

THROUGH MY BODY TO YOUR BODY AND BACK

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THROUGH MY BODY TO YOUR BODY AND BACK



"I here by declare the this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material which has to a substantial extent been accepted for any degree or diploma of a university or other institute of higher learning, except where due acknowledgement has been made"

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|-----------|------------------------------------|
| 1 | Title |
| 2 | Attestation |
| 3 | Table of Contents |
| 4 | Abstract |
| 5 | Introduction |
| 6 | Ursounds |
| 8 | Voice |
| 9 | Chorus |
| 10 | Skin |
| 12 | Volume |
| 14 | Rupture |
| 17 | Interaction |
| 18 | Control |
| 20 | Ear/Mouth |
| 21 | Form |
| 23 | Materials |
| 25 | Conclusion |
| 26 | Methodology |
| 28 | Post Installation Conclusion |
| 29 | Flow Chart of Practice Development |
| 33 | References |

INTRODUCTION

Through My Body To Your Body And Back is a multi-channel sound installation/performance comprising three elements. Six suspended metal plates that have speakers mounted, ear & mouth casts and my sleeping body. Internal sounds of my body are placed in motion across the plates in a generative composition. The aim of this installation and research practice is to uncover notions of selfhood and collectivity. I ask what does it mean for the boundaries of one's being when notions of multiplicity and temporality are examined, can I remain an island? As my boundaries of selfhood are washed away I examine on what level this action takes place, is it in my conscious, unconscious or mechanical self.

To expand on these ideas my supporting exegesis will begin by an endeavour to elucidate notions of the originating soundscape, the uterine ur-soundscape. One that place us at the source of all sound and acts as indexical to all further sound experience, but also places this originary scape as located in mythic space as much as in actual. I expand those notions into querying voice as a component of individuation and examine the notion of chorus to unpick the dynamic inherent in my practical work

The following chapter carries on the questioning of selfhood with the focus now opening into the arena of surface, skin and boundary. I challenge my practice as to whether I am enacting notions of surface or depth within my work and questioning what the outcome may be if both are held in a tension with each other, or more precisely if both are enacted what becomes of the notion of self.

The final segment draws an alignment between the fluidic nature of sound and the leaky body. Looking at ways the wholeness of the body can be subverted and swamped, washed out and washed away. Exploring what happens when the sonic tide of the internal-scape swells over the boundaries of the body and flows unhindered into the environment aided and abetted by a technologized prosthetic system.

Throughout this practical research issues of control break through the surface as an internal force of the project and then sink back down just as quickly. With this final iteration of the work the notion of control becomes foregrounded and a tension is developed within the work to explore the performative role of the self in relation both to the work and to that very sense of selfhood that resides at the core of this investigation. It has been a fundamental issue all along, yet as I said sometimes it slunk off into the corner and would remain unnoticed. As such it sits outside the flow of the argument of my theoretical research and is incorporated here as more of a coda. However, I hope to elucidate the concept to the extent that it allows you to see it as a tectonic element of the research.

The final chapter of the written element of my research covers my methodology and strategy of my thinking, it places my work within a wider framework of theoretical research and delves into my choices behind the structure and materiality of the installation.



URSOUNDS

The trajectory of the project has seen me explore one's relation to environment, to oneself and to others. Asking how is the individual placed within a collective and what is the collectivising mechanism at work. This iteration of the project sees that questioning undergo a reframing. I find myself circling back to a beginning, the body, more precisely my body, my body's placement in the world, and even more precisely, the one place that is not and never will be the world, the womb.

The foundations of my practice are the ursounds of the uterine space. Flesh expanding cell by cell into the amniotic ocean. Bathed in the reverberations of the schlugging of the digestive tract, the aeration of the lungs plus the ventricular flapping and systolic percussion of the heart. This originary aural scape is at once unique to each body, yet also universal. I hear and know my own mother through these amniotic sounds, I recognize her voice, yet each body's sounds are so similar. Already notions of singularity and plurality are born before I am even aware there is a world to be in.

Therefore the ursound, the soundscape to which all other audible encounters are indexed, is more than personal it is cultural, it is collective and the divining of the original soundscape is a mythic soundscape. Labelle in *Perspective Of Sound Art* (2006,204) quantifies it as 'seeking to locate the mythological beginning of sound, the ursound from which the sound world itself was born'

The Delphic Oracle, the name Delphi comes from the same root as Delphyus meaning 'womb'. Apollo ruled over the oracle at Delphi, but according to Farnell (1907,vol iv,180) it was not founded by him. He inherited the oracle from a still older cult, that of Ge (Gaia) and Themis, the earth goddess and her daughter.

"The earth is the abode of the dead, therefore the earth-deity has power over the ghostly world: the shape of dreams, which often foreshadow the future... ascend from the world below... the consultant slept in a holy shrine with his ear to the ground. That such conceptions attached to Gaia is shown by records of her cults at Delphi" (1907, vol iii, 8)

The Gaian body out of which oracular messages seep, here, is linked to sound and the unconscious dream-space. The seed of the living germinating in the chthonic Gaian body is the oracular voice. I lie on the ground, asleep and listening to the earth with my dreambody for the words of Gaia. It is the dreamspace that connects my horizontal form with the vertical forms hanging, waiting to receive the body sounds. I am the ear. I am listening, listening for the future of my body.

I am also the body unfolding my interiority outward, sending my sounds to the speakers. Projecting my focus toward the site of their unfolding. Steven Connor says that for Michel Serres 'the soul is not something sequestered or inhumed in the body, but that which comes into being in contact, in activities of reaching, stretching, doubling, magnification.' (2004.30) In listening to the sounds my awareness reaches and in so doing I find my soul, myself. I find myself in the reaching out toward the sound, in reaching out to the oracular voice. Through the act of exteriorizing the sounds am I able to locate myself. And I do this through listening, which is a form of absorbing myself outward into the sound. Yet it is the sound of inside me, it is an echo I am creating, the reaching for and folding into myself. It would be a closed circuit if it wasn't for the fact that the sounds aren't just mine they are yours too. They are everyone's.



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Aura Satz
2005
Intrasonic
www.iamanagram.com
retrieved 4.11



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Aura Satz
2005
Ventriloqua
www.iamanagram.com
retrieved 4.11

Aura Satz, in her project Ventriloqua, 2003, summons the same oracular voice. The work was executed while Satz was pregnant, musician Anna Piva played the electromagnetic waves of Satz's belly with a theremin. In Satz's own words 'the artist was transformed into a instrument, an antenna, a medium through which an otherworldly voice was transmitted.'

Satz's work sits aligned with my own- the using of the body as instrument, exposing a hidden soundscape and the situating the body as otherworldly. Satz's voice translated by the theremin can be conceived as music and by virtue of the theremin would reside in cultural knowledge as indexed to Sci-fi soundtracks. The theremin has come to be associated with all things otherworldly, as such it reemphasizes the oracular connection. It, at the same time, adheres the sound to the abstract. In comparison the sounds in my work situate my point of view directly at the body, of the body, from the body. They are the direct voice of the flesh. This is not an act of ventriloquism but the actual voice, albeit with a distortion of scale (dimensional not harmonious). These sounds that lap at the edge of the hearing amplified to extreme.

VOICE

I use the sounds of my body to divine an aspect of self usually hidden. I use the sounds to relate myself to you, but split across the multiple surfaces. I am a being of multiplicity. The body overflows with multiple sounds. I pour these sounds into the vessels of metal. They sing as a chorus therefore this voice is also a multi voice, a collective voice, a universal voice, this voice of the body. But is it a voice? I must ask, what is voice, what does it mean to give voice to the body, can the internal body be thought of as having voice?

Aristotle in Book I I.8 of the *De Anima* says voice is 'a kind of sound characteristic of what soul has in it; nothing that is without soul utters voice ... voice is a sound with a meaning.'

The expression of the internal reality, its twists & obstacles, its cavities, its densities and the bacteria residing within. Could this not be thought of as an articulation of the inner environment, a dialogue of the sublimation of external elements into the body, would this not constitute meaning? Is it not a language of the flesh?

Voice is an identifying attribute, but one that I continually give birth to as apposed to the others I am given, like my face, my hands. Steven Connor (2004.3) says 'to speak is to perform...giving voice is the process which simultaneously produces articulate sound, and produces myself...It is an event'. Voice defines me and through it I express my internal reality, this usually applies only to thought, but here I am using it to express my fleshy internal.

I am performing my sounds, I am performing an identifying feature, but yet, in my passivity the universal body voice is performed and I not sure that it is 'me' that performs it perhaps, as Connor suggests, the voice performs me.

