Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork

Selected press

FRIEZE

Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork Dials Down The Noise

Cassie Packard

Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork, 'Poems of Electronic Air', 2024, exhibition view, Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Cambridge. Courtesy: Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts; photograph: Julia Featheringill

'This city has a hum – a Manhattan-specific drone music – that I love,' Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork tells me when we meet in New York, after installing her first institutional solo show on the East Coast – 'Poems of Electronic Air'– at Harvard University's Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts. 'Different parts of the city are characterized by markedly different sounds, down to patches where you can hear whooshes from the subway below.' Sound – as material, process, system and event – is a phenomenon to which the Los Angeles-based artist is emphatically attuned. Born in Long Beach, California, Kiyomi Gork was 'one of those kids who was always making art' to make sense of the world, she says. She cut her teeth in a San Francisco noise band, playing homemade instruments like plastic inflatables rigged with contact microphones. After studying sound art at the now-defunct San Francisco Art Institute, she entered the MFA program at Stanford University, where she researched military sound technologies, and also became involved with the university's Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics, which was working to reconstruct original experiences of sound at archaeological sites.

'I'm interested in those scenarios where you can really hear the ways architecture controls sound and movement,' Kiyomi Gork says. This interest, along with her desire to 'create what [she] want[s] to experience', has shaped two decades' worth of sonic installations and sculptures, often involving meticulous arrangements of

microphones, speakers and sculptural or architectural elements made from visually evocative, sound-warping matter. A self-described 'materials person,' she regularly collects wide-ranging materials to reference in her art, a habit she picked up working for interior designers; the underpinnings of prohibitively expensive commercial acoustic products often inspire her selections.

Portrait of Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork. Courtesy: François Ghebaly; photograph: Telavaya

Kiyomi Gork sculpts unorthodox media – such as wool, fibreglass, synthetic hair, vinyl and silicone – as well as acoustic processes like feedback, reflection, absorption and attenuation, building ecosystems that foreground sound's spatial and material dimensions. Carpenter Center gallery-goers can actively orient themselves toward certain sounds as they navigate the installations, or contribute sounds of their own movement to the installations' recording devices and feedback loops. Consequently, for a medium that can quickly flip between liberatory and disciplinary, agency in the gallery space oscillates: participants are both choreographing their own movements and being choreographed and sound slips between seeming both co-constituted and more externally imposed.

Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork, 'Poems of Electronic Air', 2024, exhibition view, Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Cambridge. Courtesy: Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts; photograph: Julia Featheringill

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Coinciding with the final months of the Taipei Biennial in which she also features, 'Poems of Electronic Air' assembles recent examples from three important bodies of Kiyomi Gork's

Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork, 'Poems of Electronic Air', 2024, exhibition view, Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Cambridge. Courtesy: Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts; photograph: Julia Featheringill

work. In the exhibition's lone commissioned work, a highlight, she pokes at the brutalist self-serious rigidity of The Carpenter Center – famously the only US building designed by Le Corbusier: *Variations in Mass Nos. 5, 6, 7* (2024) is a musical choreography of bathetic inflatables installed in the building's outdoor plaza. Covered with a pattern of rendered bricks based on Harvard's buildings, three inflatable walls wilt in tandem, draping longingly around Corbusier's columns, then jointly expand, unfurling like flags and bounding into place, accompanied by overwrought swells of Romantic music and orchestral warm-ups, intercut with the sound of the inflating blowers. As it deflates modernist traditions across media, this playful engagement with notions of aural architecture underscores that sound does not occur in a vacuum – spatially, socially or culturally.

Upstairs are recent examples from two long-running sculpture series, the diffusive 'Noise Blankets' (2016–ongoing) and absorptive '*Sound Blanket*'s (2018–ongoing). Inspired by noise reduction sheets, the Sound Blankets (all 2022) manifest as the artist's scaled-up outerwear: absurdly oversize puffer jackets and peacoats – an apparent wink to Joseph Beuys – made from a whorling brown mixture of hand-felted wool and human and synthetic hair. When I stand between the coats, feeling like a kid hiding in a clothing rack, they soften the room's ambient hum. Noise Blanket No. 17 (2023) is a wall-mounted kimono – a gesture to the artist's Okinawan, Japanese and Eastern European heritage – that combines cotton and polyester with slick blooms of brown and white poured silicone. The garment is lined with metal fasteners, prompting auditory imaginings as to how the silicone, an acoustic diffuser, might reshape the sound of their snapping.

Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork, 'Poems of Electronic Air', 2024, exhibition view, Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Cambridge. Courtesy: Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts; photograph: Julia Featheringill

Cloistered in an adjacent gallery is *Solutions to Common Noise Problems* (2021–ongoing), a site-responsive version of a piece that Kiyomi Gork debuted at Hong Kong's Empty Gallery in 2021. Evoking a Japanese rock garden, the immersive installation features a bed of smooth grey river stones; the wall-mounted Attenuator No. 2 (2021), a substantial tumorous form crafted from beech-coloured wool and polystyrene; and *Attenuators Nos. 9, 10, 11*,

12, 13, 14, 15 (2024), seven near floor-to-ceiling columns made of fibreglass and wool in marbled telluric tones. The latter respond to Corbusier's hallmark concrete columns, which cut across the gallery space that the installation occupies. Kiyomi Gork often masks sound frequencies that are dominant in a space with her own version of those sounds. Here, she explains, 'I was thinking about that architecturally, and how I could "mask" Corbusier's columns as unimportant in a way.'

When visitors traverse the river stones, weaving between the pillars, the crunch of their footsteps is registered by hidden microphones. The distorted, layered and amplified sound is piped back into the gallery via 12 speakers. How and where we move – gingerly toeing or boldly clomping, toward a bass trap column or an amplificatory patch – changes what we hear, and what we hear in turn changes how and where we move. If the spatial and the sonic are understood to be social, this dance of constant dis- and re-orientation opens onto the larger question of what might become possible if we oriented ourselves differently, less fixedly, to the world. 'My hope is that people come away a little bit more sensitive, a little bit more aware,' says Kiyomi Gork of the show. 'That might be simple, but it also feels meaningful, because it's so easy to turn off awareness.'

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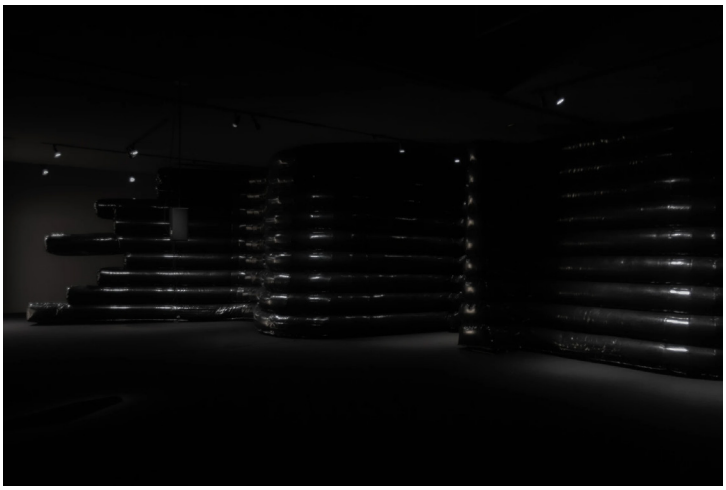
Small World Journal

An Interview with Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork

William Smith



Not Exactly (Whatever the New Key Is) 2017-ongoing, PVC tarpaulin walls, centrifugal blowers, Arduino microcontroller, MIDI and trigger relay. Dimensions variable. Music: MNDR Production: Peter Wade Keusch Production and Engineering; Singers: carolyn pennypacker riggs, jonathan Mandabach and MNDR. Courtesy of the artist, Empty Gallery, Hong Kong, and François Ghebaly, Los Angeles

Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork's piece for TB13, *Not Exactly (Whatever the New Key Is)*, 2017–ongoing, is a dynamic work of aural architecture. Black vinyl walls inflate and deflate in sync with a multichannel sound piece playing on speakers placed in precise locations throughout the space.

Editor of Taipei Biennial 2023, William Smith, spoke with Gork about the experience of refabricating her project in Taiwan, the avant-garde roots of her interest in sound installations, and the tangled histories of blow-up structures.

William Smith: You first realized a version of this work at Empty Gallery in Hong Kong, where it was called Not Exactly B Flat. There was another iteration at Mission 365, an art space in Los Angeles. What's different about the piece in Taipei?

Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork: The original was made in a space probably a fifth of the size of the gallery where it was in Taipei Fine Arts Museum. When I re-installed that piece in LA, it was in a gallery closer to the size of the current space. At TFAM I knew I wanted to retain the feeling of intimacy from Empty Gallery but with the feeling of spaciousness that came about at 356 Mission. That was a goal: I wanted visitors to feel choreographed and inside the maze, but they could also get out of the maze and experience the piece from the "outside."

WS: Do you consider the installation in Taipei to be site-specific?

JKG: I don't think of my work as site-specific. It's more site dependent. Acoustics are never going to be the same from one place to the next. The sculpture was also re-fabricated for this show. We tried to improve upon the previous design by re-engineering how the walls rise and fall.

We also had to fit the scale of the museum. When I came to TFAM for a site visit, I noticed that it was a popular museum with a lot of people flowing through. I wanted the work to maintain an intimate feeling, even if there were to be 20

people in the room at once. At Empty Gallery, a maximum of around four people could experience the piece at the same time due to the size of the piece and the gallery.

Everything was designed around the inflatables. Once I understood the acoustics in the room, I started to build the audio piece. Luckily audio is fluid and flexible. You can change keys, adapt different EQ settings, and make other modifications.

WS: The works title suggests that you weren't sure beforehand what key the work would be in—previously it was B Flat.

JKG: Its frequency is about one key higher, 45hz.

WS: What accounts for that change? Is that the nature of the blowers or the inflatable materials?

JKG: Everything. The smaller blowers I've used for previous versions of the piece tend to have a very loud resonant frequency. It's a shrill tone. The ones I'm using in Taipei are each about four times bigger but the tone is not nearly as loud. They have a much softer resonant frequency. The tone has a different feeling to it. It's a different timbre.

WS: "Choreographed" is an interesting term for how visitors might experience the piece. What do you mean by that?

JKG: With a lot of my multichannel work, I think of the choreography or score as one-and-the-same with what you're hearing. What you hear is determined by where your body is placed, and where your head is positioned in the space. Your movements in the space are creating a score as you're navigating it. The sound is pulling your attention in different directions. When you are outside of the sculpture and in the larger part of the room, you're more of a voyeur—an observer of the sculpture. The acoustics are different when you're outside of the maze.

WS: When I was in the piece, I found myself paying attention not just to what I was hearing but also to the nature of listening in general.

JKG: The experience switches between listening and understanding how you're listening. I'm trying to bring about an awareness of how your body is placed and what decisions you might be making unconsciously or consciously in how you're navigating the installation. The experience also changes as more people enter the space. As the walls fall down, you can see other people in the room, creating a dynamic of observing and being observed.

WS: You introduced me to the work of Maryanne Amacher, and I'm curious how you see her influence on this piece.

JKG: I was fortunate that I was able to study sound art as an undergraduate, when I was 20 years old. One of my teachers, Laetitia Sonami, was a colleague of Maryanne Amacher's. Even though I never experienced any of Amacher's installations in person, I've had the privilege of being friends with a community of people who have been her collaborators, students, or colleagues. Even before the current interest in her work, including the publication of her selected writings and interviews by Blank Forms, I had access to some of her writing and bootleg recordings of her work. I remember watching her lecture at Ars Electronica from 1989 and thinking, f**k. She's speaking how I think about sound.

