

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Philippe Parreno

Hertzian Tales

September 21 – October 28, 2023

Opening Reception: September 21, 6pm - 8pm

515 West 24th Street

New York

Philippe Parreno's exhibitions are living organisms, responsive to their environments and the people within them. Think Robert Rauschenberg's *White Paintings* (1951), famously described by John Cage as "airports for lights, shadows, and particles" as multi-dimensional entities powered by an AI. Parreno's exhibition at Gladstone, *Hertzian Tales* is the most recent manifestation of his ongoing contemplation of art as both sentient and sensual. New and recent works perform an intricate choreography in reaction to multiple stimuli, some as ineffable as the slow melt of time or invisible shifts in barometric pressure, others as shocking and urgent as climate change. The transparent acrylic *Clock* (2020) with its multiple faces animated by gears controlled by a DMX box, adheres to the forward propulsion of passing minutes, yet stutters and shifts according to changes in the atmosphere. The video, *The Owl in Daylight* (2020-2023)—never before exhibited in the U.S.—comprises a CGI-animated waterscape in which light and vapor and a fugitive city appear and disappear algorithmically in concert with actual climactic fluctuations. Part weather station, part imaginary world, this digital work pays homage to the last, unfinished, eponymously titled novel by sci-fi author Philip K. Dick, situated on an alien planet that lacks sound and considers the cacophony of Earth as a kind of heaven. The video's generative soundtrack was conceived by composer and sound engineer Nicolas Becker to blend naturalistic noises with abstract echoes of our tech-driven landscape. An additional layer of sound will interact with the video for its current manifestation in the gallery. The voice of actor Charlotte Gainsbourg (with whom Parreno is currently working on a film project) responds to events on the screen and the sounds that emanate from it. The non-narrative voiceover is determined by a computer program that synchs sound with the mutable components of the video. Using the Markov model, which assumes that all future states depend only on the current state, the algorithm allows for series of permutations. Parreno's heliostat sculpture, which captures the movement of sunlight to then reflect it onto a stationary point, will follow the sound of Gainsbourg's voice, sending a ray of solar energy onto the screen in response to it. Like the beam of a film projector in a cinema, this light alludes to an unfolding narrative. The heliostat, the voiceover, and the video are synchronized like a mechanical ballet, a multi-part automaton recounting a lyrical, esoteric story.

Hertzian Tales—an allusion to the flow of electromagnetic waves—operates as a self-regulating system, adhering to a predetermined sequence of operations. Yet, within its framework, the intricate interplay of elements births feedback loops, unexpected variables, and non-linear events—making outcomes elusive and unpredictable. At its core, the exhibition can be distilled into a formula of interdependencies: climactic fluctuations animate a film, which in turn modulates the soundtrack. This auditory landscape then influences a voice, ultimately guiding the movement of a heliostat.

Parreno's presentation at Gladstone inaugurates a year of major exhibitions and projects, including solo presentations at the Leeum Museum, Seoul, and the Haus der Kunst, Munich, that will expand on the artist's ongoing exploration of voice generation and systems for computerized sentience, which are being exhibited here for the first time.

Parreno has presented solo exhibitions at Espace Louis Vuitton (2023); La Bourse de Commerce, Paris (2022), Fondation Beyeler, Basel (2021); LUMA, Arles (2021); The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2019); Watari-Um, Tokyo (2019); Gropius Bau, Berlin (2018); Jumex, Mexico City (2017); The Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai (2017); Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art, Porto (2017); ACMI, Melbourne (2016/17); HangarBicocca, Milan (2015/2016), Park Avenue Armory, New York (2015); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2014/2013); CAC Malaga (2014); Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow (2013); Fondation Beyeler, Riehen/Basel (2012); Serpentine Gallery, London (2010-2011); Centre for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, New York (2009–10); Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin (2009–10); Kunsthalle Zürich (2009) and Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (2009). Parreno's work is represented in numerous major museum collections, including Tate, London; MoMA, New York; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Kanazawa Museum of the 21st Century, Japan; Musée d'Art Modern de la Ville de Paris, Paris; SFMOMA, San Francisco; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. His work was also presented at the Venice Biennale (1993, 1995, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2015, and 2017), Venice Biennale of Architecture (2014), Lyon Biennale (1997, 2003, and 2005), and Istanbul Biennial (2001).

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