

TACTUS FESTIVAL 2025, 12.12. - 14.12.2025 | PRESSEMELDUNG



<https://www.usmaradio.org/tactusfestival2025/#program>

Old Monastery of Santa Chiara. Contrada Omerelli 20, City of San Marino

# TACTUS FESTIVAL 2025, 12.12. - 14.12.2025 | PRESSEMELDUNG

## War radio, peace radio

The University of the Republic of San Marino, through Usmaradio – Research Centre for Radio, presents the second edition of **TACTUS Radio Festival**, to be held from **12 to 14 December 2025** in the main hall of the Ancient Monastery of Santa Chiara. The central theme of the edition is “**War Radio, Peace Radio**”: a journey of reflection and practice on contemporary radio, podcasting, and the forms of sonic communication that today participate in processes of conflict, resistance, and peacebuilding.

The project is carried out in collaboration with **ORF Kunstradio and Bauhaus-Universität Weimar** and edited by **Andrea Borgnino, Roberto Paci Dalò, Nathalie Singer** ed **Elisabeth Zimmermann**. The initiative is part of the University's annual program dedicated to peace, promoted by the Rector **Conrad Petrocelli** and shared by the university community.

## Maurine Mercier: Live from Ukraine

One of the most powerful moments of the festival will be the intervention of the journalist **Maurine Mercier**, correspondent in Ukraine for the **RTS (Radio Télévision Suisse)**, which will connect **December 12th directly from Ukraine**. Mercier is the author of the popular podcast **Ukrainian Cards**, in which, through voice notes, she documents the daily life of the conflict, giving voice to intimate stories often overlooked by traditional reportage.

Her field experience is widely recognized: she has been living in Kiev since 2022 and has received numerous international awards, including the **Bayeux-Calvados War Correspondents Prize**.

Mercier's participation in the festival is not only symbolic: during the input session on December 12th (“*Ukrainian Cards* (Presentation with Q&A)”, the audience will be able to engage directly with her, ask questions, and discuss the war narrative. This remote connection will offer a unique perspective on what it means to do radio from inside a conflict.

The festival offers live performances, frontal sessions by the curators on the theme of the use of radio in war theatres (among the interventions: “The enemy is

Old **Monastery of Santa Chiara**. Contrada Omerelli 20, City of San Marino

## **TACTUS FESTIVAL 2025, 12.12. - 14.12.2025 | PRESSEMELDUNG**

always listening” by Borgnino and “Sonic Warfare” by Paci Dalò) and, above all, **free workshops open to the public** which will take place throughout the three days. The workshops are designed to allow anyone—students, professionals, enthusiasts, and the general public—to experiment with radio-making practices, broadcast device construction, and collective sound design.

### **The workshop sessions**

In the heart of **TACTUS – War radio, peace radio** the three-day workshop offers an immersive journey dedicated to listening, broadcasting, and collective planning. Activities led by Nathalie Singer offer participants the opportunity to explore radio not only as a technical medium, but as a cultural and social practice. **Dyaden-Exercise**, which trains deep and relational listening through a structured dialogue in pairs, **Blind Walk**, which will take place in the vicinity of the University and in the historic center of Titano, which invites us to perceive space exclusively through sound and trust in others, the workshop fosters a new sensitivity towards what is "felt" rather than what is "seen".

Alongside these practices, the session **Radio Waves as a Common** by Andrea Borgnino takes participants on a journey through the electromagnetic spectrum, thanks to Usmaradio's new KIWI SDR receiving station\*, revealing signals and soundscapes that are usually invisible.

The journey concludes on Sunday morning with the **World Café**, led by Nathalie Singer and Elisabeth Zimmermann, a moment of collective discussion where we share insights, connections, and visions to imagine the "radio of the future." A workshop that combines experience, listening, and experimentation, transforming radio into a shared space for research and participation.

This year's guest artists, who will perform live at the end of the second day (Saturday at 19:30 PM), are: **The Empire of Light** e **Andrei Rublev**.

The activities will be held in English and Italian.

