

BLANTON MUSEUM OF ART

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

The Blanton Museum's Popular *SoundSpace* Returns for its Tenth Season



The acclaimed art and music series can be experienced online on April 21, 2022

Austin, TX—March 16, 2022—The Blanton Museum of Art at The University of Texas at Austin will return with the tenth season of its acclaimed art and music series *SoundSpace*. ***SoundSpace: Conversation Pieces*** will feature eight performers responding to artworks in the Blanton's collection through sound and performance. The program will be streamed online on **Thursday, April 21, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. CT** and include pre-recorded performances in the museum galleries, followed by a live Q&A with performers.

“The program will showcase a wide array of sonic dialogues, from virtuosic performance to solitary reflection and charged confrontation, with artworks across a range of mediums, eras, and geographies,” said Steve Parker, *SoundSpace* Artistic Director and Austin-based musician, artist, and curator. “For more than ten years, the Blanton's *SoundSpace* has transformed the museum into a site for creativity and exploration. I'm especially excited to bring that experience online for the first time—and to transport viewers to the gallery walls through a combination of visual, performance, and sound art. We're really going to give them a unique show.”

For this online edition, Parker has invited nationally and locally renowned composers, musicians, artists, and dancers to create poignant “conversations” with works from the Blanton’s collection. One such performance, **José Villalobos’** powerful *LENGUA*, speaks about the erasure and silence of queer bodies, particularly along the U.S.–Mexico border, against the backdrop of *Stacked Waters* by Teresita Fernández, which serves as surrogate for the Rio Grande.

Also among the performers is dancer and choreographer **Alexa Capareda**, who recreates an exhausting depression-era dance marathon. In these events, couples competed for prizes by dancing for as long as possible— often days at a time—as depicted in the 1934 painting *Dance Marathon* by Phillip Evergood.

Lagos- and Pflugerville-based artist **AKIRASH’s** performance is staged in the Blanton’s European art galleries, among two paintings depicting a woman and child by the 18th-century Venetian artist Giovanni Antonio Pellegrini. Titled *Yeye Oloomo – Affection of Mother*, the piece acts as a lament for a lost mother and the rituals of parenthood.

In his piece *Dusted*, artist **Michael Anthony García** closely observes Frederic Sackrider Remington’s largest painting and depiction of the American West, *The Charge [A Cavalry Scrap]*. Combining poetry with projected images, the performance dismantles the dust kicked up by cavalry horses in the painting’s foreground.

Composer and regular *SoundSpace* collaborator **Graham Reynolds** interprets the abstract landscape painting *La cañada [The Glen]* by French-Mexican surrealist Alice Rahon as a graphic score for kalimba with electronic instrumentation.

Performances also include **Henna Chou’s** inventive composition for cello in response to *Vivir: a los saltos [To Live: By Leaps and Bounds]* by Argentine painter Rómulo Macció; **claire rousay’s** synthesizer composition *Dedication to Cathedrals*, which highlights the 600,000 coins in the installation *Missão/Missões [Mission/Missions] (How to Build Cathedrals)* by Cildo Meireles; and interdisciplinary tap dance artist **Michael J. Love’s** composition opposite *We Belong Here* by Tavares Strachan.

SoundSpace: Conversation Pieces will be hosted live by Steve Parker and Carter E. Foster, Blanton Deputy Director for Curatorial Affairs. Registration is required to attend. Attendees can support the Blanton’s online programs with a pay-what-you-wish donation. Details and registration at <https://blantonmuseum.org/events/soundspace-conversation-pieces/>.

SoundSpace is generously underwritten by Michael Chesser.

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About the Blanton

Founded in 1963, the Blanton Museum of Art holds the largest public collection in Central Texas with more than 21,000 objects. Recognized as the home of Ellsworth Kelly’s *Austin*, its major collecting areas

are modern and contemporary American and Latin American art, Italian Renaissance and Baroque paintings, and prints and drawings. The Blanton offers thought-provoking, visually arresting, and personally moving encounters with art.

About SoundSpace

Heralded by the *Austin American-Statesman* as “the most successful new music event in the city,” *SoundSpace* is a dynamic concert series that brings together musicians and other creatives to connect visual and sound art. The series, which started in 2011, demonstrates the Blanton’s commitment to nurturing collaborations that provide innovative experiences with art, inspire creativity, and support the educational mission of The University of Texas at Austin.

About Steve Parker

Steve Parker is a musician, artist, and curator who creates communal, democratic work to examine history, systems, and behavior. His projects include elaborate civic rituals for humans, animals, and machines; listening sculptures made from salvaged marching band instruments that are modeled after obsolete WWII acoustic locators; and cathartic transportation symphonies for operators of cars, pedicabs, and bicycles. He is the recipient of the 2021 Rome Prize, the 2020 Ashurst Prize (UK), and the 2018 Tito’s Prize, as well as multiple grants from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Image: *(from left to right, top to bottom)* claire rousay, Henna Chou (photo: Leon Alesi), José Villalobos, AKIRASH (photo: Michelle Akindiya), Michael J. Love, Graham Reynolds, Michael Anthony García, Alexa Capareda (photo: Sarah Annie Navarrete)