

## PRESS RELEASE



Anri Sala, *If and Only If*, 2018  
Courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery; Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris

### **Anri Sala. AS YOU GO** **February 26 – June 23, 2019** **Drafted by Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev and Marcella Beccaria**

Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea organizes the solo show by **Anri Sala** (Tirana, 1974). One of the most prominent contemporary artists on the international scene, Anri Sala lives and works in Berlin. He represented France at the 2013 Venice Biennale and took part in important exhibitions at the Castello di Rivoli, including the group shows *Faces in the Crowd*, 2005, and *Colori*, 2017.

Beginning in 2000, Anri Sala has produced film and sound installations, sculptures, photographs, and drawings that explore the fractures, the intervals, the overlaps and the echoes through which reality unfolds through time, and events become meaningful. The artist uses architecture to shape visual, sound, and tactile elements so as to generate new interpretations and unique possibilities of perception within a liberating vision of language and culture.

References to music are an integral part of Anri Sala's practice and are one of the elements shared by the works on display at the Castello di Rivoli. Conceived for the galleries at the Castello, the exhibition presents in an innovative organic itinerary some of the most significant film works made by Anri Sala in recent years, including *Ravel Ravel* (2013), *Take Over* (2017), and *If and Only If* (2018), as well as the sculpture *Bridges in the Doldrums* (2016).

Visitors are welcomed by *Bridges in the Doldrums*. A three-part arrangement for clarinet, saxophone and trombone, this work, embodied by drums, has been constructed solely from the bridges of seventy-four pop, jazz and folk songs from different periods and geographies, compiled in order of tempo, building a gradual sense of progressive acceleration with the three wind instruments trading roles. "The bridge alienates the listener from the song itself, keeping one's attention while

suspending one's expectations, until the chorus returns to reconfirm their acquaintance with it." Each of the film works investigates a specific relation. *Ravel Ravel* stages the simultaneous performances of two different pianists playing the famous *Piano Concerto for the Left Hand*, composed by Maurice Ravel between 1929 and 1930. The concert was commissioned by the Austrian pianist Paul Wittgenstein who had lost his arm during World War I. In the words of Anri Sala: "My intention is to bring out the resonance of a space consecutive to the temporal lag between the two performances and, through the repetition of the same notes, to induce the impression of an echo in an entirely muted space where the absorption of the sound reflections annihilates all sense of space."

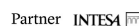
In *Take Over*, the artist explores the possible meanings that arise by juxtaposing *La Marseillaise* and *L'Internazionale*, compositions whose complex stories sometimes intermingle. Composed in 1792 by Claude-Joseph Rouget de Lisle, *La Marseillaise* became the distinctive symbol of the French Revolution, and later spread to other countries to become a symbol of political freedom. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, *L'Internazionale* was the anthem of labor movements and promoted ideals of equality and solidarity. Written in 1871, the lyrics to *L'Internazionale* were initially sung to the music of *La Marseillaise*. In 1888, Pierre de Geyter wrote the music and it ultimately became the anthem of the internationally inspired Socialist movement. Referencing the aspects shared by these two famous pieces of music, including any possible distances and differences, Sala's work stages two performances, one by a pianist, and the other by a mechanical piano.

This exhibition represents the world presentation in a public museum of *If and Only If*, a film in which the artist's attention focuses on the relationship between the movement of a snail and that of the musician Gérard Caussé as he plays the *Elegy for Solo Viola* by Igor Stravinsky (1944) on his viola. With poetic delicateness, the film presents the snail as it moves along the musician's bow and the variations made by the animal's slightest movements, or when it stands still, upon the overall performance, thus creating music in collaboration between human and non-human. "The Elegy is subverted through the tactile interaction between the musician and the snail, its duration revised to almost double its usual time. The music - Sala says - elongates into a journey that becomes a tangible part of its musical rearrangement."

Like the components of an unusual orchestra, the three film works on display at the Castello have been repropounded by the artist in order to produce a highly synesthetic immersive experience. According to the artist's project, the screenings unfold along a wall that crosses through the consecutive rooms. The "parade" has a total duration of about 38 minutes.

