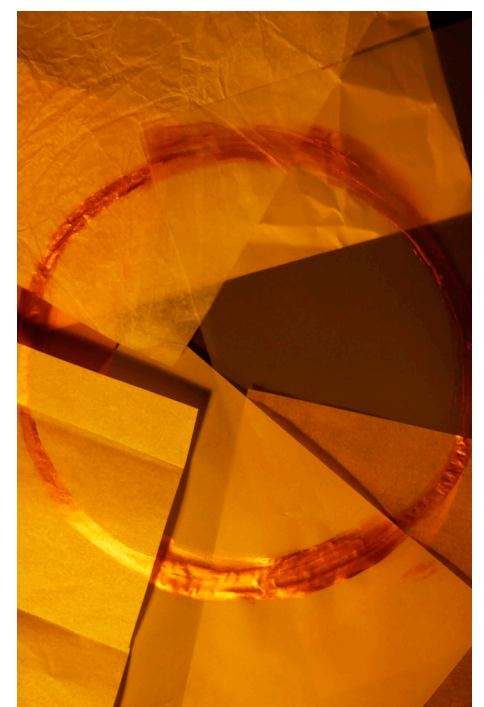
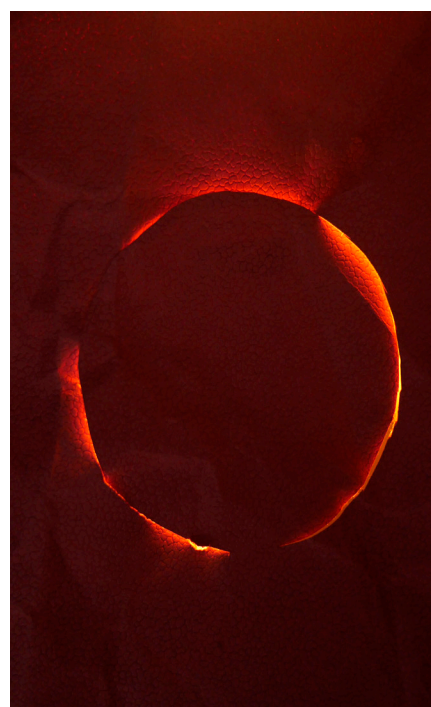
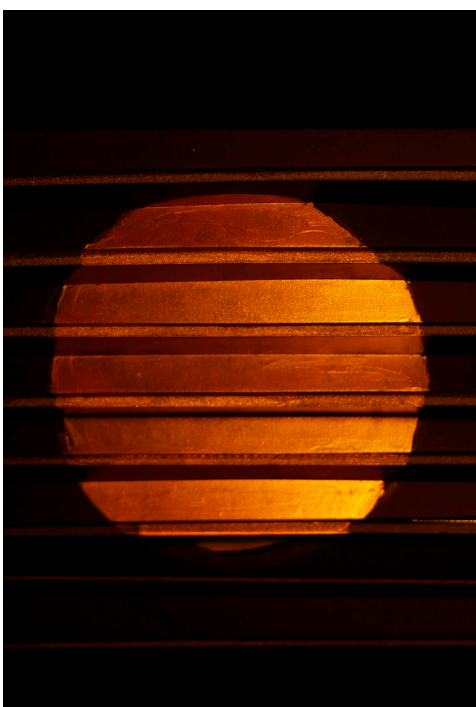
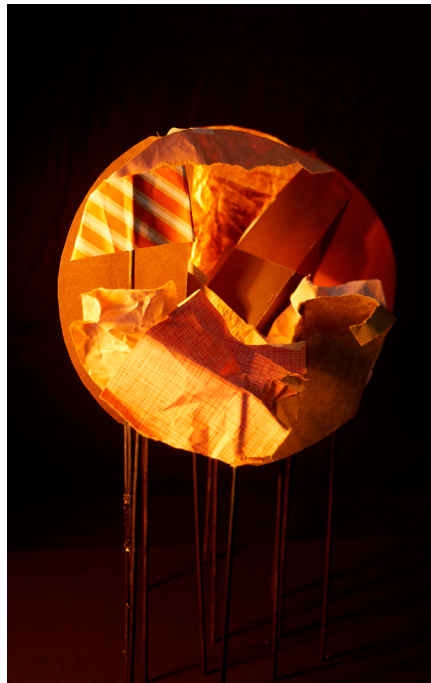
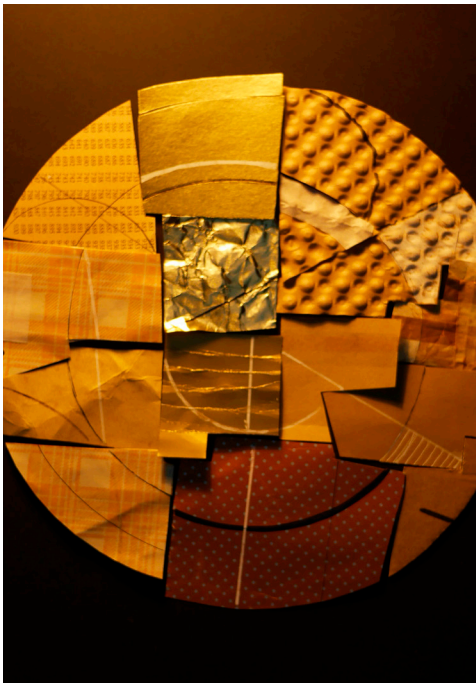




