

Brooklyn
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News Release

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BAM presents the world premiere of *The Long Count*, a multimedia collaboration by musicians Bryce Dessner and Aaron Dessner (The National) and visual artist Matthew Ritchie

Featuring Kim and Kelley Deal (The Breeders), Shara Worden (My Brightest Diamond), and Matt Berninger (The National)

The Long Count

Bryce Dessner, Aaron Dessner, and Matthew Ritchie

Music direction by Rob Moose
Audio design by David Sheppard
Costume design by Rabia Troncelliti

Vocalists—Kim Deal, Kelley Deal, Shara Worden, and Matt Berninger

Commissioned by BAM for the 2009 Next Wave Festival

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House (30 Lafayette Avenue)

Oct 28, 30, 31 at 8pm

Tickets: \$20, 25, 35, 45

718.636.4100 or BAM.org

Artist Talk with Bryce Dessner, Aaron Dessner, and Matthew Ritchie

Oct 31 at 6pm

Hillman Attic Studio

Tickets: \$8 (\$4 for Friends of BAM)

Brooklyn, NY/September 14, 2009—BAM presents the world premiere of *The Long Count*, an ambitious creative collaboration between musicians—and twin brothers—Bryce Dessner and Aaron Dessner (acclaimed guitarists and songwriters for indie rock band The National) and world-renowned visual artist Matthew Ritchie.



Jointly conceived by the three artists as a one-hour immersive multimedia experience exploring ideas of symmetry and creation, *The Long Count* weaves together disparate themes ranging from the hero twins of the Popul Vuh (a Mayan creation myth) to the epic 1976 World Series victory of the Cincinnati Reds over the New York Yankees (which occurred in the year of the Cincinnati-born Dessners' birth).

Ritchie's large-scale sculptural environment frames a one-hour animated film made from the artist's intricate, biomorphic drawings. An evocative, complex score and song cycle composed and performed by the Dessners and a twelve-member chamber orchestra will be illuminated and sung by guest artists including fellow twins Kim and Kelley Deal (of seminal indie band The Breeders), Shara Worden (lead singer of My Brightest Diamond), and Matt Berninger (lead singer of The National).

A re-creation myth for the 21st-century, *The Long Count* constitutes a Next Wave Festival debut for all three collaborators. (Bryce Dessner and Aaron Dessner appeared at BAM with The National as part of the Brooklyn Next series in spring, 2008.)

For press information contact Adriana Leshko at 718.636.4129 x2 or aleshko@bam.org

About the artists

Bryce Dessner is a composer, guitarist, and curator based in New York City. He is best known as the guitarist for the rock band The National. Dessner has also received widespread acclaim as a composer and guitarist for the new music quartet, Clogs, and is the founder and artistic director of the annual Music Now Festival in Cincinnati, Ohio. He recently made his feature film debut as score composer for the independent film *Turn the River*, written and directed by actor Chris Eigeman. Dessner is also co-founder and owner of the Brassland record label, home to a diverse group of artists including the celebrated young composer Nico Muhly. Dessner and his brother Aaron recently produced the AIDS charity compilation, Dark Was The Night, for the Red Hot Organization. Dessner has performed and/or recorded with some of the world's most creative musicians, including songwriters Sufjan Stevens and Antony Hegarty, Sonic Youth guitarist Lee Ranaldo, composers Philip Glass and Michael Gordon, and the contemporary ensemble, Bang on a Can All-Stars; this past summer, he recorded and premiered a new work by the iconic American composer Steve Reich.

As a composer, Dessner's recent commissions include a ten-minute work for the Kronos Quartet, which it is currently touring internationally; a commission from Thyssen Bornemisza Art Contemporary in Vienna to create a 40-minute spatial sound work for *The Morning Line*, a large outdoor pavilion by artist Matthew Ritchie; and a Jerome Grant from the American Composer's Forum and The Kitchen (NYC) for a full concert of his music which was held in March 2007. Other new works include a commission by the Rosenbach Library in Philadelphia for a series of compositions in honor of Abraham Lincoln's bicentennial (www.21stcenturyabe.org), and *The Long Count* commission for the 2009 BAM Next Wave Festival. Dessner's music has been featured by WNYC's New Sounds Live at Merkin Hall, as well as in live performance on BBC 3, France Inter, and Dutch National Radio.

