

CONCERTINO  
UNISONO  
Michael Staab

A performative  
artistic intervention  
in public space,  
San Marco square, Venice

*Venezia*



## PRESS KIT

---

# CONCERTINO UNISONO

BY MICHAEL STAAB

*A performative artistic intervention in public space*

Piazza San Marco, Venice



- 8 May (5pm) **1st performance / Press preview and cocktail at Caffè Lavena**
  - 9 May (5pm) 2nd performance
  - 10 May (5pm) 3rd performance, streamed live on [www.lab-bel.com](http://www.lab-bel.com)  
Viewing party at 22 cours du 7ème art (Paris 19th arrondissement)
  - 16 May (5pm) 4th performance
- 

**FOUCHARD  
FILIPPI**  
COMMUNICATIONS

**FOUCHARD FILIPPI COMMUNICATIONS**  
[hello@fouchardfilippi.com](mailto:hello@fouchardfilippi.com)  
+ 33 1 53 28 87 53 / + 33 6 60 21 11 94  
[www.fouchardfilippi.com](http://www.fouchardfilippi.com)



### **The 3 Easy Pieces project**

During the opening of the 56th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, **Lab'Bel, the Artistic Laboratory of the Bel Group**, will present its latest art project in Venice, Italy: part one in a series of **3 Easy Pieces**.

#### **The 3 Easy Pieces project**

Each piece in the *3 Easy Pieces* project is a performative work conceived specifically for a single city or place in the world. The aim is to produce a work of contemporary art that keeps it simple, using each location's existing attributes to create a site-specific project.



## CONTENTS

---

Page	<b>4</b>	<b><i>THE FINEST SALON IN EUROPE - MICHAEL STAAB</i></b>
Page	<b>8</b>	<b><i>ORDER OF CHAOS - LAURENT FIÉVET</i></b>
Page	<b>12</b>	<b><i>THE HARDEST THING IS TO BE EASY, PERFORMANCE ART IN A PUBLIC SPACE - SILVIA GUERRA</i></b>
Page	<b>16</b>	<b>MICHAEL STAAB, ARTIST</b>
Page	<b>19</b>	<b>LAURENT FIÉVET, CURATOR</b>
Page	<b>20</b>	<b>SILVIA GUERRA, CURATOR</b>
Page	<b>21</b>	<b>LAB'BEL, ARTISTIC LABORATORY OF BEL GROUP</b>
Page	<b>25</b>	<b>PRESS IMAGES</b>
Page	<b>26</b>	<b>PARTNERS</b>
Page	<b>27</b>	<b>PRACTICAL INFORMATION</b>

# **THE FINEST SALON IN EUROPE - MICHAEL STAAB**

---

## **Piazza San Marco**

A visit to St. Mark's Square – "the finest salon in Europe", as French writer Alfred de Musset described it – is one of the highlights of every trip to Venice. There are three renowned coffee-houses in the arcades: Caffè Florian, established in 1720, Gran Caffè Quadri (1775) opposite, and Caffè Lavena (1750) next door. Traditionally, each of these keeps a small orchestra, which entertains patrons on the terrace, the Piazza San Marco, with music of all genres and periods. Since despite its huge dimensions, the Square has excellent acoustics, the orchestras play alternately in order to avoid acoustic overlapping.

## **The Project. What will have had happen**

**Venice, Piazza San Marco**

**8, 9, 10 and 16 May 2015**

**Live performance in public space**

**Duration 5 - 5.20 p.m.**

At 5 p.m. on the dot, the great bells in the campanile of St. Mark's Basilica boom out over the piazza, ringing the evening in. The afternoon sun sinks over the Napoleon Wing opposite the Basilica, bathing the piazza and the tables of the popular Florian, Lavena and Quadri cafés in a warm light. The tourists in the square are looking around for motifs for their best photo, their most radiant "selfie" or most spectacular video. They are feeding the pigeons and listening to the orchestras of the three famous cafés.

A man dressed in tails appears in the middle of the square and starts conducting. Surprisingly, the orchestras follow his beat, and they all begin playing at once. The resultant musical chaos soon organises itself into an ensemble, and the square is filled with the strains of Johann Strauss' *Blue Danube* waltz.

The music of the three orchestras mingles with the babble of tourist voices, the cooing of the pigeons and the noises of the lagoon to form a *Concertino Unisono*, which is best experienced in the midst of the throng, in constant motion like the Danube itself, or swaying to the rhythm of the waltz. After a few minutes, the magic moment of togetherness is over, remaining in the memory as a special experience in one of the most magnificent squares in Europe. Then you all gather in one of the cafés and discuss the experience with friends from all over the world.