At the beginning of chapter two in *The Five Senses* we find Michel Serres's sitting in the amphitheatre at Epidaurus. Epidaurus is renown not only for the amphitheatre, with astonishing acoustic precision, but also for its healing centre where people come to sleep and through dream to hear the oracular voice, just like Delphi. Serres posits it is through the noise of the organs that we can divine illness - akin to modern auscultation, the diagnosis of illness by listening to the body via stethoscope- this noise arises through the 'clatter and clamour'(2008.85) of speech. He advocates attending to the silence of the primary world, pre-language and pre-sensation. 'The world calms the turbulent noise of the body' (2008.85)

Serres explains how the amphitheater acts as a place not of speaking but a place of many hearing. A single word or gesture can silence the crowd to a point of attention and this act of collective paying attention he sites as healing. The voice of the many is dis-harmonious, the voice of the one with the attention of the many is healing.

I am expressing the idea of the language of body, juxtaposing the whole body which is unified yet is incommunicado, away and other. The body that is open for communication and exploration is the divided one, the multiple and therefore both individuated and collected at the same time. it is the body of somaesthesia, and speech of the flesh, it is the universal body that we can all relate to.

CHORUS

Many voices singing in unison; the chorus. The many convolved into the singular.

It is a homogenous voice, a non-individualized voice. It functions within the play as a collective voice, the voice of the people that respond to precedings and elucidate thematics to the audience, often expressing hidden fears or secrets of the main actors. Schiller (1863) says of the chorus that it 'forsakes the contracted sphere of incidents to dilate itself over the past and the future...to deduce the grand results of life, and pronounces the lessons of wisdom'.

Schiller puts forward the notion that the chorus encloses the play and draws a 'living wall' around in order to shut off from the real world and to reserve for itself an ideal basis and a poetic freedom. This is so interesting for me because it is this very action I am trying to subvert. Schiller would be aghast. I am carving up the space, conceptualizing the work as an event, an accident a de-formation of self and yet we have this chorus functioning at the heart of the work, in what Schiller would term as this agent of purity and idealism. One that creates the meta-narrative.

So, the collective voice, the many working together to create a unified vocalization exposes the thematics and meta-narratives of the play. This is what I invoke with my multi voiced body, am I asking for a meta-narrative to be created by my voice and your movement? Are the plates acting as the purifying agent and not my body in repose?

This makes me think that what is going on within my own work that gives a different angle is that I, the performer, who is supported by the chorus, am an element of such repose, such inactivity that the dynamic is inherently perverted. Perhaps I, the sleeper, the supine heroine, I am the idealized and purifying element to the chorus's process and event nature. I have inverted the chorus. Therefore I think the chorus element could just as easily be said to reside in the voices of my body, the multi voices, before they leave my body and are transferred to the speakers where they become agents of disharmony and non-unison. This aligns my sleeping body as the unified and purified voice of the people, of the collective. It also draws me as already a being of multiplicity.

This idea of the chorus is interesting for me. I'm not saying it conceptually sits perfectly within my project but I am writing this before I attend to the final composition of sound across speakers. It gives me food for thought as to the reading of the sounds if they sing in unison, therefore each plate having its own sound, a sense of an entity and identity then the chorus resides in the plates. If the sound is not located not in an individual speaker but moves around the set then the chorus is subverted and there is the notion of a deflation of purity, a loss of integrity, meta-narrative. This thinking is fundamental to what it is I am researching. At this juncture I am thinking the sound moves.

SKIN

The synesthetic experience of touch and sound of the mother enveloping the infant, no understanding of where hearing ends and touch begins, where one being ends and the self begins, yet. They combine to slowly stroke a skin into being for the infant. This is Didier Anzieu's concept of the development of psyche envelopes in the Skin Ego. Connor (2002) elucidates this skin ego as 'a metaphorical skin or envelope of sound, formed by the echoing interchanges between the mother's voice and the child's own sounds.' So a psyche boundary of self develops out of this synesthetic experience. The forming of identity and apartness.

These images above have become skins and they reveal a sense of skin within my own work other than my obvious skin. The first image, Mona Hatoum's 'Marrow' is the interior substance of the bone exposed, and here we read the bone as form, the skeleton. Form/structure evaporates to leave the bed puddle, a flaccid skin. This relates to my own exposing of the interiority, offering it for contemplation as a skin. And exposes my loss of form as the body dissolved into sound split across multiple speakers.

Whiteread's bed is created homogeneous through the process of casting. Its interior no longer springs & padding but concrete and the same all the way through. It has become flat, surface. My sleeping body is surface, not through an inner homogeneity but through its unavailability. It is not moving, non interactive. It is sleeping, dreaming and listening to divine voice, it is other.

At times throughout this project, this journey, a skin has congealed to enclose the work in notions of self and boundary. I have constructed membranes through which to think the ideas of containment. I have also been thinking through the notion of skin/membrane as a site of porosity, one that acts as a mechanism of collection but understanding that bound in that action is the inherent requirement that it too can dissolve.

It was with the initial fabric membrane speaker sheets I started to think of interior and exterior and came upon the idea that one can never visually apprehend oneself as a whole, the gaze of the other is always required to complete the visual circuit. E von Alpert (1992.114), elucidates the point in this manner 'One does not see oneself as one is seen by others. While others see the subject's body as a whole, the subject has only inner experiences or fragmented outer views of her or his own body.' This was a profound moment when I read this.

The question arises, so if this is the 'gaze' and is visual what then of the aural, can I be aurally complete within my own being? An expression of this project was to site the speakers on the body. Therefore exposing not recorded body sound but opening a portal onto the actual internal soundscape. The skin acting as a containment, but also as a site of rupture where, through the agency of another the sound leaked. Again it is the agency of another that is employed to activate the wholeness.



Mona Hatoum
Marrow
1996
www.daratafunfn.org
retrieved 6.11



Rachel Whiteread
Untitled (Black Bed)
1991
www.museomadre.it
retrieved 6.11



Through My Body To Your Body And Back
2011
St Paul St Gallery Three
16.11



Through My Body To Your Body And Back
2011
St Paul St Gallery Three
16.11

For the final iteration I have reigned it right into the act of completion being contingent upon the movement of the visitor around the site of the hanging speakers. The act of completion is no longer a gaze falling on a surface of the body, it is now an act of movement through a space. The body is opened up, encompassing and receiving the one who completes. The dynamic of subject and gazer is redefined, through my split surfaces I have subsumed you. Because of your descent through the gallery and into my body I have swallowed you in the act of completing me

‘The skin betrays what it is its function to guarantee, the integrity of distinctions between internal and external, depth and surface, self and other, and the regulation of the passages between these regions’ Connor (2004.65)

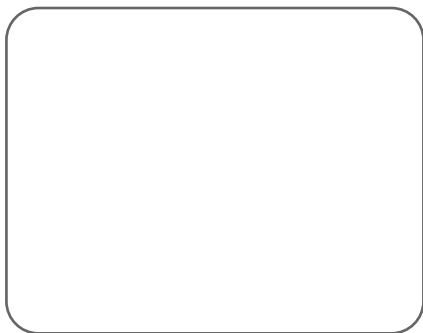
The metallic pellicles, expansions of the skin surface, a displaced skin, another body but without depth. I lie dreaming of the second body craving completion (and when I say completion do I mean depth) and harmony of the organs, I dream in hopes of the healing the oracular voice may convey. To reiterate, Connor says that for Michel Serres the soul is not something residing in the body but that which comes into being in contact, in activities of reaching’ ((2004.30). The soul is neither the body nor the thing being reached for but the act of reaching. I reach for my body as I lie dreaming. “The ear knows this distance” says Serres(2008.94) “I can put it out the window, project it far away, hold it at a distance to my body.” I use sound as a projection of self, the sound of the self to act as the healing element, I stretch my body between two places yet my hearing is used to this. It resides in states of omnipresence, of ubiquity. It travels as ambassador for the ecstatic self, the ecstatic skin.

Serres says of the skin that it is ‘a variety of contingency: in it, through it, with it, the world and my body...intersect and caress each other’ (2008.80) The skin is the site of mingling of all the senses, though to say site gives it a passivity Serres would not uphold, in his words ‘Skin intervenes between several things in the world and makes them mingle.’ (2008.80)

This thinking reveals the passive and active role of the surface within my own work. The performative me sleeps and listens. I am away, lost to my own dream depth interior yet by virtue of my non-availability to the other bodies in the room my being is a surface, but I now, in view of Serres, think of it as a medium. Serres says of a medium it ‘is abstract, dense, homogenous, almost stable, concentrated’. Where as, conversely, my sonic body fragmented across the metal plates is active, interactive and fluctuating, ‘a mixture favours fusion and tends towards the fluid.’ The plates open up as active agents in a melding of self and world, self and other, sonicity & materiality, a making and a caressing. The representative becomes more active and seemingly more real through its availability.

