

BANG ON ➤ CAN



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Announcing the 30th Anniversary Bang on a Can Marathon at Brooklyn Museum

Saturday, May 6, 2017 from 2-10pm



Brooklyn Museum | 200 Eastern Parkway | Brooklyn, NY
Marathon Admission: FREE with Brooklyn Museum admission;
Museum admission free after 5pm courtesy of Target First Saturday

Information: 718.852.7755 or www.bangonacan.org

New York, NY — **Bang on a Can** announces its **30th Anniversary Bang on a Can Marathon**, presented for the first time at **Brooklyn Museum** on Saturday, **May 6, 2017 from 2-10pm**. This incomparable super-mix of boundary-busting music from around the corner and around the world features eight hours of rare performances by some of the most innovative musicians of our time side-by-side with some of today's most pioneering young artists. The Marathon is part of *A Year of Yes: Reimagining Feminism at the Brooklyn Museum*, a yearlong project that celebrates the 10th anniversary of the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art through ten diverse exhibitions and an extensive calendar of related public programs. Bang on a Can Marathon artists include Meredith Monk, Julia Wolfe, Joan La Barbara, and many more.

Bang on a Can started as a one day Marathon concert thirty years ago on Mother's Day 1987 in a SoHo art gallery and has grown into a multi-faceted performing arts organization with a broad range of year-round international activities. *The New York Times* reports, "A quarter-century later their impact has been profound and pervasive. The current universe of do-it-yourself concert series, genre-flouting festivals, composer-owned record labels and amplified, electric-guitar-driven compositional idioms would probably not exist without their pioneering example. The Bang on a Can Marathon, the organization's sprawling, exuberant annual mixtape love letter to its many admirers, has been widely emulated..." *The Village Voice* recounted, "[one could] enjoy a world made a bit more habitable – something like an authentically felt home – thanks to all manner of cultural practices that get dissed out in the mainstream."

Bang on a Can co-founders and composers **Michael Gordon, David Lang, and Julia Wolfe** say, "Thirty years ago we started dreaming of the world we wanted to live in. It would be a kind of utopia for music: all the boundaries between composers would come down, all the boundaries between genres would come down, all the boundaries between musicians and audience would come down. Then we started trying to build it. Building a utopia is a political act – it pushes people to change. It is also an act of resistance to the things that keep us apart, and it is an act of love, bringing ideas and sounds and people together. This year, we couldn't have found a better home or partner than the Brooklyn Museum, whose slate of

2017 *Year of Yes* exhibitions is dedicated to artists and ideas, and especially women, who have passionately shared a parallel path. Please come celebrate our 30th anniversary with us, in an 8-hour marathon concert of politics, resistance, and love.”

Some highlights of the 2017 30th Anniversary Bang on a Can Marathon include the **Oberlin Contemporary Music Ensemble** directed by **Timothy Weiss**, playing Dutch composer **Louis Andriessen**’s hard-driving Platonic masterpiece *De Staat* (“The Republic”), written as a commentary on the debate about the relation of music to politics; Brooklyn’s historic and mesmerizing **Crossfire Steel Orchestra** playing music by composer **Kendall Williams**; Bang on a Can co-founder and Pulitzer Prize-winning composer **Julia Wolfe**’s folk ballad *Steel Hammer*, based on over 200 versions of the John Henry ballad, a quintessential American legend of the laborers that worked the railroad; renowned saxophonist, composer, painter, and poet **Oliver Lake**, co-founder of the internationally acclaimed World Saxophone Quartet and frequent collaborator with a veritable who’s who of the jazz vanguard, whose breadth of disciplines can be traced back to his formative years with the Black Artists Group, the innovative St. Louis collective of musicians, poets, dancers, and painters he helped architect over 35 years ago; **Joan La Barbara**’s *A Murmuration for Chibok*, which honors and keeps in the present over 250 school girls abducted in Chibok, Nigeria by Boko Haram in 2014, performed by the award-winning **Young People’s Chorus of NYC**, led by **Francisco Nuñez**; New York’s legendary and inspirational composer-singer **Meredith Monk** leading an all-women vocal ensemble performing brand new music; wildly creative art songstress violinist-composer **Carla Kihlstedt**; Bang on a Can’s extreme mobile ensemble **Asphalt Orchestra** performing music by **Merrill Garbus/ tUnE-yArDs**, **Kim Deal/Pixies**, and more; **Amir ElSaffar**’s **Two Rivers Ensemble**, an all-star sextet of jazz and Middle Eastern musicians that blends *maqam* music of Iraq and contemporary jazz; plus the New York premiere of **Michael Gordon**’s recently composed *No Anthem*; and more.

