



a time to tear and a time to mend (installation view) (2022). Image courtesy of the artists, SUPERCOLLIDER, and Wönzimer. Photo: Ian Byers-Gamber.

to in the title by its Paiute name—as well as a system of interactive audio outputs that index the soundscapes of locations in the area. The lake is now dry, depleted by the Los Angeles Aqueduct and the city’s insatiable thirst.

This was a show about water, and the L.A. River’s troubled history complicates the work. The 51-mile river was channelized, or cast in concrete, by the Army Corps of Engineers in the mid-twentieth century in the name of flood control. It has since become a monument to natural-cultural contradictions—a desolate thoroughfare linking L.A.’s racially and economically divided neighborhoods and a drainage ditch for rainwater in a drought-afflicted region. The Indigenous Tongva once lived along the river’s flood-prone banks; today, the river is a technocratic reminder of the colonial encounter and its violent aftermath. Bon is clear-eyed in her efforts to repair the river. She is also, it must be mentioned, a member of the Annenberg family and the Vice President and Director of the Annenberg Foundation, an elite philanthropic organization. Metabolic Studio can only do what it does because of a rarified form of institutional access and substantial funding. The work represents an utterly timely paradox, pitched between privatization and radical possibility.

Bon is currently the only private individual authorized to divert L.A. River water, and her stated desire to dissolve this “private water right” into a new, equitable eco-commons will strike some as misguided or overly utopian.¹ *Bending the River*,

however, is deeply effective as both an actionable public project and a provocation. It is a compelling plan for a beleaguered waterway and an opportunity for audience members to ask themselves: What is the future made of? Who gets to decide what happens to public space?

1. Mitchell Lecture Series, “Lauren Bon - Mitchell Lecture Series,” YouTube, May 10, 2022, www.youtube.com/watch?v=kmDLWVVfGkA.

a time to tear and a time to mend at Wönzimer

**October 7–
November 18, 2022**

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: A time to be born and a time to die,...A time to weep and a time to laugh, A time to mourn and a time to dance...A time to tear and a time to mend.¹

This passage from Ecclesiastes has long been utilized to encapsulate the cyclical nature of life. Transcending its scriptural context to enter into the cultural lexicon, the verses embody a timeless existential truth: To honor the fullness of life, we must appreciate its peaks and valleys, its joys and its sorrows. As we continue to contend with the reverberations of the Covid-19 pandemic, the verses’ lessons resound, challenging us to process the manifold losses we have sustained and prompting new questions: Under late capitalism, in which ceaseless

labor is a prerequisite for survival, how do we make space for sadness?

In their exhibition *a time to tear and a time to mend*, artist and curatorial collective SUPERCOLLIDER breathe new life into the biblical adage, presenting a multimedia exploration of mourning. The event concludes their annual SciArt Ambassador program, which supports emerging L.A.-based women, nonbinary, and transgender artists in curating exhibitions at the intersection of art, science, and technology. The show experiments with digital and analog technologies, mining their potential to create healing spaces. Working within and beyond conventional notions of technology, the eight artists embrace an expansive understanding of the term, employing tools from videography to language as conduits of emotional confession and connection. Through this prismatic gaze on grief and the technologies through which it is transmuted, the immersive exhibition imagines a safe space to make peace with mourning.

In her performance video *Now a Room, Now a Landscape* (2020), artist Erin Cooney navigates a self-constructed labyrinth in the home in which she was isolated during Los Angeles’ “Safer at Home” order. Cooney attached GoPro cameras to her feet as she traversed the space, depicting the unique intimacies between our bodies and the places we inhabited during the lockdown. As Cooney walks through her domestic maze during the 23-minute recording, her gestures are cautious and calculated, mirroring

that time of earth-shattering solitude and uncertainty. Inviting us into this moment of mutual remembrance, Cooney's work blurs the lines between public and private realms, using technology to hold otherwise isolated grievances with communal care.

Situated at the center of the exhibition, Cara Levine's *Cried Listening to the News Again (2020)* amplifies Cooney's confessional tone. The work's title is spelled out in floating foil balloons suspended from the ceiling and loosely tethered to one another. The hovering words recall the pandemic headlines, radio bites, and daily losses that seemed both painfully real and incomprehensible, immediately facilitating an encounter with our collective grief. First installed in the courtyard of Levine's Hollywood apartment complex during the 2020 "Safer at Home" order, the work experiments with written language as an analog technology, utilizing text to broadcast intentional, public solidarity with those who share the space it occupies. As a relic of that initial gesture, Levine's installation characterizes the exhibition as a whole, the surrounding works orbiting and echoing its mournful sentiment.

To the right of Levine's balloons, Jody Zellen's video installation, *Photo News, January 1, 2019 - September 15th, 2022*, comprises an extensive montage of *New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times* headlines representing the pandemic and simultaneous political, social, and economic uprisings. Zellen transforms photographs culled from

the newspapers' International or World News sections by cropping them and pushing their color and contrast levels until they read as flat two-tone cutouts. The result is a series of heavily saturated images whose eerie hues highlight the surreal quality of the realities they reference. Snippets of headlines are overlaid atop them—phrases like "virus variant spread" and "despair deepens" clash with others, like "higher profits needed" and "return to normal life," demonstrating the inherent tension between millions of lives lost and unrelenting capitalist production. Zellen's cacophony of headlines gives voice to the uniquely fragmented realities we now inhabit, lending the cognitive dissonance of this time a comforting legitimacy.

An antidote to systems of power that would have us return to "normal" at all costs, these artists' unapologetic expressions of emotional disclosure and vulnerability function as powerful acts of resistance. Through their experimental use of varied technologies to metabolize their grief, the artists unearth novel spaces of connectivity within an increasingly disconnected society. Mapping the jagged terrain of our collective grief, they encourage us to process the seismic shifts we have undergone, offering radical permission to feel the sorrows of the present and to honor the many complex cycles of our lives.

1. Ecclesiastes 3:1–2, 4, 7, New International Version.

Maria Maea at Murmurs

October 28–
December 17, 2022

In her first solo exhibition at Murmurs, Maria Maea, a first-generation American artist of Mexican and Samoan descent, challenged the ritualized and repetitive ways of functioning within institutional structures by decentralizing herself as the sole author. The inclusion of her mother, Susan Tuilaepa, and brother, Martin Tuilaepa, in a relational exhibition-making process was deeply rooted in Indigenous ideas of community. Months before *All in Time* opened, Maea returned to her hometown of Long Beach, where together they wove palm fronds, a principal material found in each of the exhibition's artworks. While they worked, the three recorded their conversations about Samoa, where Maea's maternal family is from.¹ Through this collaboration, *All in Time* ultimately presented an alternative and explicitly political model for exhibition-making. In exploring her multifaceted identity in collaboration with her family, Maea demonstrated the importance of moving out of the institutional structures and labels that seek to constrain Brown artists while modeling how an artist might facilitate community healing.

The exhibition can be viewed as a practice in "re-Indigenization," which entails a transformation in ways of thinking and knowing

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