

locustprojects

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Locust Projects presents
PROJECT ROOM:
Juan Ledesma:
Rhythm of Speech

Exhibition Dates:
June 11-August 7, 2021

Related Programs:
OPENING RECEPTION
Thursday, June 10
6-8pm; masks and social
distancing required

Public Hours:
Wednesday to Saturday
11am – 5pm
APPOINTMENTS OPTIONAL
[Link to make appointments](#)

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Press kit and images:
[Available here](#)

LOCUST PROJECTS PRESENTS NEW AUDIOVISUAL INSTALLATION BY JUAN LEDESMA On view June 11-August 7, 2021



[Miami, FL] Locust Projects presents *Rhythm of Speech*, a new experimental audiovisual installation by Miami-based artist and musician Juan Ledesma. Ledesma's first solo presentation draws connections between diverse musical traditions and our collective lived experiences by exploring the musical potential of spoken accents. The exhibition opens to the public on June 11 from 11am-5pm by appointment, admission is free.

Ledesma's artistic practice is in constant dialogue with his music-making and seeks to identify how space, time, and sound can materially relate to one another through process-driven explorations. For *Rhythm of Speech*, the artist invited three Miami-based musicians to create a musical score based on a linguistic analysis of their respective accents. Although accents are commonly considered linguistic indicators of nationality, cultural upbringing, or socio-economic background, Ledesma aims to reframe language as a collective repository of sounds that can be used towards creative musical compositions.

The centerpiece of the installation is a video projected on a circular screen featuring the musicians candidly sharing their influential and formative experiences creating music. Drawing from childhood memories and moments of solitude, each musician describes music-making as an affectively potent and transcendent mode of expression. This is illustrated through the musical performance, which is interspersed throughout the video. Each musician's identity is profoundly entangled with their

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relationship to music. Ledesma's work addresses forms of collective exchange through language and simultaneously hones in on this phenomenon through shared acts of making and experiencing music.

Rhythm of Speech is also situated within the historical trajectory of experimental sound art, alluding to American composer Alvin Lucier's seminal sound art piece *I am sitting in a room*. In this artwork, Lucier records himself as he recites a text while sitting in an empty room. The recording is then played back into the room and then recorded again. Lucier continues to do this until his words become unintelligible and the only sounds that remain are the activated resonant frequencies in the room. In Ledesma's words, "the room found a way to speak." This analogy gestures towards the possibilities of sound becoming visually and physically tangible. In this case, the gallery housing Ledesma's installation was acoustically tuned and its resulting resonant frequencies were compared to that of the room Lucier's piece was created. Ledesma makes references to this through material sound-proofing interventions including hand-made wood panels, acoustic foam panels, and rugs.

In *Rhythm of Speech*, Ledesma offers unconventional and innovative ways to reconsider our relationship to sound and music. Through perceptive explorations of language and the embodied qualities of sound, the work contributes to the development of meaningful inquiries that fundamentally question who we are and how we relate to one another.

Text by: Angelica Arbelaez

Rhythm of Speech is funded in part by The Ellies, Miami's visual arts awards, presented by Oolite Arts. This project was selected as part of Locust Projects' Project Room Open Call by panelists Pepe Mar, sculptor, assemblage artist and Locust Projects alum (2017); Aaron T. Stephan, multimedia installation artist and Locust Projects alum (2017); and Elizabeth Withstandley, video installation artist and co-founder of Locust Projects.



Freedom Tower, Miami (2012), among others.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Juan Ledesma (b. 1988 Auckland, New Zealand) considers the resonant qualities of human experience found in music and audio recording through sculptural sound installations. The artist is interested in acoustic space and material culture, a pursuit which seeks to find manners in which elevated sonic and sculptural discourse can inform more colloquial musical traditions.

Selected exhibitions and performances include: Instrument, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA (2018); Performance for Parafiction, Oolite, Miami (2017); Milagros: Portal Culture,

Ledesma received his Bachelors in Fine Arts from Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL in 2012.

Photo: Juan Ledesma, photography by Mariano Cayo.

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ABOUT LOCUST PROJECTS

Founded by artists for artists in 1998, Locust Projects is Miami's longest running nonprofit alternative art space. We produce, present, and nurture ambitious and experimental new art and the exchange of ideas through commissioned exhibitions and projects, artist residencies, summer art intensives for teens, and public programs on contemporary art and curatorial practice. As a leading incubator of new art and ideas, Locust Projects emphasizes boundary-pushing creative endeavors, risk-taking and experimentation by local, national and international artists. We invest in South Florida's arts community by providing artists with project grants and empower creative careers by supporting the administrative work of being an artist through an onsite artist resource hub and access to pro bono legal services.

Locust Projects 2020-2021 exhibitions and programming are made possible with support from: The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; The Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners, The Children's Trust; Berkowitz Contemporary Foundation; The National Endowment for the Arts Art Works Grant; Hillsdale Fund; the Albert and Jane Nahmad Family Foundation; VIA Art Fund | Wagner Incubator Grant; Funding Arts Network; The Jorge M. Pérez Family Foundation at The Miami Foundation; Susan and Richard Arregui; Kirk Foundation; Miami Salon Group; Scott Hodes; Jones Day; Community Recovery Fund at The Miami Foundation and the Wege Foundation; and the donors to the Still Making Art Happen Campaign and Locust Projects Exhibitionist members.

ART HAPPENS HERE.