



November 10, 2016
For immediate release

Announcement of the Founding of the Kunsthalle for Music

Kunsthalle for Music
November 2016 - March 2018
www.kunsthalleformusic.org

"That music must be heard is not essential—what it sounds like may not be what it is."

—Charles Ives

"I want everything I do to be presented in an art context."

—Kanye West

Music is not necessarily what you think it is.

Can we imagine a space for music that exists outside of any media and beyond the stage? A space for unrecordable music, music of undefined duration, existing even when no audience is present? A dissolution of performer and audience, of rehearsal and performance? A music existing in the world based in a space of musical action and activity, production and performance that can be entered into and exited from at will. A space wherein the ideal listening and viewing position is determined independently by each artist, performer or visitor, not determined beforehand by a seat number on a ticket. Having an ensemble at the center of its activity carrying out or otherwise enacting the work which continues during the opening hours whether there are visitors present or not.

Music today is encountered primarily as that which we consume, through a remove, usually neatly pre-packaged, either as a recording or on a stage. And yet throughout most of its history, to experience music one had to perform it. Music was by definition: live, social and spatial. In other words also: messy, political, meta-temporal. Music was not merely in space; it was space. Music was not only social through listening; it was social in its conception. Music didn't happen in time; it defined time.

Spring Workshop
3/F Remex Centre
42 Wong Chuk Hang Rd
Aberdeen, Hong Kong

info@springworkshop.org
www.springworkshop.org
t + 852 21104370
f + 852 21104372

Spring 工作室
香港香港仔黃竹坑道42號
利美中心3樓

Music is not necessarily what you think it is.

Music is inherently not about perfection or reproducibility. Music is the act of an orchestra rehearsing. Music is "John Baldessari Sings Sol LeWitt." Music is a group of people becoming a choir, or a band, whether they perform publically or not. Music is two strangers singing a duet.

In short, can we imagine contemporary music, composition, music performance as contemporary art? When did we forget that music—compositional strategies, formal structures, harmony and dissonance, orchestration, scoring, arrangement, rhythm, tempo—is at the base of it all? Music traditionally had been a driver of the contemporary; all the more striking then the situation wherein music qua music has mostly separated itself and been separated from what is considered to be contemporary art. It is in this schism that the *Kunsthalle for Music* operates.

So what, in this sense, would be the institution for music inside and alongside the contemporary art institution? What would be its repertoire? What kind of a school and educational attitudes would it have at its heart? How would it contemplate the state of musicians and music today? Would its ensemble include musicians and non-musicians alike? Would it have a collection, and if so how would music works enter into the market in the first place? What kind of a mythical new audience would it desire?

We are thrilled to welcome back composer/artist Ari Benjamin Meyers as the Founding Artistic Director of *Kunsthalle for Music*, a new institution founded in collaboration with Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art. Meyers will return to Hong Kong in November and December this year for his second residency at Spring Workshop. Meyers will continue his in-depth research on developing a series of programs with international and local collaborators that will unfold the *Kunsthalle's* foundational themes in a debut presentation entitled *An exposition, not an exhibition* at Spring Workshop in March 2017.

“As 2017 will be our final year of the Spring Workshop initiative, it is poetic and meaningful to us to dedicate ourselves to founding a new experimental art institution – the *Kunsthalle for Music* – and to do so once again with our beloved, trusted partners at the Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art,” says Spring Founder Mimi Brown. “In the coming year, we are especially interested in looking at the question of why the visual arts and music

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have disparate audiences, and then creating a program that continues to blur the artificial lines that have been drawn, offering cultural audiences new models for enjoying music and other artistic endeavors in our space.”

Program schedule

Kunsthalle for Music

November 2016 - March 2018

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An exposition, not an exhibition

by Ari Benjamin Meyers at Spring Workshop

March 2017

Spring Workshop

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Media enquiries

An exposition, not an exhibition

by Ari Benjamin Meyers at Spring Workshop

Jessica Kong

T +852 2110 4370

M +852 9703 8689

E jessica.kong@springworkshop.org

Kunsthalle for Music

General enquiries: contact@kunsthalleformusic.org

Ari Benjamin Meyers, Mimi Brown (Founder, Spring Workshop), and Christina Li (Director, Spring Workshop) are available for interviews by request. Please contact us for more information.

About Kunsthalle for Music

Artistic Director: Ari Benjamin Meyers

Founding Directors: Ari Benjamin Meyers, Defne Ayas,

Mimi Brown

Team: Natasha Hoare, Christina Li, Anja Lindner, Samuel

Saelemakers

Design: APFEL (A Practice for Everyday Life)

The *Kunsthalle for Music* is commissioned by Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art (Rotterdam) together with Spring Workshop (Hong Kong) and will make

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additional appearances at locations to be announced. *An exposition, not an exhibition* by Ari Benjamin Meyers will unfold the Kunsthalle's foundational themes at Spring Workshop (March 2017), followed by a congress at Witte de With (May 2017) and punctuated by an inaugural take-over, featuring a series of new commissions also at Witte de With (January 2018).

About Spring Workshop

Spring Workshop is a cultural initiative that brings people together to experiment with the way we relate to art. Committed to an international cross-disciplinary program of artist and curatorial residencies, exhibitions, music, film and talks, Spring serves as a platform and laboratory for exchange between the vibrant artists, organizations and audiences that define Hong Kong's rich cultural landscape and the emerging and established artists, organizations and audiences around the world that seek to engage in far-reaching dialogue. Since opening its space in Wong Chuk Hang in 2011, Spring has welcomed over 12,000 audience members to its 131 programs and events featuring 199 artists, residents and collaborators. In 2016, Spring Workshop received the Prudential Eye Award for Best Asian Contemporary Art Organization.

About Witte de With

Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art is an international public institution with Rotterdam as its home base. Established in 1990, Witte de With explores developments in contemporary art worldwide. Witte de With has been commenting on the social and political predicament since its inception through the presentation of curated exhibitions, symposia, live events, educational programs, and a bold publishing arm.

About the artist

Ari Benjamin Meyers (b. 1972, USA) lives and works in Berlin. In his work, Meyers, who trained as a composer and conductor at The Juilliard School, Yale University, and Peabody Institute, explores structures and processes that redefine the performative, social, and ephemeral nature of music. He has composed numerous works for the stage among them three operas; his chamber opera *Nico. Sphinx aus Eis* was commissioned by the Semperoper Dresden. Past solo exhibitions and projects include *Black Thoughts*, Esther Schipper (2013); *Chamber Music (Vestibule)*, Berlinische Galerie (2013-2014); *Just in Time, Just in Sequence*, This is Not Detroit Festival, Schauspielhaus Bochum (2014); *The Verismo Project (Franz Hartwig, A Most Wanted Man)*, Kino International

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Berlin (2015); *Beating Time*, Martin-Gropius-Bau Berlin (2015); *Memories of the Future*, Museum of Modern Art Warsaw (2016); *The Name of This Band is The Art*, RaebervonStenglin Zurich (2016). Upcoming exhibitions include Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (2016); Trafo Center for Contemporary Art, Stettin (2016); Witte de With, Rotterdam (2017); Lenbachhaus, Munich (2017); Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal (2017).

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