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# Oakland artist Evan Holm creates environments within galleries

By Kimberly Chun Published 7:33 pm, Wednesday, May 20, 2015



Photo: Derek Schoonmaker / Derek Schoonmaker

Artist Evan Holm hand-turned the oak and poplar wood wheels and used 600 pounds of flour for “Cloud | Clock,” one of two installations in “the river made no sound” at Vessel Gallery.

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Call it a close encounter of the artful kind. Watchers will probably remember Oakland artist **Evan Holm DJing** on “Submerged Turntable” amid mossy tree branches in SFMOMA’s atrium during its 2013 countdown to closure, much as they will recall kindred spirit Christian Marclay’s “The Clock” screening at the same time upstairs. Little wonder that the two have converged, unintentionally, at other points.

“He’s an artist I highly respect and he’s more advanced in his career than I am, so I try not to look too closely,” says Holm, 35, who snuck upstairs to watch “The Clock” when he wasn’t performing. “There was a deciding moment when I happened on one of his shows and he was showing sinotype cassette images, and they were absolutely beautiful, but it took me aback

because I had sketches in my sketchbook that were very similar that I hadn’t realized yet.

“That’s the thing with artists that they have to be careful about. Usually when I develop an idea, I do a quick Internet search to see if I’m treading too closely. There are thousands of ideas and no need to be redundant.” We spoke to Holm, who was preparing for “the river made no sound,” at Vessel Gallery, which includes two large installations, “Cloud | Clock” and “Forest Pools,” and musical performances, and was looking forward to building a piano drawing machine for the **Contemporary Jewish Museum**.

**Q: How do the installations work together?**

**A:** With “Forest Pools,” I’m bringing a small lake into the gallery—and a small forest. There are oak trees, some 10 feet tall, standing in small grove on top of a small lake. They speak to each other because with both my installations I’m trying to create natural phenomenon and a natural landscape. “Cloud | Clock” resembles sky and air and clouds.

**Q: No vinyl records are incorporated?**

**A:** With this show, I’ve shifted over to cassette tape. I think the next one will be a radio. I don’t think I’m going to tackle CDs—it’s a little too shiny for me. I don’t like the aesthetic of it.

**Q: The idea of timekeeping relates to both clocks and music.**

**A:** That’s what I like about music: it isn’t a static entity. Paintings and sculpture are frozen in a moment in time, but music is always changing.

**Q: Why are you compelled to create environments within galleries?**

**A:** I’ve grown up in cities and have been a lifelong city dweller, but I have a profound respect for the natural world. There’s so much beauty outside of cities. I feel like it’s part of my job to bring that back into the city and share it with my viewers.

*Kimberly Chun looks to the skies above the East Bay. E-mail: 96hours@sfchronicle.com Twitter: @kimberlychun*

**If you go**

**Evan Holm — the river made no sound:** Opening reception Thursday, May 21, 6-8 p.m., with musical performance by Holm, **Kiva Schweig**, Karuna Holm and Alexandra Stefans. Oakland Art Murmur reception June 5, 6-9 p.m., with musical performance by Holm, Alexandra Stefans and **Hanna Rifkin**. Artist talk June 13, 2 p.m. Exhibition runs through June 27. Gallery hours 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday and 3-9 p.m. first Fridays. Vessel Gallery, 471 25th St., Oakland. (510) 893-8800. [www.vessel-gallery.com](http://www.vessel-gallery.com).