

secession

Vereinigung bildender KünstlerInnen Wiener Secession
Friedrichstraße 12, A-1010 Wien
T. +43-1-587 53 07, F. +43-1-587 53 07-34
office@secession.at, www.secession.at

Press release

Christine Sun Kim

Cues on Point

February 17 – April 16, 2023

Hauptraum

Preview for the press: Thursday, February 16, 2023, 10 a.m.

Opening: Thursday, February 16, 2023, 7 p.m.

Exhibition talk: Christine Sun Kim in conversation with Bill Dietz
Thursday, February 16, 2023, 6 p.m.

The talk is in English and American Sign Language,
with simultaneous interpretation into Austrian Sign Language.
An event by the Friends of the Secession

Christine Sun Kim's art brims with rhythm and dynamic energy. Small-format drawings and sprawling murals, internet memes, text messages in public spaces, and banners towed across the sky by airplanes pack a punch and seem to want to explode the confines and constraints of their media. Her drawings are graphical and spare and largely fall into one of two categories: one utilizes the aesthetics of infographics, while the other adopts the formal repertoire of comic strips, notably speed lines to convey action and reaction.

Language, sound, body, identity and diaspora, translation, hierarchization, principles of exclusion, and societal norms: these are some of the vital concerns to which the artist dedicates herself in her formally diverse output. Many of her works share with the audience how it feels to be structurally and systematically excluded from the hearing majority community; to be forever subject to the rules of others and have to fight for opportunities that are available by default to the hearing. Kim's art is unmistakably political, at its core demanding greater visibility for Deaf people* and wider recognition of disability access writ large.

Sign language is a constant theme on the formal and aesthetic level as well as the level of content. In recent years, a growing number of works by Kim have drawn a connection between systems of notation of the sort used in music and dance and the artist's own graphical representation of sign language. In her works and lecture performances, the artist deftly explores the fundamental structures of American Sign Language (ASL), celebrating its inherent beauty and its powerful role as a part of Deaf identity. Besides the aesthetic qualities of non-auditive modes of communication, processes of translation in all their facets are another

secession

Vereinigung bildender KünstlerInnen Wiener Secession
Friedrichstraße 12, A-1010 Wien
T. +43-1-587 53 07, F. +43-1-587 53 07-34
office@secession.at, www.secession.at

focus in Kim's work. Her practice spans multiple languages, tracking points of convergence and divergence between ASL and English and often occupying both at once. Far from being fixed and immutable, language—spoken and signed, written and sung—is fluid and perpetually changing.

At the Secession, the artist presents new works in which she continues her exploration with the themes of echo and debt. The echo is an emblem for the time lags, superimpositions, and distortions that, for the artist, characterize the process of communicating with hearing people and life in a society dominated by them: communication facilitated by sign language interpreters (as well as ancillary forms of writing) is distorted by pauses, waiting, and the uncertainty of how faithfully a message will ultimately be “translated.”

In her studies into debt, she examines the social conventions for which the incursion of liabilities is an unquestioned part of life; the pressure to repay debts is accepted as its inevitable flipside. Her perception of a large difference between the economic orders of her native U.S. and Germany, where she has chosen to live, has fueled this interest. Still, Kim emphasizes that disability rights are considerably more progressive in the U.S. than, say, in Europe. Taking an interest in debt broadly conceived, she explores social liabilities, but also private obligations in the form of commitments and responsibilities.

Kim's drawings combine writing and image, the two dimensions of the sheet, with the three dimensions of space and body. Words spelled on the pictures such as “HAND” and “PALM” refer to the components of sign language. That is why the shapes, far from being coincidental, are a result of this relationship.

Hewing to the artist's customary black-and-white, the composition of the exhibition, comprising a monumental wall painting, videos, and drawings, is rhythmical and melodic yet also dramatic, alternating between noisy and quiet zones. The mural *Prolonged Echo*, which is based on the charcoal drawing *Long Echo* (2022) and extends across the room's entire rear wall, positively shouts at us and overwhelms us with its physical presence, while the drawings from the series *Echo Trap* are in rhythmical and almost throbbing motion. On a smaller scale, the room's energy is also palpable in each of the large-format charcoal drawings: the black areas thickly coated with charcoal are inhomogeneous, revealing considerable depth and showing traces of the creative process in the form of impressions made by the crayon and smudges left by the artist's hand.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is the two-channel video work *Cues on Point* (2022), which is making its public debut at the Secession. It is part of Kim's ongoing reflection on her appearance at the 2020 Super Bowl, where the artist was invited to perform the American national anthem *The Star-Spangled Banner* and *America the Beautiful* in American Sign Language together with the singers Demi Lovato and Yolanda Adams in the stadium and for a hundred million TV viewers before the beginning of the game. In the middle of her performance, the cameras for the ASL-dedicated broadcast panned away from her and toward the athletes, making it impossible for Deaf people to follow the songs, a big disappointment for the artist and many others. Rather than showing the artist's recitation as such, the two videos lay out the code of cues she had developed with the ASL interpreter Beth Staehle, who signaled to her during the performance to keep her in sync with the vocalists.

