

Liepa Vozgirdaitė x NEKO3: Rotations (2026 WORLD PREMIERE*)

+ Nanna Søgaaard & Pernille Kaufmann x NEKO3: party/earth/museum/!!!! (2023-26 WORLD PREMIERE*)

The second concert of the festival represents the ensemble's ongoing pursuit of artistic exchange, cultural inclusion and creative "contamination." At its core lies the belief that encountering new cultures and musical idioms is not only a source of inspiration, but a necessary condition for artistic growth and continuous evolution. This night highlights NEKO3's artistic philosophy in which exchange, travel, and curiosity are understood as vital forces in music, art, and creative practice more broadly. Simultaneously, it is a celebration of NEKO3's MICRO-WORKSHOP initiative, which has enabled meaningful, in-depth collaborations with dozens of young composers and artists ever since its conception in 2021, and facilitated international exchanges across Europe and beyond. Through this framework, NEKO3 has worked and performed at major festivals and universities worldwide, shaping both the ensemble's artistic identity and its international network.

The program brings to Copenhagen the results of recent travels to the United States in 2025 and Austria in 2023, where NEKO3 collaborated with composers Lemon Guo, Han Zhang, Ni Zheng and Liepa Vozgirdaitė during MICRO-WORKSHOP residencies at UC San Diego, Stanford University and impuls Festival. The concert presents four works developed in close collaboration - pieces that strongly resonated with NEKO3's artistic vision and working methods. Beyond music alone, it highlights the ensemble's long-standing vision of artistic practice as an expanded field that encompasses performance art, installation, visual art, and theatrical elements among others.

In ***where do old sounds go to die?***, **Lemon Guo** works with memory reconstruction. Field recordings she made of the traditional clothing-making practice via hammering cotton at the Kam villages in Guizhou, China, are transformed into memories in real time through letting the performers listen to the recordings a singular time and then recreating the soundscape based on what they can remember. The performance is recorded live on a cassette tape and, once the performers leave the stage, is played back for the audience together with a narration of the death of sound, which comments on the gradual disappearance of the hammering sound from the Kam villages due to cultural tourism transforming the village soundscape.

the nakedness of our naked laceration is a physical performance, featuring three performers created by **Ni Zheng**, objects, movements, and electroacoustic sounds. It delves into the array of sounds and noises produced by and with the body, focusing on the body's potential, its movements, and its capacity to endure and transform pain, while transgressing perceived boundaries and limitations. It aims to portray the body in its cruel, primordial materiality, using it as the site of violent and intense affects. The ensemble's physical presence, gestures, and vulnerability become central dramaturgical elements, and the fragility of human existence is placed on stage and transformed into a source of collective strength.

Han Zhang's *No_Input_Dev* explores the immanent capacities of things - how sound, material, and technological objects activate one another from within, rather than through external command. Centered on a non-contact feedback system composed of a tam-tam, a loudspeaker, and a microphone, the work encourages the immanence of one element to resonate with and amplify that of another. Sound does not originate from a single source or gesture, but emerges through mutual excitation: vibration in air provokes metal, metal reshapes sound, and the system continuously listens to itself. The piece is also a cross-media theatrical site for performances, with the performers' gestures subtly modulating the conditions of the system - spacing, orientation, proximity - guiding the feedback without fully controlling it. Each element remains distinct, yet none acts alone. Developed as a new collaborative work with NEKO3, the project treats feedback not as instability to be corrected, but as a relational force revealing how immanent processes connect, negotiate, and co-compose across media, materials, and bodies.

Liepa Vozgirdaitė works at the intersection of performance and installation, where the audience is invited to move freely through the space, exploring the soundscapes created by turntables and live performers as an immersive installation environment. Departing from vinyl records and traditional performance techniques, ***Rotations*** focuses on direct physical interaction between the turntable motor's spinning plate and a variety of everyday materials and objects, producing a wide spectrum of sounds from noise to resonance, melodies, continuous drones and rhythmic pulsations. The resulting sound world shifts between semi-autonomous, generative processes and gestures shaped directly by the performers' actions. Amplification strategies are used selectively alongside moments of purely acoustic sound. The work frames the turntable as an accessible, non-virtuosic instrument, inviting performers to engage through curiosity, tactile exploration, and attentive listening.

