

ΔW

Jeppu Ugelvig

GRAYCODE, jiiiiin, the ongoing collaboration between electroacoustic music composers Jinhee Jung (aka. jiiiiin) and Taebok Cho (aka. GRAYCODE), is a flight into the deep materialities of sound. Spanning the musical, the vibrational, and the datalogic, their compositions raise questions about how to represent the world through sound and vibration, phenomena almost entirely invisible to the human eye. Through sophisticated modes of sound synthesizing, processing, and representation, GRAYCODE jiiiiin strives to become "eyewitnesses of the unseen," urging a reflection about our understanding of nature in a time of data culture and global warming.

The duo's ambitious new exhibition at SONGEUN Art and Cultural Foundation is titled Δw. Δ, the Greek word for delta, is commonly employed in physics as a symbol to

represent change in a variable, while Δw connotes the change in wave. The exhibition presents the artists' findings of a rigorous field study of a particular site, the seaside cliffs of Seogwipo, located at the southernmost tip of Jeju Island. Employing various devices on-site, the duo amassed an elaborate data set by registering changes in vibration near and just below the sea surface, measured in the smashing of waves, the trembling of stone, wind speed, sea level, etc. Over the course of several days, the duo amassed a stunning 44,100 data sets, exhaustively accounting for the minute physical changes in the natural environment. These "raw actualities," as the artists refer to them, make up the compounds that is nature itself; a concept human beings can only understand in its symbolic totality.

At SongEun, the artists blast their findings into the gallery as data through a series of sculptures that double as high-functional speaker installation, able to transmit frequency into vibration. The unique architecture of SongEun's basement floor produces a sonically reflective and resonant environment similar to an *ocarina*, an ancient type of vessel flute. Here, the data from Seogwipo is not only made musical but refashioned anew by yet another environment, distinctly architectural and abundant in bouncing concrete surfaces. A dialogue is established between two moments, one synthesized and one happening, and will take a different quality depending on where the audience locates itself in the gallery space. GRAYCODE jiiiiin's conceptually lofty and technically avant-garde pursuit is characterized by the intense visceral nature of the actual sound of their productions: ultra-deep bass

humming, sharp percussive rhythms, and ecstatic clinging brings audiences into a percussive trance, where they are allowed to contemplate—or get lost in—the abstract nature of information *about* nature.

What GRAYCODE jiiiiin's auto-engineered and highly idiosyncratic synthesizing device lacks in scientific convention, it makes up for in philosophical ambition: how can the spatiotemporal ephemerality of the present moment be broken into properties that can be recorded, reconfigured, and preserved as data; that is, so as to recreate it somewhere else, in some other present? This issue contends with long-held philosophical debates, such as Martin Heidegger's idea of *Dasein*, through which he similarly sought to better understand the particular qualities of *being-in-the-world*. The artists' meticulous data harvesting and

processing treats this conundrum in a new materialist manner, where potentially everything, including time itself, has a materiality that can be registered, synthesized, amplified, and stored: total mediatization of nature. This understanding is a pressing one in a time of climate change—when nature, environment, and weather are increasingly only approached in scientific terms, valued for their quantifiable function in carbon cycles.

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2023

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