



## The Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles Announces Spring 2023 Exhibitions

***Milford Graves: Fundamental Frequency***

***Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork***

**February 11–May 14, 2023**

***Christine Sun Kim: Bounce Back***

**February 11–September 10, 2023**

**Media contact:** [communications@theicala.org](mailto:communications@theicala.org)

**Press Kit:**

LOS ANGELES (January 18, 2023) — The Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (ICA LA) announces its spring season of exhibitions celebrating three different artists whose work uniquely engages with sound. Opening to the public on February 11 in ICA LA’s main galleries is ***Milford Graves: Fundamental Frequency***, a retrospective exhibition dedicated to the life and enduring legacy of the revolutionary artist and musician Milford Graves. In the Elsa Longhauser Project Room, ***Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork*** presents a new sound and sculptural installation in the form of a maze, marking the first museum solo exhibition by this Los Angeles-based artist. Commissioned for the ICA LA building façade, ***Christine Sun Kim: Bounce Back*** is a new outdoor mural by Berlin-based artist Christine Sun Kim whose work characteristically invokes American Sign Language (ASL) to deconstruct the politics of sound and the spoken word. This will be Kim’s first museum presentation in Los Angeles.

“We are delighted to present the work of three extraordinary artists, whose practices represent three very distinct sensibilities of sound. Though each artist explores a different aspect of the auditory—as music, vibration, architecture, language—together, their work forms a rich dialogue that brings visibility to the aural world. All three artists encourage us to carefully consider how sound is felt in our everyday experiences and how it operates as an invisible force shaping our culture, our society, and our bodies,” says Good Works Executive Director Anne Ellegood. “As a compass for this season of sound at ICA LA, we are especially thrilled to bring the visionary work of the groundbreaking artist Milford Graves to Los Angeles audiences. His wide-ranging interests and deep study of the interconnectedness between sound, the wellness of the body, and the spiritual realm put him in a category all his own, and the exhibition is an opportunity to celebrate his life with a range of communities through a rich program of performances and public programs.”



***Milford Graves: Fundamental Frequency***  
**February 11–May 14, 2023**

*Milford Graves: Fundamental Frequency* is dedicated to the life and work of the late interdisciplinary artist Milford Graves (1941–2021, born in Jamaica, Queens), whose revolutionary experiments—spanning music, medicine, movement, and art—explore the cosmic relationship between rhythms and the universe. Instrumental in the Free Jazz movement, Graves is best known as a percussionist, yet he applied his interest in rhythm far beyond the boundaries of music. A true polymath and innovator, Graves also trained as a cardiac technician to better understand the connection between the drum beat and the heartbeat; invented a martial art form called “Yara,” an improvisational practice loosely based on the movements of the praying mantis, the Lindy Hop, and African ritual dance; operated a community garden as a skilled botanist and herbalist; and taught generations of students as an influential professor in the Black Music Division at Bennington College.

Originating at Artists Space in New York, in collaboration with Mark Christman and Ars Nova Workshop in Philadelphia, *Milford Graves: Fundamental Frequency* has been reimaged for the presentation at ICA LA. Reflecting Graves’ expansive approach, this comprehensive retrospective includes extensive film, photographic, and archival documentation of the artist’s live performances and dynamic collaborations across the globe including those with Japanese dancer Min Tanaka and jazz musicians Albert Ayler, Giuseppi Logan, and the New York Art Quartet. Also featured is a selection of Graves’ extraordinary assemblage sculptures and related documentation based on his studies of human anatomy and acupuncture, several expressive and rarely seen works on paper, a collection of hand-painted album covers (released under the artist’s own recording imprint, Self-Reliance Program, famously realized in collaboration with pianist Don Pullen), decorated percussion instruments, and a number of Graves’ iconic costumes. Accompanied by a series of live events hosted at ICA LA and at various locations across the city of Los Angeles, this presentation will further underscore the legacy of Graves’ work and the enduring impact of the artist’s singular and holistic approach to sound, spiritualism, and the study of the human body.

