

## PRESS RELEASE

### **The Smartphone Orchestra celebrates world premiere at Dutch Lowlands Festival** *Visitors of Lowlands form a staggeringly large orchestra with their own smartphones*

Sunday, 21 August marked The Smartphone Orchestra's world premiere at renowned music festival Lowlands. Using their smartphones, thousands of Lowlands visitors collectively created a single, monumental work of music, composed especially for this occasion: a musical piece with every smartphone making its own unique contribution, thanks to sophisticated technology and an entirely new method of composition. The Smartphone Orchestra makes a powerful riposte to the criticism so frequently uttered against smartphone use today. However, thanks to the orchestra, instead of a group of individuals each staring at his own telephone the crowd came together to experience a unique moment of collectivity. Proof that modern technology can bring people closer together.

This idea had already existed for some time. The Smartphone Orchestra team has dedicated an entire year to programming, tweaking and testing the necessary technology. Timesync technology, developed by Amsterdam based creative production studio Ambassadors, formed a vital link. However, the team had to grapple with many problems besides the technical challenges: they also needed to discover a new way of composing music. Writing for huge numbers of smartphone speakers requires an entirely new way of thinking. The piece played at Lowlands is loosely inspired on minimal music, in which various patterns form a bigger whole when put together. Where traditionally musical instruments form the building blocks of a composition, in this case the ring tones and notification beeps of smartphones are the key ingredients. Following several test sessions at Oerol, with Spinvis, and at the Sonár Festival in Barcelona with Brian Eno nodding in approval, it was now time for the official premiere at Lowlands.

Steye Hallema, initiator of The Smartphone Orchestra:

*'The smartphone is literally getting more and more "under our skin". It makes a lot of things much easier, and I also make use of the advantages it offers. However, I regularly ask myself if it is healthy for us to be continually overloaded with information. Our brain also needs to be able to day-dream and to "tune out". This is why we wanted to reverse the operation of the smartphone and use it to get people to come together and share a wonderful experience. We are very proud that we were able to achieve something on this scale at the Netherlands' most pioneering pop festival. It was an experience that I, in any case, will not quickly forget!'*

For a video recording and photos of the premier performance at Lowlands go to:

<http://www.smartphoneorchestra.com/presskit>

\*\*\*\*\*

#### **Note for editors (not for publication):**

Contact person for the press and for more information, interviews, and other questions:

Marieke Nooren- 0031645608987/ [marieke@wildvreemd.nl](mailto:marieke@wildvreemd.nl)

#### **Links:**

[Video World Premiere The Smartphone Orchestra @Lowlands](#)

[Promo video The Smartphone Orchestra](#)

[www.smartphoneorchestra.com/presskit](http://www.smartphoneorchestra.com/presskit)

<https://www.facebook.com/smartphoneorchestra/>

#### **Partners:**

The Smartphone Orchestra has been made possible by the TimeSync technology from Ambassadors and financial support by the Creative Industries Fund NL, 'Toekomstmuziek!' (a program by Fonds 21), and the Performing Arts Fund NL.

#### **Creative team:**

Steye Hallema - Creative lead / composer  
Marieke Nooren - Producer  
Eric Magnee - Composer / sound design  
Adrien Jeanjean - Creative technologist / co founder  
Hidde de Jong - Creative technologist

The Smartphone Orchestra is a WildVreemd production.