

Timeless Music, Nowhere
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Pianist Marino Formenti is spending eight days living in a room at the City Museum of Graz and playing a concert of endurance amidst a sea of mattresses. A report from the floor.

For four days, Formenti has been playing almost nonstop at the City Museum of Graz.

The rustling of a jacket, a suppressed whisper, the passing streetcars, fluorescent tubes on the ceiling buzzing louder and louder. Marino Formenti sits at the piano and plays Erik Satie's *Danse de travers* No. 1 from the *Pièces Froides*, twice in a row.

Construction workers pass by the window, elderly women, Chinese businesspeople, a man in lederhosen, many of them pausing briefly to wonder at this strange sight. Formenti sits at the piano and plays Morton Feldman. Between pieces, he gets up, takes a pen and makes notes on the wall: "20.15 Variations, 20.25 Intermissions, 20.35 Vertical Thoughts, 20.40 Intermission (Nature Piece No. 4)."

Music and mattresses

People lie on mattresses scattered about the floor—one of them on his stomach beneath the piano, another two cuddling together in the spoon position, while a grey-haired woman in striped socks points her toes into the air and another listener maintains a yoga position in the corner. Formenti plays Klaus Lang's now here 3.

Listeners walk up to the pianist, thanking him or declaring "very nicely played!" But they receive little more than a brief smile in response. Formenti does not speak. For eight days, he has been living like a monk at the City Museum of Graz, spending at least ten hours every day performing music by three composers from three different generations—composers who, "in the long era of the ego," as he writes, "would (have) most like(d) to simply disappear."

The audience is invited to come and go as they please while the museum is open. Some of them even take advantage of this offer several times a day, and more than a few end up hanging around for hours on end, listening in a state of total concentration, their eyes closed.

In his "Nowhere," a performance of pure endurance, the pianist puts himself entirely at the mercy of the public gaze, living in a room which is visible from the outside and also shown via a nonstop live-stream on the Internet. He sleeps on the same mattresses that are available to the audience, eats at his table and lives from a black suitcase over in the corner, leaving the room only briefly to visit the bathroom.

Timeless, boundaryless

This project of the "Open Music" and "musikprotokoll" series transcends the boundary between stage and life, between audience and pianist; all concert conventions such as those of time, place and space are reduced to absurdity. And whoever lies down on a mattress and opens themselves up to Feldman's *Vertical Thoughts* from a horizontal position, allowing life outside to pass by, will quickly realize just how absurd something like time can become.

Nowhere. Until 2 October, daily from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., at the City Museum of Graz

Nina Müller