

THE SHED

West 30th Street between
10th and 11th Avenues
New York, NY



The Shed under construction as seen from the High Line, February 2018. Photo by Ed Lederman

The Shed Announces First Seven Commissions of 2019 Inaugural Season

Proposals from Early-Career NYC Artists in All Disciplines Now Being Accepted for *Open Call* Commissioning Program

Hans Ulrich Obrist Appointed Senior Program Advisor

The Shed's Iconic Multi-Use Hall To Be Named The McCourt

NEW YORK, March 6, 2018—The Shed's Artistic Director and CEO **Alex Poots** today unveiled the first group of commissions for the 2019 inaugural season in its future home on Manhattan's west side, and provided major updates about the organization's leadership, program, and capital campaign. New York City's first arts center dedicated to commissioning, producing, and presenting new work across the performing arts, visual arts, and popular culture, The Shed will open to the public in spring 2019 with commissioned programs filling its iconic and expansive multi-use hall, two floors of column-free galleries, and versatile and intimate theater.

"The original idea for The Shed was relatively simple: provide a place for artists working in all disciplines to make and present work for audiences

Opening spring 2019
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from all walks of life,” said Poots. “Our opening programs begin to show how these artists, art forms, and audiences can thrive together under one roof.”

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The programs of The Shed’s inaugural season reflect the organization’s mission to nurture artistic invention across the widest range of disciplines, frequently informed by cutting-edge technologies. They include: a new live production celebrating the unrivaled impact of African American music on art and popular culture over the past 100 years, conceived by acclaimed filmmaker and artist **Steve McQueen**, developed and produced with music industry legend **Quincy Jones**, respected NYU Professor **Maureen Mahon**, and preeminent hip-hop producer **Dion ‘No I.D.’ Wilson**; a live performance/exhibition pairing works by master painter **Gerhard Richter** with a new composition by **Steve Reich** and an extant composition by **Arvo Pärt**; a reinvention of Euripides’ *Helen* by poet **Anne Carson**, starring **Ben Whishaw** and **Renée Fleming**; an original live production co-conceived by **Chen Shi-Zheng** and *Kung Fu Panda* screenwriters **Jonathan Aibel** and **Glenn Berger**, with songs by **Sia** and choreography by **Akram Khan**; expansive exhibitions devoted to extant and newly commissioned work by trailblazing artists **Trisha Donnelly** and **Agnes Denes**; and an unprecedented opportunity for New York City-based, early-career artists of all disciplines to develop and showcase their work throughout The Shed’s spaces via an **Open Call** commissioning program.

Alex Poots also made institutional announcements about the growing organization, including the appointment of **Hans Ulrich Obrist** as The Shed’s Senior Program Advisor. In this new role, which is part-time, Obrist will collaborate with Poots to develop and commission a wide range of new work in all disciplines while continuing as Artistic Director of the Serpentine Galleries in London. The Shed’s largest and most iconic space, in which some of the commissions announced today will be presented, has been newly named **The McCourt**, in recognition of a \$45 million gift by **Frank McCourt, Jr.**, and his family in support of The Shed’s mission. The McCourt can accommodate large-scale performances, installations, and events, and is formed when The Shed’s movable shell is extended over the building’s adjoining plaza.

An overview of the first group of 2019 commissions follows (dates to be announced):

Soundtrack of America

Soundtrack of America celebrates the unrivaled impact of African American music on art and popular culture over the past 100 years. Having begun with the concept of a “family tree” of influential musicians and composers, this commission culminates in a series of concerts by leading musicians performing its “branches,” tracing African American music’s global impact from its roots in the 17th century to present-day hip-hop, R&B, jazz, and pop. Conceived by Oscar-winning filmmaker and artist **Steve McQueen** (film: *12 Years a Slave*, *Hunger*, visual art: 1999 Turner Prize), *Soundtrack of America* is being developed and programmed in partnership with 27-time Grammy Award-winner **Quincy Jones** (chief music advisor), respected NYU professor **Maureen Mahon**, and preeminent hip-hop producer **Dion ‘No I.D.’ Wilson** (Kanye West, Alessia Cara, Jay-Z). The creative team is

supported by advisors **Regina N. Bradley, Nelson George, Alisha Lola Jones, Hamza Walker, and Matthew D. Morrison.** (The McCourt)