I have two skins enacted in the installation and one is mediated by technology, produced by it even, Connor(2004.66) says ‘in the reforming , infinitely reformable contemporary sensorium, the associations of the skin with transmission, passage and connection become more emphatic than its functions of screening and separation.’

VOLUME



Antony Gormley
Mother's Pride
1982
www.antonygormley.com
Retrieved 5.11

In 2007 when in London I visited Antony Gormley's 'Blind Light' exhibition at the Hayward Gallery. I hadn't started to explore the body within my own practice then but, upon reflection, I realize it was beginning to enter from the end of 2007. I made a interactive sound & movement installation, Empty Enclosure, that was exploring my body in absence juxtapose with the movement of the visitor's body as the activating agent.

A large degree of Gormley's work deals with surface and volume. This show had a room of his figures constructed from wire where the form reveals itself slowly from the wire chaos.



Antony Gormley
Allotment 11
1996
www.antonygormley.com
Retrieved 5.11

My body has slowly faded into solidity within my practice. I am locating myself through my practice and, in a sense, actuating myself, but I can't do it alone.

The inside is the foreign land, it is the universal flesh, I recede from myself internally there is no visual reference in the darkness of self, only indistinction and somaesthesia subsides slowly the further in one goes. I recede from myself and my own identity. In an act of explaining myself to myself I have turned my sonic self out, offered it up for inspection. I need to listen to myself to know myself, I need you to listen to solidify myself. I coagulate at the point of your sonic apprehension. I, I, I... so many I's. These sounds that we hear, these body sounds, they are universal, could be anyone's, they don't define my "I".



Through My Body To Your Body And Back
2011
St Paul St Gallery Three
16.11

They are 'the body'. The sounds create a simpatico with the body of the visitor. They call the body to attention, perhaps even activate the visitor's own digestive tract, these sounds activate mine. Perhaps the visitor unconsciously regulates their breathing with mine, their heart beats entrain, perhaps. This empathetic nature implicates the body of the visitor. It is more than representation, it's relation.



Through My Body To Your Body And Back
2011
St Paul St Gallery Three
16.11

This is a body's inner dimension expanded outward. The flat metal surfaces- their dimensions chosen to fit the surface area of my body- become the skin, a skin that does not contain but divests itself of content outwards. A skin that resonates. 'Resonance requires interiority' says Steven Connor (2008), 'soft, compliant or moist substances (human bodies for example) amorously soak up sound, but thereby annul it as the obdurate substance – stone, wood, crystal – which, by resisting sound, rings and responds to it, giving it back to itself, completing it by rebuffering and doubling it.' The depth of the body is given an availability usually unknown while the actually body is closed up and taken from the interactive realm. I am situated outside of myself, the body ecstatic, but one also of alienness, alien in its metallic flatness and resonant qualities.

In Francis Bacon and the Logic of Sensation Gilles Deleuze (2002.109) explains Bacon's figure/ground relation as one of the contour connecting form and ground. 'The form and the ground, connected to each other by contour, lie on a single plane of a close haptic vision' He calls Bacon an Egyptian, and he is referring to the bas relief flatness of the figure/ground relation. 'It allows the eye to function like the sense of touch.' (2002.99) He says the contour 'isolates the form as an essence, closed unity that is shielded from the accident, change, deformation and corruption.'

I posit my sleeping self as aligned with Deleuze's reading of Bacon's bas relief shallow depth that isolates the figure as a unity. Although the sleeping self is all depth and interiority to herself for the viewer she is more of a flat surface, any depth is imagined. I understand this by reading myself as a closed unity in this position. There is a flatness both of form against ground, not just in the lying positioning but also in the psychic reading of myself. Depth is imagined.

Dreaming supposed. I am static, isolated, contained and defined.

Deleuze then expands his reading to elucidate the deformation that occurs in Bacon's figures. The draining of the essence through the accident or fall. Deleuze opens up this notion by giving the example of the treatment of the form and its fundamental deformation in Christianity. 'Insofar as God was incarnated, crucified, descended, ascended... the form or figure was no longer rigorously linked to essence, but to what, in principle is its opposite: the event, the accident.' The form of Christ now can be conceived of as a form undergoing process, and in the nature of deflation and descent that process can be 'a napkin or a rug on the point of unrolling, the handle of a knife ready to become detached.' Any manner of acts of undoing. "Form begins to express the accident, and no longer the essence"

This is a pivot point of my work. This act of dissolving of self, the draining of essence through the event, or accident. The exposure of the internal sound and its spilling across the speakers.

At this point I want to revisit an idea I put forward early to tie my thinking up a bit more evidently. Serres says that we are most ourselves in ecstatic moments, when we are outside ourselves in pure experience with the world. And now Deleuze is saying that essence and unity of being is dissipated through the accident. At first they don't seem related, but I suspect they entwine easily. The process of loss of self, I feel both men talk of the same thing from different angles, the positive act of expansion beyond oneself and the negative accident of loss of self to the process of unfurling. Which am I enacting. I am enacting both, the Serresian expansion into the dreamspace and the Deleuzian accident, the dissipation of essence through the event; the self relayed across the individual speaker surface. When you hear me as you walk through my sonic depth am I resurrected?



Francis Bacon
Crucifixion
1933
www.tate.org.uk
retrieved 6.11



Francis Bacon
Triptych in memory of George Dyer
1971
www.tate.org.uk
retrieved 6.11

RUPTURE

Do I really believe that my identity resides in the epidermal layer? Do I exist only on the shore and the further one travels into the inner ocean the more one recedes into universal oblivion. Do I loose myself to my inner darkness?

In Cornelia Parker's work 'The Maybe' Tilda Swinton sleeps in a glass case, she is totally other, cut off behind glass and doubly unavailable in her sleeping repose. She brings the night into the white gallery. The dark of the night is a different dark to the interior dark of the body. Night is all otherness, away and unavailable. The body is all closed in flesh touching, holding me into the world. Or is it. Am I not more available to myself as a sleeping being than I am as a fleshy one. In the flesh, deep in the flesh I am only revealed to myself through illness and pain. I only see my insides through rupture.



Through My Body To Your Body And Back
Cast urethane mouth/ear detail
2011. St Paul St Gallery Three.

Leder says (1990.55) 'Prior to explicit acts of positing, our body grasps multiple, ambiguous meanings that elude articulation and conceptual grasp. There is thus a indeterminacy, a horizontality, an unconsciousness, adhering to the sensorimotor self.'

In answer to the question of the first paragraph, yes, in parts I uphold this thinking and yet I can't escape Serres's mingled thinking. He calls the skin the milieu of milieux, everything mixes and mingles in the skin. The world and the flesh met and mingle. Rather than a site of touching it becomes a site of interchange, flow and flux, nothing stays the same. I could have covered the windows of the gallery, and that idea was thought through. It would have heightened the idea of being inside a body but I wanted to have a room that read as a body but was still connected to the outside world through light and, most importantly, through sound. Sounds of traffic flowing in and the soft sounds of bodies seeping out, in view of Serres's mingling this reads 'body' more than cutting off and sealing up to me now.

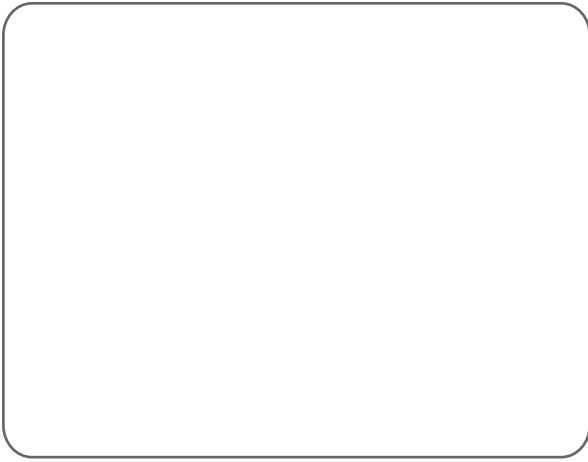


Through My Body To Your Body And Back
Cast urethane mouth/ear detail
2011. St Paul St Gallery Three.

There is a strong play between to the two selves in my work, on the one hand the body is presented but it is contained, clean and resting in the purity of sleep and the other world, it transcends the reality it lies in. At the same time this body in sleep is as much 'other' to itself as it is to those around it. The Gaian voice I listen for is abjected by virtue of its unknowableness and its link with the unconscious.

