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***Nikita Gale: END OF SUBJECT***

January 21-March 26, 2022  
52 Walker Street, New York

Press viewing:  
Friday, January 21, 2-4 PM

*The artist will be present.*  
*To attend the press viewing,*  
*RSVP to [press@52walker.com](mailto:press@52walker.com).*



Nikita Gale, *END OF SUBJECT*, 2022 (detail). © Nikita Gale. Courtesy the artist and 52 Walker, New York

52 Walker is pleased to announce its second exhibition, *END OF SUBJECT*, featuring the work of Los Angeles-based artist Nikita Gale. Engaged with the history and politics of sound and its surrounds, Gale will present an aurally and visually rich environment in the gallery, complete with light and sound, which calls upon the tacit agreement between the audience and the materials that enable the act of viewing and experiencing. Through the artist's multidisciplinary approach, Gale recasts and destabilizes notions of witnessing, visibility, and representation that operate both inside and outside of the space as well as within and among our bodies.

As with Gale's previous projects *PRIVATE DANCER*, presented at the California African American Museum, Los Angeles, in 2021, and *AUDIENCING*, at MoMA PS1, New York, in 2020, *END OF SUBJECT* proposes an intervention within 52 Walker's architectural confines that engages the ideological apparatus and technological infrastructure of performance. The artist probes how a performance might be constituted in the absence of the human figure while reconfiguring the production of the experience of presence as it is mediated by the physical body—via such mechanisms as lighting, staging, atmosphere, and sound, as well as expectations shaped by existing social and political systems.

*END OF SUBJECT* considers the phenomenological limits of performance, how spatial hierarchies are stratified, and how transcendence and immanence are embodied by audience members. Here, Gale establishes bleachers as a kind of shorthand for the intersubjective act of witnessing: across the gallery, six sets of aluminum bleachers are distributed; three sets are violently crushed and made unfit for seating. Stage lights are mounted throughout the space, occupying some places in which the spectator would normally be present. A lighting program, automated by a show control system designed in collaboration with lighting designer Josephine Wang, shifts the site between dormant and active states. A synchronous four-channel audio installation features an original theme by composer Tashi Wada.

001 Reflecting on the material limits of ideology in *END OF SUBJECT*, Gale  
002 assumes the cycle of destruction and creation proposed by the framework of  
003 abolition. The exhibition attempts to instantiate the symbolic turning  
004 point of rupture in which both ruins and new social relations are formed.  
005 This trace evidences the physical and the ideological that continues to  
006 radiate after the annihilation of institutions, marking and formalizing the  
007 vestiges of the infrastructures that once prevailed. Drawing from a formal  
008 training in archaeology, the artist captures the moments in which the  
009 resonances of the destruction incurred linger and relations between  
010 subjects are challenged.  
011

012 The exhibition will include a series of six drawings on aluminum panels,  
013 which also mark presence by creating an absence on the surface through  
014 processes of extraction. Gale etches words onto the smooth metal that move  
015 from quantitative to subjective descriptors and mounts mini spotlights onto  
016 their reflective exteriors. The artist envisions the thin metal layer as  
017 the protective interface between human beings and technology, shielding the  
018 physical body from technology or from the environment when encountered.  
019

020 Moving away from the pop-performance aesthetics of Gale's previous  
021 presentations, *END OF SUBJECT* regards the particular experiential  
022 parameters of the sculptural in the visual and aural realms by focusing on  
023 the physical site and its infrastructure. As Gale has inquired, "What lies  
024 between the bodies and the sounds and the stage and the lights—what are we  
025 to each other in the act of witnessing? What have we agreed upon through  
026 the mere act of showing up?"<sup>1</sup>  
027

028 *Clarion*, the 52 Walker publication series from David Zwirner Books, will  
029 release a fully illustrated catalogue that will accompany the exhibition,  
030 featuring contributions by gallery director and curator Ebony L. Haynes as  
031 well as Daphne Brooks, Andrea Fraser, and Harmony Holiday.  
032

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035 Born in 1983 in Anchorage, Alaska, **Nikita Gale** received a BA from Yale  
036 University, New Haven, in 2006, and an MFA from the University of  
037 California, Los Angeles, in 2016. Gale also attended the prestigious  
038 Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Madison, Maine, in 2019.  
040

041 In 2022, Chisenhale Gallery, London, will present Gale's first European  
042 solo exhibition. In 2021, the California African American Museum, Los  
043 Angeles, opened the artist's first institutional solo exhibition, *Nikita  
044 Gale: PRIVATE DANCER*. The artist has had other notable solo exhibitions and  
045 commissions at institutions such as the Anchorage Museum, Alaska (2021);  
046 MoMA PS1, New York (2020); Coaxial Arts Foundation, Los Angeles (2019); The  
047 Visual Arts Center at The University of Texas at Austin (2019); Atlanta  
048 Contemporary Art Center (2018); and The Front, New Orleans (2013).  
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050 <sup>1</sup> Nikita Gale, "Slow Ruin," *Texte zur Kunst* (August 26, 2020), accessed online.

001 Gale has also presented recent solo exhibitions at 56 Henry, New York (2021  
002 and 2018); Reyes|Finn, Detroit (2019); and Commonwealth and Council, Los  
003 Angeles (2018).  
004

005 Work by the artist has been included in significant group exhibitions  
006 presented by the Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, and Kunstraum  
007 Kreuzberg, Berlin (2021); Anchorage Museum, Alaska (2020); Nottingham  
008 Contemporary, England (2020); LACE (Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions),  
009 Los Angeles (2020); Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2019); Hammer Museum, Los  
010 Angeles (2018); The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York (2017); Zuckerman  
011 Museum of Art, Kennesaw, Georgia (2015 and 2014); Samuel Dorsky Museum of  
012 Art, New Paltz, New York (2014); and the Atlanta Contemporary Art Center  
013 (2013 and 2012), among others.  
014

015 Gale's writing has appeared in publications such as *Texte zur Kunst*,  
016 *Resonance: The Journal of Sound and Culture*, and *Triple Canopy*.  
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018 Gale is represented by 56 Henry, New York; Reyes|Finn, Detroit; and  
019 Commonwealth and Council, Los Angeles. The artist resides and works in Los  
020 Angeles.  
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048 For all press inquiries and to RSVP to the January 21 press viewing,  
049 contact  
050 [press@52walker.com](mailto:press@52walker.com)