

# Art | Basel

## Miami Beach | Dec | 4-7 | 2014

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### PRESS RELEASE

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#### Art Basel and Performa bring immersive performance by artist Ryan McNamara to Miami Beach

Celebrated contemporary artist Ryan McNamara will stage *MEEM 4 Miami: A Story Ballet About the Internet* at the Miami Grand Theater at Castle Beach Resort, the former Playboy theater, during Art Basel's show in Miami Beach. A choreographic exploration of the online world, the work is a Performa Commission, presented by Art Basel, and produced by Performa and Art Basel. The performance will take place at 8pm and 10.30pm on Wednesday, December 3 and Thursday, December 4, with a by-invitation performance on Tuesday December 2.

*MEEM 4 Miami: A Story Ballet About the Internet* presents an interpretation of the layered architecture of the internet and the infinite streams of information that pour through its portals onto our laptops and smart phones. Exploring how we share content and process information, McNamara samples and remixes music and movement within an inventively staged environment that reflects the dense layers of our digital landscape. The performance creates a physical analogue of the cluttered nature of the digital realm, and the frequency and speed with which material is copied, created, appropriated, repeated, plagiarized, mined, projected and passed on.

The ballet engages multiple narratives – the internet as a utopic space of unfettered and open global communication and self-creation, as sinister military infrastructure, and as motor for a round-the-clock infotainment culture. A fully immersive experience that questions the very possibility of a singular, individual 'experience', the performance plays with abrupt changes in pacing, music, and choreographic styles – from classical to contemporary – mirroring the close proximity different modes of spectacle now have to one another. Created as a Performa Commission for the 2013 Performa Biennial in New York City, the work premiered to critical acclaim and was awarded the second Malcolm McLaren Award as the most innovative and thought-provoking performance of Performa 13. For its Miami Beach premiere, the artist will debut a new and expanded iteration, incorporating additional performers and content.

'I saw Ryan's stunning performance at the Performa Biennale in New York last November and was astounded by the way in which *MEEM* redefines the audience experience, making physical the virtual experience of link-clicking, and simultaneously incorporating many decades and styles of dance,' says Marc Spiegler, Director Art Basel. 'A few weeks later, when I first walked into the Miami Grand Theater, I thought it could be a perfect setting for a next edition of *MEEM*. This Performa commission continues our strong history of presenting and supporting performance and live art, which includes 2009's *Il Tempo del Postino* and last summer's *14 Rooms*. And we are delighted to once again collaborate with Performa!'

'Ryan's work has a way of revealing to us the way that we see and feel when we sit in front of a performance, or in front of a computer for that matter,' says RoseLee Goldberg, Founding Director and Curator of Performa. 'This piece is far more complex than it first appears, because it unfolds as one surprise after another. The viewer is both totally in the

moment and yet spends hours thinking about it afterwards, piecing together what it is that one just witnessed.'

*MEEM 4 Miami: A Story Ballet About the Internet* is Art Basel's second collaboration with Performa and will be presented at the Miami Grand Theater at Castle Beach Resort, 5445 Collins Avenue, Miami Beach, Florida 33140.

Production support in Miami has been provided through a partnership with YoungArts.

Tickets are \$30. For further information and to book, please visit [artbasel.com/miamibeach/meem4miami](http://artbasel.com/miamibeach/meem4miami).

On Thursday, December 4, at 4pm, Ryan McNamara will be in conversation with the art historian and critic Claire Bishop. The talk is part of Art Basel's Salon program and will take place in the auditorium in Hall C of the Miami Beach Convention Center.

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

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### **About Ryan McNamara**

Born in 1979 in Phoenix, Arizona, Ryan McNamara is a Brooklyn-based artist known for blending different practices and histories of visual art, dance, and theatre. Often situation-specific, his works frequently play with received notions of the 'collaborative' or 'participatory.' McNamara has participated in three Performa Biennials. Along with the first iteration of *MEEM: A Story Ballet About the Internet* for Performa 13, McNamara took part in *Three Performances in Search of Tennessee* by Laurel Nakadate and James Franco for Performa 11; and for Performa 09 presented *The Sacred Band of Thebes AKA In Memory of Robert Isabell AKA Any Fag Could Do That*, a work inspired by the sacred band of Thebes, a small brigade of homosexual lovers that defeated the Spartan army in 375 B.C. In 2012, McNamara's ballet, *Relâche*, was the featured performance of Performa's Surrealist-inspired celebration. In New York, McNamara has staged performances and exhibitions at The Whitney Museum of American Art, the High Line, the Artist's Institute, and The Kitchen. His work was included in *Greater New York* (2010) and the *Athens Biennial* (2009). He recently presented *Score* (2014) in Hong Kong, commissioned by Stephen and Yana Peel and timed with the second edition of Art Basel in Hong Kong.

