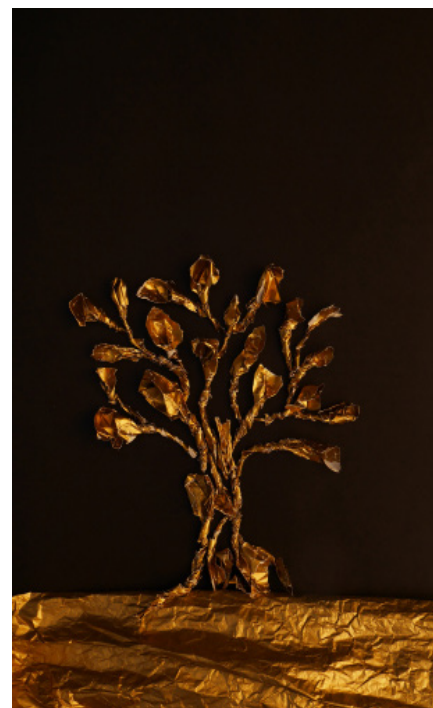
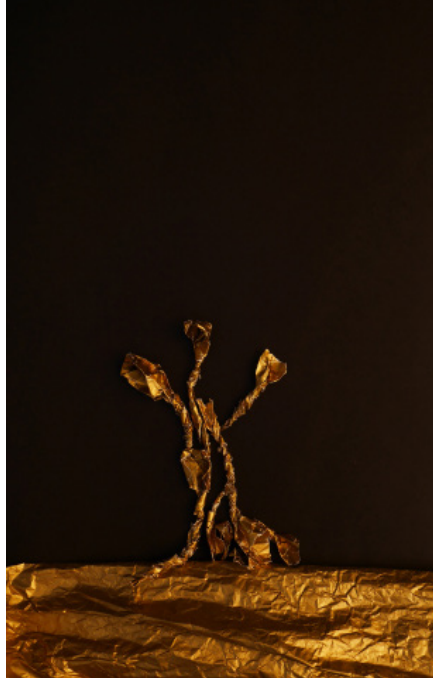
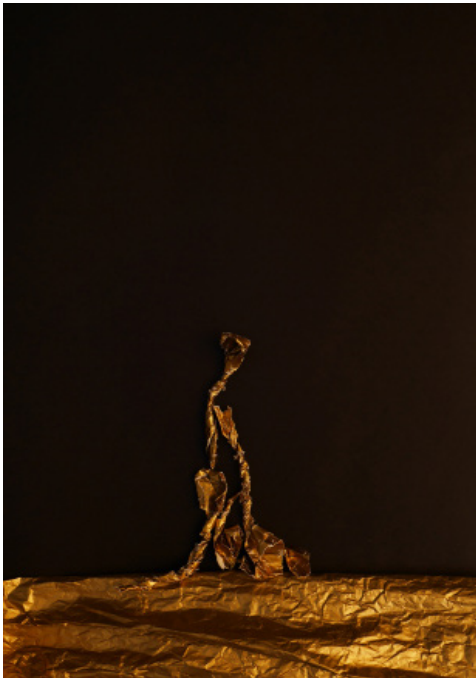
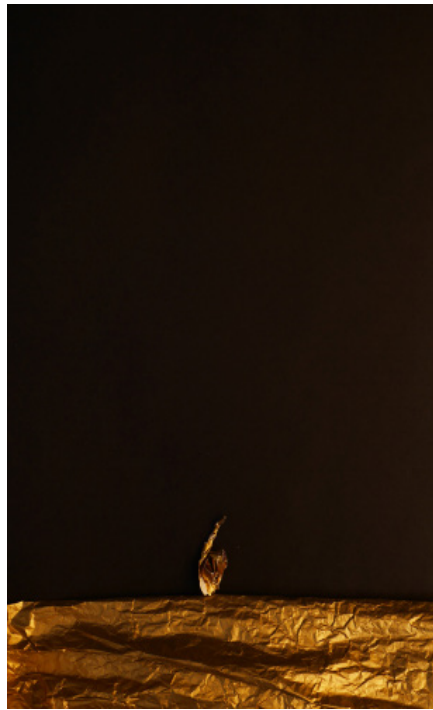




