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RETURN TO THE EVERYWHERE

Return to the Everywhere looks to various modes of communication, storytelling, and listening in an attempt to grasp the implications of this so-called post truth era in which we now find ourselves. Both of the moment and half-forgotten impressions of such notions as fact vs fiction, objectivity, bias, and belief ricochet off each other as this collection of works creates space to consider the implications of truth's tenuity for interpersonal connection at large.

Presented in collaboration with WBEZ Chicago, Chicago's NPR news station, and featuring work by Gwyneth Zeleny Anderson, Jesse McLean, Sayward Schoonmaker, Sonnenzimmer, and Sadie Woods

Glossary

Archive

A collection of historical documents or records providing information about a place, institution, or group of people

Broadcast

Transmit (a program or information) by radio or television

Ephemera

Things that exist, are used, or enjoyed for only a short time

Graphic

A image or visual representation of an object

Graphic design

Process of visual communication and problem-solving through the use of typography, photography, and illustration

Objective

Not influenced by personal feelings or opinions in considering and representing facts

Sound Art

Art which uses sound both as its medium (what it is made out of) and as its subject (what it is about)

Subjective

Based on or influenced by personal feelings, tastes, or opinions

Tone

The author's attitude toward or feelings about the subject matter

Transcript

Written or printed version of material originally presented in another medium

Transmitter

Equipment used to generate and transmit electromagnetic waves carrying messages or signals, especially those of radio or television

Watermark

A faint design made in paper that is visible when held against light



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Click on the yellow dots to explore the artwork

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GWYNETH ZELENY ANDERSON

Um Radio

Listen ●



● View



What do you listen to on the radio?
What words/sounds are being played from this radio?
Why do you think the artist chose these words/sounds?

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JESSE MCLEAN

Relations

Watch ●

What do you think of when you hear the word “news”?
Why do you think the artist made the newspaper spin?
For a moment, the newspaper stops spinning to reveal a headline, what does it say?
What headline would you write to describe current events?

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SAYWARD SCHOONMAKER

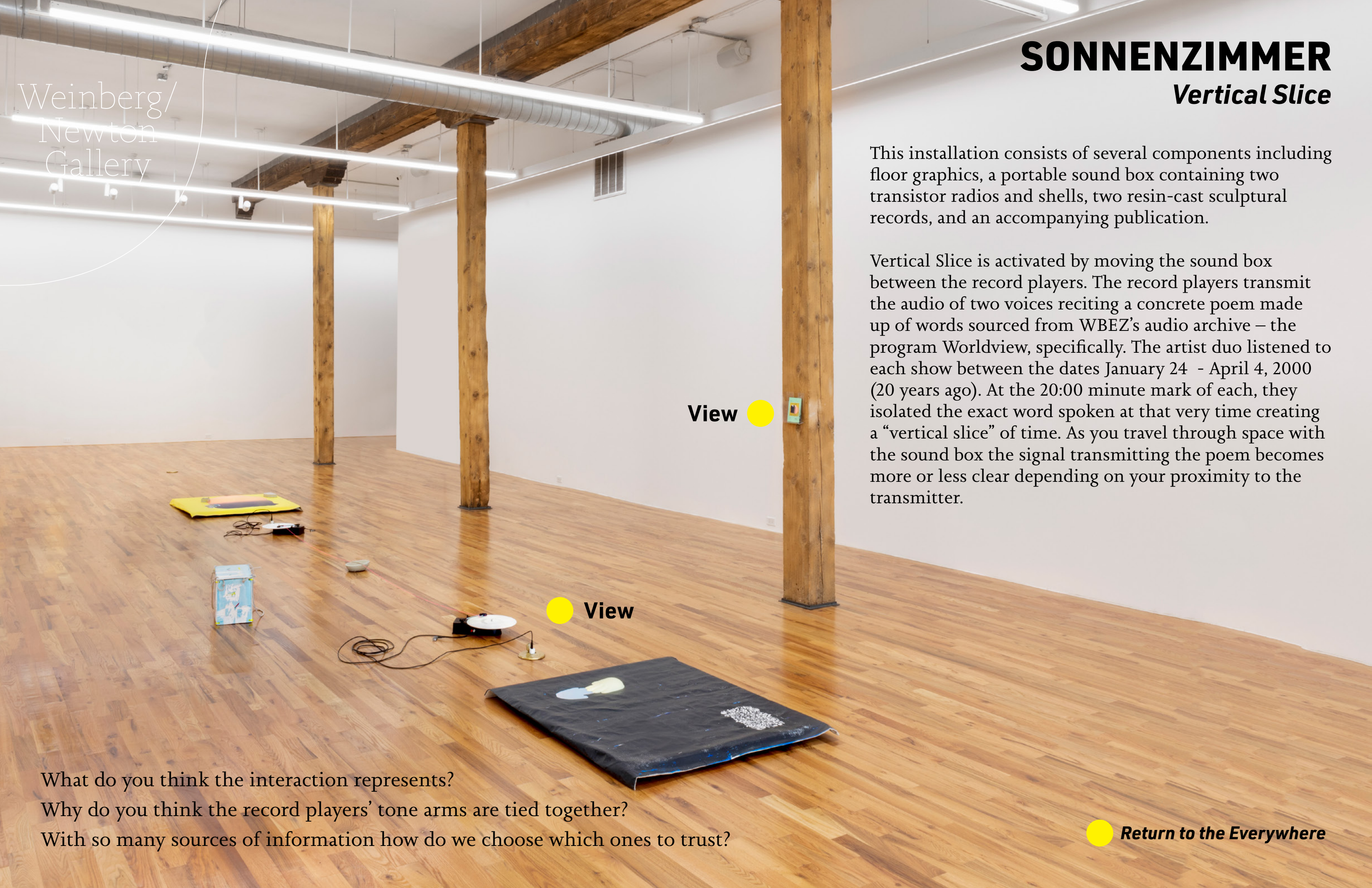
Authoritative Forms

View ●

● **View**

What does authority mean to you?
What makes something authentic?
What words or phrases hold value for you?

