

MUSIC WAS MY FIRST LOVE

a yearlong continuously changing art exhibition
from June 2020 until June 2021

curator:

Wim Lambrecht

production:

BOZAR (Brussels),
in collaboration with **Museum Dr Guislain** (Gent)

In brief:

MWMFL exhibits art works which reflect on the possible impact of music making on the social well-being and health of man.

MWMFL is a dynamic exhibition spread out over the period of a full year. Within the classic concept of a static exhibition the different rooms are made subordinate to a trail. This exhibition invites the audience to a broader experience over a longer period of time. **MWMFL** builds bridges from the art of making music to the visual arts.

MWMFL will also unfold an accompanying program of musical, participatory and academic interventions. Together they form a chain of activities which slowly resonate and intervene upon each other. This accompanying program will be developed in dialogue with different disciplines in the **BOZAR** program (literature¹, classical and world music, cinema², Africa-program, architecture, Bozar studio, middle east...).

MWMFL will continuously remind the audiences of previous activities in the exhibition and will announce upcoming proposals.

¹ James Baldwin (see cluster 'isolation-resonance') and Mark Schaevers' Orgelman (see cluster 'detention - torture')

² films from Jonas Mekas, Douglas Gordon, Dan Graham, Derek Jarman, Jeremy Deller, Albert & David Maysles and Charlotte Zwerin, and many others...

This flux of different art works - exhibited and then replaced - will well connect with the temporality so typical of musical performances. **MWMFL** will allow the visitor to move between the ear and the eye.

MWMFL is developed in 6 (or 7 clusters³) of art presentations - each about 2 months length - (possibly) presenting works by: Berenice Abbott, Kader Attia, Allora & Calzadilla, John Cohen, Phil Collins, Manon De Boer, David Hammons, Eastman Johnson, Christian Marclay, Hana Miletic, Felix Nussbaum, Claes Oldenburg, Anri Sala, Ross Sinclair, Luc Tuymans, Joris Van de Moortel, Klaas Vanhee, P.B. Van Rossem, Jeff Wall, Co Westerik, Artur Zmijewski...

Yearlong exhibition of 6 or 7 clusters / mental rooms⁴:

1. fracture - repair

Kader ATTIA - Klaas VANHEE - ALLORA & CALZADILLA

Kader ATTIA: Reenactment (2014)

Klaas VANHEE: Guitars (2008)

ALLORA & CALZADILLA:

- Returning a Sound (2004)
- Stop, Repair, Prepare: Variations on Ode to Joy, No.3 (2008)
 - participatory workshop on 'lutherie sauvage' (Max Van der Vorst)
 - performance by Benjamin Glorieux on styrofoam cello of Tim Duerinck
 - commissioning⁵ in residence artists of KAOS (Erik Thys) to create works with broken music instruments of Music Fund
 - Beethoven celebrations (Allora & Calzadilla's work)

2. clash cultures

Phil COLLINS - Anri SALA

Phil Collins: The World won't listen 2004-2007

Anri SALA: Le Clash (2010)

Anri SALA: Tlatelolco Clash (2011)

3. hearing differently

Anonymous - Hana MILETIC - P.B. VAN ROSSEM - Artur ZMIJEWSKI - Co WESTERIK

Anonymous artist: Mädchen mit totem Vogel (1600)

³ A 7th cluster can be developed in collaboration with the Museum Dr. Guislain around 'state of mind - addiction'.

⁴ At Bozar as many clusters as possible should be exhibited in one and the same exhibition space, if possible in the **Raadzaal**, because it is well situated, near the Horta Hall and the entrances towards the exhibition and concert halls of Bozar. Which months is it available between June 2020 and June 2021?

⁵ The ambition of the MWMFL-team is to be able to commission artists in the context of this exhibition.

Hana MILETIC: Softwares (2018)
P.B. VAN ROSSEM: Zonder title (2018)⁶
Artur ZMIJEWSKI: Singing Lesson 2 (2003)
Co WESTERIK: Grammofoonspeler (1971)

- music of P.B. Van Rossem
- workshop singing Bach (ref: work by Artur Zmijewski) by people musically or culturally unrelated to Bach's music (refugees...) by Judith Vindevogel and Michael De Cock⁷ (KVS & Walpurgis) or/and Singing Brussels or/and Koor & Stem or/and Hanne Deneire or/and Globalroma...

