

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Nina Azzarello, "Allora & Calzadilla at Fondazione Nicola Trussardi," *Design Boom*, October 23, 2013.



allora & calzadilla at fondazione nicola trussardi

american artists jennifer allora and guillermo calzadilla are among the most diverse and active personalities in the international art world, traversing a hybrid of creative releases including performance, installation, sculpture, and visual media. their fugue between the limits and contradictions of the global world and their practice of personifying the ideas of nationalism, and social change composes an impressive collection of interdisciplinary and experimental artwork. it is this approach that informed their current exhibition '**fault lines**' for [fondazione nicola trussardi](#). set in the grandiose seventeenth century palazzo cusani in milan, the site responsive solo show creates a narrative with both the venue's architecture and historical context, as the opulent baroque rooms transpose into live vignettes. **thematically, music and sound play monumental roles in the show's orchestration.** dispersed throughout the palazzo are a medley of instrumental performances: a company of opera singers hidden within tunnel-like passageways of a towering sculpture in the courtyard; a trumpet player ascending and descending the staircase leading to the main exhibition spaces; a pianist trapped in a cut-out void at his instrument's core.

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the pianist plays a musical composition while inside his instrument
image © designboom

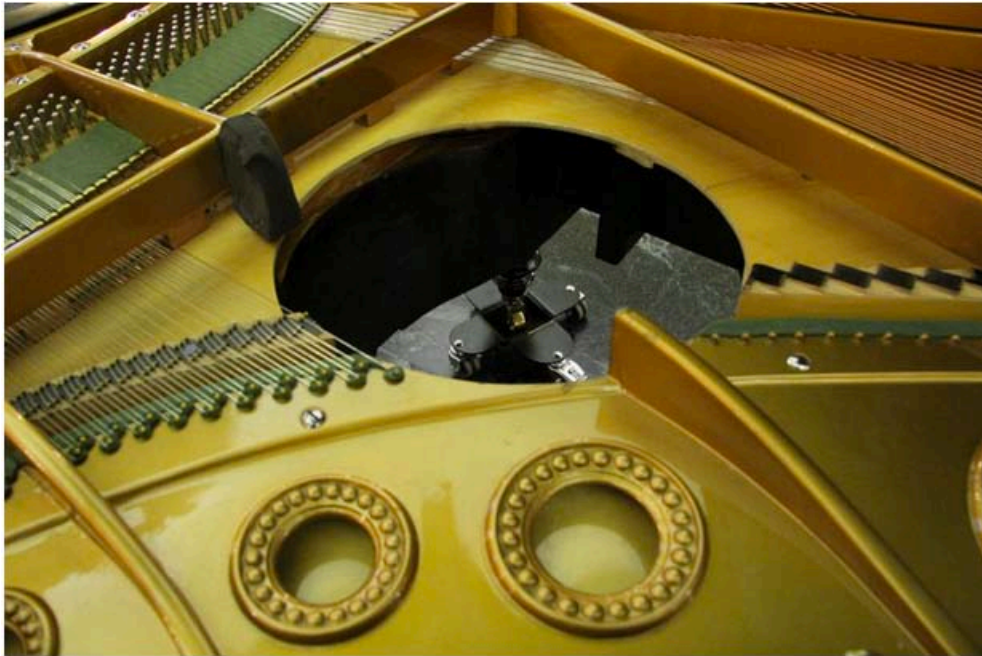
arguably one of the exhibition's most impressive installments is 'stop, repair, prepare'. allora & calzadilla have modified a grand piano by carving a circular hole directly through it. once an hour, a pianist standing within the void, behind the keyboard, angles over the keys and attempts to play variations of 'ode to joy'. performing upside down and backwards, the musician additionally mobilizes, carrying the massive instrument around his waist throughout the room.



the musician leans over the piano to play, while simultaneously walking around the space
image © designboom

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the cut hole at the core of the piano
image © designboom



allora & calzadilla 'stop, repair, prepare: variations on 'ode to joy' for a prepared piano'
video © [designboom](#)

upon entering the palazzo's sumptuous courtyard, echoing operatic voices reverberate throughout the space, initially mystifying visitors as their source is imperceivable. it becomes evident as one approaches that the choral tones are from human singers, hidden within the small tunnels and tubes of a towering foam and plaster sculpture at the court's core. **'sediments, sentiments (figures of speech)'** is a live performance delivered by fourteen opera singers, who casually enact the musical compositions, occasionally peeking out from their respective voids to glance at the crowd of mesmerized viewers.

