

## ARTISTS SPACE

Char Jeré

*Zoo or an Orchestra*

December 13 – February 17

Artists Space presents *Zoo or an Orchestra*, the first solo exhibition by New York-based artist Char Jeré.

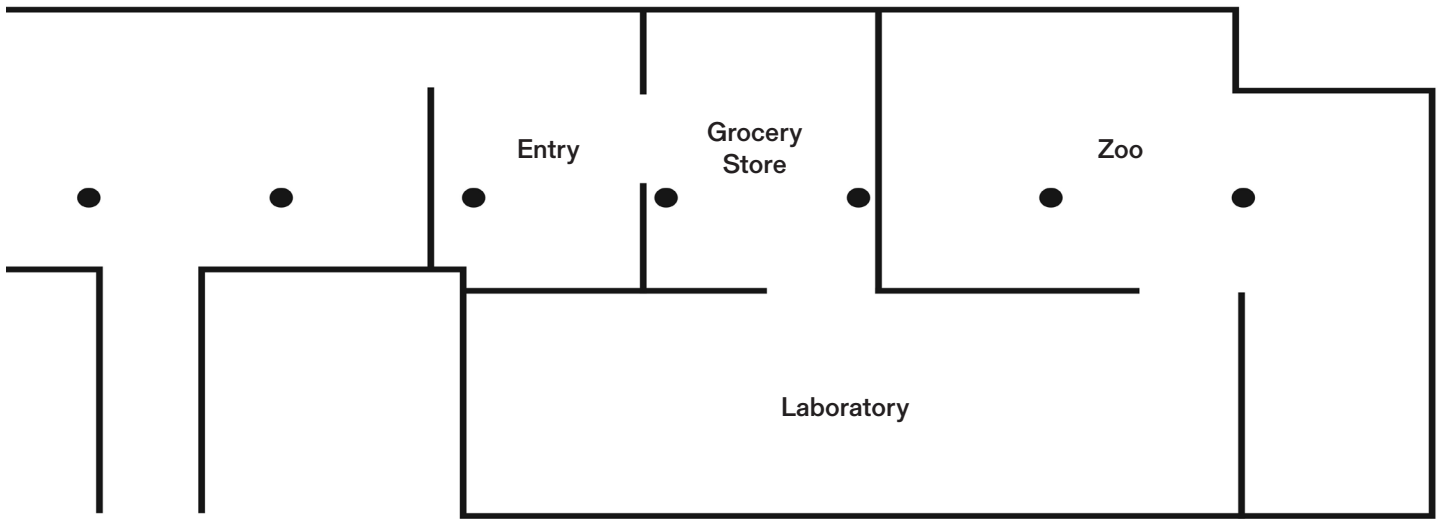
Jeré considers themselves an Afro-fractalist whose work focuses on the nonlinear temporality created within the African diaspora. Their work across sound, sculpture, filmmaking, and installation centers on the long history and evolving future of the relationship between race and technology. *Zoo or an Orchestra*, their multisensory project for Artists Space, comprises a dense multimedia installation-as-opera in four movements created from both found and archival materials—a reflection on the memories we share with those we've only briefly met, others we've never met, those who we've known for a long time, or the ones we've yet to meet.

Act One serves as the exhibition's entry point, a storefront modeled after the neighborhood grocery store owned by Jeré's grandfather in Yazoo City, Mississippi. This façade leads into Act Two, a defunct grocery store stocked with books and booklike objects in materials such as wax, ceramic, and resin, accompanied by a document scanner that allows visitors to scan books on display. Their titles are drawn from *A Working Bibliography on the Negro in the United States*, a 1969 work compiled by Dr. Dorothy Porter Wesley, one of several such research tools she created in response to the Dewey Decimal System's glaring omission of Black history and culture, which was only represented by topics number 325.26 and 326—colonization and slavery. Wesley's extensive work and scholarship, conducted primarily at Howard University, helped form the foundation of African American Studies.

Act Three of *Zoo or an Orchestra* is a community laboratory where a variety of instruments, automated sound objects, and other made and found items create a spatialized symphony. Act Four realizes a surreal mise-en-scène comprising antique televisions, mirrors, and drawings populated by a multitude of sculptural creatures, all set against the backdrop of the artist's *Periodic Table of Black Revolutionaries* (2021).

The artist Char Jeré merges their background in data science with a passion for social, economic, and environmental justice. Before receiving an MFA in sound art from the Computer Music Center at Columbia University in 2023, Jeré earned an MS in Data Analytics and Visualization from Pratt Institute in 2021.

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*Zoo or an Orchestra, 2023*

An installation of sound, video, found objects, groceries, reading materials, stills, scientific equipment, instruments, records, hair grease, amplifiers, synthesizers, papier-mâché animal sculptures, cardboard boxes, plastic sheets, and partial walls.