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"Who Collects Clouds in the Sky?"

By [Altamese Osborne](#) Wed., Sep. 11 2013 at 9:00 AM

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Words can't describe how phenomenal Katja Loher's "Who Collects Clouds in the Sky?" exhibition is. The spherical showcase, on view at Anya Tish gallery in Montrose, is one of the few exhibitions that leaves you feeling delighted and befuddled at the same time. The only words one can muster up are ones that break down its main components: creativity, technology and entomology, the study of bugs.

Creativity

The first thing the viewer sees is a collection of balloon-shaped objects of varying sizes -- the clouds. But, they don't quite look like the fluffy stuff; "Airplanet," (2013) "Timeplanet" (2013) and "Redplanet" (2012), the three biggest globes hanging from the ceiling look more like Chinese lanterns that have been stripped of their colors. This white background provides a canvas for images to be transmitted onto them. The previous trio's names identify themselves in relation to the smaller glass globes surrounding them on walls and tables. Compared to these medium-sized glass jars, ranging in diameters of 10 and 14 inches, the planets are gargantuan, sized from four to eight *feet* in diameter. However, the size of these spherical shapes is nothing compared to what's inside of them.

Technology

Those are not just any videos playing inside those "clouds." At first, like in the "Last Supper?" (2013) "videosculture," these looping videos seem to project images of insects, like bees.

Look harder.

All of a sudden, one of these "bees" looks up at you -- "What are you looking at?" her face asks -- and you realize it is not a bee at all, but a person dressed in a bee costume. Remember the scene in *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* in which trigger-happy television addict Mike Teevee was shrunk down and his miniature shape was transmitted into a television screen? That's what these images remind you of. Do they know they are trapped inside? They certainly know you are there, as the initial discovery of you staring down at them turns into repeated stares -- and eventually, smiles -- up at you.



"Last Supper?" (2013)

How did these little people get inside those spheres? Let's take one of these pieces apart. "Triplebubble" (2013) consists of three hand-blown glass spheres, a "white acrylic box" and three looping videos. The videos are placed into circular grooves scooped out of the acrylic box and covered with the glass. (The videos inside of the tabletop glass jars are a result of embedding, while the videos playing on the large floating spheres shoot out of a video projector. All of the videos run on a two to 10-minute loop.) But none of this begins before filming the dancers in a colorful, natural setting.

Entomology

Juxtaposing nature alongside technology may seem confusing. However, there is still an organic component at work: the dancing, which mimics insects and aquatic animals at work. The bee dancers are especially telling, for they look like they are in the process of collecting and storing honey in their "Beeplanet" (2013) sphere.

The animal-people also explain the title. Who collects clouds in the sky? Why, the bees, of course!

"Who Collects Clouds in the Sky?" will be on view through October 19. Visit anyatishgallery.com for more information.