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the sculptural artwork at the courtyard's core, hiding a collection of opera singers in its tunnels
image © designboom



an opera singer peeks out from a tunnel within the massive sculpture
image © designboom

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a male singer enacts the operatic composition
image © designboom



singers glancing and stretching in the sculpture
image © designboom

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allora & calzadilla 'sediments, sentiments (figures of speech)' for fondazione nicola trussardi
video © [designboom](#)



portrait of guillermo calzadilla and jennifer allora
image © [designboom](#)

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opera singers hidden inside the foam and plaster installation



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a pianist plays his instrument while inside a cut-out void at its core

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for revolving door, a choreographed performance of twelve dancers stretch across the space from wall to wall like a human barricade

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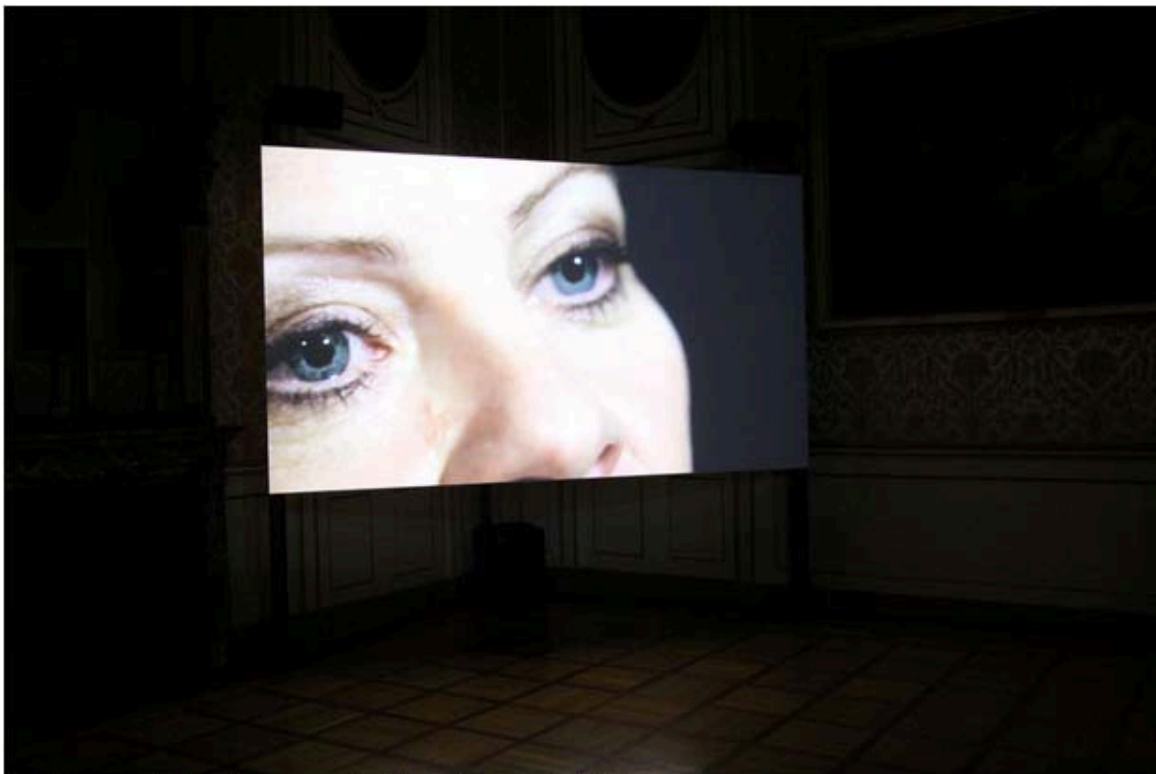
wake up (rising) features a jazz trumpeter on the grand staircase improvising different chords as he walks up and down the steps



petrified petrol pump is a sculptural stone representation of a gasoline pump

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a still from raptor's rapture, one of a trilogy of media installations

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the bird of hermes is my name, eating my wings to make me tame is part is a military helmet for special action, fitted with a video camera and wings: contemporary representation of hermes, the greek messenger