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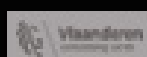


FESTIVAL VAN VLAANDEREN KEMPEN

# MUSICA DIVINA

## Momenten van Waarheid

17.09 tot 4.10.2026 | Tongerlo, Averbode,  
Hoogstraten, Postel, Geel, Lier, Mol,  
Heist-op-den-Berg, Turnhout, Herentals.



[www.musica-divina.be](http://www.musica-divina.be)

## PROGRAMMA 2026

DO 17.09

**ABDIJ TONGERLO**

Utopia Ensemble  
& Psallentes

ZA 19.09

**ABDIJ AVERBODE**

Momentum

ZA 19.09

**ABDIJ AVERBODE**

DionysosNow!  
& HERMESensembel

DI 22.09

**HOOGSTRATEN**

Liesbeth Devos  
en Gwen Cresens

WO 23.09

**ABDIJ POSTEL**

Constantinople

DO 24.09

**GEEL**

Constantinople

ZA 26.09

**LIER**

BRYGGEN Bruges Strings

DI 29.09

**MOL**

ClubMediéval  
en SPECTRA

WO 30.09

**HEIST-OP-DEN-BERG**

ORLANDOviols

VR 02.10

**TURNHOUT**

Graindelavoix

ZA 03.10

**HERENTALS**

Eric Whitacre  
& Vlaams Radiokoor

ZO 04.10

**GEEL**

Team en bewoners OPZ Geel,  
festivalcomponist Noah Senden  
& studenten Koninklijk Conservatorium  
Antwerpen

# Musica Divina 2026

## Momenten van Waarheid

van 17 september tot 4 oktober 2026



Between September 17 and October 4, 2026, we bring you the 14th edition of Musica Divina with heavenly music in the heart of the Kempen region. The Musica Divina festival brings heavenly, healing music to the beautiful abbeys, beguinages and churches of the Kempen region every autumn. It is organised by the Festival of Flanders Kempen in partnership with Averbode, Tongerlo (Westerlo), Mol/Postel, Geel, Heist-op-den-Berg, Herentals, Hoogstraten, Lier and Turnhout.

The 2026 edition of Musica Divina is themed 'Moments of Truth'. We are bombarded with 'fake news' and generative artificial intelligence. Empiricism has been common practice since the Enlightenment as a scientific method. But can we still trust our own perceptions? For artists, an imagined reality might expose a deeper truth. If reality briefly coincides with how we experience it, as it might during a meditation or prayer, can we perhaps call this a moment of truth?