### **About the Artist**

**Milford Graves** (1941–2021, born in Jamaica, Queens) was a percussionist, acupuncturist, herbalist, martial artist, programmer, and professor. A pioneer of Free Jazz, Graves was a member of the New York Art Quartet, whose iconic first recording in 1964 featured poet and social activist Amiri Baraka (then LeRoi Jones). In 1967, Graves joined powerhouse saxophonist Albert Ayler's quartet and they went on to achieve great praise for their seminal performance at John Coltrane's funeral. In 1972, Graves invented a martial art form called "Yara," which he developed and taught in his dojo in Jamaica, Queens. Graves later joined the Black Music Division, at Bennington College, where he taught for 39 years. In 2000, he was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship and in 2015 he received the Doris Duke Foundation Impact Award. He is the subject of a critically acclaimed feature-length documentary, *Milford Graves: Full Mantis* (2018), directed by his former student, Jake Meginsky, with Neil Young. Among his many notable recordings are *In Concert At Yale University* (with Andrew Cyrille, 1966); *Dialogue of the Drums* (with Andrew Cyrille, 1974); *Meditation Among Us* (1977); *Grand Unification* (1998); *Beyond Quantum* (with Anthony Braxton and William Parker, 2008); and *Space/Time Redemption* (with Bill Laswell, 2014).

***Milford Graves: Fundamental Frequency*** is organized by Artists Space, New York, in collaboration with Mark Christman and Ars Nova Workshop, Philadelphia. The exhibition is curated by Danielle A. Jackson with Stella Cilman. The presentation at ICA LA is organized by Amanda Sroka, Senior Curator, with Caroline Ellen Liou, Curatorial Assistant.

Major support for *Milford Graves: Fundamental Frequency* is provided by Karen Hillenburg and Sebastian Clough.

The exhibition is also generously funded by Betsy Greenberg and Steve NyBlom and Yuval Bar-Zemer.

Additional support provided by Kate Lally and Paul Solomon.

ICA LA is supported by the Curator's Council and Fieldwork Council.



***Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork***  
**February 11–May 14, 2023**

Marking the artist's first solo museum exhibition, *Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork* features a new sound-based installation in ICA LA's Elsa Longhauser Project Room. Titled *Into/Loving/Against/Lost in the Loop* (2023), the installation builds on Kiyomi Gork's (b. 1982, Long Beach, CA) ongoing explorations into sound as architecture, presented in the galleries in the form of a maze-like environment that uses sculpture and sound to confront the viewer with their own embodied experience.

*Into/Loving/Against/Lost in the Loop* brings together both new and existing works by the artist, all of which reflect Kiyomi Gork's sculptural use of objects commonly associated with noise control, such as speakers and sound blankets. Placed at the center of the installation's maze is the sculpture, *SA-3* (2011), made up of ultra-directional speakers that process live audio from the surrounding galleries, which is then generated into an electronic beat. The rhythmic pulse of the beat evokes the somatic impulses of underground club culture—a key sonic reference in the artist's practice—as soundwaves vibrate through the body and orient the viewer in a collective audio experience.

In constructing a feedback loop of its own, the work underscores how the phenomenon of hearing itself is a feedback loop—or in Kiyomi Gork's words, "What you hear affects how you move and how you move affects how you hear." In blurring the distinction between audience, performer, audio, and architecture, *Into/Loving/Against/Lost in the Loop* reveals the structures of control and agency underlying the listening experience to create a heightened awareness of the dynamics of perception.

### **About the Artist**

**Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork** (b. 1982, Long Beach, CA) has been working with the intersection of sound, sculpture, and performance since 2002. She studied sound art, photography, and new genres at the San Francisco Art Institute and researched the history of communication technologies, acoustics, and computer music at Stanford University. Her work has been included in several group exhibitions, including *Made in L.A.: A Version*, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2020); *Searching the Sky for Rain*, Sculpture Center, New York (2019); *Soundtracks*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco (2017); and *Geometry of Now*, V-A-C Foundation, Moscow (2017). Other solo presentations include those at 356 Mission Rd. and Human Resources, both in Los Angeles. She is represented by François Ghebaly, Los Angeles and Empty Gallery, Hong Kong.

**Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork** is organized by Caroline Ellen Liou, Curatorial Assistant, ICA LA.

The exhibition is supported by ICA LA's Curator's Council. Additional support provided by Yas and Bob Baravarian.



***Christine Sun Kim: Bounce Back***  
**February 11–September 10, 2023**

In conjunction with the opening of the exhibitions in the galleries, ICA LA is pleased to present a new large-scale mural commissioned for the museum's façade by the Berlin-based American artist Christine Sun Kim (b. 1980, Orange County, CA). Working across the mediums of drawing, performance, experimental sound, video, and large-scale murals, Kim's work engages with the limits and possibilities of language—be it spoken, signed, or scripted. Often referencing musical scores, infographics, and emojis, her singular visual lexicon brings together sarcastic humor and incisive critique to illuminate the systems of power and ideology embedded in oral communications and investigate the complex realities of Deaf culture.

Titled *Bounce Back* (2023), this new site-specific mural builds on Kim's recent body of work that focuses on debt—signed in ASL by one index finger tapping the open palm of the other. Depending on elements such as the directionality of the open palm, the force of the finger's impact, and other non-manual cues like facial and bodily expression, one sign can carry multiple meanings. In this case, the word for "debt" can take on various nuances that indicate the type, severity, or urgency of the debt, or even allow the sign to slip into adjacent meanings like "owe" or "afford." Creating her own kind of ASL notation, Kim makes reference to the tapping finger through the traces of its movements, incorporating into the drawing a double bouncing line reminiscent of those used in old cartoons or comic books to indicate motion. Moving from hand to hand, the bouncing lines underscore the relational aspect of debt, asking the viewer to examine what exactly is owed? And to whom? Offering a poignant meditation on systemic inequity and shared experience under debt, Kim's mural asks us to consider our collective responsibility in contributing to the layers of financial, historical, social, and emotional debt that structure and define everyday life.

### **About the Artist**

**Christine Sun Kim** (b. 1980, Orange County, CA) is an American artist based in Berlin. Kim's practice considers how sound operates in society, deconstructing the politics of sound and exploring how oral languages operate as social currency. Musical notation, written language, infographics, American Sign Language (ASL), the use of the body, and strategically deployed humor are all recurring elements in her practice. Working across drawing, performance, video and large-scale murals, Kim explores her relationship to spoken languages, to her built and social environments, and to the world at large. Kim has exhibited and performed internationally, including at the Queens Museum, New York (2022); the Drawing Center, New York (2022); the Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt (2021); MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge (2020); Whitney Biennial, New York (2019); Art Institute of Chicago (2018); San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2017); Berlin Biennale (2016); Shanghai Biennale (2016); and the Museum of Modern Art, New York (2013), among others, with works held in numerous prominent collections. Kim is an inaugural awardee of the Ford and Mellon Foundations' Disabilities Future Fellowship, a TED Senior Fellowship, an MIT Media Lab Fellowship, and the 2022 Prix International d'Art Contemporain of the Fondation Prince Pierre de Monaco. She is represented by François Ghebaly, Los Angeles and White Space Beijing.

***Christine Sun Kim: Bounce Back*** is organized by Amanda Sroka, Senior Curator, with Caroline Ellen Liou, Curatorial Assistant.

Major support for *Christine Sun Kim: Bounce Back* is provided by Palatine Capital Partners.

ICA LA is supported by its Curator's Council, Fieldwork, and 1717 Collective.

## **PUBLIC PROGRAMS**

### **Opening events:**

#### **Spring 2023 Exhibitions Sneak Peek**

**Friday February 10,**

**10:30am–12pm**

#### **Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles**

Curators Danielle A. Jackson (Artists Space, New York) and Mark Christman (Ars Nova Workshop, Philadelphia) will lead a tour of *Milford Graves: Fundamental Frequency*, followed by a brief walkthrough of *Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork* and *Christine Sun Kim: Bounce Back* led by ICA LA curatorial staff. Light refreshments will be served.

