Meredith James is interested in perception—the way we see our immediate environment and ourselves inside it. Perception can work in ways that are habitual or biased, predefined or unpredictable. Working in video, sculpture, and theater, James experiments with the physical and optical anatomy of space, where perspective can be manipulated and observation influenced.

James’ new project, *Mobius City*, 2015, is inspired by the Museum’s Panorama of the City of New York, the gigantic miniature with nearly 900,000 individual structures rendered at a scale of 1:1,200. Originally commissioned for the 1964 New York World’s Fair, the model may be a static, old-fashioned way of representing space, but it is unsurpassed in its ability to show an urban environment as a three-dimensional totality. James found her East Village apartment building on the Panorama, imagined her apartment in it, and pictured herself inside of it—like we all do! *Mobius City* is a fantastical daydream in the form of sculptural installation with video, staged in and structured around three real spaces: the artist’s apartment in a 12-story building on 4th Avenue and 12th Street; its double as a near-life-size sculpture; and, the tiny model of the apartment building, standing two inches tall on the Panorama.

Made of wood and painstakingly painted, the apartment replica in the gallery is designed in the simplified style of the miniature buildings on the Panorama. The interior décor is an extrapolation of what it might look like if the building models on the Panorama had insides with the artist herself re-imagined as a moving wooden figure—what a person might look like if the Panorama had a population. The looped video footage, running on a simplified replica of the large mirror in James’ own apartment, is seamlessly composed of scenes filmed in, at, and outside of these three versions of her habitat. This results in a visual Mobius strip* effect that brings the viewer in and out of the illusion. In doing so it expands and animates the optical relationship between real urban space and its doubles—the sculpturally reproduced artist’s apartment and the miniature universe of the Panorama—in a hypnotic, infinite interplay of scale and illusion.

**Meredith James** holds a BA from Harvard University (2004), an MFA from Yale University (2009), and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture (2011). She is the recipient of the Abrons Art Center AIR Space Residency and has received fellowships from Socrates Sculpture Park (2014), Vermont Studio Center, and Sculpture Space, among others. Her work has been featured at venues including 247365, Brooklyn, NY; Jack Hanley Gallery, New York; Rivington Arms, New York; Socrates Sculpture Park, Long Island City, NY; Interstate Projects, Brooklyn, NY; David Castillo Gallery, Miami, FL; and Center for Visual Arts at Harvard University, Cambridge, MA. Solo shows have been held at Jack Hanley Gallery, New York, and Marc Jancou Contemporary, New York. In addition to her own practice, she is a curator and co-founder of Primetime Gallery in Brooklyn, NY.

As one of the first recipients of the Queens Museum/Jerome Foundation Fellowship for Emerging Artists, Meredith James has spent the past year working closely with curators and other staff members to optimize opportunities to expand her practice, with the Museum serving as a catalytic agent. She was selected by a panel that included Naomi Beckwith (Curator, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago), Herb Tam (Curator, Museum of Chinese in America, New York), and Hitomi Iwasaki (Director of Exhibitions, Queens Museum, New York).

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* Mobius strip: A one-sided surface that is constructed from a rectangle by holding one end fixed, rotating the opposite end through 180 degrees, and joining it to the first end.
Catalyst
New Projects by Meredith James, Kameelah Janan Rasheed, and Casey Tang

Oct 18 2015
Feb 28 2016
Kameelah Janan Rasheed explores the power of words and images, utilizing both to generate a space for those who are segregated or marginalized. With a personal history that includes a period of childhood homelessness, Rasheed’s work is rooted in her need to sustain a sense of community and home through an ongoing process of archiving and narration. Rasheed searches for and accumulates images, words and phrases, both existing and self-authored, unearthed everywhere from garage sales to public archives. Liberating materials from their original sources and re-engaging them in a new context, her process transforms the typically bureaucratic and passive nature of an archive into an intimate and proactive tool for creating alternative narratives, both personal and social.

Source Material for a Poem I’ve Been Trying to Write about Casual Superlatives, National Progress and Palate Cleansers, 2015, is a sprawling installation consisting of multiple smaller works and components, all sharing a black tonality that renders a decisive focus on the current state of African-Americans’ lived inequity. Along with word and image fragments, Rasheed pins assorted materials including fabrics and synthetic human hair directly to the gallery wall. Other elements include Alphabet Aerobic x Emplotment, 2015, a fast-paced photo slide and text-based video projection of words and images that Rasheed calls “linguistic stutters and hiccups,” and Go Slow, 2015, featuring the lyrics of Nina Simone’s 1964 song “Mississippi Goddam.”

Rasheed negotiates the dialogue between the written word and imagery, and the directness and openness of each. Recognizing the power and magic of poetry, the artist also repurposes words through alliterative games and constricted writing techniques found in the work of African-American poet Harryette Mullen, whose avant-garde approach to language playfully delivers politically charged content.

Also featured is How to Suffer Politely (and Other Etiquette), 2014, a series of aphorisms styled after etiquette guides, mounted on a billboard-sized wall. Deftly fused with the artist’s deadpan humor and sense of satire, these convey the anxiety and frustration triggered by the serial injustices imposed upon Black people.

