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AT INVISIBLE EXPORTS, MIKA TAJIMA WEAVES SOUND

By Blake Gopnik



THE DAILY PIC (#1469): In this piece called *Negative Entropy*, from a group show at Invisible Exports in New York, Mika Tajima explores the connection between computers and looms, in what she calls an “abstract woven portrait.” First she recorded the sounds of the computers in a server room, then took the waveform diagrams for those recordings and had them rendered by a computer-controlled loom – a descendant of the original Jacquard loom that itself was the ancestor of the modern computer. Finally, she backed those weavings so they would function as acoustic dampening panels, having a real effect on the sound that they otherwise merely depict. (For full impact, I guess the pieces would only be shown in that original server room.) All that's all very well, and very good, but what intrigues me is how, deliberately or not, Tajima's weavings echo the 1970s paintings of Jules Olitski and other late-Greenbergian abstractionists. It's as though those paintings wished they'd had content, all along, but didn't get it until computers could deliver something for them to be about.