

Saturday, September 22nd, 10:00-11:30 pm in the  
Martha Graham Studio, 55 Bethune Street, 11th Floor:

*A TRIBUTE TO MORTON FELDMAN*

**Beth Griffith**

with

**Bill Hellermann**

**Robert Voisey**

***Morton Feldman Says***

Robert Ashley

Bill Hellermann, voice

Robert Voisey, voice

***Three Voices***

Beth Griffith, voice

Morton Feldman

***Experiences No. 2***

Beth Griffith, voice

John Cage

Reservations are advised. RSVP

to [westbethmusicworks@gmail.com](mailto:westbethmusicworks@gmail.com) requesting either:

1) dance floor space for the unique experience of listening while lying on the dance floor, under the studio's beautiful ceiling, city lights and stars visible through the 11th story windows- you may bring a yoga mat if desired, or

2) seating in chairs or pews on the periphery of the dance floor.

Directions: enter Westbeth at 55 Bethune Street and take the main elevators to the 11th floor. Please gather in the lobby of the Martha Graham Dance Studio by 9:45pm.

## About the program

*Morton Feldman Says* program note by Bill Hellermann:

*Morton Feldman Says* by Robert Ashley is a text transcribed from a conversation between the composer and Morton Feldman in August of 1964. It subsequently was recast as a composition with the text unaltered and the requirement that it be performed by a composer and memorized. It is not required in the score that it be performed in a manner reminiscent of Feldman's Brooklyn accent. I have chosen to do so since Morty and I were friends and I can't hear it in any other fashion. Consistent with its incarnation as a musical performance, at the request of Bob, I have taken the liberty of exaggerating the melodic inflections of that dialect.

*Three Voices* program note by Paul van Emmerik:

The title *Three Voices* is characteristic for Feldman. By eliminating any implication of genre he draws the listener's attention to the material, acoustical reality. Although it is not expressly indicated in the score, Feldman clearly intended not only that the three voices be soprano, but that they actually be three identical soprano voices. In concert performance, the soprano sings the third voice while the others are played back from tape over loudspeakers.

In the first sketches for *Three Voices*, Feldman had already imagined the singer with two loudspeakers placed behind her on the left and right.

Shortly before he began work on the composition, one of his closest friends, the painter Philip Guston, died (1980). The death of Frank O'Hara in 1966 (whose poem *Wind* is used as text in *Three Voices*) had already made itself felt in Feldman's work. The loudspeakers are Feldman's image for the tombstones of these two men. The composition is thus a metaphor for a conversation of a "living voice with the voices of the dead" and is thereby not just a memorial to Guston and O'Hara, but also a dirge for the generation of artists to which Feldman belonged.

*Experiences No. 2* program note by Joan La Barbara:

John Cage composed this music for Merce Cunningham. Modal in flavor, the entire work is constructed on only 5 pitches, arranged as shifting modular motivic elements. Cage experimented with notational anomalies, for example, staccato and tenuto articulation markings on the same notes, and with using silence as negative space, juxtaposing the presence of sound with the absence of it. There are notated silent measures indicted, heightening the anticipation of the next moment of music, or allowing us to

reflect on what has previously been heard. The text is from "sonnets-unrealities of tulips and chimneys" by e.e.cummings. Regarding his setting of cumming's poem, Cage wrote: "the last two lines were omitted. Other lines and a word have been repeated or used in an order other than that of the original".

#### About the artists

**Beth Griffith** has given concerts and sung in festivals world-wide. She has guested with Sequentia, Musikfabrik, L'Art pour L'Art, Cologne Radio Symphony Orchestra, Paris Philharmonic, New York City Opera. She had the honor and pleasure to perform the European premier of *Three Voices* with Feldman himself present. Her recording of this work was awarded the German Record Critics Prize.

**Bill Hellermann** graduated from the Univ. of Wisconsin in Mechanical Engineering and went straight to NYC where he performed in the Village as Guillermo Brillante, flamenco guitarist. Following a series of minor miracles he became a composition student of Stefan Wolpe's, got a DMA in Composition at Columbia, did post graduate studies with Morton Feldman at the Chock Full of Nuts at 116th & Broadway and wound up in SoHo exhibiting sculpture, scores, and photographs, where he was curator of soundart and/or music performances at PS 1, The Clocktower, and the Alternative Museum. Along the way he had two children - Elspeth and Django - and two divorces.

**Robert Voisey**, when not composing or performing, is a new music producer. He seeks innovative and creative approaches to promote the music of today's composers and musicians, including the 60x60 project, Composer's Voice concert series, 15 Minutes of Fame, and many other projects at Vox Novus. Take a look at some of the things he is doing at [www.VoxNovus.com](http://www.VoxNovus.com) or [www.RobVoisey.com](http://www.RobVoisey.com)