

# Drum Listens to Heart

## Part III: Review

strong potential of making them start clapping as well, without having any further motivation than the will of adhering to the child's energy. This expansive capacity is mainly rooted in the feeling of tenderness that its sincere and innocent sound provokes, being in this sense a reminder of the fact that seemingly random activities can still have meaningful consequences.

**Self-support applause** /n  
**1** Performed individually during the process of dealing with a challenging situation or a hard task to be achieved. It is usually executed when no one else is around to witness it, although there are some cases in which there is an actual audience watching the scene (commonly when the person performing the applause is famous or is trying to accomplish something of public interest). **2** Linguistically speaking, this type of applause constitutes the external manifestation of an internal dialogue with oneself, specifically one in which the person is trying to internalize the idea that the final outcome of the situation could (and hopefully will) be favorable. For this reason, it is a highly intimate applause and, even if being

observed by other people, it portrays the vulnerability of both human struggle and optimism.

**Single applause** /n **1** One single clap or finger snap, executed by an individual right after having a good idea or realization. It tends not to have other recipients other than the person performing the applause, since it operates primarily as a quick physical reaction to a thought. In this sense, it is both abrupt and ephemeral in terms of its trigger, its actual sound and its immediate effects. **2** The strength of this type of applause lies on the fact that it may be the only visible manifestation of a potentially transformative experience, capable not only of portraying but also of inscribing that moment in the person's memory. **3** It comprises both surprise and excitement, although it is generally followed by subtle distrust due to our common skepticism around the existence of epiphanies or sudden flashes of inspiration.

**Silent applause** /adj & /n **1** Executed in sign language by raising both hands and shaking them in the air. **2** This type of applause is needed when there is deaf people among the partici-

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pants and/or when it is held in a place that demands absolute silence. During a formal event, it might also be performed to express approval or excitement without interrupting. **3** In certain cultural contexts, this gesture also denotes the imminence of a potentially exciting action. For being visually attractive when held among a large crowd, it is commonly used during public events like performances and festivals to raise the expectation of the audience and highlight its celebratory spirit.

**Snap applause** /n **1** Quiet type of applause executed by making finger snaps repeatedly during a certain event or public situation. It constitutes a strategy to show agreement, appreciation or encouragement without completely disrupting what is taking place. **2** This applause is mainly used for being immediate, informal and easily recognizable to its recipient, operating as some sort of instantaneous emotional bond between audience and performer. It's also useful to show affinity towards something without sounding overjoyed about it, specially eloquent during performances that touch serious topics one should not feel particu-

larly happy about.

**Spontaneous applause** /adj & /n **1** Genuine and highly subjective kind of applause that feels deeply necessary among the participants and reflects a great amount of approval, satisfaction and/or joy towards a certain situation. **2** Unplanned and sometimes unexpected, it tends to include screaming of different frequency and intensity, and it is usually performed standing despite the presence of chairs. **3** In most cases, this applause goes towards a recipient that knows the character of their audience well enough to successfully give them what they are expecting, regardless of whether they know each other in person or not. When the emotion is too strong, interrupting the action with the applause's loud noise might be seen as something inevitable and even imperative. **4** If received with sincere gratitude the applause reaffirms to its witnesses the power of what they consider valuable and creates an atmosphere of companionship that may remain in people's minds long after the actual event has concluded.

**Sufocated applause** /adj & /n **1** Type of applause that only exists briefly in the imagina-

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By Renata  
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*Drum Listens to Heart* is a three-part exhibition at the Wattis Institute, bringing together the work of multiple artists. The exhibition focuses on the different interpretations and approaches artists give the concept of percussion. Part III of the exhibition took place from January 17 to March 4, 2023. Part III, in comparison to the previous parts, felt more focused on percussion as a social act, rather than percussion as something within ourselves, or around us. Multiple artists present their own vision of how sound changes meaning depending on social contexts; for example, how applause conveys different emotions depending on the setting, the pause between the movement, and the expression of the person performing it.

As in Part I, the gallery space was divided into multiple sections, each one presenting a different vision of percussion as a social act. There were multiple references to sound as a catalyst for change, as well as to the spiritual properties associated with percussion and drumming. As we first enter the gallery we are faced with the installation *Basketball Installation, 1995*, by David Hammons, which presents the marks of a bouncing basketball covered in charcoal and dirt, a basketball hoop attached to a tree trunk placed on the gallery floor, and a basketball inside a ceramic pot placed in close proximity to the hoop. Hammons used dirt from Harlem (a historically Black neighborhood in New York) in order to create the marks in the gallery, making the viewer reflect on the role of African American athletes, specifically in basketball, and how through this sport that Black community has been able to take space in society. The marks visible on the gallery walls make us reminisce on how finding a voice and taking space in society has been a struggle for many groups of people throughout history.

