

Maja Ratkje, general information, summary

Maja Solveig Kjelstrup Ratkje (born Dec. 29, 1973 in Trondheim, Norway) has been performed in more than 30 countries including the Scandinavian countries as well as Germany, France, Italy, Great Britain, Czechia, Austria, Bulgaria, the Netherlands, Japan and USA. She has attended festivals like Bourges, Musica Nova, Klangspuren Schwaz, Northlands Festival and the International Gaudeamus Music Week, in Norway at Ultima, Bergen International Festival, Oslo Chamber Music Festival, ISFIT and the St. Olav Festival in Trondheim. Performers have been Oslo Sinfonietta, Arve Tellefsen, Cikada and Vertavo string quartets, Ticom, Torben Snekkestad, Frode Haltli and POING among others. Her music is released on rune grammofon, ECM, Grappa and Albedo.

awards:

Ratkje was the first Norwegian composer to receive the Arne Nordheim Prize in 2001. She received the 2nd prize at the Luigi Russolo competition for her piece "Sinus Seduction (moods two)" for saxophone and electronics in 2001. In 2000 she won the IAWM search for new music student prize for the piece "Louange". In 1997 she won the 1st prize and a commission from the Dutch ensemble 'de ereprijs' in Apeldoorn during the 3rd Gaudeamus International Young Composer's Meeting with the piece "Waves I". "Waves II" was a commission for the ensemble. A third version "Waves IIb" has been performed in Norway and resulted in two prizes: The Norwegian Edvard prize in 1999 (work of the year) and the International Rostrum of Composers in Paris 1999 for composers below 30 years of age.

formal studies:

Ratkje has studied composition at the Norwegian State Academy of Music with professors Olav Anton Thommessen, Asbjørn Schaathun, Lasse Thoresen among others. She has also had lessons with Gerald Bennett, Louis Andriessen, Sofia Gubaidulina, Joji Yuasa, Ivar Frounberg, Klas Torstensson, Klaus Huber, Richard Barrett, Kaija Saariaho and more. She attended IRCAM Summer Academy in 1999.

positions:

Ratkje holds a position in composition at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU). She is actively used as a

leader of seminars, is a member of some boards and has been the leader of the music festival and organisation UNM for young Nordic composers from 1995-1999.

as a performer

Maja Solveig Kjelstrup Ratkje is active as a singer/voice user, whistler, electronics and theremin player as well as studio engineer and producer of music, mainly in connection with the contemporary improvisation ensemble SPUNK (distributed by ECM records). Her solo voice/electronics project with backing from the group Jazzkammer has been a main focus since 2000. Other main collaborations are Fe-mail, a noise/electronics duo consisting of Ratkje and Hild Sofie Tafjord from SPUNK, (x,y,z), an electronic improvisation trio with Risto Holopainen and Asbjørn Flø and a collaboration with accordion player Frode Haltli.

She has also played with Oslo Industrial Ensemble, Norwegian Noise Orchestra, No Spaghetti Edition with Evan Parker and Rhodrie Davies, Paal Nilssen-Love, Masami Akita (Merzbow), Zbigniew Karkowski, Sachiko M, Gino Robair, Jaap Blonk, Oslo Sinfonietta and Lasse Marhaug. She has performed a chamber opera by Dagfinn Rosnes, especially written for her voice, among many other things such as Icelandic film music by Hjalmar Ragnarsson. She performed her own music for Ibsen's play "Ghosts" at Northlands festival in 1999. In 2000 she had two performances in Tokyo. She is currently working on a new opera commissioned for the Ultima festival in Oslo.