

Manifesto for olfactory-acoustic sculpture (A guide to creating uncomfortable questions)

As humans we like to think we know. The expression 'I know' is comfortable to say. Not knowing is uncomfortable. Not knowing is the beginning of a useful problem.

I create questions that cannot be dispatched, or rendered pointless, with an 'I know.' This is an expression that kills questions; it is the antithesis of creativity or progress.

Our primary sense of vision must be stepped aside from in order to move away from all the 'I knows.' The visual world is saturated with facile symbolism that is easily recognised and talked about 'knowingly.' Vision is full of 'I know.'

The visual elements of my work are framing devices, plinths holding up the work to enable it to be experienced, notations formed from research. My sculpture fills space with volumes of sound and smell.

Noise is a sound yet to be placed within language. The distinction between noise and sound is entirely dependent on knowledge. Often the noises in my acoustic compositions are animal calls. Those who study bioacoustics might recognise them, and know them as sounds.

Smell must make you stop and think. Perfume refers to a smell that has been classified by language. The isolated olfactory molecules, or 'notes', of my compositions are unfamiliar and lie outside of language.

Neither my sound nor my smell compositions respond to, or are defined by, linguistic references. They are outside of assumptions.

My titles are not descriptive; they are material and tactile elements of the composition and serve to frame the work. They are coordinates; they set the key for the register of perception. The elements of my sculptures create scenarios where perception tests the limit of knowledge.

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