

It Only Happens All of the Time

Gordon:

Kiyomi!

Jacqueline



Control

Jacqueline Kiyomi Gordon's work reveals the role of sound in our increasingly uncanny, artificial world. Evidence of acoustic manipulation is all around us and takes diverse forms: consumer noise-cancellation devices, white noise machines (as sleep aids or torture devices), audio branding and the use of ultrasonic directional speakers in advertising, the prevalence of Auto-Tune in music production and consumer apps, and so on. Gordon's research into feedback systems in 20th- and 21st-century sound and architectural design connects the dots between new acoustic technologies and a subject responsive to those systems. By examining how power is enacted through sound as situated in architecture and objects, Gordon excavates the sonic attributes of built space and the modes of subjectivity informed by them. Her practice, which incorporates sculpture, site-specific installation, sound, performance, drawing, video, and textiles, is an exercise in dissonance. Much like the prefix "dis" in "dissonance," which signals division and divergence, her work is not a rejection of sound, but a redirection of it.

Feedback systems rely on a constant rotation of information—a looping, responsive circuit of cause and effect. In many of her projects, Gordon embeds sonic feedback systems that pull in sound from just outside the gallery in order to create porosity with respect to the outside world. For her work *Listening 3 & 4* (2013), the artist attached transducers to the windows of Pro Arts Gallery in Oakland, transforming the panes of glass into amplifiers that routed the exterior sounds of Frank H. Ogawa Plaza into the gallery space. Similarly, her 2009 installation *Our Best Machines Are Made of Sunshine* at Queens Nails in San Francisco transmitted audio sourced from two microphones mounted out front to a four-channel surround-sound installation within the gallery.

Inside and outside become blurred in these scenarios, and our overall sonic awareness intensifies. To make the film *Everyone Will Be Here Now But Me* (2013), shot at the offices of the Los Angeles Food Center, Gordon invited visitors to explore sound installations distributed throughout the empty rooms, with the option to listen through binaural microphones that captured the 3D stereo sound of the space. In a studio setting, binaural recording is achieved by positioning two microphones on the ears of a dummy head, which simulates their natural placement. For the project, Gordon attached these dummy heads onto rods that visitors held as they toured the offices, so that they were simultaneously listening to the space as filtered through 3D stereo while physically inhabiting it, thereby disturbing the divide between inside and outside.

The video's soundtrack is a compilation of synthesizer recordings used in the installation.

For her newly commissioned installation at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, *It Only Happens All of the Time*, Gordon has constructed an immersive sonic environment that encourages visitors to intuitively navigate the space through physical and audio perception. She describes the experience as a blur between movement and listening, the tactile and the sonic. Gordon generated the sound that visitors hear in the space through the application of various sound design techniques; she culled audio from commercial sound-effect banks, field recordings, and modular synthesizers. Sound designers, especially in the film industry, aspire to transport audiences to the scene they are viewing, aiming for maximum realism and affective punch. Broadcast over Meyer Sound speakers using a state-of-the-art commercial surround-sound system, Gordon's audio is transformative not just acoustically, but on a physical register as well. Sound becomes sensation.

The installation's sound-absorbing walls reference the design of anechoic chambers found in military and scientific testing facilities, which insulate and absorb sound reflections. Within this highly regulated setting, the sculpture *Love Seat* presents a different kind of framework. Visitors are invited to sit across from one another, each gazing at the other person, and connect while listening. Gordon hopes the sculpture will encourage intimacy—an emotional proximity to others and the self through shared experience. The work recalls what the theorist Steve Goodman describes as "affective tonality" in his book on sound's weaponization, *Sonic Warfare: Sound, Affect, and the Ecology of Fear*. "Affective tonality" is a term referencing how sound's production, transmission, and mutation—in everything from elevator music to the use of sonic cannons in crowd control—can determine human emotional,

Jacqueline Kiyomi Gordon, *Everyone Will Be Here Now But Me*, 2013 (footage), Courtesy of Machine Project

psychological, and physiological states. Through affective tonality, sound modulates mood. By activating varying degrees of sonic manipulation, an influence that can both commune and command, *It Only Happens All of the Time* demonstrates the possibilities and the dangers of affective tonality.

