

Mary Helena Clark & Joy Episalla

*A Gamut*

May 4 — June 1, 2025

Opening Reception Sunday May 4, 2025, 5-9PM

28 Varick Ave. Brooklyn, NY 11237

...he's having trouble sleeping next to his new lover. This mattress feels nothing like his usual one. Awoken by the tiniest discomfort in the middle of the night, he can't fall back asleep quickly. When the lover sleeps facing away from him, he stares at his spine up and down, trying to remember how to spell the names of each part. He thinks he can make out each word because, he has been going to the doctor's office a lot recently, and in the waiting area he sits facing an anatomical drawing annotated with names of human bones. "Cervical, Thoraic, Limbar, Sacrum, Coccyx...?", he thinks he's got it.

When the lover sleeps facing him, he can't make himself bold enough to stare at his face. It feels like, to him, watching a movie on TV but sitting right in front of the screen, when the unflattering reflection of the spectator suddenly gets transposed into the moving image via pockets of dark void. He's afraid that if he stares at him too long, and starts counting every single of his eyelashes uncontrollably, his gaze would wander into his lover's dreams by mistake, and startle that sweet face asleep.

He makes a slow turn towards the windows.

There are two windows in this room, one of them is open, and both covered by somewhat translucent blue curtains. In darkness, he couldn't figure out which side the opening is on, but he smells the wet soil and new grass from the lawn in the backyard. The fresh scent makes him want to drink water to refresh himself. His mouth has gotten very dry. He doesn't know how to sneak out to the kitchen without alerting the sleeping man next to him, so he stays still and tries to be patient with this dryness incubating from deep within his throat.

The thirstier he gets, the more blue these curtains seem to become. Sometimes they are soft, baby blues that allow him to make out more of the scene outside. He could possibly see a moving shadow in the building across the yards. Maybe that's someone grabbing a glass of water... Sometimes the shade of these curtains turns very deep and dark. The form of the undulating fabric feels like a snapshot of a wave out there somewhere on the sea. He can't quite remember when was the last time he was out on the water, but he always remembers the smell of it. The smell that makes him feel dirty and clean at the same time.

He feels like the two windows are turning into a stereograph. His glasses are sitting on the nightstand on the other side of the bed. Without his lenses, the two frames do not converge into perspective. Sometimes when he's feeling very alone, he imagines himself to be a camera. In his imagination, he doesn't bother to picture the mechanical precision of a machine, or the beauty of utilitarian design. Instead, he mainly romanticizes being the gatherer of refracting light who boxes it into a rectangular frame.

He's been wanting to make a picture of his lover, since before they met, since he started learning how to put one thing besides another, since he first noticed the flickering gaps between each grain of static, since he began to see all the colors from black and white, since he heard the ancient music whispering through the night: come here.

**Mary Helena Clark** (born 1983, USA) lives and works in Queens, New York. Her work has been exhibited and screened nationally and internationally, including presentations at Cushion Works, San Francisco; Bridget Donahue, New York, the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge; Sundance Film Festival, Park City; Swedish Film Institute, Stockholm; The Gene Siskel Film Center, Chicago; Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago; Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus; Anthology Film Archives, New York; Yerba Buena Center, San Francisco; National Gallery of Art, Washington DC; and at the New York, London, Rotterdam and Toronto International Film Festivals.

**Joy Episalla (b. 1957)** lives in New York City and works at the intersection of photography, video, and sculpture. Episalla has exhibited nationally and internationally including solo exhibitions and screenings at MoMA, NYC; Eastman Museum, Rochester; Tibor De Nagy, NYC; Galerie Joseph Tang, Paris; International Center of Photography, NYC; Participant, Inc, NYC; Carrie Secrist Gallery, Chicago; Debs & Co., NYC; Phoenix Art Museum and Mercer Union, Toronto. Group exhibitions include Participant, Inc, NYC; / (slash), San Francisco; Centre Pompidou, Paris; ICA Philadelphia; Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art, NYC; Fondation d'Entreprise Ricard, Paris; Bronx Museum of the Arts; Central for Contemporary Art, Brussels; MoMA PS1; Rose Art Museum, MA; Brooklyn Museum; Artists Space, NYC; Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus; White Columns; Buffalo AKG; and The Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

*Benny's Video* is a nomadic curatorial project conceived and operated by Craig Jun Li since March 2025. The inaugural season of programming is generously hosted in the studio space of artist Grant Mooney. BV would also like to thank Bridget Donahue gallery, Carrie Yamaoka, Oskar Fougeroul, Noa Wesley, William Wiebe, Coco Klockner, André Magaña, Ben K. Voss and Kyle Croft for their indispensable support. All inquiries to [jubeahoune@gmail.com](mailto:jubeahoune@gmail.com)