

*margaret fiedler mcginnis*  
*selected sculptures 2024/26*

*born chicago*  
*lives & works east london*

*e-mail / IG / web*

*margaret fiedler mcginnis*

## **PRESENT PARTICIPLES**

*testing creating reverberating thinking sharing listening challenging preparing editing fracturing improving  
exploring developing drifting warping recording questioning attending experiencing falling growing being*

**15th - 21st april 2025 / 9am - 7pm daily**

*The Sabines*

*three rooms london solo show*  
*link to site-responsive*  
*3-channel music composition*  
*'when the sky was still a room'*

# SONOMONOLITH® I

2025

*blackened steel, beeswax, audio  
electronics, intangible IP asset  
(registered trademark)*

*1812 x 1334 x 834 mm*

*A sonic monolith  
weighing over 175kg, the  
sculpture is barely  
audible even when  
standing very close to it.  
However, by "connecting"  
to the sculpture - with  
the forehead or even  
elbow, the low 35Hz sub-  
bass tone fills the body.  
This form of hearing via  
the phenomenon known  
as "bone conduction"  
can be deepened even  
further by wearing ear  
defenders to exclude all  
external ambient noise*



# CYMATICS

*works in progress 2026*

*cold-blackened, rusted and waxed mild  
steel "plug & play" sonic wall works*

*steel, scrap, audio electronics*

*dimensions variable (~35cm smallest – 97cm longest)*





## *Pest Control 2026*

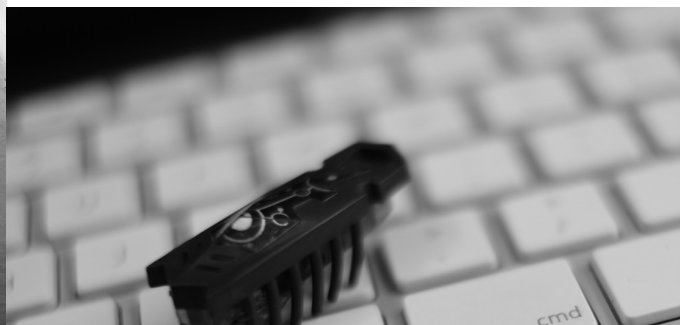
*prepared piano recordings*

*proposed vinyl LP release and concert  
hall tour with improvised musical  
performances and interactive/  
collaborative contemporary dance*

*baby grand piano, autonomous robot  
composers (HEXBUG nano®),  
condenser & contact microphones, cello  
bow*

*dimensions / durations variable*

*LINK to ROUGH MIX track 1 (.wav file)*



*The Sabines*  
Royal College of Art  
2025

*mild steel sculptural  
reverberation plates  
named in honour of  
Wallace Sabine, the  
father of architectural  
acoustics. For  
composition,  
collaboration &  
performance*

*steel, audio electronics  
guitar amplifiers*

*180 x 300 x 270 cm*



# *The Octophonic Forest*

*2025*

*laser-cut, welded & spray-painted mild steel, quartered Epping Forest tree trunk, 8-channel loudspeaker array, site-responsive musical compositions – installations include public seating/floor cushions & bespoke essential oil blend  
dimensions variable*



# Power Failure

2026

*modified manual fire alarm bell, hand-crank mechanism, custom label, accompanying text*

*participatory sound object(s), each alarm is 24cm x 24cm*



*A fully functional mechanical fire alarm bell whose only alteration is a single textual change: the word "FIRE" has been replaced with "MUSIC". The original instruction remains: "Turn handle to operate."*

*By this minimal intervention, the work enacts a direct Cageian proposition. Just as John Cage's 4'33" (1952) proposed that there is no such thing as silence and that any sounds occurring within a framed duration can constitute music if we attend to them as such, Power Failure reframes the most anti-musical sound - an urgent institutional alarm - as music.*

*When a visitor turns the crank, the bell produces a loud, raw, metallic clanging (≈60 dB). The sound is abrupt, resonant and*

*unmistakably alarm-like in timbre and rhythm. Yet every activation is unique, shaped by the performer's speed, force, duration and rhythm.*

*The piece does not end with the clanging. It continues in the sudden intrusion into ambient quiet, the collective startle or laughter, the lingering ring in the ears, the gradual return of environmental sounds and the heightened awareness of listening itself. Hesitation before cranking, the decision to activate (or refrain), and the acoustic and psychological aftermath all become part of the durational composition.*

*The work creates a deliberate double bind: it looks exactly like emergency infrastructure yet invites the one action viewers are trained never to do (unless there is actually a fire!) which is to deliberately operate what appears to be a fire alarm in a public place. In this tension, authorship and responsibility shift entirely to the participant.*

*Power Failure proposes that music is not what pleases the ear or what culture packages as entertainment. It is whatever sound we choose to frame and attend to - even when that sound is coded as noise, disruption or danger.*

