



## Press release

Exhibition / Performances /  
Films / Discussions /  
Lectures

November 11, 2013  
February 17, 2014



Robert Wilson © Lucie Jansch

“The Louvre invites Robert Wilson” is sponsored by LOUIS VUITTON and is also made possible through the generosity of Kathy Rayner, the Anne Cox Chambers Foundation, and the Annenberg Foundation/GRoW Annenberg. Additional support is provided by American Friends of the Louvre.

## The Louvre invites Robert Wilson Living Rooms

Some forty years after he first created a sensation on the French theater scene with *Deafman Glance*, Robert Wilson is the Louvre’s latest guest curator. No mere retrospective or remembrance, this event marks an unprecedented collaboration between the world’s quintessential museum and the artist who, in the words of Louis Aragon, is “what we, from whom Surrealism was born, dreamed would come after and go beyond us.”

The theme of Wilson’s residency at the Louvre, “Living Rooms,” reflects his wish to infuse the museum with the spirit of the Watermill Center on Long Island, the artists’ community where he lives, works, shares his personal collection of art and artifacts with the public, and nurtures the creativity of young and emerging artists. In the Salle de la Chapelle, Wilson presents an exhibition clearly conveying his creative processes, featuring a selection of objects that serve as the raw material for his artistic inspiration.

In the Louvre’s auditorium, Wilson hosts and takes part in a series of performances, conversations, film screenings, and discussions giving a glimpse into the personal perspective shaping his work as a theater and opera director, artist and designer who takes particular pleasure in dislodging any preconceived ideas one might have about him. This wide-ranging program offers the public an exceptional opportunity to share precious moments with Wilson himself, but also with a number of influential figures in his artistic circle, such as Christopher Knowles and CocoRosie.

The program of performances is presented in partnership with the Festival d’Automne in Paris

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## Exhibition

**November 14, 2013**

**February 17, 2014**

**Salle de la Chapelle, Sully Wing**



Watermill Center © Lesley Leslie-Spinks

**Robert Wilson** was born in Waco, Texas in 1941. Educated first at the University of Texas, Wilson studied painting with George McNeil in Paris before arriving in New York in 1963 to attend Brooklyn's Pratt Institute. From 1969, he developed his first signature works in New York theaters. He had his first major success with *Deafman Glance*, in 1971. This live theater work then traveled to Nancy, Rome, Paris and Amsterdam. *Deafman Glance* created a sensation in France and Wilson was soon in great demand on the international scene, taking on various projects in Europe, the Middle East, and even in South America.

Painter, sculptor, architect, writer, designer and all-around theater man, Wilson's work transcends traditional boundaries between disciplines. As a stage director, his process of creation embraces all the components of a production (set and lighting design, music, etc.), always breaking new ground and creating total works of art, which have revolutionized the language of theater and opera.

# Living Rooms

**Robert Wilson**

When he first spotted a former Western Union building in Water Mill, Long Island about two hours from New York City, Robert Wilson knew it would be the ideal place to store a collection of art and artifacts as well as his archives and to give free rein to experimentation by inviting young artists for summer residencies each year. The elements making up the Watermill Collection are fascinating for the role they play in Wilson's creative process. Works of art from Oceania share space with ancient Chinese ceramics, contemporary photographs, chairs of all periods, and found objects. All of these things, often incongruous and highly disparate in quality, seem to have been amassed as raw material later to be distilled by the artist. In the spirit of the Surrealist collections, and especially that of André Breton, this medley speaks less of the objects themselves than of the gaze of the artist who selected them and brought them together. Conceived by Wilson himself, the exhibition design evokes the way in which these works constitute the environment of his daily life and serve as a permanent source of inspiration.

**Exhibition curators:** Robert Wilson and Philippe Malgouyres, curator, Department of Decorative Arts, Musée du Louvre

**Executive producer:** Change Performing Arts

## Introduction to the exhibition

**November 20 at 12:30 p.m.**

With Robert Wilson and Philippe Malgouyres

## Art on Stage

**Pierre Révoil (1776–1842), artist and collector, and Henri II's burgonet**

**November 27 at 12:30 p.m.**

With Philippe Malgouyres, curator, Department of Decorative Arts, Musée du Louvre.

