

WONJU LIM SELF ANNIHILATION

ACT 1

JAN 14—FEB 10, 2024

TIMESHARE

3526 N. BROADWAY,
LOS ANGELES, CA



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WONJU LIM
SELF ANNIHILATION

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PRESS RELEASE

Once upon a time, witchcraft and magic were real things, real not only as beliefs sincerely held by premodern people, but also as potent influences on their lives and fortunes. Curses and blessings played a powerful role in sickness and health through their ability to subvert or support the body's functioning due to the psyche's intimate connection with soma. A form of what might be called psycholinguistic programming, spells could trigger instinctual responses as well as cultural expectations to promote illness or healing, depending on the emotional valiance of the words, vocalizations, and accompanying expressions and gestures. Similarly, gazing into a mirror, scrying, was used to identify thieves, locate lost objects, and predict marriage partners because of its ability to induce trance states in which unconscious knowledge was manifested as images discerned in the reflective surface. "Every village has its witch, and every district has its healer," held a Danish proverb, reflecting the ubiquity of these beliefs, practices, and practitioners in premodern Europe, America, and much of the rest of the world.

That was then, of course, and now, since the 1800s, we moderns no longer indulge such beliefs. Or, rather, we indulge them as fantasies and parodies, metaphors and allegories, vestiges of childhood both societal and personal, shadows of what we know to be real. Frankenstein exposed who the real monsters in this world are; the Adams Family turned bourgeois life on its head; "Bewitched" created a proto-feminist reality in which Samantha Stevens had to deny and suppress her extraordinary power to preserve her husband Darren's status as breadwinner and protect his fragile ego. Dottering Aunt Clara provided comic relief with miscast spells whose errant outcomes created magical messes that Samantha had to fix by surreptitiously utilizing further magic to clean them up before they revealed the supernatural reality behind the facade of normalcy in the Stevens' household.

Drawing on a selection of Aunt Clara's spells, Won Ju Lim's installation *Self Annihilation, Act 1* at Timeshare juxtaposes the printed text of the spells—in some cases clearly laid out, in other cases jumbled one on top of the other,—a glossolalial soundscape mixing Aunt Clara's often nonsensical utterances and a variety of self-consciously pre-verbal experimental and avant garde musical selections, and mirrors set up to produce a mix of straightforward and infinitely regressing reflections, to explore the effects of words, prosody, and reflective surfaces on mind and body. Part of her ongoing exploration of the show *Bewitched*, in this installation Lim reaches beyond the socio-cultural implications of the sitcom to bring together elements that echo the visceral impact of primal magical experiences, real magic.

—Edward Bever, Ph.D.,
The Realities of Witchcraft and Popular Magic in Early Modern Europe

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ARTIST BIO

Won Ju Lim is a Korean American artist whose multimedia practice is grounded in the interactions of sculpture and architecture. It revolves around the play of real and fictional spaces in the construction of memory, longing, and fantasy, drawing upon both empirical and imaginary constructs that we rely on to move between multiple scales of interiority and exteriority. The conceptual and formal elements in her work draw from sources ranging from Baroque architecture, the urban landscape to the domestic space.

Her work has been exhibited worldwide in 40+ solo and 70+ group exhibitions, including those at Elzig Museum, Istanbul (2023); University Galleries, California State University, Sacramento (2023); the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2022, 2013); the San Jose Museum of Art (2018); the Yerba Buena Art Center, San Francisco (2015); the St. Louis Art Museum (2014); Vancouver Art Gallery (2011, 2002); the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2009, 2001); the Museum of Art, Seoul (2009); UCCA, Beijing (2008); Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt (2008); DA2 Domus Artium, Salamanca (2005, 2007); the Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus (2005); ZKM Museum für Neue Kunst, Karlsruhe (2005); Museum Haus Ester, Krefeld (2004); Museum der Moderne in Salzburg (2004); and Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver (2002). Her biennale exhibitions include the International Incheon Women Artists' Biennale; Architecture, Art, and Landscape Biennial of the Canaries; the Gwangju Biennale; Snapshot: New Art from Los Angeles, the Hammer Museum; and the Münster Sculpture Biennale. Her work is included in international public collections such as those of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, San Jose Museum of Art, Manetti Shrem Museum of Art, Elzig Collection, Hammer Museum, High Museum of Art, M+ in Hong Kong, Guy & Myriam Ullens Foundation, La Colección Jumex, and Vancouver Art Gallery, among others. She is the recipient of numerous grants and fellowships including the 2016 C.O.L.A. Individual Artist Fellowship; Henry L. and Natalie E. Freund Fellowship; Creative Capacity Fund; Tribeca Film Institute Media Arts Fellowship (funded by the Rockefeller Foundation); Korea Arts Foundation for Visual Arts Grant; and California Community Foundation Fellowship for Visual Artists.

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Self Annihilation, Act I, 2024 Mirrored Plexiglass, vinyl, sound

Tracks in order of play:

Various Artists, Sounds of a Tropical Rainforest in America, Folkways Records, 1952

George Vlad, "Underwater Glacier Sounds," YouTube

Öyvind Fahlström, Faglar i Sveridge (1963),
Sveriges Radios förlag/Fylkingen, 1999

Velimir Khlebnikov, "The Radio of the Future" (1921),
Baku: Symphony of the Sirens, ReR, 2008

F. T. Marinetti, "La Battaglia di Adrianapoli" (1924),
Futurism & Dada Reviewed, LTM Recordings, 2000

Language Removal Services, "Static Language Portrait of Marilyn Monroe" (2000), The Sound of Things, New Museum, 2007

Matthew Brannon, Gag, self-released LP, 2010

Jessika Kennedy, "Crying Scene," from
Ari Aster, Midsommar (2019), YouTube

Pierre Henry, "Variations pour une porte et un soupir" (1963),
Messe pour le temps présent, Philips, 1989

Basil Kirchin, "Special Relativity," Quantum, Trunk Records, 2003

Luciano Berio, "Visage" (1961), Electronic Music (2), Turnabout, 1966

Mauricio Kagel, Hallelujah, Deutsche Grammophon, 1969

Pierre Henry, "Vocalises" (1952), Deuxième panorama de musique concrète,
Ducretet Thomson, 1964

Vladimir Ussachevsky, "Wireless Fantasy" (1960) OHM:
The Early Gurus of Electronic Music, Ellipsis Arts. 2000

Basil Kirchin, "The Concept Suite: Secret Conversation Between Instruments,"
Particles, Trunk Records, 2006

Paul McCarthy, Painter, 1995, YouTube

Tosca, "Listen, My Friend," Opera, G-Stone Recordings, 1997

Oscar Sala, "Sound Effects from Hitchcock's Birds and Other Themes,"
1963, YouTube

Kurt Schwitters, "Ursonate" (1932), Futurism & Dada Reviewed,
LTM Recordings, 2000

Mixed by Jan Tumlrir / Mastered by Kern Haug