

MoMA EXHIBITION LOOKS AT MUSIC'S WIDE-RANGING INFLUENCE ON ARTISTS, ACROSS MEDIA, BEGINNING IN THE 1960s

The Work of David Bowie, Laurie Anderson, Nam June Paik, and The Residents, Among Others, Brought Together in *Looking at Music*

Looking at Music

August 13, 2008—January 5, 2009

The Yoshiko and Akio Morita Gallery, second floor

August 18—December 21, 2008

The Roy and Niuta Titus Theaters

Press Preview: August 13, 2008, 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.; Screening at 10:30 a.m.

NEW YORK, August 13, 2008—The Museum of Modern Art presents *Looking at Music*, an exhibition that explores music's role in the interdisciplinary experimentation of the 1960s, when a dynamic cross-fertilization was taking place among music, video, installation, and what was known as "mixed media" art. In the decade between 1965 and 1975, an era of technological innovation fostered this radical experimentation, and artists responded with works that pushed boundaries across media. Comprising over 40 works from the Museum's collection, the exhibition includes video, audio, books, lithographs, collage, and prints, by artists such as Laurie Anderson, Nam June Paik, Bruce Nauman, and John Cage. Their work in the exhibition is accompanied by related experimental magazines such as West Coast poet Wallace Berman's *Semina*, along with drawings, prints, and photographs by John Cage, Jack Smith, and other radical thinkers. The exhibition, organized by Barbara London, Associate Curator, Department of Media, The Museum of Modern Art, is on view from August 13, 2008, to January 5, 2009; the accompanying film and video series in The Roy and Niuta Titus Theaters, which includes 12 programs of nearly 50 works of documentary and experimental films along with music videos, will be on view August 18 to December 21, 2008.

Barbara London states: "Coinciding with the advent of portable video cameras and electric guitars, it seemed as though every artist of this time was in a band, with some artists studying music formally before gravitating to one of the new art forms."

In The Yoshiko and Akio Morita Gallery, the exhibition begins with an untitled 1968 sculpture by video pioneer and classically trained pianist Nam June Paik (American, b. Korea, 1932-2006): a television set that exhibits an unchanging image, like a musical composition consisting of a single note. Transformed into a Zen-like object, it is reminiscent of Paik's early performances, in which a single stroke of a piano key followed a long preparatory phase. Paik's collaborator Otto Piene (German, b. 1928) completed the jewel-like composition by adding pearls to the TV set's outer casing. Paik's iconic work is accompanied in the exhibition by a film from fellow Fluxus artist Yoko Ono (American, b. Japan, 1933), and collage drawings from Paik's

friends, the philosopher-composer John Cage (American, 1912-1992) and Ray Johnson (American, 1927-1995).

In the same gallery, the installation *Self-Playing Violin* (1974) by Laurie Anderson (American, b. 1947) incorporates an element of wish fulfillment: her violin has a tiny speaker concealed inside that can produce any piece of music Anderson desires. Trained as a classical violinist, Anderson would talk, sing, and bow a duet with the instrument in performances.

In the video *Organic Honey's Visual Telepathy* (1973), Joan Jonas (American, b. 1936) hums and sings a capella as she tries on different identities, putting on Japanese Noh Theater masks and vamping in front of a mirror. Kneeling on the floor over a piece of white paper under an overhead camera, Jonas, as the title character Organic Honey, slips back her mask to wear it like a hat, then draws a dog's head, the top half on the bottom of the paper, the bottom half on top—on the monitor as the vertical roll bar rolls, the two halves of the drawing coming together in proper position. As she draws, Organic Honey's hands and arms become visible; occasionally her mask looks up at the camera, all to various musical scores.

Ego and alter ego is similarly a strategy for Jack Smith (American, 1932-1989) as seen through a drawing and photograph done at the time of his early 1960s midnight events in his downtown Manhattan loft. At these events Smith would mill around and assemble a costume from heaps of clothes piled up on the floor, with no one quite knowing the distinction between Smith's life and his art. Included in the exhibition is Smith's photograph *Head* (1958).

