



**IHME**  
CONTEMPORARY  
ART FESTIVAL

**Press release 25 October 2016**

### **IHME Project 2017 is The Black Charismatic**

*“Charismatic is the gift of the black people: the power that comes from the animation of the body, from being with others and yet focusing on the internal, the meditative and the durational.” – Theaster Gates*

The person chosen to devise IHME Project 2017 is the Chicago-based African-American artist **Theaster Gates** (b. 1973). Gates’ new project for Helsinki will present one of the cornerstones of his collective artistic production: the experimental jazz group **Black Monks of Mississippi**. The IHME project will have four parts: a video installation in public space, a film documenting the jazz group, their live performance and a music album. The title of the Project, *The Black Charismatic*, refers to the common thread running through Gates’ work, namely the history and present of black people and the way that black culture has changed the world. [Read more about the IHME Project 2017 >](#)

**Theaster Gates will give a public talk – at 18:00 on Thursday, 27 October in [the Exhibition Laboratory, University of the Arts Helsinki \(Merimiehenkatu 36\)](#) – about his artistic practice, music as a contemporary art-making practice, and art in public space. Admission is free, with limited seating available on a first-come-first-served basis. [Read more >](#)**

Gates was invited to create IHME Project 2017 because he is an artist who constantly explores what contemporary art can be. He is a potter, an urban planner and a collector, as well as a singer. Gates’ works have been shown in numerous international exhibitions, e.g. Documenta 13 – Kassel in 2012 and La Biennale di Venezia in 2015. Gates is the winner of the 2015 Artes Mundi prize, founder of the non-profit Rebuild Foundation, and currently Professor in the Department of Visual Arts, University of Chicago. This is the first time his work is being shown in Finland and the Nordic region. [Read more about the artist >](#)

Next year’s programme of talks and films will have a new location and structure, with new collaborators who will join IHME in programming the Festival. [Read more about the new arrangements >](#)

The IHME Contemporary Art Festival was founded and is funded by Pro Arte Foundation Finland. Kone Foundation is supporting IHME’s work during 2015-2017.

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**Press materials and photos:** [www.ihmefestival.fi/en](http://www.ihmefestival.fi/en) > **Media** For a password contact Communications Officer **Suvi Korhonen**, [suvi.korhonen@ihmefestival.fi](mailto:suvi.korhonen@ihmefestival.fi), +358 (0)45 632 6267

*Each year, IHME produces a work of art in public space by an international artist. A multi-faceted Festival Programme delivers new dimensions to the commissioned artwork, encourages independent thought and sparks discussion. IHME is open to everyone who is interested in life, society and contemporary art.*

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