Like much of Gordon's work, the installation asks how we sense and respond to the world and other people. Thus, the "blur" is not just about movement and sound within one body, but also about a heightened empathetic register among and between bodies. This relation follows the philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty's concept of "flesh" as a type of interdependent fold embodied in both the perceiver and the perceived—a shared correspondence by which we come to sense. Through our faculties, we feel and are felt by others; we feel others feel, and feel with them. Merleau-Ponty argues that sensation is a core, unifying aspect of the human condition. Gordon's practice allows us to ponder the impact and relevance of technological design on this sensorial field. Through reverse engineering and experimentation, her work reveals how perceptual experience is mediated and qualified through technology.

The title of the exhibition and installation, *It Only Happens All of the Time*, references sound's ability to permeate. Likewise, the suspended figures in Gordon's new series of drawings *Filter Resonance B* mirror the way in which sound travels through us, activating our bodies in the process. Gordon imagines that the drawings represent actual filters, which isolate information, and their presentation is meant to evoke the interfaces of audio filters in music software, which allow the user to directly regulate verb, equalization, and so on by manipulating graphical elements. Fusing bodily organs with protruding wires on a background grid, these floating, organ-like specimens are both futuristic and eerie, perhaps a reminder of the many ways in which humans process sound as information.

Cecil Moss, Assistant Curator of Visual Arts

Jacqueline Kiyomi Gordon, *IWYTWMTWYTW (I Want You To Want Me To Want You To Want Me)*, 2014, Courtesy the artist

Artist Bio

Jacqueline Gordon is a visual and sound artist based in Los Angeles. Her work integrates audio technologies into sculptural forms to question relationships of affect within an environment. She received her BFA in Photography from the San Francisco Art Institute in 2004 and an MFA from Stanford University in 2011, where her research focused on the history of communications technology and the physiological and psychophysical effects of music and sound on the body. For her 2013 solo exhibition at Pro Arts in Oakland, Gordon created a sculpture and sound installation responsive to the architecture of the gallery and its proximity to Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, using sound to defy the structural barrier dividing the outside and inside of the space. Her solo show at Eli Ridgway Gallery (San Francisco, CA) in 2012 titled *No Touch* involved three sound installations that incorporated different stages of sound reflection and absorption through materials and architecture. She has also exhibited at Institute of Contemporary Art (London, UK), di Rosa (Napa, CA), SOMArts (San Francisco, CA), Cue Arts Foundation (New York, NY), Queens Nails (San Francisco, CA), the San Francisco Arts Commission Gallery (San Francisco, CA) Machine Project (Los Angeles, CA), Worth Ryder Art Gallery (Berkeley, CA), and Sonoma State University (Sonoma, CA). Gordon has received

numerous awards including the 2011 Joan Mitchell Foundation MFA Award, a Center for Cultural Innovation Grant (2011), a Phelan, Murphy, and Cadogan Fellowship (2010) and The Outstanding Student Achievement In Contemporary Sculpture Award from the International Sculpture Center (2010). She has participated in artist residencies at Skowhegan School of Drawing and Painting (2011), Bemis Center for Contemporary Art (2008) and Djerassi Resident Artists Program (2013).

For the past 6 years, Gordon has been a member of the music and performance collective, Oth, who have performed at such venues as The Berkeley Art Museum (2011), The San Francisco Electronic Music Festival (2011), and Southern Exposure (2010). Their performances incorporate dance, sculptural installation based electronic instruments, and multi-channel video installations. Gordon has also recently been developing a new performance with sound artist, Laetitia Sonami. They have performed together at Yerba Center for the Arts (2011) and SOMArts (2012).

