

FRÆNKEL

49 GEARY STREET SAN FRANCISCO 94108 415 981 2661

For immediate release:



JANET CARDIFF & GEORGE BURES MILLER Ambient Jukebox & Other Stories

January 11 – March 9, 2024

Fraenkel Gallery is pleased to present *Ambient Jukebox & Other Stories*, an exhibition of new work by multidisciplinary artists Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller. Atmospheric, dreamlike, and theatrical, the duo's work often explores how sound affects perception. This will be the artists' second solo exhibition with the gallery since 2018. A public reception with the artists will take place on Saturday, January 13, from 2-4pm.

In *Cosmic Disco*, tiny points of light reflected from altered mirrorballs fill a darkened room to create the illusion of slowly moving galaxies, accompanied by a soundtrack drawn from recordings of planets and moons made by NASA's Voyager I and II. The piece immerses viewers in illusory reflections and otherworldly sounds, encouraging contemplation of the universe and humans' place in it. In another room, *Ambient Jukebox* repurposes a familiar-looking 1960s jukebox. Rather than playing pop hits, it has been reprogrammed to spin drone-like tunes created by Bures Miller during the disorienting months of the global pandemic. As in many of their pieces, Cardiff and Bures Miller invite the viewer to activate the piece—selecting the tracks creates a singular experience of the work and transforms the iconic object into something unfamiliar and surprising.

A range of more intimate works populate the third gallery. Combining paintings, found materials, soundtracks, and audio musings, these works explore the ways in which narrative, music, and sound influence the viewer's interpretation of visual elements. Playful sculptural collages, made in part from studio scraps left over from earlier works, are inspired by constructivist ideas. In one, a collage made from rough wooden shapes, pieces of torn paper, and a tuft of blonde hair spins on a round pedestal as

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speakers play a hypnotic soundtrack of layered voices. Other works juxtapose moody oil paintings with fragments of found text, exploring the power of words even when inaudible.

Suitcases appear in several works. A vintage suitcase is transformed into a theater, replete with curiously crafted doll-like characters and a range of scenarios that play on a small screen facing the 'stage.' Another suitcase is modified with a gramophone speaker through which Cardiff's dreamlike voice quavers the World War I marching song *Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag, and Smile, Smile, Smile* by George and Felix Powell, a song which in time has been sung by forces on all sides of many conflicts.

Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller recently opened the Cardiff Miller Art Warehouse in Enderby, British Columbia, a venue that showcases their immersive large-scale installations. *The Killing Machine*, an automated installation inspired in part by Franz Kafka's story *In the Penal Colony*, is featured in the exhibition *Kafka: 1924* at Villa Stuck in Munich, Germany, on view until February 11, 2024. Their solo survey exhibition *Dream Machines* was recently on view at Museum Tinguely in Basel, Switzerland, following its premier at Lehmbrock Museum in Duisburg, Germany. The exhibition was organized in honor of the Wilhelm Lehmbrock Prize, which was awarded to the pair in 2020. Cardiff's celebrated sound sculpture *Forty-Part Motet* is on view in ongoing exhibitions at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa, and Inhotim in Brumadinho, Brazil.

Their work has been shown in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; MoMA PS1, New York; National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and Tate Modern, London, among many others. Their work is in the collections of public institutions including the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, Texas; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and others. In 2011 they received Germany's Käthe Kollwitz Prize, and in 2001, represented Canada at the 49th Venice Biennale, for which they received the Premio Speciale and the Benesse Prize.

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Image: Janet Cardiff & George Bures Miller, *Suitcase theater*, 2000-23

For press inquiries and images, please contact Rebecca Robertson
at 415.981.2661 or rrobertson@fraenkelgallery.com