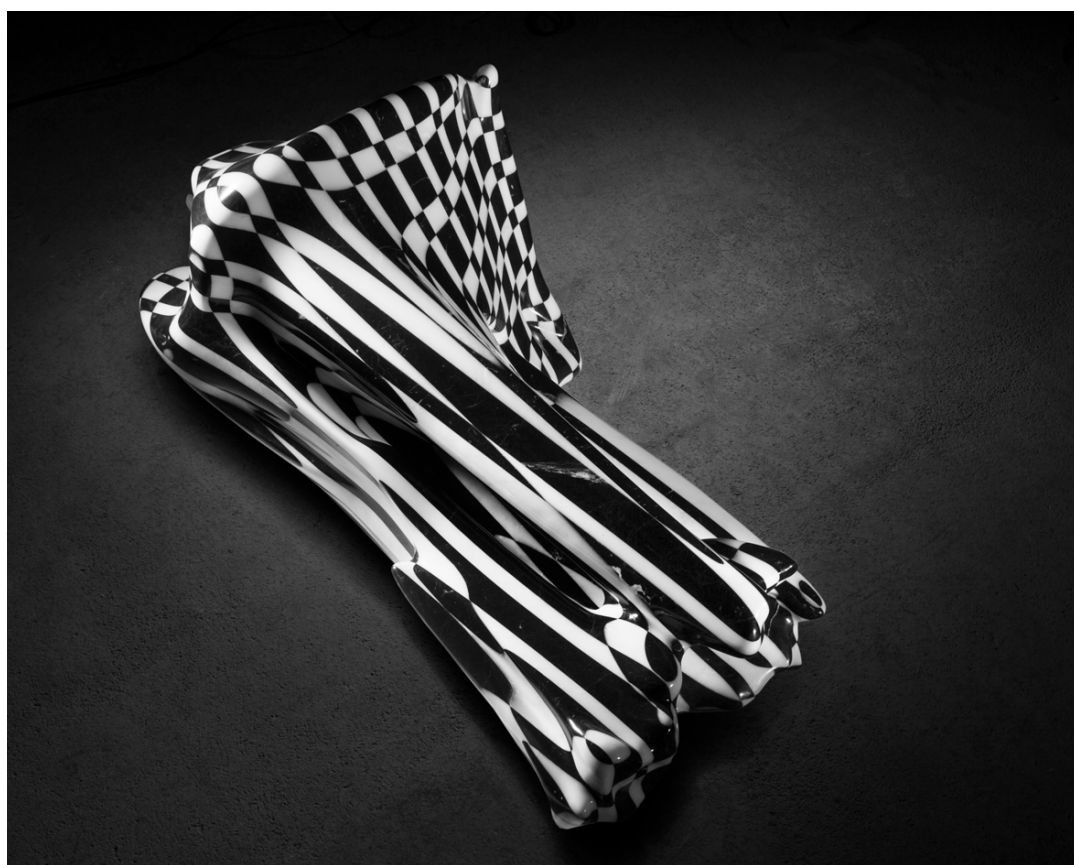


Press Release

Mat Chivers
Harmonic Distortion

Exhibition: 25th November 2016–28th February 2017
Private view: 24th November, 6–9pm
Performance: 24th November, 7pm and 8pm
Address: PM/AM, 259-269 Old Marylebone Road, London NW1 5RA



Harmonic Distortion, 2016
Mat Chivers
Nero marquina and thassos marble.
100 × 62 × 47 cm

PM/AM is delighted to present *Harmonic Distortion*, an exhibition of new work by the British artist Mat Chivers, his first solo show in London in more than five years. Chivers's presentation uses a range of media to explore relationships between environmental phenomena, the fundamental materials that constitute the world, and the contemporary production technologies that we use to understand and interact with them. *Harmonic Distortion* is comprised of an eponymous series of large-scale sculptures, a further series of wall-based works, and a performative piece inspired by Shibari, a ritualised form of erotic bondage that will incorporate drawing and original music.

The *Harmonic Distortion* works are large-scale sculptures that are formed from solid blocks of alternately black and white sections of marble. The patterns have a binary, pixel-like quality that alludes to how information is processed and transmitted digitally. The 'source code', as such, of these works are sets of data relating to the physics of wave and cloud formations, which have been cut into variations of the monochromatic marble blocks using robotic milling technology. The forms have been adapted from the cycles of a breaking wave, and from three-dimension data of a cumulus cloud supercell forming and disintegrating over time, which was captured by a meteorological balloon over the Congo Basin in Central Africa.