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Reich Richter Pärt

Reich Richter Pärt plumbs the depths of a shared language between painting and music, exploring how each medium might affect our sensory experience of the other. The Shed's Gallery I will be divided into two spaces: one will house a collaboration between **Steve Reich** and **Gerhard Richter**, the other between Richter and **Arvo Pärt**, each expanding on a shared interest in the relationship between art and music. The *Reich Richter* partnership, based on the notion of seriality, expands on both Richter's formula for his "Patterns" series, which divides, mirrors, and repeats a single painting, and on Reich's systematic compositions from the 1960s and '70s re-thought to incorporate Richter's structure. Together, Reich's music and Richter's paintings become a unified work with a shared structure between art and music, creating an immersive experience in the gallery. The world premiere of Reich's newly commissioned score will be performed by musicians from the **Ensemble Signal** (Brad Lubman, Conductor), the **International Contemporary Ensemble**, and **AXIOM** (Jeffrey Milarsky, Conductor). Pairing Richter paintings with music is a concept first developed by Alex Poots and Hans Ulrich Obrist for the 2015 Manchester International Festival, for which Pärt was commissioned to compose a choral piece, *Drei Hirtenkinder aus Fátima*, in response to new paintings by Richter. **Vox Clamantis** will perform this piece at The Shed in the other half of the gallery. As an extension of this exhibition, Richter, with the filmmaker **Corinna Belz**, will make a film for his collaboration with Reich. The film will grow out of the algorithmic processing of Richter's abstract paintings. (Gallery I)

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Trisha Donnelly

Trisha Donnelly (b. 1974, San Francisco), lives and works in New York. (Gallery II)

Norma Jeane Baker of Troy

A melologue (partly spoken, partly sung) performance piece based on the ancient Greek tragedy of *Helen* by Euripides, ***Norma Jeane Baker of Troy*** is specially commissioned from the poet, essayist, and scholar **Anne Carson** (*Eros the Bittersweet: An Essay, Autobiography of Red: A Novel in Verse, Nox and Float*), written for actor **Ben Wishaw** (film: *Bright Star, The Lobster, Skyfall*; Broadway: *The Crucible*), with soprano **Renée Fleming** (numerous roles at major opera houses; concert performances around the world and on television; Broadway: *Carousel, Living on Love*; film soundtracks: *The Lord of the Rings, The Shape of Water, Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*). The production will be staged by theater and opera director **Katie Mitchell** (National Theatre's *The Seagull*, Aix-en-Provence Festival's *Written on Skin*, Royal Court Theatre's *Anatomy of a Suicide*) with music by composer **Paul Clark** (co-founder of Clod Ensemble, *Here All Night* at Gare St. Lazare's *Beckett in London Festival*). (Theater)

Dragon Spring Phoenix Rise (working title)

An original live production co-conceived by **Chen Shi-Zheng** (*Peony Pavilion* at Lincoln Center Festival; *Monkey: Journey to the West* at Manchester International Festival) and screenwriters **Jonathan Aibel** and **Glenn Berger**

(*Kung Fu Panda I-III*), **Dragon Spring Phoenix Rise** (working title) is about a Chinese sect in Flushing, Queens that possesses the magical power to extend human life. Written by Aibel and Berger and directed by Chen, **Dragon Spring Phoenix Rise** features songs by singer-songwriter **Sia** (*1000 Forms of Fear*, *This is Acting*), movement and aerial choreography by **Akram Khan** (English National Ballet's *Giselle*, Royal National Theatre's *in-i*), and production design and costumes by **Tim Yip** (*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*). (The McCourt)

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Agnes Denes

Agnes Denes (b. 1931, Budapest) gained international attention in the 1960s and 1970s as a leading figure in conceptual and environmental/ecological art. A pioneer of several art movements, she is difficult to categorize and employs a broad spectrum of media to explore science, philosophy, linguistics, and the human condition in an artistic practice that weds aesthetics to social engagement. Denes has participated in more than 600 exhibitions in galleries, museums, and the public realm throughout the world and her work is in the collections of major public and private institutions. Her survey exhibition at The Shed will include major new commissions and will be her largest show in New York City to date, filling both of The Shed's galleries. (Gallery I & II)

Further details about these programs and the remaining commissions for the 2019 inaugural season will be announced later this year, as well as on-sale dates for tickets.