In the drawing *Sign Sing*, Kim points up the similarities as well as differences between singing and signing—both are manifestly forms of expression, but not at all the same thing. Her experience, whether

secession

Vereinigung bildender KünstlerInnen Wiener Secession

Friedrichstraße 12, A-1010 Wien

T. +43-1-587 53 07, F. +43-1-587 53 07-34

office@secession.at, www.secession.at

during the Super Bowl performance or in her observations of a TikTok trend that has hearing influencers recite popular songs in incorrect sign language (the subject of the work *TikTok Dilemma*, 2022), people identify sound and signifier without regard to the fact that the one mode of expression oppresses the other.

Christine Sun Kim was born in Orange County, California, in 1980. She currently lives and works in Berlin.

Programmed by the board of the Secession

Curated by Bettina Spörr

*In the use of the capitalisation of Deaf we follow the artist, who is referring to Carol Padden and Tom Humphries, *Deaf in America: Voices from a Culture* (1988), where they write: “We use the lowercase deaf when referring to the audiological condition of not hearing, and the uppercase Deaf when referring to a particular group of deaf people who share a language – American Sign Language (ASL) – and a culture.”

secession

Vereinigung bildender KünstlerInnen Wiener Secession
Friedrichstraße 12, A-1010 Wien
T. +43-1-587 53 07, F. +43-1-587 53 07-34
office@secession.at, www.secession.at

Publication

Christine Sun Kim. DRAW A BLANK – BLANK ZIEHEN

Format: 21 x 29,7 cm

Details: Softcover, dustjacket, 144 pages

Series design concept: Sabo Day

Graphic design: Sabo Day, Rosen Eveleigh

Texts: Caroline Ellen Liou (essay), Matthew Hyland (conversation), Christine Sun Kim

Languages: German, English

115 images

Secession 2023

Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther und Franz König, Köln

ISBN 978-3-7533-0421-2

EUR 24,00

Intervention by the artist: Christine Sun Kim wrote a short conceptual invitation text in which she asked the recipient to create one or two sheets with staff lines and sent it out to friends and colleagues. The results are 54 contributions—works on paper, in various media and dimensions—on perforated paper.

Christine Sun Kim. DRAW A BLANK – BLANK ZIEHEN, the artist's first monograph, with an essay by Caroline Ellen Liou and a conversation between the artist and Matthew Hyland, is released on occasion of the exhibition. The book contains an artistic intervention based on her drawings of musical staves. In this instance, the staves are deliberately left blank, a tribute, the artist explains, to sign language interpreters she works with and people who have spoken on her behalf. "These lines represent the parameters of their voices and how they conversely influence my voice and my work." As though to amplify these superimpositions of voices, Kim invited colleagues working in visual art, dance, music, literature, and activism to respond to her notational lines by designing their own blank staves. The fifty-five contributions gathered in the book illustrate the unbelievable diversity of creative visions; an illustration of her social network, they underscore the importance of exchanges of ideas with other artists. The pages are perforated so the reader can remove them from the book and use them for their own notes.

With texts by Christine Sun Kim, Caroline Ellen Liou, an interview by Matthew Hyland and 55 artworks by Adam J. Kurtz, Amy Sillman, Amy Yao, Andi Fischer, Andrew Yong Hoon Lee, Aram Saroyan, Ben Russell, Bill Dietz, Chella Man, Christian Marclay, Christine Sun Kim, Christoph Niemann, Colin Self, Constant Dullaart, Daniel Chew, David Horvitz, Ed Steck, eL Seed, Farah Al Qasimi, Hank Willis Thomas, He Xiangyu, Hyunhye Seo, Jamie Stewart, Jeffrey Yasuo Mansfield, Jerron Herman, Kelly Akashi, Kevin Beasley, Kyle McDonald, LABOUR (Farahnaz Hatam, Colin Hacklander), Lia Lowenthal, Liana Finck, Lucas Odahara, Lukas Fischbeck, Maia Ruth Lee, Marc Handelman, Marina Rosenfeld, Marisa Olson, Marley Freeman, Matana Roberts, Matt Karmil, Meg Stuart, Mieko Akutsu, Mirthe Berentsen, Nicole Eisenman, Niels Van Tomme, Nikita Gale, Roux Kim, Sable Elyse Smith, Sarah Rara, Shannon Finnegan, Taeyoon Choi, Thomas Mader, Tin Nguyen, Willem de Rooij, and Youka Snell.

secession

Vereinigung bildender KünstlerInnen Wiener Secession

Friedrichstraße 12, A-1010 Wien

T. +43-1-587 53 07, F. +43-1-587 53 07-34

office@secession.at, www.secession.at

Christine Sun Kim was born in Orange County, California in 1980. She currently lives and works in Berlin.