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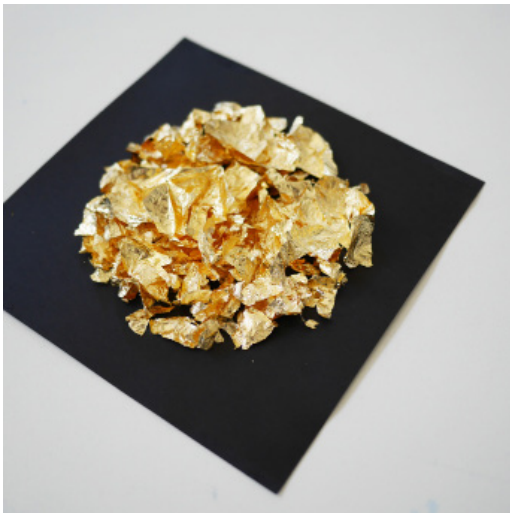
## With heartfelt respect, we dedicate Musica Divina 2020 to all healthcare workers..

The Covid-19 pandemic has confronted everyone in the world with an extraordinary situation. Our thoughts are with everyone who has lost a loved one in these difficult times.

We would like to assure you that we are applying all the measures imposed by the National Security Council and the local authorities in organising the concerts. The health of our audience and artists is our top priority. Stay healthy and take good care of each other.

On 2 April a nurse wrote down his feelings:

Sometimes you just have to pour your heart out on paper. It's something I have to do for my colleagues on the coronavirus ward, and also for myself. Tonight we had to say another goodbye. She deserved better than blue guard of honour in their yellow masks, but that was all we could give her, a silent farewell. What she left behind was people gasping for air. Daughters gasping for air, embraced by the softly lit corridor as they walked towards the swinging doors, a plastic bag under their arm with their mum's clothes inside, and a final glance at us. They were grateful for what we had been able to give, but they saw that we were gasping for air as well. Everywhere you look, after all, you sense souls gasping for air. Everyone has had their wings clipped, because we have lost our closeness to one other. Care has lost some of its warmth, and the farewells we need to say sometimes have to be said from far away. Bodies fail, but the despair is clear in every patient's eyes. Why can't I be with my wife now, of all times, in her final hours? Love means closeness and nobody was made to die alone. And again we start gasping for air. We phone, listen, discuss; we're ready to get in the car ourselves and drive. Anything at all to bring people together, anything for closeness, anything for oxygen. Our souls need it.



# Musica Divina 2020

## Oxygen for the soul

from 18 September to 4 October 2020



The graphic designer and artist Emilie Lauwers was inspired by the four natural elements of earth, fire, water and air to create the campaign images for Musica Divina 2020.

Between 18 September and 4 October 2020, you will be able to enjoy the eight edition of Musica Divina, with heavenly music in the heart of the Kempen region. The Festival of Flanders Kempen organises concerts in abbeys, beguinages and churches at the beginning of the new cultural season. The focus of this year's festival is oxygen, under the motto Oxygen for the Soul.

In March 2014, all the towns and villages in the Kempen signed the Kempen 2020 mayors' covenant, supported by the local waste disposal service. This covenant is an initiative by the European Commission aimed at local governments. The intention is to reduce CO2 emissions across the region by 20% by 2020. Musica Divina fully supports this positive signal from the Kempen mayors in 2020.

Director Jelle Dierickx tells us more: "As a festival that focuses on quiet, a slower pace, contemplation and the religious heritage of the Kempen, Musica Divina aims to contribute to the principle of a healthy mind in a healthy body. After all, music also provides oxygen, healing, beauty and sometimes even an experience of the sublime. Longinus put it succinctly back in the first century of the Christian era: 'It is natural in us to feel our souls lifted up by the true Sublime, and, conceiving a sort of generous exultation, to be filled with joy and pride, as though we had ourselves originated the ideas which we read.' That is exactly what Musica Divina 2020 aims to offer. Oxygen for the soul."

