

mumok Museum moderner Kunst
Stiftung Ludwig Wien
Museumsplatz 1, 1070 Wien

Exhibition dates
June 23 to November 11, 2018

Press conference
Friday, June 22, 2018, 10 am

Exhibition opening
Friday, June 22, 2018 7 pm

Concert: Phill Niblock
Friday, June 22, 2018, 9.30 pm



Photo: mumok

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Double Lives Visual Artists Making Music

It is quite remarkable how many fine artists also made and make music. This is much more than just an interest in another medium. Public musical performances and the production of recorded music involve different ways of working and different environments, and also a different audience, not to mention different forms of income.

This is why art critic Jörg Heiser refers to a “contextual shift” between the fine arts and music when he writes about this phenomenon, beginning in the 1960s. Alluding to the fact that some artists did not make their work in other fields transparent and open, his book is called *Double Lives*. It is certainly true that there are many different ways in which individuals can either combine these two fields in their lives and work—or keep them separate. In some cases, work in both fields was only known to insiders. Other artists, by contrast, made a deliberate use of the frameworks of the fine arts for their musical performances. There is a broad spectrum with many intermediate forms.

From June 22, 2018, a mumok exhibition taking its title, *Double Lives*, from Heiser will focus on fine artists who wrote or produced music, who performed it in public, or who were members of artists’ bands. This raises the question as to the difference between pure musicians and artists and those working in both fields. The exhibition will also address the influence of music by fine artists within the history of twentieth and twenty-first-century music.

Music as a Work of Art

The exhibition *Double Lives* will present “only” music, in the form of images and sound. The exhibition will thus reflect the significance of the artists’ different choices of performance situations. Information about the fine art work of the artists will also be presented in the form of an Internet catalogue.

A Double Life in the Twentieth Century

As early as 1913, the year of his first ready-made, Marcel Duchamp used principles of chance as a compositional method in his *Momentum Musicale*, while in the same year futurist Luigi Russolo designed his first noise instruments (*Intonarumori*). Already in classical modernism, fine artists were developing questions and methods that were to define not only the fine arts but also the musical avant-garde.

After World War II, the phenomenon of fine artists making music became more and more significant. Key impulses came from John Cage, a pioneering composer and musician in so many ways, who was always in close contact with fine artists and also himself created a number of visual artworks. In the second half of the 1950s, he taught at the New School for Social Research in New York, where key members of the later Fluxus movement were among his audience. Nam June Paik was also

influenced by Cage, and in his performances in an intermediary space between music and the fine arts (from 1964 with Charlotte Moorman), he wanted to find a space for sexuality and other themes that he saw as wrongfully neglected by music.

In the field of reductive music, which coined terms such as minimal, repetitive, or drone music, fine artists have also provided significant contributions, and even pioneering positions. As early as 1952, Gerhard Rühm wrote his *onetonepiece*, which he saw as the “Tao of music.” In his *Monotone Symphony – Silence* (1947/1960) for choir and orchestra, Yves Klein created a field of sound that was upheld for up to twenty minutes, followed by a silence for the same length of time, in which inner resonance may ensue. Thanks to the long duration, the sense of time is extended, or even removed. The same intentions underlie the repetitive music by Hanne Darboven and Charlemagne Palestine, Hermann Nitsch’s sound clusters, and the drone music by Tony Conrad and Phill Niblock, in which notes are held over a long period of time and overtones are gradually increased.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, we see more and more artists playing against the rules and systems of the genres from which they emerged—whether this is jazz, free jazz, or rock. Their rejection of the conventions is a means to move into new artistic territory, and also a protest against rigid and meaningless mastery as well as musical and social window-dressing and conformity. In this context, figures like Captain Beefheart and Alan Vega became idols and the pioneers of the later punk movement and the fine artists’ amateur music movement of the late 1970s.

