

THE KITCHEN
NEW YORK CITY'S CENTER
FOR EXPERIMENTAL ART
AND THE AVANT-GARDE
SINCE 1971

For Immediate Release
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THE KITCHEN ANNOUNCES SPRING 2024 VIDEO VIEWING ROOM PROGRAMMING

Video from Tsedaye Makonnen (April 2024), Lynn Hershman Leeson (May 2024), and Los Cybrids (June 2024) Will Be Shared on The Kitchen's Online Platform for Recent Work and Resonant Archival Recordings

The Kitchen today announces Spring 2024 programming for its **Video Viewing Room**, featuring works by multidisciplinary artist **Tsedaye Makonnen**; multimedia artist, filmmaker, and 2024 Kitchen Spring Gala honoree **Lynn Hershman Leeson**; and the 1999-2003 collective **Los Cybrids**. Throughout the next three months, these works will be presented on **The Kitchen On Screen's** [Video Viewing Room](#).

April 2024 sees the screening of Makonnen's new video work *Astral Sea: Views*, which weaves together a mesmerizing tapestry of views from her performances and sculptural activations around the world. In May 2024, the Video Viewing Room celebrates the pioneering practice of Lynn Hershman Leeson, who first presented work at The Kitchen as part of the exhibition *New Works, First Runs* in 1990, hosted The Kitchen's *TV Dinner* event series in February 1999, and is a 2024 Gala Honoree. For June 2024, The Kitchen's Video Viewing Room turns to work by Los Cybrids: *La Raza Techno-Critica*, a collective of three Latinx artists—**René García**, **John Jota Leños**, and **Praba Pilar**—exploring cultural and somatic mutations caused by advanced information technologies. (See full descriptions of all works below.)

The Video Viewing Room series presents recent video works and archival recordings. The online program revives The Kitchen's series of the same name that existed between 1975 and the early 1990s, then as a dedicated space within its buildings. Functioning at first as a resource facility where visitors could watch their own tapes or view videos from The Kitchen's archive and collection, in fall 1978 the Video Viewing Room began to feature curated programs of artists' videos. Now, this newer iteration offers a version of The Kitchen untethered from any specific location, with works viewable everywhere.

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Spring 2024 Video Viewing Room Program Descriptions

Tsedaye Makonnen: Astral Sea: Views
The Kitchen On Screen
Premieres April 25, 2024

From interventions alongside ships in Venice to a processional against the backdrop of The Met's *Africa & Byzantium* exhibition, this Video Viewing Room presentation blooms a meditation on resilience, memory, and migration. Drawing on her Ethiopian heritage and informed by critical discourses around ecological extraction, xenophobia, and the socio-political devaluation linked to Blackness, Tsedaye Makonnen's work champions the narratives of migration survivors and those impacted by its conditions.

Astral Sea not only showcases the artist's commitment to exploring discourse about art and migration through site-sensitive performances, installations, and films, but also stands as a poignant reflection on her journey as an artist deeply rooted in Black feminist theory, ethical social practice, and a personal history intertwined with the legacies of refugees. Created by Makonnen as artist-curator, mother, and birthworker of Ethiopian descent, the work invites viewers into a powerful exploration of identity, displacement, and collective healing.

Tsedaye Makonnen: *Astral Sea: Views* is organized by **Tsige Tafesse**, 2023-24 Curatorial Fellow.

Tsedaye Makonnen is a multidisciplinary artist, curator, researcher and cultural producer. Tsedaye's practice is driven by Black feminist theory, firsthand site-specific research, and ethical social practice techniques, which become solo and collaborative site sensitive performances, objects, installations, and films. Her studio primarily focuses on intersectional feminism, reproductive health and migration. Tsedaye's personal history is as a mother, the daughter of Ethiopian refugees, a doula, and a sanctuary builder.

