THE KITCHEN

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

Fall 2026

The Kitchen presents

Instrument Object
by Josiah McElheny

September 10—November 7, 2026

*Instrument Objec*t, an exhibition by New York-based artist Josiah McElheny, explores the intersection of sound, movement, and visual form and pays homage to visionary musicians and composers from across the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In works of sculpture, painting, installation, and drawing, ranging from 2014 to 2026 and never before exhibited in New York City, McElheny translates the work of ten musical artists into visual form. The exhibition is an experiment in animating the inanimate through sound and movement: transforming The Kitchen's loft space into an installation of image, sound, motion, and colored light, where works unpredictably activate, emerging from silence to emanate music from within, hum with the sound of motor gears, or encourage visitors to imagine an invisible harmony.

McElheny draws on the legacies of pioneering voices with historical ties to The Kitchen such as Pauline Oliveros, Lucia Dlugoszewski, Julius Eastman, and John Cage, as well as other musical luminaries including, Milford Graves, David Grubbs, Big Mama Thornton, Joe McPhee, Wes Montgomery, and Sun Ra. Across these works, McElheny creates visual allegories for fundamental investigations within experimental music: the mysterious nature of vibration, the relationship of rhythm to the circulatory system of the human body, and connections between freedom and unpredictability within improvisation.

Josiah McElheny: *Instrument Object* is organized by Robyn Farrell, Senior Curator and Director of Curatorial Affairs with support from Fernanda Escalera Zambrano, Operations Manager, Angelique Rosales-Salgado, Assistant Curator. Production by David Riley, Senior Production & Exhibitions Manager, and Tassja Walker, Production Supervisor.

Performance: Zeena Parkins

September 10th, 2026
The Kitchen at Westbeth

after Fire Fragile Flight

How did I manage to miss the work of Lucia Dlugoszewski? Having devoted a good part of my career in collaboration with choreographers making live music for dance, it's surprising that I knew so little about her. It was Josiah, noting the affinity between us, who pointed me directly in front of her and inspired me to respond to her work.

At first, I worked on a cover version of *Fire Fragile Flight*, transposing the chamber orchestra composition for my self-made electric harp, but I quickly realized the ridiculousness of the scheme. Instead, in the spirit of *Instrument Object*, I present tonight a translation. This new composition is honoring the original's unique orchestration and "leap-points triggering startled-juxtapositions," resonating with her intuitive sound rituals and moments of sensation(al) transmissions.
—Zeena Parkins

Bio
Zeena Parkins, Detroit born, New York based artist, celebrated for her unparalleled rigor and boundless creativity. Renowned for redefining the harp's sonic potential, she combines innovative technique with groundbreaking design, crafting both extended acoustic methods and custom electric instruments. Currently Parkins, in collaboration with artists Blinn & Lambert, has a work, *Current Place* installed in Harvestworks Art and Technology building on Governors Island, in their *In Other Forms* show.

"Her innumerable ways of articulating the harp create a complex unity in parallel with her diverse voicings of the electronics. Such animated symbiosis is characteristic of her brilliant musicality throughout."
—John Bischoff

Concert: Wendy Eisenberg and David Grubbs

September 11th, 2026
The Kitchen at Westbeth

Wendy Eisenberg and David Grubbs first performed as a duo in 2023, at which point it became obvious that Wendy should join David and Bonner Kramer in the then-nascent group SQUANDERERS. In a recent cover feature on Wendy in *The Wire*, David described SQUANDERERS as "a dream of a trio, something that I always hoped I might find in an improvising group." Wendy's take on the group from the same feature: "It's the most beautiful mermaid shit I've ever heard in my life." Tonight's performance is a rare opportunity to hear these guitarists in a duo setting, one in which David's compositions for Josiah McElheny's sound paintings may find their way into the evening's flow.

Bios

Wendy Eisenberg is an improviser and songwriter who uses guitar, pedals, the tenor banjo, the computer, the synthesizer, and the voice. Their work spans genres, from jazz to noise to avant-rock to delicate songs. Though often working solo as both a songwriter and improviser, they also perform in the rock band Editrix, and in endless other combinations of their heroes and peers including Bill Orcutt, Caroline Davis, Ryan Sawyer, and John Zorn.

David Grubbs has released sixteen solo albums and was a member of the groups Gastr del Sol, Bastro, and Squirrel Bait. He has performed with Tony Conrad, Pauline Oliveros, Luc Ferrari, Susan Howe, Will Oldham, the Red Krayola, and many others. Grubbs's books include *Good night the pleasure was ours, The Voice in the Headphones, Now that the audience is assembled, and Records Ruin the Landscape: John Cage, the Sixties, and Sound Recording.*

Dialogue: Josiah McElheny, Raven Chacon, Jennie C. Jones, George Lewis, and Fred Moten

October 1st, 2026
Giorno Poetry Systems

The artist Josiah McElheny convenes the composer Raven Chacon, the artist Jennie C. Jones, the composer George Lewis, and the writer Fred Moten to think about music and limb independence. To do that, each person has prepared some tracks to play and listen to together, and discuss.