Whilst a weighty, seemingly earth-bound material, the origins of marble are paradoxically bound to the ocean and the myriad ecologies and lifeforms it supports. Marble is a metamorphic limestone formed from the calcium-rich exoskeletons of ocean dwelling invertebrates that have sunk to the seabed and been subjected to intense heat and pressure, a process which produces the solid stone. As such, marble is embedded within a conception of materials that transcends human comprehension and facility. After the initial robotic milling process, the sculptures are further formed by hand, a confluence of the digitality of their source data and the sensuality of materials that is writ in the artistic history of marble.

The black and white patterns of the sculptures are determinately geometric; however, the forms themselves are fluid and subject to the shifting interpretations of visual perception. Much like Bridget Riley's dizzying Op Art canvases in the 1960s, they are mesmerising, and effect an ambiguous quality to the works as their forms are illusionistically eroded by the potent geometry of the base material. This perceptual phenomenon acts as a metaphor for our contemporary digital moment, reflecting how technology gives us a way of seeing impossible elements in the world but simultaneously fragments it, leaving us unable to describe the totality of the relationships involved.

(It's Not) Black & White are a series of six wall-based works, each of which are titled after various global locations, for example, two works are named after the threatened ecosystems of Brazil and the Galapagos Islands, and further relate to wave and cloud data sets. Yearly graphs of ocean wave heights from these locations have been milled into slabs of cast sea-salt recycled from desalination plants. The data range is from the first year during which accurate measurements of wave heights started to be taken by scanning orbital satellites, and transmitted back to earth, up to the present day. Ocean swells are driven by low and high pressure atmospheric events (storm cells), which are themselves a result of thermal flux in global ocean currents. Wave height data is a key marker for understanding how climate change may be affecting extreme weather events – in these works, Chivers records global meteorological instability in geometric form. Further works in this series are digital visualisations of cyanotype prints, created by layering graphs which articulate the presence or absence of cloud cover for the various locations over light-sensitive paper, and exposing them to sunlight. The works reveal the tendency towards decreasing cloud cover, hence increased solar radiation reflection, symptomatic of climate shift and global warming.

A major component of the exhibition is the performance work *Circle Drawing*, influenced by Shibari, a traditional Japanese form of ritualised erotic bondage in which

a power exchange is enacted between the person being bound and the one binding (the Kinbakushi). Natural jute ropes are used to reform and accentuate aspects of the body of the tied individual, often leading to the body being suspended above the ground in a contorted posture using a network of weaves and knots. This particular work presents us with two female Shibari practitioners, in a piece whereby rope is replaced with the same fiber optic cabling that is used to transmit information by global digital networks.

Over a period of time, the Kinbakushi binds her partner, slowly elevating her from the floor, to suspension just above the ground. As the receiver is bound, she attempts to draw a circle on the floor with a piece of raw ochre pigment. This task becomes increasingly difficult as the performance progresses, distorting the shape of the circle. A live sound work developed in collaboration with renowned producer Moiré, underpins the physical events as they unfold. *Circle Drawing* hinges upon the contradictions of the human condition and the entanglements of contemporary life, both the opportunities and limitations that our increasing reliance on technology present: metaphors abound between freedom and bondage, environment and technology, communication and networks.

Harmonic Distortion examines the environmental data of shifts in cloud and wave cycles as signifiers of our precarious contemporary moment. Together with the water cycle, and its role as the essential life force, these phenomena have archetypal status for human beings and our very existence. In the age of the Anthropocene, Chivers suggests, it is more important than ever to retain a sensual relationship with the world and its materials.

Notes To Editors

Mat Chivers (b. 1973, Bristol, England)

The work of British artist Mat Chivers looks at how the fundamental phenomena that exist below the surface of things inform the way we experience the world around us. The process of making draws on combinations of analogue and digital technologies in works that embody a hybridisation of old-world and contemporary envisioning and fabrication processes. His practice concentrates on the locus of data capture and its interpretation, in order to explore the nature of perception. He studied Fine Art at Nottingham Trent University in the UK and La Escuela de Bellas Artes de Barcelona, Spain. In 2016 he was one of three finalists in the Fondazione Henraux's sculpture award, Premio Internazionale di Scultura. His work is in both private and public collections including Oxford University, The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, and The Met Office in the UK, the Kasser Mochary Art Foundation collection, USA, and Fondazione Henraux collection, Italy. Chivers lives and works in London and south-west England.

