

# CTM Festival 2023 – Portals

## First Programme Announcement



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### FESTIVAL FOR ADVENTUROUS MUSIC & ART, BERLIN

#### 24<sup>th</sup> EDITION, 27 JANUARY – 5 FEBRUARY 2023

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CTM 2023 will take place at Berghain, HAU Hebbel am Ufer, silent green, radialsystem, and other Berlin venues. This 24th edition uses the metaphor of [Portals](#) as curatorial shapes through which to make contact with specific modes of experience, histories, communities, and speculative futures – and to reflect on the preconditions, thresholds, regulation, and fundamental function of sound and music as gateways to other realities.

Sound and music open portals to other realities and to the experiences of others, transporting us to real, speculative, and imaginary worlds, which in turn always point back to the realities of their creators. These wormholes allow us to engage with utopian longings, the complex stories of social and artistic movements, alternative histories, collective identities, or deeply personal experiences. Yet in thinking about music as portals and practices of world-building, one must inevitably also deal with questions of access and inclusion.

Details on the festival programme, the festival theme, and on various open calls are to be found on the following pages or on our website: <http://www.ctm-festival.de>

We launch the 2023 programming with artists:

**Ana Fosca** (DK)

**Audrey Chen, Hugo Esquinca, Doron Sadja** (INT) – »PIERCE.«

**Authentically Plastic** (UG)

**Courtesy** (DK)

**Eris Drew b2b Octo Octa** (US)

**Gibrana Cervantes** (MX)

**Hanaby** (DE)

**Lil Mariko** (US)

**Lolsnake** (US/DE)

**LSDXOXO** (US/DE)

**LustSickPuppy** (US)

**Maria W Horn & Sara Parkman** (SE) – »Funeral Folk«

**Mookie** (FR/ES)

**Om Unit** (UK) pres. »Acid Dub Studies« live

**Stefanie Egedy** (BR/DE) pres. »Sub-Bass Dose«

**Tash LC** (UK)

**Toumba** (JO)

**Tzusing** (INT)

**Van Boom** (KW)

**VMO aka Violent Magic Orchestra** (JP)

Plus special projects:

**GROUP50:50** (INT) – »The Ghosts Are Returning«

**Maryanne Amacher** (US) – »GLIA«

Radio Lab Winners:

**Anna Kravets** (UA) – »An Emotional Encyclopedia of War«

**Isuru Kumarasinghe** (SK) – »Gilunu: I Became One with You«

The **Research Networking Day 2023** programme

And open calls for:

**MusicMakers Hacklab 2023**

**CTM 2023 Magazine**

**Vorspiel 2023**

# CTM 2023 Performances & Club Acts

Jump into festival hyperdrive with euphoric energy of [Eris Drew b2b Octo Octa](#) as they weave through classic house, rare rave gems, and hard-hitting breaks. The dancefloor favourites will finally grace CTM's opening club night at Panorama Bar with a multi-hour journey through a sparkling wormhole. Joining the frenzy is Floorgasm founder [LSDXOXO](#) with a cut-throat live set of his wild takes on Baltimore club, electro, techno, and one of the fastest rising DJs in the 030, Local Juice Soundsystem head honcho [Hanaby](#).

A member of Barcelona's experimental afro-diasporic collective Jokkoo, [Mookie](#) will fire up another club night at Berghain with punked and distorted afro-futuristic sounds, fried and hard. He'll be joined by Berlin mainstay [Lolsnake](#), founder of the queer party Weeeirdos with a love of hypnotic techno and harder sounds, as well as [Van Boom](#), a producer, DJ, and organizer embedded in the Arab states along the Gulf Region. Encoded into the giddy fragmentation and acidic crescendos of Van Boom's music is a deep meditation on the meaning of difference and disobedience in very real circumstances. Rave, black metal, industrial, and noise form an unholy alliance with art and music project [VMO aka Violent Magic Orchestra](#). The intense mosh music of the six-piece collective from Japan has found a home on Gabber Eleganza's NEVER SLEEP label, which is slated to release their upcoming second album. Blending elements of punk, gabber, drum & bass and rap, [LustSickPuppy](#) delivers equal parts glitter and blood through a live rave liturgy that takes audiences by the leash while offering the ride of a lifetime. Following a collaboration with Machine Girl's Matthew Stephenson, they will appear fresh off a sun-drenched sophomore EP *As Hard As You Can*, sporting their signature smiley face paint which in their words: »represents me existing as a black queer person having to smile my way through this fucked up world. If you can't see past this face, you will never be able to connect with me deeply.« With a new full-length LP on PAN in the pipeline, [Tzusing](#) will venture into his blend of aggressive, cathartic music, inflected with off-kilter rhythms, textured harmonies, resonant drums and an occasional nod to the redemptive power of pop.