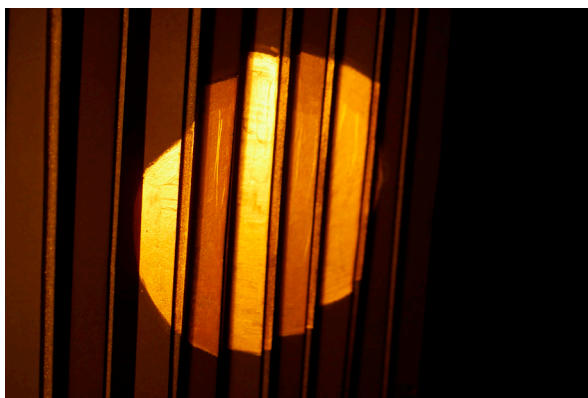
Director Mathias Coppens: *During the Romantic Age, there were genuine philosophical debates on whether music was capable of representing anything other than itself, but one thing was certain: of all the arts, it came closest to the inconceivable truth of the Sublime. We are committed to that musical power: from vocal polyphony as a symbol of transcendent religious truth to the worldly folk wisdom of the drinking song in 'In Vino Veritas'.*

At each edition, Musica Divina provides a unique interplay between heritage and music. The programme includes Utopia Ensemble, DionysosNow, HERMESensemble, Liesbeth Devos, Gwen Cresens, Noah Senden, Ensemble Constantinople, BRYGGEN Bruges Strings, ClubMediéal, SPECTRA, ORLANDOviols, Graindelavoix, Eric Whitacre and the Vlaams Radiokoor.

Musica Divina is a full experience. Each concert includes an introduction by Klara presenter Katelijne Boon. After each concert, listeners can enjoy a free reception in cooperation with local authorities and partners. Musica Divina is dedicated to hospitality in the Kempen region.

The full programme can be found at: [www.musica-divina.be](http://www.musica-divina.be).

## Musica Divina presents its very first festival composer: Noah Senden brings healing and 'points of truth'.



Between September 17 and October 4, 2026, the 14th edition of Musica Divina will descend upon the heart of the Kempen region. Under the festival motto 'Moments of Truth', the Festival of Flanders Kempen brings heavenly and healing music to the religious heritage sites of the Kempen. This year, the festival celebrates a first: the appointment of its very first festival composer, the young and promising Antwerp-based **Noah Senden**, who drew inspiration for the occasion at Averbode Abbey.

Musica Divina traditionally focuses on the healing power of music, reflection, and connection. With festival composer Noah Senden, the festival chooses a fresh, contemporary voice that combines deep spiritual layering with an accessible purity. Specially for the festival, he wrote a flexible core piece that transforms depending on the different performers throughout the festival.

Noah Senden studied composition at the Royal Conservatoire of Antwerp under the late Wim Henderickx, who left a profound human and musical impact on him. He was also taught by Bram Van Camp and Mathias Coppens. However, his artistic identity was definitively shaped during an Erasmus exchange in Estonia. At the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre in Tallinn, he studied under Tõnu Kõrvits and met the legendary composer Arvo Pärt. Inspired by the overwhelming Baltic choral tradition and European spiritual minimalism, Senden developed a deep fascination with stillness, simplicity, and the power of the human voice.

For this unique festival commission, Senden sought out the ultimate spiritual silence. To fully immerse himself in the spirit of Musica Divina, he spent a week at Averbode Abbey. Sheltered by the abbey walls, he composed his new work, using the festival theme 'Moments of Truth' as his direct starting point.

The result will be performed live in various iterations by different ensembles during the festival including BRYGGEN Bruges Strings, ORLANDOviols and the Vlaams Radiokoor. In addition, there is a special scoop for festival-goers: Senden has transformed one of the versions of the composition into an immersive sound installation. This will be set up on Saturday, September 19, in the Limburgzaal of Averbode Abbey, allowing visitors to literally submerge themselves in the composition and the serene atmosphere of the abbey.

*"I want to create a kind of musical core that always remains recognizable, but comes to life in a different way with each performance,"* Senden explains. *"The piece breathes and adapts to the specific space and the ensemble."*

### PRACTICAL INFO

September 19, 2026 (13:00 - 17:00): Sound installation Noah Senden - Musica Divina Momentum - Averbode Abbey  
September 22, 2026 (20:00): Creation Noah Senden by Liesbeth Devos & Gwen Cresens - Hoogstraten  
September 26, 2026 (20:15): Creation Noah Senden by BRYGGEN Bruges Strings - Lier  
September 29, 2026 (20:15): Creation Noah Senden by ClubMédiéval & SPECTRA - Mol  
September 30, 2026 (19:00 & 21:00): Creation Noah Senden by ORLANDOviols - Heist-op-den-Berg  
October 3, 2026 (20:15): Creation Noah Senden by the Vlaams Radiokoor - Herentals  
October 4, 2026 (15:00 & 17:00): Sound installation Noah Senden in collaboration with KCA students & OPZ Geel patients - OPZ Geel chapel

