

Christian Marclay

Surround Sounds

SEPTEMBER 10 – OCTOBER 17, 2015
534 W 21ST STREET

NEW YORK – The Paula Cooper Gallery is pleased to present *Surround Sounds* (2014-15), a new video work by Christian Marclay premiering in North America this fall. The large-scale, synchronized video installation consists of animated onomatopoeias projected onto four walls of a darkened room. To make the work, Marclay drew from a collection of comic books, cutting out sound effects and animating them in a choreography that suggests the acoustic properties of each word. “Whizz” and “zoom” speed across the walls; “beep” blinks persistently, while “thump” falls rhythmically onto the floor. Though silent, the work plays like a musical composition, merging the aural with the visual and providing an immersive perceptual experience.

A symphonic maelstrom of illustrated words, the silent *Surround Sound* speaks only through our recollection of noise. The viewer hears with their eyes, building an imagined auditory narrative that is both collective and personal. In keeping with Marclay’s persistent interest in sampling, the appropriated graphics rely on a shared aesthetic: familiar bright colors and bold, expressive font suggest the action of a superhero’s storyline. Yet, conversely, the silent intimate dark room insists on an individual and private internal narrative. As the artist noted in a 1997 interview: “Absence is a void to be filled with one’s own stories. I find silence is much more powerful because ... in silence we can think about sound. Silence is the negative space that defines sound.”

The exhibition will also present a series of related works on paper exploring the recurrence of onomatopoeias as visual and acoustic material in Marclay’s work. In comparison to the massive video installation, the paper works explore this crossing of visual and auditory perceptions across diverse forms of media.

Christian Marclay works in a wide range of media, including sculpture, video, photography, collage, music, and

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