

Today I will be describing Christine Sun Kim's artwork. My name is Laura Mauldin and I am a close friend of Christine's. In general, her work is an exploration into reclaiming sound. She has worked in a variety of media and engaged in a range of experiments. Some of her earlier works that explored her relationship with sound consisted of attempting to capture feedback and other sounds from speakers by placing paper, paint, and paintbrushes on top them, "recording" if you will, the patterns of sound as the brush bounced and vibrated across the surface. She then began to explore performance, including performances that had her working with and manipulating her own vocalizations. She will also be performing at the opening reception of "What Can a Body Do?" on Friday, October 26<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-7:30 pm in the Cantor Fitzgerald Gallery. In some of her latest works, she also returned to drawings and I am now going to describe the three drawings that are included in this show. She is calling these drawings "etudes" [pronounced A-toods]. An etude is defined as "a short composition for a solo instrument; intended as an exercise or to demonstrate technical virtuosity." There are three of them here, each one consisting of a large sheet of white paper, 40 inches by 40 inches. Centered on the lower half of the page of each of these is a drawing done in black ink. The drawing is quite small in relation to the page; it is only about 6 inches by 6 inches. The three drawings are displayed in a row, each one even with the next. The drawings consist of simple, clean lines that show arrows, words and letters, as well as the 'staff' used in musical notation. They bring together notational elements from different systems: graphic notation, musical notation, American Sign Language (ASL), and ASL "glossing." Glossing is a notation system used by linguists who study sign in order to capture patterns of signed utterances for analysis. One of the ways Christine links these systems is by noting that like sound or music, ASL cannot be fully captured on paper. For her, combining these various systems is an attempt to open up a new space of authority and ownership, and to offer an opportunity for rearranging hierarchies of information.

The etudes have no titles, so I will describe them from left to right. Starting on the left, the first drawing has an arrow drawn in a circular motion, looping around itself. A line is drawn underneath the circle, and extends across the page past it to the right. Underneath this line is a notation: In small, hand written letters it says "2H" followed by a colon. After this colon are sixteen lowercase, "p's" written in a slightly larger size. After this is the word "Presence" in quotation marks, all capital letters, and written in a slightly smaller size than the "p's." In ASL glossing systems, 2H refers to how a sign requires two hands to articulate. The all-capital word "presence" indicates the closest English translation for the concept articulated in a sign. Between these two glossing notations is the P that appears in musical notation, called the pianissimo. For musicians, the more Ps that appear, the quieter a sound is, hence the multiple p's indicate a point to where it is almost invisible or silent. The motion of the arrow follows the movement of both hands, referencing the sign for "presence." it could mean, "my presence is minimal" or "I'm not here" or the like.

The next drawing has is a symmetrical image. In the center are a series of 5 crescendo symbols, arranged in a vertical line. The crescendos, which indicate an increase in volume as well as directionality, are situated such that they open up to the right. Below this line of crescendos is the symbol called Sforzando, which has three letters: an S, f, and Z. In musical notation, it denotes an abrupt and fierce accent on a single sound or chord. On either side of this line are set of 'motion' arrows that zig zag back and forth. The sets of arrows mirror each other, pointing at one another. On top of these motion arrows are crescendo symbols, but these are much larger than those in the line down the middle, and are of equal size to the arrows. These crescendo symbols open into each other. All of this points to the central point in the drawing, suggesting a huge clash or perhaps an argument.

In the final drawing there are two staves, one is drawn above the other. The top staff has the word "FINISH" in all capital letters written above it, and to the right hand side. Underneath this staff, further to the left, is the word "THAT." Below this staff is a second one. Underneath it is a line with the word "positive" written in all capitals underneath that.