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Duke Performances Presents U.S. Premiere of Extraordinary Double-Bill: Bang on A Can Co-Founder Michael Gordon’s Luminous *Timber* and *Rushes*

March 8, 2016, Durham, NC — Duke Performances presents the U.S. premiere of adventurous composer Michael Gordon’s immersive double-bill of *Timber* and *Rushes*. *Timber* and *Rushes* plays for two performances only, **Friday, April 22 & Saturday, April 23 at 8 PM** at a new downtown warehouse space dedicated to the arts, **Durham Fruit & Produce Company**. The venue for this sitespecific, unique-to-Durham performance was chosen to enhance the enveloping nature of Gordon’s music. The two works will be performed in adjacent rooms, one after the other, with the audience flowing from one space to the next during intermission.

*Timber* has been praised for its “hypnotic intensity” by *The New York Times* and has been called “aural hypnosis” (*The New Yorker*) and “a cult classic” (*The Guardian*). *The Boston Globe* marveled at its “ethereal aura of sound.” A mesmerizing musical tour-de-force, *Timber* is scored for six percussionists playing amplified two-by-fours. Characterized by its physicality, its theatricality, and the extreme technical demands it places on its performers, *Timber* explores multidimensional polyrhythmic layers and waves of texture, with each of the players’ hands inhabiting different rhythmic and dynamic worlds simultaneously. *Timber* is performed (and was co-commissioned) by **Mantra Percussion**, an energetic young ensemble specializing in new works by living composers.

*Rushes*, scored for seven bassoons and performed by the **Rushes Ensemble**, is the perfect complement to *Timber*: it brings out tonal, timbral, and percussive aspects of the warmest and most sonorous of the woodwind instruments, and is meant to induce a quasi-meditative, almost ecstatic state. “The name comes from the tall grass that’s reminiscent of the reeds bassoon players use,” Gordon told the *Times-Union*. “It also refers to an ecstatic rush, a euphoria that I’m trying to build. I wanted to create something that was an environment or a spectacle that the listeners and players entered into. The music unfolds gradually, like taking a walk through a landscape — but at the same time it’s propulsive, rhythmic, and visceral.”

Composer **Michael Gordon’s** music merges rhythmic invention with textural exploration, embodying, in the words of *The New Yorker*’s Alex Ross, “the fury of punk rock, the nervous brilliance of free jazz, and the intransigence of classical modernism.” Over the past twenty-five years, Gordon has produced a body of work encompassing dance, opera, oratorio, major orchestral commissions, and works conceived for the recording studio. Transcending categorization, his music represents the collision of mysterious introspection and brutal directness. Michael Gordon is a co-founder of legendary New York music collective Bang on a Can.

Duke Performances is at the forefront of university performing arts presenters nationwide, attracting artists of the highest caliber and commissioning, developing, and producing a growing number of new works for the world stage.

DUKE PERFORMANCES MEDIA CONTACT
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