## **THE FINEST SALON IN EUROPE - MICHAEL STAAB**

---

**Paris, 10 May 2015**

**Viewing party at 22 cours du 7ème art (Paris 19th arrondissement), with Gilles Baume (Le Plateau) and Patrick Javault (art critic and curator)**

**Contact Gilles Baume at + 33 6 60 57 41 38**

**Live streaming and Skype video conference**

**From 4pm to 6pm**

On this Sunday afternoon, Parisian friends and art-lovers have gathered for a glass of Campari or a Venetian Bellini cocktail. The conversation perhaps turns on the recently opened Venice Biennale, on art in public space, on happenings, Fluxus and performances. At 4.45 a window to Venice will be opened via satellite.

A giant screen shows the afternoon sun over the arcades of St. Mark's Square. At the café tables, visitors from all over the world are drinking espresso from exquisite china cups, enjoying the music of the orchestras as it fills the square, mingling with the babel-sound of the tourist groups. A camera-man in the centre of the square captures the scene – and in the middle of Paris you can now experience how the performative action of a single individual merges the noises in St. Mark's Square, the music of the orchestras and the tourist babel into a contemporary *Concertino Unisono*. After the grand finale, the Parisians can chat with the artist and the visitors on St. Mark's Square by video conference. *Salute and santé!*

We are planning sharing events also in other cities. For current information please visit [www.lab-bel.com](http://www.lab-bel.com).

**Everywhere. 10 May 2015**

**Internet live stream,**

**Duration: 4.50 – 5.20 p.m.**

The live stream of the *Concertino Unisono* can be accessed via internet, on the Lab'Bel homepage [www.lab-bel.com](http://www.lab-bel.com). Whether you're alone or with friends, for half an hour you can be part of the company in St. Mark's Square in Venice – live! At 5 p.m. the great bells in the campanile ring the evening in. You're right there among the tourists and the babble of voices from all over the world. A conductor appears, gives a signal, and the orchestras of the three famous cafés strike up the *Concertino Unisono*. The noises of the tourists and the musicians' instruments mingle into a collective melody, and the live camera, hovering free above the square, evokes the feeling of moving in the midst of a choreography of music, voices, cooing pigeons and the noises of the lagoon. So even as a passive observer, you are part of the social sculpture of *Concertino Unisono*.

## THE FINEST SALON IN EUROPE - MICHAEL STAAB

---

### **Concertino Unisono: performative intervention, musical happening, social sculpture and interactively shared media art.**

At first glance, *Concertino Unisono* appears to be a classic performative intervention based on music. The project is, however, considerably more complex. It can be experienced directly in the magnificent setting of St. Mark's Square; or in Paris, over a Venetian cocktail with friends, at a public viewing, live via satellite; or via the live stream on the homepage of Lab'Bel Paris, alone or together with others anywhere on the planet. This idea of sharing an art experience is an essential component of the artistic concept. Through the technology of the video conference you can, at will, change your role from passive to interactive participant.

On St. Mark's Square itself, events are more complex than they at first seem. The three orchestras play together – for the first time since the founding of the famous cafés – but anyone expecting simply to experience a wonderful concert will be disappointed. The orchestral ensemble is joined here by a further, extremely intensive acoustic pattern which, in the context of a musical performance, is otherwise felt to be disruptive: the tourist babel in the square, the cooing of the pigeons, the ringing of the church bells, the noises of the lagoon. It is only the totality of these sounds that constitute the artist's concept of the *Concertino Unisono*.

The aim is not an ideal acoustic, not a concert setting. The orchestras are not technically amplified; only the natural acoustics of the architecture combine the widely dispersed sound sources into a more or less audible concerted sound. According to the position of the observer, it will be the music or the tourists' voices that dominate. You can, however, move freely around the square to create your own soundscape, as the sounds and images merge into a densified portrayal of reality – unclear, impure, chaotic, but complete and impressive. There is no ideal place for the pure appreciation of art; everyone present in the square will experience a very personal mixture of the artistic elements. What remains is the collective experience of an exceptional moment.

Apart from the acoustic, spatial and visual elements of the composition, it is the movement of the tourists who happen to be present and the visitors interested in the event, which completes the artistic action. For the duration of the *Concertino Unisono*, there is no passive audience – everyone becomes an active part of the performance. It is of secondary importance, whether you happen to be in Venice, Paris or Peking. For those watching the camera's live pictures, the spectators in St. Mark's Square are all part of the production.