Chivers has exhibited extensively both nationally and internationally. Recent solo exhibitions include: 'Altered States', Hallmark House, Johannesburg, South Africa (2015); 'Between Day and Night and Night and the Day', Kappatos Gallery, Athens, Greece (2013); 'Syzygy', Millennium, St Ives, UK (2013); 'Fascination', Maddox Arts, London (2011). Group exhibitions include: 'Babel: Curated Space', Outsider Art Fair, New York, USA (2016); 'Glasstress: White Light / White Heat', Palazzo Cavalli Franchetti, 55th Venice Art Biennale and The Wallace Collection, London (2013); 'The Knowledge', The Gervasuti Foundation, 54th Venice Art Biennale (2011); 'Material Matters: The Power of the Medium', The Courtauld Institute of Arts, London (2012); 'Eleventh Plateau', Athens Biennale and The Historical Archives Museum, Hydra, Greece (2011).

Henraux

Since 1821, Henraux has been producing natural stone in the historic stone working village of Querceta, Lucca, Italy, and owns and operates some of the most renowned quarries for Carrara White marble. The company has a long history of working with artists, including Henry Moore, Hans Jean Arp, Joan Miró, Antoine Poncet, and Isamu Noguchi. The wealth of this accumulated tradition, experience and dynamism enables Henraux to work on any project – art, architecture and design – with cutting-edge

industrial systems and unparalleled expertise. Henraux is an international stone company committed to the highest standards of quality, safety and sustainability – a leader on the world stage in stone craftsmanship.

Factum Arte

Factum Arte is a company based in Madrid, Milan, and London that utilises both new technologies and craft skills in the conservation of cultural heritage and the production of contemporary art. By using various forms of high-definition 3D scanners Factum Arte has been able to record, in digital form, a number of endangered monuments and objects of cultural importance. The company began collaborating with Chivers in 2014, when he won the Oxford Mathematics Sculpture Competition for the work *Axiom*. Factum Arte's non-contact methodologies are having a growing impact on conservation and are defining the role facsimiles play in the protection of cultural heritage. In recent years, Factum Arte have worked with The Musée du Louvre, The British Museum, The Pergamon Museum, Museo del Prado, Biblioteca Nacional Madrid, the Fondazione Giorgio Cini, the Supreme Council of Antiquities in Egypt and many other museums, institutions and private individuals.

Marika Leila Roux

Marika Leila Roux (aka Gorgone) is a French Shibari artist. After many years of exploration and experimentation with the technics and emotions of traditional Japanese rope bondage, the works *A Study on Falling* and *Red Bind* were born from the desire to break free from the sexual and S&M connotation that it carries. Today Roux's mission is to convey the freedom and feminine power Shibari inspires in her, as well as bringing the unique experience and aesthetic of the suspended body to a broader and more mainstream audience.

Gestalta

A London-based performance, installation and visual artist, the core of Gestalta's work is Shibari. Her performances are frequently direct and minimalistic with a focus on bold, dynamic transitions and movements, presented with a soft and subtle energy. Much of her work stems from an underlying interest in structure, movement and the human form, and an ever-growing fascination with the links between eroticism, surrealism, ritualistic behaviours and our often-uncomfortable relationship with transience. Gestalta has a far-reaching audience, from Japan to Australia and many European cities including London, Moscow, Paris, Berlin, Lisbon, Prague, Geneva, and Barcelona.

Moiré

Moiré is a London-based music producer, whose background in architecture influences his formal approach. In his works rhythms oscillate and shift, flickering synths pulse in and out of time, and the space between individual elements feel ominous and imposing. Encompassing mathematics, physics, and art, his music hints at both the symmetry and conscious imperfections within it. With releases on labels such as Werkdiscs, R&S, and Ghostly International, Moiré releases his second full length album *No Future* in early 2017.

PM/AM

Founded in early 2015 by Patrick Barstow (London) and Lee Colwill (Berlin), PM/AM is a contemporary art gallery that examines the discourse between artist, curator and collector. PM/AM aims to challenge existing models for interacting with contemporary art and artists through a wide ranging programme of exhibitions, performances, screenings and installations, delivering independent and collaborative content to its audiences.

www.pmam.org

Gallery opening times: Monday to Saturday 10am–6:30pm and by appointment.

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Moiré

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