Further club acts include [Om Unit](#), who will journey through psychedelic dub methodologies with his latest *Acid Dub Studies*. The distinct sound signatures of the Roland 303 and timeless dub techniques referencing masters such as King Tubby, Adrian Sherwood, and Basic Channel open up a deeply embodied psychedelic memory echospace. Spearheading Kampala's ANTI-MASS queer parties and collective, [Authentically Plastic](#) is an essential figure in the city's underground dance scene. They'll appear with a live premiere of their debut album *Raw Space*, an exploration of »sonic flatness,« where kinetic industrial thumps and influences from East Africa's innovative musical landscape cross through acerbic polyrhythms in overdrive, oscillating between the hypnotic and unrest. Spinning high-impact techno, house, and dark electro, [Courtesy](#) has been a mainstay of Copenhagen's tight-knit underground music scene for over a decade, rising to prominence as a founding member of the Apeiron Crew and label head local imprints Ectotherm, and Kuløre. Her 2022 debut EP *Night Journeys* hints at the power of a well-tuned DJ ear turning to producer. [Toumba](#) integrates elements from Jordanian and Levantine folk music into his driving, low-end heavy club offerings. As a curator at MNFA, a club and arts space in Jordan's capital Amman, he is part of an artistic community that provides a haven for wide-ranging expression in an otherwise conservative cultural establishment. Equally at home running club nights (see Boko! Boko! or Club Yeke) as she is on the airwaves (NTS, BBC Radio 1Xtra, Worldwide FM), [Tash LC](#) tastefully balances afro-jazz and highlife broadcasts with more up-tempo meetings of kuduro, gqom, and esoteric club sounds.

CTM's concert programme traverses distinct embodied experiences and sonic narratives:

Rising screamo queen Lil Mariko makes hardcore meme music that gleefully mashes sonic elements of metal, trap, pop, and techno with the Tik-Tok universe. Following a few viral bangers with producer Full Tac and rapper Rico Nasty, she's looking forward to spewing more »vomit-inducing, cringe-worthy music« at CTM, to pierce her fan's ear holes and damage their hearing with her terrifying screams.

*Funeral Folk* is a new album by Maria W Horn and Sara Parkman, exploring »the rituals of grief and the musical phenomenology of death.« The longtime friends have combined their respective solo careers with Parkman diving into Swedish folk music through her voice and violin, and Horn probing into the spectral properties of sound via analogue synths or chamber music formats. Recorded and performed with composer Mats Erlandsson, the album is a sonic guide to rites of loss that sources sacred songs, minimalist spectral music, folk melodies from Ångermanland, and Finnish black metal. Ana Fosca takes us through a dark ambient portal with her new release *Poised at the Edge of Structure*, landing into a bleak fen of floating voices curved around scraped strings and looping cyclonic thicket. Fosca describes her album as »the mathematics of grief,« amplifying personal experiences with loss to expound upon the human condition at large.

»PIERCE.« is a new work by Audrey Chen, Hugo Esquinca, and Doron Sadja that pushes beyond the physical limits of hyperextended voice through unstable arrangements for signal processing. Exploiting the specificities of Berghain's sound system, the unpredictable voice/processing interplay combined with extreme lighting put performers and audience alike into states of vulnerability and persistence.

Co-founder of sound gallery 316 centro, a space focused on bringing to light different manifestations of sound art in Mexico City, Gibrana Cervantes has focused her work as a violinist on sound processing, pulling from a background in metal and using noise as a compositional tool. Supporting an upcoming solo album, *¿Cómo pasamos la eternidad?*, Cervantes ventures through contemplative spectral dissonances that open spaces for emotional resonance.

SHAPE+ supported artist Stefanie Egedy will present »Sub-Bass Dose,« a live performance exploring the potential of sound waves – with a special focus on low-end emanations from high-powered subwoofers – to reverberate bodies and nervous systems into more relaxed states. The concert is part of her ongoing investigation of low-frequency sound waves, subwoofer arrangements, and bodies titled »Bodies And Subwoofers (B.A.S.).«

# CTM 2023 Special Projects

Unequivocally one of the most magnificent musical mavericks of the 20th century, the late [Maryanne Amacher](#) developed a body of unique methodologies and concepts that underpinned her life-long research into the experience of sound in particular spaces, ways of hearing, and the creative potentialities of how the ear itself processes sounds. One of her last works, »[GLIA](#),« is named after the brain cells which assist in neurotransmission between synapses. For this piece Amacher imagined otoacoustic emissions – sounds produced in the ears of the listener when stimulated by distinct frequencies – as this neural interface. This work was performed only once in Berlin before her untimely death in 2009, however thanks to intensive research by Ensemble [Zwischentöne](#) director [Bill Dietz](#) into reconstructing it for future performance, »[GLIA](#),« has recently seen a handful of re-premieres with members of ensembles [Contrechamps](#) and [Zwischentöne](#). The performance of »[GLIA](#),« at CTM continues the collective interpretive re-presentation of Amacher's practice.