Open Call: A Showcase for Local Emerging Artists

The Shed is launching *Open Call*, a large-scale commissioning program for early-career artists from all disciplines who live or work in New York City. Active throughout the year across all of The Shed's exhibition and performance spaces, *Open Call* will provide a valuable and prominent platform to showcase the best of the city's creative dynamism in one of its major cultural institutions.

"Nurturing artists at the start of their careers is as important to The Shed's mission as presenting new work by established artists; crucially, all *Open Call* exhibitions and performances will be free and open to the public," said **Emma Enderby**, curator at The Shed. "The panelists we are enlisting for the review process represent a diversity of voices within various fields and we likewise encourage artist proposals from all artistic disciplines."

Beginning March 7, artists in New York City who are at least 18 years old are invited to submit a project proposal for *Open Call* online at theshed.org. Following a panel review by accomplished artists in relevant disciplines, The Shed will announce the first *Open Call* commissions later this year. The selected artists (or collectives) will receive a commissioning fee and the full support of The Shed to realize their projects.

Nurturing Creative Action

The Shed will continue to expand its pre-opening commissioning program to embrace young multidisciplinary artists. **DIS OBEY**, developed for participants ages 16 to 19, will explore and provide space for protest and creative action through writing, storytelling, and visual art workshops. "We hope to channel the momentum generated by protest movements sweeping the country into a program that inspires teens to effect social

change,” said **Tamara McCaw**, Chief Community & Civic Program Officer at The Shed. With guidance from acclaimed writers and artists, participants will create original work that examines identity, personal narrative, historical acts of protest, and self-determination.

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The Shed’s pre-opening programming for young artists began with **FlexNYC**, a free dance residency that partners early-career artists with students in New York City in an examination of social issues through flexn, a form of street dance. Now in its second year, FlexNYC serves approximately 400 students from ages 5 to 18 through collaborations with 17 partners in all five boroughs of New York City, including public schools, New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) community centers, and Beacon youth programs.

DIS OBEY continues its development this month, with visual artist and writer **Kameelah Janan Rasheed** and education partner **Spark House**, founded by poet and performer **Najee Omar**, as advisors on the project.

Hans Ulrich Obrist Appointed Senior Program Advisor

The appointment of **Hans Ulrich Obrist** as The Shed’s Senior Program Advisor reunites him with Alex Poots, a long-time collaborator. Notable projects they have undertaken together include: *Il Tempo del Postino*, co-curated with Philippe Parreno, featuring artists Olafur Eliasson, Matthew Barney, Trisha Donnelly, and Carsten Höller, among others; *11 Rooms*, co-curated with Klaus Biesenbach, featuring artists Tino Sehgal, Simon Fujiwara, Marina Abramovic, and Xu Zhen, among others; and *Oktophonie*, featuring artist Rirkrit Tiravanija and composer Karlheinz Stockhausen.

“When Alex and I were introduced, soon after he started the Manchester Festival, we realized we have a very similar way of working. Everything has to do with asking artists about the projects they haven’t been able to realize within existing settings, then making them happen,” said Obrist. “Alex had been doing this for a long time in the world of opera and theater, music and dance, and I had been doing it in art museums and galleries. So we began collaborating at Manchester and wondered what it might be like if the festival never stopped. The possibilities that have opened for us are exciting and I can’t wait to begin working with artists on this new vision.”

Prior to becoming Artistic Director of London’s Serpentine Galleries he was the Curator of the Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. Since his first show, *World Soup (The Kitchen Show)* in 1991, he has curated more than 300 shows. In 2011 Obrist received the CCS Bard Award for Curatorial Excellence, and in 2015 he was awarded the International Folkwang Prize for his commitment to the arts. Obrist has lectured internationally at academic and art institutions and is contributing editor to several magazines and journals. His recent publications include *Conversations in Mexico*, *Ways of Curating*, *The Age of Earthquakes* with Douglas Coupland and Shumon Basar, and *Lives of The Artists*, *Lives of The Architects*, and *Somewhere Totally Else*.

The McCourt

In recognition of a \$45 million gift from Shed board member **Frank H. McCourt, Jr.**, and his family, the building's largest and most iconic space—its 17,000-square-foot multi-use hall—will be named The McCourt. Able to accommodate large-scale performances, installations, and events for audiences ranging from 1,250 seated to 3,000 standing (when combined with space in the adjoining galleries of the base building), it is formed by deploying an 8-million-pound movable shell over the building's adjoining plaza. The McCourt can be combined with adjacent gallery space to create a nearly 30,000-square-foot (2,715 m²) contiguous space (for reference, Grand Central Terminal's main concourse is 33,000 square feet). Thirty-foot-high operable doors on two sides allow The McCourt to also function as an open-air pavilion. The McCourt will undoubtedly become known as one of the world's most unique, flexible, and captivating cultural spaces.

