

Brooklyn Academy of Music

Adam E. Max,
Chairman of the Board

Katy Clark,
President

William I. Campbell,
Vice Chairman of the Board

Joseph V. Melillo,
Executive Producer

John Cale: The Velvet Underground & Nico

50th Anniversary of
The Velvet Underground & Nico
Curated by John Cale
Members of Wordless Music Orchestra
Plus special guests
Nov 16 & 17 at 8pm

John Cale's 75th Birthday Celebration
A Live Audio-Spectrum from Dissonance to Deconstruction
Music by John Cale
Wordless Music Orchestra
BGV Music Choral Group
Plus special guests
Nov 18 at 8pm

Presented in association with Wordless Music

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House

Season Sponsor:

**Bloomberg
Philanthropies**

Support for the Signature Artist Series provided by the Howard Gilman Foundation.

50th Anniversary of *The Velvet Underground & Nico*

Nov 16 & 17

I'm often reluctant to spend too much time on things past—then, a time marker shows up: *The Velvet Underground & Nico* turns 50! As so many bands can attest, it's the fulfillment of the ultimate dream to record your first album. We were an unfriendly band, dabbling in a world of challenging lyrics and weird sonics that didn't fit into anyone's playlist at the time. Remaining ferociously true to our viewpoints, Lou [Reed] and I never doubted for a moment that we could create something to give a voice to things not regularly explored in rock music at the time. That bizarre combination of four distinctly disparate musicians and a reluctant beauty queen perfectly summed up what it meant to be The Velvet Underground.

—John Cale, 2017

To celebrate the 50th birthday of this musical masterpiece Cale decided to perform the album in its entirety only three times. After the success of the Paris show and the 11,000 plus crowd in Liverpool, the final concerts and only US performances are these at BAM.

John Cale's 75th Birthday Celebration

A Live Audio-Spectrum from Dissonance to Deconstruction

Nov 18

John Cale invites the audience to experience a genre-bending audio-visual journey as he develops bespoke arrangements of some of his classics and rarely heard songs, as well as a glimpse into the future with unreleased material. All are arranged within contextual tapestries of drone, noise, feedback, low subs, and collapsible rhythms. "There's a world of exploratory sound and light by which to create," Cale says. He has asked a few friends to join him as he immerses the Opera House with sights and sounds intended to elicit the imagination. This tireless innovator continues his quest for new ways to break the mold.

50th Anniversary of *The Velvet Underground & Nico*

Members of Wordless Music Orchestra

Nov 16 & 17

VIOLIN

Conrad Harris
Pauline Kim Harris

SOUSAPHONE

John Altieri

VIOLA

Caleb Burhans
Drew Forde
Isabel Hagen
Caitlin Lynch

TRUMPET/FLUGELHORN

Sam Nester

John Cale's 75th Birthday Celebration

A Live Audio-Spectrum from Dissonance to Deconstruction

Wordless Music Orchestra and BGV Music Choral Group

Nov 18

VIOLIN

Brian Ford
Conrad Harris
Pauline Kim Harris
Gillian Rivers

SOUSAPHONE

John Altieri

SAXOPHONE

Daniel Blake

VIOLA

Caleb Burhans
Drew Forde
Isabel Hagen
Caitlin Lynch
Karen Waltuch
Erin Wight

TROMBONE

Alix Tucou

TRUMPET

Sam Nester

CELLO

Clarice Jensen
Christine Kim
Seth Parker Woods

HORNS

David Byrd-Marrow
Matt Marks

TIMPANI/PERCUSSION

Matt Smallcomb

BASS

Florent Ghys
Chris Johnson
Eleonore Oppenheim

JOHN CALE'S BAND (at all performances):

GITARS Dustin Boyer
DRUMS Deantoni Parks
BASS Joey Maramba



John Cale. Photo courtesy of the VU50th Archive, Paris.

