

AV FESTIVAL

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ART, TECHNOLOGY, MUSIC AND FILM / AVFESTIVAL.CO.UK

AS SLOW AS POSSIBLE 1-31 MARCH 2012

Phill Niblock: The Movement of People Working

The Sage Gateshead

Fri 2 March, 7.45-10.15pm

The Movement of People Working is a series of films by Phill Niblock that portray human labour in its most elementary form - construction work, harvesting, planting and fishing, physical exertion, with the help of basic tools. The films are scenes of people in non-industrialised communities, doing manual labor involving continually repeated movements, while their faces are often kept outside the frame.

Made between 1973-1991, they were filmed in locations including Peru, Mexico, Brazil, Hungary, Portugal, China and Japan. Projected on two large screens, there is no strict synchronisation between the projections. The films include: China 88, Japan 89, Portugal/Lesotho and Brazil 84.

Phill Niblock makes thick, loud drones of music, filled with microtones of instrumental timbres, which generate many other tones in the space. His slowly evolving music of long tones echoes the workers' repetition, however the music and images are not synchronised; the parallels between them happen at a deeper level than this. Both change at an exceedingly slow rate, evoking simultaneous sensations of movement and immobility.

The concert is a long-form experience and consists of several different pieces, as Niblock explains: *I'm interested to make music that is really open to a lot of different perceptions, so one could easily think a piece is two minutes long, twenty minutes long, thirty, forty, and lose the sense of how much time has passed. And so that's why in most concerts I play a number of different pieces. The shape of the whole concert is of long sound masses, which change moment to moment and is centered in the nature of the sound itself.*

Acoustic conditions are a determining factor in Niblock's music. What listeners actually hear, depends to a large degree on the space where it is being played, whether the audience or musicians move in the space; the quality of the sound system; and the volume of the music. This concert includes recorded samples and live performances by Susan Stenger and Robert Poss in the pieces: *Stosspeng* and *Two Lips*, and Susan Stenger in *PK and SLS* (see over).

Phill Niblock was born in Indiana in 1933. Since the mid-60's he has been making music at numerous venues around the world. Since 1985, he has been the director of the Experimental Intermedia Foundation in New York (www.experimentalintermedia.org) where he has been an artist/member since 1968. Phill Niblock's music is available on the XI, Moikai, Mode and Touch labels. A DVD of *The Movement of People Working* is available on the Extreme label.

PROGRAMME

Music by Phill Niblock

Stospeng (59min, 2007)

Susan Stenger and Robert Poss, guitars, both recorded samples and live

Harm (25min, 2003)

Arne Deforce, cello, recorded samples

PK and SLS (20min, 1977)

Susan Stenger and Petr Kotik, flute, recorded samples; Susan Stenger, flute live

Hurdy Hurry (15:21min, 1999)

Jim O'Rourke, hurdy gurdy, recorded samples

Didjeridoos and Don'ts (1992, 14 min)

Ulrich Krieger, didjeridu, recorded samples

Two Lips (22 min, 2009/2011)

The Zwerm and Coh Da Guitar Quartets, recorded samples, Susan Stenger and Robert Poss, guitars live

Images by Phill Niblock

The Movement of People Working series, two simultaneous projections:

China 88 and Japan 89 (120min)

Portugal/Lesotho and Brazil 84 (30min)