During the coronavirus pandemic, this motto and the experience of live music are more essential than ever. With heartfelt respect, we dedicate this edition of the festival to all healthcare workers.

Musica Divina creates a unique interaction between heritage buildings and music with each of its festivals. Two newcomers in the selection of historic concert locations are St Dymphna's Church and the garden pavilion of Huis Perrekes in Geel. St Dymphna's Church will be opening its doors to Dorine Mortelmans' Zen en engelenzang (Zen and Angelsong) and the new Belgian vocal sextet Air For Six on 4 October. In the daytime, you can visit the delightful garden pavilion at Huis Perrekes, where the pianist Guy Vandromme will be colouring with time.

The Musica Divina programme also features artists such as Vox Luminis in Tongerlo Abbey, Cappella Pratensis in Mol, Griet De Geyter and Il Gardellino in Turnhout, Raquel Andueza in Heist-op-den-Berg, Benjamin Glorieux and Benedicte Maurseth in Hoogstraten, Les Musiciens de Saint-Julien in Herentals, Cuarteto Quiroga in Lier and Les Passions de l'Ame in Averbode. These top musicians will be giving us oxygen for the soul.

Musica Divina is an all-round experience. As well as first-class concerts with heavenly classical music, you can look forward to the fourth and final edition of Poesia Divina.

You will find the full programme at [www.musica-divina.be](http://www.musica-divina.be).



# Musica Divina's Abbey Weekend brings oxygen for the soul in Mol, Averbode and Tongerlo



The graphic designer and artist Emilie Lauwers was inspired by the four natural elements of earth, fire, water and air to create the campaign images for Musica Divina 2020.

You can enjoy the eighth edition of Musica Divina, the autumn festival brought to you by the Festival of Flanders Kempen, between 18 September and 4 October 2020, in the religious heritage buildings of the Kempen region. The festival traditionally begins with an Abbey Weekend at the abbeys in Tongerlo, Mol and Averbode.

Expect an all-round experience in a weekend filled with concerts and festival pleasure. The motto of Musica Divina 2020 is Oxygen for the Soul. During the Abbey Weekend, the focus is on oxygen for the soul in sacred music: the breath of God.

Averbode abbey church will be welcoming the renowned Swiss ensemble with the very appropriate name Les Passions de l'Âme, led by Meret Lüthi.

Top violinist Meret Lüthi and her virtuoso colleagues present their new programme Divina. This is the final project in the ensemble's cycle on baroque music from Austria, with the focus on works by Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber and Johann Heinrich Schmelzer.

In Mol, Cappella Pratensis will perform a mass for the Feast of the Annunciation. It has drawn on sources from the Sistine Chapel. The focus is on the mass *Ecce Ancilla Domini* by Guillaume De Fay, one of the most famous composers of the 15th century.

Vox Luminis, led by Lionel Meunier, will illuminate Tongerlo abbey church with the light in their voices. They offer their refined interpretation of music by the two great masters of the Spanish Renaissance, Tomás Luis de Victoria and Cristóbal de Morales. They will sing of the mysteries of both birth and death, oxygen for the souls of those to come and those who have passed away.

Thus Musica Divina 2020 will seek out the sounds that surround oxygen for the soul. As a festival that focuses on quiet, a slower pace, contemplation and the religious heritage of the Kempen, it aims to contribute to the principle of a healthy mind in a healthy body. After all, music also provides oxygen, healing, beauty and sometimes even an experience of the sublime. Longinus put it succinctly back in the first century of the Christian era: 'It is natural in us to feel our souls lifted up by the true Sublime, and, conceiving a sort of generous exultation, to be filled with joy and pride, as though we had ourselves originated the ideas which we read.' That is exactly what Musica Divina 2020 aims to offer: Oxygen for the soul.

