

Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo

# Christian Marclay Translating

November 20 (Sat) – February 23 (Sun), 2022

*It may seem like a contradiction, but I'm interested in sound not just for how it sounds, but also for how it looks.*

Christian Marclay, *THE WIRE*, Issue 195, May 2000

The Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo is pleased to present the first large-scale museum exhibition in Japan of the acclaimed artist Christian Marclay, whose innovative practice lies at the crossroads of art and music.

Christian Marclay (b. 1955) began experimenting with sound in performances using turntables during the late 1970s in New York, and has been an important figure in the avant-garde music scene ever since. Focusing on sound as visual information and on how music is represented, objectified and commodified in modern society, he is recognized as one of the most popular and influential artists who connect contemporary art with music. Marclay works in performance, collage, installation, photography, painting and video, often repurposing a wide range of found media including LP records, CDs, comics, movies, and photographs.

*Christian Marclay Translating* is the first large-scale solo exhibition of the artist's work in a Japanese museum and aims to introduce audiences to his diverse and eclectic practice. Sampling his oeuvre, it includes early works, influenced by conceptual art and punk music, large-scale installations built from samples of image and sound information, and more recent works that reflect upon the anxieties permeating our contemporary world.



1 *Recycled Records*, 1981  
collaged vinyl records  
30.5 cm diameter  
Collection of the artist  
© Christian Marclay. Courtesy  
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York.



2 *Untitled (from the series 'Imaginary Records')*, 1992  
altered record album cover 31.1 cm x 31.1 cm  
Photo: Steven Probert  
© Christian Marclay. Courtesy Paula Cooper  
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## Marclay Translating...

This exhibition employs the term “Translating” in reference to Marclay's unique approach that attempts to find an equivalence between the visual and auditory experience and to decipher the world by using one sense for another.

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TEL: +81-3-5245-1134 URL: <https://www.mot-art-museum.jp/en>

\* All Programs are subject to change.



Born in California and raised in Geneva, Marclay grew up traveling between the different linguistic and cultural spheres of Switzerland and the United States, an experience that informed his decision to become an artist: "I didn't trust language that much and I was more interested in other types of communication, like visual language or music, things that rely on different signs or perceptions."\*

3 *Actions: Froosh Sploosh Wooosh Sskuusshh Splat Blortch (No.2)*, 2014  
screen print and acrylic on canvas  
222.2 cm x 302.5 cm  
© Christian Marclay. Photo © White Cube (George Darrell)

Marclay's technique of sampling, evident in many of his works, entails extracting and repurposing existing images and sounds, and can be considered an act of "translation" from one realm to the other, offering an alternative to language. Whether using the materiality of recorded sound to create images, as in his celebrated series of photograms, or translating image back into sound, as with the creation of "graphic scores" in which images from our day-to-day environment are given over to musicians as scores from which to create music, Marclay's practice exists at the intersection of these two cultural forms. The exhibition will also include works that feature onomatopoeia, appropriated from manga comics originally published in Japan and translated into English, such as *Manga Scroll* (2010) which is a vocal "graphic score". Shifting back and forth between sound and vision, everyday objects and art, information and matter, as well as different cultures, Marclay's practice explores the creative possibilities and contradictions inherent in translation. With a keen eye (and ear) and understated humor, he draws attention to the sensations and perceptions we take for granted while revealing the precariousness of human communication.



4 *Untitled*, 2004  
photogram  
© Christian Marclay. Courtesy Paula Cooper Gallery, New York.



5 *Ephemera: A Musical Score (detail)*, 2009  
From a set of 28 folios. Produced and published by mfc-michèle didier, Paris /Brussels  
© Christian Marclay & by mfc-michèle didier.  
Courtesy Paula Cooper Gallery, New York.

\* Jan Estep, "Words and Music: Interview with Christian Marclay," *New Art Examiner*, Sept./Oct. 2001, pp. 78-83.