## **THE FINEST SALON IN EUROPE - MICHAEL STAAB**

---

### **Specific aspects of the conception**

One specific aspect of the project is that it can be realized in only a single place in the whole world: the Piazza San Marco in Venice. A unique artistic event in a unique setting; a temporary art-work which appears and disappears, remaining not in a museum but only in the memory of those present. It is self-explanatory, and can be comprehended and accepted by everyone present, without any background knowledge of art history.

Even if the description of the project suggests a musical theme, this is merely secondary. "Concertino Unisono" regards itself as classical conceptual action art, an interdisciplinary performative intervention in public space. An existing situation is changed through the non-verbal actions of a single protagonist, altering public perception of reality. Only the conductor is new here. All other participants and the visible elements of the project are part of everyday life in the Piazza San Marco.

The magnificent setting provides a striking visual background for the musical experience – not comparable with an impressive stage-set in an operatic performance, since here the observer is not reduced to the role of passive recipient of a staged presentation, but is right in the midst of events, thus becoming a participant in the action. The event as a whole can be seen as a "social sculpture" in the sense of an extended concept of art.

The current relevance of such performative interventions in public space, which originate in Happening and Fluxus, is evident in the popularity of so-called "flash mobs", which also operate by taking unprepared spectators by surprise. In contrast to these spontaneous social happenings, "Concertino Unisono" is a planned, staged, professional performance with the clear artistic aim of opening up new perspectives on familiar things, achieved by the deliberate combination of visual, acoustic and spatial impressions.

The Piazza San Marco, with its overwhelming variety of visual and acoustic impressions and historic associations may be seen here as a metaphor for our age, overloaded as it is with images and sensory stimuli; and the "Concertino Unisono" artistic intervention might be regarded as offering an aid to finding one's bearings in the satiation inflicted upon us by the media: simply taking a look at the overall picture, rather than becoming involved in the detail.

Michael Staab, Venice 2015

# ORDER OF CHAOS - LAURENT FIÉVET

---

## 3 Easy Pieces

Michael Staab's *Concertino Unisono* is the first of a series of performances in public spaces of different emblematic European locations that give free reign to artists and are produced by Lab'Bel. Continuing in the same vein as the other exhibitions for iconic buildings of modernist architecture organized by Group Bel's Art Laboratory since 2010 – *The World Trapped in Itself (Mirrors for Windows)* by Stefan Brüggemann at Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona Pavilion in 2010 and *The Light Hours* by Haroon Mirza at the Savoye Villa in Poissy in 2014 – each one of the interventions in *3 Easy Pieces* is envisaged as an *in situ* proposal. They are conceived with the specific nature and history of the location in mind in order to create an intimate dialogue with the intention of focusing on these particular traits.

Lab'Bel chooses to present the public with its first rendez-vous in the heart of the Doge's city (in the very desirable location of Piazza San Marco, a must-see for all tourists visiting Venice) and during the symbolic moment in the springtime of 2015 just as the 56<sup>th</sup> Contemporary Art Biennale begins. Michael Staab – an artist and a clever observer who knows the city and its Biennale particularly well since he was the artistic director of the Gregor Schneider's project in the early 2000s, which won the Golden Lion at the 49<sup>th</sup> Biennale – based his proposal on his attentive examinations of certain rituals in the city that are still a must: specifically, he focused on the orchestras at the mythic cafés Florian, Quadri and Lavana, which perform different pieces daily for the pleasure of visitors.

## An Evening of Jousting

In this convivial and genteel exterior that is Venice's beating heart – a space that remains one of the Venice's most frequented and busiest squares – the confrontations between musical forms could not simply be an experience of restrained peer pressure. As we can easily understand, the purpose of the orchestras' presence is first and foremost to attract clients to their respective cafés. They engage in a form of competition for commercial gain and their system of repartition of musical interventions during the course of the day and evening discreetly renders the situation as fair as possible.

Therefore the music functions much like the expression of the purebred race. We would be tempted to call it highly civilized, which implies the opposition of a series of entities who are equivalent in nature, but who are fundamentally rivals. The ritual nature of the diffusion reveals, by the strict principle of necessary order, the precarious nature of the studied harmony that is so susceptible to deterioration. Even if the smallest false note were to escape one of the musicians, it would resonate like an unskilled shot deviating suddenly from its mark – which takes us to another register and recalls Alfred Hitchcock in his sequence on the failed assassination in the two versions of *The Man Who Knew Too Much*.

## ORDER OF CHAOS - LAURENT FIÉVET

---

In this respect, each café in the heart of the square can be seen as its own autonomous territory. They are all methodically organized, well-managed of course, and they maintain a clear hierarchy, but they simply tolerate the existence of their neighbors more than accept them because of the agreements that allow them to perform.

