

Craig Jun Li

*Everybody Here Wants You*

Craig Jun Li with Joy Episalla, David Nelson, Carrie Yamaoka

November 22, 2025 — January 18, 2026

### At Bay

An exhibition is a name for the ordering of time, a period that suspends a work or set of works in a context but which nevertheless seems to have a determinate beginning and end, like a life. A work meanwhile supposes an ordering of space, exterior framing interior, recto shadowing verso, like a body. The principle of a reality consecrated by edges, which is to say the reality of lives and bodies, subsists only in the moment of their transgression—edges being a function of what slips their containment, like lips salty with the wet of the river's mouth. What is a lip but a zone of trembling intensities, brackish with anticipation of the rising tide.

An intrusion is the acknowledgement of these boundaries by negation. Though an intrusion may be anticipated, it cannot be prepared for, because the preparation itself is the sign of the intrusion's coming into being. It is addressed precisely to what is not prepared for it, what remains unrecognized because unseen. An intrusion shows its context, raising the question not of the intruder's identity but of the identity she unsettles—the identity which itself demands, depends on, and produces the intrusion. It is a deixis that points back at the limit it intrudes upon, assimilating its meaning into that limit's effects.

"This" is the difficulty of deixis: what points stands in for the thing pointed to, always threatening a collapse. In intruding on what had previously been experienced as an autonomous existence, the identification of a thing erects a border around its qualities, drawing up positions of affirmation and negation. For every "this," so too a "not-this." The periphery of the known fortifies its categories through the absorption of what intrudes on them; what is said puts a limit on what can be seen.

A shibboleth is the boundary set against intrusion by intruding, the elaboration of the deictic binary through the suspension of its definition. It is the letter that splits negation from negativity, the possibility of knowing from what is known. It is the question put to the unrecognized and the answer of the unrecognizable. It names that which cannot be named, brokering identifications under threat of a river ("shibboleth") red with mispronunciation. It is the outside that comes inside and turns the inside out. The shibboleth overwhelms deixis not with some imaginary referent but with its own unspeakable constitution, laying new articulations onto its intrusive tongue. The limit crossed by the intruder becomes the limit of the intruder, the limit to remaining a stranger.

It is only the intruder who can establish the meaning of the shibboleth's letter and only then through an act of erasure, the lack that pronounces the intrusion. She greets with silence; she welcomes with distance. This gap is what secures the shape of her signifier—the limit as material, the limit to what can be known in advance—which is at the same

time the prospect that her meaning will continue to run under her, like a shibboleth (“river”). What cannot be controlled is only this void, this addition that resists integration, this surplus experienced as lack. A letter that speaks not from the limit of what it can say but of what it cannot.

A greeting of silence effaces the outside in a single breath. The dimension of intimacy opens in place of the dimensions of volume. On the edge of this hole whose opening undoes the meaning rolled off the tongue, the lip grazes another shore. The intruder slips past the teeth, to be carried away by the river. To know anything is easier than to know nothing at all.

*William Wiebe, November 2025*

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**"CJ" Craig Jun Li** (b. 1998, China) is an art worker and artist based in New York. Li's work has been shown in solo and group exhibitions including KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin; Kurtkubin, CDMX; SYSTEMA, Marseille; François Ghebaly, LA & New York; Taon, Ivey-sur-Seine; ROMANCE, Pittsburgh; Chris Andrews, Montréal; RAINRAIN, New York; September Sessions, Stockholm; hatred 2, New York; Prairie, Chicago; and Canal Projects, New York, among others. Li operates a curatorial project “Benny’s Video,” currently hosted in a studio sublet in Bushwick. Li’s upcoming solo exhibitions at Chapter NY (New York, NY) and Cheremoya (Los Angeles, CA) will open in Spring 2026.

**Joy Episalla** (she/they) is a New York-based interdisciplinary artist whose work repositions photography and the moving image into the territory of sculpture. Their queer/feminist perspective is the undertow for expanding possibilities by engaging with the dynamics of transformation, multiplicity and hybridity through the mutability of materials, observation, process, time, movement, seriality and sound. Creating open-ended situations that prompt the viewer to slow down and take in the moment — in all its complexity and seeming contradictions.

Exhibitions and screenings in the US and internationally include MoMA (NYC), Palais de Tokyo (Paris), Eastman Museum (Rochester), Participant Inc. (NYC), ICA (Pennsylvania), Centre Pompidou (Paris), MoMA PS1 (NYC), Victoria and Albert Museum (London), Leslie-Lohman Museum (NYC), Fondation Ricard (Paris), the Wexner (Columbus), Central for Contemporary Art (Brussels), Artist Space (NYC), Phoenix Art Museum (Phoenix), and the International Center for Photography (NYC). Writing about her work has appeared in The New Yorker, BOMB, the New York Times, Two Coats of Paint, Artforum, POST Italia, Slate, and Art in America. Episalla is a founding member of the queer art collective fierce pussy.

