

“SUN PIANO,” A MUSICAL PERFORMANCE BY LARAAJI IN THE CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA ANNUNCIATA IN CHIESA ROSSA, ON 23 APRIL 2025 IN MILAN

Milan, 10 March 2025 – Fondazione Prada with Threes presents a live performance by American composer Laraaji, who will play his latest album, *Sun Piano* (2020). Organized by Threes in collaboration with Fondazione Prada, the concert will take place in the Church of Santa Maria Annunciata in Chiesa Rossa in Milan on Wednesday, 23 April 2025, at 8 p.m.

The church’s interior, designed by Giovanni Muzio in 1932, houses since 1997 the site-specific light installation *Untitled* by American minimalist artist Dan Flavin, produced by Fondazione Prada in collaboration with the Dia Center for the Arts in New York and Dan Flavin Estate. Transformed by the chromatic sequence created by Flavin’s neon, the church’s spaces become an ideal stage for the performance by Edward Larry Gordon, aka Laraaji (Philadelphia, 1943), one of the most influential and charismatic Ambient and New Age musicians.

Sun Piano (2020) is the first album in a trilogy composed by Laraaji that, compared to his most famous jam sessions made with electronically modified kithara, marks his comeback to the piano, the first instrument he learned to play. Registered in a church in Brooklyn, *Sun Piano* includes improvised R&B, soul, and New Age tracks that create meditative and thoughtful music. The common feature of each composition is a recurring metaphor in the artist’s albums—the sun as a spiritual guide and a source of renovation.

As Laraaji states, “The piano is an instrument that gives voice to how I hold space for light... If you were sitting in the church, you’d look and see that there’s a man at the piano, someone playing a physical instrument. However, were you to close your eyes and let the piano coax, guide and escort the emotional imagination, there is a good chance that you would feel a lightness. A luminosity.”

“Sun Piano” is the fifth collaboration between Fondazione Prada and Threes to combine sonic experimentation with the spatial and visual research of Flavin’s site-specific intervention. Since 2017, the Church of Santa Maria Annunciata in Chiesa Rossa has hosted concerts and performances by well-known and up-and-coming artists, such as William Basinski (2017), Charlemagne Palestine (2018), Ellen Arkbro (2021), Arvö Part (2019), Maria Horn (2022), FUJIIIIIIIIIIITA (2023), Marta De Pascalis (2024), and Tashi Wada with Julia Holter (2024). On 10 December 2025, American composer and organist Kali Malone will present a new live performance.

Press contacts

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Information

Laraaji's "Sun Piano" concert, organized by Threes in collaboration with Fondazione Prada, will take place on Wednesday, 23 April 2025 at 8 pm in the Church of Santa Maria Annunciata in Chiesa Rossa (Via Neera 24, Milan).

Tickets are available at the following link: <https://link.dice.fm/e35a2b9f511c>

Biographical notes

After studying composition and piano at Howard University in Washington D.C. in the 1950s, Laraaji gained public recognition thanks to the collaboration with Brian Eno for *Ambient 3: Day Of Radiance*, published in 1980 and considered a classic of Ambient music. Throughout his career, he recorded over 50 albums crossing many genres—from R&B to soul, from synth to mantric pop—and experimenting with different instruments, such as the kithara, the hammered dulcimer, the kalimba, the synthesizer, and the piano, as well as natural sounds and voices. Lately, Laraaji has collaborated with artists from the underground scene, such as Dallas Acid and Sun Araw, singer and composer Solange, and singer-songwriter Jonathan Wilson. Laraaji's recordings have been issued by record labels All Saints, Numero Group, Light In The Attic, Leaving Records, and Stones Throw Records.

***Untitled* by Dan Flavin**

In 1996, American artist Dan Flavin (New York 1933–1996) accepted the invitation of priest Giulio Greco to conceive a work that marked the centerpiece of the restoration and renovation of the Church of Santa Maria Annunciata in Chiesa Rossa in Milan, designed by Giovanni Muzio in 1932. In 1997, on the occasion of the exhibition dedicated to Flavin, Fondazione Prada produced his posthumous project with the collaboration of New York's Dia Center for the Arts and Dan Flavin Estate. *Untitled* is a site-specific work made of green, blue, pink, golden, and ultraviolet lighting that crosses the church's nave, transept, and apse, creating a chromatic succession that suggests the natural "night-dawn-day" progression of light. Flavin is known for his light sculptures in the form of fluorescent tubes, often conceived for a specific architectural context to highlight its structure, contradictions, and metamorphosis. His essential approach, his limited vocabulary of forms and colors, and the discovery of light art have earned Flavin a reputation as a precursor and one of the leading exponents of Minimalism. Since the early 1960s, he undertook systematic research in relation to real sources of light. The essential elements of his production are industrial fluorescent neon tubes, arranged in simple and symmetrical combinations. Directly referring to

readymade, neon becomes a basic component to articulate in potentially infinite compositions. Thanks to his thorough knowledge of theology and art history, Flavin started his career with “icons”—monochrome square paintings with light devices and lightbulbs on their surface—and ended it with a project inside a church. However, the artist never gave a symbolic or spiritual interpretation to his work.

In collaboration with