4. real life

Joris VAN DE MOORTELE - Ross SINCLAIR

Ross SINCLAIR: 20 Years of Real Life (2015)
Joris VAN DE MOORTELE: For the Guitarplayer in Vienna (2016-2017)

- participatory workshop with youth on drums and/or guitars with Ross Sinclair (org: Maison de la creation / Music Fund)

5. detention - torture

Felix NUSSBAUM - Anri SALA - Claes OLDENBURG - Christian MARCLAY

Felix NUSSBAUM: Triumph des Todes (1944)
Anri SALA: Still life in the doldrums (d'après Cézanne) (2015)
Claes OLDENBURG: Giant Soft Drum Set (1967)
Christian MARCLAY: Guitar Drag (2000)

- conference on music in detention (org: SIMM, in collaboration with Oxford University, Panteion University, VUB, UA/ARIA)
- meeting writer Mark Schaevers on his book 'Orgelman, Felix Nussbaum - een schildersleven' (De Bezige Bij, 2014)

6. isolation - separation

Berenice ABBOTT - Luc TUYMANS - John COHEN - Eastman JOHNSON - David HAMMONS

Berenice ABBOTT: Buddy Gilmore, Paris (1926-27)
Luc Tuymans: Drum set (2015)
John COHEN: Portrait of Roscoe Holcomb (1959)
Eastman JOHNSON: Confidence and Admiration (ca 1859)
David HAMMONS: Chasing the Blue Train (1989)

- seminar with TOSO (The Ostend Street Orchestra) on which music is created in participatory music practices (org: SIMM)

⁶ Works of P.B. Van Rossem (cluster 3 and 7) and of Manon De Boer and Jeff Wall (cluster 7) will be proposed at the Museum Dr. Guislain.

⁷ Judith Vindevogel and Michael De Cock have in 2010 in the context of the music theatre performance 'Haven 010' (coproduction Walpurgis & 't Arsenaal) invited a large group of refugees to sing Bach. The participants did not know classical singing nor did they know the composer's music.

- David Lynx performance around A Lover's Question around texts of James Baldwin (ref: work of David Hammons)

7. state of mind - addiction (Museum Dr. Guislain)

Manon DE BOER - Jeff WALL - P.B. VAN ROSSEM

Manon De Boer: Presto, Perfect Sound, (2006)

Jeff Wall: The Guitarist (1987)

P.B. VAN ROSSEM: Zonder title (2018)

MWMFL wants to develop partnerships in the city, share spaces and act as a sounding board for makers, listeners and viewers, to chart the social impact of music.

MWMFL will be seen as a lively event. Different types of interventions⁸, meetings, performances and symposia are planned, such as social-artistic music workshops, concerts, lectures, films and video screenings, in collaboration with neighboring concert halls, music and film festivals.

The **5th international SIMM-posium** on research on the social impact of music making (www.simm-platform.eu) will also be organized at Bozar in the Summer of 2020, with researcher Geoffrey Baker⁹ as the keynote speaker, and in collaboration with the Queen Mathilde Fund.

⁸ by artists such as Joseph Kohlmaier, Paul Elliman, Hana Miletic et al.

⁹ Geoffrey Baker studied Sistema Venezuela, one of the best-known social music projects, and describes his findings in his book 'Sistema Venezuela: Orchestrating Youth' (Oxford University Press, 2014)

Biographies curator and coordinator accompanying program:

Wim Lambrecht (MWMFL-curator)

(°1973, Ghent) is head of visual arts, teacher and researcher at LUCA School of Arts. He is also active as an artist, editor and curator. Recent research projects and exhibitions highlighted his interest in moving images. He thereby not only focuses on projected moving image, such as film or video, but also on physically moving image in relation to an audience, such as performance, theatre and concerts. Lambrecht's interest in fragility and ephemeral and temporary art forms is the starting point for this exhibition.

Lukas Pairen (coordinator accompanying program)

(°1958, Nassogne) in 1994 co-founded together with its musicians the now famous contemporary music ensemble Ictus of which he had the general direction until 2013. In 2005 he founded the philanthropic organization Music Fund, which works with music schools in the Middle East, Africa and Caribbean, through donations of music instruments and through training repair-technicians of instruments. Since 2013 he started a PhD research in Kinshasa (DR Congo) for the University of Ghent (UGent, Faculty Political and Social Sciences) on the possible role of music in social work. In 2015 he decided to create the international research platform on the Social Impact of Making Music (SIMM), which he directs since 2017.

Presentation of some of the potential partners:

Organisations with whom partnerships are considered in the context of MWMFL are: Maison de la creation, Cinemaximiliaan, The Ostend Street Orchestra, KVS, Walpurgis, Singing Brussels, KAOS, Koor & Stem, De Ledebirds, Villa Voortman, Performatik (Kaaitheater), Cinematek, Kunstenfestivaldesarts, Art Cinema OFFoff, Queen Mathilde Fund, SIMM..