*Silent on the wall, the bell functions as latent sculpture and conceptual prompt. When sounded, the boundary between performer and audience, art and life, permission and transgression dissolves. The work lives most fully in the moment of activation and its reverberations, reminding us that listening is an active, sometimes uncomfortable and always consequential act.*



*Sonic Seating (proposal)*

*2025*

*concept shortlisted/specially commended in the inaugural Royal College of Art Jaguar Art Awards. Digital mockup for powder-coated steel and satin brass resonant seating vibrating with the sounds of the natural world - blue whales, calving arctic glaciers, sonified NASA solar data and feline apex predators. [LINK to 3-minute audio-visual film](#)*

# Attunement (proposal)

2025

*Attunement is a series of site-responsive permanent outdoor deep listening installations that frame individual trees in 3 × 3 m square contemplative enclosures with a 60 cm Cor-ten steel seating cube. Visitors are invited to sit and listen (“attune”) to the subtle sonic and visual presence of each tree from the trembling of aspen leaves to the rustle of bamboo in motion.*

*Connected to my ongoing exploration of sonic resonance and elemental materials in sculpture, the installations create a personal space for reflection, echoing the quiet emotional role of memorial benches and trees in public parks and acknowledging the transformative power that community gardening has had on my physical and mental wellbeing. Each work celebrates the unique character of the tree and offers a meditative encounter with nature, sculpture and presence.*

*digital mockup*





*Self Portrait (ringing)*  
2024

*industrial ear defenders, blued  
steel tuning fork, speaker  
stand*

*77 x 20.5 x 25.5 cm*

*Self Portrait (shrinking)*  
2024

*pianola (player piano) roll  
masking tape, HB pencil mark*

*160 x 30.5 x 5 cm*

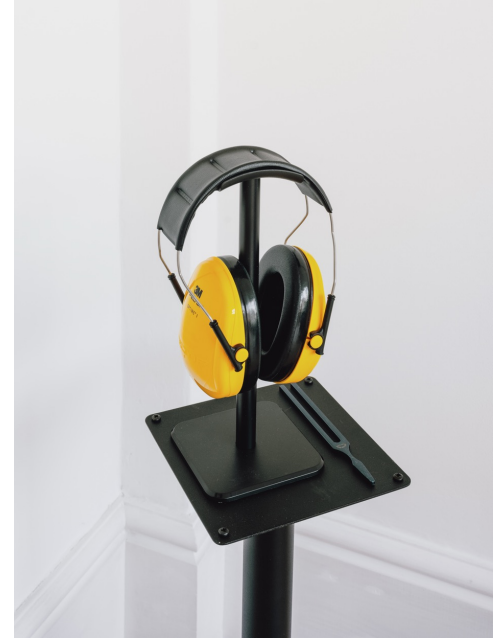
# Self Portrait (shrinking)

2024

(below & detail right)  
after decades of measuring  
160cm the artist is now 157.5cm  
(5'2")



"Self Portrait (shrinking)" incorporates lyrics from Five Foot Two Eyes Of Blue © Joseph Young / Samuel M. Lewis / Ray Henderson (MPL UK Publishing / Redwood Music Ltd)



wearing ear defenders to  
exclude external noise a tuning  
fork is struck and placed  
between the viewer's teeth.  
Through the phenomenon of  
bone conduction the participant  
has a visceral encounter with the  
artist's tinnitus

Self Portrait (ringing)

2024

*Lucky Peak*  
2024

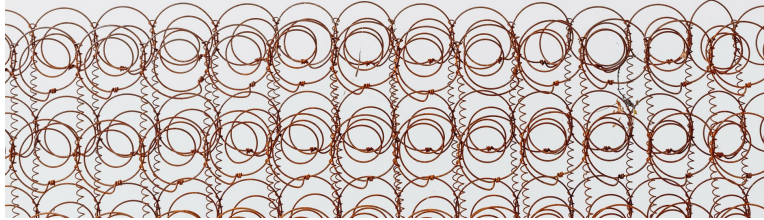
*rusted bedsprings  
wooden mousetraps  
framed colour digital  
photograph, portable  
stereo (ghetto blaster)  
one minute endless  
loop cassette, voice*

*169 x 200 x 89 cm  
duration ∞*





*in memory of the  
artist's brother, an  
addict, who committed  
a slow suicide  
Lucky Peak  
2024  
detail below & far left*



*a one minute acapella vocal composition  
transferred to endless loop cassette  
performance, musical work & sound recording  
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All artworks © margaret fiedler mcginnis 2024/2025/2026  
“Self Portrait (ringing)”, “Self Portrait (shrinking)” and  
“Lucky Peak” photography © Tim Crocker 2024  
Artist portrait photo © Evie Yussuf 2025  
All other photography © Margaret Fiedler McGinnis 2025/26

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