In 2019 Tsedaye was a Smithsonian Artist Research Fellow and staged two interventions at the Venice Biennale titled *When Drowning is the Best Option feat. Astral Sea I*. In 2021 her light sculptures were acquired by the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art for their permanent collection, and she published a book titled *Black Women as/and the Living Archive*. Tsedaye is the recipient of a permanent large-scale public art commission for the city of Providence. In the Fall of 2022 she was invited to perform at the Venice Biennale for Simone Leigh's *Loophole of Retreat: Venice* and was Clark Art Institute's Futures Fellow. In Fall 2023, Tsedaye exhibited in The Metropolitan Museum of Art's *Africa and Byzantium* with textile collaboration with Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop; in *Ethiopia at the Crossroads* at the Walters Art Museum, where she is also the guest curator of contemporary works; in Bard Graduate Center's *SIGHTLINES on Peace, Power, and Prestige*; and in UT Austin's *If we are here*. This year, in collaboration with DC Public Libraries, they are recent recipients

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of the Library of Congress Connecting Communities Digital Initiative Award for Documenting the Ethiopian Communities of DC. Additionally, she has been commissioned to perform for MetLiveArts for the *Africa and Byzantium* exhibit, returning to Clark Art Institute as a research fellow, and much more. She is currently represented by Addis Fine Art. She lives between DC and London with her partner and children.

Lynn Hershman Leeson: *Desire Inc.*

The Kitchen On Screen

Premieres May 13, 2024

Across media that include photography, collage, sculpture, video, performance, and interactive installations, Lynn Herman Leeson has addressed issues of identity construction and the conflicting complexities of a culture entrenched in and obsessed with technology and artifice. This literacy in the human condition, data, and technology, as well as our relationship to it, has been a hallmark of the artist's extraordinary body of work. Taking its title from the artist's 1988 work *Desire Inc.*, in which the artist appropriates the format of the TV commercial to emphasize the media's role in human desire, this presentation explores the artist's radical engagement with television bringing together four distinct works from across her five-decade career. Selected in collaboration with the artist and broadcast together for the first time, *Commercials for Forming a Sculpture Drama in Manhattan* (1974), *A Commercial for Myself* (1978), *Test Patterns* (1979), and *Desire Inc.* (1988) will be online On Screen through June 16, 2024.

Lynn Hershman Leeson: *Desire Inc.* is organized by **Robyn Farrell**, Senior Curator.

Lynn Hershman Leeson has been internationally acclaimed for her art and films. Hershman Leeson is widely recognized for her innovative work investigating issues including: the relationship between humans and technology, identity, surveillance, and the use of media as a tool of empowerment against censorship and political repression. Hershman Leeson is a recipient of many awards including a Siggraph Lifetime Achievement Award, Prix Ars Electronica Golden Nica, and a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship. And in 2022, she was awarded a special mention from the Jury for her participation in the 59th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia. In 2023, Pratt Institute of Art in NY awarded her with an Honorary Doctorate. Creative Capital awarded her with their Distinguished Artist Award in 2023. SFMOMA acquired the museum's first NFT from Hershman Leeson in 2023. Her six feature films—*Strange Culture*, *Teknolust*, *Conceiving Ada*, *!Women Art Revolution: A Secret History*, *Tania Libre*, and *The Electronic Diaries*—are in worldwide distribution. Artwork by Lynn Hershman Leeson is featured in many public collections including the Museum of Modern Art, and The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

Los Cybrids: *La Raza Techno-Critica*

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Premieres June 20, 2024

A "Cybrid" is a Latinx digi-tech artist from an ethnic demographic disproportionately under-represented in the cyberworld. As a junta, Los Cybrids: *La Raza Techno-Critica* artists René García, John Jota Leños, and Praba Pilar instigate a critical dialogue around access and desire in cyber-culture.

Los Cybrids employ performance, "burla," and multimedia as engagements and provocations that destabilize the passivity of equal-access-to-all within overarching social, cultural, and environmental consequences of Information Technologies in the late 90's and early 2000's. Emerging from the bilingual poetics of their 1999 manifesto, *Cybridnetics: an Ese from the Other Side of the Digital Divide*, this Video Viewing Room presents video recordings and archival material from the artists' archives to consider the relationships between critique, performance, colonialism, and surveillance.

Los Cybrids: *La Raza Techno-Critica* is organized by **Angelique Rosales Salgado**, Curatorial Assistant.

René García explores current political themes through performance, video, audio, installations and public art. A Mexican artist born in California, his current project, *Therapeutic Violence*, explores the multiple dimensions of U.S. colonialist ideology as it capitalizes on the terrified and terrorized human body. He is a founding member of the San Francisco Mission school collaborative Los Cybrids: La Raza Techno-Critica that was active from 1999-2004. His polymedia-performance *9-1-BUY-1* evokes the tragic day of 9/11/2001 to humorously explore the launch of a new product known as "Terrorism" and a new industry branded "Homeland Security."

