



margaret fiedler mcginnis
sculpture – sound – space
selected works 2023 - 2026

CYMATICS (2026)
multi-channel steel sonic wall works
[[click here to play studio audio](#)
documentation in your browser]
photo credit tim crocker



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.

*portrait of the artist in front of her Sabines – sculptural reverb plates – and her B&W infrared >830nm digital photography UV printed on mild steel
Royal College of Art, London, March 2025. photo credit evie yussuf*

PEST CONTROL(2026)

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

*disassembled/prepared upright piano, autonomous
robot composers (HEXBUG nano®), condenser &
contact microphones, cello bow*

*dimensions/
durations variable*

*[[click here to play studio audio
documentation in your browser](#)]*

photo credit tim crocker



THE SABINES (2024/2025)

*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

*[click here to play gallery
documentation in your
browser]*

photo © artist



The Octophonic Forest (2025)

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

dimensions variable [[click here to play gallery audio/visual documentation in your browser](#)] photo © artist





CYMATICS (2026)

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

*patinated/beeswaxed steel, scrap, audio exciters
quad & octophonic contemporary classical music compositions*

Left: CYMATIC 4 - Thames River London Foreshore Enamelled Steel Scrap 40 x 36 x 1.5 cm

Centre: CYMATIC 3 - Leslie Street Spit Toronto Aluminium Scrap 40 x 35.5 x 8 cm

*Right: CYMATIC 1 - Leslie Street Spit Toronto Brass Scrap 60 x 50 x 2 cm
photo credit tim crocker*



*Left: CYMATIC 2 (2026) – Leslie Street Spit Toronto Scrap 97 x 60 x 7 cm
Right: CYMATIC 5 (2026) – Thames River Foreshore Scrap 60 x 60 x 1.5 cm*



May 2026 . Five of eight CYMATICS in short-term rented warehouse studio in Hackney Wick, London testing installation, hanging, and composing music in situ. Four of the works were fitted with audio exchangers – this is quadraphonic but more audio channels – octo and beyond – can easily be added

Lucky Peak (2024)

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

*169 x 200 x 89 cm
duration ∞*

photo credit tim crocker

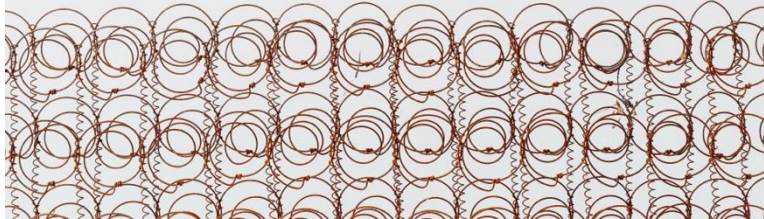




*in memory of the artist's
brother, an addict, who
committed a slow suicide*

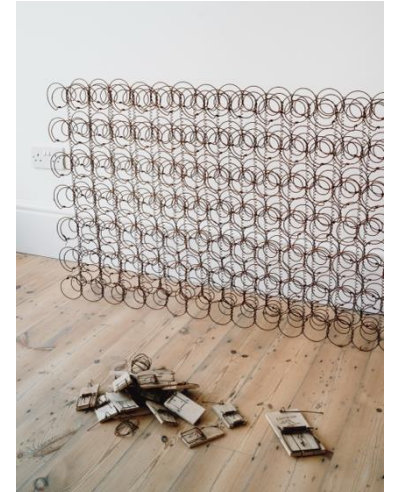
*Lucky Peak (2024)
detail below & far left*

all photos tim crocker



*a one minute acapella vocal composition
transferred to endless loop cassette
[[click here to play audio in your browser](#)]*

*performance, musical work & sound recording
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left

Self Portrait (ringing) (2024)

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

77 x 20.5 x 25.5 cm

right

Self Portrait (shrinking) (2024)

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

160 x 30.5 x 5 cm

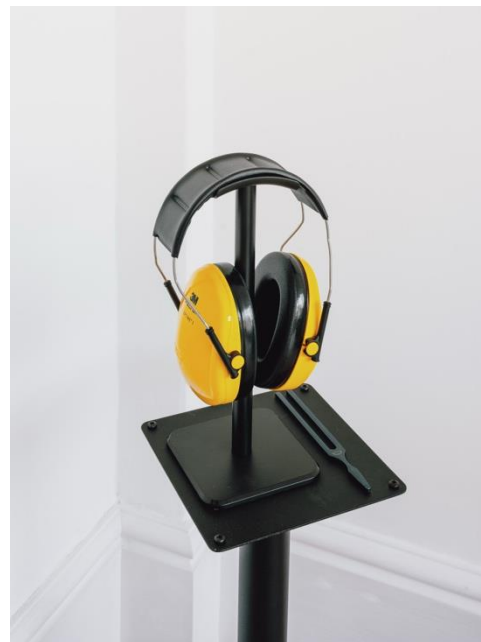
photo credit tim crocker

Self Portrait (shrinking) (2024)

(below & detail right)

*after decades of measuring 160cm the
artist is now 157.5cm (5'2")*

all photos tim crocker



*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)



