

### **Susan Philipsz: *A Single Voice***

October 25 – December 15, 2018

Tanya Bonakdar Gallery is pleased to present *A Single Voice*, a solo exhibition of recent works by Turner-prize winning artist, Susan Philipsz on view at 521 West 21<sup>st</sup> Street, New York from October 25 through December 15, 2018. This will be Philipsz's fifth solo exhibition with the gallery and serves as the United States premiere of two new acoustic works, *A Single Voice* and *Seven Tears*. Together, these ambitious installations continue the artist's ongoing exploration of the visceral, emotive, and architectural potentials of sound when projected in a specific environment.

Occupying the first floor gallery is Philipsz' seminal installation, *A Single Voice*. Made up of a large-scale film projection installed alongside a sculptural arrangement of 12 speakers, this is the artist's first major piece utilizing film as a medium. The sound is adapted from Karl-Birger Blomdahl's *Aniara*, an opera based on Harry Martinson's 1956 epic of the same name. This haunting and perceptive narrative tells the story of a spaceship named *Aniara*, meant to transport thousands of humans from Earth to Mars after the planet has been irreparably damaged by environmental destruction. On the journey, the vessel strays off course and out of our solar system leaving its passengers doomed to drift endlessly in outer space.

The film portrays a solitary violinist playing in a darkened studio, the camera slowly revolving around her, panning in and out. Philipsz poetically extracts the violin portion from the rest of the score like a signal separated and cast adrift. The musician plays only the C note in a haunting sequence based on the Morse code for "Aniara SOS Aniara". The remaining violin tones call out in response from around the room filling the architecture of the space. The suspenseful and quivering melody reflects the apprehensive journey of the spacecraft and serves as a reflection on universal themes of isolation, loss and distance.

*A Single Voice* was first created for Philipsz' exhibition *Lost in Space* at Bonniers Konsthall in 2017. The work was exhibited at the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, United Kingdom later that year.

On the second floor, Philipsz continues her inquiry into John Dowland's *Lachrimae*, an instrumental ensemble produced by the composer in 1604. Considered his signature work, *Lachrimae* aimed to portray the sensation of a single falling tear. The rising and falling notes depict the rise and fall of a tear, forming in the eye, swelling and flowing onto the cheek. Each of the seven pavans reflects on a different variety of tear, for instance, *Lachrimæ Amantis (A Lover's tears)* or *Lachrimæ Veræ (True tears)*.

To create the sound for *Seven Tears*, Philipsz recorded each part of *Lachrimae* by delicately circling her fingers along the rim of a wine glass filled with varying levels of water. The seven parts play from individual record players gracefully coalescing to a beautiful and somber harmony. The spinning records echo the circular motion of the artist's hand and culminate into the reverberating, meditative sound that amounts to an immersive installation.

*Seven Tears* was previously exhibited in *NDW: Susan Philipsz*, at Scottish National Galleries, Edinburgh, Scotland in 2017 and *Susan Philipsz: Returning*, at Kunstverein Hannover, Germany in 2016. Philipsz' first utilized Dowland's ensemble for her large-scale project, *Surround Me*, which featured multiple sound installations throughout London commissioned by Artangel in 2010.

Accompanying the installation, a series of recent paintings hang in the project space. Each painting takes its name from the individual titles of Dowland's *Lachrimae*:

*Lachrimae Antiquae (Old Tears)*  
*Lachrimae Antiquae Novae (Old Tears Renewed)*  
*Lachrimae Gementes (Sighing Tears)*  
*Lachrimae Tristes (Sad Tears)*  
*Lachrimae Coactae (Forced Tears)*  
*Lachrimae Amantis (A Lover's Tears)*  
*Lachrimae Verae (True Tears)*

Philipsz created these paintings by submerging screen-printed canvases into a salt-water bath for varying number of days. The resulting surfaces are richly enveloped with layers of salt crystals, and serve as a visual representation of the tears suggested by Dowland's music.

Born in 1965 in Glasgow, Philipsz currently lives and works in Berlin. She received a BFA in Sculpture from Duncan of Jordanstone College in Dundee, Scotland in 1993, and an MFA from the University of Ulster in Belfast in 1994. She received the Turner Prize in 2010 and was awarded an OBE in 2014 for services to British art.

Susan Philipsz was recently featured in the Berlin episode of the ninth season of *Art in the Twenty-First Century* on PBS. Her work is currently included in *Machines a Penser*, Fondazione Prada, Venice and *Divided We Stand*, Busan Biennale 2018, Busan, South Korea. The artist has a forthcoming solo presentation at The Tanks, Tate Modern, London opening on December 13, 2018. Forthcoming group exhibitions include *PHOTOGRAPHY + BOOKS Out of the Retina and Into the Brain: The Art Library of Aaron and Barbara Levine*, at the Art Institute of Chicago and *Manif d'Art*, La Biennale de Quebec, Quebec, Canada.

Philipsz's work can be found in the collections of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; The Tate, London; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid; Baltimore Museum of Art; Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany; Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; Castello di Rivoli, Italy; and the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, among others.