### ***Pavilion Against Pavilion***

We easily understand the historical echoes of this principle of cohabitations, and moreover of the sonar invasion in a contested space, that are implied without fail when a city that has known different periods and types of occupation during the last centuries: Venice's musical empire, the Teatro La Fenice itself – as we have been reminded by such filmmakers as Luchino Visconti and Ernst Marischka – is the discreet terrain of power relations and intimidation under occupation. But Michael Staab precisely chose this context to present his performance: this cartographic schema where he reveals the juxtaposition of enemy territories resonates in striking harmony with the national pavilions as a whole in the framework of the Contemporary Art Biennale.

The organic and bounteous ensemble itself is composed of autonomous and structured elements that we can imagine are the most successful of cultural engineering today. In fact, the Biennale similarly orchestrates projects in different places throughout the city that are destined to attract and retain the attention of art lovers who won't fail during their visit to interrogate and compare their respective qualities, and they do this even before a precious Golden Lion has been confirmed or disputed, distinguishing an institution amongst others with this most desirable reward.

Initially, the suspension of the orchestras' ritual of alternating execution of musical performances at the beginning of the *Concertino Unisono* raises the listener's awareness to the existence of the combat in place. The recorded mesh of very different musical pieces creates a cacophonous dimension that shouldn't only be perceived as a simple manifestation of the profusion and diversity of the projects that each pavilion presents in their individual arena. It recreates above all else a form of violence and conflict, of physical contact between bodies, the authoritative desire to impose the individual sound demonstrated by each orchestra to the detriment of the others, which remind us of attempts at both resistance and infiltration.

The performance transforms the very heart of the city, and therefore it constitutes within itself a metonymical representation in a gigantic square where armaments are housed and where war could take control. Putting aside the political issues, we cannot forget that its entire audio dimension highlights the economics in play with the fabulous machine that is the Biennale and the determining influence that it has on the careers of artists and the galleries that represent them, and how it echoes their projects on the highly-strategized market in continual movement that is contemporary art today.

# ORDER OF CHAOS - LAURENT FIÉVET

---

## **Maelstrom**

Can we also see this noisy hubbub, with its shocks and overlaps, as a way of illustrating Chaos – this mass that Ovid precisely describes in *Metamorphoses* as shapeless and confusing? We most likely must if we also recall that Chaos is only an antechamber for Creation. In its second movement, the *Concertino Unisono* abruptly shifts to a promise of pacifism and a gentler and more altruistic structure that can be associated with the Biennale. The initial moments of the *Concertino Unisono* dig an abyss of discord in the very center of the square, causing all the listeners to lose their sensory landmarks; in turn this seems echoed by the disorganized movement of pigeons just overhead in the sky as they take possession of the landscape. Here exists the seed of all that is the very essence of artistic creation in celebrated Venice at this very moment, in all the diversity and inspiring innovations.

Hopefully what emerges on strictly a musical level is a form of transposition of quantum cosmology that attempts to apprehend the spontaneous emergence of the Universe. In fact, we are tempted to draw similarities between the effects of the mutual intertwining of different musical pieces played in the square at the beginning of the performance, and this phenomenal fog of energy described by scientists in order to analyze the birth and the first shudders of the universe: this fabulous ferment where the begotten particles and antiparticles were annihilated for the good of this perpetually changing ooze which by chance appeared in certain fluctuations where energy was sufficiently distant so as not to destroy it. These particles are the building blocks of everything now in the universe and they could emotionally affect us. We recall that the same logic is precisely that which governs the division of national pavilions in different corners of the city.

## **Urbi et Orbi**

We assert that the universe would be born from an enormous fluctuation in quantum emptiness from an immeasurable force augmented by the effects of expansion. And this is precisely the experience that seems to be offered to us by the live diffusion, i.e. streaming, of *Concertino Unisono* in other places in the world. It creates a gigantic centrifugal movement that positions Piazza San Marco as the center of the universe at the exact moment when the members of the contemporary art world train their eyes on the city looking for the slightest vibrations.

For the spectators witnessing this movement when the music phagocytizes and subtly engulfs the normal sounds of the city, Michael Staab redefines their perception of a space that is already familiar to numerous listeners – he becomes the mischievous demiurge that delegated his powers to the conductor or a sorcerer who imprudently trusted a musical apprentice with his wand. With the *Concertino Unisono*, he traps us in the throws of the bubbling movement of creation, in the complex texture of the musical ooze that flows out of Venice like the meandering and twisting marine patchwork that unfurls its arms in the city canal after canal. His intervention resembles an enormous groundswell that sweeps away the spatial-temporal and sensorial landmarks of the listeners who were simultaneously brought together in Piazza San Marco and outside it, and now flows like water in the season of aqua alta, submerging our perception and physical experience with the landscape.