JOHN CALE

Over the course of a career that began in the 1960s, John Cale has built an unparalleled body of work as a musician, singer, songwriter, producer, film composer, and visual artist. He has been at the vanguard of a myriad of creative disciplines—the artist who began his musical career in a youth orchestra in Wales and wrote his first composition while still at school developed a penchant for avant-garde at a London art college, and was guided to New York by the hand of Aaron Copland and John Cage. He abandoned conventional wisdom, throwing away his classical scholarship and trading it in to contort his beloved viola into what would become his signature sound. An encounter with La Monte Young set Cale on a new path, cultivating the then-unfamiliar practice of holding a single chord for hours, creating an inexplicable movement and rhythm that was unique to each listener. All of this set the stage for a hugely influential underground career, progressing from the Velvet Underground's noise-bending attack on rock and roll through a constantly surprising solo career to the truly unclassifiable music he makes today.

His career is difficult to summarize succinctly. Who else could have collaborated with both Terry Riley and the Happy Mondays? Or Nico, LCD Soundsystem, Brian Eno, Danger Mouse... to name a few. He's a classical composer and pop genius, virtuosic violist and vitriolic rock 'n' roller, moody drone artist and pastoral Welsh songwriter with an uncompromising quest for finding what's next. Those familiar with John Cale's storied career expect the unexpected whenever he takes on a new project. His NY minimalism roots injected the avant-garde into the Velvet Underground with his signature viola drone and ecclesiastic organ. His recordings include the breathtakingly sublime baroque-pop of *Paris 1919*; the manic noise rock era of his *Fear* and *Slow Dazzle* albums; the bleak heartbreak of *Music for a New Society*; his millennial output of chill, trip, and soulful *HoboSapiens*; 2012's *Shifty Adventures in Nookiewood*; and this year's expanded re-issue of his classic *Fragments of a Rainy Season* while preparing the release of a new studio record early 2018.

WORDLESS MUSIC ORCHESTRA is the house band of New York's Wordless Music series, which was founded by non-musician Ronen Givony in 2006, and has since presented concerts in museums, churches, nightclubs, and out of doors, pairing artists from the sound worlds of so-called classical, electronic, and rock music. Comprising New York's most omnivorous young musicians, and members of groups such as Alarm Will Sound, ACME, and Ensemble Signal, the orchestra presented its first concerts over two sold-out nights in 2008 under conductor Brad Lubman, with the US premiere of Jonny Greenwood's *Popcorn Superhet Receiver*, on a program with music of Gavin Bryars and John Adams. In 2009, Arvo Pärt's Symphony No. 4 had its New York premiere in two concerts at which WMO also played with the Japanese instrumental noise-rock band MONO. These shows were recorded and released by Temporary Residence as *Holy Ground: NYC Live with the Wordless Music Orchestra*. Also in 2009, WMO recorded with Tyondai Braxton for *Central Market*, the composer's solo debut on Warp Records, and went on tour to Lincoln Center, the Library of Congress, and Walker Art Center. In 2010, WMO performed alongside the Hilliard Ensemble and Latvian National Choir as part of Lincoln Center's inaugural White Light Festival, in music by Kjartan Sveinsson and Jónsi Birgisson of Sigur Rós with Alex Somers; and at the Guggenheim Museum rotunda in a collaboration with visual artist Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster for Gavin Bryars' *Sinking of the Titanic*. On September 11, 2011, WMO performed a memorial concert for the 10th anniversary of the September 11 attacks in the Temple of Dendur at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, with the world premiere orchestration of William Basinski's *Disintegration Loop 1.1*. In 2013, the orchestra performed the world premiere live score to the film *Beasts of the Southern Wild* with director and composer Benh Zeitlin and Dan Romer, for an outdoor audience of 7,000 at Prospect Park in Brooklyn; with the legendary Kranky ambient duo Stars of the Lid; and with John Cale as part of the BAM Next Wave Festival. In 2014, WMO performed with Jonny Greenwood at the Big Ears festival in Knoxville, and in the US live score premiere of Paul Thomas Anderson's *There Will Be Blood*. Also in 2014, WMO made its Australian debut

with Max Richter at the Sydney Opera House and Melbourne Recital Centre. In 2015, the orchestra made its Los Angeles debut with composer/conductor Mica Levi in the US live premiere of *Under the Skin*; performed the US premiere of Pablo Berger's *Blancanieves*; and reprised its collaboration with Benh Zeitlin and Dan Romer for an encore of *Beasts of the Southern Wild* in New Orleans. In 2016—17, Wordless Music Orchestra performs world premiere live scores for Terrence Malick's *The Tree of Life* and *Voyage of Time* as part of the 2016 Next Wave and 2017 Melbourne Festival; Paul Thomas Anderson's *Punch-Drunk Love*, Barry Jenkins' *Moonlight*, Ava DuVernay's *Selma*, Pablo Larrain's *Jackie*, and Stanley Kubrick's *Barry Lyndon*.