"I am a strong believer in the mission of The Shed and its potential to celebrate both innovation and community in the artistic world and beyond," said McCourt. "I am confident we will be back at this already iconic venue witnessing change-making commissions for years to come."

The Chairman of The Shed's Board of Directors **Daniel L. Doctoroff** said, "Including this generous gift from Frank McCourt and a \$75 million leadership gift from Bloomberg Philanthropies announced last year, we have raised \$453 million toward our \$550 million capital campaign. We are well on our way to creating America's largest cultural startup and realizing our dynamic vision for a cultural institution of and for the 21st century."

A Prelude to The Shed

A Prelude to The Shed is a free multi-arts event that will take place from May 1 to 13, 2018, in a temporary structure designed by **Kunlé Adeyemi** on an undeveloped lot near The Shed's future home. Featuring new work by choreographer **William Forsythe**, **Tino Sehgal's** *This variation*, concerts by **ABRA**, **Arca**, and **Azealia Banks**, dance battles by **FlexNYC**, an experimental school by artist **Asad Raza**, and a series of panels organized by **Dorothea von Hantelmann**.

Admission to *A Prelude to The Shed* is free, via advanced reservations that can be made at theshed.org beginning in April, or in-person at the *Prelude* site in May.

About the Building

Designed by Diller Scofidio + Renfro in collaboration with Rockwell Group, The Shed is an innovative 200,000-square-foot (18,500 m²) structure that can physically transform to support artists' most ambitious ideas. The Shed's eight-level base building includes two expansive, column-free galleries totaling 25,000 square feet of museum-quality space; a 500-seat theater that can be subdivided into even more intimate spaces; event and rehearsal space; and a creative lab. A movable outer shell can double the building's footprint when deployed over the adjoining plaza to create a 17,000-square-foot light-, sound-, and temperature-controlled space, named The McCourt, for large-scale performances, installations, and events for audiences ranging from 1,250 seated to 3,000 standing (when combined

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with space in the two adjoining galleries of the base building). When space is not needed, the movable shell can nest over the base building, opening up the plaza for outdoor use and programming.

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Weighing more than 8 million pounds when fully loaded with building systems and production equipment, the movable shell travels on a double-wheel track based on gantry crane technology commonly found in shipping ports and railway systems. A rack-and-pinion drive moves the shell forward and back on four single-axle and two double-axle bogie wheels that measure six feet in diameter; the deployment of the shell takes approximately five minutes. The exposed steel diagrid frame of the movable shell will be clad in translucent pillows of durable and lightweight Teflon-based polymer, called ethylene tetrafluoroethylene (ETFE). With the thermal properties of insulating glass at a fraction of the weight, the translucent ETFE will allow light to pass through and can withstand hurricane-force winds. Measuring almost 70 feet in length in some areas, The Shed's ETFE panels are some of the largest ever produced.

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The fabrication of The Shed's steel and the kinetic system began in 2015 and on-site construction in 2016. In 2017, the lobby, mezzanine, galleries, and theater levels of the base building were built out, the building's kinetic elements—including the rails and bogie wheels—were installed, and the shell moved for the first time. The base building's exterior glass curtain wall and the shell's ETFE covering are scheduled to be completed by mid-2018. Interior finishing is underway and overall construction is projected to be completed by early 2019.

About The Shed

Opening in spring 2019 where the High Line meets Hudson Yards on Manhattan's west side, The Shed will be the first arts center dedicated to commissioning, producing, and presenting all types of performing arts, visual arts, and popular culture. From hip hop to classical music, painting and sculpture to literature, film to theater and dance, The Shed will bring together leading artists from all disciplines under one roof. The building—an innovative 200,000-square-foot structure designed by Diller Scofidio + Renfro in collaboration with Rockwell Group—is designed to physically transform to support artists' most ambitious ideas. Committed to nurturing artistic invention, The Shed, led by Artistic Director and CEO Alex Poots, will work with artists from a broad range of genres and backgrounds, along with innovative thinkers from across the sciences and humanities, to advance culture in the 21st century.

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