[GROUP50:50](#), a collective of artists from Congo, Switzerland, and Germany that explore the historical and current economic and political interconnections between their countries, will present »[The Ghosts Are Returning](#),« a post-documentary music performance about seven pygmy skeletons brought to Geneva from Congo by a Swiss doctor in the 1950s. Unlike many African skeletons languishing in the archives of European museums, the names, approximate origins, dates, and causes of death of these seven are known, and their descendants can be found within the nomadic Mbuti people of the forests of the Congo. But do these descendants want the skeletons and spirits of their ancestors back? Because what is rarely considered in the debate about restitution is that returning masks, skulls, and skeletons also bring back the spirits that the Europeans stole and locked away during the colonial era. Together with the Mbuti, [GROUP50:50](#) have developed a funeral ritual for the seven spirits – taking inspiration from traditional Congolese music, the funeral ceremonies and polyphonic chants of the Mbuti, and laments in the classical music tradition – in the hope that they will find peace. A project by [PODIUM](#) Esslingen with [GROUP50:50](#) and the Centre d'Art Waza Lubumbashi.

# CTM 2023 Radio Lab

Two winning projects have been selected from the [CTM 2023 Radio Lab](#) open call, which sought unusual explorations of the artistic possibilities of radio and live performance or installation mediums.

Kyiv-based artist [Anna Kravets](#) proposes a series of interactions and collective recording sessions to create an auto-ethnographic radio essay on the differences in emotional perceptions of times of war and peace. Continuing an idea initiated together with semisilent.ro, ASCR, and Q-O2, Kravets will invite a limited number of people to a basement / shelter environment where the perception of time and experience can shift, opening up a transition zone in which to explore what a feeling of danger and emergency can do to our bodies. Which types of practical and emotional reactions and responsibilities are evoked, and what can participation and sharing add to such experiences? How might one begin to translate the feeling of war to people abroad, to share the imperceptibility of the war experience and how discordant it is with life beyond its borders? Having experienced her own habitual reference system fall apart, together with the hopes that the full-scale war would not actually break out in Ukraine, Kravets aims to work towards an emotional encyclopedia of war that will manifest as a radio broadcast.

»Gilunu« – meaning »to be immersed« or »submerged« in Sinhala – plays with our total and constant immersion in sound by exploring resonance and space as instruments through a live performance installation. In his work »Gilunu: I Became One with You,« Radio Lab winner [Isuru Kumarasinghe](#) from Sri Lanka proposes to continue his explorations on the resonance of sympathetic strings and space activated by voice and Esraj, using its resonance along with field recordings as the sonic source of an eternal resonating chamber. The artist writes: »I understand the idea of the resonating chamber to be like a portal: when we step into a space or a place, where the resonance is changed or enhanced, we naturally feel like engaging with that resonance (...) to see how the space transforms the sound and how in return it transforms us. It becomes like a portal into a different world, as part of this world, just for this moment.« The radio piece will be a re-imagination of the experience of what it is like to enter and be transformed inside a resonating chamber.

The Radio Lab is a project by Deutschlandfunk Kultur – Hörspiel / Klangkunst and CTM Festival in collaboration with Goethe-Institut, ORF Ö1 Kunstradio, and The Wire magazine.

# Research Networking Day 2023

The yearly RND programme is back, this year featuring nine scholars and artists/researchers from a variety of fields of study and approaches, who will give short presentations on their research within the scope of the 2023 Portals theme: [Aditi Srivastava](#), [Becca Rose](#), [Cem Cakmak](#), [Hanna Grzeńkiewicz](#), [Hugo Scurto](#), [Justyna Stasiowska](#), [Nico Daleman](#), [Sergio Santiago Rentería Aguilar](#), [Stas Sharifullin](#).

The [full programme for RND 2023](#) is now online, and touches on themes of political sonic practices, on communication with non-human entities, and on creative ways of engaging with machine learning and sound technologies. It will take place as a hybrid in-person and streamed event and is offered free of charge.

