

TEE

TRANS EUROPE EXPRESS

HANS LÜDEMANN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Ministerium für
Kultur und Wissenschaft
des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen



Kunststiftung
NRW



Budapest Music Center



O-Tone
Music



DEUTSCHE AKADEMIE ROM
VILLA MASSIMO

Casa
del
Jazz



TransEuropeExpress ensemble, a group of outstanding French-German jazz musicians, led by Hans Lüdemann, is embarking to explore Europe's frontiers with the project called **On The Edges**. Step by step they create an exciting yet organic music from the tension arising from the difference between instrumental techniques, musical heritage, cultures, generations, tradition, esthetics or idioms in the field of improvisation and composition with strong artistic personalities.

TEE

HANS LÜDEMANN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR,
PIANO, VIRTUAL PIANO

ALEXANDRA GRIMAL SAXOPHONES

RÉGIS HUBY VIOLIN

SILKE EBERHARD SAXOPHONE, CLARINETS

YVES ROBERT TROMBONE

RONNY GRAUPE GUITAR

SÉBASTIEN BOISSEAU DOUBLE BASS

DEJAN TERZIC DRUMS

GUESTS

MAJID BEKKAS OUD, GUEMBRI, VOICE

SOFIA JENBERG VOICE

KALLE KALIMA GUITAR

RITA MARCOTULLI PIANO

LUCIANO BONDINI ACCORDEON



info@transeuropeexpress-ensemble.eu

ON THE EDGES

In his book **“Along the Trenches”** German writer **Navid Kermani** set out on a journey to and beyond the outer borders of the European Union. His observations, encounters, and experiences comprised a multi-faceted picture that reflected our personal, social, and political reality as Europeans, and in relation to our neighbours, in a sensitive way.


Inspired by this idea, the TransEuropeExpress, the French-German jazz ensemble, is going on a musical journey beyond borders with a new long-term project **On the Edges**. The musicians deliberately **step out of their comfort zone** of familiar musical styles to open themselves and the ensemble in new directions.

Begun in 2019, this project in perpetual exploration will soon enter its fourth phase. The encounters have the goal of merging the wide scope of different projects into a unified musical "Gesamtkunstwerk" – **a total work of art**.

Hans Lüdemann's eponymous composition 'On the edges' is the musical link that connects all five editions of the project.



ON THE EDGES 1 – MAGHREB EXPRESS



RONNY GRAUPE, SILKE EBERHARD, REGIS HUBY
SÉBASTIEN BOISSEAU, HANS LÜDEMANN, YVES ROBERT
DEJAN TERZIC, MAJID BEKKAS, ALEXANDRA GRIMAL

With On the Edges 1 the cycle of projects starts out beyond the European cultural sphere, on the opposite side of the Mediterranean Sea, in a cooperation with Moroccan musician, composer, and singer **Majid Bekkas**. He contributes compositions, ideas and improvisations of his own. With his instruments, the oud and the guembri (bass lute) and elements from the **North African Gnawa tradition**, the challenge and charm of the project are to make creative use of the tension and differences between different musical cultures. Together with their guest, the ensemble has found different approaches to establishing connections, as well as highlighting the differences and using them to create musical energy and tension.



One principal difference is the predominantly oral tradition of African music, as opposed to the written material that the music of the ensemble is usually based on, in spite of all the improvisational space and freedom. This is an aspect that questions many of the usual mechanisms, because a notated work is much more easily and quickly realized by professional musicians than learning a whole piece of music by ear.



MAJID BEKKAS, MAROCCO

The ensemble took the time to go through this process, learning the music by ear, instructed and led by Majid. The arrangement that evolved is the result of this collective process. The lyrics are mystic and come from the Sufi tradition.

Majid Bekkas is not only rooted in the oral tradition of Gnawa music, but is also an educated musician with a **wide horizon and vast experience**, who also writes and reads musical scores. This makes him an ideal partner for this project and allows us to use different approaches.

The goal was to find a balance that embeds and brings out the sound of his lutes and voice and **opens spaces to bring out the sounds**, soloistic qualities, and individuality of those musicians.



ALBUM INFORMATION

<https://lc.cx/omjr4a>

ON THE EDGES 2 POLAR EXPRESS

KALLE
KALIMA

SOFIA
JERNBERG

SILKE
EBERHARD

RÉGIS
HUBY

DEJAN
TERZIC

SÉBASTIEN
BOISSEAU

YVES
ROBERT

HANS
LÜDEMANN





SOFIA JERNBERG, SWEDEN

On the Edges 2 “Polar Express” is the second part of a great musical journey to different regions at the borders of Europe. The fact that we were able to realize this project in 2020, only one year after “On the Edges 1”, was a small miracle, because it took place in the first year of the **Corona pandemic**, when almost all concerts and projects were cancelled.

Polar Express was also on the brink of collapse and was postponed, but finally the “Jazzfestival Ruhr” was brave enough to actually organize concerts in September and to include our premiere in the program. Rehearsals and recordings were also organized, all musicians were spared contagion and the premiere and production were able to go ahead!



But it also meant that for this project the possibility of combining the musical journey with geographical travel was ruled out. The exchange with the two guests - the singer **Sofia Jernberg** from Stockholm and **Kalle Kalima**, the Finnish guitarist based in Berlin, in the run-up to the project and in the course of its development had to take place in other ways, mostly online.