Yet the body In its multiple state and sonic state is exposed as leaky, therefore also abjected. Kristeva, in *Approaching Abjection* puts forward the notion that abjection is not the grotesque or filthy but instead is what calls into question boundaries or threatens identity.

'When I seek (myself), lose (myself), or experience jouissance-then "I" is heterogeneous' (1980.7) In the act of exposing myself, performing my inner voice, asking you to lend cohesion I am attempting to carve out my "I", identity. In exposing myself as multiple I crave unity. That unity is continually upended as I am always 'other' to myself, on the inside. Yet in exposing the internal sonic flux I am giving abjection free reign. I am always elided by my internal.



Marina Abramovic
Self Portrait With Skeleton
2003
www.arsmagazine.com

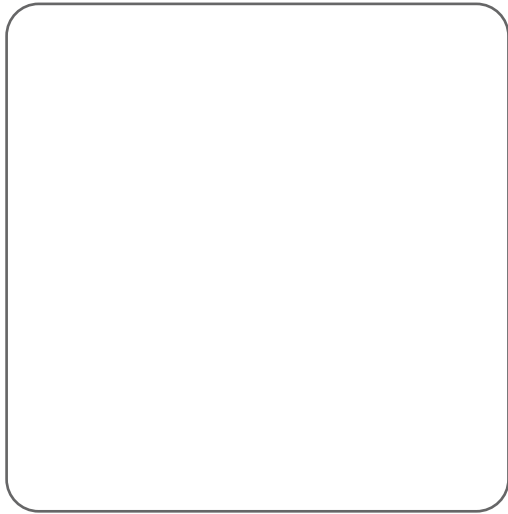


Mona Hatoum
Corps Etranger
1994
www.vanityfair.it

It is this last point that makes Mona Hatoum's work 'Corps Etranger' so intriguing to me. We follow the endoscopic camera, the foreign body of the title, into her internal body, also a foreign body. Introducing an alien gaze. The body is in a passive state, the gaze is enacted upon the body as apposed to the voice which is a performative enactment of the body. This notion is expanded by Marina Abramovic's Self portrait with Skeleton 2003. The skeleton is the other, the foreigner of the body, that which is at once most removed from somaesthetic apprehension and yet the core framework of the body. Its otherness compounded by its visual image being our symbol of death, it is synonymous of the death that lies in all of us. Yet here Abramovic enlivens it with the movement of her body breathing as it lies upon her. Again the active & passive plays out, her lying body weighted down by the skeleton subverts this by the exaggerated movement of breath. I understand my body's enacting passivity and activity too, The deeper you go into the more you recede from yourself. 'The deeper you go into yourself, the more universal you come out on the other side.' Says Abramovic, which makes me respond by saying the deeper you go into yourself, the more you recede from yourself.

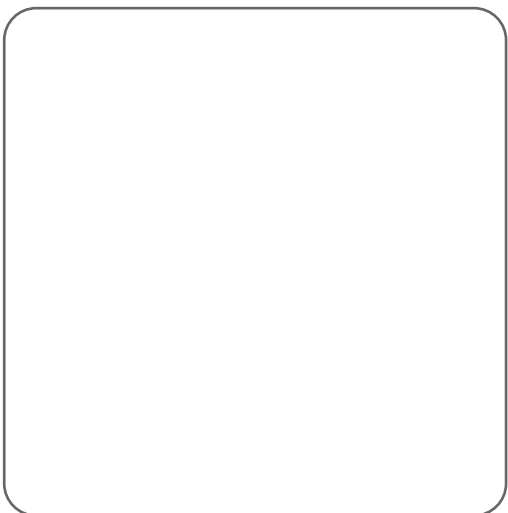
In the voice section I defined the voice of the flesh as a universal voice, I would now like to add to that concept by pointing out that while it is universal it is also other to myself as I understand myself at a day to day level. Yves-Alain Bois in Formless: A User's Guide says 'The essence of language is to be articulated. Such articulations can be smooth as one wishes: they are no less divisive for all that'. The body 's language is one of flow and dissemination. The sound of the body is synonymous with flux, change all that is opposite of articulation.

The informeI want to draw the comparison with that notion and that of the chthonic body, the dark unknowable interior. The chthonic is dark, dead soil, the underworld and in my project I am situating the dreamspace as the same as the earth by virtue of my horizontality and so linking it with the dead, the underworld to which Persephone was abducted by Hades, the feminine death and resurrection.



Franko B
I Miss You
2005
www.frankob.com
retrieved 5.11

Franko B's work takes up some of the same issues mine does, skin identity, flow and fracture but in a very different manner. The dramatic performance, the actual blood, his work exposes my own as performance of the utmost passivity, not only do I position myself as unavailable, in sleep, but that which does engage with the audience, the sounds are the sounds of my mechanical flesh body, that which my self, understood as my ego, has no reign over. Yet, I think there is this same premise underlying the works, the body as leaky and real and abjected through the release of the fluidic interior. The flowing away of identity. What really informs my practice here is Franko B's wrapped found objects. He takes the blood soaked canvas of his performance and winds it round the object conferring a skin identity and protection, he remakes the object, re-empowers it, but takes ownership of it. In my project I have no blood stained canvas, and I have no active performer audience dynamic instead my enacting of this resurrection surfaces through the movement of the visitor/listener. You tie together the plates, my body. The sound is cohesive through its ubiquity but it needs a visitor/listener to be activated as such.



Connor calls the voice an event, Deleuze calls the event an accident. Is the act of giving voice to the eternal flux and flow of the formless flesh a dissipation I can not recover myself from, will I gush away till I fade from view?

In rupturous, rapturous states the voice ebbs away as an identifying characteristic, the unity I craved dissipates across the surfaces and flows away from me. I am awash on the water of flow and propagation, sound flows to fill the space of the body, fills it up, overflows it washes out, washes me away. I am tidal. I am formless. The water speaks to me and tells me my name but in words that won't form. When I open my mouth to speak articulation sticks in my throat. Like Rabelais's frozen battle sounds I am cold and I am still and I can not comprehend the sounds. It is from the empire of identity that I try and stake my claim but I can't find my feet in the water, I am all at sea with myself.

Franko B
Wrapped Bunny
2005
www.a-n.co.uk
Retrieved 7.11

INTERACTION

As voice is not something issuing from the mouth but generated by the entire body so hearing is not apprehended merely by the ears, 'The acoustic world is also the haptic world...Being bodily touched by the physical presence of sound waves and their reverberations through the body is a quintessential part of hearing.' Leitner(2008.175)

With this penetrative quality in mind I begin to express an interaction between the visitor and my body via the installation. The isomorphic dimensions register the plates of steel as relating my body to your body and this is emphasized by their hanging in relation to a ground, therefore the upper level on which I lie. The sounds, in their universality, could be your body as easily as mine. In fact, there is a mechanical empathy involved, like yawning, when one tummy growls others often answer. The sounds of the body create an awareness of your body, a consciousness of self. you are physically implicated within this work, and not just because you are walking through it. If I am lying, listening to the sounds of my body as an act of healing and harmonizing, as Serres would have it, then you are implicated in that act, you become an agent of that harmonization.

A sense of awareness develops, a consciousness of self. The sounds of the body open a bodily awareness. The placement of my body in the space means I am there with you as you traverse the space, a blind witness but you feel me. I am aware of your presence too, even though my eyes are closed, I hear you as you move, and you know it. You are aware.

The interaction in this the final outcome of the work has shifted from previous iterations. It is no less fundamental to the reading of the work but its actuation is more subtle, more abstract. I haven't given you anything to actively do except that which is expected of a visit to the gallery, you move through the space. Yet in doing so you are fulfilling my silent request, hear me, complete me. I engage your body in a reading of my own interior via the work, through its aurality, its spatiality, and the positioning of my body. This begins to situate the work within the bounds of what Nicolas Bourriard postulates as relational aesthetics. Bourriard(2002.15) says of relational art it is an 'art form where the substrate is formed by inter-subjectivity, and which takes being-together as a central theme, the 'encounter' between beholder and picture, and the collective elaboration of meaning'

My body sounds through the speakers, your movement between those speakers gives coherency and meaning to the separated and dissolved sounds. A form, an articulation of meaning. I think we can say, together we give voice to the body.



Through My Body To Your Body And Back
St Pauls St Gallery Three.Oct 2011

CONTROL

Control is governed in part by the site, and doubly so for gallery three has it has, unlike most galleries, those strong ramp elements that break up the space.