*AS YOU GO*, the title provided by the artist for this exhibition, underlines the idea of a flow of images in motion and multiple stories, inviting spectators to choose if they want to physically move with the images or enjoy them by remaining still. More than a presentation of three interconnected film works, the overall exhibition may be interpreted like a device that can transform the screenings into a single, gigantic "moving sculpture."

The exhibition will be accompanied by a bilingual scholarly catalogue (English and Italian), published by the Castello di Rivoli with Skira editore, Milan. The catalogue will offer new essays by both curators, a collection of the broadest selection of artist writings to date, including numerous previously unreleased texts. Richly illustrated with exhibition photos, the catalogue will also offer notes and previously unpublished preparatory drawings relating to the works on display from the artist's studio and will also include an in-depth appendix with a rich exhibition timeline, anthology of critical texts, and bibliography.



## Biography

**Anri Sala** (Tirana, 1974) lives and works in Berlin. He studied at the National Academy of Arts of Tirana from 1992 to 1996. He subsequently studied video at the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Paris. In 1998–2000 he attended Postgraduate Studies in filmmaking at Le Fresnoy, Studio National des Arts Contemporains, Tourcoing. Sala has won numerous international **prizes**, including The Vincent Award (2014), 10th Benesse Prize for the 55th Venice Biennale (2013), Absolut Art Award (2011), and the Special Prize for Young Artists at the Venice Biennale (2001).

Recent **solo exhibitions and projects** include: *The Last Resort*, Garage, Moscow (2018); *O momento presente*, IMS Paulista Instituto Moreira Salles, São Paulo; *The Last Resort*, Kaldor Public Art Projects, Observatory Hill Rotunda, Sydney; *Anri Sala*, Museo Tamayo, Mexico City; *Clocked Perspective*, Museo Jumex, Mexico City (2017); *O momento presente*, IMS Instituto Moreira Salles, Rio de Janeiro; *Anri Sala: Answer Me*, New Museum, New York (2016); *No Names No Title*, Helena Rubinstein Pavilion for Contemporary Art, Museum of Art, Tel Aviv; *The Present Moment*, Middle Hall, Haus der Kunst, Munich; *Black Box: Anri Sala*, The Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore (2014); *Anri Sala*, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek; *Anri Sala: Two Films*, MOCAD – Museum of Contemporary Art, Detroit; *Anri Sala*, Centre Pompidou, Paris (2012); *Anri Sala*, National Museum of Art, Osaka; *Anri Sala*, Serpentine Gallery, London; *Anri Sala*, Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Montréal (2011); *Anri Sala. Purchase Not by Moonlight*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami (2008); *Anri Sala. Long Sorrow*, Fondazione Nicola Trussardi, Circolo Filologico Milanese, Milan (2005); *Anri Sala*, Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw; *Anri Sala. Now I see*, The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago; *Anri Sala. Entre chien et loup. When the Night Calls it a Day*, Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris / ARC, Paris (2004); *Anri Sala*, Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna (2003); *Anri Sala. Intervista and Nocturnes*, Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas (2002).

In addition to numerous **group shows**, Sala has taken part in prestigious **international events and biennials** like: Venice Biennale in 2017, 2013 (when he represented France), and 2003; Taipei Biennial (in 2016 and 2004), 12th Havana Biennial (2015), Sharjah Biennial 11 (2013), Berlin Biennale für zeitgenössische Kunst (2014 and 2006); 9th Gwangju Biennale (2012), 4th Marrakech Biennale (2012), dOCUMENTA(13) (2012), São Paulo Biennial (in 2010 and 2002), 2. Moscow International Biennale of Contemporary Art (2007), Göteborg International Biennial for Contemporary Art (2007), Biennale of Sydney (2006), 7. Medien und Architektur Biennale, Graz (2005), DAK'ART, The Biennial of Contemporary African Art, Dakar (2004); Tirana Biennale 2 (2003), Istanbul Biennale (2003).

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