



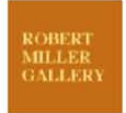
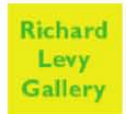
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- Kerry James Marshall
- Mark di Suvero
- "Who's Afraid of Jasper Johns?"
- Lisa Tan
- "Philip Guston: Works on Paper"
- "Decoys, Complexes, and Triggers: Feminism and Land Art in the 1970s"

Los Angeles

Kaoru Katayama

Berkeley

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"Portraying Food (and the Absence of It)"

San Jose

"Superlight"

Vancouver

"Everything Should Be Made as Simple as Possible, but Not Simpler"
"Idyl: Three Exhibitions"

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Jonathan Monk
- Bridget Riley
- Giuseppe Penone
- "Some Parisians Under Occupation"

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Kaoru Katayama

MC
6086 Comey Avenue
May 17–July 5

The Japanese-born Spanish artist Kaoru Katayama's first US solo exhibition features video works that explore the relationship between music, motion, and cultural dislocation. In *Technocharro*, 2004, a traditional dance troupe from the Salamanca region of Spain performs its routine to an incongruous sound track of techno music. Shot in a single, static take, the work is alternately humorous and uncomfortable. When the dancers' staccato steps finally find a groove, the onscreen DJ segues into a track dominated by a woman's orgasmic moaning. The dancers continue, smiling awkwardly, and the piece goes beyond lessons in culture clash to reveal folk dance's ritual codification of sexual roles. As a communal activity that subsumes individual identity in pulsing, collective movement, it's not so different from the wanton physical abandon of the dance club. *Sobremesa*, 2007, finds this unifying beat in a more intimate setting. A middle-aged couple gazes into each other's eyes while their knuckles tap out a synchronized beat on a dining-room table. The video cuts from a wide shot of the two, seated opposite each other, to alternating close-ups of their hands—an effect both conversational and hypnotic. By stripping music down to its essence, no more than the sound of human flesh on wood, the piece suggests how a shared rhythm can cement the relationship between two people, the basis of any community. Although Katayama's work often highlights difference, it ultimately reinforces the power of musical tradition as an underlying source of connection.

— Sharon Mizota



Technocharro, 2004, still from a single-channel color video with sound, 5 minutes 35 seconds.

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