An ardent guitar player in high school, Bruce Nauman (American, b. 1941) was inspired by the compositions of minimalist composers Steve Reich (American, b. 1936) and La Monte Young (American, b. 1935) (who are represented in the exhibition by their music and printed matter). Included is Nauman's video *Lip Sync* (1969), in which the artist attempts to repeat the title phrase at exactly the same moment he hears himself having just said it. In this 60-minute video, Nauman's face is seen upside down as he performs wearing earmuff headphones in front of a stationary video camera.

Nauman's video is seen in the context of music videos by other ingenious, identity altering media artists including David Bowie, Captain Beefheart, Devo, and The Residents (American, est. 1972). With wit and rarefied electronic inventiveness, The Residents fuse a dark storytelling tradition of the South with an eccentric counter-culture spirit of the Bay Area. Their pre-MTV music video, *The Third Reich 'n' Roll* (1975) inventively parodies pop music and 1960s commercials, in addition to German expressionist cinema of the 1920s.

FILM AND VIDEO PROGRAM:

A film-and-video series which features works by a selection of video artists and film directors will be screened in The Roy and Niuta Titus Theaters between August 18 and December 21, 2008. The program is organized by Ms. London, along with Hanne Mugaas, Intern, Department of Media. The program includes works from John Cage, Lucinda Childs, Nam June Paik, Michael Snow, Kenneth Anger, Jack Smith, Wallace Berman, and Andy Warhol, among others.

Art and Music in Popular Culture

- Dominatrix, "The Dominatrix Sleeps Tonight"**. 1984. USA. Directed and produced by Beth B. Choreographed by Barbara Allen. Streetwise Records. Approx. 4 min.
- The Cars, "Hello Again"**. 1984. USA. Directed by Andy Warhol, Don Munro. Produced by Vincent Fremont for Andy Warhol Studio. Elektra Records. 5 min.
- Toni Basil, "Over My Head"**. 1984. USA. Directed, choreographed, and produced by Toni Basil. Chrysalis Records. 4 min.
- Paul Simon. "René and Georgette Magritte with Their Dog After the War"**. 1984. USA. Directed by Joan Logue. 3:53.
- Laurie Anderson, "Sharkey's Day"**. 1984. USA. Directed and produced by Laurie Anderson. Approx. 5 min.
- NJS**. 2001–02. USA. Directed by Seth Price. Approx. 3 min.
- You Are My Sister**. 2005. USA. Directed by Charles Atlas. Approx. 4 min.
- File Under Sacred Music**. 2003. USA. Directed by Iain Forsyth, Jane Pollard. 5 min.
- A Little Thought**. 2000. USA. Directed by Rodney Graham. 4 min.
- Sonic Youth, "Tunic (Song for Karen)"**. 1990. USA. Directed by Tony Oursler. Approx. 7 min.
- Ugly Yelp**. 2000. USA. Directed by Olaf Breuning. 5 min.
- Hip Hop Guangzhou**. 2003. China. Directed by Cao Fei. 3 min.
- Oh No**. 1999–2000. **Hey**. 1999–2000. **It Had No Feelings**. 2003. **Beat and Perv**. 1999. USA. Directed by Aida Ruilova. 7 min.
- Apple GarageBand Auto Tune Demonstration**. 2007. USA. Directed by Cory Arcangel. 3 min. Program Approx. 59 min.
- Thursday, August 21, 2008, 6:00 p.m., T2**
- Saturday, September 6, 2:00 p.m., T2**
- Sunday, September 14, 4:30 p.m., T2**