We owe the survival of this exceptional, traditional helmet, crafted for the French king in Milan by Giovanni Paolo Negrolì (c. 1513–1569) to Pierre Révoil, the history painter and collector. The "Cabinet de Gothicités" built up by him in Lyon in the early years of the nineteenth century was acquired by the Louvre in 1828.



The Sundance Kid Is Beautiful

Christopher Knowles, *The Sundance Kid Is Beautiful*.

## Robert Wilson

### *Lecture on Nothing* by John Cage

November 11, 12, 13 and 14 at 8 p.m.

In his discussions with the Louvre relating to the plans for his residency, Robert Wilson often spoke of John Cage's determining influence. By choosing to perform the *Lecture on Nothing* given by the composer in New York in 1949, Wilson pays tribute to "something entirely new, a completely different mode of thought, an experience of limitless freedom." Wilson embraces this poetic manifesto—more composed than written—remaining marvelously faithful to Cage's mischievous sense of humor and rebellious spirit.

*Lecture on Nothing*, performed by Robert Wilson, is a commission of the RuhrTriennale.

## Christopher Knowles

### *The Sundance Kid Is Beautiful*

November 16 at 8 p.m., November 17 at 4 p.m.

In 1973, Robert Wilson met Christopher Knowles, a 14-year-old autistic child who enjoyed putting together sound collages on magnetic tape. They soon began a fruitful collaboration, which resulted in *A Letter for Queen Victoria*, presented in 1974, and the libretto for *Einstein on the Beach*, the celebrated opera by Robert Wilson, Philip Glass and Lucinda Childs, first performed in 1976, which is to be presented at the Théâtre du Châtelet (January 8–12, 2014). Today, Knowles is an artist widely acclaimed for his visual works (including some acquired by MoMA in New York) and his performance pieces, where he uses language in a repetitive manner as a kind of minimalist soundscape.



The series "Portrait Robert Wilson" also features the following events:

Robert Wilson / Mikhail Baryshnikov / Willem Dafoe

*The Old Woman* after Daniil Kharms  
Théâtre de la Ville, November 6–23, 2013

Robert Wilson / CocoRosie  
*Peter Pan* by James Matthew Barrie  
Théâtre de la Ville, December 12–20, 2013

Philip Glass / Robert Wilson  
*Einstein on the Beach*  
Théâtre du Châtelet, January 8–12, 2014

## CocoRosie

### *Concert/Performance*

December 4 at 7 p.m. and 9 p.m.

Always in sync with the music of his time, Robert Wilson has collaborated with CocoRosie to create one of his latest theater works, a new production of *Peter Pan*, which had its premiere at the Berliner Ensemble (to be presented at the Théâtre de la Ville, November 6–23, 2013). This American "freak folk" duo formed in 2003 by the Casady sisters Bianca ("Coco") and Sierra ("Rosie") creates music that bridges opera with gospel and pop. A hybrid presentation, neither entirely a concert nor entirely a performance piece, CocoRosie offers a musical and visual feast at the Louvre that takes a unique approach to conveying the magic of the duo's encounter with Robert Wilson's artistic universe.

## Face to face, lectures and films

### About Paul Thek (1933–1988)

**November 18 at 8 p.m.**

With Robert Wilson and Elisabeth Sussman, curator, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

The trailblazing and unusual work of Paul Thek, who rose to prominence on the alternative New York scene in the 1960s, has exerted a profound influence on Robert Wilson's work in the visual arts.



Paul Thek, *Untitled* (1966–67), from the series "Technological Reliquaries"  
© Watermill Center Collection

### ***Bob Wilson's Life and Death of Marina Abramović***

Directed by Giada Colagrande (Italy, 2012, 58 min.)

