

Chris Kallmyer

Los Angeles Department of Weather Modification: Northern Bureau

JANUARY 29 - FEBRUARY 14, 2015

Sound artist Chris Kallmyer and the Los Angeles Department of Weather Modification establish their Northern Bureau headquarters at Southern Exposure. With five live programs and a gallery installation, the LADWM continue their sonic explorations into our experience of weather and cultural history of weather modification practices. Kallmyer and other musicians from the LADWM use immersive sound, ritual and radical environmental experiments to end the California drought and create weather.

Events

LADWMNB Ends the Drought

THURSDAY, JANUARY 29, 2015

7:30 - 9:00 PM

The drought comes to an end as we dance it out and perform long-trusted drought-ending rituals, such as an ancient Roman stone dragging ceremony, the tossing of water from a high place and a gathering of twins.

Fog Meditation

SATURDAY, JANUARY 31, 2015

2:00 - 4:00 PM

Join Kallmyer and the LADWM Mindfulness Coordinator, Kirithi Nath, for a group meditation and the performance of fog-inspired music. Distant horns and white-out-conditions take us back to a pre-global warming San Francisco summer. Nath guides a meditation that connects us with our inner wisdom and outer foginess. Space is limited to 20 participants, RSVP to programs@soex.org.

Note: Wear warm, comfortable clothing and bring a cushion. We will be sitting and meditating. Chairs will also be available.

Coming up

Olivia Mole

YOGAFLOGOGO

FEBRUARY 21 - MARCH 7, 2015

Rain Ragas

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2015

7:30 - 9:00 PM

In North India, music regularly ushers in the monsoon season. Join the LADWM for a concert of traditional and experimental ragas on sarode and tabla. Sarode player Alam Khan and tabla player William Rosset encourage precipitation with rain-inspiring ragas.

American Rainmaker: A Weather Opera

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2015

7:30 - 9:00 PM

Weather Consultants Andrew Tholl and Archie Carey join Kallmyer to celebrate the early American rainmaker, Charles Hatfield. The LADWM examines Hatfield's legacy and the human dimension of weather modification through experimental sound work for a chamber ensemble, weather reports and auto-tuned renditions of Motown hits. The concert is preceded and interrupted by a casual lecture on weather modification by the field director himself.

Love, Thunder

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2015

2:00 - 4:00 PM

The LADWM's annual Valentines Day celebration articulates a love letter from precipitation to the people of San Francisco. Thunder needs you and wants you back. Bring an umbrella and a friend. Really, BYO umbrella.

On Western Cloud Seeding

Weather modification points to the way we understand our western cities, the way we change our common landscape and how we make a new California.

No places have modified the weather so aggressively as China with their 37,000 person Beijing Weather Modification Office, Russia with their surface to air missiles laced with rain making solutions, and the Western United States. In the West, we have modified the weather since 1946, when Vincent Schaefer and Bernard Vonnegut (Kurt's brother) invented modern day cloud seeding (the application of silver iodide into rain clouds to increase precipitation). The first weather modification companies were born in this post-WWII era, including companies like North American Weather Consultants, Weather Modification Inc. and Just Clouds. These groups are hired by state and local governments (including the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power and the Northern California Water District) to seed clouds, fill reservoirs and increase snowpack.

Weather modification might seem sinister, but it is common in the West. Aside from vast environmental changes that can be traced to inadvertent forms of weather modification, the companies that practice cloud seeding struggle to succeed or even prove their services actually work. The clouds have more power; the environment, with its size and position has the upper hand. The West will stay arid despite these attempts.

Los Angeles Department of Weather Modification

Sound is a tool that makes the invisible visible. In my work, everyday objects and activities form experiences with sound that point to who we are and where we live. I'm interested in creating work that invites one to be more present. Workshops, installations and site-based experiences invite a rethinking of traditional performer/audience relationships. These projects pose the questions: How do you ask someone to listen without saying the word? How do you invite someone to observe something so common as the weather? Like sound, weather is an analog for the things that you cannot see.

We understand the world through our affiliations, loose or formal. We identify ourselves and organize our thoughts through clubs, ensembles, businesses, civic groups and the government. If many lend focus all at once to a sound, we call it a concert. In terms of the weather, one could think of a city as a type of *weather club*. When you choose to live in a place like San Francisco or Los Angeles, you make a tacit agreement to experience weather endemic to that location. We all battle, celebrate, ignore and observe this weather together.

I started a civic ensemble, the Los Angeles Department of Weather Modification (LADWM) as a performing group that invites people to get together and aggressively address the weather, weather modification and the idea of the arid Western city. The LADWM has and will organize perceptual experiments for the public at large: a series of rituals, concerts, gathering, observances, meditations on the emergent potential of fog, lamentations of long droughts and celebrations of weather modification folklore.

—Chris Kallmyer