Eight Short Films

- Aleph**. 1958–76. USA. Directed by Wallace Berman. 10 min.
- Scotch Tape**. 1959–62. USA. Directed by Jack Smith. 3 min.
- Stockhausen's Originale: Doubletakes**. 1964–94. USA. Directed by Peter Moore. 30 min.
- Digital Experiment at Bell Labs**. 1966. USA. Directed by Nam June Paik. 4 min.
- Straight and Narrow**. 1970. USA. Directed by Beverly and Tony Conrad. 10 min.
- Violin Power**. 1970–78. USA. Directed by Steina. 10 min.
- Migration**. 1976. USA. Directed by Bill Viola. 7 min.
- Winter Wind**. 2004. USA. Directed by Andrew Deustch. 7 min. Program 81 min.
- Thursday, August 21, 2008, 8:00 p.m., T2**
- Saturday, September 13, 4:00 p.m. T2**

Films

- Wavelength**. 1967. USA. Directed by Michael Snow. Snow's groundbreaking structural film consists of a single, forty-five-minute-long tracking shot through the length of a room, accompanied by slowly-increasing sine tones. As the camera moves forward, one registers the passing of several nights and days. 45 min.
- Crossroads**. 1976. USA. Directed by Bruce Conner. Music by Patrick Gleeson, Terry Riley. Shown in slow motion from twenty-seven different angles and accompanied by Riley's electric organ score, a 1945 atomic-bomb explosion at Bikini Atoll attains a haunting beauty. 36 min.
- Monday, August 18, 2008, 8:00 p.m., T2**
- Thursday, September 4, 8:30 p.m., T2**
- Saturday, September 13, 6:30 p.m., T2**

Scorpio Rising. 1963. USA. Directed by Kenneth Anger. A precursor of the music video, this short documentary-style feature contains no dialogue, and rapidly intercuts images against a score of slyly selected pop tunes. 30 min.

Flaming Creatures. 1963. USA. Directed by Jack Smith. Sound by Tony Conrad. Described by the artist as "a comedy set in a haunted music studio," this carnal, polysexual explosion of the filmic terrain caused an uproar upon its release. 43 min.

Wednesday, August 20, 2008, 6:00 p.m., T2

Wednesday, September 3, 8:30 p.m., T2

Saturday, September 13, 2:00 p.m., T2

Fully Awake: Black Mountain College. 2007. USA. Directed by Cathryn Zommer and Neeley House. 60 min. While popularly known as the location for such events as Buckminster Fuller's geodesic dome, John Cage's first 'happening' and the publishing of the Black Mountain Review, the film focuses on the unique educational approach of Black Mountain College. The school balanced academics, art, manual labor and communal living to educate the whole person--head, hand, and heart. The directors used archival photographs, interviews with students, teachers, historians, and current artists.

Friday, October 3, 2008, 6:30 p.m., T2

Saturday, October 4, 2:00 p.m., T2

Wild Combination: A Portrait of Arthur Russell. 2008. USA. Directed by Matt Wolf. 72 min. Arthur Russell Jr. (1952-92) was an American cellist, composer, singer, and disco artist. While he found the most success as a dance music artist, Russell's career bridged New York's downtown, rock, and dance music scenes; his collaborators ranged from Philip Glass to David Byrne to Nicky Siano. Relatively unknown during his life, a series of reissues and posthumous releases has raised his profile in recent years.

Friday, December 5, 2008, 7:00 p.m., T2

Friday, December 19, 8:00 p.m., T2

John Cage/ Nam June Paik

The Strange Music of Nam June Paik. 1975. Directed and produced by Camera Three. Color, sound. 27 min. This historical document locates Nam June Paik's artistic origins as a composer, tracing his studies at the Conservatory for Music in Freiburg, his work with Karlheinz Stockhausen in Cologne, and the influence of the art and ideas of John Cage on his work.

Nam June Paik: A Tribute to John Cage. 1973, re-edited 1976. Color, sound. 29 min.

In this multifaceted homage to John Cage, Paik creates a pastiche of Cage's performances and anecdotes, interviews with friends and colleagues, and examples of Paik's own participatory music and video work that parallel Cage's strategies and concerns.

