

HARD DRIVES, SOFT WALKS – Installation, 2023

Sculpture, Soundtrack, Programmed Lighting, Animatronic Mouth, Performance.

Duo show with Martina O'Shea

Shown at Chemist Gallery, 19 January – 19 February 2023

Live Performer: Chana Joyce, Reuben Sutherland

Sound Mastering: Louis Grace

For the inaugural exhibition at 'Chemist', Martina O'Shea and Seren Metcalfe debut new work alongside a collaborative sound and light installation. 'Hard Drives, Soft Walks' is a mashed up journey of the two artists, from night clubs, to mud larking, glitching landscape, tv soaps, late night walks and half remembered dreams.

The centre of the installation is a collaborative sound piece: two voices telling tales through radio static, located in an ever changing vista of London, Ireland and Yorkshire. Fields, birdsong hit against traffic jams and sirens, mummers and echos from tv sets counter to techno beats transformed into the bodhrans. City remains and construction materials, pop memorabilia and programmed lights are forming a ghostly, theatrical set of the ever in flux space between body place and time.

The Hard Drives, soft walks Publication is an edited version of a google doc made prior and during the show. Starting off as complete strangers, they used the document as a means to form greater understanding of each other's practices. This conversation evolved into monologues, poetry and eventually a 12 minute soundtrack.

Video: <https://youtu.be/HMKJg6yEjDA>

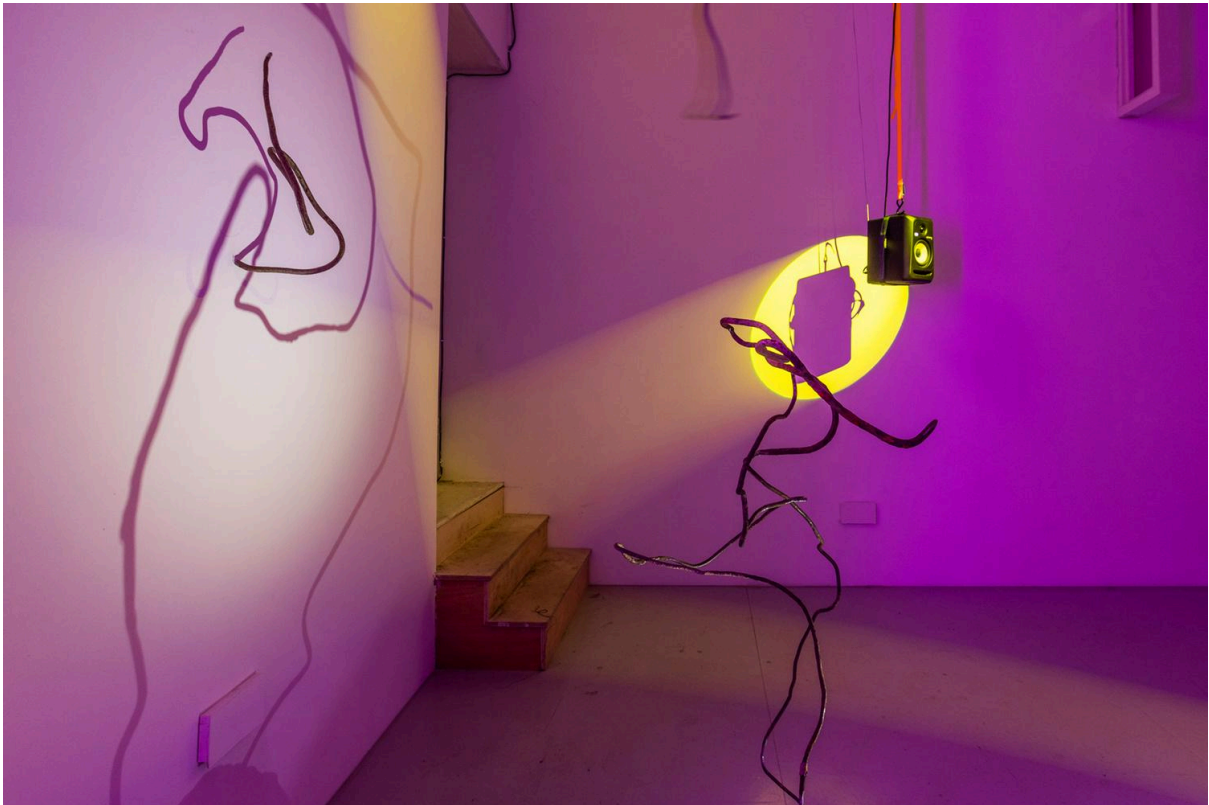
Performance Video: <https://youtu.be/rQcJ8y44FPw>

Soundtrack: <https://on.soundcloud.com/FozFD>

Publications: <https://heyzine.com/flip-book/ae4b657f6f.html>

<https://heyzine.com/flip-book/57df839d7d.html>











SM Recently I've been working with found materials. I want the wall to be a door to feel suspended in memory and time - memories and objects feeling trapped and also free and engulfing like stars. I want to use more found materials - space junk. I like the idea of you using car aerials, especially in terms of music. There's also something interesting about cars and transport and cars being prone moving towards booths.