I was inspired by her process of creation, the way that she worked with sound and architecture. Sometimes she had just one

sound file that she would place in speakers all over a space. And she would live in the space, and spend time with it, slowly tweaking it, slowing changing things, listening. Our understanding of space happens over time. It changes based on other sounds that are in the space and people in the space, but also how we're feeling, the time of day, whether we're sleeping or awake.

Early on I would spend days in an installation tweaking it, changing it, listening to it, over and over again. I wasn't trying to copy what she was doing, but it was a process that I understood.

WS: I thought of Amacher's concept of "aural architecture," which encompasses everything from a physical intervention in a space to the structure of someone's ear.

JKG: We all experience sound uniquely. We are all individuals within collective architecture. It's not just our cultural background or our understanding of music or our taste level that's determinant—it's also the unique biological structure of our ears.

WS: How do you see the relationship between your role as a sound artist and your role as sculptor?

JKG: My background is in visual arts. Art galleries are not acoustically suited to what I wanted to do with sound and multichannel audio. I had to incorporate material in the spaces that would respond to and interact with the sound. I understood those interventions as sculptural.

The concept for the inflatables came about through research into acoustic modifications in stadiums. There's an acoustic product—basically, giant black inflatable balloons—that can be placed in the ceiling of stadiums used for football games or Taylor Swift concerts. When these thick vinyl balloons are inflated with air, they provide some absorption. During a pop concert that absorption is needed for the performance to sound decent. When they're deflated, they don't provide any absorption, so a sports event can feel loud. I saw this product at an audio engineering conference. The balloons were just on the ground looking like giant walls.

I'd always wanted to build my own architecture, but it's so expensive. I was just getting tired of dealing with so much material, so much mass—controlling sound requires a lot of mass. I became interested in working with inflatables as a way for me to create mass without actually having to deal with drywall, fiberglass, all these things.

WS: I wanted to ask you about the history of avant-garde music and sound, like John Cage...

JKG: We don't have to go into that lol.

WS: Lol right, but modernist music was of a moment when inflatables became an important part of avant-garde architecture. Is there an intertwined history?

JKG: When I was in school in San Francisco I got to work with Chip Lord, who was one of the Ant Farm guys. They were very involved with the San Francisco Art Institute. A big Ant Farm retrospective, featuring their inflatable architecture, also came to SFMOMAwhen I worked there. I've always been in interested in Utopian/Distopian architecture and how it relates to technology and social constructs.

I've lived on communes. I've lived in alternative warehouse spaces. I tried to do that in my twenties, in the Bay Area.

WS: There's nothing hippie-ish about your installation.

JKG: In my early work you'd see it.

WS: You seem to have turned the utopian impulse on its head by constructing an imposing maze. It feels like a barrier.

JKG: That drive to find that utopian space often results in a dystopian world. It's like they don't exist without the other. Those things exist in opposition together. That was my lived experience, even before trying to be involved in those kinds of communities. Escapism, liberatarian thought, the fetish for self-sufficiency. There's a desire to strive for something "better," and in that process it can make the world worse.

WS: I see a lot of skepticism about avant-garde and utopian histories in your work.

JKG: A lot of those histories were made by a very specific demographic. They were not in acknowledgement of the land itself. Being part Indigenous, which is not something I speak about a lot, I felt attuned to the contradictions and hypocrisies of these histories.

It's not just something that I see, it also kind of exists in the whole East West thing. My dad is Jewish but he's Buddhist. My mom is Japanese but is atheist. A lot of Buddhist texts were translated by Jewish white dudes, and it's all been transformed, rebranded in California, and fed back in a certain way. Here we are striving to create these utopian communities when actually those communities did exist. We just killed them. What the f**k is up with that?

WS: That heaviness comes into the work. In the way you've lit the space—or rather kept it mostly in darkness.

JKG: But the work is also funny.

WS: Many people might associate the walls with bouncy castles. And when the walls deflate, become flaccid, and fall down—that's the essence of physical comedy.

JKG: At the same time, inflatables are also used in architecture of war, whether as cheap, quickly constructed hangars, or as obstacle courses for training. Some of the obstacle courses are made by the same companies that make bouncy castles. There are complex tensions in this material. Technology that's used for playful ends often stems from something dark and sinister. At least in the US.

WS: Those implications are present for sure. Also fetishistic associations: shiny, shiny plastic.

JKG: Oh yeah. I've always leaned toward that: attraction/repulsion.

WS: Could you talk about the use of pop, or pop-adjacent vocals in the audio? Is that part of the public address of the piece?

JKG: Up until this piece I had only really worked with noise, non-language-based sound. And when I say language, to me language includes music. Language includes any kind of content that's understood by other people without explanation. I think doing this work is important in some place that has its own history and relationship to pop music outside the US and the pop machine structure.

I worked with friends whose jobs are in the pop music machine, writing commercial songs or writing songs for other singers or working in production studios. I'm still grappling with how that language is understood, disrupted, manipulated, and can fall apart—but can also be very powerful.

For a long time, I didn't listen to music. I still listen to music only in certain circumstances.

As a kid, I got involved with noise and punk more because I didn't like feeling manipulated. I didn't watch Hollywood movies starting from a very young age because I felt like I was being controlled by the media. It felt very weird. Why am I crying? Why do I feel sad? Later on, I was able to let up, I thoroughly enjoy lots of that stuff. But I did not understand it at first; it made me immediately uncomfortable.

WS: Your piece feels like a controlled exposure to the emotional manipulation of the pop machine. The polished vocals are so evocative in your work, but they're in fragments.

JKG: You have to piece it together. That's consistent with all my work that deals with noise. It relies on the audience to do the work of putting the piece together. And everyone is going to put that piece together in their own way. That ties back to Amacher's thinking about how we all hear differently, we're all very structurally different. How can work acknowledge and embrace that rather than dictating what the audience has to feel.

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Trailer for a Spectacle: Taipei Biennial 2023

Sean Burns

'*Small World*', the title of the Taipei Biennial 2023, contains both a promise and a threat. It speaks to a stricken, shrinking and interconnected planet but also to a sense of insularity, intimacy and proximity. As with most biennials, the size of the curatorial task at hand – structuring a sprawling show across three floors of the Fine Arts Museum, featuring 58 artists and 120 individual works – calls for a conceit broad enough to feel encompassing but specific enough to hold critical sway.

Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork, Not Exactly (Whatever the New Key Is), 2017–ongoing, PVC tarpaulin walls, centrifugal blowers, Arduino microcontroller, MIDI and trigger relay, dimensions variable. Courtesy: the artist and Taipei Fine Arts Museum

This iteration – curated by Freya Chou, Reem Shadid and Brian Kuan Wood – errs towards a looser application of curatorial authority in a refreshing departure from the more theoretical approaches adopted by previous curators, such as Mali Wu and Francesco Manacorda in '*Post-Nature – A Museum as an Ecosystem*' (2018). Here, the recurring motifs are scale, circularity, sound – or lack of – and anti-spectacle. The works that obfuscate notions of spectacle by engaging with absence (of body or noise) offer the show's greatest delights, cleverly conveying to the audience the curators' awareness of the double-bind of the biennial format, which often seeks to achieve too much under the rubric of a city or nation...

'Small World' has a feeling of lightness about it that I like. The curators haven't been afraid to programme idiosyncratically (one room contains a spirited small survey of Taiwanese maverick Li Jiun-Yang, replete with glow-in-the-dark drawings and bespoke musical instruments) and according to their fascination with sound and its relationship to visual art. The show contains some exceptional works, none more exciting than Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork's *Not Exactly (Whatever the New Key Is)* (2023), about whom Wood quips: 'You can tell she's a club kid.' It's a searing installation of ominous black, rubbery walls inflated by six air pumps. Resonant frequencies from the pumps blast out of six speakers in a play between muscularity, circularity and softness.

Biennials can often feel like exhausting gauntlet runs. However, there's a strong sense here that Chou, Shadid and Wood had fun with the proposition while remaining attentive to the location's unique specificities. In Taiwan, the impetus to crystalize the optics of a national identity and galvanize the island's autonomy has never been more urgent. Art can certainly – though not unproblematically – be a way to do that. '*Small World*' triumphs in the charmingly reluctant moments when it appears to toy with the expectations of the occasion.

artasiapacific

Taipei Biennial 2023: The Promises and Perils of a "Small World"

HG Masters

Installation view of JACQUELINE KYOMI GORK's Not Exactly (Whatever the New Key Is), 2023, mixed media installation, inflatable sculpture, speakers, dimensions variable. Courtesy TFAM.

How small is the world? Small enough that at the Taipei Biennial 2023's opening weekend (November 16–19) at the Taipei Fine Arts Museum (TFAM), you could experience Indonesian electronic musician Julian Abraham Togar jamming with the abstract "kinetic paintings" created live by 87-year-old Palestinian artist Samia Halaby, using software she programmed. Small enough for a meteorite, a relic from the time of our solar system's formation, to fit on a child's fingertip, as captured by Taiwanese American artist Arthur Ou in the photograph *Untitled (Octavia with Meteor 1)* (2020)...

In matters of scale, the small (the microscopic, the local, the immediate, the personal) can wield sizable influence on the large..."Small World" is, physically, an event contained within the galleries of TFAM, unlike many biennials worldwide that expand into the city. Reflecting many artists' concern for modes of care and emotional support, several works of "Small World" also created their own audiovisual universes. In the TFAM courtyard, Natascha Sadr Haghighian's installation *Watershed* (2023) comprised six amorphous, bodily-like forms composed from reflective plastic animal figurines and perched on top of walkers; they doubled as resonant bodies for speakers for an immersive musical composition based around a Cantonese pop song by Karen Mok with lyrics translated to Minnan and Mandarin.

Also featuring music as a core element to its experience of space, J*acqueline Kiyomi Gork's installation's Not Exactly (Whatever the New Key Is)* (2023) is a near-pitch-black room with a maze of inflatable black walls filled with a medley of songs—the music crescendos and then the walls dramatically collapse and the sounds of air-blowers fill the room with strangely harmonic frequencies. In each of these two works, emotive strands of pop music are expanded and stretched to fit with abstracted sculptural installations about forms of collapse, care, and support at key times in one's life...

What follows is an excerpt from an interview with the Visual Arts Center's fall 2023 artist-in-residence, Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork.

Gork builds immersive installations that combine sound, amorphous sculptures, performance, and architecture. The interview speaks to Gork's first representational work, which takes the form of a Japanese lantern, and is currently on view at the VAC. The interview was conducted by Melissa Fandos in September 2023 with editorial assistance from MacKenzie Stevens. It has been edited and condensed for clarity.

MELISSA FANDOS **You often build immersive installations combining sound and soft sculptures. We expect a sculpture to be made of stone or bronze—heavy, enduring materials...**

JACQUELINE KIYOMI GORK And masculine...

MF **And masculine. Instead you use wool, foam, hair, and air blowers. For the installation at the VAC, you model a stone lantern from air and gray vinyl. How do you make material choices for your work?**

JKG This is the first time I'm actually taking an object and playing with it. Also, it's not stone. It's concrete, which is super important because it was cast and not carved. I do not know when it was made, but sometime between WWII and the 1960s. Japanese imports of stone lanterns and stone lamps were just not financially possible for my family. They were all pretty low income farmers and domestic workers outside of Sacramento—where some of the worst discrimination took place. My great uncle bought a kit from Japan that showed him how to make the mold, and then he cast them. Every family member got one. The one I have is the lantern my grandfather got from his brother.