John Cage: Catch 44. 1971. Color, sound. 39 min. Co-produced by Nam June Paik, the work fuses Cage's compositional precepts with the immediacy and real time of video. Cage is seen performing and preparing for the program "WGBX: A Telecast for Composers and Technicians," presented by the Boston public television station WGBX-TV (Channel 44).
Program 95 min.

Saturday, September 6, 2008, 4:15 p.m., T2

Sunday, September 13, 2:00 p.m., T2

9 Evenings: Theatre & Engineering

Growing interest in the new technologies generated by the rapid developments of the early 1960s led several artists to collaborate with Billy Klüver and his fellow engineers at Bell Laboratories. In late 1965 Klüver and Robert Rauschenberg formed Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.), a project that provided artists, dancers, and composers with access to new technology and presented the resulting works to a wider audience. Ten invited artists—John Cage, Lucinda Childs,

Öyvind Fahlström, Alex Hay, Deborah Hay, Steve Paxton, Yvonne Rainer, Robert Rauschenberg, David Tudor, and Robert Whitman—worked for ten months in collaboration with thirty Bell Laboratories engineers and scientists to develop custom technical equipment. The new equipment was then featured in a series of performances presented in October 1966 at New York City's 69th Regiment Armory.

Variations VII. 2008. USA. John Cage. 41 min.

Vehicle. 2008. USA. Lucinda Childs. 10 min.

Screening followed by conversation with Julie Martin, Robert Whitman, and Barbro Schultz Lundestam.

Thursday, October 2, 2008, 7:00 p.m., T2

Kisses Sweeter than Wine. 1996. Öyvind Fahlström. 71 min.

Open Score. 1997. Robert Rauschenberg. 31 min.

Program 102 min.

Friday, October 2, 2008, 8:30 p.m., T2

Vehicle. 2008. Lucinda Childs. 10 minutes

Two Holes of Water – 3. 2008. Robert Whitman. 10 min.

Carriage Discreteness. 2008. Yvonne Rainer. 10 min.

Physical Things. 2008. Steve Paxton. 10 min.

Solo. 2008. Deborah Hay. 10 min.

Grass Field. 2008. Alex Hay. 10 min.

Program 70 min.

Saturday, October 4, 2008, 4:30 p.m., T2

Variations VII. 2008. John Cage. 41 min.

Bandoneon. 2008. David Tudor. 41 min.

Program 82 min.

Monday, August 18, 2008, 6:00 p.m., T2

Wednesday, August 20, 9:00 p.m., T2

Saturday, October 4, 7:00 p.m., T2

Music with Roots in the Aether

Music with Roots in the Aether. 1975. Directed by Robert Ashley. A large-scale documentation of the "post-serial" / "post-Cage" movement that came into American concert music in the 1960s features seven composers who made international reputations for the originality of their work. The style of the video presentation came from Ashley's need to closely observe music being performed in its own space-timeframe. The visual style for showing the music being made became the "theater" (the stage) for the interviews and the portraits of composers.

Part 1: Robert Ashley

Ashley is a contemporary American composer best known for his operas, theatrical endeavors, and pioneering work with audio synthesis.

120 min.

Wednesday, September 3, 2008, 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, November 20, 2008, 4:00 p.m., T2

Part 2: David Behrman

A minimalist composer, Behrman's music involves interactions between live performers and computers.

120 min.

Thursday, November 20, 2008, 6:00 p.m., T2

Saturday, November 29, 2:00 p.m., T2

Part 3: Philip Glass

A prolific, self-described "musician with repetitive structures," his early Minimalist style has evolved through Classical and experimental directions.

120 min.

Wednesday, November 26, 2008, 6:00 p.m., T2

Part 4: Alvin Lucier

In his experimental compositions, Lucier explored auditory perception from a scientific point of view. Much of his work is influenced by the physical properties of sound itself.

