

Opera Lab Berlin: A Guide to Self- Synthesis

A Music Theater Performance by
Opera Lab Berlin

English Theatre Berlin |
International Performing Arts
Center,

Fidicinstr. 40, 10965 Berlin-
Kreuzberg

January 30, 2025 (World Premiere)

January 31 & February 1, 2025 | 8:00 PM each evening

www.opera-lab-berlin.com | www.etberlin.de | [Press Kit](#)

Language: No problem (English and other languages)

Duration: Approx. 90 minutes



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With its new performance, Opera Lab Berlin takes inspiration from pioneers of electronic music such as Wendy Carlos, SOPHIE and Pauline Oliveros in their new performance. They celebrate overcoming mechanical-acoustic sound production and going beyond heteronormative boundaries.

Together with trans singer-songwriter Marlene Bellissimo, known from The Voice of Germany, Opera Lab Berlin explores the sonic potential of electronics for defining your own parameters in A Guide To Self-Synthesis. Its transformative, transgressive power and frequencies of (self-)expression become the focus of the performance, for which composer Evan Gardner creates a pluralistic combination of notated but non-restrictive sound fields. The US-American university professor and activist Susan Stryker, one of the foremost scholars in the field of (trans)gender studies, will take the stage as a special guest with her own contribution to the production.

What possibilities does synthetic sound production offer? How do queer harmonies and trans oscillators sound? Following the principle of Mauricio Kagel's instrumental theater, singing and dancing, music from synthesizers, motion-tracking technology, composition and choreography come together in A Guide to Self-Synthesis, a new utopian and emancipatory celebration of electronic music.

“[Opera Lab Berlin is] one of the most experimental and refreshing musical theater groups in the Berlin's independent performing arts community” (Siegessäule),

MARLENE BELLISSIMO is a trans woman and musician. As a trans singer-songwriter often focusing on trans voices in her work, she is interested in how gender fluidity can be expressed through the voice. On TikTok, she celebrates the diversity of trans voices,

performing [one-woman-duets](#) that showcase her vocal range. In 2023, she released an EP titled [christmas with my dead self](#), and she is known on YouTube for her documentary [Finding a Trans Voice](#), where she discusses the philosophical and practical journey of finding a new voice through her transition. In September 2024, Marlene Bellissimo appeared on *The Voice of Germany*, astonishing the judges with her vocal artistry.

The **Opera Lab Berlin** music theater ensemble is a hybrid collective that links all creative elements together. People from all artistic fields come together in Opera Lab: whether music, acting, composition, directing, instruments, choreography, stage and costume design, lighting, stagecraft or dramaturgy – equality is a core principle at Opera Lab Berlin. Since its founding in 2013, the collective has brought over 30 original productions to the stage, featuring compositions by more than 40 contemporary composers and directed by over 18 different directors. The core ensemble has grown to more than 30 members and they collaborate with over 100 artists and production staff.

Concept by Opera Lab Berlin | Created and Performed by: Marlene Bellissimo, Francesca Verga, Rapheal Papo, Sadie Shea, Daniel Zea and Evan Gardner | Music by Daniel Zea, Pauline Oliveros, Marlene Bellissimo, Opera Lab Berlin and Evan Gardner | Text by Peach Kander, Cyrée Jarelle Johnson, Jayson Keery, Charles Theonia and Susan Stryker | Film and Video by Samuel Chalela Puccini | Musical Direction by Rapheal Papo | Choreography by Sadie Shea | Lighting Design Boris Schenk | Sound Design, Sensor & Programming by Daniel Zea & Oscar Vauris | Live Sound by Felix von Dohlen | Production Management by Paula Häfele Production & Assistant Director by Ben by Goldby | Press and PR Work by Sarah Rosenau | Harpsichord Sculpture by Aléinor Dauchez | Artistic Direction by Evan Gardner

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