MDS Yes, a car aerial example. Radio and aerials as a symbol of collective consciousness. There's a certain quality to the type of construction that happens while driving. Memories, materials, space, time is present in both of our practices. At the end of a show I installed and deconstructed this antenna. I took this photo of the stud wall being knocked down.

Why does it seem like such a joyous thing to me? Maybe the breaking of any wall triggers some kind of excitement about what's coming next! Making way for the new!

SM The idea of a divider from the window of the gallery with some kind of entrance hole could work well - a change in atmosphere. Stud walls from the bones of television, film sets and artist studios - the illusion of an environment - The avoidance of

SM We could create an environment where inside the stud wall feels dark - encapsulating the audience and the outside feels like behind the scenes. I want to create a contrast between light and dark or artificial light and natural light.

MDS Yeah, the stud wall definitely is reminiscent of tv sets and artist studios. Back in 2013 I worked behind the scenes in the art department for the national broadcaster RTE in Dublin for a couple of years on shows like The Den and Fair City. There was always a sense of being shielded by the set lights when you entered the set from behind the stud walls. For me stud walls also give off a sense of representational change/time. Maybe this was the attraction to working in TV.

SM It reminds me of a nightclub. Social rules are so strange. We can enter a certain room and suddenly the purpose is to dance and jump around and as soon as we exit the door of the nightclub and continue dancing or singing everyone looks at us like we are crazy.

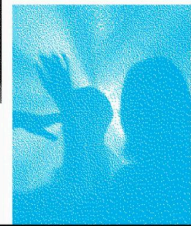
SM Music and Television are important elements I want to reference in my work, nostalgic feelings of hope and belonging, and nostalgia.



MDS I'm thinking a lot about sound lately. I got a book today called Quantum Listening by Pauline Oliveros - 'a manifesto for listening in activism, blending technology and spirituality' - forward by Laurie Anderson!

*'As I listen I remember
'As I write and listen, hidden sounds emerge'
'Can you imagine listening beyond the edge
of your own imagination'
'Can you imagine the tuning of the world'
'As you listen, the particles of sound decide to be heard. Listening affects what is sounding'*

MDS When Pauline and a couple of others descended into the Dan Harpole Cavern, using Empty receptacle for water basins, feet underground, bathed by the US military near Seattle. In the depths they listened intently as their sounds returned to them with an extraordinary delay of forty five seconds.



The sun was so strong that day, I could hardly breath, the sun was so strong that day, and I ran in the fields and lay down and looked up at the sky, I was so happy, I felt that I burst, I must have been there nearly an hour or more, I must have been there nearly an hour or more

A boogie ballad blares out across the seafloor, The Horizon reminds me to spin around the sun, it reminds me of the big burning ball of fire we so sweetly call sunshine. We have come to accept the circular orange flames that burn whilst we complete our daily routines, our 9 till 5's or 5 till 9's, repeating everyday with the waves

When we spent summers in the attic I painted a rocket on the wall

I remember driving from spit to zulfjiana in croatia, sometime after the london olympics, it was dark and we all piled out of the car for a piss. It was there that I heard the most magical sounds, what seemed like hundreds of frogs croaking under a blanket of stars. A frog chorus among the constellations, with us pissing in the background. Smooth

Whilst working at the theatre I watch as people are desperately searching for rules to follow, tuning in to their basic bodily needs and animal instincts.

In an Uber home from a job last month at 4 am the two rotating sacks of fluid otherwise known as my eyes are burning in my head. I contemplate asking the driver to stop at McDonalds but instead I open the window and let the cool air touch my face. A song comes on the radio, A guy is singing all my eyes live in Texas. How convenient I think for all your eyes to live in the same place.

"Where's the food? Where's the water? Where's the toilet? Where can I pray? Where can I survive and where can I reach god? Where can I love? How can I love? I watch as two lumps of warm conscious flesh feed each other small pots of vanilla ice cream with little wooden sticks. I can't stop thinking about how much the smoke detectors look like Belgian Buns or how a yawn can be passed around for a whole eternity

The storm is turning everyday objects into missiles, are people covered insurance wise or is this considered an act of god. The car park is now under water, that dramatic moment that the roof flew off the school lunchroom. It used to be a jazz bar but hmm but now it's another hotel, now it's another hotel.

Night clubs become churches and DJ's the priests,

Now its another hotel

Calibrating bodies and beat, limbs loose bones shack with base, pheromones stinking, collective vibrations between unknowns, pulsating peen dish of specimens, squeezing the last line of a song out of the facade into the silence of the street, big stinking, dirty ends. Losing salt to fall asleep, while others are wide awake, to walk with no aim. To function as fluid around solid matter, magified, to look beyond the facade of building, of face of television screen, of set, of societal structure, whether I in-camera capture embodied in a machine, caught images become distorted memories, bouncing off one another. Beyond our own personal province.

"Of all those worlds we have no indication of life. For me that understates the rarity and preciousness of our earth and the life upon it. Now you can see it looks more like dot but in fact it's less than that"