

Live Arts Week IV

John Cage/Lejaren Hiller (USA)

HPSCHD 1969>2015

harpichordists:

Philip Corner (USA) *Solo VII. Practice or performance of any Mozart composition*

Luciano Chessa (I/USA) *Solo II. Mozart Dice Game*

Marco Dal Pane (I) *Solo IV. Dicegame with Mozart composition used as replacements*

Anthony Pateras (AUS/D) *Solo III. Dicegame with Mozart composition used as replacements*

Salvatore Panu (I) *Solo I. Computer printout for 12-tone gamut*

electronics & sound design:

Valerio Tricoli

artists contributing visuals:

Seth Price (USA) *Chords* (2006)

Ben Vickers/Holly White (UK) *Untitled* (2015)

Yuri Pattison (IRL/UK) *colocatiom, time displacement* (2014)

Carola Spadoni (I/D) *Untitled 2010-2015* (2015)

Jennifer Chan (CDN) *Screen Saver* (2010)

Jaakko Pallasvuo (FIN/D) *Utopia* (2013)

Ogino Knauss (I/D) *K-frame* (2015)

Riccardo Benassi (I/D) *Phonemenology (The Umbrella Paradigm)* (2015)

Andrea Magnani (I) *Om̄ the Lam* (2015)

Anne de Vries (NL) *Forecast* (2011)

Harm van Den Dorpel (NL) *Strategies* (2010)

David Horvitz (USA) *The Distance of a Day* (2013)

Andrew Norman Wilson (USA) *SONE 2014: Chase ATM emitting blue smoke, Bank of America ATM emitting red smoke, TD Bank ATM emitting green smoke* (2014)

Martin Kohout (CZ/D) *Sjezd* (2014)

Roberto Fassone (I) *Hey, You Just Step On My Aura! Sorry, My Bad! (Series)* (2014>2015)

Alessandro di Pietro (I) *Trigger. Concept-Teaser For A Zed And Two Noughts* (2015)

Ilja Karilampi (S/D) *Untitled* (2015)

Auto Italia (UK) *Untitled* (2015)

visual coordination:

Enrico Boccioletti

project coordination:

Daniele Gasparinetti

production:

Xing/Live Arts Week

in collaboration with:

MAMbo - Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, Fondazione Teatro Comunale di Bologna

supported by:

Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo, Regione Emilia-Romagna, Comune di Bologna, Fondazione del Monte di Bologna e Ravenna, Goethe-Institut Mailand, Reale Ambasciata dei Paesi Bassi

technical support:

BH audio, Radio Sata

HPSCHD is the legendary total opera **John Cage** achieved in collaboration with **Lejaren Hiller**. It premiered on May 1969 at the Assembly Hall of the University of Illinois, Chicago, and it continues to be appreciated as the most gigantic and loud musical piece of the Twentieth century. Lejaren Hiller, the director of the Computer Music dept. of the University of Illinois, invited John Cage to present a project based on the application of calculating devices and stochastic processes. Cage proposed the basic concept of *HPSCHD*, inspired by an idea from Swiss harpsichordist Antoinette Vischer. Accepting the challenge, Hiller worked alongside Cage for the score and the performance, as well as solving computational and programming problems related to technology in those days. *HPSCHD* was born: it was a huge multi-media event, featuring 7 harpsichords, 208 recorded tapes, 59 amplifiers and 52 tape-players, all of which was organised into 13 sections. Regarding visuals, the work took advantage of an archive of 6.400 slides (5.000 courtesy of NASA), 64 slide projectors, 40 films projected by 8 projectors on a one hundred meter circular display, specifically conceived by Calvin Sumsion.

The very nature of *HPSCHD* is inextricable from the tumult of the year it premiered, as an essay on the subject of abundance. Cage saw the computer as a means of making an enormous number of decisions, hence producing an abundance of music for delivery in a circus atmosphere: it was the quantity and the anarchic arrangement of the whole that create the effect. 1969 is the year when Buckminster Fuller's *Utopia or Oblivion* was published, nearly twenty years after Norbert Wiener's *The Human Use of Human Beings* (1950) and four years after *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* by Marshall McLuhan (1964). *HPSCHD* could somehow depict Cage's reply to this sequence of forward-thinking works, encouraging mankind to take part in a big thought experiment and finally come to terms with the universal—rather than global—perception, which postwar society was inevitably to acquire. His reply was properly 'Cagean': virtually endlessly ambivalent and random by method, per se. It was the first enactment or, so to speak, a first 'listening' of big data.

HPSCHD 1969>2015, produced by Xing for Live Arts Week 2015 at MAMbo Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, reinterprets that trailblazing piece: both an homage, and an occasion to update and debate, thanks to the cooperation of forces from both the avant-garde generation peer to the original event, and either the so-called digital natives or Millennial generation. In the Bologna project the core elements of the musical score is observed according to a few necessary technical updates. A visual rework is definitely worth the effort of a much more flexible interpretation, including a new series of commissions to young post-digital artists, scanning through big data networks in search of inspiration, finding what, back in 1969, was beyond imagination. In the present moment of transition and ambiguity, *HPSCHD 1969>2015* is conceived with the purpose to examine this complicated phase of contemporary visual culture.

For the **music** part of the performance, Xing has invited one of the musicians who took part in the first performance in 1969 along with John Cage: **Philip Corner**, pianist, composer and visual artist of the Fluxus movement, now in his eighties, a living witness as well as performer. He will perform alongside some other musicians from later generations who work in contemporary and current music: **Luciano Chessa**, known for his reinterpretation of the *In tonarumori* by Luigi Russolo; the Australian musician **Anthony Pateras**; and Italian musicians **Marco Dal Pane** and **Salvatore Panu**, with sound design and electronics by **Valerio Tricoli**.

After the live performance which open Live Arts Week featuring also these musicians, all the visual contributions will be on display as an installation for an entire week. Cage's sound composition will thus provide an unusual backdrop, an acoustic environment to accompany this **exhibition** of the audio-visual works that have been selected or specially assigned to 19 international artists who represent a specific area of contemporary visual arts that seeks to analyse the representation of the world in the digital sphere as well as the production of new aesthetics. Artists contributing visuals: **Seth Price, Ben Vickers/Holly White, Yuri Pattison, Carola Spadoni, Jennifer Chan, Jaakko Pallasvu, Ogino Knauss, Riccardo Benassi, Andrea Magnani, Anne de Vries, Harm van Den Dorpel, David Horvitz, Andrew Norman Wilson, Martin Kohout, Roberto Fassone, Alessandro di Pietro, Ilja Karilampi, Auto Italia.**