Caroline Ellen Liou received her BFA in Painting at the Rhode Island School of Design in 2014 and her MA in Contemporary Chinese Art and Geopolitics at the Courtauld Institute of Art in 2017. As an Asian-American arts worker, she is interested in how art can often metabolize the Other through appropriation, recontextualization, and consumption.

Matthew Hyland is Executive Director of the Contemporary Art Gallery in Vancouver, where he recently co-organized Christine Sun Kim's mid-career survey *Oh Me Oh My*.

secession

Vereinigung bildender KünstlerInnen Wiener Secession
Friedrichstraße 12, A-1010 Wien
T. +43-1-587 53 07, F. +43-1-587 53 07-34
office@secession.at, www.secession.at

Current exhibitions

Hauptraum

Christine Sun Kim *Cues on Point*

February 17 – April 16, 2023

Galerie

Kresiah Mukwazhi *Kirawa*

February 17 – April 16, 2023

Grafisches Kabinett

Jordan Strafer *LOOPHOLE*

February 17 – April 16, 2023

Publications

Christine Sun Kim. DRAW A BLANK – BLANK ZIEHEN

Softcover, dustjacket, 144 pages, EUR 24,00

Kresiah Mukwazhi

Softcover, dustjacket, 80 pages, EUR 18,00

Jordan Strafer. LOOPHOLE

Softcover, dustjacket, 80 pages, EUR 18,00

Permanent presentation

Gustav Klimt, *Beethoven Frieze*

Beethoven – Painting and Music in cooperation with
Wiener Symphoniker

Opening hours

Tuesday – Sunday 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Admission

Regular € 12,00 | Students under 26 € 7,50

Seniors 65+ € 10,00 | Free admission for children under 12

Press contact Secession

Julia Kronberger

T. +43 1 587 53 07-10, julia.kronberger@secession.at

Press images

download at <https://secession.at/presse>

Main Sponsor

ERSTE 

Public funding and supporters:

 Bundesministerium
Kunst, Kultur,
öffentlicher Dienst und Sport

 **Stadt
Wien** | Kultur

freunde
der
secession

Cooperation-, media partners, sponsors:

MAX BROWN
HOTELS



 **Bildrecht**

 **Schlemser**
echt Waldviertel

VÖSLAUER

secession

Vereinigung bildender KünstlerInnen Wiener Secession
Friedrichstraße 12, A-1010 Wien
T. +43-1-587 53 07, F. +43-1-587 53 07-34
office@secession.at, www.secession.at

Christine Sun Kim

Biografie | Biography

Christine Sun Kim wurde 1980 in Orange County, Kalifornien, geboren. Sie lebt und arbeitet derzeit in Berlin.
Christine Sun Kim was born in Orange County, California, in 1980. She currently lives and works in Berlin.

Einzelausstellungen (Auswahl) | Solo exhibitions (selection)

- 2023 Oh Me Oh My, Gund Gallery, Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio, USA (forthcoming)
Oh Me Oh My, Tang Museum, Saratoga Springs, USA
Cues on Point, Secession, Vienna, Austria
- 2022 Oh Me Oh My, Remai Modern, Saskatoon, Canada
Oh Me Oh My, Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver, Canada
Time Owes Me Rest Again, Queens Museum, New York, USA
Every Life Signs, Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany
- 2021 Stacking Traumas, Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, St. Louis, USA
- 2020 Trauma, LOL, François Ghebaly, Los Angeles, USA
Off the Charts, MIT List Visual Arts Center, Boston, USA
- 2019 To Point a Naked Finger, with Thomas Mader, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, USA
- 2018 Finish Forever, François Ghebaly, Los Angeles, USA
With a Capital D, White Space, Beijing, China
Too Much Future, Public Art Installation, Whitney Museum, New York, USA
Lautplan, Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, USA
- 2017 Busy Days, De Appel Arts Centre, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 2016 Face Value, Tate Modern, London, UK
Five Finger Discount History, Akademie der Künste, Berlin Biennale, Germany
- 2015 Rustle Tustle, Carroll Fletcher, London, UK
Piano within Piano Like a Lunch Sandwich, White Space, Beijing, China
- 2013 Subjective Loudness, Sound Live Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan
Face Opera II, Calder Foundation, New York, USA