### **About Performa**

Founded in 2004 by art historian and curator RoseLee Goldberg, Performa is the leading organization dedicated to exploring the critical role of live performance in the history of twentieth-century art and to encouraging new directions in performance for the twenty-first century. Since launching New York's first performance biennial, Performa 05, in 2005, the organization has solidified its identity as a museum without walls. In the last decade, Performa has presented 592 performances, worked with 732 artists, received over 200,000 attendees, and has toured commissioned performances in 17 countries around the world. Performa is sponsored in part by artnet.

The next biennial, Performa 15, in November 2015, will be a celebration of Performa 10 Years. For more information, visit [performa-arts.org](http://performa-arts.org) and join the conversation: @PerformaNYC #Performa10Years.

### **About Art Basel**

Art Basel stages the world's premier art shows for Modern and contemporary works, sited in Basel, Miami Beach and Hong Kong. Defined by its host city and region, each show is unique, which is reflected in its participating galleries, artworks presented, and the content of parallel programming produced in collaboration with local institutions for each

edition. In addition to ambitious stands featuring leading galleries from around the world, each show's exhibition sectors spotlight the latest developments in the visual arts, offering visitors new ideas, new inspiration and new contacts in the art world.

UBS is Art Basel's global Lead Partner, supporting all three shows in Basel, Miami Beach and Hong Kong. The firm has been the Lead Partner of the Basel show for the past 20 years and of Art Basel in Miami Beach since the show's inception in 2002, and for Hong Kong beginning in 2014. UBS has a rich history of supporting cultural and artistic endeavors across the world, with a focus on promotion, collection and educational activities in the world of contemporary art.

Associate Partners Davidoff, the prestigious Swiss cigar brand; Audemars Piguet, the independent high-end watch manufacturer; and ABSOLUT, who also is also supporting Art Basel's Conversations series; support Art Basel across its three shows. Associate Partner Netjets, the world leader in private aviation, continues its support of the Miami Beach show. The VIP car service is by BMW. The show's Media Partners are The Financial Times and The Miami Herald. The show is supported by the Miami Beach Visitor and Convention Authority. For further information on Art Basel's partners, please visit [artbasel.com/partners](http://artbasel.com/partners).

#### **About Miami Grand Theater**

Considered one of the most spectacular supper clubs in America, the original Playboy Plaza Hotel and 'Penthouse Showroom' in Miami Beach opened its doors in 1970. It was a legendary destination in the steamy disco era, hosting the likes of Donna Summer, Tina Turner and the Jackson 5 until it closed its doors in 1983. **5D Society & Miami Grand Theater reopened the fabled venue during Art Basel in Miami Beach in 2013, with Nicole Ehrlich's fundraising event 'Celebrating Women in Art' for Lady Gaga's Born This Way Foundation.**

#### **Important Dates for Media**

##### **Preview (by Invitation only)**

Wednesday, December 3, 2014, 11am to 8pm

##### **Vernissage (by Invitation only)**

Thursday, December 4, 2014, 11am to 3pm

##### **Public Days**

Thursday, December 4, 2014, 3pm to 8pm

Friday, December 5, 2014, 12 noon to 8pm

Saturday, December 6, 2014, 12 noon to 8pm

Sunday, December 7, 2014, 12 noon to 6pm

##### **Press accreditation:**

Online registration for press accreditation is now open and will close on November 14, 2014. Please visit [artbasel.com/accreditation](http://artbasel.com/accreditation).

##### **Upcoming Art Basel shows**

Hong Kong, March 15 - 17, 2015

Basel, June 18 - 21, 2015

##### **Media information online**

Media information and images can be downloaded directly from [artbasel.com/press](http://artbasel.com/press). Journalists can subscribe to our media mailings to receive information on Art Basel.

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