

MICHAEL HOPE

PORTFOLIO

Michael Hope is a critically acclaimed UK-born composer, performer and producer based in Denmark, whose output encompasses, among other things, instrumental, orchestral, performative, installation, electronic, video, and site-specific works, often situated within the domains of conceptual art and experimental theatre. His works challenge traditional western art music conceptions of craft, virtuosity, and genius, drawing on the acceleration of waste, cliché, and precariousness endemic to the production and consumption of contemporary society and culture, whilst simultaneously misusing media, technology, and data in an audacious embrace of uncertainty and contradiction.

(I Love You) For Instrumental Reasons (2024)

For For Speaker, Flute, Bass Clarinet, Percussion, Piano/Celeste, Violin, Cello, 5 Performers, Electronics, Video, Staging, and Audience
Duration: c. 80-90 minutes



A multi-media concert event interrogating entrenched conceptions of craft, genius, transcendence, and the protestant work ethic, precipitated by dominating neoliberal, bureaucratic attitudes towards music and art. Debut concert from Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium, Copenhagen. Included as one of the '6 hjerter' cultural highlights of 2024 in Danish newspaper Politiken.

Watch here (highlights): <https://youtu.be/9whklLQddo0>

Performances:

MINU_festival_for_expanded_music, (I Love You) For Instrumental Reasons, Konservatoriets Koncertsal, 27/11/24 (*premiere*)

Late-Night Lineup (2026)

For 4 Performers, 4-Piece Band (Electric & Acoustic Guitar, Keyboard, Bass Guitar & Drums), Electronics, Staging, & Audience Participation
Duration: c. 80 minutes

A music-theatre work which disrupts the new music concert format by injecting it with the substance of a late night TV talk show. Interviews and monologues, battles and challenges all become vehicles for reconfiguring our relationship with the expectations and tropes of the concert experience. Commissioned by SPOR Festival.

Watch here (trailer): <https://youtu.be/CLDaavdAayg>

Performances:

SPOR Festival, Late-Night Lineup, turkis, Aarhus, 24/04/26 (*premiere*)



Si vous me regardez... (2023)

For Performer, Ensemble, and Live Electronics
Duration: c. 15 minutter

A work exploring portraiture and posing as musical practice, in which identity and perspective are constantly shifting, and in which the observer often becomes the observed. Presented by Ensemble Modern as part of ICCS young_professional 2023/24.

Listen here: rb.gy/rux6xj

Performances:

cresc...Biennale für aktuelle Musik, ICCS young_professionals, Frankfurt LAB, Frankfurt, 25/02/24 (*premiere*)



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À la carte (2023)

For 4 Performers, Playback, Lights, and Staging
Duration: c. 23 minutes

A music-theatre work that plays with the tropes and clichés of the murder-mystery genre to produce an anti-murder-mystery, anti-narrative work, in which the concept of fictional 'character' functions as a kind of musical 'instrument. Part of À la carte, a concert curated by myself, also including works by Fraz Ireland, Neo Hülcker, Caitlin Rowley, og Alexandra Hallén. Cited as 'Concert of the Year 2023' in Seismograf Magazine.

Watch here: https://youtu.be/ivg9Bchz_VM

Performances:

Radikal Jung Festival 2024, À la carte, Münchner Volkstheater, Munich, 23-24/04/24 (3 performances)
MINU_festival_for_expanded_music, À la carte, KU.BE, Copenhagen 19/11/23 (*premiere*)



Sketchbook (2021)

For Compère, Piano, E. Guitar, Cello, Percussion, Diffused Audio, Video, and Staging
Duration: c. 80-100 minutes

A space for play and playfulness, in which participants play games, play videos, play recordings, play to win, play both real and fictional characters, and even, perhaps, play instruments. Commissioned by K!ART Ensemble.

Watch here (highlights): <https://youtu.be/dib7qNnWvXw>

Performances:

Warsaw Autumn, Sketchbook, Państwowe Muzeum Etnograficzne, 26/09/25
Sketchbook, KoncertKirken, 05/04/22
Sketchbook, Musikhuset Aarhus, 02/04/22
MINU_festival_for_expanded_music, Sketchbook, Christianshavns Beboerhus, 21/11/21 (*premiere*)



Born/Again (2019)

For Solo Piano, Video and Playback
Duration: c.15 minutes

A 'homage à la nature' which follows the performer on a serene and spiritual journey as they seek to discover 'true' musical expression and emotion.

