
Museo del Novecento and Fondazione Furla
present

SIMONE FORTI

To Play the Flute

September 21, 22, and 23, 2017

Sala Fontana, Museo del Novecento, Milan

In the framework of FURLA SERIES #01

Time after Time, Space after Space

Curated by Bruna Roccasalva and Vincenzo de Bellis

Press conference and press preview

September 20, 12 PM

Museo del Novecento

Museo del Novecento and Fondazione Furla present *Simone Forti: To Play the Flute*, a selection of performances by this Italian-born American artist, choreographer and dancer that will fill the Museo del Novecento's Sala Fontana with sound and movement for three days.

Simone Forti: To Play the Flute is the first event in *Furla Series #01 - Time after Time, Space after Space*, a performance-centered program that will feature five events by five artists of different generations and backgrounds, to show a range of approaches to this form of expression.

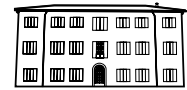
For over fifty years, Simone Forti has been a leading figure in postmodern dance. From the simple, minimalist movements of her early pieces, to improvisations joining words to movement, her work has profoundly influenced contemporary dance and performance practices.

To Play the Flute is a reenactment of four historic performances that mark fundamental points in Forti's career: *Huddle* and *Censor* (both from 1961), *Cloths* (1967) and *Sleepwalkers* (1968). This selection highlights her approach to the interplay of actions and objects, and the key role assigned to sound.

It was with her famous *Dance Constructions*—now in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York—that Simone Forti built a reputation in the 1960s art world for innovative experimentation with the language of movement. Presented for the first time in 1961 as part of *Five Dance Constructions and Some Other Things*, in a series of events that La Monte Young organized at Yoko Ono's New York studio, the performances completely rethink the relationship between body and object, movement and sculpture, rules and improvisation. Based on everyday movements or interactions with objects, these are pieces in which personal expression and improvisation are always hampered by the effort required to carry out a given physical task or follow certain rules.

In one of the best-known works from this series, *Huddle*, a group of people performs the title gesture. Together, they form a single structural entity, an uneven cluster of arms, legs, torsos and heads that takes shape before the viewers' eyes, like a sculpture made of bodies taking turns at climbing over and rejoining the mass.

First presented in 1961 as part of the same event, *Censor* is instead a clash between sounds: a pan full of nails is energetically rattled as a song is sung. In *To Play the Flute*, this unnerving



acoustic composition is repeated more than once, serving as an intermezzo between performances.

In *Cloths*, performed for the first time in 1967 at the School of Visual Arts in New York, the human body disappears, giving the stage completely over to those fundamental elements of Forti's practice: movement—in this case, the movement of cloth being thrown—and music. Three black canvases attached to frames occupy the space, concealing performers who progressively toss pieces of fabric over the frames to form colored layers, while singing over pre-recorded tracks of other songs.

Lastly, *Sleepwalkers*, here performed by dancer Claire Filmon, is one of Forti's best-known works, and stems from the artist's time in Italy in the 1960s. The piece was performed for the first time in 1968 at Galleria L'Attico in Rome, as the culmination of days spent watching and sketching the fauna in the city zoo. The result is a meditative work based on the habits that animals develop in response to confinement, conveyed in the performance through pared-down movements that explore the complicated balance between restriction and freedom.

The program for *Time after Time, Space after Space* will include four more events featuring artists from around the world, at bimonthly intervals: Alexandra Bachzetsis (November 2017), Adelita Husni-Bey (January 2018), Paulina Olowaska (March 2018), and Christian Marclay (April 2018).

Simone Forti: To Play the Flute

September 21-22-23, 2017

Sala Fontana, Museo del Novecento, Milan

Times: first group admitted at 6:30 PM with performance starting at 7;
second group admitted at 8 PM with performance beginning at 8:30.

Admission free, but room capacity is limited

For more information, please contact:

C.Museo900@comune.milano.it

info@fondazionefurla.org

www.museodelnovecento.org

www.fondazionefurla.org

Press contacts:

Fondazione Furla Press Office

Lara Facco

T. +39 02 36565133

M. +39 349 2529989

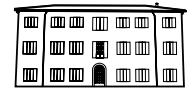
press@larafacco.com

Press Office - City of Milan

Elena Maria Conenna

elenamaria.conenna@comune.milano.it





SIMONE FORTI

Born in Florence in 1935. She lives and works in Los Angeles.

Simone Forti is an artist, choreographer, dancer and writer, who was born in Italy and grew up in the United States, where she currently lives. Her artistic career began in San Francisco in the 1950s, when she studied under Anna Halprin, a pioneer of improvisation and postmodern dance. In 1959 Forti moved to New York and attended Robert Dunn's composition courses at the Merce Cunningham Studio. In the same period, she began collaborating with Trisha Brown, Yvonne Rainer, and Steve Paxton, choreographed her first pieces, and performed in works by other artists, including Robert Whitman. In 1961 she took part in a series of events organized by La Monte Young at Yoko Ono's studio with *Five Dance Constructions and Some Other Things*, a seminal project that joined simple, everyday movements to interactions with sculptures and other objects. These pieces brought Forti into the artistic spotlight as one of the leading figures in the reinvention of contemporary dance. In the late 1960s Forti spent a year in Rome, where she worked on her studies of zoo animals and came into contact with Arte Povera; specifically, she met Fabio Sargentini from Galleria L'Attico, where she first performed *Sleepwalkers* (1968). In the early 1970s Forti returned to the US, dividing her time between New York and Los Angeles, and working with some of the most experimental artists on the music scene, like Charlemagne Palestine and Peter van Riper.

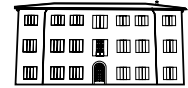
In the 1980s Simone Forti fully returned to improvisation as the core of her work in performance, developing the *News Animations* series. This project draws inspiration from the mass media and includes reflections on politics, climate change and social issues, with an extemporaneous approach combining words and movement known as "Logomotion".

Her book *Handbook in Motion* was published in 1974 by the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, and her book *Oh, Tongue* was edited and published by Fred Dewey for the Beyond Baroque Press. Simone Forti has taught at a number of universities and art schools, including the School of Visual Arts in New York (1983-1987) and the University of California (1997-2014). Her performances have been presented around the world and her work is in the permanent collections of major international museums such as the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, and the Moderna Museet in Stockholm. She is the recipient of many awards, including a Guggenheim Fellowship for Choreography in 2005 and the Yoko Ono Lennon Award for Courage in the Arts in 2011.

FURLA SERIES #01

Time after Time, Space after Space, co-produced with the Museo del Novecento in Milan, is the first edition of the **Furla Series**. Through this project, curated by **Bruna Roccasalva** and **Vincenzo de Bellis** and launched in 2017, **Fondazione Furla** will present exhibitions and events dedicated to some of the leading artists from the Italian and international scene, in collaboration with Italy's foremost art institutions.

The partnership between Fondazione Furla and the Museo del Novecento is a unique opportunity to weave together past, present and future, forging a conversation between twentieth-century masters and key figures of our time. In the year that marks the fiftieth anniversary of Lucio Fontana's death, and the months leading up to it, *Time after Time, Space after Space* is also a tribute to this figure who played a fundamental role in drawing attention to the artistic potential of material gesture, presenting a succession of performances "lit" by his famous *Struttura al Neon per la IX Triennale di Milano* (1951).



The program will include projects by **Alexandra Bachzetsis**, **Simone Forti**, **Adelita Husni-Bey**, **Christian Marclay**, and **Paulina Olowska**, who from September 2017 and April 2018 will be invited to reinterpret the museum space through new productions or reenactments of milestone performances from their careers.

