

Introduction of David Byrne and Michel Lambot

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John Adams Institute

Over a year ago, when I first heard that the John Adams Institute was planning to bring David Byrne over to give a lecture, I literally begged to be involved in some way. There was nothing I wouldn't do be given the privilege of moderating a discussion with the creative genius who had been one of the driving forces behind the band Talking Heads in the 1970s and 1980s, and whose work I've admired for so many years. So when I was finally offered the job, I felt both enormously excited and overwhelming terrified at the prospect of introducing one of my personal idols.

David Byrne is still best-known to many for his musical work as part of the emerging post-punk 'New Wave' scene that revolved around the legendary club CBGB's in New York, and for his many groundbreaking musical projects, both as part of Talking Heads and in collaboration with other artists, most notably Brian Eno. But placing too much focus on his early career runs the risk of identifying him too strongly as a legend, and thereby diminishing his astonishing work in numerous media that continues to thrive. For David Byrne was and remains a creative innovator and musical pioneer, whose unassuming curiosity and profound intelligence is palpable on every page of his book *How Music Works*. In this book, he touches on every aspect of music and musicianship, from philosophy to technology and from music's social function to what it takes to 'make a scene'. Tonight, he'll talk to us about the future of music in an age of social and technological transformations, and draw on his own experience to find out if we might be at the end of an era of commercial recorded music.

Joining him in this discussion is Michel Lambot, co-founder and director of PIAS, one of the largest independent music distributors. Play It Again Sam was started

in Michel's basement, and now has offices all over the world, as Michel continues to advocate the interests of independent musicians. He has founded Impala and Merlin, non-profit organizations dedicated to the interests of musicians and the independent recording industry. In tonight's discussion, he will draw on his own experience to counter and supplement David's perspective on the state of the music industry, and help him try to find an answer to the question whether there is any future left in music. Please join me therefore in welcoming David Byrne and Michel Lambot.