

Press release, 12.02.26 Spring Program 2026

KW

KW Institute for Contemporary Art's Spring Program 2026 explores Berlin—its materials, people, and histories—alongside KW's own building as an active framework for artistic inquiry. Centered on artists and their processes, exhibitions by **Klara Lidén**, **Jean Katambayi Mukendi**, and **Else Marie Pade** engage with the social, technological, and ecological conditions shaping the present, situating artistic practice within the lived realities of the city.

– Emma Enderby, Director



KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, 2025; photo: Frank Sperling.

Exhibition 21.02.–10.05.26

Opening 20.02.26

Else Marie Pade

Partitur

Curator: Sofie Krogh Christensen

The world was like a great dome filled with sounds. – Else Marie Pade



Else Marie Pade, 1962. Photo: Unknown.

Partitur is the first international exhibition dedicated to Danish composer and sound artist Else Marie Pade (b. 1924, d. 2016, both DK), a path-maker of musique concrète and European electronic music. Over a career spanning multiple decades, Pade approached sound as a medium of electronically generated tunes, exploring intensities, multitudes, and dissonance. Her versatile oeuvre spans electronic works, chamber and orchestral music, children's music, accompanying scores for TV and radio plays, and music drama, which carry listeners through fairy tales, cityscapes, and nightmares.

Shaped by the structure of her scores, the exhibition forms an immersive listening space. It brings together ten of Pade's seminal musical arrangements, which play throughout the space. Together with a selection of her works on paper, the exhibition traces her artistic trajectory beginning in the 1950s, when she met French composer Pierre Schaeffer. A trained classical pianist, Pade looked

to Schaeffer's concrete music in order to build the abstract sonic spaces she had been drawn to since childhood. Pade, a single mother of two, began to sample the acoustics in her home and the surrounding urban landscape. The artist later founded the first electronic studio at the Danish Broadcasting Corporation (DR) in Copenhagen, where she continued to experiment with applying new technology in musical composition. When attending the "Darmstadt International Summer Courses for New Music" in the 1960s, avant-garde composers Karlheinz Stockhausen, György Ligeti, and Pierre Boulez became Pade's mentors, with whom she continued to exchange ideas and insights.

In addition to machines, physics, storytelling, and later, Christian spirituality, Pade's musical understanding was also rooted in her experiences from World War II, during which she was imprisoned in the internment camp in Frøslev, Denmark, for her involvement in the women's resistance.

Due to the post-traumatic stress disorder, she developed after her confinement, Pade's health deteriorated and she officially retired from music in 1973. Her work, although largely forgotten in Danish music history after the early 1980s, has received renewed attention since the 2000s, with numerous new recordings, remixes, and performances.

The exhibition is accompanied by a live concert with cellist Khabat Abas, that is part of MaerzMusik 2026, as well as a conversation that centers the heritage of women artists in experimental electronic music.

Artist Biography

Else Marie Pade (*1924 – † 2016) is regarded as Denmark's most significant pioneer in electronic music and musique concrète. She began composing after the Second World War, during which she was imprisoned for her involvement in the women's resistance. In 1952, she discovered musique concrète through radio broadcasts, which inspired her to establish an electronic music studio at Danish Radio in the early 1950s. She closely followed contemporary European trends in new music and her encounters with Pierre Schaeffer, Karlheinz Stockhausen, and György Ligeti were influential for her development. Her versatile oeuvre spans electronic works, chamber and orchestral music, children's music, radio plays, and music drama.

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Titles and Dates are subject to change