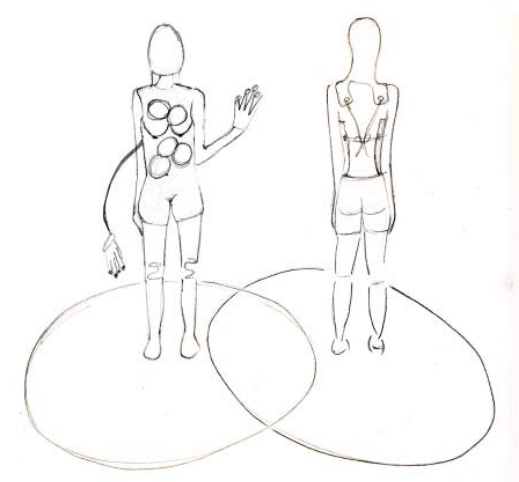
As soon as an interactive is conceived so the issue of control is unfurled. I started this project with control being a notion I wanted to address. Where was I placing my control in the interactive framework, and ultimately interleaved within that is the idea of placement of self in the work and in relation to those who interact. The placement of self, authorship and control has shifted dramatically throughout each iteration.



In this iteration the control is activated through a set of switches that move the body sounds round the speaker circle. I programme what each switch does and I have a strong scripting hand but how you choose to play with the sound is up to you. However, the implication of being the controller at the centre of the circle, and the control of another's body gives a reading of omnipotent power. I am a disembodied body too, only appearing as recorded sound. You play me



The project at this point had a similar degree of artist/participant authorship as the previous iteration but here its implication reads differently. A spatial engagement is integral now to the composition and negotiation of sound, proximity and spatial relation is fundamental to how the work operates. The control is not uni-directional and centered but dispersed, contingent and negotiated. The authorship is foregrounded by this ability to move and distribute the sound around the space. You move me.



With the move to the sound production as live and situated on the body two modes of operation arose. I could invite you to touch and activate the sound, or I could activate the sounds myself and so the whole dynamic would become one of traditional performance with no interactivity. Both were highly controlled by me. I was also placed at the centre of the work, I, the author and artist, had displaced you to position of the audience. You listen I speak. This position answered questions of how would I encourage you to interact with me, but answer them very bluntly and new issues of scripting arose. Now I have your attention what next. You listen to me.



With this, the final expression of the project I have handed back a degree of authorship to you, the visitor. But you are the visitor, not the participant anymore, your active engagement is tacitly bound within the relation of visitor to art gallery trope. There are no set of controls for you to manipulate, but your movement creates an interaction between you, the visitor, and me, the performer. For I am still performing, not directing, and consciously subverting the performer/audience dynamic by being inverted into myself through sleep. This work's interaction is one of body, consciousness and self-consciousness. You complete me through the act of listening to my fragmented sound selves. We both listen.



This process has been about loosening the mastery of the body, the control of the body. The initial iteration shown above of the circle of metal speakers was very controlled expression of bodily interaction and your sound control was very minimal. The iteration with the coloured balls that you could move about opened up the control a lot more but the limits were still very evident. You could walk only as far as the speaker cables allowed and although you had control over how the overall composition was structured the installation still required you to move in a certain way, to hold the balls just so. Ironically then the iteration with the most control for you, the visitor is the one with seemingly the least. There is no mechanism for you to control with, no prescribed movement that illicits a reaction from the work, in fact, it may not even appear as an interactive work. The interactivity, and therefore the control is reliant on how you, the visitor, moves through the space. You have the ultimate control on whether to engage with the body sounds and add a cohesion to the composition or not. But it is more than whether to complete or not to complete, it becomes about the path you choose through the work. I have tried to assemble the plates in a manner to not dictate an obvious path. I have tried to chop the space up but also encourage movement.

EAR/MOUTH

Their placement defines my view point as to the internal dynamic of the work. If they are facing one another they will define a closed system, an echo-narcissim loop. If the voice calls into the space and the ear listens outward then there is an opening to other modes of being.

They function as a means to objectify listening and giving voice. I project them out of myself in an attempt to understand myself through them. I create them as objects and render them 'other' to myself.

I cast them and manufacture them, I homogenize them and universalize them, they are no longer identifying of Rose. I make them 'body' not 'me'. They, however, take on identities of their own for each casting comes out a little different. The same issue has arisen with the metal plates. I wanted them all to be the same and read as uniform and universal but the manufacturing process has stymied this desire as there are discolourations across each plate. Now that it has come to pass I love it, it unravels one of the neatly folded concepts of my work, too neat some might say. I just love that it turns out the manufacturing process is the process that turns up the most variance in the work. This does revolve the thinking back to the original Warhol bottles image, each varying through the printing process.

These objects hold a strong power for me. I have come to think of them as moutheart, no longer separate, they are locked in a binary dynamic. I imagine making more and more and them flowing out of the confines of this installation and invading my future practice. These objects are talismanic, they listen for me, they sit ready to warn me, I have redoubled my senses. What many ears you have - all the better to hear you with. What many teeth you have...

Ear/mouth become part objects via their dislocated body status. 'Bodily repetitions both emanate from and are governed by the space of fantasy and desire' says Helen Molesworth (2005.25). Moutheart aligned on the horizontal plane as is my sleeping form, they spring from the Gaian well. Molesworth points out that as such they are 'regions of consciousness that are particularly resistant to language' There is no language here, only the physical sonicity of anti-language. Part Objects gesture 'over and over again to the obdurate failure of language to articulate the sensory realm of the body. Ear/mouth being the very sense organs associated with speech elucidate only the blind howl of the Gaian body.



FORM



The structure of the installation in response to the space of gallery three:

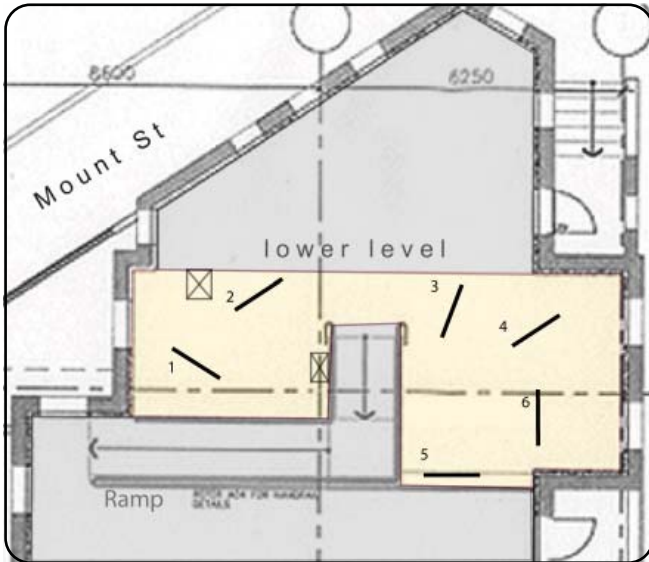
You will enter via the main entrance and in so doing gain a sightline straight to the heart of the installation at the same time that you hear it as a distant composition. It will be an aural experience that seems complete but as you draw closer the sounds will unfurl into their separate locals.

As you move into the space there will be castings of ear and mouth, set out they act as a resounding to the action, an echo. They are the listen/voice dynamic. They bounce the flow of energy back into the lower room.

I choose to lie under the window in the left hand corner of the upper level. By positioning myself here- in view of the concept of my sleeping body listening to earth for the oracular voice- I am creating this as the ground level, it is my earth. As such I choose to lie directly on the floor.

By nature of the ramp in the room you are forced to pass me but I have my back turned to you, I am unavailable, in another realm. This not the body that is open for engagement.

You descend the ramp, arriving in the body of the exhibition, within the body sounds as they move around the speakers. By virtue of the ramp and the moving through the space a movement through the building as a body is enacted. Away from the head, the mouth & ear and passed the self into the mechanical business end. This makes the ramp functions as a passage into, more than a barrier between. The notion of the barrier will always be subverted by the rolling, roving sound. In fact it is the sound that connects and gives a coherence to the space. This action of sound, this propagating and filling, this adhering function means that when the work is taken in its entirety a reading of the space as body alludes to the body as a mingled being in line with Serres's notion of the mingled sense body and in opposition to the work detailing a Cartesian mind/body split.



Floor Plan of St Pauls St GalleryThree
with speaker positions shown

The Placement of the speakers:

What I am trying to achieve with their placement is an area that is broken up by their presence and yet they act as a movement generator. I am trying not to block off too many corners. I am encouraging a flow into the far end of the lower level so to not dislocate that space and mark it as unused.