120 min

Wednesday, November 26, 2008, 8:00 p.m., T2

Saturday, November 29, 4:00 p.m., T2

Part 5: Gordon Mumma

Mumma co-founded the Cooperative Studio for Electronic Music in Ann Arbor, Michigan with Ashley, and was a musician with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company, and a member of the Sonic Arts Union with Ashley, Berhman, and Lucier.

120 min.

Friday, November 28, 2008 4:00 p.m., T2

Saturday, November 29, 6:00 p.m., T2

Part 6: Pauline Oliveros

Oliveros is an accordionist and composer whose meditative and often improvised works had a central role in the history of post-war electronic music.

120 min.

Friday, November 28, 2008, 8:00 p.m., T2

Part 7: Terry Riley

Riley is a West Coast Minimalist composer whose early endeavors were influenced by Stockhausen, until he crossed paths with La Monte Young. He became involved with the experimental San Francisco Tape Music Center, where he worked with Oliveros and studied with Pandit Pran Nath, the Indian classical vocalist who also taught Young and Marian Zazeela. During the 1960s Riley held his famous "All-Night Concerts," during which he improvised until sunrise using an old organ harmonium and tape-delayed saxophone.

120 min.

Friday, November 28, 2008 6:00 p.m., T2

Saturday, November 29, 8:00 p.m., T2

David Bowie

Music video program introduced by Thurston Moore, singer, songwriter, and guitarist of Sonic Youth. 90 min. Bowie began playing the saxophone when he was 13-years old. After graduating from a technical high school with a strong art department, he worked as a commercial artist before studying mime and, later, playing in bands. In 1969 he co-founded Beckenham Arts Lab in South London, England, a crucible for experimentation that hosted artist studios, poetry readings, and events such as light shows, theatrical and dance performances, and puppet shows. Program includes classics Space Oddity, Life on Mars, Diamond Dogs, Let's Dance, Ashes to Ashes, among other Bowie videos.

Monday, December 1, 2008, 7:00 p.m., T1

Friday, December 19, 6:00 p.m., T2 (repeat of program)

The Velvet Underground

The Velvet Underground. 1966. Directed by Andy Warhol. Black and white, sound. 66 min. The film shows the band, the Velvet Underground, rehearsing at the Factory for an upcoming performance. The film appears to have been produced with the intention of projecting it behind the Velvets during the Exploding Plastic Inevitable, Warhol's multi-media presentations of the rock

'n' roll band. During the second half of the film, the rehearsal is stopped by the arrival of the New York City police, who have responded to a complaint about the noise level.

Wednesday, December 3, 2008, 6:00 p.m., T2

Saturday, December 6, 6:00 p.m., T2

Rock My Religion

Rock My Religion. 1982-84. Directed by Dan Graham. 55:27 min. With the "reeling and rocking" of religious revivals as his point of departure, Graham analyzes the emergence of rock music as religion with the teenage consumer in the isolated suburban milieu of the 1950s, locating rock's sexual and ideological context in post-World War II America. The music and philosophies of Patti Smith, who made explicit the trope that rock is religion, are his focus. This complex collage of text, film footage and performance forms a compelling theoretical essay on the ideological codes and historical contexts that inform the cultural phenomenon of rock 'n' roll music.

Thursday, December 18, 2008, 6:00 p.m., T2

Sunday, December 21, 6:00 p.m., T2

Bill Viola

Four Songs. 1976. Directed by Bill Viola. 33 min. In terming these tapes "songs," Viola references the relation of his work to musical structures and to the poetics of Romanticism.

Hatsu Yume. 1981. Directed by Bill Viola. 56 min. Unfolding as a dreamlike trance, *Hatsu Yume* is a startlingly beautiful, metaphorical work. Viola fuses a personal observation of Japanese culture with a metaphysical contemplation of life, death and nature, achieved through a symbolic exploration of video's relation to light and reflection.

Program 89 min.

Saturday, December 20, 2008, 4:00 p.m., T2

Sunday, December 21, 6:00 p.m., T2

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