

ISHAM NEWS | 01 SEP 2017

STREETMUSIC

Isn't it remarkable that in countries with, let's say, a somewhat greyish climate, like The Netherlands, people of all ages tend to prefer grey or black clothing? And on the contrary, in climates where the sunlit colors are overwhelming, people dress like bunches of flowers. In The Netherlands there is nevertheless one area of baroque exuberant excitement, and that is the street organ. The mechanic rotary organs are full of color, with clumsy movements and a lot of noise. As an apparent contrast, many of them have a half-way dead horse in front, to pull the harmonium that drums, whistles and dances entirely on its own. Market places typically are cheered up by these miracle machines that originated from 19th century Italy, but have found their way to the rainy streets of Holland. They are not exactly classical, as they follow modern popular music in a penetrating way. Imagine such a machine at the traditional center of Delft, suddenly stamping and roaring Queen's Bohemian Rhapsody in a way you don't get it out of your head anymore for the next three days.



This music is not exactly for listening, but from a distance it merges with the summer sounds of the city, and makes an atmosphere of pleasure and relax. There are many street sounds in Amsterdam that are amazing. Many musicians are really excellent, providing moments of happiness free of charge.

Street artists are forbidden in the city center because there were too many. Just avoid the tourist-overcrowded canal district and go to the Opera House or the National Museum, and enjoy. One of our top-musicians at the moment is Janine Jansen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0u9ZyObKvHs> playing the violin, but for her performance you need a ticket in the Concertgebouw, one of the best concert halls of Europe.

Night owls will have a good time in Amsterdam's dozens of jazz cafes. Starting late at night, there is free entrance, free music <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yal34owsAqs>, free fun; just pay for the beer until the next morning (don't forget to shave before you enter the congress hall again). Most of the music centers are located within the circular canal zone that that makes up the historical city. Easy to reach by tram, and to get back, take a walk, the sun will get up at 05.24 AM, thus nothing to worry.

At the Museumplein, a large lawn surrounded by Amsterdam's major museums, there are always some guitars or drums, and if not, it is nice anyway. People gather there for a picnic or a chat, or to play basketball. Even policemen are quite relaxed; see this tough motorized law enforcement officer scoring some points while cheered by the crowd.

Of course we expect you to be present at the congress. There will be enough to do, with five to seven parallel sessions. But we also would like you to have a good time. Amsterdam is a small city, almost everything is within walking distance, and trams run very frequently between RAI and the city center. As an alternative, bicycles or Segways can be rented at low cost. We will give more precise information on getting around in the city by the time you are packing your suitcase.

