

Mouse on Mars. Spatial Jitter
09 April – 18 September 2022
Kunstbau

Mouse on Mars is widely acclaimed as one of Germany's most eccentric and remarkable electronic music projects. With an anarchic hybrid sound swinging between uncontrolled chaos and meticulously arranged structures, Andi Toma and Jan St. Werner have created a unique musical idiom that nonetheless never settles into definite form—too unpredictable are the myriad modifications they continually implement. Unconstrained by schools of thought, conventions of genre, and the pressures of the music industry, they are charting their own very distinctive trajectory through the no-man's-land between pop, art, club culture, and the musical avant-garde.

Mouse on Mars take over the Kunstbau with a sound installation for which they are developing a site-specific composition. Working with and responding to the exhibition space, the installation transforms the Kunstbau itself into a gigantic stereophonic acoustic instrument.

A rotatable horn loudspeaker pitchforkes a sound like a pinball into the 110-yard Kunstbau, where it rebounds on the pillars, cants, splinters, is gathered back in, and dies down. One by one, additional sounds from a virtually inexhaustible repertoire are sent out into the space and modulated. Percussive devices operated by robots interject analog-acoustic accents.

Sequences of different lengths, are continuously rearranged so that no two of them recur in the same order. The audience experiences the orchestrated unfolding of a dynamic composition in three dimensions. The space and the sounds generated from it clash and respond to each other, resulting in an acoustic dialogue. A dedicated illumination program is coordinated with the music, seconding the sonic movements and sometimes standing in for them.

The installation intends to challenge the audience to active listening, in which only the limits of attention determine the limits of what is acoustically possible. With targeted shifts of perspective, Mouse on Mars propose to demonstrate their conviction that there is no one valid composition: each listener produces his or her own “spatial comprosition.”

Mouse on Mars have continually evolved their practice for twenty-five years, always asking new questions. The “Comprosition” is part of their most recent acoustic research, inquiring both into the movement of sounds through time and space and aspects of psychoacoustic perception and the experience of sound: How can we define hearing and listening? How do we process acoustic information? How do our bodies respond to the physical movements of sound in space? How attentively can we observe the process of hearing itself? And in which other ways do we relate to our acoustic environment?

The supporting programme is developed in collaboration with BR / Hörspiel, Dokumentation, Medienkunst, the Dynamische Akustische Forschung as well as the Academy of Arts in Munich and Nürnberg.

An LP will be released together with a publication (Ger/Eng) with texts by Louis Chude-Sokei, Helga de la Motte-Haber, Patricia Reed, Susanne Witzgall as well as a conversation between Eva Huttenlauch, Mouse on Mars and Michael Akstaller.

Curated by Eva Huttenlauch

Mediapartners:

