

## MUSICIRCUS at the POLYGON

Sunday, January 13th, 1-4 pm

The Polygon Gallery

101 Carrie Cates Court, North Vancouver (right next to Lonsdale Quay)

Hannah Rickards, Artistic Director

Dory Hayley, Music Director

### [FAQ]

#### Who is invited?

Anyone who can perform any piece of music in any style is welcome to participate! Individuals, ensembles, and partial ensembles can all take part. **We have very limited power/amplification capabilities, so acoustic instruments are preferred.** If you play an instrument that requires amplification, please let us know ASAP.

#### What should I/we perform?

You can perform any piece or pieces you want, beginning at the precise start time you've been given. If your selection is longer than your assigned time slot, please stop performing at your precise end time, even if it's in the middle of a piece. If your selection is shorter than your time slot, you may stop playing at any time – the rest of your performance will be silence (a very Cagian concept!).

#### How does it work?

If you want to participate in *Musicircus*, **let us know ASAP, or by Jan. 8th** at the latest. You will be given a specific location in the gallery, and a precise time to start and finish. On January 13th, please arrive at least 20 minutes before your assigned performance time. A volunteer will check you in and help you find your performance site.

#### Is there a rehearsal or soundcheck?

No. There will be no opportunity to rehearse in the space. Please plan your performance accordingly.

#### What is Musicircus?

*Musicircus* was written in 1967 by the trailblazing American composer John Cage. The idea of the piece is simple: as many musicians as possible are invited to perform anything they want and in any way they desire – all at the same time!

The organisers will use chance operations to determine start and end times and specific locations for each participant's performance, generating a kind of performance "score."

Listeners participate in the creation of the composition by moving around the venue – in this case, every single available space in The Polygon Gallery – thus changing the kaleidoscope of sounds they encounter. As Cage promised, 'You won't hear anything: you'll hear everything.'

### So is it just a free-for-all?

No. Although the overall effect of *Musicircus* may be joyously cacophonous, each individual performer and ensemble is intended to play a structured and intentional performance.

For Cage, the blurred lines between performer and listener, the lack of a dominant focal point, and the performance of deliberate actions within an atmosphere of controlled chaos create a democratic, inclusive piece that mirrors the amiably anarchic society he envisioned. By playing many individual pieces in close proximity, the musicians create unintended collective sounds beyond the ownership of any one performer or composer. *Musicircus* is a uniquely powerful act of artistic community.

### What should I/we wear?

You can wear anything that you would normally wear for a performance. *Musicircus* is a festive occasion, so feel free to dress up!

### Why should I/we participate?

**Unique Experience!** *Musicircus* at The Polygon offers a rare chance to participate in one of the most unique and influential musical works of the twentieth century. Plus, it gives you an opportunity to perform in an unusual situation: as an individual in a crowd. Cage felt that a simultaneous performance where musicians might not be able to hear themselves or their collaborators was “healthy and liberating; it frees the musicians from the control of the group and the tyranny of the composition they are playing” and opened them to “process,” “openness,” and even “being.”

**Connection!** *Musicircus* is a great way to meet other musicians and artists from a wide variety of disciplines, and connect with new audiences.

**Perks!** Although there is no fee for this performance, the gallery will provide refreshments to participants. Performers will also receive a limited-edition commemorative print by Hannah Rickards documenting the performance score of *Musicircus* at The Polygon.

### Who should I contact?

To participate, please contact Justin Ramsey: [j.ramsey@thepolygon.ca](mailto:j.ramsey@thepolygon.ca)  
For music-related questions, please contact Dory Hayley: [doryhayley@gmail.com](mailto:doryhayley@gmail.com)