● **Return to the Everywhere**



SONNENZIMMER

Vertical Slice

This installation consists of several components including floor graphics, a portable sound box containing two transistor radios and shells, two resin-cast sculptural records, and an accompanying publication.

Vertical Slice is activated by moving the sound box between the record players. The record players transmit the audio of two voices reciting a concrete poem made up of words sourced from WBEZ's audio archive – the program Worldview, specifically. The artist duo listened to each show between the dates January 24 - April 4, 2000 (20 years ago). At the 20:00 minute mark of each, they isolated the exact word spoken at that very time creating a “vertical slice” of time. As you travel through space with the sound box the signal transmitting the poem becomes more or less clear depending on your proximity to the transmitter.

View

View

What do you think the interaction represents?
Why do you think the record players' tone arms are tied together?
With so many sources of information how do we choose which ones to trust?

Return to the Everywhere

Listen



Analyze

What is truth?
Who gets to decide what is true?
What songs do you think best embody the present moment?

Return to the Everywhere

riot
language of the unheard

SADIE WOODS

It Was a Rebellion (audio piece)

What information do you learn from the news reports?
What is the tone?

What information do you learn from the speeches? What is the tone?

What do you think of when you hear the word “riot”?

What kinds of music do you hear? What mood or emotion do you get from it?

Does the music change your perspective about the news reports or speeches?

Why do you think the artist chose to mix news reports, speeches, and music?

A Riot is the Language (image)

Are there any recognizable objects, places or scenes? How are they presented?

Who is the person? What are they wearing? How are they posed? Where are they looking?

How does the artist use color?

What other details do you notice?

Does the artwork communicate a narrative or story? Does it have symbolic meaning?

What is the mood of the artwork?

Can you make connections between this image and pop culture?

Why do you think the artist chose to depict the person this way?

What is your emotional response to the artwork?

WBEZ ARCHIVE

The WBEZ Archive seeks to preserve, provide access, and promote the use of the audio content created and broadcast by the station. The bulk of the collections fall between 1985-2007 and comprises mostly broadcast airchecks, talk shows, newscasts, raw audio, and special programming.

Though WBEZ first went on air April 18, 1943, the station did not start keeping systematic physical recordings of its original programming until the mid-1980s. In 2016, the station made a commitment to preserve its legacy by migrating the at-risk analog audio to digital formats. Over 13,000 discrete pieces of audio from a range of formats, including transcription discs, reels, cassettes, DATs, and CDs, were digitized. At this time, it is being cataloged in a database which provides journalists with a wealth of resources that enrich the context and depth of their news coverage and storytelling.

Radio, more than any other legacy media, has its roots firmly in the present. Ephemeral in nature and always speaking of today, it was never meant to be saved. In the current media landscape it is a rare and radical move for a news organization to invest in the preservation of its history. More than a record of the station, the WBEZ Archive is a record of the everyday in Chicago.

– Justine Tobiasz, Media Archivist, Chicago Public Media

WBEZ Radio Council recordings for Chicago Public Schools, 1949-1952

These six transcription discs hold some of the earliest audio broadcast over WBEZ’s frequency. Ranging in date from 1949-1952, they contain a mix of children’s educational programming including radio dramas, music appreciation, and English lessons. The Chicago Radio Council of Chicago Public Schools formed in 1937 in order to produce and arrange the broadcast of educational radio programs to classrooms on commercial radio stations. Radio station WBEZ first went on the air on April 18, 1943.

Transcription discs (also known as lacquer discs) found common use in the mid-1930s for the creation of instantaneous recordings. Despite being inherently fragile and unstable, the media format was well suited for the distribution of original radio programming because of its ability to be played right after recording without additional processing.



WBEZ ●

What are the different ways that you receive information?
What is one contemporary object that you think is important to preserve?

Curator's Note

These artworks insist upon the power of the listener to affect the narrative by inviting us to actively engage with them. We must decide if and exactly how we want to participate when we are encouraged to turn the knob of a radio, rearrange a meandering sequence of papers, or take a stroll with a mysterious talking box. It is our physical presence and movement through the space that activates each piece. In turn, these works create the conditions for empathy, opening us up to understanding and compassion.

— Kasia Houlihan



Artwork List

Jesse McLean

Relations
2010/2020
Looping video (16mm, hand-processed and transferred to video)
2 minutes 22 seconds

Gwyneth Zeleny Anderson

Um Radio
2019
Radio, electronics, handmade book
7.28 x 5.5 x 3.35 inches
Multiple durations
Charlie Manion, audio engineer and electronics fabricator

Sonnenzimmer

Vertical Slice
2020
Mixed media (screen prints, enamel, acrylic, cement, resin, twine, shells, transistor radios)
Dimensions variable

Vertical Slice
2020
8-panel artist book, screen printed, bound with magnets, ed. 40, signed and numbered
4.5 x 6 inches

Sayward Schoonmaker

Authoritative Forms
2019
Handmade watermarked paper, original text; text drawn from the work of John Berger, James Schuyler, and Hito Steyerl; table; stools
26 x 30 x 80 inches

Sadie Woods

It Was A Rebellion
2018-2020
1 hour 10 minutes 39 seconds