With thanks

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We are also very grateful to ECA’s Events and Festival team for their support.

Sonikebana 2019

Nine-channel reactive sound installation.

Images:
Oil on canvas, each approx. 183 x 124cm
*Between branch and limb I–VII*, 2019.
Digital print on canvas, dimensions variable.
Sonikebana is a long-form composition that takes place across nine loudspeakers inside wooden boxes on wheels. The speakers are mobile; you are invited to move them around the room in order to design and shape how the piece sounds.

Sometimes the slightest touch of a speaker will cause the piece to take on a completely new complexion, rupturing established patterns and making radically new shapes and forms. At other times, it will take considerable care to work out what agency you have and what the consequences of your actions really are.

The formal idea for this piece is based on ideas borrowed from the extremely refined and minimalist art form of flower arranging called *ikebana*. As important as the action of arranging is being still, reflecting and observing from different perspectives. You are welcome to use the floor cushions and move these around too.

Almost all of the sounds you hear were synthesised from analysis of video shot at *Little Sparta*, the garden of Ian Hamilton Finlay, whilst I was lucky enough to be a resident artist there in 2017. The sometimes gentle, sometimes rather aggressive animation of foliage oscillating in the wind was used as an energy source to excite a range of different synthesis and computer sound-processing approaches I have been developing over my career.

Martin Parker | tinpark.com

For *Sonikebana* I made five paintings with oil paint on canvas. I stretched the canvas on the walls of my studio; I wanted it to remain cloth with uncertain edges, rather than the defined rectangle of a canvas secured to a frame.

The canvas is sealed with clear gesso to limit the soaking of the oil into the fabric, but is otherwise unprimed, so that its own colour and texture show through. These unpainted areas describe the shapes that appear in the paintings, which are really a lack. Other than this I used only indigo pigment, turpentine and linseed oil.

I had been accumulating images of figures in trees, some of which are reprinted here, much enlarged. When you ask an image to appear at a much larger scale than it carries information for, how can it respond to its insufficiency? The image is required to interpolate, to make up pixel information according to algorithmically determined ‘best guesses’. There’s also a physical interpolation going on in the fact of the figures inserting themselves into the foliage of trees, and this involves another kind of negotiation.

We wanted the images to slow down progress through the room. We wanted to have images that couldn’t be taken in in once glance. Elements might repeat, like after-images appearing on the retina after looking a bright light. Shapes might move from a surface clearly painted by hand onto a printed reproduction, the cursor is never still.

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