Old **Monastery of Santa Chiara**. Contrada Omerelli 20, City of San Marino

# TACTUS FESTIVAL 2025, 12.12. - 14.12.2025 | PRESSEMELDUNG

## PROGRAM

Friday 12

**16:00** Welcome and introduction

**17:30 – 18:30** Introductory session War Radio / Peace Radio

- “Sonic Warfare” by Roberto Paci Dalò
- “Listening with the Third Ear” – Radio Resistance, by Nathalie Singer

Discussion with all participants

**18:30 – 19:30** “Carnets d'Ukraine” by Maurine Mercier (online presentation with Q&A)

**21:30** DJ-SET with Andrea Borgnino aka DJ Armeno

*Location: Coop. Il Macello*

Saturday 13

**9:30 – 11:30** Dyaden Exercise with Nathalie Singer

**11:30 – 12:30** Second session War Radio / Peace Radio

- “The enemy is always listening” by Andrea Borgnino
- “Radio Art Projects in Times of War and Conflict” by Elisabeth Zimmermann

Discussion with all participants

**14:00 – 16:00** “Electric Forests” — An Electromagnetic Sound Walk with The Empire of Light

“Blind Walk” with Nathalie Singer

- break -

**16:30 – 19:30** Transmission tools and devices

- Input: “Radio Waves as a Common” by Andrea Borgnino

Old **Monastery of Santa Chiara**. Contrada Omerelli 20, City of San Marino

## TACTUS FESTIVAL 2025, 12.12. - 14.12.2025 | PRESSEMELDUNG

- “Alternative Radio-Transmission Tools” curated by the curators

Feedback and summary

**19:30 – 20:30** Performance of The Empire of Light and Andrei Rublev

Sunday 14th of

**9:30 – 11:30** Open laboratory — World Café with Nathalie Singer & Elisabeth Zimmermann

“Prototyping the radio of the future”

**11:30 – 12:30** Final session and feedback

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Some festival activities are reserved for workshop participants.

To apply for the workshop, please send a short motivational letter to [tactus@usmaradio.org](mailto:tactus@usmaradio.org)

*The Slaughterhouse is located in front of the Ancient Monastery of Santa Chiara, Contrada delle Mura 43, City of San Marino.*

Old **Monastery of Santa Chiara**. Contrada Omerelli 20, City of San Marino



## RADIO OF WAR, RADIO OF PEACE

12 — 14 DECEMBER

### REPUBLIC OF SAN MARINO

Since its inception, **radio** has served as both an instrument of power and propaganda, and as a tool of **resistance**. This paradox runs through its more than hundred-year history, from the transmission masts of the colonial era to the shutdown of digital communication channels during today's political crises. Yet analog radio remains inexpensive, accessible, and resilient. Qualities that continue to make it a **vital medium for resistance movements** and disaster response around the world.

While Europe is phasing out FM signals and moving toward DAB+, internet radio, and podcasts, these digital infrastructures are increasingly vulnerable to authoritarian control. Can we **reclaim the freed-up frequencies** for political or artistic interventions? Can we build **alternative communication networks**? How can radio-making once again become a **social practice**, one that amplifies marginalized voices and challenges algorithm-driven content with new forms of expression?

In a **two-day festival-workshop** combining practical and theoretical sessions under the theme "*Radio di guerra, radio di pace*," we will explore these questions together imagining and designing the "**radio**" of the future: a medium of listening.

### A Special Edition of TACTUS

This year, **TACTUS** transforms into a *festival-laboratory*, an immersive and unconventional format inviting participants to spend three days working alongside

Old **Monastery of Santa Chiara**. Contrada Omerelli 20, City of San Marino

# TACTUS FESTIVAL 2025, 12.12. - 14.12.2025 | PRESSEMELDUNG

curators **Andrea Borgnino, Roberto Paci Dalò, Nathalie Singer, Elisabeth Zimmermann**, and the artists featured in the festival.

Limited to **25 participants**, the workshop offers a unique opportunity to explore the world of sound, listening, and experimental radio art, guided by leading figures of the contemporary scene.

**Participation is free, but full attendance for all three days is required.**

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## Sessions details:

### **DYADEN — Saturday 9:30**

The Dyaden Exercise is a paired listening practice that creates a held relational space: two people alternate answering guided questions while the other listens silently and without judgment. This format cultivates deep attention, empathy and collective reflection; insights are later shared and noted to build shared listening maps.

