

# The New York Times

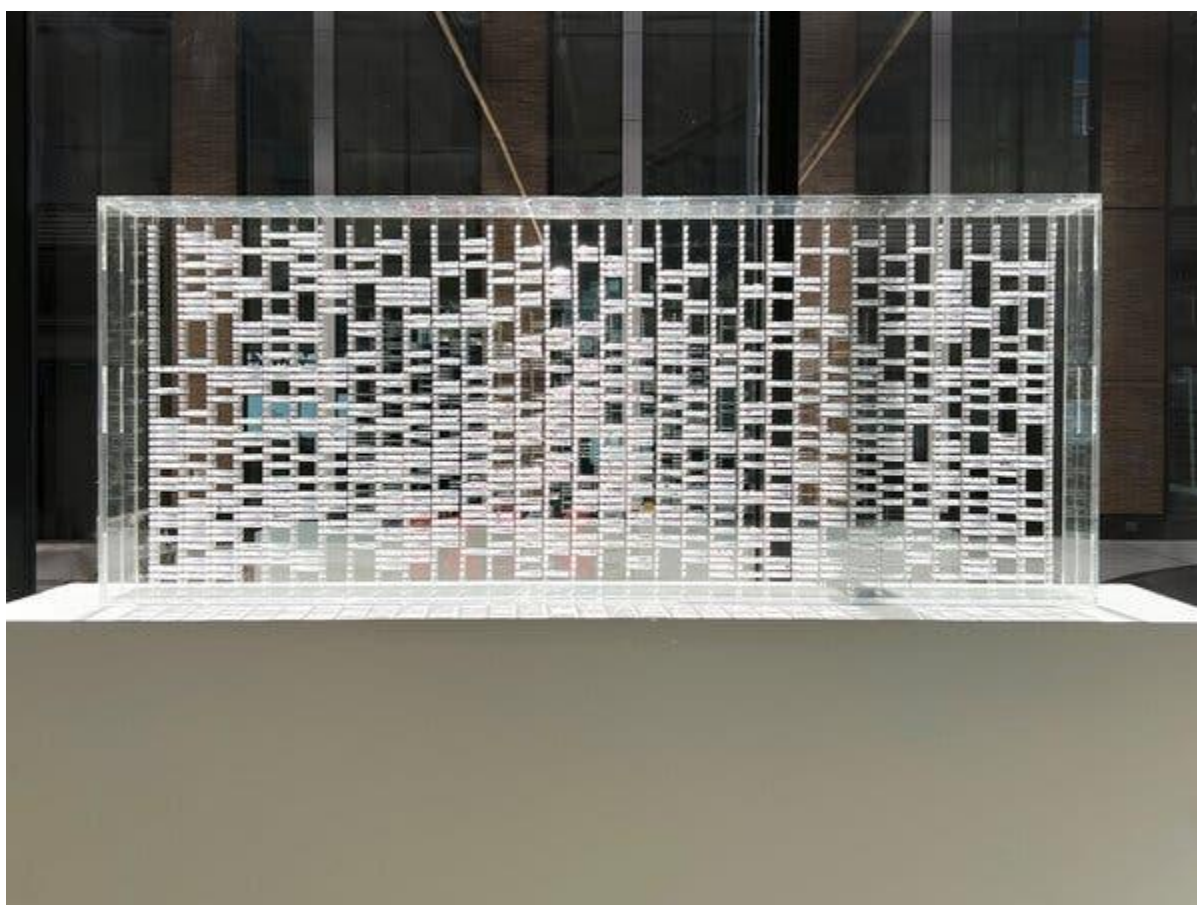
Friday, July 1, 2022

## What to See in N.Y.C. Galleries Right Now

LOWER EAST SIDE

Ani Liu

Through July 30. Cuchifritos Gallery + Project Space, 88 Essex Street, No. 21, Manhattan; 212-420-9202, [artistsallianceinc.org](http://artistsallianceinc.org).



Ani Liu's "Untitled (Labor of Love)," 2022, from her solo exhibition "Ecologies of Care." via Ani Liu and Cuchifritos Gallery, New York

The work that parents, especially mothers, do to raise their kids is often referred to as "invisible labor" because it happens out of the public eye. In her solo exhibition, "[Ecologies of Care](#)," [Ani Liu](#) quantifies that amount of labor and makes it visible, turning her experience of new motherhood into a series of thought-provoking artworks.

Liu came to art by way of architecture and then technology: For her master's thesis, she used an EEG device to control the movement of sperm on a custom circuit. The pieces

here harness technology to consider what it means to be a parent. The investigation is physical — for example, custom machines pumping a breast milk look-alike through looping tubes — and cultural, as with works showcasing gendered toys generated by a machine-learning algorithm (e.g. “Silver Scented Pony Hair Barbie Doll”).

The strongest pieces translate Liu’s physical experiences into mediated self-portraits, following feminist artists like Teresa Burga, Lynn Hershman Leeson and Adrian Piper. There’s a quiet tension between the art’s sleek appearance and the visceral realities of parenting, and in the attempt to impose order on a process that’s stubbornly unpredictable. “Untitled (Labor of Love)” (2022) charts every feeding and diaper change during the first 30 days of Liu’s infant’s life through vials containing breast milk, formula and pieces of diapers. To this childless writer, it was an eye-opening lesson — all the more acute in a post-Roe America — in just how much labor it takes to keep someone alive. *JILLIAN STEINHAUER*