Public Programs

Opening Reception
Fri, Mar 7, 6–8 PM
Upstairs galleries, YBCA
Free with gallery admission

It Only Happens All of the Time:
A Symposium
Sat, Mar 29, 2014, 1–3 PM
YBCA Screening Room
Free with gallery admission

YBCA: You Exclusive Listening Party with Jacqueline Kiyomi Gordon
Sun, Mar 30, 2014, 2 PM
Brick and Mortar, 1710 Mission Street, San Francisco
Free with RSVP for YCUsers plus one

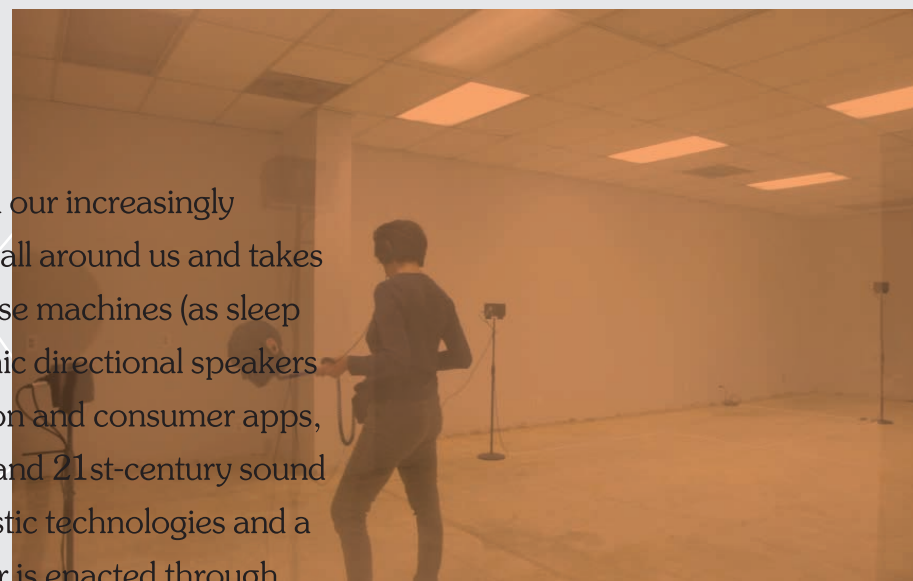
Converge: Oth and Infrasonic
Thu, May 15, 2014, 4–8 PM
YBCA Grand Lobby
Free and open to the public