MF **Do you know what your great uncle was doing around that time?**

JKG No idea. A lot of my interest in working with family objects is because I don't know anything about them. I feel like a lot of the Japanese American experience as far as being a *yonsei*, which is fourth generation, has to do with not knowing. And, accepting the not knowing and still trying to engage with it... Returning to the question of materials, it was driven by my desire to spend time with this object, to kind of honor it and also, in a way, play with it. It's sad to me that my relatives and ancestors are so lost.

I had already been doing some research about Japanese lanterns before I came to Austin because I inherited this one last year. I started to go to more Japanese gardens in California to check them out and I discovered how weird they are. A lot of these gardens were created in the 1960s as friendship or peace gardens. They were a cultural gift to the cities in which they are located by Japanese and Japanese Americans, maybe as a way to be accepted. Today many are run down and neglected. Doing this research meant I was traveling to different Japanese gardens around California in small towns—not the nice big ones like those in San Francisco [Golden Gate Park] that are well-maintained.

During my residency at the VAC, I visited the Japanese garden in San Antonio [Japanese Tea Garden]. To me it was the most alive garden I had been to. It was also the least "Japanese." It was renamed a Chinese Garden during WWII and maintained that name until 1984. It has been cared for by many non-Japanese gardeners and is full of overgrown flower beds and tropical plants, and there is even a large waterfall. The torii gate at the entrance is made out of faux wood cement by Mexican artist Dionicio Rodriguez. It has morphed, but it is alive. Especially compared to the neglected gardens in California. And that's sort of how I feel about being Japanese. Morphed but alive.

The first thing that came to me while thinking about this piece happened while I was sitting in the VAC's courtyard, hearing the natural sound of the water with the combination of the Texas heat. Even the sound of water can cool you down...I learned that the particular shape of the lantern my great uncle cast is called a snow lantern, a *yukimi doro*. And they're usually placed next to water. Sometimes even having one leg in the water. And when those two things clicked together, I thought, okay, that's a connection.

When I sat next to the lantern and the fountain in the courtyard a complex melancholy feeling washed over me. There's a melancholy—a sad, beautiful—kind of thing that I wanted to explore. I hope through the process of creating this piece, working with the sound and being in that environment, I'll get more insights into the object and try to transform that feeling of disconnect that I have with the lantern. Because I still feel very disconnected. I don't know much about my great uncle. I don't know where the other lanterns are. There's so much I don't know.

MF **I think that's a beautiful project to say I'm going sit with the not knowing and I'm going sit with the emotions that I feel toward it. And that can be the end. Maybe you have something on the other side, or you have clarity about something, but also maybe you don't and it's just the time that you sat with it. Thank you for expressing that.**

JKG Yeah. Thank you for asking because I hadn't put that into words before. But this is my process—I work very intuitively and things just sort of come together through various forms of research and desires.

MF **What drew you to making the lantern into an inflatable?**

JKG I think one of the reasons is because I find inflatables to be fairly sad...There's a sort of tiredness that comes with it, a playfulness, goofiness, or sadness as it deflates. It breathes. The audience usually empathizes with that or anthropomorphizes the inflatable.

Something that also interests me is substituting materials in the objects I make. For example, in my silicon and felt works I try to make the material look like marble or fiberglass. This takes the visual cues of a mass produced or sourced architectural material and turns it into something handmade, almost domestic. When I learned that the lantern was cast concrete (growing up I thought it was stone) I wanted to retain the shape but change the original material into something else. I couldn't figure out how to fill it with water in a safe way so filling it with air made sense to me. I wanted to take the material typically used for bouncy castles or advertising balloons and make something more personal, unique.

MF **Can you share more about your process to compose the sound for this work?**

JKG During the process of making the piece, and once the inflatable and tech were set up, I spent four days composing the audio and the inflatable choreography. During this time many fears came up. I feared I was making a mockery of the lantern by turning it into a cartoon-looking blow-up toy. I respect this object and what it represents, and did not want to make a joke out of it. I mean, there is humor, but more of the morbid kind, not goofy.

The acoustics of the room overpowered the sound, and I was unsure what the sound would ultimately be in that kind of architecture. Each blower is quite loud and carries a tone. I measured the tone of each blower in their three settings of operation: turning on, fully inflated, and turning off. Once the piece is inflated, the tone gets more pronounced, and as it's slowing down it quiets and gets lower in tone. In the past, all of my inflatables have been abstract shapes with an audio composition that sounds musical. Because this work at the VAC is not an abstract sculpture, I thought the sound could be abstract, which is something I've never done before.

I took the frequency calculations and created audio filters that resonated the dominant tone of each blower with its upper and lower harmonics. I then ran the water sound through the filters, sometimes multiple times. It ended up being unexpectedly beautiful. I was able to transform something I thought was isolated and melancholy into something connected and beautiful.

MF **After having some space from the installation, can you share your reflections on the work and how you hope someone visiting the space might engage with it?**

JKG I hope the audience spends time with it; sits with it inside the gallery and outside in the courtyard; breathes with it; and shares in the excitement as it finally blows up almost whole, but not fully.

While I'm still not sure how to address the before and after of creating this piece, I now feel connected to the lantern. I have my own connection to it.

I would like to thank the VAC and MacKenzie Stevens for allowing me to experiment in this way and connect to something very personal.

Visual Arts Center

Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork
Like a Breath of Fresh Water

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ARTnews

Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork Brings the Experience of Techno Warehouses to the ICA LA

BY FRANCESCA ATON February 16, 2023 8:30am

Installation view of Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork's *the input of this machine is the power an output contains*, 2020; in the exhibition "Made in L.A. 2020: a version" at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, 2020.
COURTESY THE ARTIST AND EMPTY GALLERY, HONG KONG. PHOTO JOSHUA WHITE/JWPICTURES.COM.

Inspired by the music of Los Angeles’s techno warehouses, Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork has created a visceral site-specific work that plays with the embodiment of sound.

Situated in in the ICA LA’s project room (through May 14), the installation Into/Loving/Against/Lost in the Loop pulls audio from the neighboring exhibition about Milford Graves, the drummer and artist who died in 2021. This includes the sounds Graves made for the ICA show, as well as any visitor interventions. One can, for example, scream in the galleries and Kiyomi Gork’s audio equipment will pick it up in her installation in the adjacent room.

These sounds are filtered through SuperCollider software, which the artist worked on with LA-based DJ and producer Ezra Rubin, also known as Kingdom. Together, Kingdom and Kiyomi Gork created a rhythmic beat.

Within Kiyomi Gork’s installation, one is prompted to traverse a maze-like structure made of clear-cut vinyl curtains hung from a steel armature. While felt and wool line the structure, the sound still bleeds between the galleries of Graves’s and Kiyomi Gork’s shows, creating a unique sonic experience.

As you’re walking through the show, curator Caroline Ellen Liou said, “you’re really questioning your own perception of what you’re hearing. Is that what I just heard in the outside galleries, or is it being distorted?”

Though Kiyomi Gork’s practice has long investigated the ways sound impacts body movement, this is the first time the artist has experimented with beats.

“Rhythm and beats really can take over space,” Kiyomi Gork said. “When you have a beat, your body automatically associates with it. That’s a lot of power.”

Installation view of Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork’s *Inside You Is Me*, 2017; at V-A-C for Geometry of Now Festival, Moscow.
PHOTO RUY SANCHEZ-BLANCO AND ROBIN RODGER

Moving through Kiyomi Gork's installation is both an experiment in choreography and a more philosophical quandary. As in LA's techno warehouses, one's body might be drawn into the somatic impulse of a generated rhythm. And, yet, visitors can pick where and how they move through the installation—if they choose to experience it at all.

"You can choose to go left or right, forward or around the corner," Kiyomi Gork explained. "One of the funny parts is that the maze is clear. You can see everywhere you're going, but you're corralled by these clear plastic curtains. And so, what is the investigated is the sound. The sound is changing as you're turning the corners; what you're walking toward or away from is the audio."

The maze structure—as opposed to a labyrinth with a set pathway—allows for individual choices and gives a sense of agency to those walking through. While the materials absorb a certain amount of audio, the bleed between sounds can impact how one processes this audio.

"I've placed things very specifically so that you might hear bits of audio when you walk toward something, and I've kind of played around like that throughout the entire space," Kiyomi Gork said.

Not unlike a club, one might bop to Kiyomi Gork and Kingdom's beats, but what's heard inside the installation will vary dramatically depending on when one visits it. As Graves's videos play in adjacent galleries, different sounds will get piped in. And then there's the fact that the Graves show's attendees will always generate their own distinct soundtracks.

Kiyomi Gork's "work sits really comfortably at [the intersection of] both isolating people and then bringing them into this collective experience," says Liou. "There's no clear answer. [The experience] is always both/and."

Ultimately, like a feedback loop, Kiyomi Gork brings to the forefront questions of how we as individuals impact the larger whole of our surrounding environment.

https://www.artnews.com/art-news/artists/jacqueline-kiyomi-gork-ica-la-1234657502/

Ysabelle Cheung, "Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork", *ArtForum*, Vol. 60, No.5, January 2022

ARTFORUM

INCHEON, SOUTH KOREA

Seulgi Lee

INCHEON ART PLATFORM

Viewed from its entrance, the main space housing Seulgi Lee's exhibition "Slow Water" appeared to be almost entirely empty. The only visible object was a disk made of a thin lattice of raw wood about thirty-six feet in diameter, hanging by wires from the high ceiling. It looked like a utilitarian object that had perhaps served as a canopy for an earlier installation. Lights threw shadowy grids onto the white walls and bare floor. As you moved under it, though, sides of the wood that had not initially been visible came into view, and these were painted in alluring colors, such as pale rose, mint, and royal blue. A radiant abstract painting revealed itself step by step. You could take in the whole work from above, via a second-floor walkway that runs around the former warehouse. The piece had a fainter but no less beguiling glow at that remove.

This was the 2021 work from which the show (curated by Hyunjin Kim and Oh Hyemi) took its title, and it served as an ideal introduction to Lee's methods. The Seoul-born, Paris-based artist conjures incredible sumptuousness (visual and symbolic) via astonishing restraint—producing a free-ranging post-Minimalism born of collaborations with traditional Korean artisans and spiked with mischievous enigmas. *Slow Water* involved a specialist in *moonsal* (the latticework on traditional Korean houses) and one in *dancheong*, the ornate painting that adorns Korean temples and artifacts, alighting here just as blocks of color. Lee's art is richly allusive, and a curatorial text cited as inspirations for her grid the aqueous frescoes of the ancient Roman Villa of Livia and the history of the Incheon Art Platform area, which was underwater until a port was built more than a century ago. Landing on these references independently would be impossible, but Lee's visions were so precisely realized that suspending disbelief and following her veiled language was a pleasure in itself.

On plinths lay five *nubi* blankets sewn by Sung-yeon Cho in 2020 in Tongyeong—ostensibly hard-edge geometric abstractions in blazing colors—signifying various idiomatic Korean proverbs. A bulbous blue shape, its title revealed, stood for *Drunk like a whale = Too inebriated*, while the curving triangles perched atop a circle represented the *Cat washing its face = To rush job*. The atmosphere became especially topsy-turvy when a short recording of swirling high-pitched voices accompanied by spare percussion emanated from a hallway alongside the main gallery. The singer was Park Minhee, a venturesome specialist in the rarefied *gagok* form, offering a contemporary interpretation of a ribald folk song once sung by Incheon laborers amid repetitious activities such as netting fish or rowing a boat. That song plays on the word *gong-al* (loosely "ball" and slang for "clitoris") as it lists cherries, green onions, and other kinds of *gong-al*. Its presence brought a certain erotic undercurrent—a charged fecundity—to the (notably labor-intensive) craftwork on view.

