**La Biennale di Venezia /**

**69th International Festival of Contemporary Music**

***The star within***

**Director Caterina Barbieri**

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con il sostegno della Regione del Veneto

Introduction by Caterina Barbieri

Director of the Dance Department of La Biennale di Venezia

***The star within***

*If the twinkling of the stars pains me, if this distant communication is possible, it is because something almost like a star quivers within me.*

Clarice Lispector

**Music** **is** **the** **star** **within**. It is the desire for great things and for vastness. Spark of new worlds, it opens us to infinity. A vibration that permeates the cosmos and pierces through us with awe, from molecule to planetary motion, sound escapes the boundaries of the ego and opens us up to the encounter with the Other — the unknown.

In this resonance, there is **deep** **listening**, which is itself the primary root of empathy. **In** **sound** **the** **interconnectedness** **animating** **all** **living** **things** **is** **laid** **bare**. It is in this deep listening of the other, in this **exercise in transcendence**, that music, today, can once again find its strong **social-political value**, helping us overcome**anthropocentric ways of thinking**and experiment with **more ecological ways to coexist** that respect the complex constellations of human and non-human forces that traverse our universe.

An exercise in **empathy** that proves to be particularly significant today in order to navigate the **challenges** and **uncertainties** regarding the future of our **survival** as a human species, within the scenario of **continuous crisis and global collapse** that we must face on a daily basis.

The festival aims to explore the **theme** **of** **cosmic** **music**. Generative music — genesis of worlds, cosmogony. **Music** **as** **a** **living** **organism**, as an autopoietic form able to self-evolve and develop its own laws — a metaphor for the cosmos. **Music** **that** **mirrors** **and** **manifests** **nature** **in** **its** **becoming**, **making** **perceptible** **its** **processes** **of** **creation** **and** **transmutation**. Music that teaches how to be in the present moment: past and future collapsing in the ‘now’. In deep listening, we feel interconnected and in continuous transformation: inner resonance with the universe. In this resonance, music responds to ancient and modern man's need to dialogue with something greater than himself, which transcends individual existence and brings him closer to the dimension of the unknowable. An intimate dialogue that transforms the individual and the collective, nurturing a sense of community and creating opportunities for catharsis and social cohesion. Music is an agent of change.

**Cosmic** **music** **is** **not** **a** **genre** **or** **a** **style**. Through using this poetic expression, I am not referring to a specific musical style or tradition but rather to the generative power of music to create new worlds, beyond rigid definitions of genre or historical affiliations.

In curating Biennale Musica I would like to have **the most vivid and fluid possible view of the contemporary** torepresent the full richness and diversity of the music of the present. **I would like to celebrate the permeability of the musical language and its innate capacity to mutate. In the ecstasy of listening, rigid notions of time and space dissolve:** music teaches us much about the relativity and limits of human perception. In this it is similar to **Venice** and its **vocation to mutability**: the play of reflections, the vanishing perspectives, the perpetual motion of water and light that dissolve boundaries and open to the space of the multiple and the infinite.

Fixed thinking becomes obsolete and opens us to change. As a curator I would like to give voice to this **change**, nurturing an idea of music **as a portal into the future** and **imagining the impossible.**

**The festival’s programme** is rooted in **electronic music** and **minimalism**, branching out into multiple directions that explore **connections between past and present**, juxtaposing musical traditions that seem distant from one another in terms of style, era, geography, and community expression. There are forays into **ancient music**, **contemporary sounds**, **folk**, **drone music**, **techno**, and **afrofuturism**. A programming conceived for resonance, offering the most vivid and fluid possible view of the contemporary, representing the richness, diversity, and inclusivity of present-day music.

**The musical projects** featured at the festival range from pioneering figures of electronic, drone, and minimalist music, such as **Laurie Spiegel**, **Catherine Christer Hennix**, **Suzanne Ciani**, **Moritz von Oswald**, and **Eliane Radigue**, to new voices in contemporary minimalism like **Ellen Arkbro**, **Bendik Giske**, **Maxime Denuc**, **Enrico Malatesta**, **Agnese Menguzzato**, and **FujIIIIIIIIIIIta**. The programme also includes selective emanations of ancient polyphonic music, such as **Guillaume de Machaut** interpreted by **Grandelavoix**, to the masters of twentieth-century experimentation like **Giacinto Scelsi**, **Xenakis**, **Ligeti**, and **Kurtág**. It spans from the icons of ambient, glitch, and techno abstraction such as **Basinski**, **Fennesz**, and **Aleksi Perälä**, to cult drone metal projects like **Sunn O)))**, from the avant-garde cosmogonic folk of **Chuquimamani-Condori** to expanded universes blending Arab maqam, jazz, and Sufi poetry by **Abdullah Miniawy**. The programme also embraces techno legends like **Carl Craig**, alongside more recent manifestations of Afrofuturist experimentalism and other forms of black-rooted electronic avant-garde (**Actress, Nkisi**, and **DeForrest Brown Junior**), as well as the multidisciplinary hyperpop of **Ecco2k** and the singular experiments between free jazz, impro-noise and electronics of artists such as **Rafael Toral** and **Mabe Fratti**.