

# ESPEN BERG pianist and composer

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## EDUCATION

**2006 - 2008** Master's degree in performing music, jazz dept. at Norwegian University of Science and Technology

**2002 - 2006** Bachelor's degree in performing music, jazz dept. at Norwegian University of Science and Technology

## PERFORMING ARTISTIC ACTIVITY: SELECTED PROJECTS

- 2011 → Espen Berg - solo**  
Released five solo albums and played over 30 solo concerts since 2011 in Norway, the US, and the Netherlands. Noctilucent was named one of the top 10 releases of 2012 by All About Jazz, while The Trondheim Concert was hailed by UK Vibe as "one of the best improvised solo piano albums of the last decade." Performed at Polarjazz, Kampenjazz, Sildajazz, Kempen (DE), and a live recording at Øra Studio in 2024.
- 2014 → Espen Berg Trio**  
The trio has released four albums on Japan's Blue Gleam and three on Norway's Odin Records, with Free to Play named one of DownBeat's Best Albums of 2019. EBT performed at jazzahead! in 2019 and was named an NTNU Ambassador in 2016. They tour regularly in Norway, Japan, and Greece, and have played in countries across Europe, as well as China and Hong Kong. In 2024, they played seven concerts in India and sold out Ronnie Scott's in London.
- 2025 → Aileron**  
Jazz quartet with Emma Rawicz (sax, UK), Kertu Aer (bass, EST) and Håkon Mjåset Johansen (drums). World premiere at Jazzfest in Trondheim, May 2025. Album recorded and to be released in 2026.
- 2022 → Water Fabric**  
Commissioned work for Jazzfest in Trondheim, Maijazz and Oslojazz. Water Fabric is a sextet consisting of Espen, Harpreet Bansal (violin), Hayden Powell (trumpet), Ellie Mäkelä (viola), Joakim Munkner (cello) and Per Oddvar Johansen (drums). Water Fabric also played at Juan-les-pins (FR) in November 2022, and released an album in 2023.
- 2017 → Trondheim Jazz Orchestra & Espen Berg, «MAETRIX»**  
Awarded Norway's largest jazz grant, JazZtipendiatet, at Moldejazz 2016 and composed the commissioned work MAETRIX for TJO. The piece premiered at Moldejazz 2017 and was later performed in Oslo, Hamar, Umeå, Trondheim, and Riga (2024). MAETRIX was recorded at Rainbow Studio in 2021 and released on Odin Records in August 2024.
- 2019 → Silje Nergaard & Espen Berg**  
The duo released the album Japanese Blue on Sony Music GmbH in 2020, and tour Norway, Germany, NL and UK regularly. Has played at some of the largest festivals in Norway and plays about 25 concerts a year.
- 2020 → A Tonic For The Troops.** Quartet led by Ellen Brekken. Has released two albums and plays about 10 concerts a year.
- 2015 → Hildegunn Øiseth Quartet.** Has released three albums and tours Europe regularly, playing about 15 concerts annually.

## OTHER PROJECTS

- 2024 → Espen Berg & Sissel Vera Pettersen**  
Recorded an album in Dec 2024 and will be touring in 2026.
- 2024 → Magne Thormodsæter Quartet**  
With Emma Rawicz, Anton Eger and led by Magne. Plays at Nattjazz in Bergen, May 2025 and will record soon.
- 2024 → Maria Väli, Espen Berg og Ara Yaralyan.** Concerts in Estonia in Feb 2024.
- 2020 → Herborg Kråkevik**  
Produced and arranged the album Barnas Juleroser, featuring Mathias Eick and Kåre Conradi, released by Grappa in November 2021. Performed as pianist and co-artistic director on the accompanying Christmas tour in December 2022.
- 2019 → Multiverse.** A quintet led by Anders Lønne Grønseth. Has released three albums, and a new one will be out in 2026.
- 2016 - 2019 Tråante.** Multiple tours with Marja Helena Mortensson, Katarina Barruk, Daniel Herskedal and Stian Lundberg.
- 2017 → Espen Berg & Seamus Blake.** The duo has played concerts in Trondheim and has recorded an album.
- 2016 - 2017 Daniel Herskedal - «Slow Eastbound Train».** Concerts in NL, and in France with Aïrelle Besson (trp)
- 2016 - 2019 BRIDGES feat. Seamus Blake**
- 2015 → Mathias Eick Quintet.** Concerts in Poland, Germany and Norway, and at jazzahead! in Bremen in 2019
- 2015 → Tore Johansen - «Requiem: Shine on Them»**
- 2015 → Andreas Aase - «Fir»**
- 2015 → Kåre Kolve - «Interactions».** Concerts with Anders Jormin and Mathias Eick at Vossajazz and Trondheim Jazzfest.
- 2013 → Cantus.** Annual Christmas concerts with Eirik Hegdal and Tore Johansen.
- 2012 - 2013 Daniel Herskedal - «Dagen Etter».** Concerts and recording, with Helene Bøksle and Marius Neset.