Seulgi Lee, *Slow Water*, 2021, paint, wood, 18 × 18'.

Five small holes were cut low in the drywall of that hallway (*Hole*, 2021) so that one could spy on that luminous wood grid, listening to a lewd work song while viewing the abstracted water. Amid the greenery in a nearby courtyard, five steel circles, each a different color and size, leaned against a sizable pole, comprising an arrangement that Lee likens to vulvic *sheela-na-gig* fertility symbols. Window vitrines on the street contained still more colorful lattices, these dyed onto white *sochang*, a textile long produced by women in the region, the patterning apparently determined by Lee's observation of shadows in the space.

Using materials with deep histories and made with a multitude of women's hands (she listed more than a dozen collaborators in an accompanying pamphlet), "Slow Water" seemed to be both a compendium of cultural knowledge and an expansive portrait of Incheon. Still, mysteries lurked. A slab of marble was affixed to a wall , near the floor, in the main gallery, engraved with Peter's question to the risen Jesus: QVO VADIS ("Where are you marching?"). Lee invites her audience to go to places that are fleeting or are already vanished, but that she is working to keep alive.

—*Andrew Russeth*

HONG KONG

Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork

EMPTY GALLERY

Twenty-four hypersensitive condenser and contact microphones, twelve strategically placed speakers, one Mac mini, six needle-felted wool sculptures, a carpet of weathered pebbles, and two fuzzy outsize sound blankets. At Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork's recent solo exhibition "Olistostrome," the stage was set. The only missing element? Its protagonist: the viewer.

The orchestration of sonic space undergirds the practice of Kiyomi Gork, whose background includes studies in computer music and archaeo-acoustics and a stint in the San Francisco noise-music scene. Created in the mode of La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela's *Dream House*, 1969, their installations approximate itinerant recording studios, anechoic chambers in laboratories and military compounds, and clamoring concert halls. In each work, the artist captures noise, controls its release—via directional speakers, subwoofers, air-blower pumps—and engineers its absorption with muffling quilts, modular sculptures of wool and foam, and synthetic and human hair. Indelible and ephemeral, Kiyomi Gork's works mine our emotional attachments to sound. Like a song once heard on the radio, an impromptu concert by a long-forgotten band, or music playing in the background of a dream, the artist's sounds, with their links to the domestic and the body, become moments visitors find themselves wanting to grasp again and again.

Reminiscent of a Greco-Roman sculpture garden, "Olistostrome" featured six sculptures of colored wool, polystyrene foam, and steel atop a carpet of loose pebbles in a darkened room. Underneath those pebbles, microphones picked up one's movements; the noise was then fed through signal-processing software and sent back into the environment. Collectively titled *Solutions to Common Noise Problems* (all works 2021), the sound installation morphed according to its audience. If one person inhabited the space, the feedback was isolated, crunchy, watery. However, if a crowd had gathered, as during the opening, the feedback began to layer, contributing to a thicker, more gravelly reification of sound. When this occurred, the positive-gain loop between microphone and speaker would glitch, triggering an overdrive distortion—at

dangerously high decibel levels—before the circuit stabilized and another cycle began.

The exhibition's title—a reference to the geological phenomenon of semifluid sediments sliding and accumulating, and the resulting instability—loosely anchored the pieces on view. At the entrance were *Sound Blanket No. 5* and *Sound Blanket No. 6*: giant kimono-shaped wall sculptures of wool, denim, and satin. If these works allude to Kiyomi Gork's diasporic identity as a fourth-generation American descendant of Japanese Okinawan and Eastern European heritage, they also underscore the shifting weight of that inheritance, both via the outfits' absurd scale—think of a kid trying on a parent's suit jacket—and in their conflation of nonfunctional ornament with private memory. A similar synthesis occurs in the "Attenuator" series. Referring to the classical statues Kiyomi Gork saw on a recent trip to Europe, these freestanding felted-wool works cleverly act as sound baffles. Arranged in a Stonehenge-esque circle, they also presented a liminal state between mythology and realism, and between ancient and contemporary. The peaty fibers and stratifications of rust and stone colors evoked the earth—Upper Paleolithic Venus statuettes, a mountain gorge—yet in the murky almost-light, the sculptures mutated from those almost-familiar forms to fuzzier, nongendered, nonhuman, and perhaps nonearthly ambiguations.

View of "Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork," 2021. Photo: Michael Yu.

Kiyomi Gork encourages sensitivity to other sensory engagements. Like a ball pit, the sonic landscape was liquid with visitors' movements; one's own flesh responded in tandem with the quivering tamped-down fibers of the sculptures when the feedback went into the red zone. One began to feel molecular, like a protein migrating through the space, before eventually being soothed back into the collective streams of footsteps. Even long after one had left the exhibition, the sensation—like an earworm—followed.

—*Ysabelle Cheung*

SYDNEY

Yona Lee

FINE ARTS

Since 2016, South Korean–born, Auckland-based artist Yona Lee has become known for her installations with titles that include the phrase "In Transit." They are constructed of polished stainless-steel tubing—cut and welded to form running lines, bends, and knots—that is screwed to walls, floors, and ceilings. The quotidian references of these

Yona Lee, *Kit-set In-transit,* 2020, stainless steel, objects. Installation view.

mazelike environments range from public-transport transit maps and industrial plumbing to those ubiquitous handrails, bollards, and barriers that everywhere assist or impede our movement in public spaces. Just as ardently ordinary are the everyday consumer objects with which Lee punctuates her steel matrices. Mass-produced household goods in the IKEA mold, they have included lampshades, umbrellas, shower curtains, chairs, tables, beds, coat hangers, and mopheads, but also things less redolent of the domestic sphere, such as transport grab handles and stop buttons. These items sparsely populate the steel sculptures as though sprouting from their metastatic impetus.

Past "In Transit" works have responded directly to specific spaces, with Lee using computer-generated drawings to plot the architecture and her intervention within it. For instance, her contribution to the Fifteeenth Biennale de Lyon, *In Transit (Highway)*, 2019, exploited the dizzying height of the exhibition venue, a former washing-machine factory. Assisted by local manufacturers, Lee constructed one of her tubular environments and a walkway perched on an existing overhead gantry. A spiral staircase enabled visitors to access the overhead structure and view other works from some twenty-six feet above the ground. For those inclined to linger in this lofty space—or perhaps to recover from the experience—the artist incorporated bunk beds, generic café furniture, and a couple of potted plants.

Lee's latest installation was not so overtly site-specific. As the title *Kit-set In-transit*, 2020, implies, it can be transported in pieces with instructions (like DIY furniture) to be fabricated anywhere. Assembled in the white-cube space at Fine Arts, Sydney, the sculpture included a centrally placed, cage-like scaffold of pipes enclosing bunk beds with pristine-white sheeting. A red umbrella arced above this arrangement, while one vertical tendril of pipe topped with a faux-Victorian lamp read as a full stop to the sense of mobility imparted by the steel labyrinth. Extending from the central matrix were more sparing lines of pipe traveling over four walls and across high windows, supporting a shower curtain, and zipping to ground level to secure a café setting for two. Continuing Lee's normcore aesthetic and its push and pull between egress and blockage, the work staged a tensile dichotomy where the abstract order of the arrangement conflicted with the implicit invitation to interact. Additionally, fixtures hinting at participation or utility were rendered dysfunctional or inaccessible: A transport grab handle hung from a pipe way out of reach, and a generic empire lampshade glowed upside down at the long end of a knotted pipe.

Viewing Lee's show when it had reopened this past October after the nearly four-month Covid lockdown that interrupted it, I couldn't help but discern a metaphor of our current situation. While her sculptures speak to the modern, technologically enabled obsession with free movement across time and space, she also inscribes points of resistance that undermine fantasies of infinite transit.

—*Toni Ross*

Lumi Tan, “Setting the Stage: Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork”, *Mousse Magazine*, Issue 77, October 2021

Setting the Stage: Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork
Lumi Tan

For artists who center sound within their practice, sharing sonic space and attention within institutional environments is a familiar struggle: how to create a focused audience without merely encasing them in soundproof walls or imposing isolating headphones upon them. Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork has attuned her sound work to be fully integrated within group exhibitions, art fairs, and outdoor settings. Pointedly, they consider themself a listener, not a composer—in a sense, aligned with the individual visitor and the collective audience rather than with the maker.

Coming to the noise music scene in San Francisco after attending the San Francisco Art Institute and studying with interactive electronic composer Laetitia Sonami in the early 2000s, Gork was frustrated by the standard formats of and behavior engendered by experimental music shows. Sound dominated those spaces without consideration for other aspects of perception, which gave way to often futile attempts to control an audience assumed to be monolithic. Their installations, which combine sound, sculpture, and performance, instead embrace the embodied knowledge of each visitor and make room for a spectrum of interpretations and movements through every space.

Their most recent and large-scale example of this approach, *the input of this machine is the power an output contains* (2020) at *Made in L.A. 2020: a version*, was positioned within the Hammer Museum's enclosed terrace, with floor-to-ceiling windows on both sides. Gork utilized the potential of this space to be seen as transitional, a passageway from one legible white-walled gallery to another. Simultaneously, it became a site for intent listening, as a work that contained and directed its performers and audiences while permitting individual agency to transcend these spaces through movement, tone, and interpretation. Using their signature materials, such as felt, synthetic hair, wool, fiberglass, and vinyl—each of which directs or absorbs sound while providing visceral associative textures—Gork created two sound-resistant rooms that mimicked the light and transparency of the surrounding architecture. Each of the four performers delivered an improvised speech from an AI-generated script based on forms of public address such as TED talks and campaign stump speeches as they weaved in and out of the installation. The performers were trained to use familiar gestures of this oratorical style—the open arms, the power stance, and dramatic cadences—while the artist's sound interventions obscured the clarity of the message. Statements delivered with a deliberately coercive tone—such as "Well, how do we make the mind open and the brain shut? I mean if you think about it, there are three methods of this. The first method is to shut down the mind and to open up the brain and mind. I have already spoken before and I just want to tell you, first of all, what I mean. I mean, if we had all our minds open, and we could have all our brains open, people who are not open would be just as good"—are only understood as nonsensical through a type of close listening that few visitors have the attention or even the desire to discern. Gork understands that language is as unruly as what we categorize as abstract sound—that we tend to absorb a sense of emotional authenticity rather than the meaning of language itself.

