

The Kitchen

Center for video, music, dance, performance, film, and literature

Spring 2013 Season

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Tristan Perich: *Noise Patterns*

May 16-17, 8pm

\$15

Expanding on Tristan Perich's previous tonal works for electronic circuits and acoustic instruments, *Noise Patterns* is a composition for sequenced 1-bit patterns of white noise, programmed for and performed by microchip. The music is an investigation into the foundational limits of computation, which surface in the seemingly simple world of randomness.

William Leavitt: *Habitat*

May 24-25, 8pm

\$15

Habitat takes place between two groups of neighbors in the adjoining backyards of a small mid-western town. While these people sometimes speak of what divides them, the real tragedy here arises in the ordinary business of life that distracts them from any possible concordance. As always, Leavitt registers the psychological impact of things that happen beyond one's power of control.

Dance and Process: Kira Alker, Anna Azrieli, Moriah Evans, Yve Laris Cohen

June 7-8, 8:00pm

Curated by Sarah Michelson

\$15

The culmination of an extended group process of sharing work and receiving structured feedback, this evening features new works by Kira Alker, Anna Azrieli, Yve Laris Cohen and Moriah Evans.

Maintenance Required

May 30–June 22, 2013

Opening Reception: Thursday, May 30

Maintenance Required examines the large-scale systems that construct our daily lives through an investigation of the diversity of maintenance tasks. Durational by nature, maintenance networks provide life-perpetuating mechanisms of care, yet these systems have the potential to invisibly direct or limit life's possibilities, even manifesting as malevolent systems of control. By dismantling our collective blindness toward maintenance activities, we can begin to examine how they condition our lives. Bringing maintenance into view exposes a constantly shifting set of social, political, and affective relations. Acknowledging maintenance systems invites questions about what needs to be maintained and under what conditions that maintenance occurs. Taking as an entry point Mierle Laderman Ukeles' "Manifesto for Maintenance

Art" (1969), in which the artist redefines maintenance activities as art, *Maintenance Required* focuses on artistic practices that frame and critically engage these invisible systems of life support: practices that articulate the paradoxical tensions of large-scale systems of maintenance whose power to sustain life may run parallel to the power to constrain it.

Curated by Nina Horisaki-Christians, Andrea Neustein, Victoria Rogers, and Jason Waite, Helena Rubinstein Curatorial Fellows of the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program

The Kitchen presents

**Tristan Perich:
*Noise Patterns***

May 16–17, 2013

This program is made possible with support from Jerome Foundation, The Amphion Foundation, Inc., Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust, The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, The Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, and with public funds from New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council and New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.



TRISTAN PERICH: NOISE PATTERNS

Randomness has meant many things to me throughout my life. I remember my sense of humor in elementary school was largely based on how random my friends and I could be. I remember how hard it was to think of something totally unexpected. When I first read about quantum physics, I learned just how deep the question of randomness goes: that nothing in our known universe is entirely precisely defined, but only probabilistically constrained. Beyond probabilities it's completely random. It wasn't just that we lacked the tools to perfectly measure a particle's location, but that it fundamentally had none. So while an electron is probabilistically more likely to show up in a specific area (remember s/p/d orbitals from chemistry), there is always an extremely small but non-zero chance that it might appear somewhere else across the universe.

Around this time I learned about the foundations of mathematics, the quest to formalize its structure beyond any question, rebuilding math from the ground up. When Kurt Gödel's incompleteness theorem proved the impossibility of actually doing this (by demonstrating that there will always be true statements outside the reach of any specific mathematical system), it shattered the hope that all truth could be captured by logic. For me it made things much more interesting, to realize that there are fundamental limits to any defined system. When Alan Turing formalized the idea of a computer as a mathematical system, he demonstrated the fundamental limitations of computation itself. One of those limitations is that computers are incapable of generating true randomness, only procedural "pseudo-randomness."

Noise Patterns is the result of thinking about these ideas. Since I started working with 1-bit audio, I've been interested in the simplest expressions of sound as process. The code for generating tones and noise is extremely basic in both cases. While at opposite ends of the information spectrum, I feel that pure tones and random noise are essentially similarly basic, flat, without significant shape. All other digital sounds lie somewhere in between. My machine drawings explore the continuum between order and randomness visually. I first used random noise for the drum sounds in *1-Bit Music*, and since then I have mostly explored tonal material, with just a few pieces for noise. With *Noise Patterns*, I'm focusing on the purely electronic sound of randomness, through precomposed patterns that sequence the probabilistic densities of randomness, from the sound of white noise to sporadic instantaneous pops.

A final look at randomness: the mathematician Gregory Chaitin visited Columbia when I was an undergraduate there, and he talked about the existence of randomness at the core of mathematics. We know from Turing that it's impossible to decide in advance if a given computer program will go into an infinite loop or will eventually halt. Chaitin proved that the ratio of halting programs to non-halting programs, a very real and well-defined number he called Omega, is essentially random in the sense that it is "unknowable." It has digits, but we can never learn them beyond a small few. They are as random as the next flip of a coin. Like the future, it is beyond our reach.

BIO

Tristan Perich's (New York) work is inspired by the aesthetic simplicity of math, physics and code. The *WIRE* Magazine describes his compositions as "an austere meeting of electronic and organic." *1-Bit Music*, his 2005 release, was the first album ever released as a microchip, programmed to synthesize his electronic composition live. His latest circuit album, *1-Bit Symphony* (Cantaloupe, 2010) has received critical acclaim, called "sublime" (New York Press), and the *Wall Street Journal* said "its oscillations have an intense, hypnotic force and a surprising emotional depth." His award-winning work coupling 1-bit electronics with traditional forms in both music (*Active Field*, *Surface Image*) and visual art (*Machine Drawings*, *Microtonal Wall*) has been presented around the world, from Sonár and the Venice Biennale to the Whitney Museum and bitforms gallery. Perich's *Microtonal Wall* will be on view at the Museum of Modern Art as part of their *Soundings* exhibition, opening August 10, with a solo performance in the courtyard garden on August 15.

Perich's compositions for soloist, ensemble and orchestra have been performed internationally by ensembles including Bang on a Can, Alter Ego, Calder Quartet and eighth blackbird. He has received commissions from So Percussion, Bang on a Can, Meehan/Perkins Duo, Dither Quartet, Yarn/Wire, Vicky Chow, Mantra Percussion and others. His composed work appears on recordings by Doug Perkins, Mariel Roberts and Meehan/Perkins Duo.

As a visual artist, Perich has had solo exhibitions at bitforms gallery (NYC), Mikrogalleriet (Copenhagen), LEAP (Berlin), Museo Carandente (Spoleto), the Addison Gallery of American Art (Massachusetts), Katonah Museum (NY), Monster Truck (Dublin) among others, as well as group shows around the world. His *Machine Drawings*, pen-on-paper drawings executed by machine, were described as "elegantly delicate" by *BOMB Magazine*.

In 2009, the Prix Ars Electronica awarded him the Award of Distinction for his composition *Active Field* (for ten violins and ten-channel 1-bit music). Rhizome awarded him a 2010 commission for *Microtonal Wall*, an audio installation with 1,500 speakers. He has been artist in residence at Issue Project Room, Mikrogalleriet [Copenhagen], the Addison Gallery, Harvestworks, and at the Watermill Center. His work has received support

from New York State Council on the Arts, the American Music Center, New York Foundation for the Arts, Meet the Composer and others. He has spoken about his work and taught workshops around the world.

Perich studied math, music and computer science at Columbia University, and received a masters in from NYU's Interactive Telecommunications Program.

tristanperich.com

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