

Monday, the 3rd of August 2026

THE TROUBADOUR BY ARI BENJAMIN MEYERS

A co-production between Urbane Künste Ruhr and Manifesta 16 Ruhr

Dear Sir or Madam, dear colleagues,

The Troubadour is a one-month durational performance taking place from the 10th of August to the 10th of September 2026 at various locations across the Ruhr Area. In addition, as part of the event *Electronic Shifts* by Urbane Künste Ruhr, there will be an epilogue on the 19th of September at Ev. Stadtkirche Sankt Petri in Dortmund.

The project *The Troubadour* is a co-production by Urbane Künste Ruhr and Manifesta 16 Ruhr. It is part of the exhibition *Uncanny Shifts* (from the 22nd of August until the 4th of October 2026), which Urbane Künste Ruhr is presenting for this year's Ruhrtriennale.

The Troubadour, performed by British-Romani singer-songwriter and actor Riah Knight, will travel through the Ruhr Area for one month – from Bochum to Dortmund, from Duisburg to Essen. Accompanied by an assistant, the Juggler, the Troubadour figure will meet people, exchange stories, wander around and find her way using public transport while searching for places to stay and spend time.

She will play music as she goes, in concert halls and clubs as well as town squares and parks. Her performances will combine songs composed for the project by Ari Benjamin Meyers with new material she will write during her travels. Inspired by the travelling balladeers of the Middle Ages, this one-month project is both a durational performance and a social experiment. Conversations, hospitality and

shared experiences will give rise to an ever-expanding repertoire of songs and tales. How will this 'unknown traveller' be treated in each town she visits? What kind of music will her journey through the region produce?

SAVE THE DATES

The Troubadour's Welcome

Date: Wednesday, 12th of August 2026

Time: 19.00-21.00

Meeting point: Hans-Schalla-Platz at Schauspielhaus Bochum, 44789 Bochum

Organiser: Manifesta 16 Ruhr

Meet the Troubadour

Date: Sunday, 23rd of August 2026

Time: 16.30-18.30

Meeting point: Dietrich-Keuning-Haus, Leopoldstr. 50-58, 44147 Dortmund

Organiser: Urbane Künste Ruhr

The Troubadour's Farewell

Date: Thursday, 10th of September 2026

Time: 19.00-21.00

Meeting point: Christ-König-Kirche, Steinring 32, 44789 Bochum

Organiser: Manifesta 16 Ruhr

Troubadour, The Epilogue

Date: Saturday, 19th of September 2026

Time: 19.00-21.00

Meeting point: Evangelische Stadtkirche Sankt Petri, Westenhellweg / Petrikirchhof 1, 44137 Dortmund, as part of the DEW21 Museum Night Dortmund

Organisers: Urbane Künste Ruhr and Ev. Stadtkirche Sankt Petri

Ari Benjamin Meyers – *The Troubadour*

Performance *The Troubadour*: Riah Knight
Assistenz / *The Juggler*: Christian Löffel
Curated by Britta Peters (Urbane Künste Ruhr)
together with Michael Kurtz (Manifesta 16 Ruhr)

ARI BENJAMIN MEYERS lives and works in Berlin and is an artist and composer. He develops structures and processes that redefine the performative, social and ephemeral nature of music. Meyers received his training as a conductor and composer at The Juilliard School, Yale University and the Peabody Institute. His works *Unless* and *Forecast (LX23)*, both from 2023 and also presented in Gelsenkirchen as part of Urbane Künste Ruhr's exhibition *Ruhr Ding: Klima*, directly address environmental and climate change. His most recent performance work, *Nation of Sleep* (2024), works with a new text by writer Tom McCarthy and schoolchildren who sing old and new lullabies to adults. Ari Benjamin Meyers is currently Professor of Sculpture at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf.

RIAH KNIGHT (*1996) is a British-Romani artist based in Berlin whose interdisciplinary practice combines acting, music, writing and dramaturgy. She made her theatre debut as a composer and performer at the Maxim Gorki Theatre with the Faust Award-nominated production *Roma Armee*. As a co-author, she contributed to Yael Ronen's theatre production *Slippery Slope*, which was invited to the Theatertreffen in 2022. In the same year, she was nominated by the critics of *Theater heute* magazine as one of the best emerging actresses. Knight is also one of the artistic directors of Glossy Pain, a collective that explores pleasure beyond oppressive structures and critically examines social norms relating to gender, race and sexuality.

UNCANNY SHIFTS

An exhibition close to Dortmund main station
22nd of August 2026 – 4th of October 2026

Urbane Künste Ruhr presents the exhibition *Uncanny Shifts*, bringing together artistic reflections on the contemporary times with explorations of urban transformations in the area surrounding Dortmund main station. Across 15 projects, sculptural, installative and performative works interact with their surroundings.

Artistic Director: Britta Peters

Curated by Alisha Raissa Danscher und Britta Peters

URBANE KÜNSTE RUHR is a multifaceted, decentralised institution for contemporary art in the Ruhr region, creating and exploring public spaces through different formats. Founded in 2012 following the European Capital of Culture year Ruhr.2010, it initiates exhibition projects for specific places and situations, programmes for guest artists and the experimental journey *Grand Snail Tour* through the region under the artistic direction of Britta Peters. Many projects take place in collaboration with local, national and international partners. Alongside Ruhrtriennale, Tanzlandschaft Ruhr and Chorwerk Ruhr, Urbane Künste Ruhr is part of Kultur Ruhr GmbH, based in Bochum, whose shareholders and public sponsors are the state of North Rhine-Westphalia and the Regionalverband Ruhr.

MANIFESTA 16 RUHR (21st of June – 4th of October 2026) takes place over 15 weeks in four cities across the Ruhr region: Bochum, Duisburg, Essen and Gelsenkirchen. Founded in Rotterdam in 1996, the European Nomadic biennial celebrates its 30th anniversary with its 16th edition in the Ruhr Area. The Biennial unfolds across 12 former and vacant church buildings and brings together more than 100 participants, creatives, collectives and educational projects rooted in local communities.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

The Troubadour by Ari Benjamin Meyers is a co-production by Urbane Künste Ruhr and Manifesta 16 Ruhr as part of the exhibition *Uncanny Shifts*.

Uncanny Shifts is an exhibition by Urbane Künste Ruhr for the Ruhrtriennale 2026.

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About Manifesta 16: manifesta16.org

Uncanny Shifts is an exhibition by Urbane Künste Ruhr for the Ruhrtriennale 2026



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