

SOPHIA AL-MARIA, TOSH BASCO (BOYCHILD) AND KELSEY LU RELEASE A NEW SOUND WORK TO MARK WINTER EQUINOX 2020

Press Release
21 December 2020



Tosh Basco, *tarax'sup?*, 2020. Cover art. Courtesy the artist.

The Serpentine is delighted to share this gift for the season: *tarax'sup?* is a short meditative sound work written and performed by Sophia Al-Maria, with a musical score by Kelsey Lu and cover artwork by Tosh Basco (boychild). Developed collaboratively throughout late 2020, *tarax'sup?* launches on the Winter Equinox on **Monday 21 December 2020**, a solstice astronomers are calling 'The Great Conjunction' wherein Jupiter and Saturn will have their closest observable coalescence since 1623. *tarax'sup?* can be experienced at tarax.live, it can also be streamed or downloaded from the [Serpentine website](https://serpentine.org) or via the [Serpentine Podcast](https://serpentine.org) feed. A poster designed by Jonna Mayer is also available to download.



Sophia Al-Maria said: “It’s a gift for anyone who needs a peaceful place to tend and grow and go when times are tough. It can be practiced as often as needed and kept as a companion to listen to or read whenever you are in need of grounding.”

This audio exercise takes the image of the dandelion (*taraxacum officinale*) and its history as a medicinal agent at its centre to explore the ‘seeding’ of ideas, kinship, our connection to nature, and abolitionist thinking through breathwork, deep listening and the principles of guided meditation imagery. *tarax’sup?* can be used at home as a means to access a different kind of space, and can also be used in environments such as on a daily walk as a way to connect to your surroundings. It encourages a certain kind of openness to the magic that comes from getting in touch with each other and with ourselves. For these artists, standardising and sharing healing methodologies is critical both to survival and the wider project of reworlding. The cover art, an ‘enlightened dandelion’ by artist Tosh Basco (boychild) is an honest icon for the starry-eyed but manic nature of our times.

Bettina Korek, CEO and Hans Ulrich Obrist, Artistic Director, Serpentine Galleries said:

“We are delighted to share this new artwork from our long-term friend and collaborator Sophia Al-Maria made with the incredible artists Tosh Basco (boychild) and Kelsey Lu. At the time when we have had to close our physical doors in the interest of safety, we are so glad to be able to share an end of year gift that can be accessed anywhere and at any time. *tarax’sup?* offers light and restoration through sound in a moment when these things can be difficult to find.”

#Taraxos #Taraxsup

NOTES TO EDITORS

tarax’sup? is a prelude to Sophia Al-Maria’s ongoing project with the Serpentine, *Taraxos*, which ruminates on the dandelion. It marks a continuation of an long-standing relationship with the artist who co-curated the Serpentine’s Miracle Marathon in 2016, participated in both the 2014 Extinction and 2015 Transformation Marathons, and whose films have been screened at a number of Serpentine Cinema events and symposia, most recently as part of the General Ecology programme.

tarax’sup? is a collaborative project between Sophia Al-Maria, Tosh Basco, Kelsey Lu and many more to come. Recorded by Thibault Verdron in Arles, France with special thanks to LUMA Foundation. Mastered by Heba Kadry.

Curated and produced at the Serpentine Galleries by Tamar Clarke-Brown, Eva Jäger, Melissa Blanchflower and Kay Watson

Fonts selected by Louis Gabriel

Design by Jonna Mayer

Microsite by Black Shuck Collective

Dedicated to the memory of Rainbow, canine companion of artist Precious Okoyomon.



About Sophia Al-Maria

Sophia Al-Maria is a Qatari-American artist who lives in London. Though her work spans many disciplines including drawing, film and screenwriting for TV, it is united by a preoccupation with the power of storytelling and myth, and in particular with imagining revisionist histories and alternative futures. Her work has been exhibited and published internationally and collaboration remains a fundamental principle of her expansive practice. Sophia was the co-curator of the Serpentine Miracle Marathon in 2016, participated in the 2014 Extinction and 2015 Transformation Marathons and her films have been screened widely at Serpentine Cinemas and symposia, most recently as part of the General Ecology programme.

About Tosh Basco

Tosh Basco is an American artist, performer and photographer, also known as 'boychild.' Her practice is rooted in collaboration, maintaining improvisation as a mode of survival and world-building. She often works in movement and dance as a way to expand the limits of language, exploring the thresholds where becoming meets representation.

About Kelsey Lu

Kelsey Lu is a classically trained cellist and polymuse from Charlotte, North Carolina currently based in London. Lu's artistic practice channels intersections between visual arts, performance, healing activism and music. In addition to their solo work, they find collaborations to be fundamental in the expansion of their practice which has brought them to intertwine with artists across a wide array of disciplines from within music, film, fashion and the fine arts.

About the Serpentine

Championing new ideas in contemporary art since 1970, the Serpentine has presented pioneering exhibitions for half a century from a wide range of emerging practitioners to the most internationally recognised artists of our time. Across two sites in London's Kensington Gardens, the Serpentine Galleries present a year-round, free programme of exhibitions, education, architecture, live events and technological innovation, in the park and beyond.

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Supported using public funding by
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