Additional programming for the 2017 Bang on a Can Marathon will be announced in late February.

About Bang on a Can: Bang on a Can is dedicated to making music new. Since its first Marathon concert in 1987, Bang on a Can has been creating an international community dedicated to innovative music, wherever it is found. With adventurous programs, it commissions new composers, performs, presents, and records new work, develops new audiences, and educates the musicians of the future. Bang on a Can is building a world in which powerful new musical ideas flow freely across all genres and borders. Bang on a Can plays “a central role in fostering a new kind of audience that doesn’t concern itself with boundaries. If music is made with originality and integrity, these listeners will come” (*The New York Times*).

Over 30 years, Bang on a Can has grown from a one-day New York-based Marathon concert (on Mother’s Day in 1987 in a SoHo art gallery) to a multi-faceted performing arts organization with a broad range of year-round international activities. “When we started Bang on a Can in 1987, in an art gallery in SoHo, we never imagined that our one-day, 12-hour marathon festival of mostly unknown music would morph into a giant international organization dedicated to the support of experimental music, wherever we would find it,” write Bang on a Can Co-Founders Michael Gordon, David Lang and Julia Wolfe. “But it has, and we are so gratified to be still hard at work, all these years later. The reason is really clear to us – we started this organization because we believed that making new music is a utopian act—that people needed to hear this music and they needed to hear it presented in the most persuasive way, with the best players, with the best programs, for the best listeners, in the best context. Our commitment to changing the environment for this music has kept us busy and growing for the last 28 years, and we are not done yet.”

Current projects include the annual **Bang on a Can Marathon**; **The People’s Commissioning Fund**, a membership program to commission emerging composers; the **Bang on a Can All-Stars**, who tour to major festivals and concert venues around the world every year; recording projects; the **Bang on a Can Summer Music Festival** - a professional development program for young composers and performers led by today’s pioneers of experimental music; **Asphalt Orchestra**, Bang on a Can’s extreme street band that offers mobile performances re-contextualizing unusual music; **Found Sound Nation**, a new technology-based musical outreach program now partnering with the State Department of the United States of America to create **OneBeat**, a revolutionary, post-political residency program that uses music to bridge the gulf between young American musicians and young musicians from developing countries; cross-disciplinary collaborations and projects with DJs, visual artists, choreographers, filmmakers and more. Each new program has evolved to answer specific challenges faced by today’s musicians, composers and audiences, in order to make innovative music widely accessible and widely received. Bang on a Can’s inventive and aggressive approach to programming and presentation has created a large and vibrant international audience made up of people of all ages who are rediscovering the value of contemporary music.

About the Brooklyn Museum: Founded in 1823 as the Brooklyn Apprentices’ Library Association, the Brooklyn Museum contains one of the nation’s most comprehensive and wide-ranging collections enhanced by a distinguished record of exhibitions, scholarship, and service to the public. The Museum’s vast holdings span 5,000 years of human creativity from cultures in every corner of the globe. Collection highlights include the ancient Egyptian holdings, renowned for its objects

of highest world-class quality, and the arts of the Americas collection, which is unrivaled in its diverse range from pre-Columbian relics, Spanish colonial painting, and Native American art and artifacts to 19th- and early 20th-century American painting, sculpture, and decorative objects. The Museum is also home to the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art, which is dedicated to the study and exhibition of feminist art and is the only curatorial center of its kind. The Brooklyn Museum is both a leading cultural institution and a community museum dedicated to serving a wide-ranging audience. Located in the heart of Brooklyn, the Museum welcomes and celebrates the diversity of its home borough and city. Few, if any, museums in the country attract an audience as varied with respect to race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, educational background, and age as the audience of the Brooklyn Museum.

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