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POP-UP SHOW "Transference," an intriguing art installation by Andy Paiko and Ethan Rose, is on view in a pop-up exhibit presented by the Museum of Craft and Design.

Glass, sound combine in nifty installation

By Cathy Bowman
Special to The Examiner

Imagine a room full of glass bowls that rotate slowly, each making hauntingly beautiful tones with not

a performer in sight.

"Transference" is the creation of Oregon artists Andy Paiko and Ethan Rose. Together they have taken a dinner-party trick — rubbing a wet finger around the rim of a glass to make a sound — and elevated it to a new art form.

"It's a ritual, a tradition we're all familiar with," says Mariah Nielson, a curator at the Museum of Craft and Design. "They've taken that experience and reinterpreted it to create something surprisingly stunning."

The installation is the first in a series of pop-up exhibitions the museum is planning around The City. Located on the corner of 18th and Castro streets, the modern space offers a peaceful retreat from the bustling energy of the neighborhood.

There are 31 bowls, some as small as goblets and others as large as serving dishes, all hand-blown by Paiko. The largest sit on chunky pedestals while the rest are mounted on dark-gray walls, facing outward so visitors can stare into the empty vessels as they rotate.

Every half-minute or so, a glass arm drops, pressing a moistened piece of fabric against the rim of a bowl. The bowl continues to turn, creating a hypnotic sound. No visitor hears the same arrangement.

"There's no composition," Nielson says. "It's literally a series of random sounds that are released."

The use of glass to make music has a long history. In 1761, Benjamin Franklin designed a mechanical version of the glass harp, which he named the armonica. Although Marie-Antoinette and others learned to play it, rumors spread that the sound could make people go mad, Nielson says.

Paiko and Rose's interpretation of the instrument uses motors connected to computer chips. Visitors seem to find the sound soothing

IF YOU GO

Transference

Where: Museum of Craft and Design, 499 Castro St., S.F.

When: 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily, except closed Dec. 25-26 and Jan. 1-2; runs through Jan. 9

Tickets: \$3 general, free for children under 12

Contact: (415) 773-0303, www.mocd.org



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— and surprising.

"It's exhilarating," says San Francisco resident Brad Webster, who popped in to see the installation while he was out doing some Christmas shopping. "I've never seen anything like it."

Nielson says the museum decided to launch its series of pop-up shows after it unexpectedly had to move out of its former location. The next site has yet to be chosen.

"It's an opportunity for us as a museum to go to the local neighborhoods of San Francisco instead of expecting them to come to us," she says.

Also, the museum is sponsoring a series of art workshops for children. Saturday, children ages 6 to 12 can enjoy a special tour of the exhibition and make their own sound instruments.