[www.musica-divina.be](http://www.musica-divina.be)

# Musica Divina presents the very first MUSICA DIVINA MOMENTUM at Averbode Abbey: an afternoon of slow living and art.

Between September 17 and October 4, 2026, you can enjoy the 14th edition of Musica Divina, the autumn festival organized by Festival of Flanders Kempen hosted across the religious heritage sites of the Kempen region. On Saturday, September 19, the festival invites the public to the vast and serene grounds of Averbode Abbey for a brand-new initiative: the first Musica Divina Momentum. Entirely in line with the festival motto 'Moments of Truth', the festival is joining forces that afternoon with numerous partners to create a unique, holistic atmosphere of music, philosophy, nature, meditation, and communal dining. Musica Divina Momentum offers a multi-layered program that challenges visitors to slow down, ground themselves, and make room for what truly resonates.

In an era where the outside world is dominated by constant stimuli, the Momentum creates a rare sanctuary where experience and reality can harmoniously align. This is reflected in a rich, afternoon-filling programme:

## IMMERSIVE ART & SOUND INSTALLATIONS

**Sound Installation by Noah Senden** (Limburgzaal): After a week of seclusion in the abbey, festival composer Noah Senden wrote his new piece. This immersive installation makes his musical 'point of truth' tangible. (Free admission, no reservation required)

**The Sung Room – Sound Walk:** An installation created by Musica Impulscentrum, Strijbos en Van Rijswijk, and Natuurpunt. Specially designed resonance panels disperse musical voices and (nocturnal) sounds of nature as soon as you enter the folly. (Free admission, no reservation required)

## NATURE, HERITAGE & EXHIBITION

**Guided Walk & Exhibition 'To be is to weave':** A guide from Natuurpunt leads you past the abbey and through Landschapspark de Merode to the Bedderehoeve. There, you will discover an exhibition and short film by Ingel Vaikla, in collaboration with Huis Perrekes. (Free admission, reservation required via [kempen@festival.be](mailto:kempen@festival.be))

**Guided Tour of the Abbey:** Walk along the monumental church, the cloisters, and the scriptorium, and discover how silence and tradition shape the daily life of the Norbertine canons.

## INTERACTIVE WORKSHOPS & PHILOSOPHY

**Zen Meditation by Luc De Winter:** An introductory session in the Brabantzaal based on the Soto Zen tradition, offered by Ho Sen Dojo vzw. An exercise in alert presence and mindful breathing without judgment.

**Lecture 'Philosophy of Life' by Els Janssens:** In collaboration with the School voor Comparatieve Filosofie Antwerpen vzw, Els Janssens uses the conceptual framework of Ulrich Libbrecht and poetry to explore how we arrive at truth through inner experiences.

**Gregorian Listening and Chanting:** A concert of silence resonates beneath the vaults of the Ridderzaal, concluding with an invitation to chant Gregorian melodies yourself, led by Father Jos Bielen.

## CLOSING CHORDS

**Concert 'To be is to weave' by De Betties** (Abtskwartier): De Betties is a 70-member intergenerational choir consisting of residents, guests, family, and supporters of Huis Perrekes. By literally making their voices heard, they place 'dementia' on the cultural agenda. Music therapists anchor the performance with their own tailor-made compositions.

**Dinner at Het Moment:** Enjoy a three-course 'abbey menu' prepared with authentic Averbode products in the abbey café.

**Closing Concert: DionysosNow! and HERMESensemble – Moment of Silence** (Abbey Church): A ritualistic concert in which the lush polyphony of composers like Josquin Deprez systematically returns to the source: from melody to sound, from sound to static white noise, ultimately dissolving into a mystical silence.

