

Press Release

November 2011

FIGURA ENSEMBLE

Contemporary Music/Theatre/Opera



FIGURA RECEIVES THE YEAH! Young EARopean Award 2011

FIGURA won in the final of 15 projects in the European Music Competition

The winners of the YEAH! Young EARopean Award was announced Saturday evening at the YEAH! Festival's award ceremony for the YEAH! Award 2011 at the Osnabrück Castle in Germany. FIGURA was one of five winners who were in the final round with 15 projects from 10 European countries.

The motto of the competition, "to encourage and inspire young people about the world of classical music" struck a chord with more than 250 institutions, orchestras and ensembles Europe-wide submitting their projects and ideas to the YEAH! Award panel. Among these the jury found the five award recipients

In the main category, "Performance", ten candidates were nominated. This category was looking for a variety of projects ranging from concerts for children through to innovative and professional stage productions aimed at young adults.

In the second category "Process", five candidates was nominated – among them FIGURA. Here the attention was directed toward creative developments and initiatives, in which children and

adolescents are directly involved. In most cases the submitted projects involved different hands-on workshops along with a final performance and presentation, as well as larger community ventures.

Along with the other finalists FIGURA represent a profile of the vivid music education scene in Europe and stand for the vitality and creativity in the current life of music and of a musical presence in society.

Small Composers is a composition workshop for children combining professional musical work and education. Children with no previous musical knowledge develop their own musical forms, which afterwards are realised by professionals.

"Here children are really encouraged to be creative. Their imaginative ideas are always taken seriously – composers, musicians and children meet eye to eye. Here music education, in the real sense of the word, takes place." YEAH! Young EARopean Award Jury

FIGURA is very proud to receive recognition for the work with Small Composers and Peter Bruun, who teaches the young composers with Jesper Egelund, states:

"I came a little stumbling and randomly to working with children and schools. But it has given me great joy, and it is an honor to be able to work with children and teachers. The development of educational work in a professional musical ensemble is a great inspiration in the artistic work. And the recognition of our work tells me also that there is in society and in schools is a strong desire to meet art and artistic processes, and that there is a great responsiveness to many different kinds of music."

Along with the Award follows 8.000 Euro, which now will be used for further development of Small Composers.

YEAH! Young EARopean Award is a project of the Stiftung Stahlwerk Georgsmarienhütte (Georgsmarienhütte Steelworks Foundation) organized by the netzwerk junge ohren (network of young ears) and supported by the City of Osnabrück and the Musikland Niedersachsen (Music Land Lower Saxony).

Figura wish to thank the Culture Schools in Gentofte as a cooperate partner in the development of Small Composers and Mette Dinesen for taking the initiative to the first edition of Small Composers

More information and press material can be found at www.yeah-award.com.

Press photos for download: <http://www.figura.dk/pressefoto.6>

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Facts on FIGURAs Small Composers

Small Composers is a project developed by the FIGURA Ensemble since 2005.

Our goal is to unleash the creative powers that all children hold within themselves by letting the children work directly with professional composers and musicians.

We encourage children to compose music, through simple exercises and tools. Exercises that helps them understand musical elements like rhythm, pitch, form and sound. And tools that enables them to write down and present musical ideas to the performers.

The music is performed as well by themselves and by professional musicians.
By the end of the day every child has composed music!

Small Composers is suitable for schools, symphony orchestras, family projects, communities, cultural institutions and festivals.

Composers: Peter Bruun and Jesper Egelund

Producer: Stine Marie Mortensen

Photo: Hanne Budtz Jørgensen

Layout: Elevatordesign

About FIGURA

A mezzo-soprano, three musicians, a composer, a poet and an architect – FIGURA Ensemble is a musical collective with a mind of its own.

Each of the seven artists of FIGURA are among Denmark's most respected –

Helene Gjerris, Jesper Egelund, Frans Hansen, Anna Klett, Peter Bruun, Filippa Berglund and Ursula Andkjær Olsen.

Together, over the last 18 years, FIGURA has challenged both collaborators and audiences alike with exceptional concerts and modern music theatre – not to mention their 'Small Composers' workshops that reach out to the coming generation of music-lovers.

2011: FIGURA's 'Small Composers' education project awarded the YEAH! Young EARopean Award

2010: Helene Gjerris awarded the Danish Composer's Society's Musician Prize

2009: The Reumert Prize for Best Children's Theatre of the Year for 'The Story of a Mother' / Ursula Andkjær Olsen nominated for Nordic Council Literature Prize 2009 and awarded the National Arts Foundation Literature Committee Prize for 'Havet er en scene' (The Ocean is a Stage)

2008: Peter Bruun awarded the Nordic Council Music Prize for the opera 'Miki Alone' with libretto by Ursula Andkjær Olsen.