### **BLIND WALK — Saturday 14:00**

The Blind Walk is a paired guided walk: one participant is blindfolded and led by a partner, focusing attention on the sonic environment without technological mediation. The practice sharpens bodily and auditory perception, explores trust and nonverbal communication, and reveals how sounds transform orientation and spatial understanding.

### **RADIO WAVES AS A COMMON — Saturday 16:30**

Radio Waves as a Common is an immersion into the electromagnetic spectrum: from shortwaves to GHz frequencies, we listen to signals, interference and radio landscapes using Usmaradio's KIWI SDR receiver. The session frames the spectrum as a shared commons, full of stories, signal migrations and political potential, and proposes low-tech, community approaches to transmission.

**Old Monastery of Santa Chiara.** Contrada Omerelli 20, City of San Marino

# **TACTUS FESTIVAL 2025, 12.12. - 14.12.2025 | PRESSEMELDUNG**

## **WORLD CAFÉ — Sunday 9:30**

The World Café is a collective lab for dialogue and synthesis: participants rotate between themed tables to address questions about inspirations, connections and next steps. Outcomes are gathered and shared in plenary to map common paths. It is a participatory space to jointly imagine the “radio of the future”.

Un progetto di **Usmaradio – Centro di Ricerca per la Radiofonia, ORF Kunstradio / Kunst zum Hören, Experimental Radio and Real.Sense.Lab of Bauhaus-Universität Weimar**

Produzione **UNIRSM – Università degli Studi della Repubblica di San Marino**

Con il patrocinio di **Segreteria di Stato Istruzione e la Cultura, Segreteria di Stato per l’Industria e l’Artigianato e la Segreteria di Stato Turismo della Repubblica di San Marino**

In collaborazione con **Unirsm Design, RaiPlay Sound, Tomo Tomo, Giardini Pensili, Sentire le Voci – La festa del podcast, Il Macello cooperativa culturale**

Media partners **Radio Icaro, Gagarin Orbite Culturali**

A cura di **Andrea Borgnino, Roberto Paci Dalò, Nathalie Singer, Elisabeth Zimmermann**

Direzione organizzativa **Alessandro Renzi**

Ufficio stampa **Jeffrey Zani**

Multimedia **Emanuele Lumini**

Design **Davide di Gennaro (Tomo Tomo)**

Comunicazione **Erica Tentoni, Andrea Conti**

Podcast **Gianni Gozzoli**

## **ANDREA BORGNINO**

Andrea Borgnino is a journalist, writer and radio presenter. He has created many programmes for Radio3 RAI dedicated to the world of radio. He worked for Gr RAI, at Radio1 as the writer of the programme “Golem”. In 2009 he was New Media Manager at the EBU in Geneva. He published the book “Radio Pirata” (Persiani Editore, 2010). He is currently head of content at RaiPlaySound. One of the members of the EBU Radio Committee. Every thursday he talks about the latest happenings on the airwaves in his Radio3 segment “Interferenze”.

## **ANDREA GAVA**

Old **Monastery of Santa Chiara**. Contrada Omerelli 20, City of San Marino

## TACTUS FESTIVAL 2025, 12.12. - 14.12.2025 | PRESSEMELDUNG

**Andrea Gava** (also known by the pseudonym **Andreij Rublev**) is a musician, composer, performer, producer, and sound designer. His work moves across sonic experimentation, education, and artistic production. He has led theatre workshops in high schools and universities, composed soundtracks for stage productions, contemporary dance performances, short films, and documentaries, and directed radio programs in collaboration with various institutions, including Usmaradio, the research centre for radiophonic studies at the University of San Marino. He has also performed at the Venice Biennale for several international artists. His research focuses on electroacoustic music and improvisational techniques, both as a solo artist and within collective projects. Alongside his performance activity, he produces online content on contemporary and experimental music, seeking to bridge the gap between artists and audiences through interviews, listening sessions, and collaborative projects.

