

Melissa Venema lives in Zaandam. She was born on the 12th of April 1995. When she was a little child she loved wind instruments. At 6 she started to play the recorder at Soli Deo Gloria, a band in Zaandam. Melissa changed the recorder for the trumpet when she was 8 years old. This seemed to be a very good choice. Her docent, called Marjan Politiek said: “she is going very well”. At 9 Melissa played trumpet solo in several churches. In the mean time she also received extra trumpet lessons from Bert Hendrix, a famous Dutch trumpet player. After that time Melissa played the trumpet in several orchestras.



In December 2005 Melissa was at an audition at the Conservatorium of Amsterdam. There it was decided for her to receive trumpet lessons from Frits Damrow. Frits Damrow is an international trumpet player, a solo trumpet player

at the Royal Concert Hall of Amsterdam and several studies are of his hand. Frits prepared Melissa for the entrance exam on April 22, 2006 at the Young Talent Class of the Conservatorium of Amsterdam. Melissa succeeded in that entrance exam and, besides her regular school, Melissa also began classical study at the Conservatorium, where Frits Damrow was her teacher again. The accomplishments at the Conservatorium are very good.

Melissa performs regularly as a solo trumpet player in several areas of Holland, frequently with the famous Zaandam Organ player Dub de Vries. Along with him Melissa gives many concerts in classical as well as religious music. Together with Dub de Vries, Melissa performs with several different choirs from Holland. Melissa also performs along with famous Dutch artists such as Liselotte Rokyta, Martin de Deugd, Carla Leurs and Yta van der Zwaag.

In the summer of 2006 Melissa participated in a summer project. After that project only Melissa was selected to play an eight and a half minute solo from the play "Concerto for Trumpet and Youth Band" by the composer Erik Waerts. Melissa was the youngest ever selected. A CD was made of the entire concert. Erik Waerts personally sent Melissa a greeting card with the text: "thank you very much for the beautiful playing of my trumpet concert. A lot of success with your (trumpet) future! "

At an audition of the known Dutch semi-professional flourish orchestra of Gelderland (province of the Netherlands) Melissa was selected and, on the 13th of January 2007, she played the trumpet very successfully in Wezep (Dutch town).

At the end of 2006 Melissa changed her amateur instrument for a professional hand-made [Yamaha trumpet](#).

In 2007, with the famous Dutch producer Bert Moll, it was agreed to publish a CD for Melissa. This CD, called "Melissa voor U", has sold out already via "De Bazuin" in Putten. The Music World is very enthusiastic about this CD and reviews by the press (also on this website) can be read.

On the 28th and 29th of April 2007, Melissa performed at `Hour of Power` in Apeldoorn and Leiden, both Dutch cities. After her performance she received a long and standing ovation. It was a challenge for Melissa to play for thousands of people. Rev. Schuller and his wife, Donna, held Melissa dear to their hearts, as did the other listeners. The warm, clean sounds of her trumpet, short conversations she had with Jan van de Bosch, allowed Melissa to touch many hearts.

On Sunday, the 29th of April 2007, a television interview between Melissa and Jan van de Bosch occurred. This interview was broadcasted on the program "[Hour of Power](#)"; by RTL5.



On Saturday, the 12th of May 2007, Melissa performed at an audition for the Conservatory of Amsterdam. Along with other young and talented children Melissa was selected to play at a Lunch Concert on June 6th 2007 in the Small Hall of the Royal Concert Hall in Amsterdam. Melissa played, accompanied on the piano by Femke de Graaf, "Sonatina" for trumpet and piano by Alexander von Kreisler.

Melissa played, on August 18 2007, successfully as a soloist during the Prinsengracht Concert in Amsterdam. This concert was broadcasted live by the AVRO.

Melissa took a solo tour in South Africa from August 31 to September 12 in 2007. She was accompanied by Dub de Vries. Melissa had been giving concerts all over the country. The concert tour was a great success and Melissa stole the hearts of many South Africans. On the press page there is more information about this special concert tour.

