

Friday, October 10, 2014, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

Berkeley Talks

Co-presented by Cal Performances and UC Berkeley

WORDLESS!

Art Spiegelman & Phillip Johnston

Words and Pictures Art Spiegelman
Music Phillip Johnston

With wordless works by

A. B. Frost

Frans Masereel (© 2013 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn)

H. M. Bateman (courtesy of Lucy Willis)

Lynd Ward (courtesy of Robyn Ward Savage)

Otto Nüchel

Milt Gross (courtesy of Joan Optican Herman)

Si Lewen (courtesy of the artist)

Wilhelm Busch

Art Spiegelman

MUSICIANS

Phillip Johnston *soprano saxophone*

Joe Fiedler *trombone*

Mike Hashim *baritone saxophone*

Neal Kirkwood *piano and melodica*

Dave Hofstra *bass*

Rob Garcia *drums*

WORDLESS! was originally commissioned by the Sydney Opera House for GRAPHIC
and produced in Sydney, Australia, in October 2013.

Representation Steven Barclay Agency
Originating Producer Joanne Kee, Places & Spaces
Film Editing and Animation Lindsay Nordell and Annalise Olson

And a tip of the hat to

Françoise Mouly/RAW Books & Graphics, Julia Phillips,
Robbie Saenz de Viteri, and Sara Bixler

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Cal Performances' 2014–2015 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.*

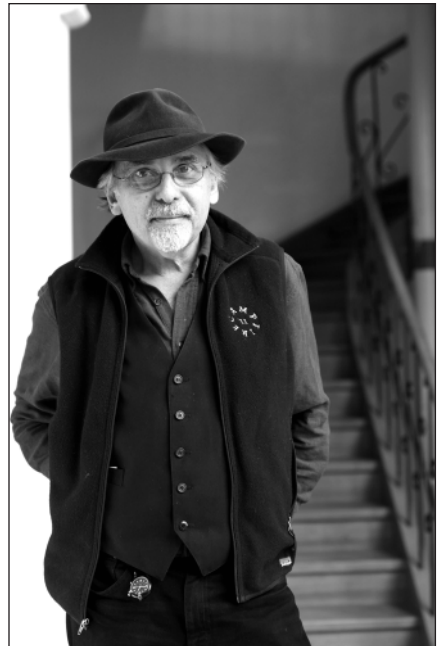


A saxophonist and composer of both jazz and new music, **Phillip Johnston** has been a significant figure in the underground music scene of New York's downtown since the beginning of the 1980s. He has composed extensively for film including Paul Mazursky's *Faithful*, Philip Haas's *The Music of Chance* and *Money Man*, Dorris Dörrie's *Paradise and Geld*, *Stolen Life* by Peter Rasmussen and Jackie Turnure (which won a New York Machinima Award for Best Music Score), and *Noise* by Henry Bean. He has also written for silent film, including Tod Browning's *The Unknown*, *The George Méliès Project*, Teinosuke Kinugasa's *Page of Madness*, and F. W. Murnau's *Faust*. His theater composition credits include *Measure for Measure*, *War of the Roses*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Macbeth* for Bell Shakespeare; *Young Goodman Brown* with Richard Foreman, *Venus* with Suzan-Lori Parks, *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Ruysch* and *The Falls* with Hilary Bell, and *Drawn to Death: A Three Panel Opera* with Art Spiegelman. Dance credits include Karole Armitage's *The Predators' Ball* at the BAM Next Wave Festival, and Keely Garfield's *Minor Repairs Necessary*, for which he won a "Bessie" in 1999.

Throughout, Mr. Johnston has maintained a parallel career as a saxophonist, both working with others and leading his own bands. During the 1980s he co-led the Microscopic Septet, and in the 1990s he led Big Trouble and the Transparent Quartet. He has toured internationally with Fast 'n' Bulbous: The Captain Beefheart Project, featuring Gary Lucas, in duos with accordionist Guy Klucsevsek and pianist Joel Forrester, with his silent film projects, and with his own bands, especially the Microscopic Septet. Mr. Johnston's recent recordings include *Not So Fast* (Strudelmedia) with the Spokes, *Live at the Hillside Club* with Mr. Forrester, and *Manhattan Moonrise* (Cuneiform) with the Microscopic Septet.

He currently performs in Australia with the Phillip Johnston Quartet and Tight Corners: The

Phillip Johnston/Jex Saarelaht Quartet Play the Music of Thelonious Monk, Steve Lacy, and Herbie Nichols, and in the United States and Europe with the Microscopic Septet and the Spokes. His original scores for silent film have been performed in Australia at the Sydney Opera House, the Melbourne Festival, and the Sydney and Perth film festivals. Other current projects include *Do Good and You Will Be Happy*, with Hilary Bell, a musical based on *Cole's Funny Picture Book*, a new silent film score for Lotte Reineger's *The Adventures of Prince Achmed* (1926) and, of course, *WORDLESS!* with graphic artist Art Spiegelman. In March 2015, he will be featured in a one-week residency at John Zorn's New York venue, The Stone, performing with twelve different ensembles over the course of a week. For further information, visit www.phillipjohnston.com.



