

abendmahl



abnehmender
Schrecken

zunehmende
Liebe

PRESS-KIT

TITEL	ABENDMAHL – »abnehmender Schrecken zunehmende Liebe«
FORM	Concert, Installation and trans-media project
DATE PLACE	Market square Leipzig [Premiere] Concert 2nd September 2017 8:15 pm [Installation 2nd to 4th September] Cathedral square Erfurt Concert 9th September 2017 8:15 pm [Installation 5th to 13th September] Market square Wittenberg Concert 16th September 2017 8:15 pm [Installation 15th to 21th September]
ARTIST	Thomas Christoph Heyde [Idea Composition Installation]
ENSEMBLES	Choir of the Meininger Staatstheater AUDITIVVOKAL Dresden ABENDMAHL-Choir & Speech-Ensemble
ORGANIZER PARTNER ARTISTIC DIRECTOR PRODUCER	Forum of Contemporary Music Leipzig [www.fzml.de] LUMALENScape GmbH [www.lumalenscape.com] Thomas Christoph Heyde [FZML] Robert Schröder [LUMALENScape]
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To mark the anniversary of the Reformation, a table of 42 m in length surrounded by 95 chairs will suddenly fill the market squares in Leipzig, Erfurt und Wittenberg in September 2017. This gigantic installation is part of the trans-medial work of art entitled ABENDMAHL – » abnehmender Schrecken | zunehmende Liebe« by the composer and media artist Thomas Christoph Heyde.

On three evenings, the table will be transformed into a venue for one of the most complex works of the present day: 95 singers will take their places on the spectacular designed seats to take part in a public concert presenting the original Latin text of Martin Luther's 95 theses and a new interpretation of the »Vaterunser« (Lord's Prayer) in a world premiere production. Large video screens installed above the heads of the singers show film material which can be seen from a great distance recorded by cameras moving along the table. This transforms the performances into a staged musical and cinematic synthesis of the arts which represents a vibrant and controversial contribution to the anniversary »500 Years of the Reformation«.

The project jointly organised by the Forum of Contemporary Music Leipzig and the film production company LUMALENSCAPE not only unites different choirs, ensembles and soloists but, first and foremost, builds a sensuous bridge between the past and the present.

The Dates

Market square Leipzig [free entry]

Concert 2nd September 2017 | 8:15 pm [Premiere]
Installation 2nd to 4th September

Cathedral square Erfurt [free entry]

Concert 9th September 2017 | 8:15 pm
Installation 5th to 13th September

Market square Lutherstadt Wittenberg [free entry]

Concert 16th September 2017 | 8:15 pm
Installation 15th to 21st September

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The Project Description

The tangible basis for the inter-medial concert installation entitled »Abendmahl« is a gigantic table which is 42 m long. Surrounded by 95 wooden chairs made from over 10 tonnes of wood, acrylic glass, steel, tar paint and over 100,000 white feathers, the object as a whole, with its impressive and unconventional appearance, also highlights the historic consequences of the Reformation.

The table object as a whole will occupy a central position on the market square in Leipzig, the Cathedral square in Erfurt and the market square in Lutherstadt Wittenberg and, before and after the concert performances, will become a lively meeting place for the benefit of visitors and residents of the three towns.

However, the other, far more spectacular intention of the art work as a whole only emerges in the inter-medial concert installation which will take place on three consecutive Saturdays in Leipzig (Sept. 2), Erfurt (Sept. 9) and Lutherstadt Wittenberg (Sept. 16). For this, 95 singers will take their places at the table and present an intense and spectacular world premiere performance of the trans-medial composition by the composer and media artist Thomas Christoph Heyde lasting approximately 35 minutes.



Track systems are integrated into the table along which four special cameras can move to film the singers' faces. These images are displayed on four transparent video screens which hang above the table. The camera movements and the museum-like scenes are conceived as an integrated process which is synchronised with the music and meticulously composed. The artistic ensemble carries out a sophisticated movement choreography comprising over 400 different gestures.

abendmah



The Piece

The work by Thomas Christoph Heyde is based on a complex system which combines musical processes in parity with object design, text interpretation and camera work to form a composed whole.

Composition

ABENDMAHL is divided into two parts. In the first part, Heyde breaks down Luther's 95 theses into 430 gestures which are performed by the participants as a choreography. The "Theses" are thus epitomised rather than being just set to music.

In the second part, Heyde uses his text entitled »Vaterunser | Muttermein«, which contains an almost imperceptible encoded version of the famous "Vaterunser" (Lord's Prayer). This part relates (in a musical sense as well) to a traditional "Vaterunser" choral which Martin Luther himself composed but ultimately discarded.

Four motorised, computer-controlled cameras which move along the table are also part of the complex composition. The camera images display 430 different gestures which are carried out by the participants and projected as portraits onto four screens hanging above the table.

The table & the chairs

The 95 chairs were specially designed by the artist himself and their dimensions reflect the mathematical proportions underlying the composition. The materials used (wood, tar, rusty metal, feathers and acrylic glass) relate both to the historical context of the Reformation and to the present day.



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The Organizer

Forum of Contemporary Music Leipzig [www.fzml.de]

FZML
[forum zeitgenössischer musik leipzig]

The Forum of Contemporary Music Leipzig is a non-profit institution, which functions as a platform for activities related to the contemporary music scene in the narrower and broader understanding. The FZML occurs as host and organizer as well as an intermediary, which means it promotes discussion on new music as well as contacts between it and other arts.

Besides several concerts and events beyond traditional formats, the FZML organized the international festival »CAGE100« that took place in the years 2012 and 2013. It was consisting of more than 100 individual events in more than 30 countrys around the world and became the biggest project since the foundation of the FZML.