As we move further into the exhibition we encounter the works of Consuelo Tupper-Hernández and Raven Chacon. Tupper-Hernández approaches this concept of percussion or sound as a social element through one of the most common percussive acts, applause. Tupper-Hernández created an “applause dictionary” which showcases multiple spreads with printed text mounted on the gallery walls. They describe different types of applause, such as the “applause of required repetition” and the “applause of simultaneously consensual and genuine response,” revealing how the simple action of applause can convey different emotions depending on the pause between each movement, the context in which the applause is being performed, and the motive behind the applause. For example, the “applause of required repetition” is described as “usually responsive to a series of brief and repetitive events that occur in a limited period of time, all of which demand (either implicitly or explicitly) an

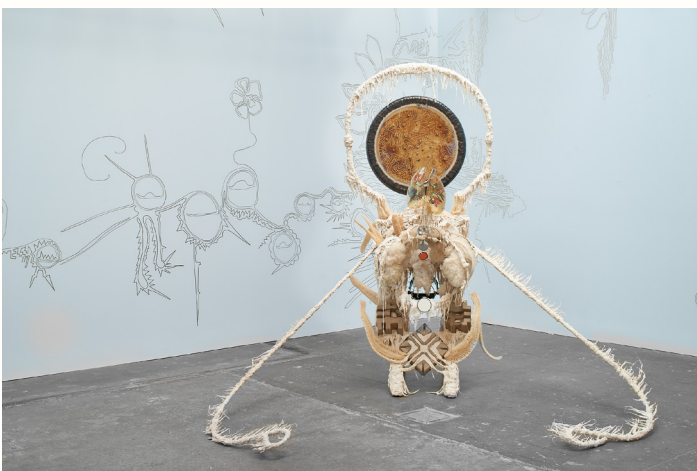
applause at their end.” Tupper-Hernández’s *Applause Dictionary*, 2020-2022, draws attention to the social context that gives sound meaning. This section of the exhibition also presents the work of Raven Chacon. The piece *American Ledger #1* proposes a new way of recording history. The work functions as a flag with a score that narrates the history of the United States and is meant to be performed as a sound piece. Chacon’s work considers how the way in which we communicate can change collective thought. By presenting American history through a score that is meant to be performed, the artist rethinks the way in which we interact with history; the score serves as a reminder that history is something that affects the present and that we should reflect on.

Next in the exhibition, we are presented with the works *Disease Thrower #4*, 2021, and *Tripa Chuca*, 2023, by artist Guadalupe Maravilla. The pieces are meant as a way for viewers to reflect on alternative methods of curing illness, but the drums, with all their different bits and pieces, reminded me more that sound can bring people together as well as serve as a type of comfort (in a sense this might be a way of healing). The different elements that make up the piece represent how a community is built by different individuals that share similar values and beliefs, and how they all come together. Maravilla’s works are made out of found materials that he took while retracing his journey from Central America to the United States as a migrant, such as baskets and conch shells. The materials used in the artworks also speak to this sense of healing and acceptance, coming to terms with identity, and in general making people reflect on where they come from and how that brings us together or drifts us apart.

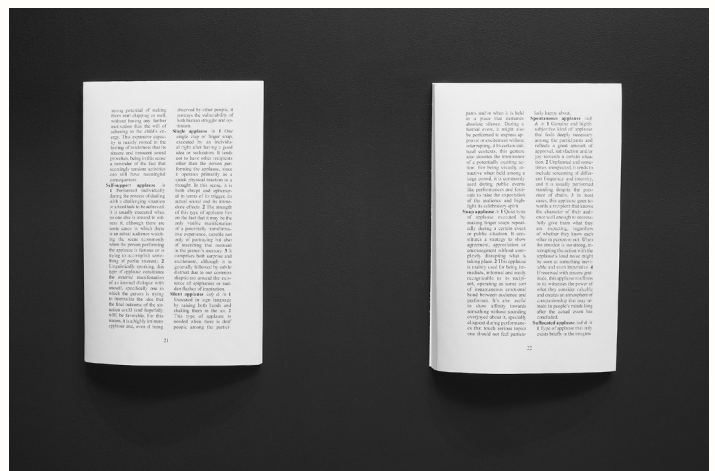
The final section of the exhibition departs slightly from the constant of sound as a social act. The works of Haegue Yang come into conversation with each other in order to create an environment that speaks to the spiritual value of sound and how many different cultures have used bells and percussion in spiritual practices. Even though this section of the exhibition might not seem to match with the rest by changing its focus to the spiritual value of sound, there is still a relation to community and society represented through sound, even if it is not in plain sight. Bells and sound as part of rituals and spirituality are also a way of bringing people together and building community by sharing values, traditions, and beliefs.

The third iteration of *Drum Listens to Heart* feels like a conversation about different ways in which percussion is interpreted, used, or ever-present in society, and how we understand it. The first two

sections of the exhibition really set this argument forward, but as we move through the exhibition, it seems like the conversation shifts toward the connection between sound and spirituality. It would be nice to see this concept introduced earlier in the exhibition and enter into conversation with more of the pieces presented. It was very interesting to see the different ways in which artists represent sound as a social act, from sound as a political statement, to the nuances and definitions of different types of applause. Overall, the exhibition made me reflect on how sound is all around us and can be interpreted differently depending on the context surrounding it, which was a satisfactory way of closing the three-part exhibition.



**Guadalupe Maravilla, Disease Thrower #4, 2019; Guadalupe Maravilla and Arlene Correa, Tripa Chuca, 2023 (wall); Drum Listens to Heart, 2022-2023; Installation view, CCA Wattis Institute. Courtesy of the artist, P.P.O.W., New York, and Robert S. Wennett and Mario Cader-Frech Foundation, Miami. Photo: Impart Photography**



**Consuelo Tupper Hernández, Applause Dictionary, 2020/2022; Drum Listens to Heart, 2022-2023; Detail view, CCA Wattis Institute. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Impart Photography.**



**David Hammons, *Basketball Installation*, 1995. *Drum Listens to Heart*, 2022-2023; Detail view, CCA Wattis Institute. Collection of Eleanor Heyman Propp. Photo: Impart Photography.**

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