- 2011 —> Trondheim Jazz Orchestra & Marius Neset**  
Has played 18 concerts at festivals in Europe, among them North Sea Jazz Festival, Moldejazz, Musikfest Bremen, and at Ronnie Scott's. Won the Norwegian Grammy in 2015.
- 2011 - 2013 Norges Korforbund:** Pianist and arranger for the productions «This is it» (2011) and «Isn't she lovely» (2013)
- 2010 - 2011 Jo Skaansar Kvartett.** Several tours in Norway, with guest appearance by Edvard Hoem.
- 2009 - 2018 Den Kulturelle Skolesekken/Rikskonserterne.** About 250 concerts with Ragnhild Faanes Kvartett and Listen
- 2009 - 2013 Kåre Kolve Quartet**
- 2009 TrondheimSolistene**
- 2008 Sissel Kyrkjebø.** Pianist and arranger on two tours in Denmark and Sweden.
- 2007 - 2008 Luftforsvarets Musikkorps.** Concerts with Ole Edvard Antonsen
- 2006 Trøndelag Teater.** Keyboardist on «Les Misérables»
- 2003 - 2010 Listen:** Tours in Syria, Belgium, Norway, Spain, and concerts in France, Denmark, Cuba and the Faroe Islands.

## WORK EXPERIENCE AS AN EMPLOYEE

- 2007 —> Department of music, NTNU:** Associate professor, 50%  
Teaches and lectures in a range of subjects at the jazz department, including instrumental teaching, ear training, ensemble, rhythm, entrepreneurship, performance psychology, master supervision, and pedagogy. Serves as course coordinator for both master's and bachelor's level courses.
- 2005 - 2015 Trøndertun folk high school:** Assistant professor, 35%
- 2007 - 2009 Respons Reklamebyrå:** Graphics designer, 40%

## WORK EXPERIENCE IN EXPERT COMMITTEES

- 2020 - 2022 Nordisk Kulturfond:** Expert assessor for music and opera. Appointed by Arts Council Norway
- 2018 - 2022 Arts Council Norway:** Expert committee member
- 2016 - 2022 Midtnorsk Jazzsenter:** Member of program committee

## DISCOGRAPHY AS A LEADER OR CO-LEADER

YEAR	ARTIST AND TITLE	ROLE	CATALOG NO.
2026	<i>Aileron</i>	<i>Pianist, composer</i>	2026
2026	<i>Sissel Vera Pettersen &amp; Espen Berg</i>	<i>Pianist, composer</i>	2026
2026	<i>Espen Berg Trio - V</i>	<i>Pianist, composer</i>	2026
2025	<i>Seamus Blake &amp; Espen Berg</i>	<i>Pianist, composer</i>	2025, Whirlwind Records
2025	<i>Espen Berg - Øra Live Sessions</i>	<i>Pianist, composer</i>	2025
2024	<i>Trondheim Jazz Orchestra &amp; Espen Berg - MAETRIX</i>	<i>Pianist, composer</i>	ODINLP9595
2023	<i>Espen Berg - Water Fabric</i>	<i>Pianist, composer</i>	ODINCD9588
2023	<i>Espen Berg - The Hamar Concert</i>	<i>Pianist, composer</i>	NXN2019
2023	<i>Espen Berg - The Nidaros Concert</i>	<i>Pianist, composer</i>	NXN2018
2022	<i>Espen Berg - The Trondheim Concert</i>	<i>Pianist, composer</i>	NXN2011
2022	<i>Espen Berg Trio - Fjære</i>	<i>Pianist, composer</i>	ODINCD9581
2021	<i>Herborg Kråkevik - Barnas Juleroser</i>	<i>Pianist, arranger, producer</i>	61211 (Grappa)
2020	<i>Silje Nergaard &amp; Espen Berg - Japanese Blue</i>	<i>Pianist, arranger</i>	Okeh - 194397246223
2019	<i>Espen Berg Trio - Free to Play</i>	<i>Pianist, composer</i>	BG011 / ODINCD9569
2019	<i>BRIDGES feat. Seamus Blake - Continuum</i>	<i>Pianist, composer</i>	AT050
2017	<i>Espen Berg Trio - Bølge</i>	<i>Pianist, composer</i>	BG008
2017	<i>BRIDGES feat. Seamus Blake - Bridges</i>	<i>Pianist, composer</i>	AMP Records AT008
2015	<i>Hildegunn Øiseth - Time is coming</i>	<i>Pianist, composer</i>	LOS 142-2
2015	<i>Espen Berg Trio - Monster</i>	<i>Pianist, composer</i>	BG006 / AKLANG314
2014	<i>Espen Berg - Acres of Blue</i>	<i>Pianist, producer</i>	AKLANG308
2012	<i>Espen Berg - Noctilucent</i>	<i>Pianist, producer</i>	AKLANG306
2010	<i>Green Serene &amp; Per Jørgensen - Living Live</i>	<i>Pianist, composer</i>	AIMCD138
2009	<i>Listen - II</i>	<i>Pianist, composer</i>	SMLCD213
2007	<i>Listen - Listen!</i>	<i>Pianist, composer</i>	SMLCD206

## AWARDS AND COMMISSIONS

- | YEAR      | DESCRIPTION                                                                                        |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2023      | <b>Official Steinway Artist.</b> Appointed by Steinway & Sons.                                     |
| 2022      | <b>Water Fabric.</b> Commission for Jazzfest Trondheim, Maijazz Stavanger and Oslo Jazz Festival.  |
| 2016-2021 | <b>Artist work grant</b> from Arts Council Norway, 2016-2018 and 2021.                             |
| 2016      | <b>JazZtipendiat.</b> Awarded Norway's largest jazz grant, and wrote MAETRIX for TJO and Moldejazz |
| 2016      | <b>Official NTNU Ambassador.</b> With Espen Berg Trio, appointed by NTNU.                          |
| 2015      | <b>Norwegian Grammy</b> with TJO & Marius Neset - Lion.                                            |