



LABORATOIRE  
ARTISTIQUE  
DU GROUPE BEL

Press release  
25 March 2015

During the opening of the 56<sup>th</sup> 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.

## CONCERTINO UNISONO

BY MICHAEL STAAB

*A performative intervention in public space*

Piazza San Marco, Venice

- 8 May (5 pm): press preview (public)
- 9 May (5 pm): VIP preview (public)
- 10 May (5 pm): public main event, shared internationally
- 16 May (5 pm): public event



Co-curated by *Laurent Fiévet* and *Silvia Guerra* for Lab'Bel

Visit [www.lab-bel.com](http://www.lab-bel.com) for information on the international sharing of the project and webcam streaming links, as well as for all future announcements and a complete performance schedule.

A visit to the Piazza San Marco - "the finest salon in Europe", as French writer Alfred de Musset described it - is one of the highlights of any trip to Venice. Three renowned cafés are situated in the square: Caffè Florian (established in 1720), Gran Caffè Quadri (1775) opposite, and Caffè Lavena (1750) next door. Traditionally, each of these keeps a small orchestra to entertain clients on the terrace with music of all genres and periods. As a rule, the orchestras alternate their playing so as to avoid acoustic overlapping.

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## The project

On the basis of this singular setting, which combines three orchestras and a famous square in which the whole world meets, the artistic project **Concertino Unisono** plans to stage a performative musical happening in public space.

With no prior announcement, a conductor gives the signal for a large orchestra to tune up. He then raises his baton and begins conducting. For a short time, nothing happens, but soon the three orchestras strike up simultaneously. Each plays jazz, classical or hits from their usual repertoire, creating, for the first few minutes, a musical cacophony. Gradually, order emerges from the chaos, until finally all three orchestras join in playing the same piece. Thus for some five minutes a kind of musical tapestry hovers over the Piazza San Marco, affording spectators and passersby an unexpected, intensive sensory and spatial experience.



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## A unique artistic event in a singular setting

A temporary artwork which appears and disappears, remaining not frozen in time but only in the memory of those present, **Concertino Unisono** can be realized in only a single place in the whole world: the Piazza San Marco in Venice.

“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. 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 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 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.”

—Michael Staab

## Live Streaming

The performances in the Piazza San Marco will be shared with an open group of institutions in European and international cities via live streaming and video conferences from Venice during the Concertino performances.

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## Michael Staab

**Concertino Unisono** is a site-specific project by German conceptual artist, theater director and independent curator Michael Staab. Since 1992, following several years of work in institutional and independent experiment-oriented theaters, Staab has focused on performatively displayed room installations and conceptual art actions and projects. He also works as curator, project manager and exhibition designer for national and international cultural institutions, museums and biennials, for whom he organizes and leads complex contemporary art projects.

In his temporary site-and context-specific projects, Staab examines the ways in which social systems function, analyzing established views and behavioral patterns of people in familiar situations. His work is interdisciplinary and participatory, in the spirit of Happening and the Fluxus movement. The goal of Staab's work is to create temporary 'social sculptures' by promoting the acceptance of an expanded notion of art, in which art is seen as a catalyst in social processes.

**Lab'Bel, the Artistic Laboratory of the Bel Group**, was formed in 2010 out of the latter's keen desire and policy to support contemporary art.

Lab'Bel is directed by Laurent Fiévet and Silvia Guerra.



**Concertino Unisono** will take place thanks to the generous support and collaboration of Caffè Florian, the Gran Caffè Quadri, and Caffè Lavena in Venice.

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