Seldom Heard Music, a project by artists from the circle of the Wiener Gruppe and the Vienna Actionists, began to cultivate deliberate amateurism. Nine Gross and Conspicuous Errors, a collaboration between the artists’ group Art & Language and Mayo Thompson, founder of the band The Red Crayola, explicitly addressed mistakes and errors, including in a philosophical sense. The American artists’ band Destroy all Monsters and the British group Throbbing Gristle turned against the mainstream to anti-virtuosity, trash, and noise. They also included visual material in the recordings of their performances, speaking to the dark side and the fears of humanity and society.

Simultaneously with a booming return to painting after the years of conceptual and performance art, the late 1970s and the following years saw a high point in the phenomenon of bands consisting entirely of fine artists. It was not least the art schools that became focuses for the development of a more or less professional (or often also deliberately amateurish) collective form of musical performance.

This field was initially dominated by men, but from the mid-1980s more and more women shook the scene up, among them Jutta Koether (who later repeatedly performed with Kim Gordon) and Pipilotti Rist as a member of the women’s group Les Reines Prochaines.

From the 1990s, the music of fine artists entered into a period of stylistic pluralism, corresponding to developments in the visual arts. Within the broad spectrum of musical approaches, sampling, montage, covering, and DJing became significant, such as for Christian Marclay, Stephen Prina, and Emily Sundblad. From the field of electronic music, the exhibition presents work by The Wired Salutation, Alva Noto, Wendy Gondeln, and Wolfgang Tillmans.

The Fine Arts and Music in Austria

One focus of the exhibition is on musical projects by artists from Austria. The phenomenon of music-making fine artists also gained ground in the 1960s in Austria. Alongside names like Christian Ludwig Attersee, Gerhard Rühm, and Hermann Nitsch, early protagonists were also found among the Wiener Gruppe and Vienna Actionism. In the early 1970s, they performed collectively in Germany under the title Seldom Heard Music. The Hotel Morphila Orchester, founded by Peter Weibel and Loys Egg in 1978, can be seen as a precursor of local artists' bands in the 1980s. Molto Brutto and Pas Paravant were two of the most important formations among many fine artists making music from the 1980s on, including Graf/ZYX, Martin Guttman, Hans Weigand, and Heimo Zobernig, and the younger generation with Beauties of the Night and Essachai Vow, who will perform live at mumok in conjunction with the exhibition.

Curated by Eva Badura-Triska and Edek Bartz

Artists and bands:

Alva Noto (Carsten Nicolai); Laurie Anderson; Christian Ludwig Attersee; Beauties of the Night (Christian Egger, Manuel Gorkiewicz, Markus Krottendorfer, Alexander Wolff); John Cage; Captain Beefheart & His Magic Band (Alex St. Clair Snouffer, Jeff Cotton, Jerry Handley, John French); Charlemagne Palestine; Chicken (Hari Ganglberger, Nicholas Hoffman, Katrin Plavčák); Tony Conrad; Martin Creed & Band; DA EAT (Stefan Branca, Mattias Vatter, Phillip Zaiser, Thomas Zipp), Hanne Darboven; Destroy all Monsters (Mike Kelley, Cary Loren, Jim Shaw, Niagara); Die Tödliche Doris (Tabea Blumenschein, Käthe Kruse, Wolfgang Müller, Nikolaus Utermöhlen); Essachai Vow (Christian Kosmas Mayer, Alexander Wolff); Marcel Duchamp; GRAF+ZYX; Hotel Morphila Orchester (Paul Braunsteiner, Loys Egg, Franz Machek, Wolfgang Stelzer, Peter Weibel); Yves Klein; Jutta Koether; Laibach (Milan Fras, Dejan Knez, Daniel Landin, Ivan Novak); Les Reines Prochaines (Teresa Alonso, Fränzi Madörin, Muda Mathis, Pipilotti Rist, Regina Florida Schmid); Christian Marclay; Molto Brutto (Gunther Damisch, Josef Danner, Blihal, Andreas Kunzmann, Gerwald Rockenschaub); Monoton; Phill Niblock; Hermann Nitsch; Markus Oehlen; Yoko Ono; O.T. (Lothar Fiedler, Helge Leiberg, A. R. Penck, Christoph Winckel); Nam June Paik; Pas Paravant (Felix Dorner, Karl Kowanz, Renate Kowanz-Kocer, Wolfgang Poor, Günther Schrom, ManfreDu Schu, Wolfgang Stengel, Hans Weigand); Stephen Prina;

