

RYAN LEE

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RLProject

Mendi + Keith Obadike

Numbers Station [Furtive Movements]

September 10 – October 10, 2015

Performance: Wednesday, September 9, 5-6PM | Opening: Thursday, September 10, 6-8PM

RYAN LEE is pleased to announce the debut of *Numbers Station [Furtive Movements]*, a performance and installation of sound and objects by **Mendi + Keith Obadike** that employs the radical misuse of the data that reduces Black bodies to numbers.

Numbers Station [Furtive Movements] is the first in a new series of works originally conceived in 2010 that utilizes the structure of numbers stations— mysterious shortwave radio broadcasts used to transmit clandestine information by a single voice reading a series of cryptic numbers, punctuated by electronic sounds and music. Blurring the lines between music and information and between public and private communication, the *Numbers Station* series addresses the cerebral appeal made by data (a tally of bodies in official records) against the visceral reality of violence. Other *Numbers Station* projects engage with lynching statistics assembled by Ida B. Wells and numbers from slave ship manifests.

The exhibition is preceded by a 30-minute performance conducted at the gallery on the eve of the opening. Using a radio transmitter and tone generators, the artists will read a series of numbers culled from the self-reported Stop-and-Frisk data of 123 New York Police Department precincts. The numbers exist as the material, the subject, and the score of the work: the artists' voices and fragmented music tones are processed, broadcast, and played back in real-time during the performance and later as a recording for the duration of the exhibition.

Mendi + Keith Obadike make music, art, and literature. Mendi (b. 1973, Palo Alto, CA) and Keith (b. 1973, Nashville, TN) began working together in 1996, creating conceptual Internet art and text-sound work before introducing sound installation into their oeuvre. They developed an intermedia practice working on themes of social filters, citizenship, and coding. Their work has been commissioned by The Kitchen, New York; New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York; Whitechapel Art Gallery, London; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; and the Center for Black Music Research, Chicago, among other institutions. They have exhibited widely at Centro Cultural de Merida Olimpo, Merida, MX; Danish Film Institute, Copenhagen; International Center for Photography, New York; MIT's List Visual Art Center, Boston; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase; and The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York.

Concurrently on view in the main space is **Paul Henry Ramirez**. Forthcoming exhibitions include **Sandy Skoglund** and **Kakyong Lee**, both on view October 29-December 23, 2015.

For press inquiries, contact Courtney Willis Blair at 212-397-0742 or courtney@ryanleegallery.com.

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