Aaron Dessner is a founding member and primary composer in the Brooklyn-based band The National. Dessner and his twin brother Bryce are also co-founders, along with Alec Hanley Bemis, of Brassland Records, an independent label that is home to artists including The National, Clogs, Doveman, and Nico Muhly, among others. In 2008, Dessner co-produced the critically-acclaimed album Dark Was The Night for the Red Hot Organization to benefit AIDS charities, for which he contributed a song, "So Far Around The Bend," with The National, and co-wrote another, "Big Red Machine," with Bon Iver. In May 2009, Dessner co-produced a sold-out concert featuring artists from Dark Was The Night at Radio City Music Hall.

Dessner also writes, produces, and performs contemporary music internationally. Recently, he has performed with Final Fantasy, Doveman, Grizzly Bear, and David Byrne, premiered new compositions at MIT in Boston, MA and the Rosenbach Museum in Philadelphia, PA, and contributed to the

soundtrack for *Racing Dreams*, which won Best Documentary at the 2009 Tribeca Film Festival. In May 2008, Dessner and his brother Bryce performed at the opening of Matthew Ritchie's installation *Ghost Operator* at the White Cube Gallery in London, and in August 2008 they performed at Guitares au Palais Festival in Perpignan, France, and in a collaborative concert with David Cossin and Luca Tarantino as a part of Sound Res, an international residency program for contemporary music and art in Salento, Italy.

Matthew Ritchie's installations of paintings, wall drawings, light boxes, sculpture, and projections are investigations of the idea of information, explored through science, architecture, history, and the dynamics of culture. They are defined equally by their range and their lyrical visual language. In 2001, Time listed Ritchie as one of 100 innovators for the new millennium, for exploring "the unthinkable or the not-yet-thought." Ritchie's work encompasses everything from cutting-edge physics, ancient myth, neo-noir short stories, and medieval alchemy to climate change, contemporary politics, and economic theory, with a focus on fusing unique narrative forms with our constantly changing factual understanding of the universe. His most recent exhibitions in New York and London—*Universal Adversary* and *Ghost Operator*—incorporated architectural elements and chance-based interactive digital projections to explore an alternate history of time.

In 2009 Ritchie created an architectural sound structure that appeared as *The Evening Line* at the Venice Architecture Biennale and *The Morning Line* at the Seville Biennale and was designed in collaboration with New York-based architects Aranda Lasch and the Arup Advanced Geometry Unit, and commissioned by Thyssen Bornemisza Art Contemporary. The unique spatialized soundscape, which explores the possibility of a visual operating language for the universe, plays newly commissioned work by well known musicians including Lee Ranaldo (Sonic Youth) and Evan Ziporyn. Ritchie's work has been shown in numerous exhibitions worldwide, including the Whitney Biennial, the Sao Paulo Bienal, and the Sydney Biennial; solo shows include the Dallas Museum of Art, the Miami Museum of Contemporary Art, Houston's Contemporary Arts Museum, and MASS MoCA. His work is also in the collections of New York's Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), the Guggenheim Museum, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and numerous other institutions worldwide. Ritchie's work is part of a permanent large-scale installation at MIT, and in the new Federal Courthouse in Eugene, OR. In 2009, in addition to his collaboration with Bryce and Aaron Dessner for *The Long Count*, Ritchie will collaborate with physicist Lisa Randall and composer Hector Parra on an opera at the Centre George Pompidou, Paris.

Credits

BAM 2009 Next Wave Festival is part of *New Works and Diverse Voices at BAM* sponsored by Time Warner Inc. Leadership support for the Next Wave Festival is provided by The Ford Foundation.

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General Information

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, BAM Rose Cinemas, and BAMcafé are located in the Peter Jay Sharp building at 30 Lafayette Avenue (between St Felix Street and Ashland Place) in the Fort Greene neighborhood of Brooklyn. BAM Harvey Theater is located two blocks from the main building at 651 Fulton Street (between Ashland and Rockwell Places). Both locations house Shakespeare & Co. at BAM kiosks. BAM Rose Cinemas is Brooklyn's only movie house dedicated to first-run independent and foreign film and repertory programming. BAMcafé, operated by Great Performances, is open for dining prior to Howard Gilman Opera House performances. BAMcafé also features an eclectic mix of spoken word and live music for BAMcafé Live on Friday and Saturday nights with a special BAMcafé Live menu available starting at 8pm.

Subway: 2, 3, 4, 5, Q, B to Atlantic Avenue;
D, M, N, R to Pacific Street; G to Fulton Street; C to Lafayette Avenue
Train: Long Island Railroad to Flatbush Avenue
Bus: B25, B26, B41, B45, B52, B63, B67 all stop within three blocks of BAM
Car: Commercial parking lots are located adjacent to BAM

For ticket and BAMbus information, call BAM Ticket Services at 718.636.4100, or visit BAM.org.

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