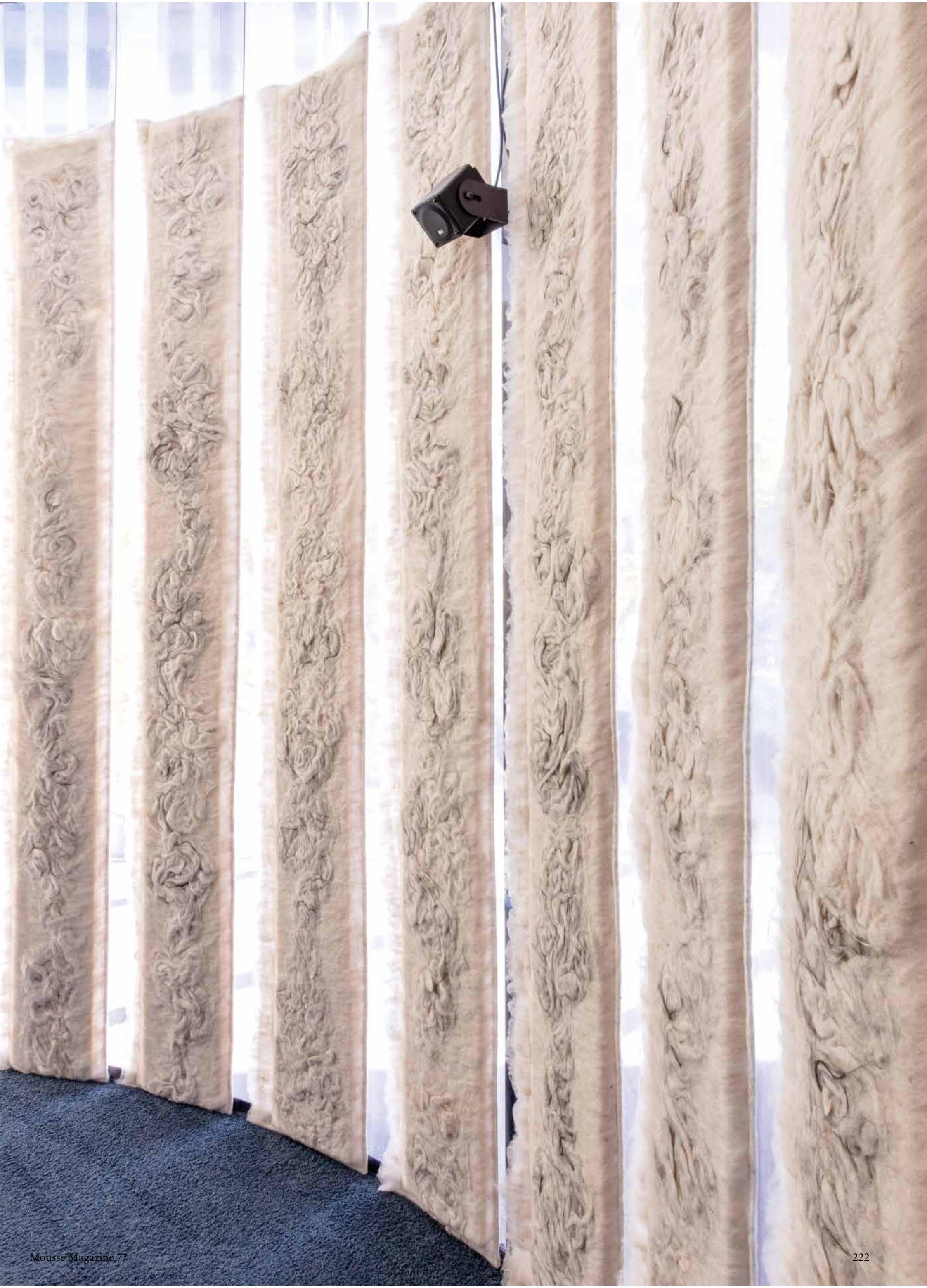
When these interpretive elements move out of the control of their maker, Gork believes that the environment absorbs much of that fractious energy. In *Olistostrome*, their current solo show at Empty Gallery, Hong Kong, the floor of the gallery's black box space has been covered with five tons of rock over a wooden platform. The artist has hidden twelve condenser microphones, twelve contact microphones, and twelve speakers around the space to create a sound work that begins once a visitor steps into the installation. The exhibition extends a technique that Gork previously employed for Empty Gallery's booth at Frieze New York in 2018, where the ambient noise of the fair and the din of visitors were all calibrated into a dense soundscape; the steady hum was interrupted by feedback only when a loud noise, such as a helicopter whirring above the tent, disrupted the polite retail routine. In Hong Kong, an individual awareness of one's body is immediately heightened as one steps into the room, with each crunching, vibrating footstep fed into Gork's composition. The performative aspects of spectatorship are bolstered by theatrically spotlit, laboriously hand-felted sculptures from a series entitled *Attenuators* (2021), inspired by Gork's observation of classical Greek and Roman statues during research in Europe. Their iterations offer just enough information to create an impression of a figure that is neither masculine nor feminine, extending the familiar gestures of contrapposto into undulating, increasingly abstract surfaces indicative of their material transference; from the marble and stone of the original statues, Gork rendered the forms in rudimentary clay, then as digital models to direct their shape in foam. Finally, Gork covered them with hand-felted wool in a palette that returns each sculpture into a "natural" landscape inspired by stones they found during hikes in Los Angeles. The exhibition's title, *Olistostrome*—a geological term for a rock mass made from gravitational sliding of mud and blocks—underscores the instability of the materials and their infinite potential for remaking and new relationalities. Playing with the idea of field recordings and their indexical fidelity, this is a human-made environment that reflects its manipulated and processed sonic surroundings.

They repeatedly call upon applications of architecture beyond site specificity; hand-sewn, felted garments and blankets, which refer to exterior and interior bodily protection while providing acoustic baffling, have long been part of her practice. Set apart from the main installation at Empty Gallery are a series of wall-displayed kimonos that are emphatically oversized to take on the scale of a room rather than a body, enveloping the collective audience rather than an individual—like all of their sculptural garments, they are ultimately unwereable. Gork's formation of what constitutes the private and public boundaries of listening, and how our bodily awareness expands beside these porous barriers, extends the isolationist traditions of sound art.

219 Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork, *Attenuator No. 6*, 2021. Courtesy: the artist; Empty Gallery, Hong Kong; François Ghebaly, Los Angeels / New York. Photo: Michael Yu

220 221 Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork, *Olistostrome* installation view at Empty Gallery, Hong Kong, 2021. Courtesy: the artist and Empty Gallery, Hong Kong. Photo: Michael Yu

222 223 Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork, *the input of this machine is the power an output contains*, 2020, *Made in L.A. 2020: a version* installation views at Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, 2021. © Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork. Courtesy: the artist; Empty Gallery, Hong Kong; François Ghebaly, Los Angeles / New York. Photo: Joshua White / JWPictures.com



Paul Laster, “Highlights Of Frieze New York 2018”, *Art Asia Pacific*, 04 May 2018

Frieze New York has returned for its seventh edition, bringing around 190 galleries from 30 countries to its customary venue at Randall’s Island Park. The fair has a new layout thanks to London-based Universal Design Studio—which has also been behind the design of Frieze London for the past four years—replacing its previous format of one massive white tent with five smaller adjacent structures, totaling 28,000 square meters, in an effort to make the large exhibition space feel more intimate.

In addition to the redesign, Frieze New York introduced new programming this year. English artist and curator Matthew Higgs helmed the first-ever themed section, “For Your Infotainment,” which celebrates the legacy of the deceased New York and Chicago art dealer Hudson and his gallery, Feature Inc. The fair also has a new “Live” section, focused on performances, installations and interactive art, curated by Adrienne Edwards, curator of performance at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. Additionally, the 2018 edition sees the New York launch of the Frieze Artist Award, for a site-specific installation created by an emerging artist and unveiled at the fair. Following an international open call, Paris-based artist Kapwani Kiwanga was selected as this year’s winner for her open-air installation Shady, featuring porous shade cloths in black, dark green, bright red and sky blue stretched across a black steel frame.

Asian artists were strongly represented at this year’s Frieze New York, with a record 28 exhibitors, including galleries from China, Japan, Korea and India. Highlights include early paintings and sculptures by Takashi Murakami at Gagosian’s booth in the “For Your Infotainment” section (Murakami had his first New York solo exhibition at Hudson’s Feature, Inc.); a solo show of late paintings by Gutai master Atsuko Tanaka at Sakurado Fine Arts in “Spotlight,” a section dedicated to 20th-century pioneers; and emerging artist Jacqueline Kiyomi Gordon’s sound and sculptural installation at Empty Gallery’s booth in the “Frame” section, for galleries aged eight years or younger. These and many more are shown below.

Empty Gallery (Hong Kong) presented a sound and sculptural installation by JACQUELINE KIYOMI GORDON, which incorporated wool, felt, hair, cast cement, paint, speakers and digital elements, and featured her sound pieces Sound Blanket No. 2, Cold World Cycles Warm – Line Array, Sound Panel No. 4, and Sound Blanket No. 4 – Jacket (all 2018), among others.

http://artasiapacific.com/Blog/HighlightsOfFriezeNewYork2018

Alina Cohen, “The 11 Best Booths at Frieze New York”, *Artsy*, 03 May 2018

Through Sunday at Frieze New York’s impressive white tent on Randall’s Island, visitors can snap selfies under a giant table designed by artist Robert Therrien, sip from water bottles ornamented with Laercio Redondo’s designs, and watch a feminist parade orchestrated by Lara Schnitger. While pristine design and eye-catching spectacle are integral to any art fair, some of this edition’s best and most important works also reside in simpler, easily overlooked corners. Over 190 galleries spanning 30 countries are presenting this year; here, we culled 11 of our favorite booths from the mix. Whether you’re looking for fully immersive experiences or subtle portraiture, overlooked talents or contemporary innovators, here’s where to start.

Empty Gallery
Frame Section, Booth FR14
With works by Jacqueline Kiyomi Gordon

Installation view of Empty Gallery’s booth at Frieze New York, 2018. Photo by Mark Blower. Courtesy of Mark Blower/Frieze.

Walk through a plastic curtain, and you’ve entered the sonic realm of Los Angeles-based artist Jacqueline Kiyomi Gordon. She’s mic’d the exterior of the booth to record the sounds of the fair. They pass into a digital program, which alters them and expels the resulting noises through two sculptures (several cast concrete speakers and one that’s real, all mounted on painted steel poles). Additional sculptures—priced between $6,000 and $9,500—made from wool and other fabrics, resembling blankets and garments, help absorb the noise. Gordon tells Artsy that she was considering the word “absorptive” and all its possible connotations. “What does it mean to be ‘absorptive?’ To feel ‘absorptive?’” she asks. The aurally focused exhibition is on-brand for this Hong Kong gallery, which also runs the Berlin-based vinyl record label Empty Editions.

https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-11-best-booths-frieze-new-york

"In their own words: ten Frieze New York artists tell us about their works for the Frame section", *The Art Newspaper*, 03 May 2018

THE ART NEWSPAPER

Co-organised by Andrew Bonacina of the Hepworth Wakefield in the UK and Laura McLean-Ferris from the Swiss Institute, New York, the fair's Frame sector gives emerging galleries (eight years or younger) space for solo-artist displays. We asked the artists to describe their work at the fair.

Courtesy of SFMOMA, from the installation Inside You Is Me

Jacqueline Kiyomi Gordon, showing with Empty Gallery, Hong Kong. "When asked to create a sound piece for Frieze New York, all I could imagine was how to escape the noise of the fair while still being seen. Everyone told me the only way was with headphones. But we don't just listen with our ears, we listen with our whole bodies. This piece involves large, sound-absorbing materials to soften the noise, and a four-channel sound sculpture that separates and uses the ambient noise of the fair, enabling you to navigate an alternative reality within the existing soundscape. "

https://www.theartnewspaper.com/gallery/in-their-own-words-ten-artists-tell-us-about-their-works-for-frame

Alex Greenerger, "Sound Body, Sound Mind: At Frieze, a Jacqueline Kiyomi Gordon Installation Shapes the Way Viewers Move"
ARTnews, 02 May 2018

ARTnews

A repeated complaint from everyone at Frieze New York today was that, even inside the fair's tent, on this sunny, 86-degree day, it was hot. And, while it was sweltering just about everywhere in the fair, you could almost be tricked into thinking there was air conditioning at Empty Gallery's booth, where Jacqueline Kiyomi Gordon was showing a sound installation that features speakers and other objects covered in the wooly-looking material used for acoustic absorption. (The Hong Kong gallery was invited to participate in the fair's "Frame" section, which is devoted to individual presentations and was this year curated by Andrew Bonacina and Ruba Katrib, who shared the labor of organizing it with Laura McLean-Ferris.)