## PRACTICAL INFO

18 September 2020 (20:00 - 21:30): Averbode Abbey - Herseltsebaan 2 - Averbode (Scherpenheuvel)

19 September 2020 (20:00 - 21:30): St-Pieter and Pauwel Church - Markt - Mol

20 September 2020 (19:30 - 21:00): Tongerlo Abbey - Geneinde 1 - Westerlo

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

# Musica Divina comes to two new concert locations in Geel, the heart of the Kempen



Between 18 September and 4 October 2020, you will be able to enjoy the eighth edition of Musica Divina, with heavenly music in the heart of the Kempen region. The Festival of Flanders Kempen organises concerts in abbeys, beguinages and churches with a unique interplay between heritage and music. Two newcomers in the selection of concert locations are St Dymphna's Church and the garden pavilion of Huis Perrekes in Geel, the heart of the Kempen.

In partnership with De Werft Cultural Centre and the City of Geel, St Dymphna's Church will be opening its doors to Dorine Mortelmans' Zen en engelenzang and the new Belgian vocal sextet Air For Six on 4 October. Six leading Belgian soloists, Liesbeth Devos, Astrid Stockman, Inez Carsauw, Denzil Delaere, Joris Derder and Charles Dekeyser, go in search of profundity and warmth in music, combining their voices into a magnificent colour palette. Air For Six almost literally offers oxygen for the soul.

The soprano Dorine Mortelmans has the same aim with her short introduction to meditation followed by one of the most intoxicating musical meditations, Henryck Górecki's O Domina Nostra for organ and voice. Expect an evening of Zen and the song of angels.

In the daytime, you can visit the delightful garden pavilion at Huis Perrekes. During Musica Divina it will become a place for colouring with time. It will be a lounge space where you can regain your energy, listen deeply, rest and enjoy. The pianist Guy Vandromme will lead you into the world of Timemonochromes, where he uses music to spin time out, as it were, turning sound into architecture and vice versa. There will also be world premières of various works, including pieces by Jürg Frey and Eva-Maria Houben.

The Musica Divina programme also features artists such as Vox Luminis in Tongerlo Abbey, Cappella Pratensis in Mol, Griet De Geyter and Il Gardellino in Turnhout, Raquel Andueza in Heist-op-den-Berg, Benjamin Glorieux and Benedicte Maurseth in Hoogstraten, Les Musiciens de Saint-Julien in Herentals, Cuarteto Quiroga in Lier and Les Passions de l'Ame in Averbode. These top musicians will be giving us oxygen for the soul.

## PRACTICAL INFO

4 October 2020

12u > 18u Colouring with time - Guy Vandromme - Garden House Huis Perrekes - Zammelseweg 1

20:15 Zen and the song of angels - Dorine Mortelmans, Nicolas De Troyer and Air For Six - St.Dimpna Church - Rijn 3-13

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

## The fourth and final edition of Poesia Divina explores 'Oxygen for the Soul'



Enjoy the eighth edition of Musica Divina, the classical music festival in the heart of the Kempen region, between 18 September and 4 October 2020. The Festival of Flanders Kempen organises concerts in abbeys, beginnages and churches at the beginning of the new cultural season.

After the successes of recent years, the festival is now organising the fourth edition of Poesia Divina in partnership with the Poëziecentrum and Mol Cultural Centre, for which nine poets will write a new psalm based on the festival's motto.

This year, the poets' subject is the motto Oxygen for the Soul. Listen live to the nine poets at Poesia Divina Live on 19 September at Mol library.

Jelle Dierickx, the director of the Festival of Flanders Kempen, tells us more: "The nine poets selected for Poesia Divina search for oxygen for the soul in their new psalms. Just like music, poetry also provides oxygen, healing, beauty and sometimes even an experience of the sublime. We will soon have four successful editions of Poesia Divina to look back on. We hope to bring out a new publication in 2021: an anthology of all the Poesia Divina psalms in a big, new Kempen Book of Psalms. That completes the circle, making this Poesia Divina Live 2020 the last in the series."

