

ARTFORUM

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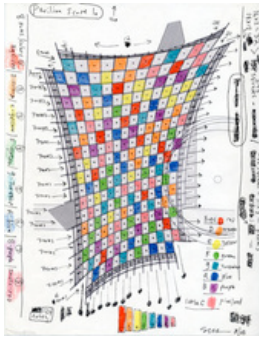
NEW YORK

"Between Thought and Sound: Graphic Notation in Contemporary Music"

THE KITCHEN

512 West 19th Street

September 7–October 20



Steve Roden, *Pavilion Score 1–5* (detail), 2005, colored pencil on computer-printed architect's paper in five parts, each 10 x 8".

In Western classical composition, the musical score is too often demoted to purely functional mediation between a composer's intention and a performer's interpretation. This vibrant multimedia exhibition, however, presents the score, in what Umberto Eco has termed "open works," as both compositional map and performative image—not only evocative of sound but a visual object as well. Further, "Between Thought and Sound," curated by Alex Waterman, Debra Singer, and Matthew Lyons, offers an invaluable archive of some of the most influential developments in contemporary music.

Whereas many of the scores presented are already profound visual objects—such as Wadada Leo Smith's Calder-like *Multiamerica*, 1999, and Alison Knowles's richly textured (and aptly titled) *Song #1 of the Three Songs: Onion Skin Song*, 1975, and *Notation Improvisation: Rice Paper Song, Lentil Song, String Song*, 2007—it is those that hint at their musical realization, via reference to more traditional notation or accompanying text, that prove most satisfying. One could easily follow Meredith Monk's vocal imaginings through her pen-on-paper *Our Lady of Late*, 1972–73, and one could even perform, if quietly, Jon Gibson's ink-on-graph paper *Rhythm Study for Voice, Hands, Feet*, 1974, in the gallery. Alvin Lucier's simple note-card drawings that compose *Resonant Things*, 1991, make it the most successful work—the visual juxtaposition of mundane objects as suggestive and interpretive as the sounds that might emerge from the random but not arbitrary graphic compendium.

The exhibition is accompanied by three concerts during its run, which will include works by many of the composers shown on the walls. Hopefully, these performances will reawaken the dormant sounds locked in what otherwise could become static visual representations—making the exhibition as fabulously cacophonous as the sounds it begets. —T. Nikki Cesare