After entering through a sliced vinyl curtain, whirring noises—ones not unlike those that come out of air vents—could be heard when visitors got up close to various speakers, which jutted out from corners and hung from the ceiling. But moving around the installation revealed what a dense soundscape Kiyomi Gordon had constructed. A repeating chime-like tone could be heard emanating from one squarish speaker, while another four-piece one—it looked like the kind used at big concerts—suspended from above played whooshing sounds.

For Kiyomi Gordon, this is a work about how sound can construct environments—how various tones and noises, though seemingly unimportant to the flow of everyday life, shape our very movements. Kiyomi Gordon has stated in the past that she is interested in "how we are both controlling and controlled by sonic information," and it was interesting to note the ways that the placement of one's body determined what could and couldn't be heard throughout the booth. (Notably absent are any sets of headphones.)

Although the industrial look of the curtain may have signaled an enclosed, cooler space, Empty Gallery's booth was just as hot as the rest of the fair. I certainly didn't cool off when I looked at one of the objects included here, a puffy jacket rendered out of soundproofing material that was hung as though it were part of a Uniqlo display. It was fuzzy and thick, and I thought it might be nice to don Kiyomi Gordon's work at some point during the dead of winter.

https://www.artnews.com/art-news/market/sound-body-sound-mind-frieze-jacqueline-kiyomi-gordon-installation-shapes-way-viewers-move-10255/

MOUSSE

Inside the works of Jacqueline Kiyomi Gordon and C. Spencer Yeh, sound becomes a sculptural material—one that holds no obligation to visual orientations that differentiate front from back. Sound bounces and reflects, in the gallery it wanders into neighboring rooms (if allowed to), it gathers in corners or multiplies itself as it echoes against hard walls and eventually dies away into silence.

Left - Jacqueline Kiyomi Gordon, *Noise Blanket No.10*, 2017.
Courtesy: Empty Gallery, Hong Kong
Opposite - Jacqueline Kiyomi Gordon, *Noise Blanket No.6*, 2017,
Courtesy: Empty Gallery, Hong Kong

THERE IS NO FRONT: SOUND AS SCULPTURAL MATERIAL

JACQUELINE KIYOMI GORDON, C. SPENCER YEH
AND CHIARA GIOVANDO IN CONVERSATION

Although sound is not a true physical substance but rather a form of energy that requires air or other matter to carry it, if we consider the sound-activated atmosphere as a sculptural material, there is the potential to begin to see the gallery or place of exhibition in different terms. Sound becomes a material in relation to all other works, objects, and the architecture of the exhibition itself as it inhabits the space. In this way, making a sound work can be seen as a kind of excavation of the gallery. Both Kiyomi Gordon and Yeh's practices deal with the spatialization of sound and involve a dedication to hours of careful listening as they shape space with intangible and invisible stuff.

CHIARA GIOVANDO
Amazingly, I think I've known both of you for over fifteen years through the U.S. experimental music and noise scene. Jackie I met in the Bay Area in the early 2000s, and Spencer, it must have been on the East Coast during a tour around that same time. Where did the two of you first meet?

JACQUELINE KIYOMI GORDON
I want to say we first met in Oakland? Although my memory is really shitty, but did I open a show for your duo with John Weiss where I was playing a giant blanket?

C. SPENCER YEH
Umm…

JKG
Like a giant blanket covered in speakers?

CSY
Yes!

CG
You both have a practice, to different degrees, that is rooted in music, specifically the experimental improv and noise music scene. Can you briefly share how you came to music?

JKG
I came to music from a visual art background when I was in school at the San Francisco Art Institute in 2000. I studied with Laetitia Sonami, went to shows in San Francisco and Oakland. At the time I was experimenting a lot with photography, painting, and installation, and then started working with sound. To be honest, I didn't really like music until I had found out about noise. I was experimenting with circuit bending and trying to make my own musical textiles. My first large installation was a piece called *Dream Blanket*. I began to perform that work because another artist, Grux, asked me to play it at his weekly series.

CSY
I arrived late to music as well. My family moved to the U.S. when I was five years old from Taiwan, and when we came to this country, my parents and my older brother were so busy trying to figure out how to be Americans themselves they didn't really act as cultural guides for me at all. I was missing a connection with mainstream youth culture. Very early on I had gotten a sense of experimental music, before I even figured out what it was, through weird encounters with late-night public television.

CG
Yes, we are also talking about a pre-internet world when one had to seek out cultural spaces in person…

CSY
That's totally it. I was isolated and having to do research on my own—like you said, pre-internet. Even my experience of listening to a regular rock record was so mysterious. So I would just create and consume in this very isolated and particular way, and that still affects the way I think about sound. I always say that I'm not a musician, but that I am working with music and sound.

CG
What were the first ways sound began to differentiate itself from music for you?

CSY
I went to school for film. At that time music was a secondary interest. Eventually I realized, through tools like four-track tape recorders, that what I was trying to do with film and video, I could do with sound as well, perhaps with more immediacy. The act of editing for me was as much based in a sonic universe as a visual one.

JKG
For me, I was making these large blanket paintings and listening to noise on headphones, and I realized I wanted to be surrounded by sound and thought, "Oh! I can build sound systems—total multichannel environments!" That was a turning point, and also had to do with exposure to spaces like La Monte Young's Dream House or going to my first anechoic chamber and shows at Recombinant Media Labs in San Francisco. Through those experiences, I found that what I really wanted to do was listen. And so I began to make my own spaces to listen in.

CG
That makes me think about the way your early performance work seems to be less about your body or gesture and more about the object as performer.

JKG
Yes, it also has to do with audience, and the kind of expectation that is inherent in the space. I think of my sound installations as a type of performance. This is because I don't really make the composition until I'm in the space and the speakers are set. Then I take at least forty-eight hours to compose in the installation—and this becomes a kind of performance that continues for the duration of the exhibition.

CSY
As a performer, there's this immediate engagement with an audience. Whereas, with installation, that immediate exchange is missing, but instead you have much more control. I think about some of these amazing spaces we've been able to use in Cincinnati—where I lived for many years—I've always said that these spaces are bad for rock bands but are amazing for other things, like environmental compositions, in the way the acoustics affect the ways sound can function in them.

CG
Sound for me is really a kind of physical material, and a material that is always in relationship, as you're both saying, to the acoustics and architecture of the space.

CSY
That's also what's so awesome about it. You have something that functions as sculpture but also has all these other possibilities. It's interesting in terms of how a work travels as well. Jacqueline,

C. Spencer Yeh, "Asian Meeting Festival" performance at METRO, Kyoto, 2017. Courtesy: the artist and Asian Music Network. Photo: Yoshikazu Inoue

C. Spencer *Yeh, Mei-Jia & Ting-Ting & Chih-Fu & Sin-Ji* (screenshot), 2018. Courtesy: the artist

C. Spencer Yeh, *Three Waves*, 2017, *Shocking Asia* installation view at Empty Gallery, Hong Kong, 2017. Courtesy: the artist and Empty Gallery, Hong Kong

I'm thinking about the work you did with Empty Gallery in Hong Kong that went to 356 Mission Rd.

JKG That's why I like to use the term "site dependent" versus "site specific" in relation to my practice. When that particular piece, titled *Not Exactly B Flat*, went from Empty Gallery to 356 Mission Rd, I re-engineered all of the tracks. I reequalized, respatialized everything, so I kind of remade the piece, and even though I was still using the same concept and objects, the feeling of it reflected the new space it was in.

CG And this is because each environment that you enter has its own acoustics that affect the piece. Both of you are such practiced and particular listeners—can you talk about that?

CSY It's like what you said earlier, Chiara, that sound is the material, and the way I finished that thought in my head was that "music is just one way of working with that material." I also think there are visual ways of listening. Like with records, there is a certain feeling of mystery before you hear anything at all, you are just staring at the cover art and thinking about what this record might sound like… Maybe you know the band and have a certain set of expectations. All that stuff influences your hearing even before you put the record on.

JKG I have a new collaborative project designing multichannel systems for warehouse parties. We are just beginning development, and so it's hard to talk about right now… I can say it is tied to an ongoing interest that started when I was at Stanford in archaeoacoustics, or the study of archaeological sites based on acoustics. I definitely use this when thinking about listening and temporary spaces.

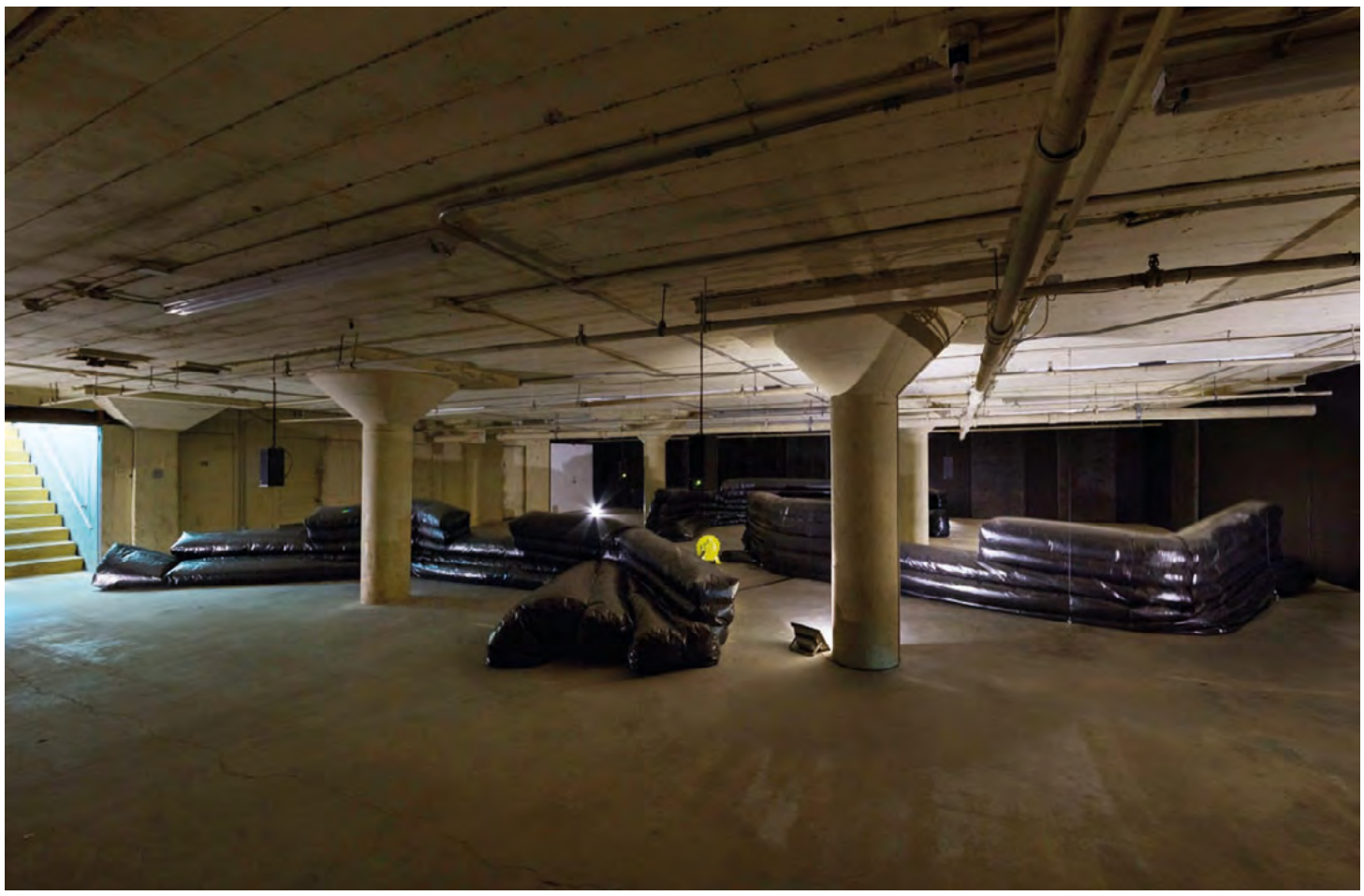
CG Can you give us an example?

