



LAURENZ FOUNDATION

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MEDIA RELEASE

CATASTERISM IN THREE MOVEMENTS BY MATTHEW BARNEY AND JONATHAN BEPLER

22-25 September 2021, 8 p.m.

Performance project at Schaulager Basel commissioned by Laurenz Foundation; produced by Matthew Barney and Jonathan Bepler, with the participation of Basel Sinfonietta; with Jill Bettonvil, Sandra Lamouche, K.J. Holmes, and others.

During this year's Art Basel, Schaulager presents *Catasterism in Three Movements*, a new work by Jonathan Bepler and Matthew Barney. The performance includes a new symphonic composition by Jonathan Bepler, to be performed as a premiere by the Basel Sinfonietta, while Matthew Barney has collaborated with dancers K.J. Holmes and Sandra Lamouche on new choreography. Holmes and Lamouche will reprise and expand on their roles in Barney's recent film *Redoubt* (2018). The three-act performance will take place at Schaulager, where artwork by Barney and by the 19th-century American painter Albert Bierstadt will be on view. The project continues the series of commissioned works that Laurenz Foundation, Basel, has initiated and enabled since its founding, alongside the major exhibitions at Schaulager.

Internationally renowned US artist and filmmaker Matthew Barney (*1967) and composer Jonathan Bepler (*1959) will stage a performance in the exhibition spaces of Schaulager Basel. Basel Sinfonietta, a unique symphonic orchestra specializing in contemporary music, will interpret Bepler's new composition, drawing on Barney's and Bepler's long history of collaboration with distinguished musicians in experimental and unconventional settings. Additionally, Barney has worked with dancer/choreographers K.J. Holmes and Sandra Lamouche, who appeared in his most recent film *Redoubt* (2018), to develop new choreographies that expand upon the broader themes of the *Redoubt* body of work. This three-part performance includes a chamber concert performed in the presence of Barney's monumental sculpture *Elk Creek Burn* (2018), which derived from the burned Idaho forest in which *Redoubt* was filmed. In writing *Redoubt's* score, Bepler allowed the soundscape of the natural world to form the basis of much of his composition. Here, Barney's sculpture is a point of departure for Bepler to develop a musical direction wholly apart from the film's narrative, but still at the juncture of the earthly, the cosmic, and the technological.

A catasterism is the story of how a mythological hero is transformed into a constellation; in its most basic definition, 'a placing among the stars.' This idea, merging mythology and measuring, forms a further basis for the performance at Schaulager.

Catasterism is divided into three distinct parts.

Part 1: Cadastre, concerns itself with practices of land survey and boundary-making, practices integral to Western land management. Featuring a 'forest' of string players from Basel Sinfonietta and unfolding with a painting by American painter Albert Bierstadt as a backdrop, this act sees a land surveyor diagram the Schaulager space with her body and a surveyor's tripod. The act culminates in the Catasterism of Diana.

Part 2: Catasterism Suite is a 30-minute chamber concert for orchestra, performed by Basel Sinfonietta, with *Elk Creek Burn* as a presence in the chamber.

Part 3: Catastasis unfolds in the Lower Level atrium. In dramatic terminology, the 'catastasis' is the dramatic complication immediately preceding the climax of a play. Here, three dancers orbit one another as cosmic bodies, while the musicians form a sound field throughout Schaulager, filling rooms, balconies, and auxiliary spaces with music and sound.

Catasterism in Three Movements refers to Matthew Barney's recent film *Redoubt*. In the film, Barney interweaves the story of Diana and Actaeon with narratives rooted in American myth-making that live on in contemporary society and politics. The film combines music, dance and visual art with the stark beauty of the wintry landscape of the Sawtooth Mountains in Idaho in the northwest of the US. In *Redoubt*, Diana (reimagined as a sharpshooter) is in pursuit of wolves in the wild. The fictional hunt is observed by Barney himself, who appears as a US Forest Service ranger. In the course of the film, the artist produces drawings on galvanised copper plates, which he electroplates in the laboratory of the Electroplater (played by K.J. Holmes). The hoop dance of an indigenous performer (Sandra Lamouche) propels the action, whose climax culminates in a gunshot. In *Catasterism*, the part of Diana will be assumed by athlete Jill Bettonvil.

Tickets:

www.schaulager.org/catasterism

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Disclaimer:

The performance will contain loud sounds in Act 1. A laser light will be used in Act 1. Audience members are requested to set their mobile phones to silent for the duration of the performance. Audience filming of the performance will not be allowed. By attending this performance, you will grant Schaulager and Matthew Barney permission to use your likeness in video documentation of the project.

Covid-19 Certificate:

Tickets only valid with Covid-19 Certificate and identity card, only certificates issued in Switzerland or the EU will be accepted. Covid-19 distance and hygiene rules communicated by the Federal Office of Public Health apply. Youth up to 16 years do not need Covid-19 certificate.