In this edition, the psalms come from the poets Geert Van Istendael, Runa Svetlikova, Peter Theunynck, Amina Belorf, Reine de Pelseener, Lucienne Stassaert, Luuk Gruwez, Bert van Raemdonck and Mahlu Mertens. Come and listen to the poets reading their brand new psalms at Poesia Divina Live.

Read the poems online from September onwards at [www.musica-divina.be](http://www.musica-divina.be).

From October onwards, the video recordings of the poems will be online at [www.musica-divina.be](http://www.musica-divina.be).

### PRACTICAL INFO

19 September 2020

17:00 Poesia Divina Live - Library of Mol - Molenhoekstraat 2 - Mol

20:00 Cappella Pratensis - St-Pieter and Pauwel Church - Markt - Mol

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



# Oxygen for the Soul, visualised by the artist Emilie Lauwers



by Emilie Lauwers, written on 23 March 2020 during the coronavirus crisis

"This has been a week of great anxiety for me, along with everyone else on our planet. These are strange times, difficult to grasp, but I am trying to reassure myself more than ever with the knowledge that the word 'apocalypse' in Greek actually means 'revelation'. The lifting of the veil, the unfolding of things we did not know about before. I am drawing great reassurance from films about fish in the canals in Venice, deer in the streets in Spain, wild ducks in the fountains in Rome. The idea that nature knows how to keep on mutating and changing endlessly to stay alive. If you turn it around – or change your own perspective – what initially looks like ruin, collapse, destruction, ending, becomes a beginning, the start of something new.

With all of this whirling around inside me, designing Musica Divina 2020 was bound to be intense. To compound matters, the soundtrack that Jelle chose was music I discovered when I was pregnant, the track I will always associate with the beginning of life. Over the past ten years, I have always played Bach's cello suites at times when I need healing. They calm me down, but this time when I started working with them to put the trailer together, I noticed an agitated progression in the music, some determinedly unstoppable force. And it couldn't get more pertinent than that.

In a sense, this Musica Divina feels like the very first one we made together: back then the theme was 'a new heaven and a new earth.' These are epic times. Like long ago, when the Earth's crust shifted, when mountains and rivers were formed and trees were enormous. It is a time of creation, a massive mutation. Or at least that's how it feels.

Primal power. The four elements - earth, fire, water and air.

When I first read 'Oxygen for the Soul', I had something very light in mind. I was imagining pretty little things swirling around, but Jelle had the idea of a tree, rooted in the earth. The opposite of climate change. Undoing the damage.

Something else that is important to me in this edition is that I notice us instinctively returning to two things in times of crisis. The first is nature: I have never come across so many people in the woods near my home and I have never discovered as many new footpaths as I have done in the past week. The other is culture: all humanity is drawing courage from Italians playing music from one balcony to another, opera singers singing from their own doorsteps, home video recordings by pop stars, streamed theatre plays and concerts and virtual tours of museums.

The power of creation, revealing the process of making things, is more relevant than ever before. The fact that beauty can be created. We have always done this with Musica Divina, and it is my mission to use simple, basic materials to create a new world every time, or at least to suggest one.

In the trailer, you see snippets of gold paper swirling around in the air. I had let them fall, but filming made them fly upwards like sparks from a fire (and fire cannot survive without oxygen, by the way). They lie smouldering on the ground as if it were a battlefield, but then they organise themselves into that ever-turning circle.

Everything can be turned around. I scrunched up gold paper into round balls that unfolded by themselves, like the buds of big roses.

I tore the paper to pieces and the surface cracked, forming a meandering river or a tree.

I twisted the paper until it looked like tree trunks, folded it open again and pushed it upwards to make mountains and craters. Finally, I pleated and folded all the little pieces of torn gold paper so that they looked like little seedlings. Like a botanical document: each one a bit different from the others, organic material. You can't hold back the spring: we are noticing that now as well. While we are all obsessed with the crisis, the weeds are growing and bushes are covered in blossom. I put all the paper seedlings together to make the tree. A tree of life."

## CONTACT

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