The Forum of Contemporary Music Leipzig celebrated the 25th anniversary of its foundation with the festival »ALTZEIT NEU« in 2016. For three days the history of the Forum was displayed through different media such as music, electronics, poetry or film. The artistic director of the FZML is Thomas Christoph Heyde.

The Partner

LUMALENScape GmbH [www.lumalenscape.com]

The Leipzig production company LUMALENScape is a full service operation which covers all the areas of professional film production in house. The creative minds at LUMALENScape particularly specialise in the field of Corporate Film/Commercial and cater to agencies and direct customers on an international level.

The field of corporate film has the decisive advantage of always being right up to date. It is a trend-setting branch which constantly reviews the concept of entertainment. The implementation of creativity in modern technological developments creates a field of tension in which the team is passionately involved on a day-to-day basis.



LUMALENScape not only implements commercial productions, but is also characterised by the courage and dedication required to shape artistic projects as well and thereby establish itself in the art scene. The driving force behind these professional visionaries is to create public media which are both contemporary and discursive.



The Artist

The composer - Thomas Christoph Heyde

Thomas Christoph Heyde is a composer, media artist, author, curator and producer. He was born in Leipzig in 1973 as the son of a pastor. He first trained as a pharmacist and worked in a clinic in Leipzig but later studied composition and electroacoustic music in Leipzig and Basel as well as being a master student at the Berlin Akademie der Künste, despite the fact that he had no school leaving qualification. During his studies, he was awarded scholarships from the German Academic Scholarship Foundation, the Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Hallbach Foundation and the Kulturstiftung des Freistaates Sachsen as well as being an associate lecturer and later lecturer in the field of Media Art at the Academy of Visual Arts Leipzig and the University of Leipzig. Right from an early stage, he was interested in trans-medial concepts and complex collaborations. His critical reflections on the contemporary music scene were echoed in the »Donaueschingen-Skandal« (2002), the publication »High Culture Motherfucker« (2008) and projects such as »Sex.Macht.Musik« (2009). Heyde is regarded as one of the most passionate and innovative intermediaries for contemporary artistic expression at the crossroads of music and media arts.



As managing artistic director of the Forum of Contemporary Music Leipzig and independent curator and dramaturge, Heyde initiated and directed numerous international festivals and concert series such as »Heimat Moderne«, »Macht-Musik« and »CAGE100«. In addition, he is the director of a psychosocial refugee centre and managing director of a consulting and production company with its headquarters in Leipzig.

His artistic oeuvre is extremely diverse and complex. It comprises not only compositions, but also works of media art which Heyde generally produces himself and which have been or are currently being broadcasted on TV and radio by German and international media companies, or which are performed at festivals and museums in Germany and overseas.

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Samples of the 430 gestures



The Ensembles

AUDITIVVOKAL DRESDEN - Those who want to discover the heights and depths of contemporary vocal arts should get to know AUDITIVVOKAL DRESDEN. Since 2007, this ensemble, led by Olaf Katzer, has impressed audiences through their unusual vocal explorations, which are often in collaboration with drama, poetry, the visual arts and the sciences.

9 members of the AUDITIVVOKAL DRESDEN directed by **Olaf Katzer** will take part in the project entitled ABENDMAHL – »abnehmender Schrecken | zunehmende Liebe«.

The choir of the Meininger Staatstheater - The foundation of an opera ensemble at the Meininger Hoftheater in 1858 under Duke Bernhard II led to the formation of the first professional choir. In 1866, the new theatre director, Duke Georg II, closed down the opera section in order to be able to concentrate solely on theatre reform and promoting the Meininger Hofkapelle as a concert orchestra. It was not until 1946 that an independent musical theatre ensemble with an opera choir was again permanently engaged at the Meiningen Theatre. In order to do justice to the wide range of repertory productions, which includes all the great choral operas, the choir was later enlarged and now comprises 33 full-time members who also regularly perform major and minor solo roles from the musical theatre repertoire. The ensemble can be increased to include a semi-professional extra choir with about 35 members to perform works which require a large choir. One special focus of the choir's repertoire is on the 13 operas by Wagner which have meanwhile been performed in Meiningen in more than 50 productions. Among the highlights were "Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg" with over 120 choristers directed by August Everding in 1994 and "Der Ring des Nibelungen" directed by Kirill Petrenko and Christine Mieltz in 2001. Since 2004, the choir has given guest performances of "Tannhäuser und der Sängerkrieg auf Wartburg" at the original location in the Festsaal of Wartburg Castle several times a year. During the 70 years following the original formation of the opera choir, it has performed over 500 works – operas, operettas, musicals and choral symphonies – and 17 choral directors have shaped its destiny and improved the choir's sound. Since 2016, the conductor Martin Wettges has been choral director and conductor of the Meininger Theatre Choir.

33 members of the Chor des Meininger Staatstheaters directed by **Martin Wettges** will take part in the project entitled ABENDMAHL – »abnehmender Schrecken | zunehmende Liebe«.

ABENDMAHL-Choir & Speech-Ensemble - In order to meet the diverse and complex artistic requirements of this composition, the Forum of Contemporary Music Leipzig has put together a project choir consisting of professional singers from central Germany. The project choir will perform uniquely and exclusively in this formation under the directorship of Alexander Stessin, Choir Director at the Leipzig Opera, and is supplemented by actors and actresses as well as a boy soprano. The magnitude of this specially compiled ensemble marks a new dimension in the history of the FZML.

The Abendmahl-Choir & Speech-Ensemble consisting of 53 members directed by **Alexander Stessin** will take part in the project ABENDMAHL – »abnehmender Schrecken | zunehmende Liebe«.