

MARGARET FIEDLER MCGINNIS, MRSS

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

post-disciplinary SCULPTURE – SOUND – SPACE

I compose for the sculptures I build

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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

MA Sculpture, Royal College of Art, London, UK (2025)

Graduate Diploma in Law, College of Law, London, UK

BA Humanities, Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, NY, USA

Guest Year, Pure Philosophy, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

RCA Jaguar Award - Highly Commended/Shortlisted (*Sonic Seating*, 2025)

Recording Architectures RCA School of Architecture PhD spatial audio research group (2024/25)

Member, Royal Society of Sculptors

Composer / Lyricist Member, PRS for Music

Selected Sculpture & Sound Practice

- 2027 Artist in Residence, Sound Art Lab, Struer “City of Sound”, Denmark (*Invited*)
- 2027 Live scoring *Aelita: Queen of Mars* (London & Paris) (*with Christi Denton*)
- 2026-27 Port of London Authority – Creative Foreshore Permit (mudlarking & material sourcing – River Thames)
- 2026 Artist in Residence, Strøm Kødbyen, Copenhagen, Denmark (*with sound artist Christi Denton, Open Call*)
- 2026 Café Oto, London (*live performance with Graham Lewis (Wire)*)
- 2026 FreeSpace Artist, Studio Wayne McGregor, London (*studio access for dance & performance development*)
- 2026 Artist in Residence, USF Verftet, Bergen, Norway (*Open Call*)
- 2026 Resonating Futures, ZKM, Karlsruhe, Germany – reached final round of jury deliberation (*Open Call*)
- 2026 Artist in Residence, Base Frequencies Lab, 101 Outdoor Arts, Greenham Common, England (*Open Call*)
- 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 Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, Omaha, NE (*2nd round finalist, Open Call, Visual Artist in Residence*)
- 2025 *Vibration*, The Gallery SW6, London (*Group*)
- 2025 STAIR Interim Artist in Residence, Harlow Sculpture Town, Harlow, England
- 2025 *The Artist’s Garden / theCOLAB / Yorkshire Sculpture Park* Artist in Residence (*shortlist*)
- 2025 RCA Graduate Show, Royal College of Art, London (*SONOMONOLITH® I debut*)
- 2025 *Present Participles*, Three Rooms E17, London (*Solo*)
- 2025 *Assemble / Fall*, Somers Gallery, London (*Performance*)
- 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

Press including New York Times, Rolling Stone, The Guardian, Libération, The Wire, Pitchfork, Mojo, Q, NME

Present: two new bands – one in Philadelphia, USA and one in Somerset, England

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