

Esther Schipper

ARI BENJAMIN MEYERS

SOLO FOR AYUMI

JULY 2–AUGUST 5, 2017



Violinist Ayumi Paul. Photo © Alexander Straulino

Esther Schipper is pleased to announce Ari Benjamin Meyers' second solo exhibition with the gallery. Entitled **Solo for Ayumi**, the exhibition will expand Meyers' series of scores and performative works, built on an ongoing artistic relationship with Berlin-based violinist Ayumi Paul.

This exhibition takes place at a decisive moment in Meyers' rapidly developing career, as the artist will be participating in this fall 14th Biennale de Lyon, as well as in the 2018 Liverpool Biennial. This year also marks the unfolding of Meyers' institutional project Kunsthalle for Music, co-founded together with Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam and Spring Workshop, Hong Kong.

Earlier this year, the two artists—who have been friends for more than fifteen years—engaged in a correspondence based on Paul's life. From the approximately thirty letters that she sent him, Meyers chose twelve to which he responded by inscribing them with a multi-part score, composing both a musical portrait and abstraction of the violin player. Every day for the duration of the exhibition, Paul will be present in the gallery space, enacting Meyers' interpretation of her life on her violin. Alongside this performance, which will form the core of the exhibition, the artist chose to exhibit selected objects and artifacts belonging to Paul as diptychs, paired with the letter-scores.

This musical portrait of Ayumi Paul will unveil itself in multiple layers: through her letters and Meyers' score, as well as through her performance. With **Solo for Ayumi**, Meyers addresses the complex connection between the artist and his muse, the composer and his interpreter, while playing with the concept of the solo as both a musical and an exhibition form. **Solo for Ayumi** embodies what it entails to live one's life through music, when a musical instrument becomes an extension of oneself and literally plays the performer's life.

Meyers' work explores structures and processes that redefine the performative, social, and ephemeral nature of music. His conceptual projects and installations often draw attention to concrete details of music-making otherwise taken for granted and make tangible underlying conceptual operations. Recent works have addressed music scores themselves, forms and arrangements of musical instruments and ensembles, concert settings, and gestures of performers and conductors. At the same time, his compositions and performances seek to challenge the relationship between performer and audience, giving form to the practice of musicians and composers, and musical structures in the context of visual art.

Ari Benjamin Meyers was trained as a composer and conductor at The Juilliard School, Yale University, and The Peabody Institute at Johns Hopkins University. Born in 1972 in New York, he lives and works in Berlin.

Selected projects and solo exhibitions include: **Symphony 80**, Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, Munich (2017), **An exposition, not an exhibition**, Spring Workshop, Hong Kong (2017), **Who's Afraid of Sol La Ti? (Invention I)**, Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (2016), **Elevator Music**, TRAFÖ, Szczecin (2016), **Memories of the Future**, Museum of Modern Art Warsaw (2016), **Symphony X (Installation Version)**, KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2015), **Untitled for Choir (Beating Time)**, Martin-Gropius-Bau Berlin (2015), **Just in Time, Just in Sequence**, Schauspielhaus Bochum (2014), **The Lightning and Its Flash (Solo for Conductor)**, New Initiative for Europe, Akademie der Künste, Berlin (2014), **Chamber Music (Vestibule)**, Berlinische Galerie, Berlin (2013–14).

The foundation of Ari Benjamin Meyers' institutional project Kunsthalle for Music—co-founded together with Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam and Spring Workshop, Hong Kong—was announced in November 2016. During Art Basel Hong Kong 2017, **An exposition, not an exhibition** at Spring Workshop unfolded the Kunsthalle's foundational themes, followed by a conference at Witte de With in May 2017 and punctuated by an inaugural take-over, featuring a series of new commissions also at Witte de With in January 2018.

Ayumi Paul is a violinist and composer based in Berlin whose work comprises performances in concert halls, museums and galleries. Born in Giessen in 1980, she trained as a classical violinist at Hanns Eisler School of Music in Berlin and Indiana University (USA), where she was the recipient of the Josef-Gingold-Award. She gave her solo debut at the Berlin Philharmonic in 2003 and has continued to perform at concert halls such as Barbican Hall London, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Salle Pleyel Paris, and Tonhalle Zürich, as well as Neue Nationalgalerie Berlin, MAXXI Museum Rome, Blockhouse Gallery Tokyo and Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art, among others. Projects throughout 2016/2017 include **I HEAR LIGHT** for Kunsthalle Osnabrück, **Forgiveness** with Israeli dancer Iyar Elezra, premieres of solo compositions written for her by Elliott Sharp and Richard Reed Parry, and concerts featuring multi-media artist Achim Mohné. She started working with Ari Benjamin Meyers in 2001.

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