## L'IMPERO DELLA LUCE

**L'Impero della Luce** [*The Empire of Light*] is an Italian duo devoted to experimentation and musical research founded in 2018 by Johann Merrich and eeviac. Through the techniques of electromagnetic induction, L'Impero della Luce explores the sounds of the electric current emitted and dispersed by human technologies. In 2019, L'Impero della Luce was chosen to be part of the international network Keychange. Since 2020, it has officially collaborated with SOMA Laboratory, presenting to listeners the fascinating appeal of Ether

## MAURINE MERCIER

**Maurine Mercier**, a Swiss-Canadian journalist, has earned numerous national and international awards for her reporting in conflict zones such as Libya and Ukraine. Currently based in Kiev after six years in North Africa (2016-2022), Mercier prefers being known as a “ground reporter” rather than a “war reporter.” Her empathetic and rigorous reporting style has garnered praise, capturing the raw emotions of those affected by conflict while maintaining journalistic integrity. Mercier’s journey into journalism was propelled by a desire to shed light on the human stories behind geopolitical events. She has been recognised for her in-depth coverage of various conflicts, including the war in Ukraine and the plight of migrants in the Mediterranean, showcasing her commitment to amplifying marginalised voices on the global stage.

## ROBERTO PACI DALÒ

**Roberto Paci Dalò** is an Italian author, composer, director, artist, and radio-maker. He directs Giardini Pensili, a performing arts company and cultural space based in Rimini, Italy. A pioneer in the use of new technologies in the arts, his work – appreciated and supported by John Cage, Aleksandr Sokurov, Giorgio Agamben, John Zorn, Gerd Schaller, and Giya Kancheli – has been presented at festivals, theatres, biennials, and museums around the world. Art, science, nature, and voice are the key words of his research. Founding director of Usmaradio – Research Centre for Radiophonic Studies at Unism, where he is professor of Exhibit Design, and artistic director of the festivals BIOMA and TACTUS Radio Festival. Among his publications

**Old Monastery of Santa Chiara.** Contrada Omerelli 20, City of San Marino

# TACTUS FESTIVAL 2025, 12.12. - 14.12.2025 | PRESSEMELDUNG

are: *Millesuoni. Deleuze, Guattari e la musica elettronica*, with Emanuele Quinz (Cronopio 2006), *Filmnero* (Marsèll 2016), *Ombre* (Quodlibet 2019), *eBAU* (Quodlibet 2024).

## NATHALIE SINGER

**Nathalie Singer** is a radio artist, curator, and professor of Experimental Radio at Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, where she also served as vice president. Her work explores how artistic ideas move between media, cultures, and disciplines, bridging art and science through sound. With a background in musicology, communication sciences, and psychology (Berlin and Paris) as well as in electroacoustic composition at the Groupe de Recherches Musicales (GRM), she has developed a distinguished international career as an author, composer, director, curator, and researcher in the field of Radiophony. Her artistic and curatorial projects — including the award-winning *Wurfsendung*, the international exhibition *Radiophonic Spaces* (2018–2020), and *Listening to the World – 100 Years of Radio* (2023–2024) — explore new modes of listening and the artistic potential of radio art archives. She founded the Real.Sense.Lab in 2021, a platform for experimental listening research and interdisciplinary collaboration. Singer's work has been recognized with the RadioJournal Broadcasting Award, the Heritage in Motion Award, and multiple Prix Europa nominations.

## ELISABETH ZIMMERMANN

**Elisabeth Zimmermann** is a cultural manager living in Vienna. She has been involved in organizing, coordinating, and curating radio art projects, symposia, publications, and international telematic art projects. She has held various presentations and lectures on radio art projects at national and international festivals. Since 1998, she has been the producer of the weekly radio art program *Radiokunst – Kunstradio* (<http://kunstradio.at>) on the cultural channel of ORF (Austrian National radio), since 2023 she is the producer of *Kunst zum Hören*. In 1999, she founded *werks* – an art association dedicated to the realization of artistic projects in telecommunications media, which published the book “Re-Inventing Radio – Aspects of Radio as Art” (eds. Heidi Grundmann, Elisabeth Zimmermann, et al, Revolver, Frankfurt am Main, 2008). She has been part of the international curator's team for the Festival Radio Revolten, Halle/Saale, 2016. Furthermore, she is repeatedly active as a member of juries.

Old Monastery of Santa Chiara. Contrada Omerelli 20, City of San Marino