



Helsinki

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IHME Helsinki Commission 2023 – rehearsals open to everyone begin.

Chicago Boys – While We Were Singing, They Were Dreaming invites everyone to join in this amateur band's rehearsals on Saturdays for six weeks from 22 April to 27 May. The project initiated by Kurdish artist and musician **Hiwa K** in London in 2010 is being carried out in Helsinki by a diverse group of people. There are musicians and non-musicians, who are united by the desire to think about the links between the economy and changes in the environment, and their effects on everyday life.

The band members choose the music to be played and the locations for rehearsals. It is important for the artist that the stories and experiences of those taking part in the work are heard. Hiwa K has said: "The capitalist system always tries to make you a 'star', but I said no, it's good for me to be a 'half-moon'." Besides Helsinki, he is simultaneously staging *Chicago Boys* with local people in his hometown of Sulaymaniyah in Iraqi Kurdistan, and will join the Helsinki band as a regular member in the last week of the Commission in May.

In the band's open rehearsals an organic space is created for discussion and music in various public places in Helsinki whose fate is threatened, for example, by privatization and neoliberal values. The first public rehearsal will be at Lapinlahti Hospital from 13:00 to 16:00 on 22 April.

According to IHME Helsinki Executive Director and curator **Paula Toppila**, *Chicago Boys* brings together all the values that are important to IHME: ecological and social sustainability; experiencing and doing things together; encouraging change; and creating change.

"In a world filled with crises many people feel the need to get together, to get to know each other and listen to each other's stories. *Chicago Boys* offers that opportunity by bringing people together to play the music of their choice in a large or small group; besides the core group, the public can also participate in band rehearsals," Toppila says.

In Helsinki, you can freely join in the amateur band's public rehearsals, with or without your instrument. The places and times of the rehearsals open to everyone will be posted on the IHME Helsinki website. The work culminates in the last public rehearsal at Stoa Cultural Centre on Saturday, 27 May.

Read more about IHME Helsinki Commission 2023: ihmehelsinki.fi

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