

Artist, dancer, and choreographer Madeline Hollander's *Flatwing* (2019) is a video installation exploring the emergence of silent "flat-wing" crickets on the island of Kauai, Hawaii. Hollander (b. 1986), equipped with an infrared camera and a field recorder, spent five nights searching for the flat-wing crickets in an attempt to record their movements for choreographic research. Their silence, due to a genetic mutation on their wings, renders them undetectable to a parasitic fly that finds its hosts by following the sounds of crickets' mating chirps and fatally attacks its singing targets. The artist's camera captures the rainforest's nocturnal inhabitants—a frog, a chicken, various insects—but no crickets are to be found. Their absence portends their likely extinction and serves as a metaphor for the human struggle to adjust to conditions of accelerated environmental change amid ongoing climate crises.

In a phone interview between Hollander and an evolutionary biologist on the installation's soundtrack the artist imagines the possibility that should the fly drive the chirping crickets to extinction, the silent ones might survive through an evolutionary response to their changing environment. Their conversation illustrates the differences in their methodologies and motivations, as well as the limits of communication between the fields of art and science. Although the scientist explains that crickets are not capable of conscious choreographic invention, for Hollander the silenced crickets' rapid evolution suggests an opportunity to develop a new mating dance, an automatic and adaptive choreography of survival.

Flatwing is accompanied by a display of diagrams, drawings, and research materials created by the artist in the process of making the film, as well as a sound installation located in the adjacent gallery.

An essay on the artist's work can be found at whitney.org/Hollander. And a transcript and sound description can be accessed at whitney.org/Guide.

 550 Access

Flatwing, 2019
Video, color, sound; 16:25 min.
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