As an extension of her archiving practice, the artist is also leading a zine-making workshop with the Queens Museum’s New New Yorkers Program.

Kameelah Janan Rasheed is a former U.S. Fulbright Scholar and holds a BA in African Studies and Public Policy from Pomona College (2006) and an Ed. M. from Stanford University (2008). Her work has been exhibited at the Studio Museum in Harlem, Brooklyn Museum, Bronx Museum, BRIC Art Gallery, Weeksville Heritage Museum, and Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York, and Vox Populi Gallery, Philadelphia, PA. Selected residencies, fellowships and honors include the Lower East Side Printshop Keyholder Residency, Triple Canopy New York Public Library Labs Commission, Artadia: The Fund for Art and Dialogue Grant, A.I.R. Gallery Fellowship, AIM Program at Bronx Museum, Art Matters Grant, Vermont Studio Center Residency, The Laundromat Project Fellowship, STEP UP Emerging Artist Award and Center for Photography at Woodstock Residency. Currently, she is the Arts Editor for SPOOK and a contributing editor at The New Inquiry.

As one of the first recipients of the Queens Museum/Jerome Foundation Fellowship for Emerging Artists, Kameelah Janan Rasheed has spent the past year working closely with curators and other staff members to optimize opportunities to expand her practice, with the Museum serving as a catalytic agent. She was selected by a panel that included Naomi Beckwith (Curator, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago), Herb Tam (Curator, Museum of Chinese in America, New York), and Hitomi Iwasaki (Director of Exhibitions, Queens Museum, New York).
Catalyst
New Projects by Meredith James, Kameelah Janan Rasheed, and Casey Tang

Oct 18 2015
Feb 28 2016
Casey Tang’s *Untitled (Two Rivers)*, 2015, was filmed in the city of Chongqing, a recently created industrial center on China’s Yangtze River, and in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, on the Black Stone River, the site of Slater Mill, the first factory in the United States. In contrasting these two locations, the video tracks the spread of industrial capitalism centuries apart, from a relic of a boom-to-bust city in the US to giant high-rises in rapidly urbanizing China.

The American textile mill complex was built in 1793, became a historical museum in 1921, and is known as the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution. Chongqing represents the most recent wave of drastic industrialization spurred by hyper-capitalism and globalizing economic systems. The 12-minute video captures both sites largely in nocturnal hours—Slater Mill through reality-TV like segments following the official late-night ghost tour of the factory, and Chongquin through atmospheric cityscapes. The footage shuttles between the two, while the sound-track bleeds from one into the other. A narrated story of child labor in unsafe factory conditions at Slater Mill melts into a night scene in Chongquin where young girls pass through in the distant shadows of high-rises.

In juxtaposing the rapid cutting of American TV with slower-paced East Asian cinema aesthetics, the video superimposes the past onto the present as if to discover the ghost of industrialization and its living counterpart across the world. Tang’s work is a meditation on the time-lapsed modernization found today in China, which is considerably accelerated and seemingly predestined to collapse. The soundtrack transitions subtly from the traditional guitar-like Chinese *guqin* to American jazz and blues guitar, suggesting a kind of sonic “third space” that embodies the migratory nature of cultures and histories while geographically undefined.

Also included in the exhibition is *First Sounds: First 500,000 Years in the Age of the Universe*, 2012, a piano score representing the birth of the Universe and its first half-million years. In collaboration with astronomer Dr. Mark Whittle, Tang created a 10-minute score that translates layers of data into musical notes, starting from the residual radiation of the Big Bang, and continuing through the formative years of cosmic history. *First Sounds* incarnates a galactic phenomenon that is otherwise beyond our comprehension, and consists of a perforated parchment paper score of the musical piece intended for an antique player piano presented next to the contemporary Steinway player piano bringing the score to life.

Casey Tang has a BFA from SUNY Purchase (2006). A solo exhibition was recently held at Charpa Gallery, Valencia, Spain. Tang’s projects have been exhibited at venues including: the Central Academy of Fine Art Museum, Beijing, China; Socrates Sculpture Park, Long Island City, NY; and Booklyn, Brooklyn, NY, among others. He is a recipient of the New Vision Award from He Xiangning Art Museum, Shenzhen, China. His work is in various public collections including: the Inelcom Madrid Collection, Spain; the Xiangning Museum, Shenzhen, China; the U.S. Library of Congress; and the Yale Rare Book Library, New Haven, CT. Tang is also a collaborator on Swale, a mobile floating food forest that docks at piers along New York City’s harbor.

As one of the first recipients of the Queens Museum/Jerome Foundation Fellowship for Emerging Artists, Casey Tang has spent the past year working closely with curators and other staff members to optimize opportunities to expand his practice, with the Museum serving as a catalytic agent. He was selected by a panel that included Naomi Beckwith (Curator, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago), Herb Tam (Curator, Museum of Chinese in America, New York), and Hitomi Iwasaki (Director of Exhibitions, Queens Museum, New York).