

The Year in Artful Music (and Musicful Art): Sounds & & Visions from 2021

In a year when the borders in between art and whatever else continued to grow ever more permeable and open up to potentiality, fans of art-adjacent music (and vice-versa) had much to value. Historic examples resided on to reveal that the past remained in lots of methods much more open and daring than today, and after that some modern happenings recommended we have a lot to anticipate in the future still. Herewith, a few of 2021's most cherished offerings in the world of artistic music (and musicful art).

Still from *The Velvet Underground*(2021). Courtesy Apple Television

The Velvet Underground

Todd Haynes's impressionistic documentary about the multimedia incubation station that was the Velvet Underground did a devoted task of demonstrating how the band was more than simply a band. The music they made still knocks one's socks off for how particular it was and, in lots of methods, continues to be. Haynes likewise panned back in remarkable style to reveal the group's prismatic practice in a broadened field. Performances with light reveals that were as innovative as the music they conjured and live soundtracks to spazz-outs of various kinds at Andy Warhol's Factory were all part the Velvet Underground's world— and what a world it was.

Installation view of “Organic Music Societies: Don and Moki Cherry” at Blank Forms. *Courtesy Blank Forms*

Don + Moki Cherry at Blank Forms

The powerful life-and-art collaboration in between Don and Moki Cherry was the topic of a jewel-box gallery program in Brooklyn along with a 500- page book filled with research study and analysis of an intermedia practice that consisted of Don’s extensive jazz and Moki’s visions in paintings, fabrics, and more. Both were the work of Blank Forms, a wandering curatorial platform that opened both a gallery and an efficiency area this year– appealing far more to come.

Fred Moten at Vision Festival

The very first show I saw after more than a year of craving live-music experiences was an unique night at the long-running Vision Festival, which this year took control of Pioneer Works in Brooklyn. All Vision Festival nights are unique, however this night, commemorating the celebration’s 25 th year, consisted of specifically fantastic group interaction by Fly or Die and the David Murray Octet Revival– plus an option trio including bassist Brendon Lopez, drummer Gerald Cleaver, and the excellent Fred Moten. Numerous in the art world understand Moten for his field-expanding writing in brochures and publications of various kinds, however his on-stage version tapped his far-ranging spirit as a poet by checking out verses that appeared to be a mix of improvisations and invocations of words that had actually been lingering to be spoken/sung for far too long.

Jónsi, *Eldfjall (Volcano) 1*, 2021. COURTESY THE ARTIST AND TANYA BONAKDAR GALLERY, NEW YORK/LOS ANGELES

Jónsi at Tanya Bonakdar Gallery

As the diva and often guitar-bower for the Icelandic band Sigur Rós, Jónsi has actually made a wealth of transcendent music given that breaking out in the late 1990 s. He made a huge relocation as an artist of various kind this year with a gallery program in New York at Tanya Bonakdar, a gallery that initially revealed his work in Los Angeles in 2019. Sculptures communicated noise, as did wall works that might be called paintings (with speakers concealed below their surface areas). And the majority of it was steeped with aromas of Jónsi's own designing— producing a multi-sensory experience that will not quickly be forgotten.

Poetry by Sun Ra. *Tom VanEynde*

Sun Ra poetry books from Corbett vs. Dempsey

Few cultural figures of any kind deserve as much continual attention as has actually been paid to the interstellar jazz visionary Sun Ra, who still is worthy of to be understood more totally to everyone. The Chicago gallery Corbett vs. Dempsey assisted in the service of that by installing an exhibit and releasing 4 books of Ra's poetry (*Jazz By Sun Ra*, *Jazz In Silhouette*, *The Immeasurable Equation*, and *Extensions Out: The Immeasurable Equation Vol. II*) in facsimile editions that protected the homegrown, homemade way in which he released a few of the most far-out concepts of his– or any other– time.

The cover for Dia's edition of La Monte Young's *Trio for Strings* Courtesy Dia Art Foundation

La Monte Young re-release treasure trove

The variety of licensed and available (read: not bootlegged or long out-of-print) La Monte Young recordings readily available to the minimalism-inclined public increased by numerous percent this year, starting with a number of landmarks works set up on digital type on Bandcamp and, then, previously this month, with a 4-LP vinyl box set launched by the Dia Art Foundation in homage to Young's 1958 structure *Trio for Strings* The chance to hear music of Young's— specifically his huge *The Well-Tuned Piano in the Magenta Lights* “87 V 10 6:43:00 PM– 87 V 11 1:07:45 AM NYC”— in hi-fi kind is a genuine true blessing.

IN MEMORIAM

We lost numerous a fertile musical mind this year— a lot of to pay ideal homage. Amongst the most difficult of the difficult news came early, in January, when word came down that the electronic-music maker and muse **Sophie** passed away in a mishap in Greece, at the young age of 34 **Milford Graves** passed in February, at the age of 79— and in the middle of some much-deserved art-world attention around exhibits of his work at ICA Philadelphia and Artists Space in New York. And December has actually been especially dark, as the progressive author **Alvin Lucier** passed away at 90 (any person who has yet to hear his tape/text piece *I Am Sitting in a Room* ought to do so ASAP), and **Greg Tate** passed at 64 (the editors of *ARTnews* were fortunate to get to release Tate on celebration in the last few years). Here's to lives well-lived— and all the sort of impact that stay to be made manifest.

Source: [The Year in Artful Music \(and Musicful Art\): Sounds & Visions from 2021](#)