Gruppenausstellungen (Auswahl) | Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2022 Another Justice: US is Them, Parrish Art Museum X For Freedoms, Water Mill, New York
Drawing in the Continuous Present, The Drawing Center, New York, USA
Beneath Tongues, Curated by Sable Elyse Smith, Swiss Institute, New York, USA
- 2021 Crip Time, Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt, Germany
Captioning the City, Manchester International Festival, Manchester, UK
Video Club: Sketches for the Future, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands
All Together, Amongst Many: Reflections on Empathy, Bemis Center, Omaha, Nebraska
DISABILITY: Care, Matter, and Justice, Ford Foundation Gallery, New York, USA
Sweat, Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany
- 2020 100 Drawings from Now, The Drawing Center, New York, USA
Drawing 2020, Gladstone Gallery, New York, USA
Readings From Below, Times Art Center, Berlin, Germany
Étude, Aranya Art Center, Qinhuangdao, China
Kissing Through a Curtain. MASS MoCA, Massachusetts, USA
Magical Soup, Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, Germany
Sounds Like Her: Gender, Sound Art & Sonic Cultures, Gallery Oldham, Oldham, UK
- 2019 Ways of Seeing, Daejeon Museum of Art, Daejeon, Korea

secession

Vereinigung bildender KünstlerInnen Wiener Secession
Friedrichstraße 12, A-1010 Wien
T. +43-1-587 53 07, F. +43-1-587 53 07-34
office@secession.at, www.secession.at

- Undocumented, PS120, Berlin, Germany
- Resonance: A Sound Art Marathon, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA
- Whitney Biennial 2019, Whitney Museum, New York, USA
- We Mean Business, Art Night London, London, UK
- 2018 50 State Initiative, For Freedoms, Jefferson City, Missouri and Des Moines, Iowa, USA
- What We Make, Ross Art Museum, Delaware, Ohio, USA
- Paulo Cunha e Silva Art Prize, Galeria Municipal do Porto, Porto, Portugal
- 2017 Resonant Spaces, Hood Museum, Dartmouth College, Hanover, USA
- Soundtracks, SFMoMA, San Francisco, USA
- The World is Sound, Rubin Museum, New York, USA
- 2016 Shanghai Biennale, Future Base, Why Not Ask Again, Shanghai, China
- NERIRI KIRURU HARARA, SeMA Biennale Mediacity Seoul, Korea
- The Tale That All But Shapes Itself, Greene Naftali Gallery, New York, USA
- Busy Day with Mader, From Minimalism into Algorithm, The Kitchen, New York, USA
- 2015 Game of Skill 2.0, Greater New York, MoMA PS1, New York, USA
- 99 Objects series with Taeyoon Choi, Whitney Museum, New York, USA
- 2013 Soundings: A Contemporary Score, MoMA, New York, USA

Fellowships, Stipendien und Residencies | Fellowships, Grants, and Residencies

- 2022 Foundation Prince Pierre de Monaco International Prize for Contemporary Art, Monaco
- 2020 Disability Futures Fellowship, Ford Foundation and Mellon Foundation
- 2016 SeMA Hana Media Art Award, SeMA Biennale Mediacity Seoul, Korea
- Work Stipend for the Visual Arts, Senate Chancellery, Berlin, Germany
- 2015 MIT Media Lab Director's Fellows, Cambridge, USA
- 2013 TED Fellowship, TED, Long Beach, California, USA
- 2012 Newhouse Award, Wynn Newhouse Foundation, NY, USA, 2012

Bildung | Education

- 2013 MFA, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, USA
- 2006 MFA, School of Visual Arts, New York, USA
- 2002 BS, Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, USA

secession

Vereinigung bildender KünstlerInnen Wiener Secession
Friedrichstraße 12, A-1010 Wien
T. +43-1-587 53 07, F. +43-1-587 53 07-34
office@secession.at, www.secession.at

Christine Sun Kim

List of Works

Sign Sing, 2022

Charcoal on paper
150 x 150 cm | 59 x 59 inches

Tiktok Dilemma, 2022

Charcoal on paper
150 x 150 cm | 59 x 59 inches

Long Echo, 2022

Charcoal on paper
113 x 223,5 cm | 44.5 x 88 inches

Two works from the series

Corner Traps, 2022

Charcoal on paper
112 x 112 cm | 44 x 44 inches

Eight works from the series

Echo Trap, 2022

Charcoal on paper
112 x 112 cm | 44 x 44 inches

Little Debts Leave Dents, 2022

Charcoal on paper
132,5 x 132,5 cm | 52 x 52 inches

Constant Debt, 2022

Charcoal on paper
132,5 x 132,5 cm | 52 x 52 inches

Index Tip and Repeat, 2022

Charcoal on paper
132,5 x 132,5 cm | 52 x 52 inches

Cues on Point, 2022

Two channel digital video
Color, sound, HD
4 min 21 sec each

Prolonged Echo, 2023

Site specific mural
Black wallpaint
dimensions variable

All works: Courtesy of the artist and François Ghebaly Gallery