

FREUNDE GUTER MUSIK BERLIN e.V.

Erkelenzdammm 11 – 13 B IV • 10999 Berlin • Telefon ++49-(0)30-215 6120
info@freunde-guter-musik-berlin.de • www.freunde-guter-musik-berlin.de

Works of Music by Visual Artists

LAWRENCE WEINER / PETER GORDON

**»The Society Architect Ponders the Golden Gate Bridge
– or: How they get what they don't deserve«**
– Premiere –

An opera by
Lawrence Weiner – libretto and design
Peter Gordon – music

with
Jeffrey Reynolds – tenor
Joan La Barbara – mezzo soprano
Kevin Zoernig – keyboard
Peter Gordon – saxophone, clarinets, keyboard
Christian von Borries – flutes

Choir of the Orchester GENERATION BERLIN
Directed by Christian von Borries

September 8 – 10, 2000 • 8 p.m. • Historical Hall
Nationalgalerie im Hamburger Bahnhof
Museum für Gegenwart – Berlin
Invalidenstraße 50-51 • 10557 Berlin Tiergarten

November 8 & 11 – 13, 2000 • 8 p.m. • Forum
Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland
Museumsmeile Bonn • Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 4

It has the status of a myth: the Golden Gate Bridge, built according to plans by the German engineer Joseph Strauss, officially opened after four years of construction on May 28, 1937; 2.7 kilometers (1.7 miles) long and 27.5 meters (90 feet) wide. Each day, 100,000 cars on six lanes pass through this needle's eye on their way into San Francisco. The bridge has been an inspiration and a backdrop for countless films, stories and legends. And now it inspires the opera project »The Society Architect Ponders the Golden Gate Bridge – or: How they get what they don't deserve« (2000) by Lawrence Weiner and Peter Gordon.

The piece is based on an actual judicial transcript that relates how a high society architect who was driving drunk injured an artist on the Golden Gate Bridge. But instead of receiving justice, the artist himself becomes the object of interrogation by a reactionary judge. Out of an apparently

harmless traffic offense, a political discussion is generated as, suddenly, the worth of an artist to society and the role of social privilege in a state governed by the rule of law become the subject of controversy.

Lawrence Weiner, born in New York in 1942, developed his works in the late '60s in the context of so-called »conceptual art«. Since then, works defined by the use of language have been central to his artistic production. Language – and the materials to which it refers – is his artistic material, so all channels of communication that function linguistically are available to work with. In addition to films and video works, posters and books, ideograms and pictograms, Weiner began in the early '70s to make use of the unique qualities of the recording media to transfer certain works into musical-auditory structures. A series of records and tapes created in collaboration with various musicians has since become a vehicle for his language pieces. Since 1978, Weiner has also worked with Peter Gordon, born in New York in 1951, one of the pioneers of New York's minimal/jazz/experimental scene. Gordon's style – rhythmic, angular and straight-ahead with an underlying lyricism – has been realized in instrumental music, operas, soundtracks and other forms. After earlier collaborations on film projects and records, such as »Deutsche Angst« (1982), this is the first major music-theater production by the two artists.

A co-operation of:

Freunde Guter Musik Berlin e.V.
Nationalgalerie im Hamburger Bahnhof
Museum für Gegenwart Berlin
Hebbel-Theater Berlin

Oper Bonn
Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der
Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Bonn

Events in the series »Works of Music by Visual Artists«
are a co-production of Freunde Guter Musik Berlin e.V. and
Nationalgalerie im Hamburger Bahnhof, Museum für Gegenwart – Berlin.

Concept:
Ingrid Buschmann, Gabriele Knapstein, Matthias Osterwold
FREUNDE GUTER MUSIK BERLIN e.V.

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