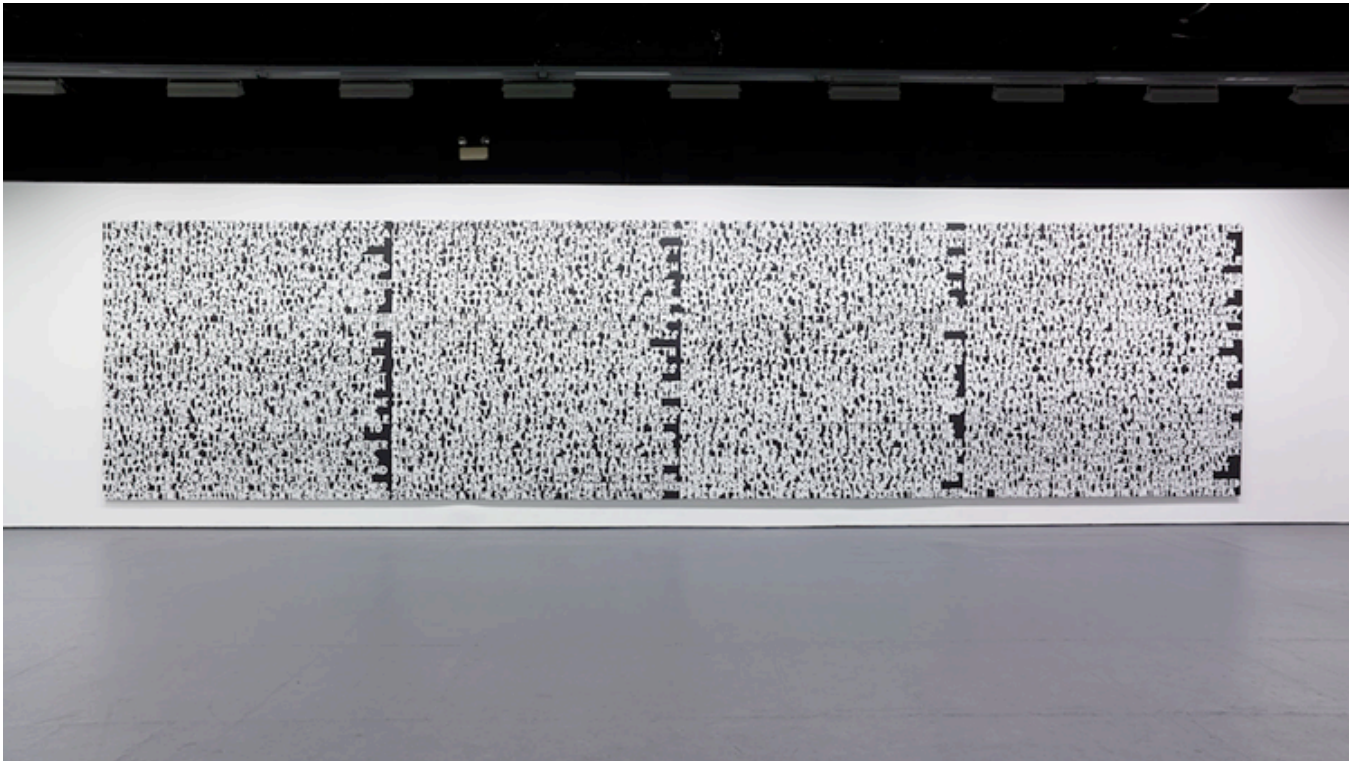




## Xaviera Simmons: CODED



Jason Mandella / Courtesy the Kitchen

By [Jessica Dawson](#)

Trust us: Take the elevator. The Kitchen's gallery is just one floor up, but stair-happy New Yorkers risk missing out on a crucial **Xaviera Simmons** video work in her small survey show "**CODED**." Inside the cab, Simmons installed the three-minute video *Islands*, in which footage shot from the prow of a boat shows the vessel's wake and its subtle shadow; the work's sound, a dull rumble, marries with the elevator's own growling, setting the stage for a disorienting trip. Upstairs, photographs and videos feature images of the sea, men and women naked or barely clothed, and landscapes. A sound work of raspy breathing fills the main room with a rough, perplexing energy. A large-scale, text-based work telling the story of maps, seas, and hurricanes comes off as both metaphor and visceral experience: Reading its white block letters pressing up against each other on the edges of the black painted wood slats may make you seasick, a fitting capstone to a show that, from start to finish, feels like a phenomenon.