This multi-layered programme is the result of an intensive and harmonious collaboration between numerous leading partners from the cultural, healthcare, and environmental sectors: Musica Impulscentrum, Strijbos en Van Rijswijk, Ho Sen Dojo vzw, School voor Comparatieve Filosofie Antwerpen vzw, Natuurpunt, Cultuur en Erfgoed de Merode, Landschapspark de Merode, Huis Perrekes, and the choir De Betties. The detailed timetable per activity, pricing, and reservation links for the walks can be found at [www.musica-divina.be](http://www.musica-divina.be).

## PRACTICAL INFO

September 19, 2026 (13:0 - 17:00): Musica Divina Momentum in the Averbode Abbey  
September, 19 2026 (20:00): DionysosNow! & HERMESensemble - Averbode Abbey

## Musica Divina brings passion and melancholy to Hoogstraten with 'In Vino Vero'



On Tuesday, September 22, 2026, the Musica Divina festival will descend upon Hoogstraten for a very special concert. Under the festival theme 'Moments of Truth', soprano Liesbeth Devos and accordionist Gwen Cresens present their program *In Vino Vero*. Together, they dive into a rich musical heritage spanning from the Renaissance to the present day, searching for the truth within the glass. Since time immemorial, wine has been an inexhaustible source of inspiration for poets, painters, and composers. While it represents conviviality and pleasure, its intoxicating, bitter, or sparkling character also reflects the passion, melancholy, and miseries of life itself. Liesbeth Devos and Gwen Cresens bring these musical extremes together. Their repertoire travels through time: from Baroque and Renaissance composers such as Monteverdi, Purcell, Eccles, and Landi, to the French chansonnière Barbara and the Basque tenor Luis Mariano. Every glass of music tells its own story.



### Top Canadian ensemble Constantinople brings Persian poetry and Bach to Postel and Geel.

This autumn, the internationally renowned Canadian ensemble Constantinople will make two appearances in the Kempen region during the Musica Divina festival. Under the festival theme 'Moments of Truth', the ensemble presents two unique, groundbreaking programs: on Wednesday, September 23 at the Abbey of Postel, and on Thursday, September 24 at the St. Dymphna Church in Geel.

Constantinople is known for building fascinating musical bridges between East and West. During Musica Divina, they will demonstrate how spiritual truth can travel across cultural and temporal boundaries.

#### Wednesday, September 23 (Abbey of Postel): Sweet Torment

Does truth lie in paradox? Inspired by Claudio Monteverdi's song 'Si dolce è il tormento', love takes center stage as a moral test of strength. Renowned soprano Hana Blažiková interprets this courtly tradition, accompanied by Michel Angers (lute/theorbo). Setar player Kiya Tabassian engages in a live dialogue from his Persian perspective. Works by Bach, Girolamo, and Borrono will also be performed.

#### Thursday, September 24 (Geel): Bach Khayyam

Although more than 600 years separate Johann Sebastian Bach and the Persian poet-mathematician Omar Khayyam, both geniuses shared a deep, spiritual worldview. Constantinople brings them together in a poetic dialogue, interweaving some of Bach's most moving arias with poems by Khayyam sung in Persian.

After the concerts, Musica Divina will host a free reception for the audience in collaboration with the local municipalities.

### PRACTICAL INFO

September 22, 2026 (20:00 - 21:30): Liesbeth Devos & Gwen Cresens - Beguinage Church, Hoogstraten

September 23, 2026 (20:00 - 21:30): Constantinople - Abbey Church of Postel

September 24, 2026 (20:00 - 21:30): Constantinople - St. Dymphna Church, Geel

# ORLANDOviols breaks traditional concert format in Heist-op-den-Berg with immersive 'Harmony of the Spheres'



On Wednesday, September 30, 2026, Musica Divina arrives in Heist-op-den-Berg for a groundbreaking concert experience. The German ensemble ORLANDOviols will perform their program *Harmony of Spheres* twice, bringing together mathematics, cosmology, and music. The audience will be seated at the very heart of the performance, surrounded by fifteen loudspeakers and an impressive light installation.

Under the festival theme 'Moments of Truth', ORLANDOviols brings the ancient theory of the 'Harmony of the Spheres' to life. Since the Renaissance, the movements of celestial bodies have fascinated humanity. Astronomers and philosophers viewed the orbits of the sun, moon, and planets as a universal, mathematical harmony. In both the 16th and 20th centuries, these cosmic proportions formed the foundation for architecture and music.