Emo Kapiteal/Agentur Focus

Art Spiegelman has almost singlehandedly brought comic books out of the toy closet and onto the literature shelves. In 1992, he won the Pulitzer Prize for his masterful Holocaust narrative *Maus*— which portrayed Jews as mice and Nazis as cats. *Maus II* continued the remarkable story of his parents' survival of the Nazi régime and their lives later in America. His comics are

best known for their shifting graphic styles, their formal complexity, and controversial content. He believes that in our post-literate culture the importance of the comic is on the rise, for “comics echo the way the brain works. People think in iconographic images, not in holograms, and people think in bursts of language, not in paragraphs.”

Having rejected his parents’ aspirations for him to become a dentist, Mr. Spiegelman studied cartooning in high school and began drawing professionally at age 16. He went on to study art and philosophy at Harpur College before becoming part of the underground comix subculture of the 1960s and ’70s. As creative consultant for Topps Bubble Gum Co. from 1965 to 1987, Mr. Spiegelman created *Wacky Packages*, *Garbage Pail Kids*, and other novelty items, and taught history and aesthetics of comics at the School for Visual Arts in New York from 1979 to 1986. In 2007, he was a Heyman Fellow of the Humanities at Columbia University, where he taught a “Masters of the Comics” seminar. In 1980, Mr. Spiegelman founded *RAW*, the acclaimed avant-garde comics magazine, with his wife, Françoise Mouly. *Maus* was originally serialized in the pages of *RAW* before being published by Pantheon, which published many of his subsequent works, including the illustrated version of the 1928 lost classic, *The Wild Party*, by Joseph Moncure March.

He and Mouly more recently co-edited *Little Lit*, a series of three comics anthologies for children published by HarperCollins (“Comics: They’re Not Just for Grown-ups Anymore”), and *Big Fat Little Lit*, collecting the three comics in one volume. Currently, he and his wife publish a series of early readers called Toon Books—picture-books in comics format. They have co-edited *A Toon Treasury of Classic Children’s Comics* (2009). His work has been published in many periodicals, including *The New Yorker*, where he was a staff artist and writer from 1993 to 2003.

In 2004, he completed a two-year cycle of broadsheet-sized color comics pages, *In the Shadow of No Towers*, first published in a number of European newspapers and magazines, including *Die Zeit* and the *London Review of Books*. A book version of these highly political works was published by Pantheon in the United States, ap-

peared on many national bestseller lists, and was selected by *The New York Times Book Review* as one of the 100 Notable Books of 2004.

Mr. Spiegelman’s work also includes a new edition of his 1978 anthology, *Breakdowns*; it includes an autobiographical comix-format introduction almost as long as the book itself, entitled *Portrait of the Artist as a Young %@&*!*; as well as a children’s book (published with Toon Books), called *Jack and the Box*. In 2009, *Maus* was chosen by the Young Adult Library Association as one of its recommended titles for all students (the list is revised every five years and used by educators and librarians across the country). McSweeney’s has published a collection of three of his sketchbooks entitled *Be a Nose*. A major exhibition of his work was arranged by Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, as part of the “15 Masters of 20th-Century Comics” exhibit (November 2005). That same year, Mr. Spiegelman was named one of *Time*’s 100 Most Influential People, and in 2006 he was named to the Art Director’s Club Hall of Fame. He was made an Officier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in France in 2005 and—the American equivalent—played himself on an episode of *The Simpsons* in 2008. In fall 2011, Pantheon published *Meta Maus*, a companion to *The Complete Maus*—it is the story of why he wrote *Maus*, why he chose mice, cats, frogs, and pigs, and how he got his father to open up (the new book includes a DVD of the transcripts of Mr. Spiegelman’s interviews with his father; it is not a graphic novel, but it is populated with illustrations, photos, and other images). *MetaMaus* has been awarded the 2011 National Jewish Book Award in the Biography, Autobiography, and Memoir category.

In 2011, Mr. Spiegelman won the Grand Prix at the Angoulême International Comics Festival, marking only the third time an American has received the honor (the other two were Will Eisner and Robert Crumb). The honor also included a retrospective exhibition of his artwork, which shows in the Centre Pompidou and traveled to the Ludwig Museum in Cologne, the Vancouver Art Gallery, the Jewish Museum in New York, and the last stop at the AGO Art Gallery of Ontario. The accompanying book is entitled *CO-MIX: A Retrospective of Comics, Graphics, and Scraps*, published by Drawn & Quarterly (September 2013).