John Jota Leños is an award-winning Mestizo (Xicano/Italian/Chumash) new media artist using animation, documentary, and performance focusing on the convergence of memory, social space, and decolonization. Leños' animation work has been shown internationally at festivals and museums including Sundance Film Festival, Cannes Short Film Corner, the Morelia International Film Festival, Mexico, San Francisco International Festival Animation, the KOS Convention 07, and the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego. Leños has also exhibited at the Whitney Biennial in New York, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Leños is a Guggenheim Fellow in Film, Creative Capital Foundation Grantee, a United States Artist Fellow and has been an artist in residence at the University of California, Santa Barbara in the Center for Chicano Studies, Carnegie Mellon University in the Center for Arts in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Praba Pilar is a diasporic Colombian artist disrupting the overwhelmingly passive participation in the contemporary 'cult of the techno-logic.' Over the last two decades Pilar has presented cultural productions integrating performance art, live work, digital works, video, electronic installations, radio programming, street theater, invisible theater, websites and writing. These projects have traveled widely to museums, galleries,

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universities, performance festivals, conferences, public streets, political meetings, bookstores, bars, and radio airwaves around the world.

Shaped by resistance to the colonial project throughout the Americas, Pilar focuses her solo practice on projects challenging complex state/corporate systems of control, domination and death. She is now in the midst of the *Techno-Tamaladas*, a multi-disciplinary project of food, generosity, conviviality and dialogue on technologies of life of the Americas. She is the Co-Director of the Hindsight Institute, is embarked on an all-encompassing post-human/microbiomial multi-species journey with Anuj Vaidya titled *Larval Rock Stars*; Co-Directs the *Bioarts Ethical Advisory Komission*, is very active in the Legal, Ethical, Societal and Libidinal implications (LESLi) aesthetic oversight approval committee of the World Congress on New Reproductive Technology Arts, and collaborates extensively on one-time events.

Funding Support and Credits

Video Viewing Room was initiated with the support of the NYC COVID-19 Response and Impact Fund in The New York Community Trust; annual grants from Lambent Foundation Fund of Tides Foundation and Howard Gilman Foundation; and in part by public funds from New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council and New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

The Kitchen's programs are made possible in part with support from The Kitchen's Board of Directors, The Kitchen Leadership Fund, and the Director's Council, as well as through generous support from The Amphion Foundation, Inc., Bloomberg Philanthropies, The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, The Cowles Charitable Trust, Joseph and Joan Cullman Foundation for the Arts, Inc., Ford Foundation, Howard Gilman Foundation, The Harkness Foundation for Dance, Marta Heflin Foundation, Lambent Foundation Fund, a fund of Tides Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Mertz Gilmore Foundation, Open Society Foundation, The Jerome Robbins Foundation, Ruth Foundation For The Arts, The Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, Simons Foundation, and Teiger Foundation; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and in part by public funds from New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council and New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

About The Kitchen

Founded in 1971 as an artist-driven collective, The Kitchen today reaffirms and expands upon its originating vision as a dynamic cultural institution that centers artists, prioritizes people, and puts process first. Programming in a *kunsthalle* model that brings together live performances, exhibition-making, and public programming under one roof, The Kitchen empowers its audiences and communities to think creatively and

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radically about what it means to shape a multivalent and sustainable future in art. The Kitchen seeks to cultivate and hold space for wild thought, risky play, and innovative and experimental making, encouraging artists and cultural workers alike to defy boundaries and sending them into the world to remake art history and catalyze creative change.

Among the artists who have presented significant work at The Kitchen are Muhal Richard Abrams, Laurie Anderson, ANOHNI, Robert Ashley, Charles Atlas, Kevin Beasley, Beastie Boys, Gretchen Bender, Dara Birnbaum, Anthony Braxton, John Cage, Lucinda Childs, Julius Eastman, Philip Glass, Leslie Hewitt, Darius James, Joan Jonas, Bill T. Jones, Devin Kenny, Simone Leigh, Ralph Lemon, George Lewis, Robert Longo, Robert Mapplethorpe, Sarah Michelson, Tere O'Connor, Okwui Okpokwasili, Nam June Paik, Charlemagne Palestine, Sondra Perry, Vernon Reid, Arthur Russell, Cindy Sherman, Laurie Spiegel, Talking Heads, Greg Tate, Cecil Taylor, Urban Bush Women, Danh Võ, Lawrence Weiner, Anicka Yi, and many more.

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