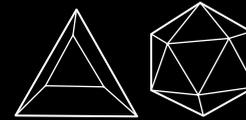


European Unison

Ruth Spencer Jolly



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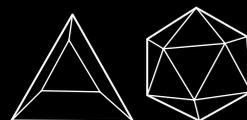
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European Unison

Ruth Spencer Jolly



„My fingers have always been much braver than my voice“, says the young British artist Ruth Spencer Jolly when asked about her artistic approach. She therefore feels more comfortable to use them as a transmitter to channel her ideas and make them become expressive. Playing the piano since a young age she more recently has extended this into her artistic practice, be it playing the piano only with her thumbs in *Text for Thumbs* (2016) – in response to their increasing superiority over the other fingers she detects because of current technological developments – or *We can work it out* (2014) which highlights another aspect of new forms of communication: debating on social media.

Now, explicitly, it is a time to be brave. Thursday, 23rd June 2016, has marked a historical changing point for Great Britain. Politics handed over their responsibilities to the people: the Damocles' sword has divided the nation, the majority voted to withdraw from the European Union and then again Dionysius return to his throne. Demographically speaking it's been patronizing senior citizens who have voted upon a future they do not have to come to terms with. Idealized nostalgia tipped the scales. Born as European citizen, Ruth Spencer Jolly and so many of her generation who now have to redefine their identity feel like subjects without a voice, even though they have had taken on their chance to speak up. And yet those unheeded ask again: What is to be done?

Ruth Spencer Jolly has written her most extensive play to this day. A piece composed for 28 pianos that re-tells the history of the European Union from its beginnings in the early fifties to the day when Great Britain decided to resign from the European Union, seemingly oblivious to its founding ideas: peace, freedom, solidarity and cultural diversity. Then, following the idea to symbolize diversity, national anthems remained, and solidary and peace is expressed



by also introducing a unifying, the European anthem: Friedrich von Schillers' Ode to Joy scored in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

In Spencer Jolly's composition European Unison six pianos, representing the founding nations Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands by playing their national anthems, merge to celebrate an Ode to Joy!



Freude, schöner Götterfunken,
Tochter aus Elisium,
Wir betreten feuertrunken
Himmlische, dein Heiligthum.
Deine Zauber binden wieder,
was der Mode Schwert getheilt;
Bettler werden Fürstenbrüder,
wo dein sanfter Flügel weilt.

Seid umschlungen Millionen!
Diesen Kuß der ganzen Welt!
Brüder – überm Sternenzelt
muß ein lieber Vater wohnen.

Wem der große Wurf gelungen,
eines Freundes Freund zu seyn;
wer ein holdes Weib errungen,
mische seinen Jubel ein!
Ja – wer auch nur eine Seele
sein nennt auf dem Erdenrund!
Und wer's nie gekonnt,
der stehle
weinend sich aus diesem Bund!!



Leading up to an uncertain present, the play denotes significant moments in the European history, focusing especially on moments that could be read as a premonition of 'Brexit': Britain's ECC in/out referendum in 1975 and 'Black Wednesday' in 1992 always recurring to The Ode to Joy.

Like the European anthem Jolly Spencer's composition is purely instrumental; written for 28 pianos – independent and self-sufficient, commonly used as solo instruments – playing together. Music again is being recognized as a unifying language understood across borders, spoken far beyond the European Union and occasionally echoing beautifully and unexpectedly the unknown as herald of a brave new world.



Text by the editorial team of *all-over*



MEET MELVIN



Besbrode Piano Shop
New & used piano
dealer's showroom

BESBRODE PIANOS LEEDS



ENTRANCE





Ruth, 23 0 2



Ruth, 23
217 miles away · Active 26 minutes ago

"Musartist" (i.e. someone working in the grey area between music and art) seeking 28 pianists to perform in the premiere of "European Unison" in Leeds on March 26th 2017.

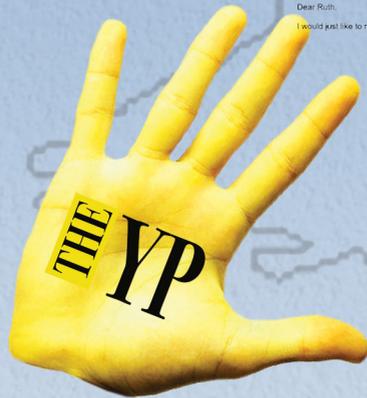
Competent piano skills and an anti-Brexit inclination needed.

Let's make m-EU-sic together :)



European Unison, Pianists Wanted! A musical illustration of Brexit for 28 pianos by Ruth Spencer Jolly #LovinLeeds

You're friends on Facebook
Studies Piano Performance at Leeds College of Music
Lives in Leeds



Dear Ruth,
I would just like to register my interest in taking part in your project for 28 pianists taking place in March.

You can not how excited i am for this project!

Wonderful news!

can not imagine*

sorry



Leeds



Hi Ruth, I am outside the barriers now, near the guy playing music. I am wearing a woolly hat and a red scarf. See you in a bit. Jakob

With you in a jiffy (I think I'm very close!)



How's the Search for Pianists going? x

Got 15 - still on the hunt for more - do you know of anyone else I should get in contact with?

I will ask around! I know somewhere I can advertise

amazing!



Happy new year! Hope you've all had a wonderful break! See you tomorrow 1pm then at Besbrode- looking forward to it.

Clair
United Kingdom

Clair
United Kingdom

trainline



Ascot

Here's everything you need for your Leeds trip
Departing Wed 4th Jan



Marita Cassina Unify is strength. Really enjoyed. Thanks.
Like Reply · 1 · 26 March at 22:00



EUROPEAN UNISON LIVE!
On Sunday 26th March at 6pm
CLICK HERE

to catch the LIVE STREAM of the event taking place in Leeds via thisistomorrow.info

all-over
Magazin für
Kunst und Ästhetik

this is
tomorrow
TOW





Gary shared your event.

My friend Ruth is putting on an interesting project based on Brexit! Wish I could go so please go for me 🍷



611561958766929198001

European Unison
at
Besbrode Piano Shop

39 Holbeck Lane, Leeds, LS11 9UL



1 Joy, beautiful spark of divinity,
 Daughter from Elysium,
 We enter, drunk with fire,
 Heavenly One, thy sanctuary!
 Your magics join again
 what the sword of custom divided;
 Beggars become brothers of lords,
 Where your gentle wing abides.
 Who has succeeded in the great attempt,
 To be a friend's friend,
 Whoever has won a lovely woman,
 Add his to the jubilation!
 Indeed, who calls even one soul
 Theirs upon this world!
 And whoever never managed, shall steal himself
 Weeping away from this union.

All creatures drink of joy
 At nature's breast.
 Just and unjust
 Alike taste of her gift;
 She gave us kisses and the fruit of the vine,
 A tried friend to the end.
 [Even] the worm has been granted sensuality,
 And the cherub stands before God!

Ruth Spencer Jolly is an emerging artist from Birmingham. She recently graduated from the Ruskin School of Art in Oxford and is currently Artist in Residence at St George's School, Ascot. She has been noted as 'one to watch', profiled on Radio 3 Young Artists' Day in 2015 and has featured in the Bloomberg New Contemporaries exhibitions this year. She specialises in an interdisciplinary practice called 'Musart' which lies in the grey zone between the visual arts and music.