

# Lady Sapiens

Sunday 23 November, 3pm  
Bates Mill Blending Shed

**Mingo Rajandi** double bass / electronics

**Beate Weisinger** double bass / electronics

**Elsa Bergman** double bass

**Berlinde Deman** serpent / electronics

**Mingo Rajandi (Estonia, 1980)**

Lady Sapiens (2025) 60' **UK Premiere**

For many years, society has categorised people, things, behaviour and characteristics by the binary division of masculine and feminine. Some examples of it linger on. Hard to believe, but it's still deep inside many of us to think that flowers are feminine and machines are masculine, being gentle is feminine while being decisive is masculine, pink socks are feminine, blue are masculine etc.

Playing the double bass or serpent are certainly not considered to be very feminine activities. For that very reason I have chosen this musical setting to be the ground from which to question the definition of femininity and “ladylike”.

But what did those things mean thousands of years ago?

What if those biases were not natural to humankind but rather recent phenomena, considering the many hundreds of millennia of human existence?

Archaeology as a science was born in the 1860s and the first archaeologists were obviously men. The centre of their research was also a man, and in their investigation of the Palaeolithic era, they saw everything through the prism of their own mindset and the prejudices of their own era; where a woman was positioned as a second-class creature, someone invisible and with less importance. Heavily influenced by the dogmas of the Bible, woman has been seen through history as a sinner, a “sideman” in a band where the HUMAN (man) stands in the spotlight and has the lead vocals.

Recent studies using novel technologies bring surprising discoveries from the Palaeolithic era. There are no signs of a woman living her life as a mere assistant to the protagonist in the history of humankind – man, as was naturally assumed by the scientists of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The women of the Stone Age were not more primitive versions of women living in the second half of the 1860s, somewhat silent accessories to their male superiors.

The Palaeolithic woman was much more than just a carer, waiting at home for the man to return, depending on him to feed her and think for her. She was an equal in the tribe, mastering technologies, having a valuable word to say in decision making and carrying on precious *savoir-faire*. She was strong, fierce and creative.

The studies on those distant times prove that the domination of man is indeed a social construction and hopefully just a very long phase that we could perhaps finally pass. Feminism has been trying to get through with its core messages for over half a century, but new scientific discoveries prove them right.

In my piece *Lady Sapiens*, I want to give women the roles that they might have had hundreds of thousands of years ago – hunters, leaders, thinkers, artists, shamans, healers, inventors.

I believe that a world that restarts hearing a woman's voice is a better place, and I hope that being "ladylike" would finally mean whatever. I have invited three powerful women to accompany me in this research of femininity. I am curious and happy to be forming a band with those highly accomplished and appreciated musicians, and to discover new musical horizons with this rather specific and unusual instrumentation of three double basses and a serpent.

My piece is inspired by the book *Lady Sapiens* by Thomas CiorotEAU, Jennifer Kerner and Eric Pincas, published in 2023 under Collection Proche. © **Mingo Rajandi**

**Produced by hcmf// supported by Estonian Centre of Contemporary Music**

***Lady Sapiens* is co-commissioned by Ha Concerts, Jazzkaar Festival and hcmf//**