TJ Shin
Counterweights

5 September - 24 October, 2026

Final Hot Desert, London
29 Ability Plaza, E8 4DT

Final Hot Desert presents *Counterweights*, a solo exhibition by TJ Shin that extends an ongoing inquiry into systems of governance and the geometries through which time, value, and distance are translated into one another. The show comprises a site-specific installation, sculpture, and experimental text, alongside a restaging of *Gotta Make Time (GMT)*, first presented remotely with the gallery in 2025.

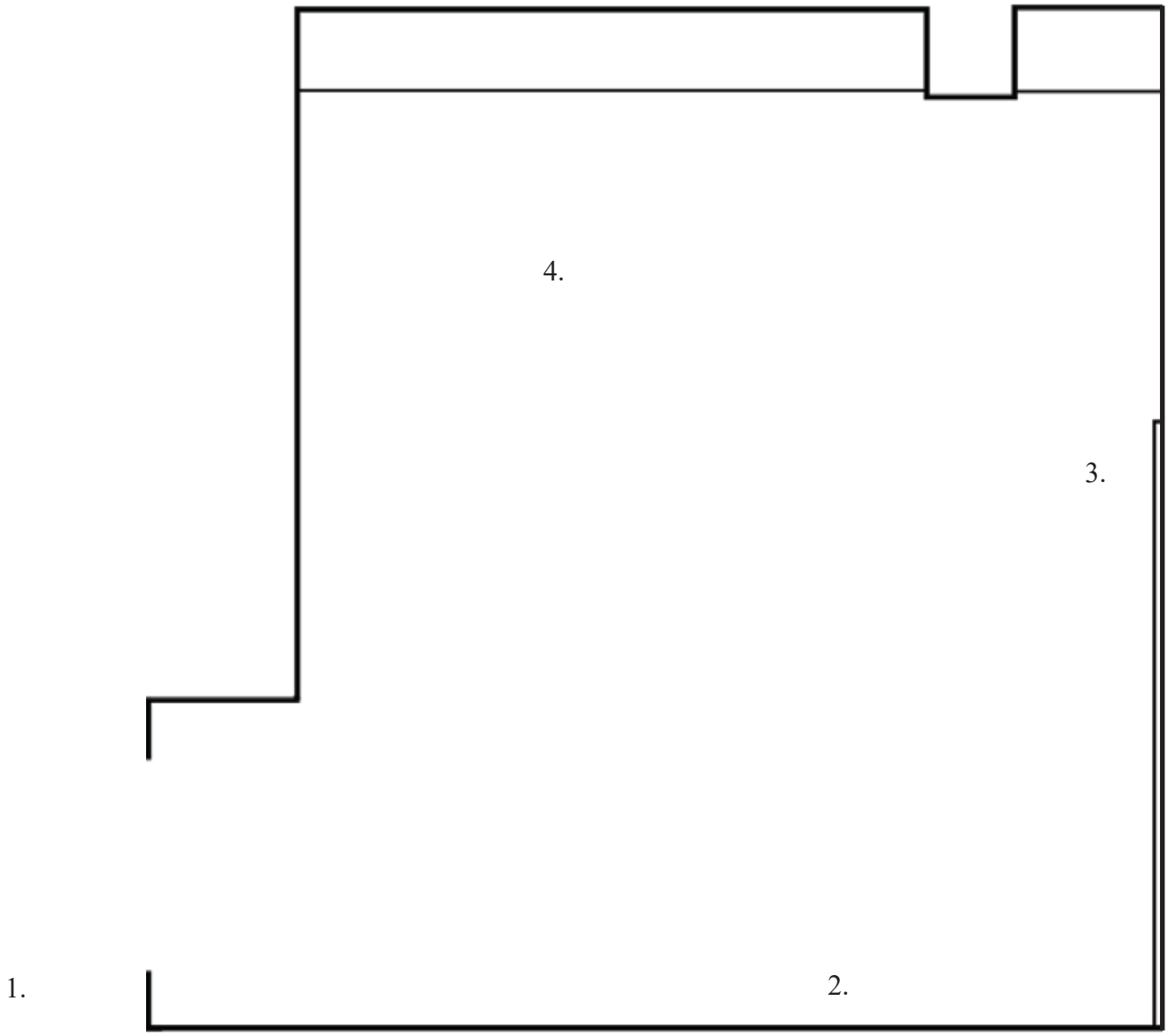
Counterweights examines the spatialization of time established from a single vantage point, against which distant subjects and places are positioned relative to a fixed reference time. Filmed from July 25 to August 5, 2025, *Gotta Make Time (GMT)* features a playback of a continuous and remote livestream of the Prime Meridian. Drawn from the Royal Greenwich Observatory's role in supporting British imperial navigation, the site establishes the zero-degree longitude and the starting point for global time zones, dividing the Eastern and Western Hemispheres. The video's 264-hour duration tracks the approximate 11-day difference between the lunar year observed in non-Western calendars and the solar year that organizes global civil timekeeping. Its start date overlaps with the beginning of the most recent leap month—time inserted every several years into the lunisolar calendar—to synchronize the lunar year with the solar year.

A site-specific installation involving a camera obscura—an early astronomical tool that admits light through a single aperture—projects a live image of the Overground train running adjacent to the gallery. Historically, the Shepherd Master Clock at the Royal Observatory transmitted uniform electrical impulses through railway telegraphs to a network of 'slave' clocks across Britain, making the railway both a recipient and a distributor of standardized time. Distorted and enlarged, the projected image of the train transforms the gallery into a dark chamber.

Among clocks outside the synchronized telegraph network, the Elizabeth Tower clock, also known as Big Ben, uses pre-decimal bronze pennies to calibrate its time to the master standard. This weight is placed on the pendulum to alter its rate by four-tenths of a second per day, making time and value interchangeable through standard mass. *rubato (counterweights)* measures this theoretical weight that would shift Big Ben's rate from solar to lunar time: 60.8 kilograms or 6,431 pennies, historically valued at £26.80. Presented on the floor, the piece is materialized through industrial steel punchings, a manufacturing by-product used predominantly for ballast. The piece is purchased by weight at the same historic unit price of £0.441/kg, standing in for bronze now priced beyond its historic value.

Crash (temps forts) meditates on mathematician Henri Poincaré's thought experiment on the relativity of simultaneity, determining whether two events are occurring at the same time by measuring the transmission speed between point A and point B via telegraph light signals. Poincaré argued that simultaneity is relative to the observer's state of motion, yet duration remains absolute, enabling 'apparent time' to be coordinated under 'true time'. Departing from this framework, the experimental text attends to how language and grammatical structures—voice, nominalization, and syntax—mirror and cross agential states with referential frames, through which overlapping durations are experienced across its passages.

Taken together, *Counterweights* addresses geometric time and its mode of extension, in which perception, movement, and exchange across distance are made commensurate and divisible under British territorial governance, continuing to order one's place within it in the present. Various modes of representation—perspectival instruments, legal tender, and linguistic signs—simultaneously surface networks of synchronization and suspend the structures that transmit them. In turn, the works reconfigure this spatialized time and unifocal perspective back into a bending field: multiple distances inhabited and simultaneous tempos colliding, always in motion.



1. *Crash (temps forts)*, 2026
   Artist book
   18.5 x 12 x .5 cm

2. *Gotta Make Time (GMT)*, 2025
   Durational livestream
   264 hours

3. *Untitled (camera obscura)*, 2026
   Site-specific installation
   Dimensions variable

4. *rubato (counterweights)*, 2026
   Steel punchings
   Dimensions variable