SIMM

is an independent international scholarly association, a research platform, focusing on the potential social impact of music making. SIMM organizes and accompanies international annual 'SIMM-posia', conferences, publications, as well as research-seminars for scholars, practitioners, funders and governmental representatives, who have in common their interest to develop, welcome or support research on the role music making may play in social and community work. Contact: Jan Leysen & Lukas Pairon (www.simm-platform.eu)

Maison de la création

for the projects involving youth (Phil Collins / Ross Sinclair). Maison de la création is a cultural centre focussing on the collaboration between artists and youth from their neighbourhood (Laeken, Brussels). Contact: Jacques-Yves Le Docte (www.maisondelacreation.org)

The Ostend Street Orchestra (TOSO)

was founded in 2014 by kleinVerhaal and wanted to offer a positive answer to the negative perception of the numerous homeless people in Ostend. The orchestra - led by renowned jazz musicians Bart Maris (FES), Giovanni Barcella (BackBack) and Ilse Duyck (Ilse Duyck Group) - grew into an experimental music ensemble that unites people from all walks of life. Homeless, recently washed ashore, baseball player, young, old, professional musician or amateur standing side by side. KleinVerhaal asked director Dany Deprez to document the 'TOSO experience'. He spent a few months in the wake of this special group of people, and visited the group members individually with the question: Why are you part of TOSO? An honest documentary on the rythm of TOSO's unfinished music (<https://vimeo.com/310054545>). Contact: Dieter Debruyne (www.kleinverhaal.be/Projecten/TOSO)

KAOS

was founded by psychiatrists Erik Thys (St-Alexis) and develops art projects with artists who may or may not have a psychological vulnerability and has an artist residence

in psychiatry. It brings art and psychiatry together and tells something about the perception about this. Contact: Erik Thys (www.vzwkaos.be)

Cinemaximiliaan

and their Music for Silent Film Project: Fourteen musicians from all around the globe worked together for more than a year to create music for a silent film. At the core of this project lies the inspiring power of various musical traditions and sounds. The ensemble consists of musicians from Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, France, Syria, Italy and also from The Netherlands, Switzerland, Belgium and Brasil. Based on improvisations and under the musical leadership of composer Simon Ho and pianist Emma Heijink, the group put together an experimental soundtrack, in which pop, jazz and rock influences are mixed with oriental ornaments into a groundbreaking musical adventure. In an innovative way, the music enters into dialogue with the silent comedy "Egged On" from Charley Bowers (1926) in which the protagonist attempts to build a machine to make unbreakable eggs: <https://vimeo.com/253420720>.

Art Cinema OFFoff

in collaboration with **Cinematek**: Art Cinema OFFoff is a screening platform for experimental cinema and audiovisual art. Time and again, OFFoff looks for films from the past and present that engage in cinematographic and (non) narrative experiments, while not avoiding a radical formal language or a different discourse, and more often navigating between cinema and the other arts. The protagonists of avant-garde cinema are cherished. At the same time, the classical canon is updated and confronted with 'forgotten' films, new media, contemporary voices and transversal perspectives.

**details on some of the
works and artists in the accompanying program
of the exhibition:**

**Allora & Calzadilla - Stop, Repair, Prepare:
Variations on Ode to Joy for a Prepared Piano**

For the ninth installment of the Performance Exhibition Series, the artists Jennifer Allora (b. 1974) and Guillermo Calzadilla (b. 1971) present *Stop, Repair, Prepare: Variations on Ode to Joy for a Prepared Piano* (2008). For this piece, the artists carved a hole in the center of a grand piano, through which a pianist plays the famous Fourth Movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, usually referred to as "Ode to Joy." The performer leans over the keyboard and plays upside down and backwards, while moving with the piano across the vast atrium. The result is a structurally incomplete version of the ode—the hole in the piano renders two octaves inoperative—that fundamentally transforms both the player/instrument dynamic and the signature melody, underlining the contradictions and ambiguities of a song that has long been invoked as a symbol of humanist values and national pride.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iuJdI8S01-k>