On September 30 2007, Melissa soloed with great success in the great hall of the Zaantheater in Zaandam. In addition, she was accompanied by the Promenade Orchestra, led by Bas Pollard. Melissa played the famous Haydn Trumpet Concert of the `Andante` and then she played `The Russian Dance`, from Oskar Böhme. In the press she was praised for her warm and convincing tone.

On Christmas Eve 2007, Melissa made her solo debut in the large Concert Hall of Amsterdam. Several times that night she received a thunderous applause.

On Sunday, February 17, 2008, Melissa won the Princess Christina Concours, the prize for western part of the Netherlands. The award was presented by the Commissioner of the Queen of North Holland. The ceremony took place at the Philharmonie in Haarlem.



On May 5 2008, in the World Forum Theater in Den Haag, premiered the opera by Roger Waters "Ça Ira" (There is Hope). This opera was performed only one time by the Dutch Concert Choir, the Counseling Orchestra of Tilburg and the Children's Choir of the Music School of Waterland. All this was led by Rob Vermeulen. As soloists there were Ernst Daniël Smid, Karin ten Cate, André Post and Melissa Venema. At the end of the opera conductor Rob Vermeulen and baritone Ernst Daniël Smid presented Melissa to the audience. Melissa received a long ovation for her trumpet solo in the opera of Roger Waters.

On the 27th and 28th of June 2008, Melissa's dream came true. She played a solo with André Rieu and his orchestra in the Amsterdam Arena. The Arena was absolutely quiet when Melissa entered and started the breathtaking "Il Silenzio". After the solo she played "Il Silenzio" again, along with Andre Rieu's Johann Strauss orchestra. The last high C resounded throughout the Arena. Melissa's playing was pure and wonderful. Many people got goose bumps and were moved by Melissa's musicality and the technique. The second song, the lightning fast "Bugler's Holiday" was played by Melissa, along with the orchestra and the 2 trumpet players from the orchestra, Roger and René. Melissa received a long applause and standing ovation.

On Friday the 4th, Saturday the 5<sup>th</sup>, and Sunday the 6th of July 2008, Melissa played on the Vrijthof in Maastricht along with André Rieu and his Johann Strauss Orchestra. Together, with the "Maastrichter Staar" and other solo players, it became a beautiful and memorable concert. The Melissa's trumpet playing was high class and the audience was deeply impressed. They were "bewitched" by her musical talent. When Melissa started her "Il Silenzio" outdoors, in the Vrijthof, there was complete silence and, at the end of the song, followed a thunderous applause. The three concerts were a great experience for Melissa.

On December the 12th 2008, during the Mid-Winter Festival-Graft de Rijk, Melissa soloed with the Municipal Orchestra of Purmerend. During the opening of this festival she played the Haydn Trumpet Concert Part 2 and 3. A music reviewer of a newspaper wrote that he never had heard such beautiful playing, with the E-trumpet, of the third part of Haydn's Trumpet Concert. Melissa was praised for her virtuoso playing and beautiful lyrical tone.

On the 19th and 20th of December 2008, Melissa played, along with André Rieu and his Johann Strauss Orchestra in the Gelredome in Arnhem, for a unique Christmas Gala. Melissa played "Il Silenzio" and "Bugler's holiday" again. The public was moved by her beautiful tone and her natural, spontaneous expression. During both evenings Melissa received a standing ovation. Because of her performance in the Gelredome André Rieu asked Melissa for two additional concerts in the Arena in Hasselt (Belgium). Melissa was also pleasantly surprised by playing at the Christmas Gala in Hassel. The Belgian public was very surprised by Melissa's performance. After a few notes she received an applause. The enthusiastic audience was very impressed by Melissa's trumpet playing. Melissa has also greatly enjoyed all the performances by André Rieu and his Johann Strauss Orchestra.