JKG For instance, one of the Stanford research projects focused on a pre-Incan temple that had completely perplexing architecture when considered through a normal physical orientation. There were several small chambers that weren't big enough for humans to walk through, but then they found that it's all because of acoustics. They found if a person played a conch shell in one small chamber, the sound would channel into several other rooms. The architecture itself was creating the illusion of multiple players—splitting the signal into a multichannel environment.

CSY That makes me think about the sound of a hi-hat moving through the room… or how important it is to organize frequencies in a space. It's not just about what sounds you are playing but also about the quality of those sounds and how they will travel and reach the listener… to make spaces geared toward active hearing, which doesn't even have to actually involve hearing sound. It can also be a physical or felt response.

CG Time is also so important. I think sound has the ability to address and insert time into exhibition in a way that challenges the presumption that exhibition is static.

Jacqueline Kiyomi Gordon, *Our Best Machines Are Made of Sunshine*, 2009, installation view at Queens Nails Projects, San Francisco, 2009. Courtesy: the artist



Jacqueline Kiyomi Gordon, *Not Exactly B Flat*, 2017 installation view at 356 Mission Rd., Los Angeles, 2017. Courtesy: the artist. Photo: Brica Wilcox

CSY Well, we could argue that all artworks, whether there is an element of time or not, do take time. They do take time to be experienced in a particular way. Even the act of looking takes time. You're right, though, there is a presumption that exhibition is static. And in the case of a sound installation, the viewer has to consider something like "how long should I stay in here to get a sense of this work?" I like the idea of applying that same logic to a wall work, or something like a painting. I wish we could tell people, "I want you to spend at least twenty minutes looking at this because you're not going to get it otherwise."

JKG I believe there are several different scales of time. There is the time we have on our clock, then there is the time that we experience, but I feel like the quality of time is different depending on what sensory mode is dominant to the experience and our memory of it, once you leave the gallery. Maybe somebody only saw something for five seconds, but when they leave, they can recall that image in their head. It's different to recall sound, it doesn't imprint the same way, it's like you have to recall the feeling of it in time.

CG This brings up a huge challenge for sound art, which is that we are working within a field, and actually a world, that privileges the eyes. Increasingly, institutions are investing in equipment and architectures that are conducive for showing sound work. Still, often artists working in these areas are faced with certain challenges. You've both worked in a spectrum of venues, everywhere from underground warehouses to a new era of black box galleries oriented towards supporting sound to museums. How do each of these spaces affect your practice?

JKG I was a part of the recent *Soundings* exhibition at SFMOMA. Because it's a brand-new museum, the architecture is finally acknowledging acoustics. A lot is happening with new materials and research into acoustic control. I think this is because the commodification of experience is very important to museums. The museum had a soundproof wall around my piece, but sound still traveled through the air vents… it's great that newer museums are taking more into consideration, but there's still a long way to go. Regarding neutral space, or black box, or white cube, I always think

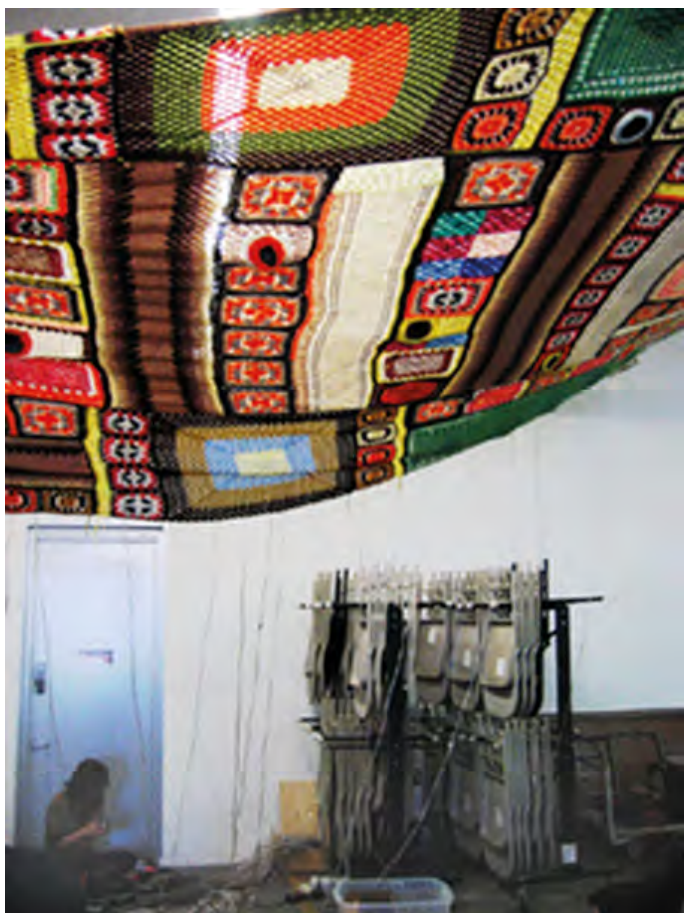
back to my first shows in apartments and warehouses. Those were spaces that enabled me to develop my own language that I still use. I don't think there's such a thing as neutral space.

CSY Did you feel a certain amount of relief when you were able to finally install in a space that wasn't so much like the warehouse or basement?

JKG Yes, but I was really confused. I painted all of my work white. Everything for my first show in a real gallery was white! All the work matched the walls perfectly. The floor was even painted white.

CSY I did a project for Cleveland MOCA and used their preinstalled speaker system in the stairwell. That work was both inhabiting its own conceptual universe and had to be mixed and made for the conditions of the museum. I've been working on and off with text-to-speech voices. For this piece, I was working with three voices, all for Chinese language. One is to represent Chinese from Taiwan, one from Hong Kong, and one from mainland China. So I was spending time with those voices, writing these text scripts, sort of like concrete poetry to generate these weird glitches or extended vocal techniques from the voices. And then I was sampling those recordings and I brought my own voice in to imitate the Texas speech voice sounds. And I used Chihfu, which is one of my first names. I want to riff on this work more. Use these voices as a frame.

JKG It's an instrument in a way.



Jacqueline Kiyomi Gordon, *Dreamblankets*, 2005, A Little Display, San Francisco, 2005. Courtesy: the artist

CSY Yes, I'm always trying to find these other sort of weird little tools, and other ways to effectively work with the voice.

JKG I think that goes into another major difference between sound as material and other contemporary art materials, even concept as a material—where with sound, it opens up a different kind of thinking. I think of my sound systems as being instruments. I can play different sounds through them—is it a different piece? I don't know—it's the same sculpture? Maybe. I can have that flexibility and ambiguity.

CSY Do you think that there's a correlation between that ambiguity and other power formations?

JKG Well, we are surrounded by a system in which art is supposed to be produced and sold, and that system is very Western, and I don't think that has to apply to sound.

CG I think sound art actually challenges that economy. Not only is it challenging the ways that viewership is engaged temporally and spatially, but it's actually changing the way we understand objectness. I am also very attracted to sound's lack of objectness, or its object ethics. I have a vision of entire landscapes buried in more and more and more objects, and then I think about sound art… I don't know if that makes sense.

JKG Absolutely. I've been thinking about that a lot right now. I use a lot of materials, but everything is modular and is reusable. Even though I make sound blanket objects, they are made out of materials that I buy, and I put into the world—I reuse them. They are still blankets that block sound; they are functioning things.

CG Sound has a kind of freedom in not actually being a thing.

Jacqueline Kiyomi Gordon (1982, Long Beach) works with sound, sculpture, and performance and is based in Los Angeles. She received her BFA in photography in 2004 from the San Francisco Art Institute and her MFA in 2011 from Stanford University, where her research focused on the history of communications technology and the physiological and psychophysical effects of music and sound on the body. Recent shows include SFMOMA's *Soundtracks*, VAC's Geometry of Now Festival in Moscow, and solo shows at Empty Gallery in Hong Kong, Human Resources and 356 Mission Rd. in Los Angeles, and the Lab in San Francisco. She is in the music group 0th and the Los Angeles–based video and sound collective DLS, and she has performed with Laetitia Sonami throughout the San Francisco Bay Area.

C. Spencer Yeh is recognized for his interdisciplinary activities and collaborations as an artist, improviser, and composer, as well as for his music project Burning Star Core. His video works are distributed by Electronic Arts Intermix, and he is a contributing editor to *Triple Canopy* and *BOMB* magazine. Yeh also volunteers as a programmer and trailer editor for Spectacle Theater, a microcinema in Brooklyn. Recent exhibitions include *Shocking Asia* at Empty Gallery, Hong Kong; *Two Workaround Works around Calder* at the Whitney Museum, New York; *Modern Mondays* at MoMA, New York; *Sound Horizon* at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; and *Mei-Jia & Ting-Ting & Chih-fu & Sin-Ji* at MOCA Cleveland. International presentations include *Closer to the Edge* in Singapore and *Crossing Over* in Kuala Lumpur; *The Companion* at the Liverpool Biennial 2014; the Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival; *Tony Conrad Tribute* at Atelier Nord/Ultima Festival in Oslo; and *Great Tricks from Your Future* at D-CAF in Cairo. In 2015 he was an artist in residence at ISSUE Project Room, Brooklyn, and he was included in the performance program for Greater New York at MoMA/PS1. A new project on vinyl record, *The RCA Mark II*, was recently published by Primary Information.