# **THE HARDEST THING IS TO BE EASY - PERFORMANCE ART IN A PUBLIC SPACE - SILVIA GUERRA**

---

**“Bringing people together to do something, to participate without consuming; unison as the driving force of art” M. Staab**

The hardest thing to do is something simple, and I like *Concertino Unisono* because it functions as a simple piece.

I remember something a poet friend of mine once told me: there is no such thing as a pure and simple transformation. Transformations aren't acts of magic. They are a passage from one thing to another, like the transformation of flour and water into bread.

The project we bring to Venice also reveals a transformation: one of a place, a setting, a situation. It combines the architectural facades of the Piazza San Marco, which have remained unaltered for centuries, with an artist, a conductor, musicians, barmen, waiters, priests, street vendors, other artists, tour guides, art critics, businessmen and their lovers, press agents, policemen, as well the countless tourists who arrive in and leave this magical city everyday.

The concept is simple, but reveals multiple meanings. The conductor of an orchestra lifts his wand in the middle of the most beautiful reception hall in Europe and subsequently blends the sounds emanating from the orchestras of the three most famous cafés in the Piazza: Il Florian, Il Quaddri and Il Lavena.

The music will be unique, and the blending of the orchestras will last only a few minutes before the buzz of the crowd reestablishes the normal rhythm of the piazza. Only those who happen to be passing through at that precise moment will hear the music played in unison.

## **The Public Space of a Piazza**

“The measure of any great civilization is in its cities, and a measure of a city's greatness is to be found in the quality of its public spaces, its parks and its squares.” John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*.

## **THE HARDEST THING IS TO BE EASY - PERFORMANCE ART IN A PUBLIC SPACE - SILVIA GUERRA**

---

Our urban public spaces have slipped into disuse, on a social level as well as on a political one. Today, the urban space has been replaced by a virtual or digital one. *Concertino Unisono* invites us to experience the public space of the Piazza San Marco, to physically participate in this performance event. Its simultaneous projection via live streaming invites a wider public to participate in the event by joining the artist for a spritz in our own homes. Here, public art is still fully lived and experienced by the inhabitants. Despite the mass of tourists, the public squares remain the place to meet others. Even now, Venice resembles a large house. The only true square (the others are called *Campos*) is San Marco, with its many landmarks: the Doge's Palace, the byzantine Basilica, the public library, the archeological museum, the shops, and the first cafés in which that black liquid, so loved by Balzac, was served to Europeans.

Thousands of people cross this square everyday. The immense rectangle forces us to stop for a minute, to reflect. Afterwards it is sound that gives the square a third dimension.

During the Art Biennale, the influx of visitors is skewed. Here, we are able to sense another of the project's dimensions: it almost invisibly blends into the crowd, without jumping into your face, without proclaiming its artistic genius. Rather it continues the tradition established in the performances of the Fluxus movement, while revealing a clear understanding of John Cage's *Sounds of Venice*. It is so discreet in the crowd, so convivial, so simple, that it makes us want to be a part of it, to sit at a table, to experience for an instant this encounter with sound.

### **“Discontinue the Continuous or Give Continuity to the Discontinuous”**

The piece only lasts around 20 minutes, the time for a few dozen people to walk past. It's ephemeral imprint on the world reminds me of Richard Long's *A Line Made by Walking*. It also reminds me of the impermanence and the sheer relativity that is commonplace in the art world.

This work has not been produced to be sold; it is instead the very embodiment of transition. Drawing on his past experience in theater, particularly with spatial installations and curating, Michael Staab has conceived this piece as a form of invisibility. *Concertino Unisono* is truly a 360° work, where the center is a space shared amongst the orchestras and passersby. Everything revolves around the invisible point between the three orchestras, where their sound creates tension. This movement is as complex as atoms in space. It is this friction between atoms that gives birth to energy and creativity and renews our aesthetic experience.

# **THE HARDEST THING IS TO BE EASY - PERFORMANCE ART IN A PUBLIC SPACE - SILVIA GUERRA**

---

## **First Piece of the Project 3 Easy Pieces**

It is said that Stravinsky would have been sent to prison in Boston for having dared to alter the American hymn. Modifying its sacred harmony was a crime. Today, Igor Stravinsky peacefully slumbers in the San Clemente Cemetery in Venice.

The title of this project is a discreet homage to him: *3 Easy Pieces* is a piano duet meant to teach children to play with four hands. It was composed in 1915, just after *The Rite of Spring* had shocked the music world. Our proposal, as the title indicates, is to present a series of simple and accessible projects in public spaces, mostly performances, that can be appreciated by everyone, specifically a large and anonymous public.