**David Nelson** (1960-2013) was an interdisciplinary artist who worked across photography, drawing, sculpture, and painting. Rigorous and precise, Nelson engaged process, time, chance, and a finely tuned attention to the natural world. Nelson’s work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, including solo exhibitions at Petersburg Gallery, Debs & Co., and Barbara Gladstone in NYC, at Tracy Williams in Paris, as well as many group exhibitions, which include Artists Space, The Drawing Center, Boston Center for the Arts, and the Academy of Arts and Letters. A posthumous survey exhibition at 80WSE Gallery was curated by Jonathan Berger and Nancy Brooks Brody in 2015, with an accompanying catalogue. More recently Nelson’s works have been exhibited at Parent Company (New York), Benny’s Video (Brooklyn, NY), Ulterior (New York).

Originally from California, Nelson moved to NYC and began making art in the mid-1970s. By the 1980s, he had a studio on East 14th Street and became friends with the artists Robert Bordo, Nancy Brooks Brody, Joy Episalla, Tony Feher, Zoe Leonard, Angela Muriel, Nicolas Rule, Rafael Sanchez, and Carrie Yamaoka. This peer group’s formative years coincided with the onset of the AIDS crisis, which deepened

their camaraderie, with many of them becoming involved with ACT UP (The AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) during the 1980s and 1990s. In 1985, Nelson met the artist David Knudsvig, who remained his life partner until Knudsvig's death from AIDS in 1993.

**Carrie Yamaoka** (b. 1957) is an interdisciplinary artist whose work ranges across painting, drawing, photography and sculpture. She is deeply engaged with the topography of surfaces, materiality and process, the tactility of the barely visible and the chain of planned and chance incidents that determine the outcome of the object. The work addresses the viewer at the intersection between records of chemical action/reaction and the desire to apprehend a picture emerging in fleeting and unstable states of transformation.

Yamaoka's work has been exhibited at the Institute of Contemporary Art (Philadelphia), MoMA PS1 (New York), Palais de Tokyo (Paris), Zilkha Gallery/Wesleyan University (Middletown, Connecticut), Centre Pompidou (Paris), Fondation Ricard (Paris), Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington (Seattle), Artists Space (New York), Wexner Center for the Arts (Columbus, Ohio), Participant Inc. (New York), Victoria and Albert Museum (London), Grey Art Museum (New York), and MassMOCA (North Adams, Massachusetts). Writing on her work has appeared in the New York Times, Artforum, Art in America, Artnews, The New Yorker, Time Out/NY, Hyperallergic, Interview, Ursula, and BOMB. Her work is included in the public collections of the Buffalo AKG, the Art Institute of Chicago, Centre Pompidou, Dallas Museum of Art, Henry Art Gallery, Sunpride Foundation, and the Whitney Museum of American Art. She is the recipient of the Maria Lassnig Prize (2025), a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship (2019) and an Anonymous Was A Woman award (2017). A monograph, RE: Carrie Yamaoka, has just been published by Radius Books in 2025. Yamaoka is represented by Commonwealth and Council (Los Angeles), Kiang Malingue (Hong Kong/New York) and Ulterior (New York). Yamaoka is a founding member of the queer art collective fierce pussy. She lives and works in New York City.

**William Wiebe** is an artist based in New York and the director of Emmelines, a gallery located at the 5th Ave & 53rd St MTA Station.

The artists would like to specially thank Barry Paddock, who maintains and operates the estate of David Nelson.

***Everybody Here Wants You***

Craig Jun Li with Joy Episalla, David Nelson, Carrie Yamaoka

November 22, 2025 — January 18, 2026

**416 Dwight Street**

Main space:

**Craig Jun Li**

*Untitled*

2024

Oil paint, alcohol, silicone

12 x 8 in. each (flat)

In a suite of five, each unique

**David Nelson**

*Hand in Hole*

2000 / 2001

Silver gelatin print

24 x 20 in. (unframed)

31 x 25.5 x 1 in. (framed)

Edition of 5

**David Nelson**

*Tidal Records*

1987 / 1989

Ink and sand on paper

26 x 20 in. each

Twenty-six panels, each unique

**Joy Episalla and Carrie Yamaoka**

*Day for Night*

2019 / 2025

5 minute digital video, flexible urethane resin on black vinyl

Video dimension varies / vinyl measures 48 x 91 in.

**Craig Jun Li**

*Untitled*

2023

SX-70 film on reflective silver mylar in artist's frame

16.25 x 20.25 in. (framed)

Unique

**Craig Jun Li**

*"untitled" (pets)*

2024

SX-70 film in artist's frame

16.25 x 20.25 in. (framed)

In a suite of three, each unique

**Carrie Yamaoka**

*peeled 3*

2025

Flexible urethane resin on black vinyl

20.25 x 25.25 in. (framed)

**Joy Episalla**

*foldtogram (1152" x 50", August), iteration 5*

2019 / 2021(2) / 2023 / 2025

Light sensitive emulsion-coated paper

Dimensions variable

Lower level:

**Carrie Yamaoka**

*23 by 18.75 (black crawl)*

2025

Flexible urethane resin on black vinyl

23 x 18.75 x 3 in.