John Cohen - portrait of Roscoe Halcomb

In 1959 John Cohen travelled to East Kentucky looking for what he calls old music. Cohen asked for names at local gas stations but soon ran out of leads, and drove off the highway onto the next dirt road. Here he stumbled across Roscoe Holcomb playing the banjo and singing on his front porch in a way says Cohen, "that made the hairs on my neck stand up on end." And so by pure chance began the lifelong friendship that is the background for *The High and Lonesome Sound*. Cohen visited Holcomb frequently over the next three decades, and made many photographs, films and records of his music. In time Holcomb, a poor coal miner by trade, became a regular feature on the American concert and festival circuits. The strange beauty and discomfort of his music--a mixture of blues, ballads and Baptist hymns, and unique through his high strained voice--was exposed to a larger audience. Nevertheless, Holcomb died alone in a nursing home in 1981. *The High and Lonesome Sound* combines Cohen's vintage photos, film and musical recordings as well as an anecdotal text into a multimedia tribute to this underappreciated legend of American music whose every performance was, in Cohen's words, "not just a rendition of music, but a test of something to be overcome."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dlQJcSy6lHA>

Scott Matthews examines the documentary work John Cohen produced in eastern Kentucky from the late 1950s into the 1960s, particularly the image he created of singer-musician Roscoe Halcomb, who is prominently featured in Cohen's 1963 film *The High Lonesome Sound* (made in collaboration with Joel Agee). Cohen, a musician, photographer, and member of the group *The New Lost City Ramblers*, met Halcomb in Eastern Kentucky in 1959, when the area was in the grip of an economic depression. Through sound recordings, photography and film, Cohen spread Halcomb's music and image throughout the folk revival scene of the early 1960s, making him an iconic embodiment of artistic authenticity based in the grinding poverty of Appalachia (and turning his recognized name to Roscoe Holcomb along the way). The article shows how Cohen's representation of the depressed conditions that shaped Halcomb's existence contributed to the power of Halcomb's mythic image during this time. Matthews also explores the differences between the two men's views on the relationship of art, work, poverty, and survival. Based upon several extended interviews with John Cohen as well as other historical materials, the article examines Cohen's friendship with Halcomb and his relationship to Halcomb's personal life and musical career, with special attention to the production and reception of *The High Lonesome Sound*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l5EcebrTqMI>

Jeremy Deller - Our Hobby Is Depeche Mode

Our Hobby Is Depeche Mode, 2006

(with Nick Abrahams)

"A friend of mine, Nick Abrahams, told me that Mute Records were looking to make a film about Depeche Mode for an anniversary 'greatest hits' package. I thought that could be quite interesting. And either he or I or both of us - I can't actually remember - suggested that we do something about their fans, as you hear almost mythical stories about their Eastern European fanbase, particularly in the 1980s. We went to Mexico, the US, Germany, Romania, Brazil and Canada - all in under three weeks. In Russia, 60 fans met us at the airport and basically kidnapped us for two days, which was brilliant for the film. As we suspected, the story from Eastern Europe was massive. The effect of Depeche in that region during the 1960s was similar to the effect of the Beatles on the UK during the 1960s. The film was never released - we suspect for a number of reasons. One of which was this German family (see the bottom-left image, facing page), who dress their children up as members of the band and characters from the films. They somehow manage to get tickets for the press launches of albums, private meet and greets - and no one can work out how they do it. A lot of German fans seem to resent this family. Also the band have been so carefully branded and marketed that the fans' behaviour sometimes disrupts this carefully crafted

image. The fans appropriate the band, they do their own thing and have a laugh; it's not clean, it's messy and it's chaotic."

[http://www.jeremydeller.org/OurHobbyIsDepechMode/OurHobbyIsDepecheMode Video.php](http://www.jeremydeller.org/OurHobbyIsDepechMode/OurHobbyIsDepecheMode%20Video.php)

Douglas Gordon - Feature Film

Feature Film is a video installation by the Scottish artist Douglas Gordon. It is comprised of two large wall projections showing the same closely cropped footage of a conductor's hands and face. The projections, measuring at least 3 x 5.5 m, are shown on opposing walls in a blacked-out room, with one image flipped horizontally so that the images mirror one another. The film was made in super 16 mm before being blown up to 35 mm. The soundtrack of the film, which consists of the music that the subject is conducting, is played at high volume. The conductor depicted in the film is James Conlon, who was Music Director at the Opéra National de Paris at the time the work was made. In *Feature Film* he interprets the full soundtrack written by composer Bernard Hermann for the film *Vertigo* (1958), directed by Alfred Hitchcock. When Hermann's soundtrack was originally issued by Mercury Records in 1958 to accompany the film's release, it contained only thirty-four minutes of the eighty minutes of music featured in the film. Conlon's recording is the only one to date to feature the entire suite as written by Hermann. The score, which echoes the *Liebestod* from Richard Wagner's 1859 opera *Tristan und Isolde*, opens with a portentous two-note falling motif; a musical imitation of the notes emitted by the foghorns on either side of San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge. This bridge features in the film as the site where the character played by actor Kim Novak jumps into the bay. The dialogue in *Vertigo* is sparse, and Hitchcock relied on Hermann's score throughout the film to drive the narrative.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q24vjmUdOrk>

Douglas Gordon - I Had Nowhere To Go

Jonas Mekas is a filmmaker, writer and curator, a champion of the avant-garde. In 1970 he helped found Anthology Film Archives in Manhattan, an invaluable movie house and resource that's the closest thing to Henri Langlois's seminal Cinémathèque Française to emerge on American soil.