### Translating Marclay...



6 *Untitled from Graffiti Composition*, 1996-2002  
detail from portfolio of 150 prints  
© Christian Marclay. Courtesy Paula Cooper Gallery, New York.

Evolving with the passage of time, Marclay's work is 'translated' by the viewer and/or the listener into a myriad of open-ended experiences. His early masterpiece *Record Without a Cover* (1985), for example, is an LP record without any protective packaging which allows for damage from shipping, storing, and playing the vinyl to become part of recording.

During the exhibition, a public programme of events will feature performances of Marclay's graphic scores by Japanese musicians.

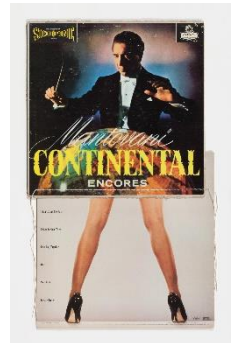
## Highlights

The first major exhibition at a Japanese museum of the most significant artist working today at the intersection of art and music.

The crossover between sight and hearing is a theme that has fascinated many artists past and present. In the words of a Nineteenth Century critic: "all art aspires towards the condition of music." Christian Marclay, who initially gained recognition in the music scene, has explored the inextricable relationship between the two spheres through numerous notable works, and has received significant acclaim in the field of contemporary art with exhibitions at major museums around the world. This is the first large-scale solo exhibition held at a Japanese museum by the artist.



7 *Recycling Circle*, 2005  
video installation with sound  
Photo: Osamu Watanabe  
© Christian Marclay. Courtesy Gallery  
Koyanagi, Tokyo.



8 *Continental* (from the series 'Body Mix'), 1991  
2 record covers and cotton thread  
54.6 cm x 33 cm  
Photo: Steven Probert  
© Christian Marclay. Courtesy Paula  
Cooper Gallery, New York.

### Music, Art, Comics and Film... A Means of Expression Through Sampling

Since the 1970s, Christian Marclay has pioneered techniques of sampling and collage. Visitors are invited to enjoy a vast selection of works spanning the artist's career which demonstrate how he translates and re-mixes the existing world of music, art, manga, and movies, as well as graffiti found on the street into compelling works of art.



9 *Scream (Orange and Blue Shaking)*, 2019  
color woodcut  
220.1 cm x 121.5 cm  
© Christian Marclay. Courtesy Paula Cooper  
Gallery, New York.



10 *Face (Fear)*, 2020  
collage on paper 30.2 cm x 30.3 cm  
© Christian Marclay. Courtesy Gallery  
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### Intersections Between Sound and Image Experienced Through Large-Scale Installations

Marclay's large-scale installations offer viewers the previously unknown experience of "seeing sound / listening to images." Installations will include Marclay's masterpiece *Video Quartet* (2002), an audio-visual composition made from sampled film clips and shown on four contiguous video screens, and *Surround Sounds* (2014-2015), a symphonic maelstrom of animated onomatopoeias cut out from comic books and choreographed to suggest the acoustic properties of each word.



11 *Surround Sounds*, 2014-2015  
video installation  
Photo: Ben Westoby  
© Christian Marclay. Courtesy White Cube, London, and  
Paula Cooper Gallery, New York.

## Artist Profile

Christian Marclay was born in California, USA in 1955, and was raised in Geneva, Switzerland. He received his Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Massachusetts College of Art in Boston, and continued his studies at Cooper Union in New York. Long based in Manhattan, in recent years he has been living in London. In 1979 Marclay presented his first performance using turntables, and quickly gained recognition as an important figure in experimental music for his pioneering approach to records as interactive musical instruments. In addition to improvisational performances, since the 1980s he has been known for his artworks exploring the connections between sight and sound.