#### **Spring 2023 Exhibitions Open House**

**Saturday, February 11**

**3–6pm**

#### **Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles**

Join ICA LA in celebrating our spring exhibitions. Open House activities kick off at 3pm with an Art Talk focusing on *Milford Graves: Fundamental Frequency* with exhibition curators Danielle A. Jackson (Artists Space, New York) and Mark Christman (Ars Nova Workshop, Philadelphia), moderated by Amanda Sroka, Senior Curator, followed by a public reception from 4–6pm.

### **Additional program highlights:**

*(final details for all exhibitions programs forthcoming)*

#### **Talk:**

#### ***Milford Graves: A Mind-Body Deal* with Mark Christman, founder Ars Nova Workshop**

**Wednesday, March 15**

**7pm**

#### **Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles**

In celebration of the recent release of the catalogue *Milford Graves: A Mind-Body Deal*, we invite Mark Christman to share the experience of conceiving this first-ever overview of the polymathic creative genius that is Milford Graves. Essays in the book provide the perspectives of such luminaries as Fred Moten, Min Tanaka, moor mother, and Rhea Combs among others. *Milford Graves: A Mind-Body Deal* was edited by Mark Christman, Celeste DiNucci, Anthony Elms; co-published by Inventory Press and Ars Nova Workshop.

#### **Talk:**

#### ***Marilyn Nance: Last Day in Lagos* and FESTAC '77**

**Wednesday, April 19**

**7pm**

#### **Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles**

In 1974, Marilyn Nance was an official photographer of the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture, aka FESTAC '77, a month-long event that engaged 17,000 participant performers (including Milford Graves) from 56 African nations and the African Diaspora in a celebration of music, art, literature, drama, dance, and spirituality. Her recently



released book *Last Day in Lagos* is an impressive record and reflection on this historic experience. Meet Marilyn Nance and learn about this extraordinary festival. *Last Day in Lagos* was edited by Oluremi C. Onabanjo and published by The Center for Art, Research, and Alliances (CARA).

**Live Music:**

**Milford Graves Album Release & Listening Party**

**Wednesday, April 26**

**7pm**

**Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles**

Black Editions celebrates the release of a new double album of never-before-heard private recordings of the late Milford Graves (1941-2021) recorded in 1976 with the late Arthur Doyle (1944-2014) and Hugh Glover (1937). Black Editions founder Peter Kolovos will play the album in its entirety; it will also be available for the first time at this special event.

**Film Screening:**

***Milford Graves: Full Mantis* with director Jake Meginsky**

**Thursday, April 27**

**7pm**

**Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles**

*Milford Graves: Full Mantis* is the first feature-length portrait of the renowned percussionist Milford Graves, exploring his kaleidoscopic creativity and relentless curiosity. Meet the film's director Jake Meginsky—who was a student of Graves as well as a collaborator—and receive a sneak preview of never-before-seen footage of Graves to be included in an upcoming film release with Criterion Collection.

**Live Music:**

**Heart Trio: William Parker (bass), William Hooker (drums), and Isaiah Collier (saxophones)**

**Friday, May 12 & Saturday, May 13**

**8pm**

**Tickets: \$30**

**2220 Arts and Archives**

In partnership with Black Editions and 2220 Arts and Archives, ICA LA invites you to a special event with Heart Trio, a musical collaboration featuring Milford Graves's close collaborator William Parker, fire music legend William Hooker, and new generation cosmic transitions saxophonist Isaiah Collier in a new trio formation to celebrate the *Milford Graves: Fundamental Frequency* exhibition at ICA LA.

**Live Music:**

**Beats & Beats Thursdays**

**Select Thursdays**

**5-7pm**

**Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles**

Celebrating Graves' legacy in Los Angeles, *Beats & Beats Thursdays* will feature local percussionists who are invited to perform in dialogue with *Milford Graves: Fundamental Frequency*.

**Tours:**

**POV Tours**

**Select Fridays**

**7-8pm**

**Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles**

Join musicians, artists, botanists, and members of the Deaf community for point-of-view (POV) tours of our three exhibitions.