Roots

Simon Løffler: Solo for Snare Drum (2026 WORLD-PREMIERE*)

Mads Emil Dreyer: Lament, Music Box Music (2025 DANISH PREMIERE*)

Jeppe Ernst: Bønnebog - Treatment B (Ordinarium) (2026 WORLD-PREMIERE*)

Jeppe Ernst: Nocturnes (for a human body) (2023)

Simon Løffler, Dreamwork, trio version (2018-2024*)

The second concert of the night is an homage to NEKO3's roots and to the close artistic relationships that have accompanied the ensemble since its creation. The program brings together composers and collaborators who were central to NEKO3's early years in Copenhagen, alongside new commissions written specifically for the ensemble and its individual members. Thus, the concert highlights NEKO3's identity as a modular ensemble, capable of shifting fluidly between solo, duo, trio, and more complex configurations. The dramaturgy of the concert follows a clear geometric progression: beginning with two solo works, expanding into two duos, and culminating in a trio.

The concert opens with the world premiere of ***Solo for Snare Drum*** by **Simon Løffler**, written for Lorenzo Colombo. The work engages directly with post-instrumental practice, exploring the snare drum's potential as a melodic and multifaceted solo voice. The piece builds on an extensive research collaboration in which unique playing techniques are developed to expand the snare drum's rhythmic and timbral possibilities. Colombo, with a background in both heavy metal and experimental composition, brings virtuosity and specialized techniques such as continuous one-handed rolls and asymmetric hand patterns to the work. The drum's body is extended with 12 snares across the drumhead, and the sticks are prepared with vibrators and butterfly wings, producing a new range of resonances and sonic textures. The resulting music inhabits a space between pulsating white noise and melodic overtone glissandi and stepwise patterns.

The second work is a recent solo work by **Mads Emil Dreyer**, a long-term collaborator of NEKO3 and one of the ensemble's founding members (est. 2017). This piece reflects the deep artistic continuity between the ensemble and its closest collaborators, with Kalle Hakosalo commissioning and premiering the piece in 2025. ***Music Box Music, Lament*** centers around a music box that plays melodies transcribed on paper tape and ran through its system. The sound is augmented by human voice and bar chimes, which are further amplified and electronically processed. With both its artistic potential and mechanical imperfections (e.g. noises made by the music box machinery) amplified, the setup and performer appear exposed on stage - full of imagination, but limited by physics.

The program then continues with two duo works that foreground the idea of artistic family, a concept that has long characterized NEKO3's working methods. In these pieces, Colombo and Hakosalo perform together with their life partners Marta Soggetti and Erica Giacometto, both of whom are long-standing collaborators of NEKO3. Behind both the works is the Copenhagen-based composer **Jeppe Ernst**, a close artistic partner of both NEKO3 and its individual members.

Bønnebrog: Treatment B (Ordinarium) is composed for neck musculature and forms the second part of a trilogy consisting of three works - trio (beginning), duo (middle), and solo (end) - whose subtitles reference sections of the Catholic Mass. In each movement, the two performers rotate one step around their own axis, resulting in five distinct spatial relationships between them and the audience, ranging from facing each other to standing back-to-back. Because the neck determines the direction of vision, the musical material consists of vertical and horizontal neck movements. The work functions as a study of how changes in gaze direction affect the perceived relationship between the performers from an external viewpoint, and neck positions are treated as a kind of tonal system, where fixed postures function analogously to consonant and dissonant relationships within a two-voice melodic structure.

The concept for ***Nocturnes (for a human body)*** arose at a time when Ernst suffered from insomnia. The performers carry out the various movements lying on the floor, and the work unfolds as four so-called routines (much like standard movements in the world of ballet). The idea is that one has to go through these routines to fall asleep, but it doesn't work. The four movements' titles illustrate different time intervals over the night to indicate the strange sense of time that occurs when one lies awake all night. It is a sibling work to ***Nocturnes (for a human mind)***, that is written for a sleeping person's imagination.

