

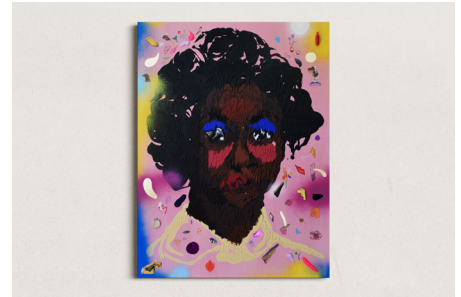
A.I.R.

Dial Tone **Dana Robinson**

September 10–October 9, 2022

Opening reception: Saturday, September 10 from 6–8pm

GALLERY II



Dana Robinson, *More Wishes Come True for Chris Harris Too*, 2022, acrylic on wood panel, 18 x 24 inches.

A.I.R. Gallery is pleased to announce *Dial Tone*, a solo exhibition by 2021–22 A.I.R. Fellow Dana Robinson. *Dial Tone* features a new body of work, including a monoprint on wood panel and collaged archival material preserved in plastic shadow boxes.

When you catch something and try to save it, it changes. The frieze of the Ancient Greek Parthenon entered the collection of the British Museum in the seventeenth century because the Earl of Elgin wanted to “protect what was left of the treasure.” Carried away from its original location, the frieze is experienced in a fundamentally different way when viewed as a recreation in a museum display in London rather than as a landmark in Athens.

Robinson’s work addresses the cycles of maintenance and transformation that people, and the materials they inhabit, undergo when they are preserved. Using vintage Black media, she pulls images of people out of the pages and gives them a new life. Mixing the past and present, she builds her own world and abstracts and collages with care, making it clear that these quotidian materials—the crumbling pages of 1950s magazines, the antique advertisements of Black women, the Newport cigarette ads—are as precious and deserving of preservation as the Parthenon Marbles.

In *Dial Tone*, the viewer encounters images of a woman presented on pastel backgrounds. Created from a vintage Fashion Fair ad, she is big and beautiful, a woman in her prime: independent, focused, rosy-cheeked, and ready for the world. Abstracted through Robinson’s monoprint process, she is divorced from her source and able to exist on her own terms. She is free, self-assured, but anonymous, and floating in a mist of possibilities. She can do anything.

Robinson is working to drag this media, transformed by time and space, into the light to be seen and appreciated. Many of the works are displayed like pictures in a photo album, placed behind acrylic on black wood panel. Familiar and intimate but also unrecognizable, they can be seen but not touched, not bothered.

The white of the gallery and the context of the space immediately become a part of the pieces. The collages on clear plastic are hung so that they float off the gallery wall, teasing the viewer with the knowledge that they are only seeing one side, and there is an entirely different work on the back.

Dial Tone is about loving ourselves fully by keeping something for ourselves. But it is also a show about the preservation of the push and pull of daily life, and about what happens to the artifacts of life—the daily grind, the washing of the dishes, getting dressed for the day, calling your mom, the pressing of the snooze button—when removed from the context of life.

What does a dial tone become when heard outside the context of a phone call?

Dana Robinson is a Brooklyn-based multimedia artist. She uses materials such as fabric, paint, vintage materials, and other found objects to investigate questions of Blackness, feminine identity, and ownership. Conversations about Robinson's eclectic collection have appeared in publications such as *Vice*, *Ain't-Bad*, NY Mag's *Vulture*, and *It's Nice That*. Her work has been published in *The Baffler* and *The New York Times Magazine*, and she has created large-scale commissions for Acrylicize in the Empire State Building, and for Meta and Not A Monolith in the Bronx. She has also exhibited at Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, Texas State University, Fuller Rosen Gallery, 92nd Street Y, Spellerberg Projects, Kates Ferri Projects, A.I.R. Gallery, Haul Gallery, and Regular Normal.

She was recently an artist in residence at the Wassaic Project, a fellow at A.I.R. Gallery, and she has upcoming solo shows with Kates Ferri Projects and Turley Gallery later in 2023.

A.I.R. Gallery is wheelchair accessible via ramp. There are accessible toilets in the venue. There is comfortable seating with backs. Free tap water is available. The venue is nearest to the F train at York St (0.2 miles) and the A train at High St (0.5 miles). The nearest wheelchair accessible trains is the B, Q, R at Dekalb Av (1.1 miles) and the 2, 3 at Borough Hall (0.8 miles). The roads immediately surrounding the gallery are cobblestone. The nearest accessible parking garage (for an hourly fee) is two blocks away at 100 Jay St. No ID necessary for entry. Please contact info@airgallery.org for more information.

