

## Over the Moon

Even 50 years after Neil Armstrong's legendary first step, the Moon still mystifies us. In her current multimedial concert experience, Susanne Mecklenburg reflects on the ongoing fascination for our Earth's little companion using music, images and stories.

Susanne Mecklenburg manages satellite missions at the European Space Agency, ESA. Thanks to her scientific background, topics like the lunar eclipse or the moon's tidal influence formed a natural point of departure. As a classically trained singer, she is, however, equally attracted to the moon's impact on our emotions: Its gentle light, its influence on our dreams, the way it has shaped many of our mythologies. Mecklenburg's own relationship with it even began in early childhood: "*When I think of the Moon, I instantly think of the sandman,*" she laughs.

Bringing together the different threads in an artful way required a lot of research. The first stage of the program is the exciting era of Galileo Galilei's early moon observations. We tend to think of Galilei as a singular historical persona, but he wasn't the only one turning our view of the world upside down: His contemporary, the composer Monteverdi, ignited a similar revolution within the traditional model of polyphony. Mecklenburg and her pianist William Hancox also visit Apollo, Greek god of music, whose name graced the first moon mission. Finally, they contrast our growing knowledge about the moon with earlier speculations about 'lunar locals'.

Stylistically, *Over the Moon* draws from a diverse selection of pieces by Händel via Schumann, Debussy and Britten up until Golijov and Eisler. Even improvised electronic soundscapes are part of this galaxy thanks to the inclusion of guitarist and space music specialist Leander Reininghaus. There is something at once stimulating and dream-like about the way vocal performances, solo piano passages, videos by photographer Gareth Davies and insights about the pieces take turns.

In a sense, this journey isn't even going to the Moon. Rather, it is aimed at our constantly changing inner world of impressions and emotions. Which is why the evening doesn't close with an answer, but a question: What are you thinking of, when you're thinking about the Moon?

## The Artists

**Susanne Mecklenburg (voice)** manages satellite missions at the European Space Agency, ESA and performs as a classically trained singer. In her programs, she combines music of different styles, periods and regions into multilayered musical stories. Video and photography are a natural part of her approach – as is the search for new and rarely performed repertoire. // [susannemecklenburg.info](http://susannemecklenburg.info)

**William Hancox (piano)** has performed as a solo pianist, chamber musician and accompanist throughout the UK and abroad. He has played in all major concert halls in London and broadcast for Classic FM and the BBC. His teaching activities have included positions at London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama and Trinity College of Music, as well as the Britten-Pears School in Aldeburgh.

**Gareth Davies (photography and video)** lives and works in London. He is one of the leading international experts for slitscan panoramic photography, a technique making it possible to capture progress, repetition and time within a single integrated image. He regularly exhibits in the UK and internationally. // [tickpan.co.uk](http://tickpan.co.uk)

**Leander Reininghaus (composer and guitar)** first stepped into the limelight through his involvement with Neues Glas aus alten Scherben, one of the follow-up-formations to legendary German band Ton Steine Scherben. Both in and outside of the group, his work has oscillated between folk, rock and cosmic electronica. As STARSCAPES, he composes ambient orchestral soundscapes in real time. // <https://www.facebook.com/leander.reininghaus>