A man with a beard and mustache, wearing large black headphones, is smiling and looking towards the camera. He is holding a thin baton or stick in his right hand. He is wearing a black t-shirt. The background is a warm, dimly lit room with a textured wall and a glowing lamp. The text "KALLE KALIMA, FINLAND" is overlaid on the left side of the image.

KALLE KALIMA, FINLAND



ALBUM INFORMATION

<https://lc.cx/degXae>

There are many fascinating aspects about Sofia Jernberg's singing and voice: her wonderful timbre, which lends warmth to even her most experimental improvisations and extreme sounds, and makes every note sound round, her enormous vocal range; the ease and virtuosity with which she combines and masters complex composed material and very **different improvisational situations**; and how she uses her voice in the most varied ways, with or without lyrics.

If the collaboration with Sofia was a premiere, there had already been a connection for some time between the ensemble and Kalle, as he had already played in the band as a guitarist during concerts and the recordings of the first TransEuropeExpress album "Polyjazz". His knowledge of the musicians in the ensemble, his commitment and enthusiasm, his team spirit, his humour and his creativity gave this project a **wonderful energy**.

While Sofia Jernberg brought her special improvisational concepts and ideas, Kalle Kalima worked on very complex compositions. One of them, his piece "Viruses", directly reflects the situation at that time. The vocal text is a list of the names of viruses – surprisingly, the Corona virus is only one of many and one sees it in a special context and contrast. Two compositions by Silke Eberhard and Ronny Graupe from another studio session were added to complete the album.

ON THE EDGES 3 – ROMA EXPRESS

ALEXANDRA GRIMAL, RÉGIS HUBY, SILKE EBERHARD,
DEJAN TERZIC, LUCIANO BIONDINI, HANS LÜDEMANN,
RITA MARCOTULLI, YVES ROBERT, SÉBASTIEN BOISSEAU





RITA MARCOTULLI, ITALY

The fact that this project could be realized in Rome was a stroke of luck and is due to extraordinary circumstances: Hans Lüdemann received the Federal German Rome Prize for Composition of the Villa Massimo for 2021/22. He thus became the first jazz musician to receive this award, which until then had been reserved for composers of classical “new music”. The prize is linked to a one-year artist residency, which began in September 2021. Even before the residency began, the idea of realizing the project during the year was born, and this was taken up and **supported by Villa Massimo**.

First guest choice for the project was **Rita Marcotulli**, the fantastic Italian pianist. Hans and Rita had known each other personally for a long time and were excited to perform with such a special combination with two pianos. She also had already played with other musicians from TEE, bassist Sebastien Boisseau and violinist Regis Huby. It was a gift for the ensemble to be able to work with her. The connection with **Luciano Biondini** came about on the recommendation of Kalle Kalima without knowing about the connection between the two of them (there is even a duo album by Rita and Luciano) at the time. When he started playing accordion in the first rehearsal, it felt like the ignition of a rocket giving the impression he could go through the roof at any moment. With both of them, working together was easy and a pure pleasure.



LUCIANO BIONDINI, ITALY



Luciano Linzi, the director of the Casa del Jazz, was immediately interested in the concept, and so we were finally able to develop the specific project for the summer of 2022 as a cooperation between "musica per Roma/Casa del Jazz", the Villa Massimo, and the TEE, with funding from the Kunststiftung NRW.

When you live in Rome, you encounter **millennia of history at every turn**, especially often in the form of fragments and remains of ancient buildings and sculptures. This idea has determined the structure for new compositions as "Frammenti". Another aspect of the city is its **intensity and energy**, the lively and at times chaotic hustle and bustle, this is expressed in the piece "Movimenti". Both pieces follow on directly from the previous editions of "On the Edges" and continue them – they are based on the same musical matrix. Unusual both for the studio situation and for the stage set-up of the concert were the two grand pianos, which took up a lot of space – this was a new situation for the ensemble and caused some difficulties during the recording. However, the audience was presented with an impressive sight on stage, and the final concert on 15 June, 2022 was a brilliant premiere. The final work of editing, mixing and mastering the recordings from Rome was done a year later, in June 2023 at the BMC Studio in Budapest by engineer Viktor Szabó and Hans Lüdemann.



ALBUM INFORMATION

<https://lc.cx/RbkyID>

TEE INFORMATIONS

TransEuropeExpress e.V.
Rotdornallee 26
51503 Rösrath
Deutschland
Tel: +49 - 2205 - 910329
E-mail: info@transeuropeexpress-ensemble.eu
www.transeuropeexpress-ensemble.eu

PHOTOS INFORMATIONS

Maghreb Express © Krisztina Csendes
Polar Express © Volker Beushausen
Roma Express © Ulla C. Binder
Navid Kermani © Bogenberger Autorenfotos
Front cover © Arne Hückelheim

BOOKING INFORMATIONS

o-tone music – Uwe Hager
Marktlaubenstr.1
35390 Gießen
Deutschland
Tel: +49 (0) 641 - 9 48 89 30
E-mail: booking@o-tonemusic.de
www.o-tonemusic.de

LABEL INFORMATIONS

BMC – Budapest Music Center
Producer : László Gőz
Label manager: Tamás Bognár
Email: bogi@bmc.hu
www.bmcrecords.hu