"[I Had Nowhere to Go](#)," a film directed by the artist Douglas Gordon, is based on Mr. Mekas's diaries, published in 1991 under the same name. (Mr. Gordon is possibly best known in this country for his 1993 art installation "24 Hour 'Psycho,'" which slowed Alfred Hitchcock's famous work to a duration of, well, take a guess.) Mr. Gordon does not focus on Mr. Mekas's career; the movie's interest is in Jonas Mekas the displaced person who was imprisoned by Nazis in a labor camp in his

native Lithuania, then shuttled around Europe before immigrating to the United States and settling in New York. Long portions of the film have the screen black as Mr. Mekas, who is 95, reads from his book; sometimes its color shifts from black to white, from white to gray; at times a field of red fills the screen. Shots of potatoes, or of feet trudging through the snow, punctuate the absence of imagery. Sometimes a silence descends over the black screen, and then Mr. Gordon puts a loud explosion on the soundtrack, a symbol of the war Mr. Mekas spent his early years trying to flee. The effect is startling, and consistently so. But what it conveys is not so much Mr. Mekas's experience as Mr. Gordon's will, and his cheap sadistic hostility to the audience. It makes this film a vexed experience.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mrO5zSsn4tk>

Dan Graham - Rock My Religion

This video documentary is an assemblage of stories, music, text, and film that examines and reconstructs the relationship between alternative religions and rock music in their development and practice. The video opens with punk musicians wildly shaking their bodies onstage to the sound of an electric guitar, alternating with woodcut illustrations of Shakers, members of an eighteenth- and nineteenth-century religious movement named for the fervent dancing and writhing they performed to purify themselves of evil.

The opening soundtrack layers and alternates between Graham's voice telling the story of Ann Lee, the Shaker who believed she was the second coming of Christ, and the music and voice of Patti Smith, an innovator of punk-rock music who has compared rock culture with religion. *Rock My*

Religion continues by exploring historic American religious practices, including Native American, Puritan, and Shaker rituals, and the emergence of rock musicians like Jerry Lee Lewis, Elvis, and The Doors. Rock is interpreted as a religion with the potential for communal transcendental experience, but one that inverts traditional pieties with sexualized religious dance. Graham focuses on the social and sexual origins and implications of rock and roll, and his historical reconstruction provides a framework for the interpretation of the rituals of rock and punk culture as forms of religious practice.

<https://vimeo.com/8796242>

Joseph Kohlmaier - Musarc

Musarc is one of the UK's most progressive choral collectives. Based at [The Cass Faculty of Art, Architecture and Design](#), London Metropolitan University, Musarc explores making music, listening, performance and composition in relation to the creative process, and music as a social form in the context of architecture and the city.

The ensemble, which is sought after for its experimental and open-minded working approach, has been commissioned by major cultural organisations and institutions in the UK and abroad, and regularly collaborates with [artists and composers](#) to commission new work that challenges traditional ways of making music, and that brings together art, performance and education.

[Read more about the choir.](#)

<https://www.musarc.org/about/>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=63&v=DbpaQcEI7t0

Mark Schaevers - Orgelman, Felix Nussbaum - Een schildersleven

Mark Schaevers' book 'Orgelman' tells the wonderful rebirth of an artist destroyed by Hitler: Felix Nussbaum. While his existence as an exile from 1933 on was difficult, at the end of the war it was scorched to the ground. Just like his wife Felka Platek, Nussbaum did not return from the last transport to the East from Dossin in Mechelen; nothing remained of his paintings and his great fame in the Berlin interbellum. And yet: half a century later, his home town Osnabrück set up a museum for him and today he is counted among the most important Jewish painters of the twentieth century. How this wandering organ man still managed to find an echo is an extraordinary and exciting piece of history which was still waiting for a storyteller.

<https://www.knack.be/nieuws/mark-schaevers-wint-gouden-boekenuil/video-iwatch-567085.html>