**Talk:**

**Seeing Sound: Discussion with Hamza Walker and Micah Silver, moderated by Caroline Ellen Liou**

**Wednesday, March 22**

**7pm**

**Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles**

On occasion of the exhibition *Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork*, curator Caroline Ellen Liou will moderate a discussion with Hamza Walker, Director of LAXART, and Micah Silver, artist, curator, and founder of Black Hole. Hear their perspectives on the difference between audio, sound, and music, and how that relationship has been framed by contemporary art institutions. The conversation will be followed by a walkthrough of the exhibition with the artist Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork.

**Intro to ASL at ICA LA**

**February—July 2023**

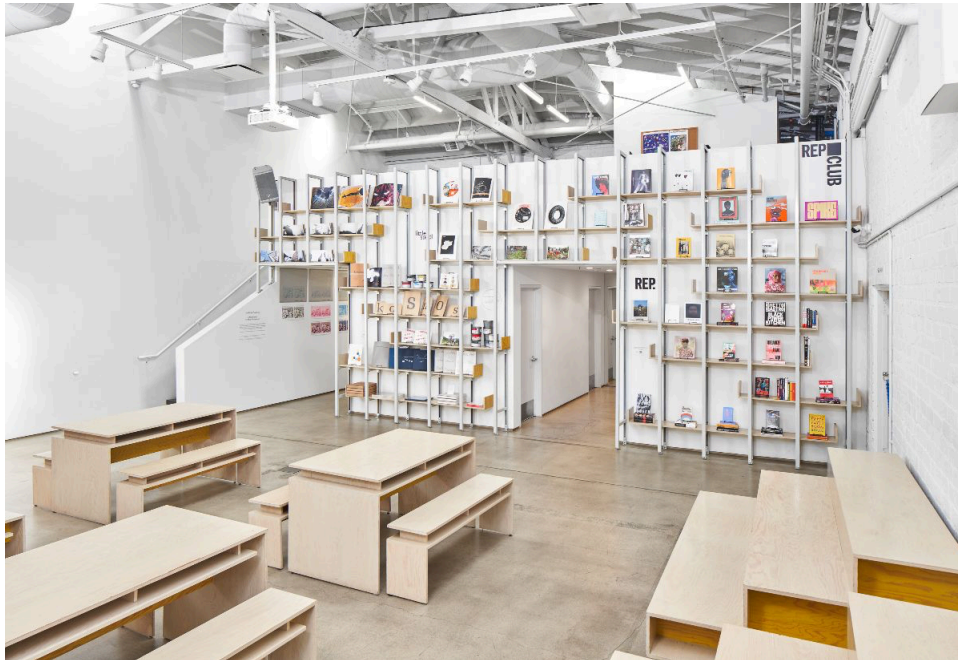
**Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles**

Learn a new language! ICA LA begins a new series of free introductory ASL courses in partnership with the Greater Los Angeles Agency on Deafness (GLAD).

**ARTransmissions: K-12 Educational Resource Posters**

ARTransmissions posters that contain inquiry questions and art lessons will be created around selected artworks from *Milford Graves: Fundamental Frequency* and *Christine Sun Kim: Bounce Back*. Posters will be distributed to LAUSD teachers, downloadable from our website, and available for pick up at ICA LA.

*All exhibitions are accompanied by bilingual gallery didactics in English and Spanish. Printed copies will be available on-site and digital bilingual versions will be downloadable on the museum's website. An ASL curatorial walkthrough of the exhibitions will be available digitally, both on-site and online, following the opening of the exhibitions in spring 2023. The exhibitions will be documented in 360° virtual reality to allow visitors to navigate through the galleries in 3D using a smart phone or computer. 3D capture is both for archival purposes and to reach those with limited mobility as well as audiences outside of Los Angeles. In addition, ICA LA will offer a series of education initiatives and community programs, providing special tours and workshops to students and local organizations.*



## **Bookshelf Residency**

ICA LA's Bookshelf Residency program invites local booksellers and independent publishers to expand their footprint with a residency on the museum's bookshelves. Unique titles are available for sale and each partner works with the museum's Learning & Engagement department to produce exhibitions and public programs.