**Craig Jun Li**

*Sometimes I hear every beat of your silence. I do*

2025

Restored antique 120 hour bank vault time locks, wall-mounted aluminum cigarette and ash receptacles

13 x 3.5 x 4.5 in. each

**Joy Episalla**

*foldtogram (rc burnt 2)*

2020

Silver gelatin object

20 x 24 in.

**Joy Episalla**

*foldtogram (chromo white 2), iteration 2*

2025

Light sensitive emulsion-coated paper

40 x 30 in.

Chambers 1 & 2:

**Carrie Yamaoka**

*28 by 24 (silver verso)*

2025

Verso of flexible urethane resin on black vinyl

28 x 24 x 1 in.

**David Nelson**

*Untitled (Hole)*

c. 1998-2000

Resin, dirt, roots, rocks

10 x 9 x 4 in. (variable)

**David Nelson**

*Untitled (Hole)*

c. 1998-2000

Resin, dirt, roots, rocks

6 x 4 x 5 in.

**David Nelson**

*Untitled (Hole)*

c. 1998-2000

Resin, dirt, roots, rocks

11.5 x 11.5 x 7.5 in.

**Joy Episalla**

*foldtogram (chromo sm 5)*

2025

Light sensitive emulsion on paper

10.25 x 12.375 in. (framed)

**David Nelson**

Untitled (Hole)

c. 1998-2000

Resin, dirt, roots, rocks

10 x 6 x 5 in.

**David Nelson**

*Hole #19*

1999

Resin, dirt, roots, rocks

10 x 16 x 10 in. (variable)

**Carrie Yamaoka**

*peeled 1*

2025

Flexible urethane resin on black vinyl

25.25 x 20.25 in. (framed)

**Craig Jun Li**

*i went outside in the middle of the night and changed the colors of all the leaves for you*

2025

Altered SX-70 film and cartridge parts

5.5 x 3.625 x 0.5 in.

Chamber 3:

**David Nelson**

*Drip #1:#2*

1999

Silver gelatin print

15 x 19 in. (unframed)

**Craig Jun Li**

*Untitled*

2025

SX-70 films and cartridge parts

107 x 88 mm each (individual film)

In a suite of eight, each unique

**Carrie Yamaoka**

*14 by 11 (black crawl)*

2025

Flexible urethane resin on black vinyl on wood panel

14 x 11 x 1 inches

**362 Dwight Street**

Basement 1:

**Carrie Yamaoka**

*30 by 30 (black vinyl crawl)*

2025

Flexible urethane resin on black vinyl on wood panel

30 x 30 x 2 in.

**Craig Jun Li**

*Untitled*

2025

SX-70 films, packaging foam, plexiglass

13.5 x 10.75 x 0.625 in. each

In a suite of eight, each unique

**David Nelson**

*Doppelganger*

1997

Photogram

15.5 x 15.5 in. (unframed)

21 x 21 x 1.5 in. (framed)

**Craig Jun Li**

*Untitled*

2024 / 2025

SX-70 films, vintage time lock mechanism part, reflective silver mylar, artist's frame

25.25 x 20.25 x 1.25 in.

Basement 2:

**Joy Episalla**

*foldtogram (chromo sm 1)*

2025

Light sensitive emulsion-coated paper

10.25 x 12.375 in. (framed)

**Joy Episalla**

*foldtogram (chromo sm 2)*

2025

Light sensitive emulsion-coated paper

10.25 x 12.375 in. (framed)

**Joy Episalla**

*foldtogram (chromo sm 3)*

2025

Light sensitive emulsion-coated paper

10.25 x 12.375 in. (framed)

**Joy Episalla**

*foldtogram (chromo sm 4)*

2025

Light sensitive emulsion-coated paper

10.25 x 12.375 in. (framed)

**Carrie Yamaoka**

*Blue bubble remains*

2025

Urethane resin and mixed media

16.5 x 20.375 in.

**David Nelson**

*Untitled (Timer/Sand/Pull)*

c.1993

Photogram

16 x 20 in. each

In a suite of five, each unique

**Craig Jun Li**

*"Untitled" (Bad Clocks/Kyle)*

2024 / 2025

Antique 120 hour bank vault time locks, acrylic, embossed silicone, clear poly sheeting, cigarette ash, artist's saliva, mirror-polished stainless steel, aluminum, glassine, cinder blocks

Basement 3:

**Carrie Yamaoka**

*peeled 2*

2025

Flexible urethane resin on black vinyl

25 .25 x 20.25 in.

**Craig Jun Li**

*i'd like to make you a happier man*

2025

Digital video projection

65 min / projection dimension varies

**Craig Jun Li**

*Save the Next Dance for Me*

2025

Altered belt-drive turntables, aluminum panel, intermittent timer

36 x 14 x 2 in.