Lab'Bel is producing *3 Easy Pieces* for the purpose not simply of travelling, but of moving through time and space. We can see this in the evolution of *Architectures Modernistes* and *Metaphoria* (between poetry, music, and the visual arts), which took place over three years and in different cities. It is this spirit of experimentation and investigation that characterize a laboratory in the field of art.



## MICHAEL STAAB, ARTIST

---

Born in Esslingen in 1962, lives in Cologne since 1992. Theatre director, curator and conceptual artist

From 1984 to 1992, Michael Staab worked in various state and free professional theaters as actor, assistant director and stage director, taking part in over 50 theatrical productions, including at the Stuttgart State Theatre (1984 -1985, intendant H.G. Heyme), Württemberg State Theatre/Esslingen (1984 -1989, intendant Friedrich Schirmer), Freiburg City Theatre (drama, dance, opera; 1989 -1992, intendant Friedrich Schirmer), Gostner Court Theatre/Nuremberg and LOT Theatre/Brunswick. His own production during this period includes plays by Peter Turrini, Ödön von Horvath, Franz Xaver Kroetz and others. He staged the opera *Der Mond* by Karl Orff and realized experimental dramatic, musical and dance theatre projects based on texts by Adolf Wölfli, Jorge Luis Horvath, Klaus Fehling and others. Further stage productions since 2009 included *KONG / PRAXIS*, Cologne (2009) and *Wir Chrono- nauten*, LOK St. Gallen, as well as drama, ballet and opera at St. Gallen Municipal Theatre (2010). Michael is a founder-member of the free theatre initiative "Die Sechste Direktive", Cologne.

After working for several years in institutional and experiment-oriented theaters, Michael has engaged since 1992 in performatively displayed room installations, conceptual actions and projects in the field of art. He also works as curator, project manager and exhibition designer for national and international cultural institutions, museums and biennials, realizing complex projects in contemporary art.

In his temporary site- and context-specific art projects, Michael Staab examines the ways in which social systems function, appraising established views and behavioral patterns of people in familiar situations. His work is interdisciplinary and participatory, in the tradition of happening, Fluxus and the idea of creating a temporary 'social sculpture' through accepting an extended concept of art. Here, art is seen as a catalyst in social processes."

After private studies in painting and graphic reproduction in the studio of Hans Hahn-Seebrugg (1982 - 1984) and after working as actor and stage director (1984 – 1992), Michael Staab has engaged since 1992 until today in performatively displayed room installations and conceptual actions in the field of art. These actions have also produced pictures, objects, print editions and videos as independent artworks.

His complex artistic actions and art projects have been realized in sites including the Museum of Modern Art/Frankfurt (2002 and 2005), Martin Gropius Bau/Berlin (2005) and Kunsthalle Exnergasse/Vienna (2012). Due to his special working method, the majority of his projects have been realized not in museums or galleries, but in selected public spaces and distinctive squares.

# MICHAEL STAAB, ARTIST

---

## Selected art projects and exhibitions, 1996 - 2013

2013: Metaphoria II. Room installation. Group exhibition, ReMap4 / Athens

2012: Bilder einer Ausstellung - Zeit ist Kunst und Kunst ist knapp Performative staging of an art exhibition, room installation. Kunstsalon Klinik/Cologne

2011: Tisch im Raum. Solo exhibition. Performative room installations, objects and pictures. Kunsthalle Exnergasse/Vienna

2010: Wir Chrononauten. Performative drama project, room installations. Kulturzentrum/ St. Gallen and St. Gallen Municipal Theatre

2009: Der grössten Auswahl wegen... Solo exhibition. Pictures, objects, installations, performances, Kunstraum PRAXIS/Cologne

2007: Die Biennale 07 Köln. Conceptual art project and installation, objects. Kunstraum LABOR/Cologne

2006: Totalschaden. Group exhibition. Pictures and objects. Curated by Gregor Schneider. Kunstverein/Bonn

2005: Organisation - Büro für Desinformation. Group exhibition Rundlederwelten. Performative room installation, objects, pictures. Kunsthalle Martin Gropius Baud/Berlin.

2004: Warhol Beuys Superstars. Solo project. Performative art project and room installations. Museum of Modern Art/Frankfurt.

2002: Erscheinen/Verschwinden. Solo project. Performative art project and room installation. FraKK in Museum of Modern Art/Frankfurt.

1998: Calw goes Calcutta / Ortswechseleien II. Installations, performances and media art. Town of Calw and City of Calcutta/India

1997: An Opera - Version II. Fluxus opera performance after Emmett Williams, room installations. Schloss Solitude/Stuttgart.

