

## Press release / Public appeal



John Edwards at TMM 08, photographed by © Nick Becker

# Nothing doing ?!

Bad news first: TMM 09 will not take place!

The 41<sup>th</sup> Total Music Meeting was planned to run from 5 - 8 November, hosted by the Berlinische Galerie as in previous years. We composed a high quality programme with a variety of rare and musically challenging acts including some of the finest Berlin-based groupings for this renowned International Artists Festival of Improvised Music.

End of April we were notified and offered by the authorities of the City of Berlin the thrilling sum of € 3,760 (threethousandsevenhundredand sixty Euros) for the 4-days-festival.

Of course, as every year, we additionally sought to obtain fundings elsewhere but to skyrocket the sponsoring for an International Artists Festival of Improvised Music solely within 'the market' is a mission impossible. No major festival, theatre or opera house is subject to such a demand.

Please note that until 1999 the TMM received an *annual* amount of 224,000 DM/ € 114,529.

From 2000 to 2008, that is within the past nine years, since the programming and organisation of TMM has been with us, we obtained all in all a small allowance of € 167,000, that is an average of € 18,555 annually (instead of € 114,529 as until 1999).

The wide range of singular concerts, workshops, films, exhibitions and panels which we were able to realize within these years bore exceptional artistic profits and made not only a great impact internationally, but contributed to and inspired strongly the development of the local art and music scene. Without the unfailing support of the Berlin Artists Programme of the DAAD though, and above all, the generous assistance of international master musicians, artists, young European improvisers and last but not least the devoted audiences from all over the world we would not have been in the position to achieve this labour of love and to perform so strongly in order to keep Improvised Music alive.

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Every month we are receiving some 50 applications from individual musicians or groups from Berlin, Germany, Europe and abroad interested to perform at Total Music Meeting, that is grosso modo 500 enquiries per year.

In previous weeks, months and years we sought to constantly communicate and discuss the critical fiscal situation with the public authorities, exerted ourselves for the necessary support with politicians, institutions and individuals, obtained the patronage of eminent personalities, received a huge amount of petitions from musicians and audiences worldwide appealing to the authorities to safeguard TOTAL MUSIC MEETING and, eventually, to safeguard artists jobs, etc.

The Lord Mayor of Berlin, Mr. Klaus Wowereit, who is also in charge of cultural affairs, was addressed by the advisory board of his administration in October 2008 with the following appeal: "The TOTAL MUSIC MEETING is an important platform for free improvising musicians from all over the world. It is highly acclaimed internationally and is contributing continuously, since four decades, to the public perception and image of the City of Berlin as an internationally relevant cultural hub. (...) It is essential to keep TMM alive. We therefore ask you again to assure the financing of TMM. (...) and to re-enact its previously institutionalized public sponsorship."

In support of TOTAL MUSIC MEETING we call for funds and action *now* and invite the authorities to collaborate with us on a perspective to keep TMM alive.

**Please assist us with your vote. Send a petition/statement/letter/article/comment to your paper and to the address below or write to the Lord Mayor of Berlin, Mr. Klaus Wowereit, Senatskanzlei - Kulturelle Angelegenheiten, Brunnenstr. 188-190, 10119 Berlin, Fax +49 30 90 228-457, Email: [der-regierende-buergermeister@senatskanzlei.Berlin.de](mailto:der-regierende-buergermeister@senatskanzlei.Berlin.de) and/or to the State Secretary of Culture, Mr. André Schmitz ([andre.schmitz@kultur.berlin.de](mailto:andre.schmitz@kultur.berlin.de)).**

Kind regards

Helma Schleif

Berlin, September 2009