## CTM 2023 Open Calls

A worldwide open call is out to all artists, thinkers, experimenters interested in collaborative creation at the next edition of CTM's [MusicMakers Hacklab](#). Selected participants work together during the festival week to explore and realize new musical ideas, which are then tested out in a public finale performance. Apply by 7 November.

An open call for the [CTM 2023 magazine](#) is open to writers, artists, and thinkers wishing to engage with the topic of Portals, as well as ongoing topics within independent music ecosystems and scenes. Apply by 15 November.

The [Vorspiel open call](#) is aimed at independent project spaces, platforms, initiatives, curators and artists based in Berlin who wish to propose ideas as part of a two-week event series leading up to and running in parallel with CTM and transmediale festivals. Apply by 9 November.

# Portals – CTM 2023 Theme

Sound and music open portals to other realities and to the experiences of others. A societal moment and its long history can be expressed in a music genre, a track, a certain tonality, a rhythm, or even a single sound, a small tonal shift, or in the combination of two musical elements. Complex stories of social movements, resistance, and empowerment can resound within such sonic fragments. The longing for a utopia, alternate worlds, the reality of a community, or an individual's idiosyncratic mental map can be articulated. And vice versa: the sounding of such a musical marker, agent, or medium can transport listeners to its underlying stories, realities, and modes of experience, drawing them deeply into states of being, emotions, and discourses.

We are transported to other physical and mental states through sonic affects and resonances, which evoke emotions and sensations, activate the imagination, and echo memories. However, as abstract as experimental forms of music and sound may seem, they are also grounded in storytelling, not only through obvious forms such as lyrics, but by taking place in and responding to present and historical contexts, which they continue to expand. The choice of contributors, structures, tools, and materials also produces meaning. Collaborations across geographies and cultures, for example, or pulling together materials and ideas from different times and places, create unexpected connections in the form of spatio-temporal folds and tunnels as well as new historiographical forking, which from then on may follow their own trajectories. Such portals and wormholes transport us to real, speculative, and imaginary worlds, which in turn always point back to the experience and reality of a world's creator.

Portals, and the worlds they give access to, can be created using a wide variety of techniques: they can favour bodily, affective, ritual, mnemonic, emotional, narrative, or documentary approaches – or combinations thereof – and use immersion, alternative temporalities, and world-building. Artists must ask themselves through which means and modalities a portal operates. Does it invite active immersion and engagement, or does it create an irresistible pull across a threshold? Should listeners remain as observers or become co-producers? Is the focus on the commonality or the limits of shared experience? Should access be widened, or should a reflection on privilege, differences, and inequalities be achieved by standing in front of closed doors?

In thinking about music as portals and practices of world-building, one must inevitably deal with questions of access and exclusion. What creates permeability? Who is addressed? Who gets access and how is access governed? And who owns the material and immaterial resources to be able to create portals and the worlds behind them in the first place?

CTM 2023 uses the metaphor of the portal as a curatorial shape through which, on the one hand, we attempt to make contact with specific modes of experience, histories, communities, and practises of world-building, and, on the other, we reflect on the preconditions, thresholds, regulation, and fundamental function of sound and music as gateways to other realities.

# Tickets and Accreditation

[Festival passes](#) are on sale now in limited quantities. Festivalgoers can choose between the CTM Pass, which grants access to most of the festival's events, or the Connect Pass which offers additional access to transmediale festival programming. Tickets to specific concerts and events will go on sale in December.

The [press accreditation](#) application period is now open, with a deadline of 9 January 2023 to apply. Journalists can apply to cover CTM or transmediale respectively, or for a combined accreditation to both festivals.

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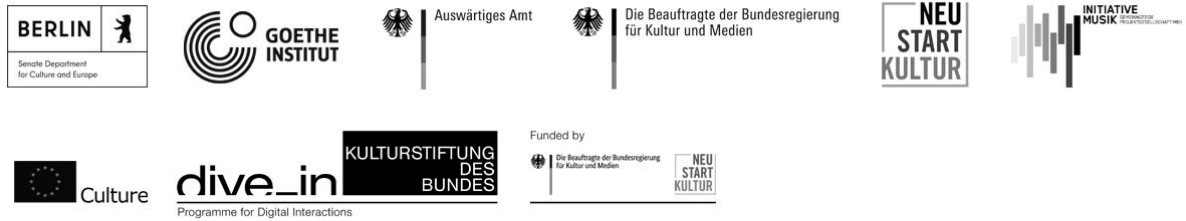
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