## A SONIC BATH INSTEAD OF A FRONTAL STAGE

ORLANDOviols translates these astronomical proportions into a unique spatial context. Breaking radically with the traditional frontal stage, the musicians, fifteen loudspeakers, and the lighting design transform the concert space into an immersive sonic bath. The listener is literally positioned at the center of the cosmos and the music.

To accommodate high demand while guaranteeing an intimate, enveloping setting, the concert will be performed twice in one evening: at 19:00 and at 21:00. Following both sessions, the festival will offer the audience a free reception in collaboration with the local municipality.

## ABOUT ORLANDOVIOLS

ORLANDOviols is a professional viola da gamba ensemble that seamlessly connects historical performance practice with the 21st century. Their impressive repertoire ranges from 16th-century fantasies and the masterpieces of Johann Sebastian Bach to Minimal Music and conceptual compositions by John Cage. The ensemble is renowned for its experimental performances, pushing the boundaries of the classical concert by incorporating live electronic processing, spatial audio techniques, audiovisual installations, and even interaction with bicycles.

## PRACTICAL INFO

September 30, 2026 - 19:00 & 21:00 ORLANDOviols - Our Lady Queen of Peace Church (Zonderschot) Heist-op-den-Berg

[www.musica-divina.be](http://www.musica-divina.be)

# BRYGGEN Bruges Strings brings mesmerizing sounds and a Belgian premiere to Lier



On Saturday, September 26, 2026, the Musica Divina festival arrives at the Beguinage Church in Lier with the concert *Ecstatic Truth*. Led by violinist Jolente De Maeyer, the string orchestra BRYGGEN Bruges Strings presents a mesmerizing program that explores the boundaries between trance, tradition, and pure musical ecstasy.

## BELGIAN PREMIERE BY THOMAS ADÈS

The absolute highlight of the evening is a Belgian premiere by the master British composer Thomas Adès. He used the traditional shanty, the rhythmic work song of sailors, as his starting point. The hypnotizing variations within the verses draw both the performers and the audience into a state of deep focus.

In addition, the orchestra builds the tension further with *Orawa* by Polish composer Wojciech Kilar, a gripping piece that grows organically and slowly toward absolute ecstasy. The concert is completed by Arvo Pärt's serene and iconic *Fratres*, and the layered *Entr'acte* by American composer Caroline Shaw.



**HERENTALS – On Saturday, October 3, 2026, the Musica Divina festival arrives in Herentals for a layered, two-part festival day. Under the festival theme 'Moments of Truth', this day centers on life's big questions, the cosmos, and deep human emotions. The audience will first be treated to a film screening by grandmaster Terrence Malick, followed by a unique evening concert by the world-famous American composer Eric Whitacre and the Vlaams Radiokoor.**

The afternoon kicks off with the experimental documentary film *Voyage of Time* (2016) by director Terrence Malick. The film is much more than an aesthetic masterpiece with stunning cinematography; it is an existential meditation on the birth and death of our universe. Malick sweeps the viewer from the infinite cosmic void to the swarming of microscopic life on Earth, captured within the genesis and ultimate collapse of time.

At 20:00, the monumental St. Waldetrudis Church will provide the backdrop for the absolute musical highlight of the evening. World-renowned composer and conductor Eric Whitacre will personally lead the Vlaams Radiokoor to perform his masterpiece *The Sacred Veil*.

This intimate, twelve-movement work was written in close collaboration with poet Charles Anthony Silvestri, whose wife, Julie, passed away from ovarian cancer at the age of 36. Utilizing texts by Silvestri, Whitacre, and Julie herself, the poignant score charts a universal and deeply human story of love, loss, and the search for solace. By avoiding specific names within the text, the work transcends personal tragedy, touching upon a universal truth that every human being faces sooner or later.

## PRACTICAL INFO

October 3, 2026 - 16:00 Film screening *Voyage of Time* - Terrence Malick - Schouwburg - Herentals  
October 3, 2026 - 20:00 Eric Whitacre & Vlaams Radiokoor - St.-Waldetrudis Church - Herentals

[www.musica-divina.be](http://www.musica-divina.be)

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