During of the 10-year anniversary of the Zaantheater, on January 10 2009, Melissa soloed with the Verkade Show-Orchestra in Zaandam. It was nice for the people of Zaandam to hear and see their own Melissa in their own city. When Melissa soloed the hall was breathtakingly quiet. The performers received a resounding and long applause. During her "Don't cry for me Argentina" the audience got goose bumps. With the Verkade Show Orchestra, along with the piano accompaniment of Cathy Catoun, Melissa's evening was very successful.

On Saturday, the 7th of March 2009, Melissa played in the first round of the Princess Christina Concours in Haarlem. On Sunday the 8th of March, she was selected for the finals of that competition. Sunday Melissa received her prizes from the hands of the mayor of Haarlem. Melissa won the First Prize, the audience, the Master-Class Prize and the Final Prize.



On the 11th of March 2009, Melissa soloed for [Queen Beatrix](#) at the opening of the pavilion Verkade. The queen thanked her personally for her beautiful trumpet playing.

On the 14th of March 2009, Melissa soloed at the Christian Harmony "Princess Juliana" in Numansdorp. They played "Chanson napolitaine" and "You raise me up", which was beautifully arranged by the conductor Mr Alex Zwijger. The audience was very enthusiastic and Melissa received a standing ovation. Melissa was asked to repeat, as a bonus, "You raise me up". Afterwards, there followed a standing ovation and a thunderous applause.

On the 4th of April 2009, Melissa played on the Princes Christina Concours during nominations in The Hague. This day Melissa received the Incentive Prize. Melissa was one of the eleven finalists.

On the 7th of June 2009, Melissa entered the next class of the Young and Talented Class of the Conservatorium of Amsterdam. She reached that class “Cum Laude”!

On the 4th of July 2009, during a great concert in the "Grote Kerk of Westzaan", Melissa presented her new album called "Melissa in Concert". The mayor of Zaandam, Miss Géke Faber, received the first CD. She applauded Melissa for her musicality and perseverance. It was a wonderful concert and it was accompanied by Dub de Vries (organ), Peter Besseling (piano) and Liselotte Rokyta (pan flute). You can buy the CD via [www.sth.nl](http://www.sth.nl).

On the 14th of July, Melissa, accompanied by Peter Besseling on the piano, played a lunch concert in the New Church in The Hague. She played the “Trumpet Concert” by Hummel. She played on the E-Trumpet. The audience was impressed and all stood up to give her a big applause. During the concert the director of the Princess Christina Concours congratulated Melissa on her beautiful performance of the Hummel Concert.

From the 22nd of July until the 3rd of August 2009, Melissa toured South Africa. Melissa played in the concert hall of the Academy of Stellenbosch and also in the large Concert Hall Universitas of Pretoria. In addition Melissa also played in big churches, in auditoriums in Bloemfontein, in Port Elisabeth, in Durbanville, in Onrusrivier and in the Mossel Baai.

She also gave music lessons in Pretoria at the Music School pro Arte for a group of young people between the ages of 14 to 18 years. At all of the concerts tickets had been sold out and she was successful everywhere. The South Africans were deeply impressed by Melissa's trumpet playing, her monumental technique and her individuality. Melissa's accompanists, Peter Besseling (piano) and Dub de Vries (organ), ensured Melissa's success. South African newspapers wrote of Melissa as a phenomenon on trumpet and held her dearly in their hearts. In addition to the exhaustive and favorable press interviews Melissa also gave a radio interview, which was transmitted live.

On the 28th, 29th and 30th of August 2009, Melissa played the trumpet in the Thialf Stadium in Heerenveen along with André Rieu and his Johann Strauss Orchestra. It was a big success. The audience was very enthusiastic and was also touched by the way Melissa played her trumpet. She received a big applause and standing ovations.

On November 7 2009 Melissa played the "Trumpet Concerto in F minor" by Oskar Böhme, soloing with the Christian fanfare Excelsior Bunschoten. The "Trumpet Concerto" was specially arranged for brass band by Ruud Merx, the trombonist in Andre Rieu's Johann Strauss Orchestra.

<http://www.melissavenema.nl/>