

# ARTFORUM

## CRITICS' PICKS



View of "Aki Sasamoto: Past in a future tense," 2019.

### NEW YORK

Aki Sasamoto

BORTOLAMI  
39 Walker Street  
March 1–April 20

The trio of spherical glass volumes in Aki Sasamoto's installation here are reminders of all that is circular in her work: the wall drawings in performances such as *Strange Attractors*, 2010; the toilet paper rolls of *Under/Over*, 2015; the rotating washing machines of *Delicate Cycle*, 2016; the doughnuts in her newest video (on view here), *Do Nut Diagram*, 2018; and even the suggestive displacement of "Past in a future tense," the title of this exhibition.

A loud whirring sound emanates from three centrifugal fans; the wind is channeled through coiling HVAC ducts that are connected to three large glass bottles resting on two round cocktail tables and a long oak bar—the kind from which you'd order a gin and tonic. A hand dryer-like rush of air goes through the bottles, which are directed into small holes cut into the sides of the three glass orbs mentioned earlier. Within each crystal-clear stomach, an amber drinking glass rests on its side. These configurations have been precisely measured, causing the cups to spin in place. However, each one rotates at a different speed, and occasionally, one will stop moving altogether. These austere Rube Goldberg machines, with their flows of invisible energy, are hypnotizing, if faulty, timekeepers. (My ears connect the soundscape to the hum of a refrigerator as heard from the bedroom at night. Imagine this scene after hours—glasses still spinning, intoxicated ghosts hovering over the bar.)

What can we make of Sasamoto's perennial churning? Like her other artworks, this piece seems part of a larger system, an ever-growing circuit of interconnected things. And, like her Venn diagram of a doughnut in the video, the show implies that the artist is still trying to answer to an old question she asked in *Strange Attractors*: "What does it feel like to be inside and outside at the same time?"