Bios
Josiah McElheny (b. 1966, USA) is an artist. Recent solo exhibitions include The Kitchen in New York (2026); LACMA in Los Angeles (2024); Cantor Arts Center in Paolo Alto (2019); and Moody Center for the Arts in Houston (2018). He was awarded the MacArthur Fellowship in 2006. He lives in New York.

Raven Chacon (b. 1977, Navajo Nation) is a composer, performer, and installation artist. He has exhibited or performed at LACMA, the Whitney Museum, Borealis Festival, SITE Santa Fe, Swiss Institute Art, among many others. Chacon is the senior composer mentor for the Native American Composer Apprentice Project (NACAP). He was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Music in 2022 and the MacArthur Fellowship in 2023. He lives in upstate New York.

Jennie C. Jones (b.1968, USA) is an artist. Recent solo exhibitions include the Pulitzer Arts Foundation in St. Louis (2025); the Roof Garden Commission at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (2025); the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, NY (2022); and the Arts Club of Chicago (2020). She lives in in Hudson, NY.

George Lewis (b. 1952, USA) is a composer, musicologist, and trombonist. He has been a member of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM) since 1971 and is the author of *A Power Stronger Than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music* (2007), and the co-editor (with Harald Kisiedu) of *Composing While Black: Afrodiasporic New Music Today* (2023). Lewis is the Edwin H. Case Professor of American Music at Columbia

University and Area Chair in Composition in the Department of Historical Musicology. He was awarded the MacArthur Fellowship in 2002. He lives in New York.

Fred Moten (b. 1962, USA) is a critic and poet. His books include *In the Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition* (2003), *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study* (with Stefano Harney, 2013), *Black and Blur* (2017), *Stolen Life* (2018), *The Universal Machine* (2018), *All Incomplete* (with Stefano Harney, 2021), and *Perennial Fashion Presence Falling* (2023), among others. He is Professor in the Departments of Performance Studies and Comparative Literature at NYU and was awarded the MacArthur Fellowship in 2020. He lives in upstate New York.

Family Program: Cecilia Lopez
co-presented with Artists & Mothers

October 3rd, 2026
The Kitchen at Westbeth

The Kitchen welcomes families of all ages to join us for artmaking programs across 3 Saturdays this fall. Lead by The Kitchen's Teaching Artist, Rosed Serrano, families will create kaliedoscopes inspired by Josiah McElheney's multimedia scupltures. Inspired by the light, color, and shapes of McElheney's work, participants will create a new univers for themselves through their kaliedoscopes.

Family Programs are free with registration. Sign up for a timeslot and come anytime within that slot. Family Programs are on Saturdays September 19, 26, and October 3 with timeslots at 11AM and 12:30PM.

The program on October 3 will be co-presented by Artists and Mothers and feature a performance from Cecilia Lopez using RED a large-scale speaker-wire handwoven electronic instrument created Lopez that investigates interactions with unstable acoustic feedback systems.

Bios
Artists & Mothers is a nonprofit organization with a mission to support artists who identify as mothers at an inflection point in their careers. Awarded to New York City-based artists with children under the age of three, grantees receive $25,000 to subsidize a year of childcare with the provider of their choice.

Cecilia Lopez is a composer, improviser, and multimedia artist from Buenos Aires, currently based in New York City. Her interdisciplinary practice spans performance, installation, and sound sculpture, frequently incorporating custom electronic sound systems and original devices.

Her work has been presented internationally at venues including the Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, Center for Contemporary Arts (Vilnius), Kunstnernes Hus (Oslo), and the XIV Cuenca Biennial. In the U.S., she has been featured at the Guggenheim Museum, MASS MoCA, The Kitchen, Lincoln Center, Issue Project Room, and Roulette

Intermedium.

Lopez has received support from the New York State Council on the Arts, Jerome Foundation, Foundation for Contemporary Arts, and a Civitella Ranieri Fellowship. She holds an MFA in Music/Sound from Bard College (Milton Avery Graduate School) and an MA in Composition from Wesleyan University. Her collaborators include Zeena Parkins, Ingrid Laubrock, Carrie Schneider, John Driscoll, and Carmen Baliero.

Rosed Serrano (she/her) is a poet—born and raised in the Bronx—living, working, and creating in New York. Currently, she is a PhD candidate in English and Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies at the University of Pennsylvania.