I will hang the speakers at a height in line with the floor of the upper level when you take your sightline from the lower level. This gives the reading of the plates as bodies on the earth. Yet it also situates the speaker about head height on the plate. The plates function therefore as body analogies on both the earth floor level and the lower level.

They are hung rather than placed on the floor on stands so to incorporate a sense of levity, an ungroundedness in opposition to my prone actual body. I know I am contradicting myself but I want both readings. These are beings of surface with an illusionistic depth and their levity contradicts their materiality. There is a dynamic of dualism inherent in this work but it is continuously disrupted by the flow of sound. I hang the plates to, also, sonically reflect sound at myself and up the ramp to call the visitors down.



MATERIALS

Metal

I love using metal, yet, I have always found it hard to defend the use of metal. In this iteration I am beginning to understand what it is I am saying with this material. Steel is hard, hard flat shiny and repels sound, therefore it rings and has resonance...it is manufactured, each sheet, all the same, without distinction. I could read the metal as being closer to a technologized, repeatable and manufactured self, the multi-self. But that is a reading of logic.

Bodies are soft, round, organic and illogical, they have inside and out and as, Connor says, 'amorously soak up sound', bodies are unique, although they too have a universal nature running through them.

Bodies and metal could not be more divergent, but the reason I use metal is because I love it as a material. This is what I love about it. I love its precision, when I make a squared corner it stays square, unlike fabric that moves like skin pulling to and fro. I love its hard surface against my hand and the cuts it inflicts on my fingers, its tough. To manipulate it gives a sense of achievement. But mostly I love it because it smells of blood, strange to say, but inside there is iron and that blood smell is there, and it is that connection with the body I love, sometimes in the workshop when no one is looking I will have a sneaky sniffy sniff. And it is in my blood, as the saying goes, my grandfather and uncle worked in the foundry in Greymouth.

Throughout this project I have fought the urge to use steel, I tried latex, resin, silicone, fabric but none of it sat right, none of it worked for me. I have finally returned to its use, and the fact I couldn't defend it as an element whose language fell coherently within the bounds of my project be damned. But it does, I now see that it does, it connects to my body and my identity. My work comes alive for me when I incorporate it and that is the most important reason to use it.



MATERIALS

Speakers

When I reflect upon the genesis of my ideas I realize that it is the speaker that drives a large part of the design of the work. Unlike video installation, where the screen disappears as you look through it, the speaker is a present element.

There are two ways to go with the speaker, either have it hidden or on view. When it is on view a huge amount of complexity instantly arises. If you don't deal with it you end up faced with four mdf boxes. People often cope by fetishizing the speaker and multiplying them.

Handled beautifully by Dunedin artist, Alex MacKinnon in his piece A Deaf Piano. Having just the speaker driver and no resonant hollow in which it is mounted is always going to limit the sounds you use and amplification, or lack there of can become a foregrounded issue.

Very early on in my practice I chose to subvert the language of the speaker by using metal as the housing, it is not for its resonant qualities but visual. Through using multi-channels I find myself engaged in constructing multiple housings, the idea of multiplicity arises from the counting out of the objects as I complete each tasks in their making. Issues of identity, individuality and the collective arose from my identifying the self with the speaker columns in Cellula, an earlier work. The ideas detached from the speaker and blossomed into solid avenues of enquiry in my practice.

In this iteration the material of the speakers, chosen for its acoustic properties, or more precisely, its resonant qualities, again subverts the normal language of the speaker. The speaker box has been flattened and the fact that the surface now rings plays into the poetic reading of the piece. The ringing speaks to the otherworldliness that my sleep body elicits, like with the theremin in Aura Satz's work engaged in the sci-fi otherworldly.

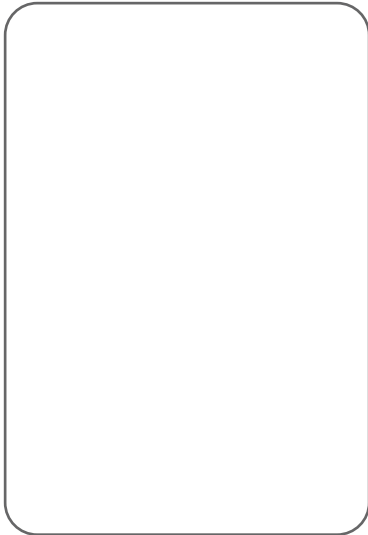
I have yet to hear the large metal sheets as I write this. That doesn't happen till I am in-situ in the gallery but the test plates have a subtle resonance that is very exciting, I might pump up the effect with a bit of reverb, have to wait and hear.

In the installation the speakers are positioned to engage the body but not just be hung at head height. Firstly I don't want cyclopsian creatures and secondly with the speaker driver placed closer to the ground the grounding nature of the weight of the plates is emphasized and the whole of the visitors body is engaged as a listening device.



Alex MacKinnon
A Deaf Piano.2009
www.thebigidea.co.nz
retrieved 8.11

CONCLUSION



Andy Warhol
Green Coca-Cola Bottles
1962
www.materurbium.com

I used Andy Warhol's cokes bottles as the launch pad for my enquiry into serialism. I questioned, if an image was repeated was it the same entity or multiple entities. Looking at this image the inconsistencies in the printing lead me into a study of rhythm as a binding mechanism. To create the basis for rhythm there must be a similarity built through proximity and temporality, but also in likeness of qualities.

In coming full circle and finding myself making objects through casting I relook at this image and say I could just as easily have asked 'Is it the outline of the coke bottle that delineates its identity and contains its multiplicity'. That it is a multiplicity I am sure for I have developed a line of thinking that while questioning one's place within a collective has thrown up the notion that rather than the idea revolving around the individual vs the collective, the individual is the collective. I present myself as a multi faceted and multi being-ed entity. I am all of Andy's coke bottles.

Through enacting myself as a being of multiplicity and multiple aspects I now have the opportunity for reintegrating the divergent elements. I am divining the method through intuitive and oracular means. I am inviting you, the participant, the visitor to be my sonic witness, to be my connect-the-dots agent of cohesion. Collectively we conform, we co-form... we create form. It is this aspect of the work that enfolds my earlier exploration of a relational logic and aesthetic. We collectively shape our world, and more than that, our world and we shape one another, everything mixes, mingles and co-creates.

Identity has emerged as a line of enquiry within this project. In this text I have questioned whether voice gives identity, or if it is the skin.... And what I now must conclude is I am exposing, offering up and performing my interiority in a quest for identity. As if in the act of relating myself to you, and reaching for myself at the same time, I will somehow become more solid, more myself, more complete. On the otherhand I am invoking the chorus as a voice of the collective and the universal aspect of humanity through which to build this identity.

Ultimately this leads to a giving away any identity that had coagulated around me.

In the chapter entitled 'Skin' I make the point that the visitor, while in the act of moving through and completing me, has been subsumed into me. Steven Connor (2006.1) says 'Subsuming means a taking in, an incorporation, a digestion.' You are assimilated, therefore underlining the collectiveness of the work and the notion of joining back to the universal body. This is a resurrection, but one that is ultimately left unresolved as the plates remain split and spilling as the visitor exits the gallery.

METHODOLOGY

The questioning of the integrity of the self with a skin as encapsulating membrane apposed to my dissipating sonic being situates my enquiry on the structuralist / post-structuralist divide. I am continually enacting both modes of thinking throughout my practise. With this iteration I feel the issue is foregrounded through the enactment of both, one as fragmented and one as whole.

I began this project studying the structuralist film of the 1960s New York scene and, in particular, Andy Warhol's early films. Warhol's work straddles the two modes of thinking. While the subject matter are these- and here I am referring to *Sleep & Empire*- solid, unified, definable, identifiable beings, so siding with the narrative of identity and selfhood. This is upended by their extreme length, there is no actual narrative, it's a mono action, and in the case of *Empire* it is in fact static action. Without a narrative hook one does not dissolve into the film instead there is a falling away into oneself and a resurfacing back to the unmoving film.

Not only am I not swept along with the temporal unfurling of the film I also am not drawn into the pictorial surface, I don't look into the scene, my attention expands across the film, oil slick on water's surface. Stephen Koch (1975.137) explains it as 'introjected and internalised perception...and in this inwardness the structure of awareness extended in a kind of passive meditation'. One looks at the screen rather than through it.

I have taken the prone body and here given it only internal life, the dream space, the body space. On one level I present only depth. Yet on another level I present only surface, the flat metal sheet, the non-responsive body, the cast body fragments, just skin.

I am subverting the presumption that the skin is functioning as a vessel of containment and integral element of unity. There is an out, there is the fault, the accident and the essence, sonically leaks from the shell.

