

# **JUSTIN RANDOLPH THOMPSON**

## **Heel Tap**

**Galería FORMATOCOMODO**  
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Heel Tap is a sound based sculptural installation and performance that explores rhythmic servitude, human powered technology, the rhythmic roots of Spanish folk music and the historic African American involvement in the Spanish Civil War.

The entire work of the artist is a look over the African American myths that represent his roots.

The leitmotiv inside all the installations is the sound and the rhythm that is very important for every culture and has magical ritual effects.

For the African Americans the rhythm is essential in life and it's part of its own culture. Inside every work of the artist the functional is a fundamental aspect as well: the hurdy gurdy, for example, has its interest in being driven by the human body with an action that reminds of slavery.

The installation revolves around 3 dominant elements: a rotating music stand/hurdy gurdy, an amplified floor tap performance booth and a pile of quilted speaker tubes with a sound work.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is a large kinetic sculpture that emits sound. Based on the ancient instrument, the hurdy gurdy, the sound becomes the base for a sound work composed in collaboration with Jason Thompson created for three saxophones, based loosely on Alan Lomax's recordings in Spain. The terra cotta top piece is a tangled composition of three figures, based on Blackamoor furniture. Each figure holds a music sheet.



### **Hurdy Gurdy**

**2013**

**Wood, 3 speakers ,3 acoustic guitars, cables, afro pick, self adhesive vinyls, terra cottas, sound**

**200 x 180 x 160 cm.**



**Hurdy Gurdy**

**2013**

**Detail terra cottas, music sheets based on Alan Lomax's recordings**



**Hurdy Gurdy**  
**2013**  
**Detail terra cottas**



**Hurdy Gurdy  
2013  
Detail guitar**





**A moment of the performance  
3 sax players, artist spinning the plate**

The second element of the exhibition is a tap performance booth with an amplified floor. This structure hides the performer body but not his head while amplifying the sound of his tapping and distorting it to sound like gunfire. The façade of the booth serves as panels for the wheat pasting of documents, which consist of prints of a children's book ("The First Book of Rhythms") of the Harlem Renaissance poet Langston Hughes ritualistically wheat pasted to the surface during the performance.



**Tap Booth**  
**Sound installation**  
**Wood, 6 speakers, lights, leather curtain, antenna, afro pick, paper**  
**240 x 180 x 124 cm**

