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Festival dreamscapes

'Art is society's way of dreaming,' says Anders Beyer, artistic director of the Bergen International Festival, launching its 67th edition today.

This year's festival in Bergen, Norway, will take place from 22 May until 05 June, with *longing* as an overall theme running through the programme. The theme is apparent in the [opening performance *Waiting*](#), a re-telling of Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* seen from the character Solveig's point of view set to Edvard Grieg's music. Norwegian author Karl Ove Knausgård has created a modern Solveig for the performance, which will be directed by Catalan Calixto Bieito and have critically acclaimed Norwegian soprano Mari Eriksmoen in the leading role.

The opening performance sets the tone for hundreds of events at 30 venues in and around the city of Bergen in Western Norway. This year's programme will present thirteen world premieres of theatrical and musical works and eight Scandinavian premieres.

'As always, the programme presents art of all genres during fifteen remarkable days when the city finds itself at its most beautiful,' says festival director Anders Beyer.

International stars visit Bergen

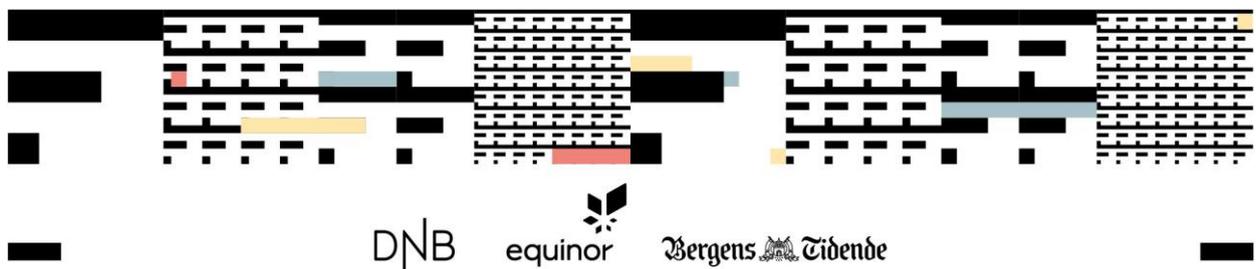
The line-up contains both world-famous classical stars such as [Yo-Yo Ma](#), [Kathryn Stott](#), [Steven Isserlis](#), [Robert Levin](#) and [Hilary Hahn](#), and internationally renowned artists and creators including [Angélique Kidjo](#), [Mikael Persbrandt](#), [Robert Wilson](#) and [Nils Frahm](#). [Festival composer Unsuk Chin](#) will also be prominent in the 2019 programme.

The Bergen International Festival continues its focus on art in virtual versions and offers [a free VR lounge](#) at the main venue of Grieghallen throughout the Festival period. Also on the programme is the [crime mystery *Frogman*](#), which includes VR in the play itself.

'Together with our many partners at home and abroad, the Festival offers extraordinary dreamscapes filled with art and experiences, creating space to think new thoughts and put the soul to use, says Anders Beyer, who has been Festival director since 2012.

New venue in the middle of the city

In the city square, a new epicentre for the Festival is created, hosting 22 different events. In the Festival tent in the square, acts include author Karl Ove Knausgård and band, voodoo priestess and artist Moonlight Benjamin and [Joan as Police Woman](#) performing solo. Outdoors, [massive dinosaurs roam to the delight of young and old](#) and [the world's most swinging potato-installation plays greasy tunes](#).



'I believe in the transformative powers of art, and that experiences engaging our hearts enrich our lives more than we can fathom. In that sense, the Festival is a gift that society presents to itself', says the Festival director.

Notes to editors/Bergen International Festival (Festspillene i Bergen)

- The Bergen International Festival is the largest of its kind in Scandinavia and presents hundreds of events in a variety of genres, with the main focus on music and stage arts.
- The first Bergen International Festival took place in 1953, inspired by a previous initiative by Norwegian composer Edvard Grieg.
- In 2019, the Bergen International Festival takes place from 22 May till 05 June
- His Majesty King Harald V of Norway is the Festival's patron.
- The Festival Opening Ceremony on 22 May will be attended by Her Majesty Queen Sonja of Norway.

[See the full Festival programme](#)

[Download press photos](#)

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Bergen International Festival, 22 May–05 June 2019

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