

Savannah Barkley
Artist Statement

I enter the natural landscape; in this field I let go of the comforts I feel for contained, readily defined space. Out of this, I have begun to discover a kind of non-space, one that consists of every object connected in a mesh extending deep into time. The variety of its components building an endless system of dynamic uncontrollable nature. I want this mesh to hold me, even if only for a moment, to understand it's sentiments and complexities. I collect a specimen from its body, and place it in my pocket. After the departure from its origins I imagine the tugging and rearrangement of the mesh; changing dynamics, points letting go and lines re-connecting. This object, removed from its system is implemented into another where I can imagine the tendrils attached and the space in-between.

I consider my constructions to be sentimental collected understandings of a personal reality. Juxtaposing organic forms upon grids, I battle my own tendencies for order and allow myself to see beauty in the slippage. In these ecocentric systems I create, the body becomes a tool for exploration, a moment of interaction realized through the production of sound waves that propagate through the air. My work speaks to scientific inquiry while existing within a world of childlike wonder. Imagined environments act as fields for the senses, the reveal of it's parts forming a literal map of connections between objects and ideas. A poetry of science discovered through the use of natural material and the systematically habitual process of caregiving. A process that responds to the needs of something rather than telling it how to behave. Connections that require sensitivity and attunement to a dynamic field that opens up the pathways between object/body/environment.

In my most recent work, *A Bed to Lie, Just Before the Shore* I use sound, sculpture, living and found materials, science, tech and one's body to create an interactive immersive experience. Inviting the participant into a greenhouse structure carpeted with live grass, they are welcomed into an interior headspace where the capacitance of one's body acts as the completion to an electronic circuit. This quiet moment reveals the connection found through this mode of interaction, linking its nuanced nature to the reveal of electrical energy between objects in relation to the center of the earth. The grass, which is connected to a handmade circuit board, is connected to a microcontroller, connected to my laptop, which is connected to an outlet via its power cord. Connecting the system to the circuit in the room in a continuous mesh, respondent of its surroundings and the participants mode of engaging. When engaging, the soundscape is a droning orchestration reminiscent of one you would hear by the sea. An imagined environment inspired by the finding of an object lodged in a rock by the shore, a weathered styrofoam form uncannily masking itself as one that is of the organic world. The exterior of the greenhouse, where this object has become part of the system, reveals exposed PVC piping, ventilation tubing, and electric cording, powering the interior space. These components imagined to be inside the walls of a home offer a unique moment of revealing the methods of what I consider to be the powers needed to sustain this environment.

Thinking about the body as a vessel for interaction and the fluidity of the simple gesture of call and response. In my experiential work, I am aiming to resituate an approach towards the environment. To better understand the world's many ecosystems, each complex and with its own unique relationships and ties. For me, the earth is an image of home, with a history and body. To access this history I am reaching back into deep time in attempt to come to terms with the past, and consider possibilities of the future.