

16 Nov 2022

Immersive new commission at London Mithraeum Bloomberg SPACE.

Albion Waves - an acoustic portrait of Britain over the past 2,000 years.

9 February 2023 – 15 July 2023
London Mithraeum Bloomberg SPACE
12 Walbrook, EC4N 8AA
www.londonmithraeum.com

Oliver Beer's immersive new installation is inspired by the cultural and social changes in Britain's material history and its ever-changing position across the globe. Drawing inspiration from the 14,000 Roman artefacts discovered on the Bloomberg site during the 2012 – 2014 archaeological excavations, *Albion Waves* features a constellation of 28 historic British vessels suspended from the ceiling, a diverse selection of British objects from the past 2,000 years.

Each of the suspended vessels contains a microphone, meaning that each object's "voice" will be amplified when the microphones are turned on, triggered when movement sensors detect the visitors' presence. Traversing centuries and varying in colour, form, size and origin, the installation is played by the viewer as they move through the space, evolving into a gentle orchestral song as the bodies and movement of visitors interact with the work. To accompany the sound installation, Beer has created dynamic new 'Resonance Paintings', using the sounds of these vessels to move finely ground pigment into beautiful geometric patterns that are then permanently fixed onto the canvas.

Beer says: *"Just like a seashell makes a sound, every vessel that's ever been made in the history of object making is also constantly, quietly resonating at its own musical note: physical form and musical harmony are inseparable. The installation reveals sounds that have been audible for millennia, it just needed someone to unlock and listen to them."*

An evolution of his landmark solo exhibition in 2019 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the new installation continues Beer's exploration of a natural acoustic phenomenon, whereby each and every empty vessel has its own natural resonance, determined by the object's specific volume and geometry. Beer's unique talent for revealing hidden music and the stories that come with it has also seen his work exhibited at the Pompidou Centre in Paris, the Sydney Opera House, and most recently the 59th Venice Biennale.

Bathing the space with blue light, Beer unifies the installation's elements, creating a captivating and immersive installation of sound, light and colour providing a unique and innovative way for visitors to connect with the evolution of British culture and object making across the centuries.

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Visitors can engage further with the exhibition using the Bloomberg Connects app, the free digital guide to cultural organisations around the world that makes it easy to access and engage with arts and culture from mobile devices, anytime, anywhere. The app can be downloaded for free via Google Play or the App Store.

Listings information

Oliver Beer: *Albion Waves*
9 February - 15 July 2023
London Mithraeum Bloomberg SPACE,
12 Walbrook, EC4N 8AA
www.londonmithraeum.com

Opening hours

Tuesday - Saturday: 10 am - 6 pm
Sundays & Bank Holidays: 12 pm - 5 pm
First Thursday of the month: 10 am - 8 pm
Closed Mondays, Christmas
& New Year bank holidays

Press information

[Madeline Adeane](#)
Rees & Co
+44 (0)7989 985 850
madeline@reesandco.com

[Oisin O'Malley](#)
Bloomberg L.P.
+44 (0)20 3525 4958
oomalley2@bloomberg.net

About London Mithraeum Bloomberg SPACE

Situated on the site of Bloomberg's European headquarters, London Mithraeum Bloomberg SPACE returns the Roman Temple of Mithras to the location of its discovery in the heart of the City and offers visitors an immersive experience of the ancient temple as well as a chance to see a collection of the Roman artefacts found during the building excavations. Expanding on Bloomberg's legacy of support for new commissions by international artists, the ground floor Bloomberg SPACE gallery aims to present lively and thoughtful works by contemporary artists whilst bringing fresh perspectives to the many-layered history of the site.

London Mithraeum Bloomberg SPACE is free to visit and open to the public from Tuesday to Saturday from 12pm to 5pm, and on Sundays and Bank Holidays from 10am to 5pm. Pre-booking is advised through londonmithraeum.com

About the artist

Oliver Beer trained in musical composition at the Academy of Contemporary Music before attending the Ruskin School of Art, University of Oxford, and studying cinematic theory at the Sorbonne, Paris. His work often exists at the meeting point of music and visual arts; and this is reflected in his live performances, films, installations and sculptures, which reveal the hidden acoustic properties of vessels, bodies, and architectural environments. Beer's work explores the unifying potential of music and art that resonates across history, generations and cultures, as embodied in objects and spaces.

In Beer's ongoing *The Resonance Project* (2007-), vocal performances stimulate the natural harmonics inside buildings, ranging from the Sydney Opera House and the Centre Pompidou to a hammam in Istanbul and the Brighton sewers. His recent solo exhibition *Vessel Orchestra* (2019) worked with hollow objects from The Metropolitan Museum of Art's collection in New York. Beer selected the objects for their natural pitches and assembled them to create an idiosyncratic musical instrument in an installation that plays with museological conventions to form an acoustic portrait of the museum collection.

Beer's *Resonance Paintings* - a series of ambitious abstract two-dimensional works complementing and responding to the voices of vessels. Beer creates these paintings by playing the sounds vessels through a speaker placed beneath a horizontally oriented canvas. Beer describes how he literally uses 'sound as his paintbrush', as dry powdered pigment is moved and shaped into visual manifestations of the sound waves before being fixed in place by the artist. A video of this unique painting process can be viewed [here](#).

The artist's work has been the subject of many solo and group exhibitions, notably at Met Breuer, Metropolitan Museum of Art and MoMA PS1, New York; Centre Pompidou, Opéra Garnier, Fondation Louis Vuitton, Palais de Tokyo and Chateau de Versailles, Paris; the Musée d'Art Contemporain, Lyon; Ikon Gallery, Birmingham; WIELS, Brussels and the Sydney, Istanbul and Venice Biennales. Beer is included in the British Art Show 9 and has also held residencies at the Palais de Tokyo, the Watermill Centre, Sydney Opera House and the Fondation Hermès.

About Bloomberg

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