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Weekend

FINE ARTS
LEISURE

The New York Times

'Mori'

*The Kitchen Art Gallery
512 West 19th Street, Chelsea
Through tomorrow*

"Mori," which is being billed as an "Internet-based earthwork," seems more suitable for the Hayden Planetarium than an exhibition space. But given the frequency of Dolby-enhanced, from-on-high rumblings emitted by video and audio artworks these days, it is worth a visit. The rumble here is relatively low-down and natural: it is the sound of the earth moving in real time.

The seismic fluctuations are transmitted by a sensor at the Hayward Fault in California. At the Kitchen a MIDI system programmed with a mix of natural sounds (rock slides, volcanic eruptions, thunderclaps) translates the fluctuations into loud roars and crashes. They resonate in a small dark chamber lighted by fiber optic guide rails. At the center of this chamber, a monitor shows these sounds as a moving graph line that climbs and falls.

"Mori" has been created by Ken Goldberg, an artist and professor of industrial engineering at the University of California at Berkeley, in collaboration with Randall Packer, a composer and media artist; Gregory Kuhn, a theater artist; and Wojciech Matusik, a computer programmer. Although the effects dissipate once you re-encounter the reality-based rumblings of the trucks on 10th Avenue, their collaboration reinvests the popular superlative awesome with some of its original weight.

ROBERTA SMITH