1996: Die unendliche Bibliothek. Performative art project after Jorge Luis Borges. Room installations. Municipal library/Stuttgart.



## LAURENT FIÉVET, CURATOR

---

Laurent Fiévet lives and works in Paris. He has a PhD in cinema and audiovisual studies, and taught the aesthetics of cinema and film analysis for ten years at the Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle and at Paris 7.

The director of Lab'Bel since its inception, Laurent Fiévet has been the curator or co-curator of numerous exhibitions produced by this artistic laboratory, including: *Rewind* (La Maison de La vache qui rit, Lons-le-Saunier, 2010), *Art for Life / Art for a Living* (Swab, Barcelona, 2011), *The World Trapped in the Self* (Mies Van der Rohe Pavilion, Barcelona, 2011), *Touching the Moon* (Galerie 5, Angers 2012), *Au Lait ! Quand l'art déborde* (La Maison de La vache qui rit, 2012), *Un Œil dans la maison* (La Maison de La vache qui rit, 2013), *The Light Hours* (Villa Savoye, Poissy 2014) and *Histoires sans sorcière* (La Maison de La vache qui rit, 2015).

In addition to his other projects, from October 2014 to February 2015, he has been with Cécile Poblou the co-curator of the three sections of the *Collectives – Collections* exhibition at the BBB Contemporary Art Centre in Toulouse, consisting of a series of propositions based around his own personal art collection, with a particular focus on video art, which he has always made a particular effort to promote.

Laurent Fiévet is also a visual artist. His artistic work is regularly presented in the context of group and/or solo exhibitions, both in France and overseas, notably at the Kiasma - Museum of Contemporary Art in Helsinki (*Suites hitchcockiennes* en 2003), at the Munch-Museet in Oslo (*In/Out*, 2007), at the Galeria Vermelho in São Paulo (*Silêncio !* 2008), and at Musée National Picasso of Paris (*Carlotta's way/Returning Carlotta's way*, 2014) for its reopening to public. Several of his films have also been presented at the Centre Pompidou and the Palais de Tokyo of Paris as part of their collective programming. Two of his films will be presented between may 28 and June 6 2015 in Barcelona at Museu Picasso.

Laurent Fiévet collaborates also regularly to video shows, video performances and video concerts. Among other projects, he realized the video editings of Ludovic Kerfendal's play *Les Yeux ouverts* after Marguerite Yourcenar and Matthieu Galley which will be part of Avignon Theater Festival next July at Théâtre du Chêne noir.

Website: [www.laurentfievet.com](http://www.laurentfievet.com)

## SILVIA GUERRA, CURATEUR

---

Silvia Guerra is the Artistic Director of Lab'Bel. Silvia studied art history at Coimbra (Portugal) and at the Università di Ca' Foscari in Venice (Italy). She began her professional activity in 2001, managing the German Pavilion team along with artist Gregor Schneider during the presentation of his work "Totes Haus Ur", which received the Golden Lion award at the 49th Venice Biennale. For three years Silvia Guerra was the Representative of Contemporary Art for the Department of International Relations at the Arts Institute of the Ministry of Portuguese Culture. In 2006, she transitioned into the role of curator. In her work, Silvia Guerra investigates the curator's artistic creativity and uses new media to experiment with new exhibition display forms, including social networks and USB supports. Showing art works on screen using a cinematic narrative or exploring the space of an art show as a "medium" to develop our conception on reality and fiction, on literality and transe are some of her research themes; Silvia Guerra has co-curated - among others - the following Lab'Bel exhibitions: *Rewind* (2010), *Metaphoria I and II* (2012,2013), and *The Light Hours: Haroon Mirza* at Villa Savoye (2014).



## **LAB'BEL, ARTISTIC LABORATORY OF THE BEL GROUP**

---

## LAB'BEL, ARTISTIC LABORATORY OF THE BEL GROUP

---

Lab'Bel, the artistic laboratory of the Bel food group, was formed in the spring of 2010 out of the latter's policy, and desire, to support contemporary art. Its non-profit actions consist primarily of sponsorship or patronage in the realm of contemporary art.

Directed by Laurent Fiévet (director) and Silvia Guerra (artistic director), Lab'Bel is committed to visual artists and various other actors in the world of contemporary art. Humour, impertinence and unconventionality is the byword for Lab'Bel and these three thematic axes serve as the structure for the group's identity.

### **An itinerant laboratory**

Since its beginning, Lab'Bel has attempted to establish a network of collaborations on a human scale with artists, exhibition curators, young filmmakers and exhibition designers, as well as the authors of its regular publications.

The group's exhibitions and collection strive for a dynamic of visibility. Lab'Bel produces collective exhibitions in France and site-specific shows in Europe—multidisciplinary projects combining art, architecture, literature and contemporary music.