Chiara Giovando is a Los Angeles–based artist, composer, and curator. Giovando is currently director and curator at PANEL LA, an artist residency focused on newly commissioned works. In 2015-2016 she was curator in residence at Disjecta Contemporary Art Center in Portland, Oregon, where she presented a series of exhibitions and programming titled *Sound Is Matter*. She was codirector and curator at Human Resources L.A., and in 2015 she curated *In Search of an Author* at the Unge Kunstneres Samfund in Oslo, and THE OUTSIDE MUSEUM, a temporary museum in the Mojave Desert in collaboration with Portland Museum of Modern Art. In 2012 she was curator in residence with René Block at Kunsthal 44 Møen and organized *Hammer without a Master: Henning Christiansen's Archive*, an exhibition that included fourteen artists and composers as well as archival material. Other recent projects include *The Third Ear*, an exhibition of new sound art curated with the Fellows of Contemporary Art LA. Giovando's own scores *Repulsion Music*, *Puncture Tones*, and *Edges Adaptation* have been played both nationally and internationally including at the Barbican in London and the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Brady Ng, “Catchy”, *Art Asia Pacific*, Summer 2017

CATCHY
JACQUELINE KIYOMI GORDON

BRADY NG
EMPTY GALLERY

HONG KONG | USA

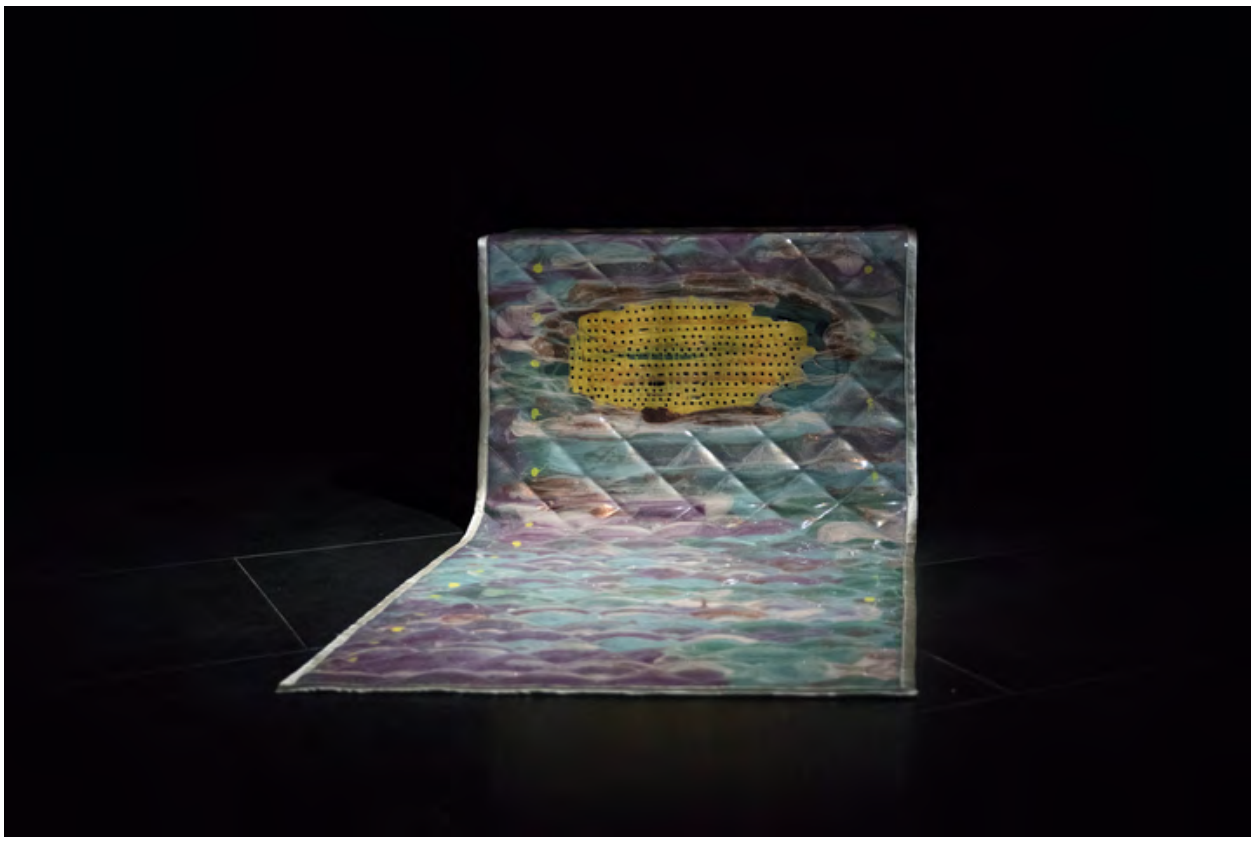
On the opening night of “Catchy,” the parents of LA-based installation artist Jacqueline Kiyomi Gordon offhandedly commented that Hong Kong’s Empty Gallery was one of the few art spaces that could earnestly present their daughter’s work. Perhaps it was the all-black-everything interior—the key feature which sets the kunsthaus apart from its peers in the city—that provided a suitably minimal, dimly atmospheric backdrop to Gordon’s signature, precise manipulation of sound and architecture that warranted the remark. “Catchy” was Gordon’s first presentation in East Asia, and featured shifting walls, a newly composed pop song and quilts hued jade, seafoam and lavender.

A hefty speaker emitting a bass beat was set by the entrance passageway, leading visitors forward into the gallery’s upper level presentation space. An arresting set of inflated, sound-absorbing walls stood there, kept erect by pneumatic equipment for about four minutes at a time. Speakers that peppered the space emitted sounds that resembled the output of tone generators found in the laboratories of physicists. When the air pumps reversed their function and slowly let air out of the soft, black, ballooning barriers, the walls slowly glided down, losing volume and structure as if they were melting, first revealing light sources, then exposing multiple origins of sound. A song played—an earworm, a catchy tune—with saccharine, meaningless mumbles from which one could decipher: Imma love you / up and down / we go, we go, we go, as well as other lines that would not be out of place in a concert featuring Billboard’s Hot 100 songs. Around three minutes later, the song concluded, matching the common length of popular music tracks, and the barriers were filled with air again, blocking off the speakers and lights as clinical tones flooded the soundscape once more.

On the lower floor, five speakers emitted Björkian vocal notes and melodies, their angles of audio coverage guided by the gallery’s walls and blankets that were draped over metal frames that housed the custom-made equipment. Here, we heard clean tones, snippets of mumbled song lyrics and breathing sounds.

Installation view of **JACQUELINE KIYOMI GORDON**’s “Catchy” at Empty Gallery, Hong Kong, 2017. Courtesy Empty Gallery.]

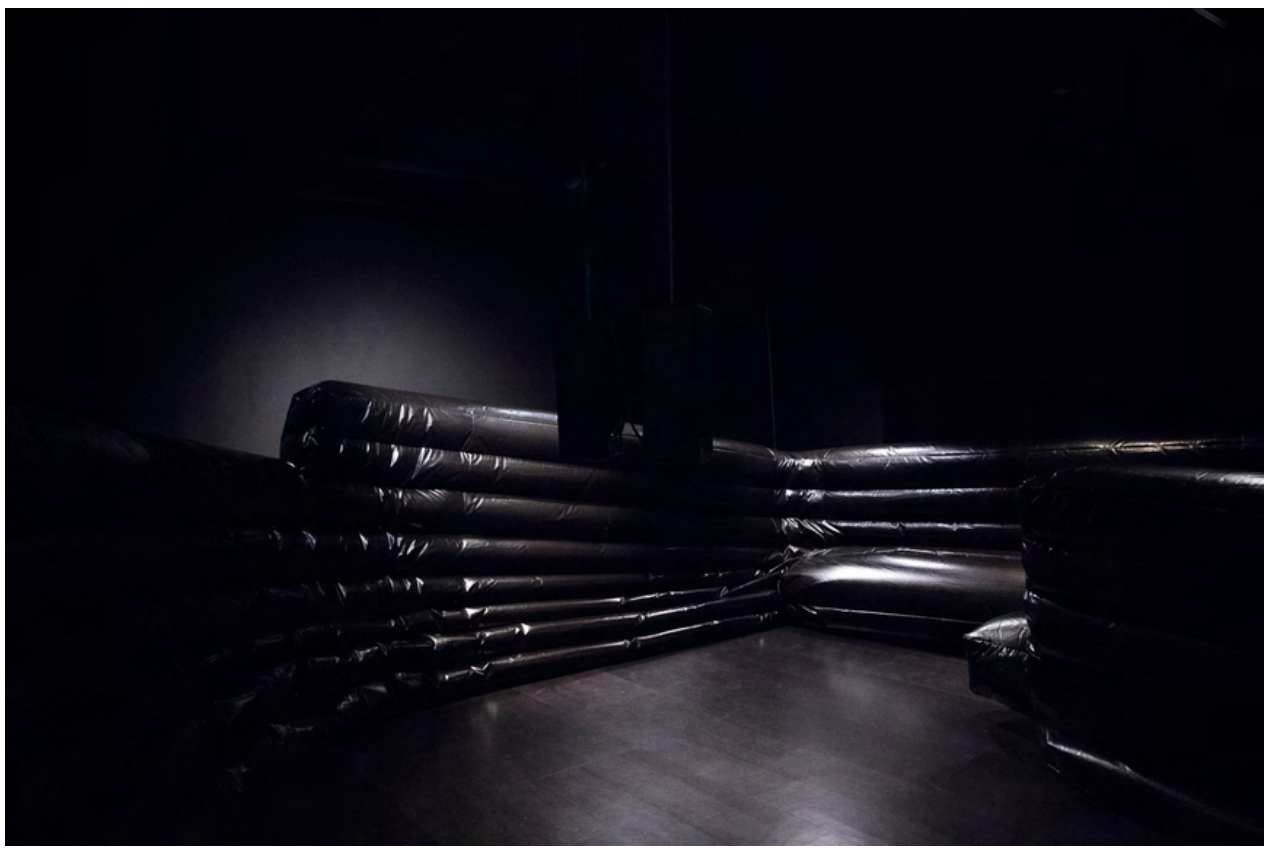
JACQUELINE KIYOMI GORDON, Noise Blanket, No. 10, 2017, poured silicone, artificial fur, nylon, steel armature, 189 × 76 cm. Courtesy Empty Gallery, Hong Kong.



JACQUELINE KIYOMI GORDON, *Noise Blanket, No. 5*, 2017, poured silicone, artificial fur, nylon, steel armature, 183 × 75 cm. Courtesy Empty Gallery, Hong Kong.

Gordon's installation drew inspiration from recording studios where multi-channel productions are the norm and craftsmanship overshadows artistic character. The way to navigate "Catchy" was to think of the sounds from each speaker as separate channels in a single track. The vocals heard on the upper floor were the main lyrics; the bass beat could be heard by the entrance; vocal harmonies and other electronic instrumental sounds were downstairs, ripped apart and spewed forth by five directional speakers placed in different locations, towards different directions, steered further by quilts with flighty, subtle shades of pastels made by the artist. By isolating the sounds that form a single pop music track, Gordon turned the two floors that comprise the gallery into a song, folding the aural dimension into the art space's architecture. To hear the music, one must step through the space: first the narrow pass past the entrance, followed by Gordon's maze, down the stairs, and then into and out of three smaller rooms. While the artist appropriated the language and production techniques of pop music, her composition was never presented as a single unit, and therefore could never be heard in full. Unlike a standard pop music track, visitors were only offered one or two layers at any given spot, at any given time.

The effect of Gordon's site-specific installation is one of detemporization or a reconfiguration of temporal measurement. Within Empty Gallery's black halls—particularly inside Gordon's labyrinth of inflatable walls—our appraisal of time was no longer the consequence of Mesopotamian construction, but shaped by the cycles that allowed light to flood the paths within the barriers and permitted song to permeate the same space.



JACQUELINE KIYOMI GORDON, *Not Exactly B Flat*, 2017, PVC tarpaulin walls, centrifugal blowers, Arduino microcontroller, MIDI and trigger relay, dimensions variable. Courtesy Empty Gallery, Hong Kong.

Jacqueline Kiyomi Gordon's "Catchy" is on view at Empty Gallery, Hong Kong, until August 19, 2017.