**November 22 at 5 p.m.**

One day, the famed Serbian performance artist Marina Abramović asked Robert Wilson to film her funeral. This idea gave birth to a biographical project that has resulted in one of the most compelling theater works conceived and directed by Robert Wilson in recent years.

**Discussion following the screening with the director and Willem Dafoe**

### **Meet Robert Wilson**

**November 22 at 8 p.m.**

Robert Wilson comments upon the development of his creative process, presenting a set of rare archival documents brought together especially for his residency at the Louvre. This encounter covers all the arts on which Wilson has left his mark with his radical vision of the stage: plays, operas, dance, video art, performance pieces, etc.

### ***Die Walküre* by Richard Wagner**

Christoph Eschenbach (conductor)

Robert Wilson (director, lighting design)

With Peter Seiffert, Stephen Milling, Jukka Rasilainen, Linda Watson.

**November 23 at 3 p.m.**

Robert Wilson's work has profoundly transformed our perspective on opera. This is especially the case for one of the pillars of the repertoire, Richard Wagner's "Ring" cycle. This first-ever screening film documents Robert Wilson's work as an opera director: an unabridged account directed by Philippe Béziat, of the production of *Die Walküre* presented at the Théâtre du Châtelet in 2006.

### **From Video 50 to Video Portraits: Robert Wilson's Video Oeuvre**

**November 24 at 3 p.m.**

Already in the late 1970s, Robert Wilson rightly grasped the artistic potential of video as a medium. This screening offers the chance to discover rare documents, including a video produced by Wilson taking as its starting point an excerpt from *Deafman Glance*, revealing the unity of his aesthetic universe, from stage to screen.

### **Making of a Man of the Theater**

**November 30 at 3 p.m.**

This presentation tracing the origins of Robert Wilson's stage work looks in particular at *Deafman Glance* and includes a series of previously unreleased documents from the artist's personal archives, including a film on the Watermill Center (1970) and another on his legendary contribution to the Shiraz Festival (1972).



*The Life and Death of Marina Abramović*  
© Lucie Jansch

In the auditorium



*Lecture on Nothing* de John Cage  
© Wonge Bergmann für die Ruhrtriennale, 2012

## Robert Wilson: Portrait of the Artist as a Performer

November 30 at 5:30 p.m.

An inventive stage director and a magician of lighting design, Robert Wilson is also a remarkable performer, having worked as an actor, dancer, even a clown. Rare documents dating from the 1960s bear witness to this aspect of his work, as does his unforgettable interpretation of Hamlet's soliloquy.

### Robert Wilson and Dance

December 1 at 11:30 a.m. at the Cinémathèque française

Reservations: [www.cinematheque.fr](http://www.cinematheque.fr)

*Program presented by the Cinémathèque de la Danse, Centre national de la Danse.*

A series of films focusing on Robert Wilson's work as a choreographer. This archival footage offers a rare and unique opportunity to explore and gain insight into Wilson's highly personal, visual and poetic style.

#### Visitor information

##### Exhibition locations

Salle de la Chapelle

##### Hours

Open every day except Tuesdays, from 9 a.m. to 5:45 p.m. Evening hours on Wednesdays and Fridays until 9:30 p.m.

##### Admission fees

Access to the exhibition is included in the purchase of an admission to the museum's permanent collections: €12. Free admission for youths under 18, EU residents under 26, teachers holding the "Pass Education", the unemployed, and holders of the "Louvre Familles", "Louvre Jeunes", "Louvre Professionnels" or "Amis du Louvre" cards at all times, and for all visitors the first Sunday of each month.

**Unless otherwise indicated, all performances, films, discussions and lectures are presented in the Auditorium du Louvre under the pyramid**

**Tickets priced from €3 to €26**

##### Reservations

- At the museum box office Monday, Thursday and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5:15 p.m.; Wednesday and Friday from 9 a.m. to 7:15 p.m. Tickets available from September 4.
- By telephone +33 (0)1 40 20 55 00 Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. (credit card purchases only)
- At [www.fnac.com](http://www.fnac.com)

##### Further information

[www.louvre.fr](http://www.louvre.fr)