Reading Group: Matthew Perloff

October 21st, 28th & November 4th, 2026
The Kitchen at Westbeth

The Kitchen welcomes artists, readers, and art-enthusiasts to participate in a reading discussion series inside of its current exhibition, Josiah McElheny's *Instrument Objec*t. Led by The Kitchen's Teaching Artist Matt Perloff, participants will actively engage in three reading discussion workshops centered around the following questions: How do we look at art? How is art in conversation with the past, present, and future? Partcipants will read and discuss creative ideas, meet peers in the arts, and learn about experimental art.

Readings will include excerpts from: Jenny Odell's *How To Do Nothing*, David Grubbs's *Records Ruin The Landscape*, Robin D.G. *Kelly's Freedom Dreams*, as well as readings, images, videos, and recordings highlighted in the exhibition.

The reading group is free with registration and participants are encouraged to attend all three workshops. Workshops take place in person on Wednesdays from 6-8PM October 21, 28, and November 4.

Bio
Matthew Perloff (he/they) is a Brooklyn-based educator working in New York City public schools and museums for over a decade. Perloff's education practice is grounded in community with a sharp focus on making the arts accessible to all.

Record Release: *From Red Black to Black, from Blue Black to Black* by David Grubbs

November 6th, 7pm
Record Grouch (986 Manhattan Avenue, Brooklyn)

To celebrate the release of David Grubbs's CD *From Red Black to Black, from Blue Black to Black* on Corbett vs. Dempsey, Greenpoint's Record Grouch will host a solo lap steel performance by Grubbs followed by a conversation with John Corbett. The album is comprised of material from six of Grubbs's soundtracks for artworks by Josiah McElheny.

Symposium: Improvisation, Archive and Homage

November 7th & 8th, 2026
The Kitchen at Westbeth

The culminating event of Instrument Object, a two-day symposium, *Improvisation, Archive and Homage* featuring musicians, composers and MacArthur Fellows Claire Chase, Mary Halvorson, Ikue Mori, Tomeka Reid, Jason Moran, and Craig Taborn, moderated by Josiah McElheny and music historian and gallerist, John Corbett. A closing reception for the exhibition, hosted by the MacArthur Foundation and honoring symposium participants, will be held in the evening on November 7.

This program is supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, as part of *Defying Boundaries: MacArthur Fellows at 45.* This moment calls for creative courage. For 45 years, MacArthur Fellows have expanded the boundaries of possibility by questioning conventions, crossing disciplines, and driving collective progress. Throughout 2026, the Foundation is celebrating the groundbreaking work of the Fellows and inspiring public dialogue through a series of nationwide events and conversations. Learn more at macfound.org/fellows-45.

Schedule

Saturday November 7
2 PM to 5 PM
The Archive's Relationship with the Improvised Music
With Claire Chase, Ikue Mori, Tomeka Reid and Mary Halvorson, John Corbett and Pamela Sneed.

- Pamela Sneed reads poetry by Joe McPhee.
- Performance by Claire Chase and Ikue Mori.
- Conversation between John Corbett, Ikue Mori and Claire Chase about the archive and its relationship to recordings.
- Performance by Tomeka Reid and Mary Halvorson.
- Conversation between John Corbett, Tomeka Reid and Mary Halvorson about the archive when nothing is recorded.

5 to 7 PM
Public reception hosted by the MacArthur Foundation.

Sunday November 8
2 to 6 PM
The relationship of Homage to Improvised Music
With Jason Moran, Claire Chase, Ikue Mori, Tomeka Reid, Craig Taborn, and Mary Halvorson, John Corbett and Pamela Sneed.

• Jason Moran and Claire Chaise perform a piece by Pauline Oliveros.
• Conversation between John Corbett, Jason Moran and Claire Chase about homage.
• Ikue Mori, Craig Taborn, Tomeka Reid and Mary Halvorson perform a work dedicated to Pauline Oliveros.
• Conversation between John Corbett, Craig Taborn, Ikue Mori, and Mary Halvorson about the idea of homage and Pauline Oliveros.
• Closing conversation between John Corbett and Josiah McElheny about the overall themes of the two-day symposium.
• Pamela Sneed reads poetry by Joe McPhee.

Bios
Described by The New York Times as "the most important flutist of our time," **Claire Chase** is a musician, interdisciplinary artist, and educator. Passionately dedicated to the creation of new ecosystems for the music of our time, Chase has given the world premieres of hundreds of new works by a new generation of artists. She is a MacArthur Fellow, a Professor of the Practice in the Department of Music at Harvard University, and was the Debs Creative Chair at Carnegie Hall in the 2022-23 season. In 2013, Chase launched the 24-year project Density 2036. Density reimagines the solo flute literature over a quarter-century through commissions, performances, recordings, education, and community-focused approach to cultural production.

