

Sound Lines: A public Sound sculpture by Bill Fontana

21 June–20 August | Dark Neville Street (Dark Arches), Leeds | active 7am–10pm

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Primal Soundings:

A new sound work by Bill Fontana

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Sound Lines by Bill Fontana

Commissioned by MAAP and Lumen | Presented as part of Architecture Week 2005

21 June – 20 August | daily 7am – 10pm | free | Dark Neville Street (Dark Arches), Leeds City Centre, LS1 4BR | Opening at Bar Home, Granary Wharf, 21 June, 6pm–9pm (RSVP: soundlines@lumen.org.uk)



Internationally renowned US artist Bill Fontana will transform the labyrinthine Dark Arches of Leeds into a live sound sculpture –*Sound Lines* – for two months from 21 June 2005. Launched during Architecture Week, a specially designed loudspeaker system will emit the live sounds of the River Aire below and the Leeds City train station above as Fontana orchestrates an ever-changing composition transforming the space into an immense, brick-built acoustic instrument.

Since 1976, Fontana - originally trained in philosophy and music - has worked in major cities from San Francisco to Kyoto, Paris and London. In 1994 he created a sound sculpture from the Arc de Triomphe, transposing live sounds of crashing waves off the Normandy coast and the cry of seagulls, silencing one of Europe's busiest traffic islands. In 2004 Big Ben received international attention when it became a unique sound sculpture, enjoyed by parliamentarians and passers-by.

For *Sound Lines* hydrophones (a device used to listen to underwater energy) will be sunk into the course of the River Aire as it is re-directed under the arches. The musical water sounds will be played back through loudspeakers along Dark Neville Street. A series of microphones installed in the vast architecture of Leeds City train station will relay an acoustic description of trains arriving and departing, and the sound of station announcements, into the river arches below. And accelerometers (sensor device used to measure or listen to acceleration within material) will be attached directly onto buffer stops at the end of rail tracks in the station detecting the constant sound of trains approaching and coming to a stop.

Bill Fontana commented "The medium I work in is a kind of ugly duckling. It does not fit in the art world and it does not fit into music. It is on the edge of different worlds. For me, the urban and natural environment is a living source of musical information and I was inspired in Leeds by the River Aire which flows through the Dark Arches and has had a defining impact on the development of the city, on its architecture and its layout."

Sound Lines is funded through the kind support of Arts Council England Yorkshire, Arts & Business, ISIS and Leeds City Council

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