Gerhard Rühm; Luigi Russolo; Selten gehörte Musik (Günter Brus, Hermann Nitsch, Dieter Roth, Gerhard Rühm, Oswald Wiener); Suicide (Alan Vega, Martin Rev); Emily Sundblad with Pete Drungle and Ensemble, The Alma Band (Herbert Brandl, Josef Danner, Martin Kippenberger, Albert Oehlen, Markus Oehlen); The Pop Rivets (Brand Buds, Wild Billy Childish, Big Russ, Little Russ), The Red Krayola with Art & Language (Kathryn Bigelow, Ian Burn, Jesse Chamberlain, Christine Kozlov, Nigel Lendon, Mel Ramsden, Paula Ramsden, Terry Smith, Mayo Thompson); The Wired Salutation (Andrea Belfi, Angela Bulloch, David Grubbs, Stefano Pilia); Throbbing Gristle (Chris Carter, Cosey Fanni Tutti, Peter Christopherson, Genesis P-Orridge); Wolfgang Tillmans; Trabant (Viðar Hákon Gíslason, Þorvaldur H. Gröndal, Ragnar Kjartansson, Gísli Galdur Thorgeirsson, Hlynur Aðils Vilmarsson); Wendy Gondeln (Albert Oehlen); Heimo Zobernig with Marcus Geiger, Martin Guttman, Hans Weigand.

Digital Catalogue:

On the occasion of the exhibition, a sub-website will be online, which provides further information on the artistic and musical work of the artists, as well as more information on the exhibited work: doppelleben.mumok.at

Concert Series at the Exhibition

Double Lives. Visual Artists Making Music

Fri, June 22, 9.30 pm

Phill Niblock with Martin Zrost

Venue: mumok kino

Phill Niblock is one of the founding fathers of drone music, and he began composing his complex music back in the 1970s. He overlaps extended notes, a large range of beats, and sophisticated overtone patterns to create fascinating psychoacoustic effects.

Thu, June 28, 8 pm

Beauties of the Night (Markus Krottendorfer, Alexander Wolff, Manuel Gorkiewicz, Christian Egger)

Venue: mumok kino

Extensive noise rock in the spirit of free jazz, challenging sounds, band members competing against each other—the Vienna artists' band Beauties of the Night.

Thu, October 4, 7 pm

Hermann Nitsch (organ concert)

Venue: the exhibition

Hermann Nitsch is not only a sculptor. He has also written a large oeuvre of music, consisting of pieces composed for orchestra, organ (harmonium), and string quartets. In this concert at mumok, he will play a piece for organ.

Sat, October 6, 10 pm

Hanne Darboven (played by Michael Duch during the Long Night of the Museums at mumok)

Venue: the exhibition

Professor of music and double-bass player Michael Duch from Trondheim performs Hanne Darboven's music in terms of a marathon with musical forms of movement and repetitive rhythms.

Thu, October 11, 7.30 pm

Essachai Vow (Christian Kosmas Mayer und Alexander Wolff)

The band name Essachai Vow comes from a fictional Stone Age language and means "hunger." The music of the two visual artists Christian Kosmas Mayer and Alexander Wolff is influenced by jazz and kraut rock. They combine their "hunger" for idiosyncratic compositions with low-fi and dream pop.

Thu, October 25, 7.30 pm

Emily Sundblad and Band

Artist and musician Emily Sundblad performs in many different musical contexts—as a soloist, with new interpretations of Schubert, and as a folk singer, redefining the music of the legendary Shirley Collins and unsettling the New York art-rock scene with her friends and artists like Rita Ackermann and Jutta Koether.

We wish to thank the mumok sponsors, Dorotheum and UNIQA, and our media partners Der Standard, Falter, Wien live, and Ö1.