BGV MUSIC CHORAL GROUP

Rasul A-Salaam is the CEO of BGV Music, Inc. a small business he founded in 2007 where he provides an array of services with a focus on arranging, producing, and singing background vocals as well as contracting and managing background vocalists and solo artists alike. A native New Yorker, A-Salaam has been in love with singing since the age of three years old. By age seven, he was known for lending his vocal talents and critical ear to various choirs and ensembles, as a supporting vocalist, soloist, and even as a teacher. A-Salaam officially began his adult career in 2005, touring the world singing background and sharing stages with a plethora of artists—Shirley Caesar, Lyle Lovett, and Fantasia Barrino, to name a few. In the fall of 2013 He was a featured soloist in *Abyssinian Mass—A Gospel Celebration*. This project was conceived and manifested by composer, jazz trumpeter, and bandleader of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra (JLCO) Wynton Marsalis. It was commissioned by the historical Abyssinian Baptist Church (Harlem, NYC) for its bicentennial celebration in 2009. *Abyssinian Mass—A Gospel Celebration* is a two-hour concert of original jazz/choral music based on the movements of a traditional catholic mass. Seventy vocalists from all over the country and abroad and the 15-piece JLCO toured the east coast, midwest, and southern US for the month of October, concluding with three performances in the Rose Theatre at Jazz at Lincoln Center. A-Salaam led the "Scripture" movement in Act II of *Abyssinian Mass—A Gospel Celebration*.







KURT VILE

Singer-songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, and record producer, Kurt Vile first came to public attention as the lead guitarist of the War on Drugs, but he'd already been recording and releasing records under his own name. Vile left that band to focus on his solo career releasing a collection of consistently intriguing albums with his band, The Violators. *Smoke Ring for My Halo* brought the Pennsylvania-native greater acclaim. Drawing on diverse influences, Vile has carved out his own unique terrain on the vast stretch of Americana. In 2015, Vile released his sixth studio album, *b'lieve I'm goin down*. In 2017, Vile and Courtney Barnett teamed-up for the collaborative album *Lotta Sea Lice*, released on October 13, 2017.



ANIMAL COLLECTIVE

Leading pop experimentalists formed in Baltimore, MD in 2003, Animal Collective is a rotating collective comprising Avery Tare (David Portner), Panda Bear (Noah Lennox), Deakin (Josh Dibb), and Geologist (Brian Weitz). Dedicated to restless studio experimentation, complex counter-rhythmic beats, and a rich exploration of vocal harmonies, it released *Here Comes the Indian* in 2003. *Sung Tongs*, which drew on influences including early American field recordings and polyphonic campfire songs, brought the group greater acclaim and international audiences. In 2009, the band released its most commercially successful album, *Merriwether Post Pavillion*, regarded as a landmark career-defining album. The latest release, *Painting With*, has been critically lauded as reinforcing their rightful place at the head of the experimental psychedelic table. Over 15 years, 10 studio records, and three live records, the musicians have largely worked as a collective with different members in and out of albums and tours.



Photo courtesy: the-artist

MGMT

Deftly dodging any easy categorization, the duo of Andrew VanWyngarden and Ben Goldwasser, known as MGMT, first blasted into the global conscience in 2007 with their smash-hit album, *Oracular Spectacular*. However, a startlingly original EP, *Metanoia*, was also released that year, evidence that MGMT would not be content to meet fan-base expectations. Returning with *Congratulations 2010* produced by Sonic Boom, and a self-titled *MGMT 2013*, the band has charted its own unique path. The release of their latest, *Little Dark Age*, is imminent, with producer David Fridmann returning.



