

LA Timpa

I Got A New Joint: What I Should'nt Do With The Money

5. July – 24. August 2025

In a conversation, LA Timpa describes how he was sitting on a bench when several things happened at once that resulted in a unique compositional moment: an announcement not quite distinct in the school yard behind him, birds taking flight, a freight train unloading. Returning the next day in the hope of coincidentally reliving something similar, he found the kids were gone, school out.

I Got A New Joint: What I Should'nt Do With The Money is an exhibition by musician and artist LA Timpa centred around five sound pieces. In an installation that includes drawings, animation, sculptural elements, a novella and sound, LA Timpa has moulded a world of imagery and sounds that tunes into moments grounded in the, specifically his, physical world. LA Timpa traces where spirit manifests and transfers onto objects, surroundings and situations. To record these traces, LA Timpa gravitates toward “old” devices and technologies: cassette players, super 8 and 8mm film. He does not consider these obsolete, which would mean perpetuating the strange psychosis of renewal and the new; he chooses them because they are recalcitrant to work with. Stubborn in their form, they require sculptural handling and function cut-and-dry, counter to the smooth and speedy options when working with sound available on the market today. As tools they demand intentionality, but they are also more susceptible to circumstance.

Circumstance is key to this show in several ways – in how LA Timpa is drawn to, sources and then shapes the material that he comes across: Train debris, animal crates, kite string, shoe polish, garbage bags, motor oil, pipe insulation. The compositional moments he works with are ones of things falling into place: Believe this to be chance or believe it fate, in both cases it is an openness or a will to reception – to surroundings, to noise, to silence, to heritage, to the subconscious. Kaivalya Brewerton engages with this topic in her exhibition text. She writes: “The issue is really a question of reception. What is one’s capacity for listening? Understanding scale and attunement may affect inexhaustible arguments in interpretation. Yet, if it is beyond the realm of comprehension, it’s just noise. BANG! Nevertheless, one can proceed to get on the train, ride the bus, jump in the car, get on the plane, take the boat, and seek refuge in the misperceived quiet of nature. You will find a setting much more nuanced. It is not that one is solely involuntary to auditory reception. We have the ability to listen to intonation, to hear spaces between the noise. It is a moment to listen (..) to the impossibility of silence.” This approach is also re-connecting to that which has become estranged – and it is as poetic as it is technical. Silence in the composition process of tape recordings is not absent but an essential part of composing. Here, still objects form sound and videos are shown without, cassette tape is used as lines in drawings and the clangs and bells we hear resonate with the metals of sculptures, with titles of works. In *Bristol car and truck rentals 3*’, we hear the piece playing into a drum, the drum jammed into an animal crate, the animal crate in the exhibition space, each a resonating, vibrating body of its own.

Tapping into and connecting with the rawness of what he sees and hears around him, LA Timpa gauges visual and audio ratios in drawing out the noise in it all. Wilderness breaking through in urban environments and inhabiting unlikely spots. Animals occupying cities, weaving nests, winding strings. Instruments hollowed out to serve as resonating bodies that he calls “tombs”. Heartbeat. Absence. The flickering of light and screens, shadows moving.

LA Timpa is a Nigerian-born Canadian songwriter, singer, musician, producer and visual artist based in New York. He has released five albums, most recently *IOX* via avant-garde music pioneer Lolina's label, Relaxin Records. Previous albums are *Time of Marcker* (2024), *Pity by One All Good Treasure* (2022), *Modern Antics In A Deserted Place* (2020), *Equal Amounts Afraid* (2019) and *Animal* (2016), put out with O_o?, Vulgarteem, Halcyon Veil and Slow Release. He has worked with Space Afrika, Tricky, Lol K, Klein and Kathryn Tompkins and is a regular contributor at Café Oto, London, NTS and Rinse FM. LA Timpa blends pop, dub, ambient and experimental electronics. His compositions explore themes of introspection and the psychological dimensions of exile and estrangement and they engage with spirituality in fragmented melodies and vocals. As in his performances for the show, of which one took place at 5am in the morning after the opening, LA Timpa is interested in breaking with the conventional duration of performances and pushing them into an extreme, often physical realm related to rituals. LA Timpa has also written a novella for the exhibition. A destiny in jeopardy is on view in our library space, and can be bought for 15 CHF.

Kaivalya Brewerton, who wrote the exhibition text, is an artist and writer, performs as Workid, a Geordie moniker, and is based between Berlin and London. Some of her previous publications include Arcadia Missa, Galerina, Magnum Photos, and Final Hot Desert. As DJ, she's played venues across UK and Europe, from Ormside Projects (London) to Salon des Amateurs (Köln); alongside John T. Gast, Lolina, New York, Rat Section and others.

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Thanks to Spike Fern, Kaivalya Brewerton, Rob Gordon, Marc Jauss, Jo-Moritz Krah.

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Bristol car and truck rentals 3'

Performed by Rob Gordon

Arranger, producer LA Timpa

Mastered to tape by Kathryn Tompkins

Rob Gordon is a performer based in Toronto, Canada. His contributions to this exhibition mark the end of an indefinite hiatus from the drums, brought on by a mysterious nerve condition that eluded diagnosis. The five-year recovery proved to be fertile ground for long-standing feelings of technical inadequacy and a fading sense of identity—having traded a dedication to boundless creativity for the repetition of professional touring.

His inclusion in this exhibition is an attempt to answer a single question: What is one to do when given such a rare opportunity for transformation? Two continuous performances—90 and 30 minutes, respectively—capture those fresh steps.

Former technical aspirations and a rigid obsession with freedom of expression reveal themselves to be empty vessels of meaning. From here on, identity stems from perspective, and purpose arises from the unfolding of perceived truths.

To capture the performances, a small studio was rented in Toronto's Little Italy. By coincidence, the dates aligned with one of the city's biggest summer street festivals. The anxiety caused by the twenty-odd sound systems competing for dominance was inverted and reinterpreted as a value in itself.

The performances present rhythmic mutations conceived in the moment and realized through repetition, with little to no embellishment. Rob accepted the sloppiness of his execution, choosing instead to sit with the feelings of inadequacy for as long as possible before progressing to a new passage.

In further rejection of technical inadequacy, the very sound of the drums was reconsidered. A small guitar amp—gifted to his daughter one Christmas but never used, a haunting reminder of unrealized dreams—was repurposed alongside a pink toy microphone and dusty FX pedals. Another mic was run through a Pioneer DJ mixer (a preferred creative tool during the hiatus) into a second amp. A bass guitar, with all its strings crudely tuned to the same pitch as the kick drum, was laid with its neck against the kick to extend resonance through a third amp and controlled by a tremolo pedal. Often, the drums were played with one stick. At times, a variety of elementary school bells were placed on the drumheads—perhaps a symbol of priorities shifting from cracked teenage dreams to the tangible responsibilities of parenthood, culminating in a new mindful self.

Text by Rob Gordon