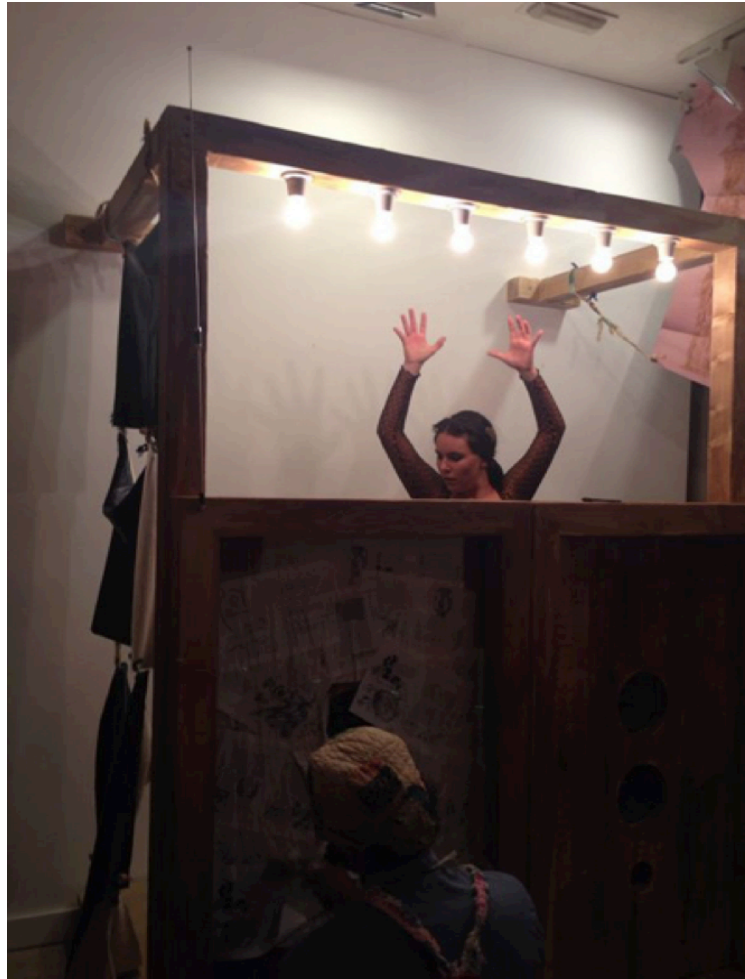




**Tap Booth  
Sound installation  
Detail**



**Tap Booth**  
**Sound installation**  
**Detail of the façade with documents pasted**



### **Tap Booth**

**A moment of the performance**

**Flamenco dancer tapping and artist pasting documents and singing**

The paintings, painted in shoe polish on paper, have the shape of mats that snipers use in combat and the images are drawn from mixtures of propaganda posters from the Spanish Civil War and images of “American progress “ painted by José María Sert in New York.



**Painted curtain**

**2013**

**Paintings made of shoe polish on paper and vinyl**

**160 x 46 x 1 cm C/U; 310 x 300 x 60 cm mural**





**Painted curtain**  
**2013**  
**Detail paintings**



Another element of the exhibition is a small pile of quilted speaker tubes, made of patchwork that remind of the African American tradition. Taking their form from a pile of cut palm tree wood, these quilted surfaces become the coverings for small subwoofers that will echo a sound work based on the sound of historic performances of tap dance. It consists in a pile of military berets hand quilted from fragments of American quilts.



**Firewood**  
**2013**  
**Subwoofers, fabric, tubes**  
**140 x 50 x 110 cm**



**Mask**  
**2013**  
**Wax, patchwork**  
**52 x 29 x 10 cm**



**The receiver**  
**2013**  
**Terra cotta, patchwork and antenna**  
**34 x 50 x 49 cm**



# Justin Randolph Thompson Biografia

Peekskill, NY, 1979

Lives and works between Florence and USA

## EDUCATION

2003 American University, MFA

2001 The University of Tennessee, BFA

1999-2000 Scuola Lorenzo de' Medici (Drake University) Florence

1998 Skidmore College, New York , Summer term

1997 School of Art Institute Chicago , Summer term

## SOLO SHOW

2013 Dem' Golden Slippers, Cuchifritos Gallery, NY, NY

2012 Meet Me in the Bottoms, Blue Star Contemporary Art Center\_Project Space, San Antonio, TX

2012 Without Laughter, Fabbrica, Gambettola, Italy

2012 Tossin' the Rag, The Bindery Projects, St. Paul, MN

2012 The First Book of Africa, l'Associazione le arti Tessili Maniago (PN)

2012 I'm Gone (performance), SRISA Project Space, Florence

2012 Rag Poppin' (two person Solo with Filmmaker Kevin Jerome Everson) , Hiram Van Gordon Gallery/TSU New Media Space, Nashville, TN