John Corbett is a writer, curator, and producer based in Chicago. He is co-owner of Corbett vs. Dempsey, an art gallery and record label. Corbett is the author of several books, including *A Listener's Guide to Free Improvisation* (2016), *Vinyl Freak: Love Letters to a Dying Medium* (2017), and *Pick Up the Pieces: Excursions in Seventies Music* (2019). As an essayist and reviewer, Corbett has written for numerous academic and commercial publications, including DownBeat, The Wire, The Chicago Reader, The Chicago Tribune, NKA, Bomb, LitHub,

and Lapham's Quarterly. His first novel, *Want List*, is forthcoming. Corbett's work as a music producer includes his label, the Unheard Music Series (1999-2006), and Corbett vs. Dempsey, an ongoing label issuing CDs of new and historical jazz, experimental music, and improvised music. As a curator, Corbett has been involved in many exhibitions at museums including the Smart Museum of Art, the Tang Teaching Museum, Sullivan Galleries, the School of the Art Institute, Chicago, and the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia. Corbett taught at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago from 1988 to 2014.

Mary Halvorson is a Brooklyn-based guitarist, composer and recording artist for Nonesuch Records. Her distinctive sound and innovative approach to her instrument have earned her widespread recognition, including a 2019 MacArthur Foundation fellowship, featured performances at venues and festivals all over the world and Guitarist of the Year honors from the DownBeat Critics Poll, International Critics Poll and the Jazz Journalist Association's JJA Awards. When not leading her own ensembles, she can be heard in a wide variety of creative partnerships and on more than 75 releases as a co-leader or sidewoman. Her latest release, *About Ghosts*, the third to feature her sextet Amaryllis, was selected as the best new jazz album of 2025 by NPR Music, Slate and the 20th Annual Francis Davis Jazz Critics Poll among others. And, her "beguiling and fascinating" (Kevin LeGendre, Jazzwise) collaboration with trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire, *Slo-Mo Neon Luminate Hoverings*, was just released in June.

Ikue Mori moved to New York in 1977 started playing drums joined the No Wave band DNA. In mid 80's started playing drum machines in the unlikely context of improvised music forged own sensitive signature style and involved in downtown improving community since. Ikue won the Distinctive Award for Prix Ars Electronics Digital Music category in 1999 and shortly after started using laptop computer to expand her vocabulary not only playing sounds but create and control the visual work as well. Received grant from the Foundation for Contemporary Arts in 2006. Named MacArthur fellowship in 2022. Recent live performance include collaboration with Joan Jonas at MoMA. Most recently CD/DVD "Enchanted and Delighted" music video album was released from Tzadik label.

Described as a "new jazz power source" by The New York Times, cellist and composer **Tomeka Reid** has emerged as one of the most original, versatile, and curious musicians in Chicago's bustling jazz and improvised music community over the last decade. Her

distinctive melodic sensibility, always rooted in a strong sense of groove, has been featured in many distinguished ensembles over the years. Reid released her debut recording as a band leader in 2015, with the Tomeka Reid Quartet, a vibrant showcase for the cellist's improvisational acumen as well as her dynamic arrangements and compositional ability. Reid is also a 2022 MacArthur Fellow and was a visiting professor at Dartmouth College from 2023-2025. In 2013, Reid launched the first Chicago Jazz String Summit, a three-day international festival of cutting-edge string players. 2026 will see its 12th iteration.

Jazz pianist, composer, and artist **Jason Moran** was born in Houston in 1975 and earned a degree from the Manhattan School of Music, where he studied with Jaki Byard. He was named a MacArthur Fellow in 2010, served as Artistic Director for Jazz at the Kennedy Center from 2021-2025, and currently teaches at the New England Conservatory. Moran is deeply invested in reassessing and complicating the relationship between music and language, and his extensive efforts in composition, improvisation, and performance are all geared towards challenging the status quo. His activity stretches beyond 15 solo recordings and performances with masters of the form including Charles Lloyd, Cassandra Wilson, and the late Sam Rivers. His multimedia tributes to Thelonious Monk, Fats Waller, and James Reese Europe have shifted the jazz paradigm.

Born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, **Craig Taborn** has been performing piano and electronic music in the jazz, improvisational, and creative music scene for over twenty-five years. As a soloist, bandleader, and sideman, Taborn brings a fearless and sophisticated approach to music making. He draws from musical traditions as varied as traditional and contemporary jazz, contemporary classical, experimental, electronic, rock, metal, and hip-hop. His constant experimentation in genre and style informs his own distinct musical intelligence and voice. With a precise touch and keen sensitivity to an instrument's capabilities, Taborn elicits distinct textures from the piano and electronic keyboard.

A rare artist of unusual depth and originality, he enhances musical collaborations and composition through his expansive exploration of sound, technique, and instrumentation. In 2025, Taborn became the recipient of the MacArthur Foundation Fellow Improvising Musician and Composer.

Funding Credits

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The Kitchen

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