

## Kunsthaus Bregenz

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Austria



KUB 2016.01 | Press release

# Susan Philipsz

## Night and Fog

30 | 01 - 03 | 04 | 2016

**An exhibition at two venues  
in collaboration with the Jewish Museum Hohenems**

### **Curators of the exhibition**

Thomas D. Trummer and Rudolf Sagmeister

### **Press Conference**

Thursday, January 27, 2016, 11 a.m.

### **Opening**

Friday, January 29, 2016, 7 p.m.

### **Opening**

**Sound Installation at the Jewish Cemetery, Hohenems**

Sunday, January 31, 2016, 11 a.m.

### **Press photos per download**

[www.kunsthhaus-bregenz.at](http://www.kunsthhaus-bregenz.at)

Scottish born Susan Philipsz is one of today's leading artists. Her work revolves around a melancholic existentialism and explorations of the human voice. She became well-known through a capella renditions of songs. For the Glasgow International Festival she developed *Lowlands*, after a ballad from the 16th century, which was later recreated at Tate Britain in London, where it won her the prestigious Turner Prize (2010).



The subject matter of memory, trauma, and mourning are ones she has increasingly confronted recently, such as at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, and in Kassel for dOCUMENTA (13). For her new series of works *War Damaged Musical Instruments*, 2015, she has been employing instruments damaged by war. The point of departure for her current project for Kunsthau Bregenz is Peter Zumthor's architecture, an illuminated structure, together with the lake and the fog that is typical of the town. Fog as a metaphor was also the source of the title for the 1955 French documentary *Night and Fog* by Alain Resnais reconstructing the deportations to Auschwitz and Majdanek. Philipsz has deconstructed Hanns Eisler's soundtrack for the film into the individual voices of the instruments. Isolated and removed from the overall composition, their timbres fill the seemingly archaic spaces of the Kunsthau with an almost sculptural presence.

Philipsz is creating a second sound installation at the Jewish Cemetery in Hohenems, in collaboration with the Jewish Museum there, which can be experienced concurrently to the exhibition at KUB.

Concerning the two exhibitions the artist has written:

»At Kunsthau Bregenz I would like to explore disappearance, obscurity and absence, merging the atmospherics of the site with a deeper historical perspective. [...] I have chosen to work with mainly wind and brass instruments to emphasise the breath passing through the instruments and passing through the space. Each of the tones will be separated and there are gaps and pauses where the other instruments should be. At each level the work is different but the composition is reprised and there is a sense of repetition with sounds from different levels combining in unexpected places throughout the building.«



Susan Philipsz was born in 1965 in Glasgow. She completed a BA in Fine Art at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art, Dundee (1989–93) and an MA in Fine Art at the University of Ulster, Belfast (1993–94). In 2000 she was awarded a residency in the P.S.1 studio program, and in 2001 she participated in the Kunst-Werke e.V. artists' residency program in Berlin, the city she has lived in since. In 2010 she won the Turner Prize, and in 2014 she was awarded an OBE.

Her recent solo exhibitions include *War Damaged Musical Instruments*, Duveen Galleries, Tate Britain, London (2015/2016); *Follow Me*, various locations in Genoa, Museo de Arte Contemporanea Villa Croce, Genoa (2015); *War Damaged Musical Instruments (Pair)*, Theseustempel, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (2015); *The Distant Sound*, various venues, Denmark, Sweden, Norway (2014); *Part File Score*, Museum für Gegenwart – Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (2014); *It Means Nothing To Me*, Mizuma Gallery, Beijing, (2012); *Seven Tears*, Ludwig Forum für internationale Kunst, Aachen (2011); *You Are Not Alone*, Haus des Rundfunks, Berlin (2011); *We Shall Be All*, MCA Chicago (2011).

Her many group exhibitions include the 14th Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul (2015); *Soundscapes*, The National Gallery, London (2015); *Parasophia*, Kyoto International Festival of Contemporary Culture, Kyoto (2015); Manifesta 10, St. Petersburg (2014); *Soundings*, A Contemporary Score, MoMA – The Museum of Modern Art, New York, (2013); dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel (2012); *Haunted*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (2010); Turner Prize, Tate Britain, London (2010); the 29th Biennale de São Paulo, São Paulo (2010). Public collections include Tate Britain, London; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Walker Arts Center, Minneapolis; MCA Chicago; Museum Ludwig, Cologne; Museo Reina Sofía, Madrid; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Palazzo Reale, Milan.

KUB Publication

**Susan Philipsz**

**Night and Fog**



Susan Philipsz considers her work to be »sound sculptures«: entwining the human voice, sound, and melodies, the interplay between audio and architectural elements results in installations of an almost spatial presence. In deconstructing Hanns Eisler's music for Alain Resnais' film *Night and Fog* (1955) for Kunsthaus Bregenz, Philipsz generates affiliations to earlier work, whilst also making reference to Peter Zumthor's architecture. A further site-specific work has been created for the Jewish cemetery in Hohenems. For this publication, KUB Director Thomas D. Trummer discusses the exhibition concept in an interview with the artist, using the above two approaches as a point of departure, whilst Theodor Ringborg, from Bonniers Konsthall Stockholm, addresses the metaphorical aspects of night and fog, as well as *Erinnerungskultur*, distance, and loss. Linda Schädler, from the University of Zurich, focuses on the emotional-affective dimension of Philipsz' work. A richly illustrated appendix comprehensively collates the artist's work and exhibition history.

**Susan Philipsz**

**Night and Fog**

Published by Kunsthaus Bregenz, Editor Thomas D. Trummer; with contributions by Theodor Ringborg, Linda Schädler, and Thomas D. Trummer

Graphic design: Stefan Altenried, Bernd Gassner, Lindau  
German | English, approx. 208 pages,

21 x 26.5 cm, hardcover,

Date of publication: April 2016

Price: 42,- EUR

An edition is being published on the occasion of the exhibition.

**KUB Online-Shop**

[www.kunsthhaus-bregenz.at](http://www.kunsthhaus-bregenz.at)

KUB Artist Edition

**Susan Philipsz**

**Vernebelt IV**



Exclusive special editions for Kunsthaus Bregenz are a result of close collaboration with artists and their production processes.

The artist's breath, condensed on a glass panel, seizes upon issues central to the exhibition: night and fog, concealment and transparency, breathing as the epitome of being alive, its absence an indication of the arrival of death. Breathing accompanies our lives from the very beginning. In almost every religion, breath is mythically associated with the soul. The sensation of breathing is, as an activity or process, difficult to comprehend.

In her three-part series of works *Vernebelt*, which is the most recent work on display in the exhibition at Kunsthaus Bregenz, Philipsz makes the essence of breathing, the breath, visible in mysterious figural form.

**Susan Philipsz**

**Vernebelt IV**

colour photograph mounted on aluminum composite panel and behind glass with mounting fixation

33 x 50 cm

limited edition of 40 copies +5 A.P., signed and numbered,

1.800,- EUR including 10% VAT,

plus postage and packing costs and custom duties

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Kunsthaus Bregenz would like to thank its partners for their generous financial support and the cultural commitment that goes along with it.



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## **Hours**

Tuesday to Sunday 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Thursday 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Carnival Sunday, 07.02.2016, closed

Shrove Tuesday, 09.02.2016, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Ticket Office ext. -433