Watch here: <https://youtu.be/Y1uSJ7JkIbY>

Performances:

Pulsar Festival 2023, with and without strings, Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium, 10/03/23
MINU_festival_for_expanded_music, Spectres of _____, Christianshavns Beboerhus, 20/11/21
Pulsar Festival 2020, Current Resonance, Rytmsk Musikkonservatorium, 11/03/20
Current Resonance Festival «3» Born/Again_____, Musikhuset Aarhus, 24/10/19 (*premiere*)



MICHAEL HOPE

PRESS

"I have seen Michael Hope perform his works before, and heavy thoughts lie behind the madness. Thoughts about what a composer should do, how he can function in society, how we should contend with the individual, beauty, and art. Hope's objective is not to answer, but to elucidate the entire issue - with the help of the works of art that he himself performs... The entire work, entitled '(I Love You) For Instrumental Reasons', was a brilliant reflection on what it is that Michael Hope has been educated in at the conservatory. Now he is a fully-fledged composer, and we can look forward to more questions than answers from him."

Thomas Michelsen for POLITIKEN, 6 hjerter, *(I Love You) For Instrumental Reasons* [Read here](#) (in Danish)

"What one can sometimes miss in this environment...is that the works are not only spectacular, but also have musical depth. It is this which sets apart the good idea from the good work. And it was this balance that the young English composer Michael Hope found to a near-genius degree, when he held his debut concert from The Royal Danish Academy of Music as part of MINU Festival."

Sune Anderberg for WEEKENDAVISEN, *(I Love You) For Instrumental Reasons* [Read here](#) (in Danish)

"...Wednesday's breathtaking debut concert with the British composer Michael Hope...It is delivered with absolutely unbelievable precision...we each take the concert and our wonderment about what has just happened to us out into the evening. As I walk home, I think that there is hope for future debutants, for their scene, their festival organisers, their audiences - perhaps even for their reviewers - if we can take this open attitude, presence, conversation, and invitation to think about works with us out into the world."

Rasmus Holmboe for SEISMOGRAF, *(I Love You) For Instrumental Reasons* [Read here](#) (in Danish)

"Loaded to the brim with content, yet pleasantly structured...A huge spectrum of emotions, from rage to sadness, joy and jokes... The composer has succeeded in something extremely difficult with a large accumulation of content - the piece is etched in my memory and I am still able to reconstruct its progression and the emotions that accompanied me...I recommend keeping an eye on Michael Hope and following his career."

Joanna Kwapien for GLISSANDO *(I Love You) For Instrumental Reasons* [Read here](#) (in Polish)

"At the end of the performance, when Hope stands in the audience gallery and yells at the ensemble, whose members in the meantime have all donned larger-than-life cardboard masks of his own face, it becomes clear that this is self-abuse in the form of an exuberant swan song to the role of the composer. The text slowly oscillates between narcissistic self-aggrandising and the will to progress, emancipatory desire and the need for love, which produces an astonishing emotional impact."

Jonas Harsen for POSITIONEN, *(I Love You) For Instrumental Reasons* (translated from German)

"But the really big festival experience was Current Resonance, with whom I began this article. The five works on the quartet's programme - with Hope's À la carte as the last - seemed incredibly well chosen, and rarely have I experienced such perfectly executed new music. It's a mystery to me how the ensemble could succeed in activating the entire range of emotions with such a mundane theme as food...I managed to be baffled, irritated, moved, nauseous, overwhelmed. But most importantly, I couldn't wipe the smile off my face after the concert. It was a rollercoaster ride that tickled in all the right places. One rarely gets the chance to enjoy a concert experience like this in Denmark."

Jakob Gustav Winckler for SEISMOGRAF, *À la carte* [Read here](#) (in Danish)

"Similarly, the closing performance of Hope's 'À la carte' saw the ensemble perform in gender-confounding costumes that refused to settle into a binary as they sat down for dinner, caught in the multilayered subjective realities of the moment. Between incidental sounds of culinary consumption, snippets of big band jazz, sound design, dialogue and noise, Hope had staged and composed the ruptures we live with even when we just share a meal with a friend/ lover/ enemy/ parent/ partner/ associate and the struggle we feel to keep it all together - all the while questioning if we should. By the end, the stage and the performers were covered in cake and there was a remarkable feeling of levity in the room which is rare in contemporary music festivals."

Macon Holt for PASSIVE/AGGRESSIVE, *À la carte* [Read here](#)

"Something that was genuinely fun, on the other hand, was Michael Hope's Late-Night Lineup at turkis on Friday evening. Strolling down the aisle wearing a T-shirt printed with his own face, Hope brought new music to the people. In a tightly structured composition, he commented on the talk show genre in relation to contemporary music...the tones that seemed randomly scattered throughout the talk show were razor-sharp...It was pure form - until even the form dissolved.... Normally, I consider audience-participatory theatre my personal version of hell...but this felt strangely safe. As if we, the audience, had been part of the piece all along."

Therese Wiwe Vilmar for SEISMOGRAF, *Late-Night Lineup* [Read here](#)