

# The Kitchen

## *From Minimalism into Algorithm*

**Phase 1, January 7–30; Phase 2, February 4–27; Phase 3, March 3–April 2**

Taking place in The Kitchen theater and gallery spaces, “From Minimalism into Algorithm” sets contemporary and historical painting, sculpture, performance, and musical composition in counterpoint, seeking to propose a new through-line for art-making during the past half century. The series coincides with The Kitchen’s 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary and fosters intergenerational and interdisciplinary dialogues akin to our beginnings in a Soho loft.

The gallery exhibition takes up the legacy of Minimalist sculpture and composition during the 1960s and 1970s—whose seriality was taken at once by artists and critics to correlate with the era’s industrial production and increased weight placed on the individual—as a precedent for reconsidering work by a younger generation for whom such serial repetition corresponds more directly with digital technology. The terms for minimalism—whether articulated in notions of presence, materiality, or theatricality—shift as our encounters with physical space and material are similarly reconfigured through networked communication.

The gallery exhibition takes place in three phases, beginning here with historical works by artists who appeared at The Kitchen and helped create its legacy of minimalism in tandem with experiments with nascent technologies. Artist and composer **Tony Conrad**, for example, contributes what he terms a “minimalist print work”: scrolling computer pages generated by an IBM machine Conrad accessed as a programmer at Life Magazine in 1965. **Laurie Spiegel**, a pioneer of electronic music (who first performed at The Kitchen in 1971), presents algorithm-generated compositions on computers from the late 1980s and early ’90s, in addition to early animations she created at Bell Labs using her VAMPIRE (Video and Music Program for Interactive and Realtime Exploration) coding. Artists like **Vera Molnar** represent the concurrent investigations beyond New York; working in Paris, Molnar was one of the earliest computer artists whose 1969 work *Interruptions à recouvrements* (Disturbances by overlappings), for example, was based on her own hand-drawing, but was ultimately created using a computer plotter to highlight the variations of scale, shape, and line thickness of her initial composition.

Appearing in counterpoint with these works is a selection of new pieces by contemporary artists such as **Cheyney Thompson**, whose large-scale untitled painting is made using a random walk algorithm, a formalization of Brownian motion that is frequently used in financial theory to model market behavior. **Paul Sietsema**’s ink-on-paper works suggest the already-mediated status of contemporary materials—and of art-making tools, which are by now often logos for digital processes, such as a paintbrush for Photoshop. At the same time, **Zoe Leonard**’s analog photographs of birds in flight above Brooklyn rooftops display flocking behavior that provided the basis for a 1987 algorithm designed by Craig Reynolds for information visualization and optimization tasks.

The exhibition will open onto select programs in The Kitchen’s downstairs theater, including **Robert Ashley** and **Steve Paxton**’s *Quicksand*, which premieres on January 28. In the gallery’s front room, **Mary Lucier** presents a special project setting her 1971 *Color Phantoms* within a psychoanalytic setting using the personal belongings of Ashley himself—pairing the phantoms of media with those of life, effectively creating a pixilated memorial for the artist.

“From Minimalism into Algorithm” has been created collectively by The Kitchen’s curatorial team (Katy Dammers, Alessandra Gomez, Tim Griffin, Matthew Lyons, and Lumi Tan) in partnership with the participating artists, who have invited others in turn.

Please see The Kitchen website for more information on performances and public programs associated with “From Minimalism into Algorithm.”

Phase 1 artists: **Lucinda Childs, Tony Conrad, Charles Gaines, Donald Judd, Jacob Kassay, Agnieszka Kurant, Zoe Leonard, Mary Lucier, Vera Molnar, Paul Sietsema, Richard Serra, Carlota Fay Schoolman, Laurie Spiegel, Cheyney Thompson**

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### **About The Kitchen**

The Kitchen is one of New York City’s most forward-looking nonprofit spaces, showing innovative work by emerging and established artists across disciplines. Our programs range from dance, music, performance, and theater to video, film, and art, in addition to literary events, artists' talks, and lecture series. Since its inception in 1971, The Kitchen has been a powerful force in shaping the cultural landscape of this country, and has helped launch the careers of many artists who have gone on to worldwide prominence.

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