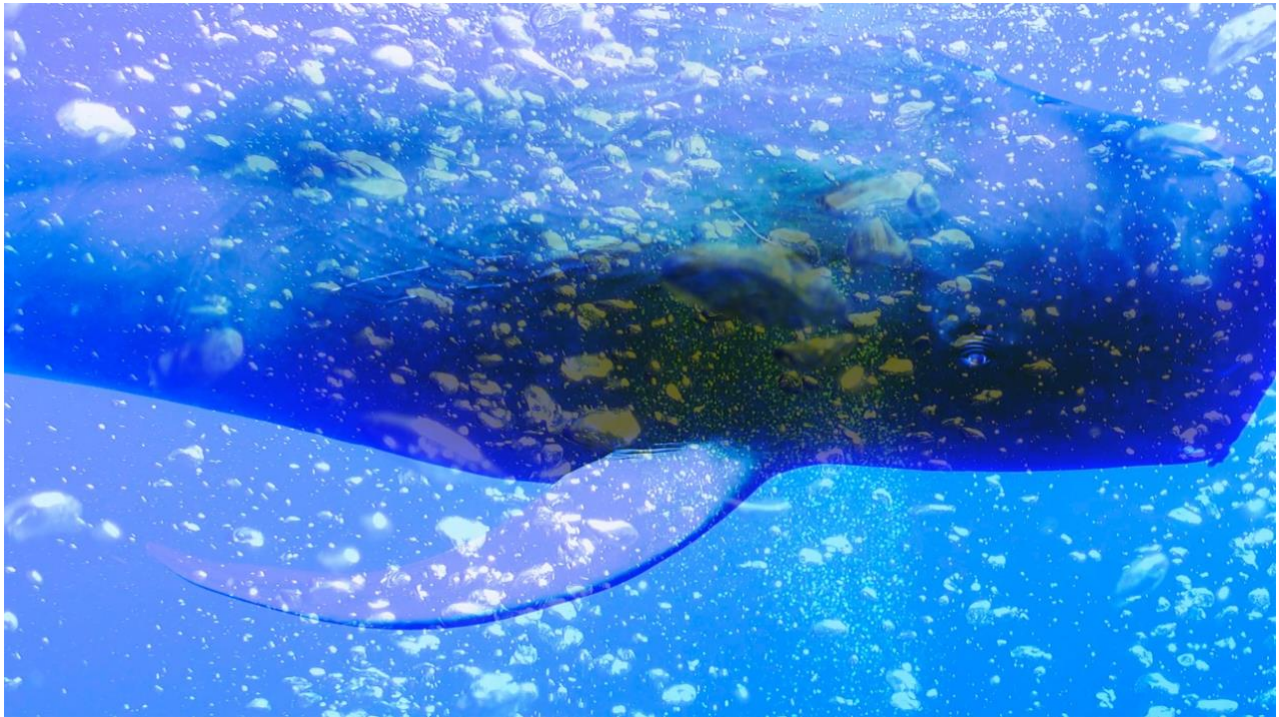


MISHKIN GALLERY

Who Speaks for the Oceans?

September 1 – December 9, 2022



Miho Hatori, *Do Whales Dream of Electric Human?*, (video still), 2022. Video installation. Courtesy of the artist.

On September 1, 2022, *Who Speaks for the Oceans?* opens at Mishkin Gallery, Baruch College, City University of New York. The exhibition proposes new and challenging ways to shift our understandings of and relationships to whales and other nonhuman animals. Through over fifteen interdisciplinary artworks in video, installation, painting, tapestry, music, performance, and more, *Who Speaks for the Oceans?* analyzes epistemological and historical knowledge built around what we think we know about life in the ocean through the charismatic “whale song.” As we approach a crucial moment concerning the condition of our planet, listening to whale vocalizations and other marine creatures can bring us closer to understanding their needs and encouraging action towards healthier stewardship of the oceans.

Many historic representations of ocean life have been informed by colonial, racialized, gendered, and terra-centric conventions alongside the production of nature, which will be exposed and critiqued through the multiple perspectives of an international and intergenerational group of artists. Traversing a polyvocal marine geography, the artists in *Who Speaks for the Oceans?* encourage listening beyond normative patterns of consumption. They also consider how technology, assumed to be indexical and scientific, has informed imaginary and fantastical perspectives of non-terrestrial worlds. Some artists in the exhibition play with such perspectives and offer alternative future projections, while others reflect on and amplify overlooked histories.

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Baruch College, CUNY
135 E. 22nd st. at Lexington
New York, NY

@mishkingallery
mishkingallery.baruch.cuny.edu

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The first recorded whale vocalizations were publicly released in 1970 through the LP *Songs of the Humpback Whale*. These recordings were widely distributed through *National Geographic* as the largest environmental record pressing of all time. They heavily influenced artists and activists alike, while introducing human listeners to empathic perspectives of ocean life. The recording spearheaded the Save the Whales campaign, was played on the floor of Congress, and in-part, helped to ban commercial whaling in the United States. If listening to such sounds inspired monumental change in the 1970s, what can we continue to learn from this history today? *Who Speaks for the Oceans?* encourages revisiting our relatively new position as stewards of the planet to reimagine creative ways in which listening to one another can lead to action and bring forth equitable futures.

Artists: Ant Farm, Ursula Biemann, Myrlande Constant, Jacques Cousteau and Louis Malle, Pia Dehne, Miho Hatori, Marguerite Humeau, Will Jackson, Joan Jonas, Dominique Knowles, Alvin Lucier, Chris Marker, Josèfa Ntjam, and Roger Payne

Who Speaks for the Oceans? is curated by Alaina Claire Feldman, Director and Curator of Mishkin Gallery, and David Gruber, Distinguished Professor of Biology and Environmental Sciences. Support for this exhibition has been provided by the Weissman School of Arts and Sciences. This exhibition is made possible with support from Etant donnés Contemporary Art, a program of Villa Albertine and FACE Foundation, in partnership with the French Embassy in the United States, with support from the French Ministry of Culture, Institut français, Ford Foundation, Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, CHANEL, and ADAGP.



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