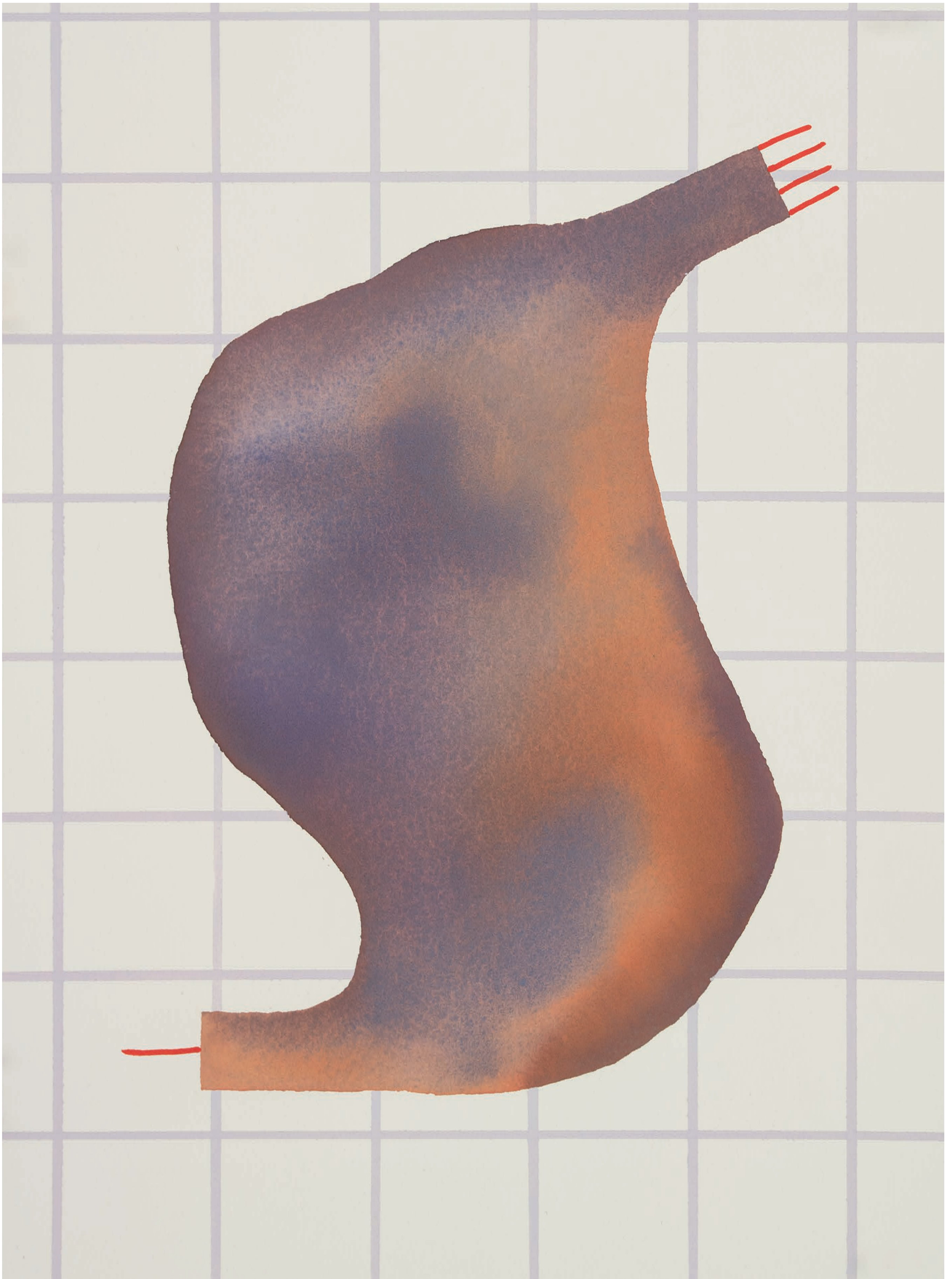
Exhibition Credits
YBCA Exhibitions 13–14 made possible in part by Mike Williams and Sheila Duggan, Marilee Moore and Kevin King, and Creative Designs, Inc. YBCA's Members of Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, YBCA's Members of Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, YBCA's Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Programs are made possible in part by Adobe, Koret Soundwell, Inc., Jake Rodriguez, and Dean Martin Howay of Special thanks to Zachary Blangert, Don Ledeker, Meyer Sound Laboratories, Inc., Berkeley, Calif. *It Only Happens All of the Time* was made possible by Design by Nicole Grenell, Soundwell, Inc.

About YBCA
Founded in 1993 out of an expressed need for an accessible, high profile arts center devoted to contemporary art of all genres, YBCA presents world that reflects the profound issues and ideas of contemporary art from the Bay Area and around the world. Through its programming, YBCA makes exploration and risk-taking, quiet reflection, and active engagement. Through its programming, YBCA makes exploration and risk-taking, quiet reflection, and active engagement. Through its programming, YBCA makes exploration and risk-taking, quiet reflection, and active engagement.



"Oth" Blow Up Universe SF Performance at Southern Exposure, photo by Forrest Kelly





Jacqueline Kiyomi Gordon
Filter Resonance B3, 2014
Gouache and ink on paper

Courtesy the artist



About Control: Technology In Culture

Control: Technology in Culture, curated by Ceci Moss, Assistant Curator of Visual Arts, is Yerba Buena Center for the Arts' ongoing series of exhibitions showcasing work by emerging and mid-career artists who examine the social, cultural, and experiential implications of technology. The series seeks to prompt timely questions about the profound and far-reaching influence of technology in our daily lives by focusing on artists whose work spans a multitude of disciplines and relates to a diverse set of issues, including architecture, acoustics, psychology, labor, consumerism, the environment, and the military.

The term "control" refers to philosopher Gilles Deleuze's theory that, as a result of the ever-increasing role of information technology, Michel Foucault's "disciplinary society" of the 20th century has given way to a "control society" in the 21st century. In contrast to discipline, which *molds* the individual through confinement in factories, prisons, and schools, control is diffuse, adaptable, and ubiquitous, *modulating* rather than molding the individual.