Recording The Dead / The Dead Remind Us - Field Recordings 2023 in Berlin / London / Norwich / Paris / Copenhagen				
Niels Bohr Physicist 1885-1962 Assistens Kirkegård København	Claude Debussy Composer 1862 - 1918 Cimetière de Passy Paris	Samuel Beckett Novelist & Playwright 1906-1989 Cimetière du Montparnasse Paris	Julian of Norwich Theologian & anchoress 1342 - (after) 1416(?) Church of St. Julian Norwich shrine, body not identified	Bertolt Brecht Playwright 1898-1956 Dorotheenstädtischer Friedhof Berlin
Charles Baudelaire Poet 1821-1867 Cimetière du Montparnasse Paris	Mary Wollstonecraft Writer & Philosopher 1759-1797 Place of burial St. Pancras Old Church London reinterred St. Peter's Church Bournemouth	Jean-Paul Sartre 1905-1980 & Simone de Beauvoir 1929- 1980 Writers & Philosophers Cimetière du Montparnasse Paris	Rosa Luxemburg Economist & Revolutionary 1871 - 1919 Zentralfriedhof Friedrichsfelde Berlin cenotaph, body not identified	Søren Kirkegaard Philosopher 1813 - 1855 Assistens Kirkegård København
Susan Sontag Writer & Filmmaker 1933- 2004 Cimetière du Montparnasse Paris	Karl Marx Philosopher & Economist 1818 - 1883 Highgate Cemetery London	Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel Philosopher 1770-1831 Dorotheenstädtischer Friedhof Berlin	William Blake Poet & Artist 1757-1827 Bunhill Fields Burial Grounds London	Herbert Marcuse Political Philosopher 1898-1979 Dorotheenstädtischer Friedhof Berlin
Frédéric Chopin Composer & Pianist 1810-1849 Cimetière du Père-Lachaise Paris (body) / Bazylika Świętego Krzyża Warszawa (heart)	Marcel Proust Novelist 1871-1922 Cimetière du Père- Lachaise Paris	Equipment list: SONY PCM- M10/R field recorder w/matched pair Jaz Riley French C-Series contact microphones. Cemetery recordings at 96kHz/24-bit. Voice markers placed via Sony field recorder's omni-directional built-in electret condenser microphones. Headphones - bespoke in-ear monitors by Hand Held Audio Enfield London	Nico / Christa Paffgen Singer, Songwriter, Actor & Model 1938-1988 Friedhof Grunewald-Forst Berlin	DIE TOTEN MAHNEN UNS (The Dead Remind Us) Self-Portrait 20.07.23 Gedenkstätte der Sozialisten (Memorial to the Socialists), Zentralfriedhof Friedrichsfelde Berlin

RECORDING THE DEAD (2023 – ongoing)

archive of contact mic recordings, photos, spreadsheet and field notes of the gravestones of radical thinkers who have influenced my intellectual & creative life

ATTUNEMENT (proposal) (2025)

Attunement is a series of site-responsive permanent outdoor deep listening installations that frame individual trees in 3 x 3 m square contemplative endlosures 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.

*One of the first proposed sites is in Glenveagh National Park, Co. Donegal, where, in March 2026, I discovered the *Populus tremula* – the quaking aspen – grows natively.*

digital mockup



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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
- 1988 Guest Year, Pure Philosophy, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland
- 2025 RCA Jaguar Award - Highly Commended/Shortlisted (*Sonic Seating*)
- 2024/5 *Recording Architectures* RCA School of Architecture spatial audio research group

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 Artist in Residence, USF Verftet, Bergen, Norway (*Open Call*)
- 2026 Artist in Residence, Base Frequencies Lab, 101 Outdoor Arts, England (*Open Call*)
- 2026 Sound Artist in Residence, Regional Cultural Centre, Donegal, Ireland (*Open Call*)
- 2026 *A Century of Sounds*, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, England
(*Group & Permanent Acquisition*)
- 2025 *Vibration*, The Gallery SW6, London (*Group*)
- 2025 STAiR Interim Artist in Residence, Harlow Sculpture Town, Harlow, England
- 2025 RCA Graduate Show, Royal College of Art, London (*SONOMONOLITH@1 debut*)
- 2025 *Present Participles*, Three Rooms E17, London (*Solo*)
- 2025 *Assemble / Fall*, Somers Gallery, London (*Performance*)
- 2024 *SPRINGS*, Treize Galerie, Paris (*with Christi Denton*)

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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

Lead Guitarist (Worldwide Touring): PJ HARVEY & WIRE

Broadcast & History: BBC Radio 1 Peel Sessions (John Peel Sessions female world record holder performed with 4 bands);

Live performances on television including *Later... with Jools Holland*, David Letterman, Canal+ *Nulle Part Ailleurs*

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

Selected Press *The Wire*, *Pitchfork*, *Les Inrockuptibles*, *The Guardian*, *Libération*, *New York Times*, *Rolling Stone*

PALETTE (2026)

scrap metal intended for resonance testing sourced from Leslie Street Spit Toronto & Thames River Foreshore London

dimensions variable photo credit tim crocker