### **Cardboard House Press**

Cardboard House Press creates Spanish-English bilingual spaces through small-press publishing, community workshops, and bilingual events. Founded in 2014, the press publishes Latin American and Spanish poetry in translation, with a special interest in contemporary documentary and conceptual poetics, and the historical avant-garde. Cardboard House Press's editions have used a variety of printing techniques that include silkscreen, linocut, stencil, letterpress, and digital printing. Some of the titles are bound with recycled cardboard through community workshops, following in the tradition of the cartonera publishing movement in Latin America.

As part of the Bookshelf Residency and on view in the Annex Gallery, Cardboard House Press presents *cardboard minutes / libro de cajas: Cartonera Collective Files*, curated by Giancarlo Huapaya and Ryan Greene. The exhibition presents the history of the Collective and its community of book makers who generate solidarity, encouragement of ecological and democratizing practices, and extraordinary works of bilingual literature.

**Related events:****Saturday, April 1, 3pm****This is Cardboard House Press**

Meet members of Cardboard House Press and the Cartonera Collective Giancarlo Huapaya, Ryan Greene, Mary Hope Whitehead Lee, and Claudia Núñez de Ibieta who have created a national network of publishing of bilingual poetry and educational workshops.

**Sunday, April 2, 1-5pm****Cartonera Collective Workshop**

Cartonera Collective is one of Cardboard House Press's community projects, which consists of facilitating workshops where bilingual editions are handcrafted with members of the community. Facilitated by Ryan Greene, Mary Hope Whitehead Lee, and Claudia Núñez de Ibieta, the workshops introduce bookmaking techniques that include hand sewing and binding pages, marbling endpapers, linocut printing, and creating book covers from recycled cardboard.

**Reparations Club**

Also in residence is Reparations Club, a concept bookshop & creative space Curated by Blackness® in Los Angeles, CA. As the premier Black-woman owned bookshop in Los Angeles, Rep Club has partnered with Well Read Black Girl, Noname's Book Club, Nike x Virgil Abloh, Beyoncé, and has been featured in the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Washington Post & many more.

Rep Club was founded in 2019 by Jazzi McGilbert, a queer Black woman and creative director from South Central Los Angeles. She cut her teeth in fashion at Teen Vogue, Vogue, NYLON, and others before retiring from the fashion industry in 2016. She spends now spends her days buried in books and community at Rep Club.

### **About the Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (ICA LA)**

The Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (ICA LA) is an epicenter of artistic experimentation and incubator of new ideas.

Founded in 1988 as the Santa Monica Museum of Art (SMMoA) and reestablished in 2017 with a new identity and home in Downtown Los Angeles, ICA LA builds upon a distinguished history of bold curatorial vision and innovative programming to illuminate the important untold stories and emerging voices in contemporary art and culture. The museum's 12,700 square-foot renovated industrial building—designed by wHY Architecture under the leadership of Kulapat Yantrasast—features ample space for exhibitions, public programs, retail pop-ups, integrated offices, and special projects.

ICA LA's mission is to support art that sparks the pleasure of discovery and challenges the way we see and experience the world, ourselves, and each other. ICA LA is committed to upending hierarchies of race, class, gender, and culture. Through exhibitions, education programs, and community partnerships, ICA LA fosters critique of the familiar and empathy with the different. ICA LA is committed to making contemporary art relevant and accessible for all. Admission is free.

**Museum Hours:** Wednesday & Friday, 12–6pm; Thursday, 12–7pm; Saturday & Sunday, 11–6pm. Closed Mondays, Tuesdays, and public holidays.

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**Image captions:** *Milford Graves at the Festival d'Automne à Paris*, 1974, Black and white photograph. © Philippe Gras. Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork, *Inside You Is Me*, 2017. Site-specific installation, dimensions variable. Choreography collaboration with Sonya Levin. Installation view, V-A-C for Geometry of Now Festival, Moscow. Photo: Ruy Sanchez-Blanco and Robin Rodger. Christine Sun Kim, Preparatory drawing for *Bounce Back* (2023) at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. Courtesy of the artist. Installation view, Bookshelf Residency, Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. Photo: Elon Schoenholz.

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