The group boasts a small but efficient team and its collaborations have gone from strength to strength over time, much like its projects.

In Europe, Lab'Bel established collaborations with artist residencies such as the Gasworks, London, Le Palais de Tokyo, Paris, and the Hangar, Barcelona as part of the Art for Life / Art for a Living project.

In Barcelona in 2011, within the context of a contemporary art fair, Lab'Bel chose to exhibit artists living outside of the gallery and art agency circuit, surviving on research scholarships and artist residencies. Such a choice aimed to question the status of the artist today and the implication or importance of mobility in, and to, his creation.

### **Contemporary art and modernist architecture**

Barcelona was the birthplace of a project that was the conjuncture of art and some of the key edifices of modernist architecture. In collaboration with the Mies van der Rohe Foundation, Lab'Bel commissioned a site-specific installation from artist Stefan Brüggemann. The latter was asked to invest the Pavilion, named after modernist architecture's most renowned advocate and representative, within the context of *The World Trapped in the Self* exhibition, and with a view to initiating a cycle of dialogue around contemporary art and architecture. This found a sequel in the spring of 2014 with the exhibition *The Light Hours: Haroon Mirza* presented at Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye in Poissy (outside of Paris).

## LAB'BEL, ARTISTIC LABORATORY OF THE BEL GROUP

---

### Contemporary art and metaphor as a means of transporting or moving ideas

Lab'Bel was also present in Portugal as part of the Guimarães, European Capital of Culture in the autumn of 2012, with an exhibition titled *Metaphoria I*. This exhibition was to find a sequel with *Metaphoria II* in September 2013, as part of the Athens Biennale.

Born of a dialogue with a poet on the idea of metaphor as a means of transporting and transforming images through art, *Metaphoria I* and *II* established a link between poetry, music and the visual arts.

### Children and family audiences

In France, the group's collaboration with the museum of the brand, The Laughing Cow, has, since its opening, resulted in a series of collective and solo exhibitions with particular attention drawn to involving children and young audiences, and to making art more accessible in France's decentralized regions.

*Rewind* in 2010, *Même Pas Vieille!* in 2011 (a collaboration with three schools and Culture and Design Masters students), *Au Lait!* in 2012, as well as *Un Œil dans La Maison*, commissioned to Portuguese artist Miguel Palma in 2013, are just some examples of these exhibitions. Lab'Bel's latest project, *Histoires sans sorcière* (Winter 2014/2015) has once again seen this exhibition venue completely transformed through the presence of both monumental pieces and discreet works, blending perfectly with the architectural context of the space.



## PRESS IMAGES

---



### **Concertino Unisono**

©Lab-bel



### **Caffè Lavena**

Photo: Michael Staab  
©Lab-bel



### **Caffè Florian**

Photo: Michael Staab  
©Lab-bel



### **Gran Caffè Quadri**

Photo: Michael Staab  
©Lab-bel



### **Postcards with Concertino Unisono**

Photo: Michael Staab  
©Lab-bel



## PARTNERS

---

### CAFFÈ LAVENA



### CAFFÈ FLORIAN



### GRAN CAFFÈ QUADRI



# PRACTICAL INFORMATION

---

## Dates

- **8 May (5 pm)** : first performance with press and VIP preview cocktail party, thanks to the generous support of Caffè Lavena
  - Vernissage presse / cocktail Terrasse Caffé Lavena
- **9 May (5 pm): second performance**
- **10 May (5 pm): third performance - streamed lived**
  - **Public viewings and video conferences (4–6 pm):**
    - 22 Cours du 7ème Art, Paris. With Gilles Baume (Le Plateau) and Patrick Javault (art critic and exhibition curator). Contact Gilles Baume at + 33 6 60 57 41 38. (streamed at [www.lab-bel.com](http://www.lab-bel.com))
    - Labor Ebertplatz, Köln / Cologne. (streamed at [www.labor-ebertplatz.de](http://www.labor-ebertplatz.de))
    - GIA grupo de interferencia ambiental, Salvador de Bahia. (streamed at <http://giabahia.blogspot.it/>)
    - BREGAS, Lisbon (streamed at <http://primeiraavenida.blogspot.it>)
- **6 May (5 pm): fourth performance**

## Location

Piazza San Marco, Venice

## Websites

Lab'Bel, Artistic Laboratory of the Bel Group - [www.lab-bel.com](http://www.lab-bel.com)  
Bel Group - [www.groupe-bel.com](http://www.groupe-bel.com)

## Press Images

On request at [info@fouchardfilippi.com](mailto:info@fouchardfilippi.com)