In previous iterations- most emphasized in my project *Cellula* where each speaker had it's own sound and the premise of the work was that when two people activated the installation the rhythms of those sounds would entwine, yet never lose their identity or transform completely.- I have had the sounds in speakers and thinking of them as representative of the individual, totemic. The sound is a special sound chosen by a person to represent them. It is then carried in a special vessel, symbolic of the self. This is a contained sound, not leaking.

Krauss (1994) says in regards to a modernist approach 'just as an artist is made up of a physiognomic exterior and an inner psychological space, the painting consists of a material surface and an interior which opens illusionistically behind the surface'

This is very interesting for me, for I expose my internal as external and my symbolic internal sleep self is turned away and unreachable, this is an interior opening behind a surface. I am both.

So what is the next theoretical step, where has all this practical & theoretical research gotten me. During this exploration I have begun to familiarize myself with the writings of Michel Serres and through him the supporting texts of Steven Connor, I have concentrated my research primarily on Serres's Five Senses book and Connor's supporting texts. Through these I have begun to understand the skin as the site of mingling of the senses and the self with world. It is through this thinking that the notion of the global and the local is really expanded upon

These are the conceptual fields in which I graze, but I also must question the method in which I apply this research, and to be honest I find this a very hard task. I find it hard to balance my theoretical and practical research, with sometimes one and sometimes the other taking precedence. I think in part the problem with quantifying the research method transpires from where the actual inspiration for the work arises. And, not just inspiration but the grounds upon which I am making my artistic decisions. I was often accused of letting theory inform those decisions, but actually nothing could be further from the truth. Those decisions have always been firmly situated at a personal level for me.

I make intuitive decisions, ones I am sometimes not really sure why I am making them but later they are revealed as pertaining to my life path, unconscious and therefore my practice. I am explaining the world to myself via the artistic process. These intuitive interjections in the work often come to be integral and fundamental functioning elements. I have had to learn, and am still learning to trust this voice. It's this intuitive voice that I feel is a meta-narrative for this work, this work about voice. I have invoked an oracular voice within the installation, and it is a voice I am actively listening out for, in so doing I am beginning to understand this work as a call to voice for myself.

The irony of that is that within the academic research arena I find it hard to articulate this as what I am doing, and how I am doing it. One can not base one's decisions on purely personal ground, I get this, there's no reference, no meaning other than internal. Unless that internal comes to represent a universal view. I don't think my work is a closed circuit, there is a relation and universal meaning in it, and I am not just referring here to universal voice I talk of. My work is about my body, the body, we all have bodies.

In opening myself to the intuitive I am also uncovering a hidden aspect to myself, this has been, and continues to be, a constant thematic in my ongoing practice. The exploring of hidden soundscapes, and one I shall pursue post study.

So, the even greater irony of this situation is that while exploring notions of the self and the body I feel I must eviscerate this fundamental aspect of myself from the process. In academia I have no body.... Ah but maybe this is what I have been saying all along. The meta narrative of me is an illusion anyway. It is when I reach out into, the absorbing my self in the world that I am most me. Dissipated, like sound propagating outwards.

POST INSTALLATION CONCLUSION

The outcome of my research culminated in a solo show in St Pauls St Gallery Three on the 16th of October. I held an opening at which I performed my sleeping body and while so doing I had time to reflect on the outcomes.

The research and installation was structured in such a way as to explore how the wholeness of the body could be subverted and swamped, washed out and washed away. How the tide of internal sound dissipates the boundaries of selfhood, yet I was confounded in this assumption that it was a flowing out of the body that led to dissipation, in actuality it was the opposite flow, a flowing into that washed me away. Let me explain.

The nature of the resonating plate meant the volume had a level of restriction, too much bass frequency and rather than ring they would clang. This was fine in set up and exhibition mode but during the opening with the swell of voices of friends coming to view and chat it became hard to hear the body sounds until one was up close to the plates. The chorus subverted the main action, stole the show. The body, my body, in its spatialized and fragmented state was left exposed to the affects of others entering me. I was swamped by acculturation and I felt reminded of Michel Serres sitting in his amphitheater listening to the world but being distracted by tourists, the 'clamour and clatter' of their voice and by words.

The resonating of the plates worked very. It was subtle but gave a sense of fullness and interiority unfolding to the sound. It did limit the volume of the piece though, if the volume was too high the plates would clang. It was this phenomena that meant that the opening of the show became about the work being swamped by the sound of the crowd. This was interesting. I lay listening for my heart beat, for fear of it failing, yet was confounded in that attempt by the voices of the crowd, 'the clamor and clatter' as Serres would have it. This led me to surmise that my thinking of the fragmentation of the self, the questioning of being washed away, my personal boundaries dissipating was erroneous and in fact the self remains as an ever evolving rhythm against the tide and influx of outside influences.

In the chorus section I questioned whether, in the final installation, the sound ing moving across the metal plates acts as a deflation of the purity of the self enclosed being, a loss of integrity and meta-narrative. I have to conclude that rather than that I found it to be an act of opening up and spatializing what is a closed and close space, the internal body. To walk through my body and to have to subtly shifting around you was uncanny. It was, however, the process of others invading the space that led to the loss of integrity and purity of the originally form and not the act of spatialization.

The quietness and the fact that one had to come very close to the sound source to hear during the opening, I don't see this as a fault, actually I think it imparts another level of complexity and understanding to the research. The installation began to function much as a real body does in a group situation, silently, unnoticed at a normal level of attention. People were then pulled in to the plates, their bodies in close proximity, bent in listening and engaged. This was emphasized by the speakers being at torso height and not ear height, and a full body listening was initiated.

FLOW CHART OF PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT

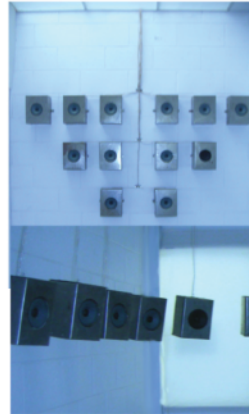
masters
begins
here



Collapsing Cities: four metal tower speakers resonate with a generative composition built from the structural sound of architecture



Replicated Community: etched metal plates & facebook group installation introducing the ideas of the individual vs collective



Liminal: 12 speaker array with sine tone multi-channel composition juxtapose against 12 speaker array with domestic sounds playing at once. Exploring movement & stasis, pure vs banal sound

Empty Enclosure: Motion tracked interactive sound installation. Exploring voice, body & movement in a visual white space



Cellula: Interactive soundwork. Each speaker column has its own precious sound. When more than one column is activated the rhythms convolve into new compositions. Exploring identity, interaction and a negotiated composition through rhythm. This is where I started to think through identity and representation of the self in my practice



next step: the precious sounds are held and carried in a vessel emphasizing the equation of identity of self, the body and sound

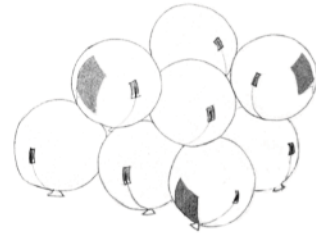
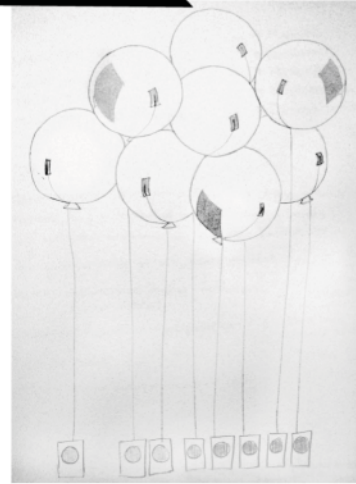
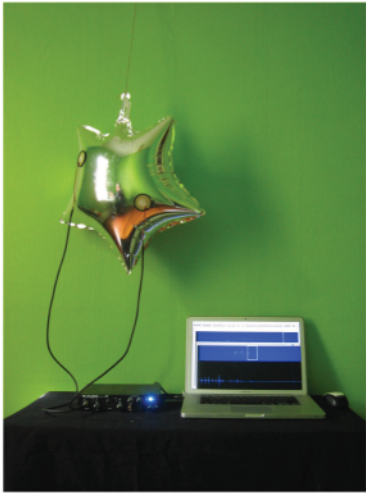
First iteration incorporating my body sounds played across a multi-channel system. Switch controlled play. Speaker circle situates participant in central & stationary position. Exploring body and notions of play vs control