CONNAN MOCKASSIN

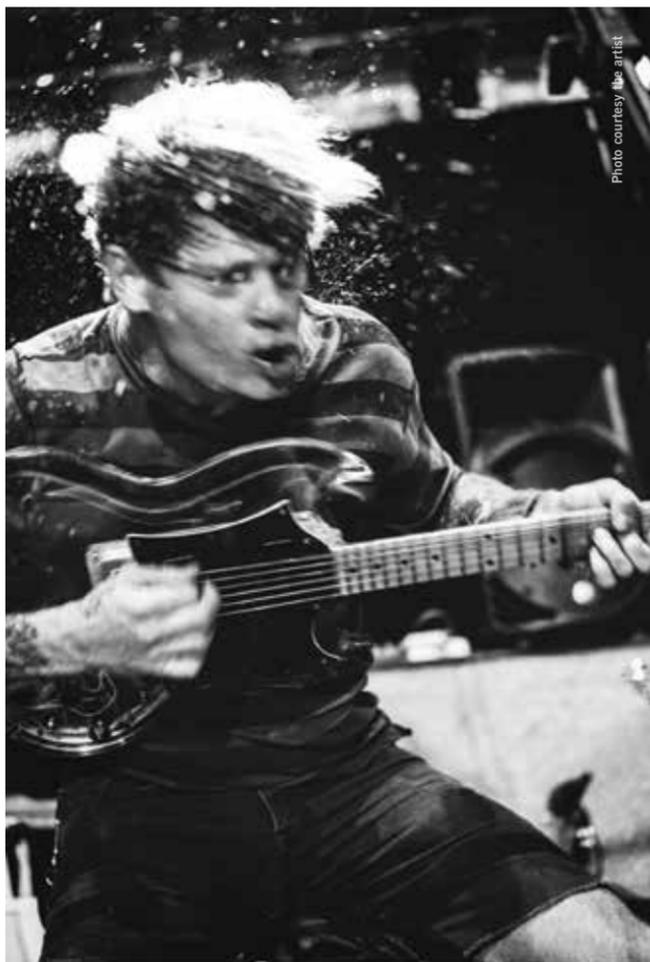
Born and raised in Hawke's Bay, New Zealand, Mockassin moved to London and was quickly a regular feature in London's pubs and clubs performing as Connan and the Mockassins. In 2011, *Forever Dolphin Love* was released on Erol Akan's Phantasy label which showcased Mockassin's unique guitar work and beguiling helium vocals. His playful image and experimental whimsy has won a new international audience following the release of his 2nd album, *Caramel*. In 2012, he composed and appeared on the Charlotte Gainsbourg's song "Out of Touch" before touring New Zealand in support of Radiohead. He also collaborated with James Blake on his album, *The Colour In Anything*, with Dev Hynes (Blood Orange) on an EP called *Feeling Lovely*, and Sam Dust on a side project called Soft Hair. His third album's release is imminent.



Photo courtesy the artist

CAROLINE POLACHEK (Chairlift)

Caroline Polachek formed Chairlift in Boulder, CO with Patrick Wimberly. Following a move to Brooklyn, the band built a reputation for well-crafted, slickly-produced pop that connected with both indie and dance audiences. Its first release, a single entitled “Evident Utensil,” featured a remix by MGMT. The group’s debut full-length was released in 2008, melding the band’s space-rock influences with a pop aesthetic. The album received widespread attention when the song “Bruises” appeared in an iPod commercial. A second album, *Something*, released in 2012, elevated the band’s kaleidoscopic pop to a grander scale. Polachek collaborated with Beyoncé on her 2013 album, *Beyoncé*. In 2014, Polachek released her first solo album, *Arcadia*, under the name Ramona Lisa, marking an intriguing musical departure from her band’s sound. Following its third album, Chairlift announced it would disband with a final tour in 2017.



THEE OH SEES

Hailing from San Francisco, Thee Oh Sees have been releasing albums since 1997 under various names including the OCS and Ohsees. While renowned for their fierce live show, Thee Oh Sees have produced a diverse array of albums covering garage, psychedelic, avant-folk, rock, experimental noise, and punk. Under the leadership of primary songwriter and core member John Dwyer, the band has achieved a reputation for being one of the world's great live bands. Brigid Dawson joined Thee Oh Sees in 2006 and in 2015 left the band to return to painting. After a year-long break, in 2015, Dawson returned with his next studio album, *Mutilator Defeated At Last*, and began touring with two drummers. Touring extensively, this lineup recorded the band's much-lauded 17th and 18th studio albums, *A Weird Exits* and *An Odd Entrances*.