At the 54th Venice Biennale (2011), Marclay was recognized as the best artist in the official exhibition, winning the Golden Lion for his work *The Clock* (2010). He has presented solo exhibitions at major museums throughout



the world such as the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Los Angeles, California, USA, 2019), Barcelona Museum of Contemporary Art (Barcelona, Spain, 2019), Aargauer Kunsthaus (Aarau, Switzerland, 2015), Whitney Museum of American Art (New York, USA, 2010), in addition to releasing several albums such as *Record Without a Cover* (1985), *More Encores* (1988) and *Records* (1997). He has performed and recorded with numerous musicians including John Zorn, Elliott Sharp, Sonic Youth, Fred Frith, Steve Beresford, Okkyung Lee, and Otomo Yoshihide.

12 Christian Marclay Photo by The Daily Eye

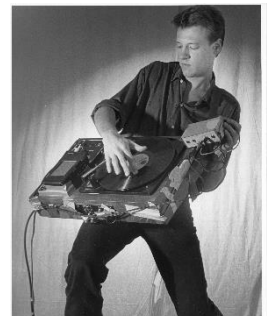
## Exhibition Catalogue

The first Japanese publication on Christian Marclay, the catalogue features images of exhibited works, artist interviews, conversations and essays by key commentators such as Tone Yasunao, David Toop, and Douglas Kahn, as well as newly written texts by Otomo Yoshihide, Nakagawa Katsushi (researcher in music and sound studies) and Ryan Holmberg (art and comics historian). The catalogue will include a timeline, archival materials and a comprehensive selection of references to Marclay's artistic activities in Japan.

## Events

Multiple events will be held over the course of the exhibition period.  $\in Y \ni$ , Otomo Yoshihide, KOM\_I, Makigami Koichi, Fuyuki Yamakawa and others will perform Christian Marclay's graphic scores, marking a new chapter in the history of Marclay's special and on-going relationship with Japan's experimental music scene which began during his first visit to the country in 1986. A band led by Jim O'Rourke will also be formed for this performance (Jim O'Rourke [guitar], Tatsuhiro Yamamoto [drums], Marty Holoubek [bass], Eiko Ishibashi [flute], and Kei Matsumaru [saxophone]).

(Details will be announced on the museum website at a later date).



13 Christian Marclay playing his Phonoguitar, 1983  
Photo: Steve Gross

© Christian Marclay. Courtesy Paula Cooper Gallery, New York.



## Information

Exhibition Period	November 20 (Sat) –February 23 (Sun), 2022
Closed	Mondays (except Jan 10, Feb. 21 2022), Dec 28. 2021–Jan 1. 2022, Jan 11.
Opening Hours	10:00 - 18:00 (Tickets available until 30 minutes before closing.)
Admission	Adults –1,800yen / University & College Students, Over 65 –1,200yen / High School & Junior High School Students –600yen / Elementary School Students & Younger – Free
Venue	Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, Exhibition Gallery 1F
Organizers	Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo operated by Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture
Curator	Tomoko Yabumae (MOT)
TEL	+81-50-5541-8600 (Hello Dial)

## Concurrent Exhibitions

*"Viva Video! The Art and Life of Shigeko Kubota", "EUGENE STUDIO After the rainbow"*  
*"MOT Collection"*

PRESS IMAGES



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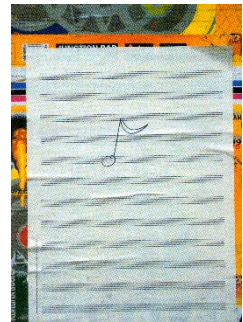
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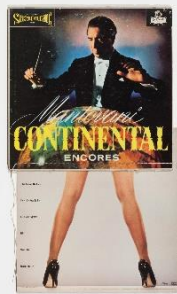
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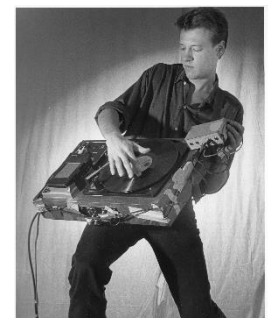
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