Borborygmi: motion tracked interactive sound installation exploring how a negotiated composition evolves between two or more participants. Participants carry balls that sound internal body noises which vary according to each balls proximity. Now the interaction is related to movement & the body, control is released to a negotiated authorship. The felt surface of the ball isn't working as a warm organic texture. Control resides in the limits of the installation, ie, the speaker cables negating previous explorations of control & interaction. By using the primary colours, the oversized balls and the felt I was trying to foreground the idea of play. However, the balls were too heavy and killed the spirit of levity the installation was aiming for



Now the metal speakers transform into latex membrane and I begin to think through interior/exterior, skin & porosity. Still using the circular control layout and switches but realize that these are the less successful elements. My body explored by the participant is too static & the interaction not complex enough

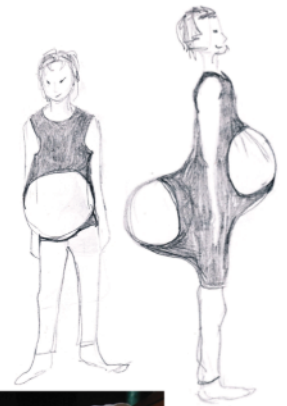




Next step is to keep the idea of levity and transfer the speakers and the mics to balloons. Using the balloons as a resonating hollow to amplify sound. Initially I wasn't sure I would keep up the body sound exploration but very soon realized how fundamental it was to my thinking. This iteration still incorporates the notion of play but it is now reliant on the language of the balloon and not inherent to the function of the work

The next big step forward came as an answer to how I would encourage participation in the work. Present a technology people understand without querying how to use, clothing. Initially it was a speaker glove, a glove with tiny metal speaker drivers at the finger tips that only sounded when applied to a surface. Then it became wearing the balloons with a view to opening up portals of sound into the body. All of a sudden the idea of performance entered the equation. The more personally performative the work the tighter control of the scripting I had to have, and I didn't respond well to that. I am used to making systems with a set of parameters as a controlling mechanism resulting in a co-authorship of artist & viewer

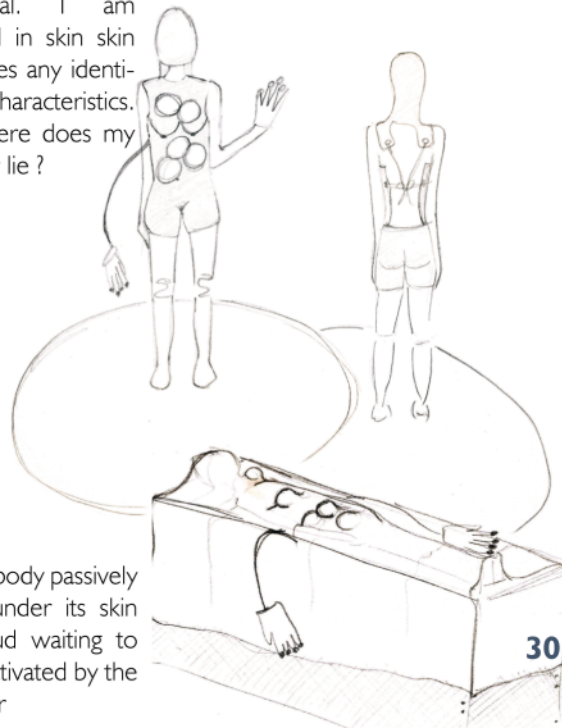
The notion of skin became more & more important for them. It became the site of containment and rupture, where my identity could ebb away through the agency of the participant. The balloons, like tumors, drew the body as in a state of disharmony and the act of touching and illiciting sound became a release from disease. Very abject, perhaps too uninviting. How would I get people to touch. I could perform it all myself. I could speak an invitation



Through the speaker glove the idea of casting hands arose. Creating a second skin, to at once enliven and object and make it seem dead and flayed.

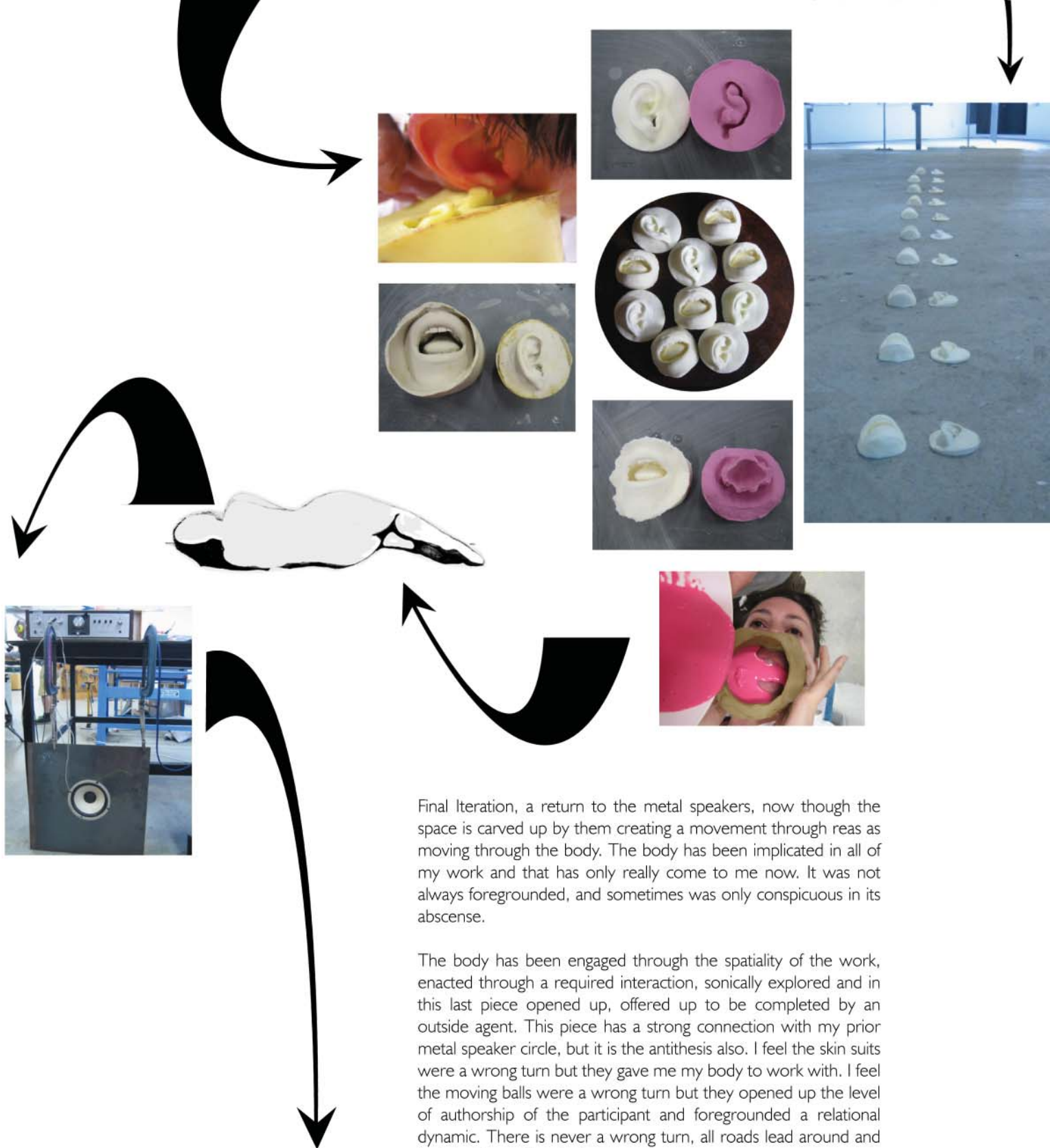


I shroud my face, hide my identity and my body is now universal. I am clothed in skin skin obscures any identifying characteristics. So where does my identity lie?



In contrast to the performed 'I' of the skin suits I thought of these balloon part objects. Still including the body but no performing it. Instead here the body bits are agents for interaction.

The body passively lies under its skin shroud waiting to be activated by the visitor



Final Iteration, a return to the metal speakers, now though the space is carved up by them creating a movement through reas as moving through the body. The body has been implicated in all of my work and that has only really come to me now. It was not always foregrounded, and sometimes was only conspicuous in its absense.

The body has been engaged through the spatiality of the work, enacted through a required interaction, sonically explored and in this last piece opened up, offered up to be completed by an outside agent. This piece has a strong connection with my prior metal speaker circle, but it is the antithesis also. I feel the skin suits were a wrong turn but they gave me my body to work with. I feel the moving balls were a wrong turn but they opened up the level of authorship of the participant and foregrounded a relational dynamic. There is never a wrong turn, all roads lead around and back to the end/beginning.



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