

MARGARET FIEDLER McGINNIS

Lives and works in London, UK · Born in Chicago, USA

post-disciplinary SCULPTURE – SOUND – SPACE

I compose for the sculptures I build



portrait of the artist in front of her Sabines

Royal College of Art, London, March 2025

Photo credit Evie Yussuf

Artist Statement

My practice is rooted in epistemological disobedience – a lifelong, deliberate refusal to accept established boundaries, genres, or rules. Having operated at the vanguard of international sonic culture for over thirty years, including pioneering the foundational landscapes of post-rock in the early 1990s, my current sculptural work is a direct continuation of this trajectory. I do not see a division between an instrument, an object, a building, or a historical archive; they are all sites of resonance and resistance.

At the absolute core of my work is sound – or the profound, intentional lack of it. Driven by a deep curiosity and a warm, visceral engagement with the world, I build physical instruments, structural interventions, and altered ready-mades that challenge how we listen. Heavily influenced by the conceptual frameworks of John Cage, I treat silence, technical failure, and structural interference not as absences, but as active materials. Whether driving multi-channel audio through patinated steel and scrap metal, delivering 35Hz sub-bass through your skeleton via bone conduction, or capturing the quiet, ignored frequencies of a historic site, I intercept space to reveal the unscripted reality of a material. My work is an invitation to look past the visual and engage with the raw, boundary-pushing friction of sound on its own terms.

Education & Institutional Recognition

- 2025 MA Sculpture, Royal College of Art, London, UK
 - 2006 Graduate Diploma in Law, College of Law, London, UK
 - 1989 BA Humanities, Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, NY, USA
 - 1987-88 Guest Year, Pure Philosophy, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland
 - 2025 RCA Jaguar Award - Highly Commended/Shortlisted (*Sonic Seating*)
 - 2024-25 *Recording Architectures* RCA School of Architecture PhD spatial audio research group
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Selected Sculpture & Sound Practice

- 2027 (*upcoming*) Artist in Residence, Sound Art Lab, Struer “City of Sound”, Denmark (*Invited – dates flexible*)
- 2027 (*upcoming*) Live scoring *Aelita: Queen of Mars* (London & Paris) (*with Christi Denton*)
- 2026 Artist in Residence, USF Verftet, Bergen, Norway (*Open Call*)

- 2026 Artist in Residence, Base Frequencies Lab, 101 Outdoor Arts, England (*Open Call*) – CYMATICS triptych
 - 2026 Sonic Experiments Open Call, ZKM Hertzlab, Karlsruhe, Germany (*Finalist*)
 - 2026 “Recording The Dead” essay and field recording project, *Ways Of Listening*, Evelyn Glennie Foundation
 - 2026 Sound Artist in Residence, Regional Cultural Centre, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, Ireland (*Open Call*)
 - 2026 *A Century of Sounds*, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, England (*Group & Permanent Acquisition*)
 - 2026 *Through These Red Windows* my sculptures collab w/sound artist Asher Levitas (*vinyl and digital release*)
 - 2025 *Vibration*, The Gallery SW6, London (*Group*) – the Sabines
 - 2025 Artist Residency Open Call, BEMIS Center for Contemporary Arts, Omaha, USA (*2nd round shortlist*)
 - 2025 STAiR Interim Artist in Residence, Harlow Sculpture Town, Harlow, England
 - 2025 RCA Graduate Show, Royal College of Art, London (*SONOMONOLITH® I debut*)
 - 2025 *Present Participles*, Three Rooms E17, London (*Solo*) – debuts of the Sabines & the Octophonic Forest
 - 2025 *Assemble / Fall*, Somers Gallery, London (*Performance + original composition and sound design*)
 - 2024 *SPRINGS*, Treize Galerie, Paris (*with Christi Denton*)
 - 2024 *DRIFTLESS*, Amtrak sponsored USA cross-country train journey of field recordings and photography
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Sonic Legacy & Practice (1980s–Present)

Pioneering Roots: First cellist / member of Greenwich High School Electronic Music Department;
Early underground collaborations including teenage band with MOBY

Co-founder, Composer, Multi-instrumentalist: LAIKA & MOONSHAKE

First woman shaping the foundational landscapes of post-rock (1992); seven critically acclaimed albums

Two Radiohead support tours (UK for *OK Computer* and Europe for *Kid A*) at Thom Yorke’s personal request

Lead Guitarist (Worldwide Touring): PJ HARVEY & WIRE.

50 shows supporting U2 on their *Elevation* tour in USA/Canada + Earl’s Court London

Broadcast: BBC Radio 1 Peel Sessions – John Peel Session female world record holder for performing with the most bands – four: Laika, Moonshake, PJ Harvey and NYC’s queercore avant-rock God Is My Co-Pilot

Live television including Later... with Jools Holland, David Letterman, Jay Leno

Performance Highlights: Madison Square Garden, Glastonbury, Lollapalooza, Big Day Out, Roskilde

Selected Press: The Wire, Pitchfork, Mojo, Q, NME, Les Inrockuptibles, The Guardian, Libération, New York Times, Rolling Stone

New Bands: one in Philadelphia (album nearing completion); one in Somerset, England (rehearsing for live shows)

Community

Founder & co-lead *HOPE GARDEN*, Walthamstow, London (2021–ongoing)

Community garden with the NHS & Change Grow Live (UK national substance addiction charity)

Weekly wellbeing gardening sessions; quarterly free seasonal community & family workshops

Royal Horticultural Society Certificate of Excellence (2023) & Best London Wellbeing Garden (London In Bloom 2023)

Garden Instagram @cgl.garden.e17

Contact & Links

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