



AARON TAYLOR KUFFNER

Aaron Taylor Kuffner is an artist whose pieces often take the form of long term multi year projects that involve in depth research, collaboration with field experts and development of specialized skill sets.

Each project is uniquely attached to the idea of providing conceptual tools that further the evolution of consciousness through experiences of beauty and the sublime. In doing so he reaches far outside of conventions pushing the role of art to be a form of service to society.

Through his work Kuffner has become a composer, sculptor, electronic music producer, machinist, installation artist, theater director, engineer, instrument builder, street artist, poetic terrorist, social activist, community radio advocate, multi-channel sound system engineer, and producer of social sculptures and hyperbolic events ranging in scale from intimate finite happenings to the epic and fabled.

As a solo artist, with the Gamelatron and other projects and collaborations, Kuffner has performed or presented work more than 400 times in 30 countries in the last twenty three years. From 2001- 2013 he notably received grants, in-kind support and awards from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts (through the Clocktower Gallery), The Trust for Mutual Understanding, The Experimental Television Center with The New York Council for the Arts, Ableton Gmhb, The CEC Artslink, Scope Arts, Artist Wanted, Techshop, The New Orleans Airlift, The Indonesian Foreign Ministry, The Dharmasiswa Scholarship, The Berlin Arts Council, EU / European Commission, I-D media Berlin, Schloss Brollin Art Labor, James F. Robison Foundation, The Soros Foundation, Swiss Air, The Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation and The US Artists International partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. After 2013, Kuffner's Gamelatron project provided a sustainable financial model and he has since not applied for public funds so as not to take away financial opportunities from other artists. In 2019 Kuffner created the Gamelatron Project Foundation dedicated to providing therapeutic experiences for communities in need.

Kuffner's Gamelatron sonic kinetic sculptures, have notably exhibited at the 56th Venice Biennale, Smithsonian American Art Museum Renwick Gallery and Sackler Gallery, Cincinnati Art Museum, Hammer Museum, The Drawing Center, Oakland Museum of California, Academy Art Museum, Lyman Allyn Museum, München Stadtmuseum, The Clocktower Gallery (Curated by Alanna Heiss), In the Temple and Man at Burningman, Federal Hall National Park, ISA Art and Design Jakarta, and with Sundaram Tagore Galleries in New York, Honk Kong and Singapore 2011 – 2015.



Higher Education

Institut Seni Indonesia di Yogyakarta, Karawitan and Ethnomusicology 2003 - 2006

San Francisco Art Institute, New Genres, 1996

Syracuse University, School of Visual and Performing Arts, 1993 – 1995

Advanced Classes, Private Lessons and Apprenticeships

Agus Purnomo, bronze gong fabrication, apprenticeship 2013 - 2015

Harry Gold, patina and metal finishing, private lessons 2014

Nikki Romanello, TIG welding of non-ferrous metals, private lessons 2013

League of Electronic Musical Urban Robots, Physical Computing and Machining, Apprenticeship 2008 – 2009

Madagascar Institute, Steel Fabrication, Pyrotechnics, Advanced Classes 2007 - 2008

Made Rindhi, bronze key fabrication and tuning, apprenticeship 2004 - 2008

Wayan Sadera, Gamelan Selonding Techniques, Private Lessons 2004 - 2006

Ivan Flores, Percussion Training, Private Lessons 2004 - 2005

Wayan Sinen, Balinese Gamelan Techniques, Private Lessons 2003 - 2004



The Gamelatron Project, sonic kinetic sculptures

The Gamelatron is the world's first fully robotic gamelan orchestra. A Gamelatron is a sound producing kinetic sculpture presented as site-specific installations, and stand alone art works by Aaron Taylor Kuffner. Gamelatrons are made from traditional bronze, brass and iron instruments from Indonesia's gamelan tradition, retrofitted with mechanical mallets on sculptural mounting systems. The pieces are connected to a network that transcribes digital compositions into an array of electrical pulsations that results in a ghostly musical automaton.

Gamelatrons draws on the thousand-year-old sonic tradition of Indonesia—Gamelan—and the emerging field of robotics to create magical, viscerally-powerful, site-specific performances, installations and stand alone art works. Handcrafted, masterfully-tuned orchestras of vibraphones, drums, chimes, bells and resonating bronze gongs are played by mechanical mallets installed to immerse the audience in living kinetic sculptures.

The artworks' mission is to expand the legacy and creative cultural power of gamelan through innovation. The Gamelatron Project exposes us to the rich and profound nature of resonance and its effect on the psyche. It strives to create a harmony in the tension of fusing the East and the West, the Modern and the Ancient. The Gamelatron's contrasting materials and mechanisms tell us a story of globalization and modernization. The Gamelatron Project re-contextualizes tradition and grants artistic license to creatively re-engineer its potential role in a changing society. Principal artist Aaron Taylor Kuffner uses exhibitions of the Gamelatrons to create sanctuaries both in public and private spaces. He views the body of the work as an offering to the observer.

Over the last 10 years Kuffner has created over 50 Gamelatrons of various size, scale and purpose.



Exhibitions

Art Jakarta Garden Sculpture, ISA Art Gallery, Jakarta, 2022
Supernova, ISA Art Gallery, Jakarta, 2021
Oakland Museum of California 2019 – 2020
Academy Art Museum, Easton, MD 2019 – 2020
Center for the Arts, Jackson Hole, WY 2019
Cincinnati Art Museum, 2019
Gamelatron : Sonic Kinetic Sculptures, ISA Art Gallery, Jakarta, 2018
Münchener Stadtmuseum, Munich, Germany, 2018
Smithsonian Institute Renwick Gallery, DC 2018
Crossing Collective, Solo Show, Chelsea, NY 2018
The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA 2017
The Chimney, Brooklyn, NY 2017
The Drawing Center, Soho, NY 2016
The New York Hall of Science, Queens, NY 2015
The 56th Venice Biennale, Palazzo Grimani 2015
The Chimney, Brooklyn, NY 2015
Ace Hotel, New York, 2014
Hudson Valley Museum of Contemporary Art, 2014
Smithsonian Institute Sackler Gallery, DC 2013
Sundaram Tagore Gallery, Hong Kong 2013
Times Square Alliance, New York 2013
Sundaram Tagore Gallery, Singapore 2013
The Clocktower Gallery, New York, NY 2012
Metro Toronto Convention Center, Toronto, CN 2012
TechShop Annex, San Francisco, CA 2011 – 2014
Music Box Shanty Town, New Orleans, LA 2011
The University of Colorado at Boulder 2011
Sundaram Tagore Gallery, Chelsea NYC 2011