2011 The Pits, University of Tennessee Downtown Gallery, Knoxville, TN

2011 I Take My Time (performance), Grassy, Madrid

2011 The Jesse Tree (performance), Santa Reparata Contemporary Art Gallery; Florence

2010 Swingin'; They Won't Find Us Here, Minneapolis, MN

2010 Jacobs Ladder and other Aspirations; Sign Salon, Minneapolis, MN

2009 Southern Trees; Santa Reparata Contemporary Art Gallery; Florence

2009 Martirio; Brooklyn Public Library/ Business Library; Brooklyn, NY

2008 I got somethin' for your...; number\_5 GmbH; Zurich, Switzerland

2008 Maybe it Runs in the Family; Buffalo Arts Studio; Buffalo, NY

2008 Signpost; SACI Gallery; Florence

2007 La Ruota degli Innocenti (Sponsored by the Fulbright Commission); Ospedale degli Innocenti, Florence

2006 Tree (with Amber Scoon; Castello del Pieve del Vescovo, Corciano (PG))

## GROUP SHOWS

2013 Through the Lens of the Blues Aesthetic, curated by Kevin Jerome Everson, The Whitney Museum of American Art, NY, NY  
Forthcoming 2013 Correspondencia II, Palazzo Lucarini, Trevi(PG), Italy  
2012 Transition, curated by Yvette Naylor, Jamie Liles, and Alison Morley, ICP Education Gallery, NY, NY  
2012 Tossin' the Rag, Art in Odd Places, NY, NY, Curated by Edwin Ramoran  
2012 USUK Olympics Exhibition, Salem Art Works, Salem, NY  
2012 Global Positioning System (So You Say You Want a Revolution) curated by Keren Moscovitch, SVA Westside Gallery, NY, NY  
2012 African American Artists from the Permanent Collection, Mobile Museum of Art, Mobile, AL  
2011 Revolution/Evolution, Buffalo Arts Studio, Buffalo, NY  
2011 Correspondencia, Vecchio Municipio, San donato Val di Comino Curated by Bruno Corà  
2011 Green, Textile Museum, Washington D.C.  
2010 Exquisite Corpse, Soundfjord Gallery, London  
2011 TPS Report, SpaceCamp Microgallery, Indianapolis  
2010 DIY( Do It Yourself), Dash Gallery co-curated by Derrik Adams and Wardell Milan III , NY, NY  
2010 There is no Looking Glass Here, Deutsche Bank 60 Wall Gallery/MOCADA curated by Kim Gant, NY NY  
2010 Past residents at CAC; CAC Woodside, Troy NY  
2010 Dialogo a Tres, Studio Clara Carvajal, Madrid  
2010 Laguna Prize; Arsenale, Venice  
2010 Videoholica; Visualcontainer tv, Milan, Italy  
2009 Videoholica Festival; In Difference Festival; Vip Art Gallery, Belgrade, Serbia  
2009 Vuelta al Cole, La Nave/Galeria Altamira, Gijon, Spain  
2009 Funktified, Staller Center for the Arts, SUNY Stony Brook, Stony Brook, NY  
2009 Elsewhere: I am here; MAS Gallery, Odzaci, Serbia  
2009 Tools for Revolution; Rotte Metropolitane; Villa Romana, Florence  
2009 All Art Now International Video Festival; British Council, Damascus, Syria  
2008 Liquid Cities; Micro Museum; Brooklyn, NY  
2008 Revolutionary Sound; Fortezza da Basso, Florence  
2008 Gen X: Postboomers and the New South; Mobile Museum of Art, Mobile, AL  
2008 Valcellina Prize; Museo del Tessile, Pordenone  
2008 Arnaldo Pomodoro Prize; Fondazione Arnaldo Pomodoro, Milan  
2007 Drift; Rush Arts Gallery New York, NY



2006 Frame International Video Festival; Rivoli Teatro, Porto, Portugal  
2006 Bridging Cultures Through Art; Marrakech, Morocco  
2006 Langston Hughes African American Film Festival; Seattle, WA  
2006 Legion (NY,NY); NADA Art Fair, Miami, FL

## AWARDS/RESIDENCIES

2012 Foundation for Contemporary Art Emergency Grant  
2012 Open Studio Fellowship; Franconia Sculpture Park  
2012 Artist in residence; Tennessee State University, Nashville, TN  
2011 Artist in Residence, Salem Art Works, Salem, NY  
2011 Artist in Residence, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN  
2010 CAC Troy Residence, Troy, NY  
2009 Taller de Jannis Kounellis, Fundacion Marcelino Botin, Santander, Spain  
2008 Winner of Revolutionary Sound, Sound Art Competition; Radio Papesse(section of Palazzo delle Papesse)  
2008 Jerome Fellowship; Franconia Sculpture Park  
2008 Finalist Arnaldo Pomodoro Prize  
2007 USUK Cast Iron Symposium; Salem Art Works Salem, NY  
2006 Sculpture and Installation Residence; School of Visual Arts Ny,NY

## COLLECTIONS

Mobile Museum of Art; Mobile, AL  
Brooklyn Public Library/ Business Library; Brooklyn, NY  
Franconia Sculpture Park, Franconia, MN  
Albornoz Palace Hotel; Spoleto  
Salem Art Works Sculpture Park; Salem, NY  
Premio Valcellina Collection, Maniago  
Collezione Civica di Fiber Art di Chieri, Chieri(TO)

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