The evening is concluded by ***Dreamwork*** - originally a quartet by **Simon Løffler**, arranged for NEKO3 and premiered in 2025. The piece exemplifies the ensemble's post-instrumental ethos, featuring musicians performing exclusively on their own bodies - whipping, scraping, and stroking with 50 cm-extended fingers - in precise choreographic formations, alongside an alien-like machine that attempts to mimic the musicians with its own rapid and slow movements. The work explores a hybrid field of new technology and musicianship, confronting performers with extreme demands of precision, timing, and bodily awareness, while also highlighting the inherent vulnerabilities that emerge when humans encounter highly mechanized counterparts.

Night 3 - 7.11.2026

Home

Alexander Schubert x NEKO3, Angel Death Traps (2022-24*)

The closing night of the festival celebrates the concept of home. Drawing on its Latin origin, “casa - home” embodies a tension between temporariness and permanence: a dwelling may be simple or provisional, yet it is deeply rooted in lived experience. This makes “casa” (a powerful metaphor for identity) and belonging not fixed conditions, but qualities shaped over time through use, care, and return. In this spirit, the festival reflects on NEKO3 as a home - a hub of creativity that fosters belonging and identity, yet remains a concept continually shaped and curated through passion, dedication, and hard work.

For the conclusion of the festival, NEKO3 will present their project with the German composer **Alexander Schubert, *Angel Death Traps***. This production is one of NEKO3’s most visionary and personal projects to date, having allowed the ensemble to perform at major European festivals and has reshaped their understanding of its own identity and artistic languages. More than a single work, the project embodies NEKO3’s philosophy: the possibility to continuously evolve, reinterpret meaning, and explore new visions while maintaining a coherent artistic identity. *Angel Death Traps* has been central to NEKO3’s long-term journey of artistic research and experimentation.

Angel Death Traps is a song cycle by Alexander Schubert situated around the trans-human condition, in which a fusion between the body and technology is progressing further and further. These songs are progressions of the intertwining of the digital and the human. The expression of the performers becomes increasingly artificial and technically stylized while addressing strongly personal, emotional, and sexual desires. It’s a transition process, a melting of flesh and motherboard. The artificial and nature are constantly contrasted and interwoven with each other.

OTHER COLLABORATORS

The festival will once again celebrate the group’s strong focus on visual identity, collaborating with one of the most exciting artists on the Copenhagen panorama, **Matilde Digmann**.

Matilde Digmann (Mat) is an award-winning artist and author. Their artistic practice is multi-faceted, rooted in two main principles:

1. Creating work that brings hidden shadows to light, exposing what is often kept in the dark, and challenging biased structures in society and dominant moral frameworks. Through graphic novels like *Pseudo* and *Bad Boys*, Mat aims to heal a generation shaped by capitalist patriarchy.
2. Contributing to the artistic community, particularly supporting blocked or marginalized artists, through initiatives like the Shadow Work Podcast.

For the festival, Matilde will incorporate its spirit by creating a poster that embodies its essence, along with a small fanzine. The fanzine will explore the festival’s themes - *Genesis*, *Wanderer*, *Roots*, *Home* - shaping the overall visual identity of the event.

LINKS

Ni Zheng: *the nakedness of our naked laceration*

*ScoreFollower video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1JusXnpcxA&list=RDP1JusXnpcxA&start_radio=1

Lemon Guo: *where do old sounds go to die*

*Premiere documentation at Stanford University in 2025

<https://youtu.be/ljyOFseHexI?si=4B61uaEaTQI166xW&t=1214>

Nanna Søgaaard & Pernille Kaufmann x NEKO3: party/earth/museum/!!!!

*Short document of the work process

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhp1rRD6RY&t=40s>

Han Zhang: Theegma Duo (Han Zhang & Yifan Guo) No Input Device: tam-tam feedback system

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AoGepDGXJGg>

Alexander Schubert x NEKO3: *Angel Death Traps*

*Video: unedited, raw camera audio recording from a general rehearsal at Mousonturm (Frankfurt) on 22.02.2024

<https://youtu.be/8Gw5aFm9k5M?si=oYL1AM00zKnVjUml&t=2013>

*Green On A Black Screen, live recording

<https://youtu.be/GqGHyz4b20>

*Documentary from Jose Villalon

<https://youtu.be/nMr89CDXx0s?si=8t9c-YU4LVUWNatV>