

Marla Hlady
Rooms & Walls

Oakville Galleries
—Oakville, Ontario

Hallwalls Contemporary
Arts Center
—Buffalo, New York

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For this installation, each room on the first floor of Gairloch estate was imagined at one-sixth its actual size, the same 1:6 ratio that is commonly used for dolls with articulated limbs, such as G.I. Joe and Barbie. These scaled-down rooms are reshaped from their original architectural form to a cubic form, and then placed in the gallery in approximate relation to the room's actual location in the building. The cubes are distributed vertically in the space at regular intervals spanning from floor to ceiling.

The blinds in this gallery are mechanized and act as a volume control for the installation's sound. As the blinds go up the audio in the sound objects is turned down. As the blinds go down the volume increases. Each time the blinds close, a different sound composition is heard—one of three distinct pieces made from the same audio material. These compositions are determined using rules referencing some aspect of the objects:

Composition #1: If the largest object is 52203 cubic inches then the longest clip will be 52.2 seconds (multiply the cubic inch by .001). If the longest sound is in the largest cube then the audio level will be the quietest. All sound clips begin simultaneously.

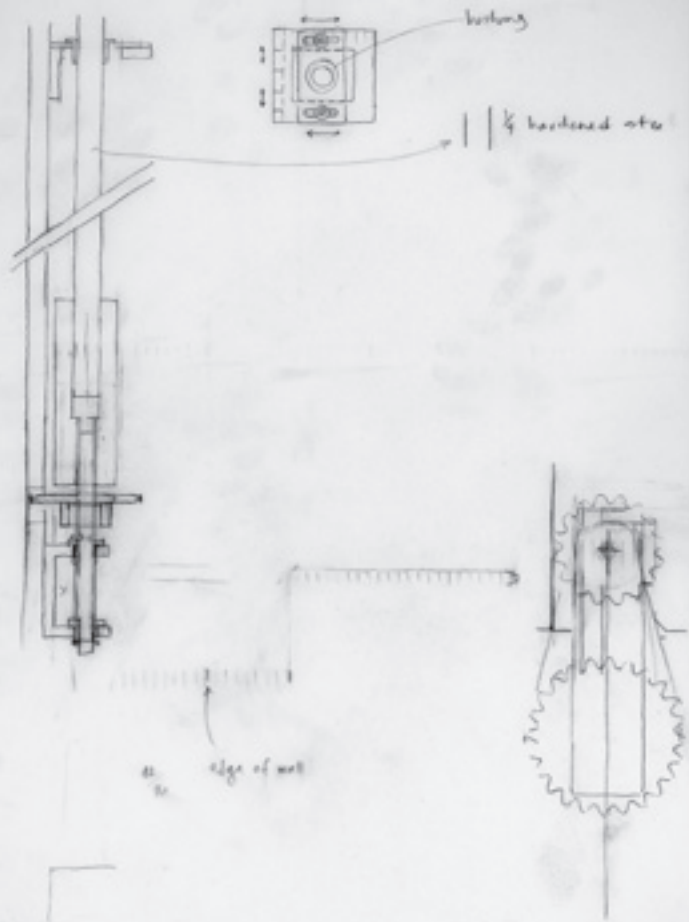
Composition #2: Swap the clips between cubes from Composition #1—put the sound from the largest cube in the smallest, etc. Stagger the beginning point of each clip based on height.

Composition #3: Make all clips equal in length and play all clips consecutively based on height location. Once all the clips have played once, begin again and again in quicker succession. Never alter the order or the length each clip plays.

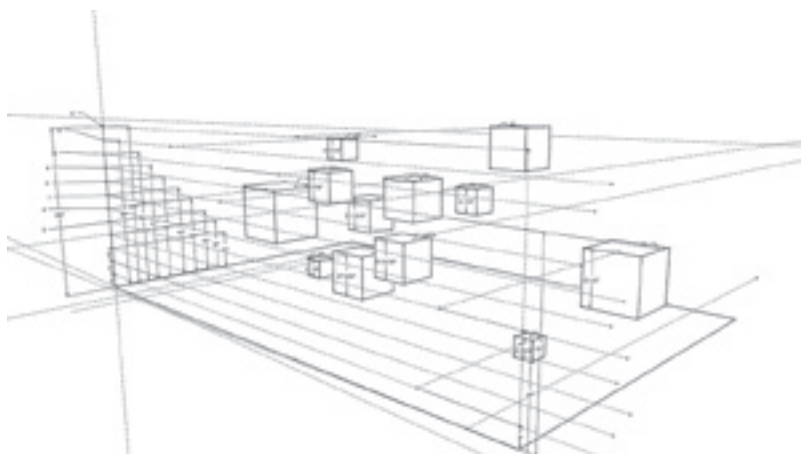




square hole in blind mechanism .235







When Oakville Galleries' Curator of Contemporary Art, Marnie Fleming, extended an invitation to Marla Hlady to realize an exhibition at Oakville Galleries in Gairloch Gardens, it was in keeping with a rich institutional tradition of site-specific projects. As Fleming notes in her judicious meditation on Hlady's work in the pages that follow, Gairloch estate has been the subject of countless artists' interventions over the past two decades in media of all description. Yet, Hlady's particular brand of meticulous enquiry would nevertheless catch us unawares, offering up to us a Gairloch we had never encountered before. As *Rooms* took shape, our understanding of the building we work in every day became suddenly elastic, yielding readily to the artist's shrewd sonic and spatial observations. In Hlady's hands, Gairloch was a space at once enlivened and exposed, laid bare to visitors in the most productive of capacities.

Hlady approached *Rooms'* companion project *Walls*—staged at Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center in Buffalo—with a similarly inspired sensibility, likewise prompting a careful reassessment of that institution's particular space. Read together, these exhibitions demonstrate her admirable spatial caninness—an ability to merge aural, sculptural and kinetic explorations of an environment to great effect. In both *Rooms* and *Walls*, Hlady creates dynamic relationships between her work, the space it occupies and the viewer's experi-

ence therein. These are ambitious, thoughtful projects that draw as readily on traditions of sound art and performance as those of sculpture and drawing. Ultimately, these exhibitions underscore the singularity of Hlady's practice, and her meticulous engagement with the intersection of sound, space and social context.

It is a pleasure to document these two exhibitions in cooperation with Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center. In particular, I am grateful to John Massier, Hallwalls' Visual Arts Curator, for his enthusiastic partnership on this catalogue—and his astute take on Hlady's work in his contribution to this volume. I likewise extend thanks to Marnie Fleming and Oakville Galleries' former Assistant Curator, Rose Bouthillier, for their unwavering dedication to this project.

Exhibitions and publications such as these are not possible without the generosity of our supporters. I extend sincere gratitude to our respective funding agencies—the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council and the Town of Oakville; and the New York State Council on the Arts, the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, and Erie County—as well as our many corporate, foundation and individual partners.

We are also indebted to Martin Arnold, for his lucid text on Hlady's work; Chris Lee, for his singular sense of design; and Meg Taylor, for her superb editorial eye. This publication benefits in ways large

and small from their respective contributions.

And finally, our deepest thanks are extended to the artist, who provided of herself generously—through her work and otherwise—over the past three years of our collaboration. This catalogue is a testament to her precise amalgam of wit, rigour and fortitude.

Matthew Hyland
Director, Oakville Galleries

Beneath the gallery in which this piece was installed, there is a room of almost identical shape and size. *Basement Bass* offers no scale or ratio change but rather draws attention to the similarity of the rooms through the floor: it is as if the basement floor is brought up into the gallery. The built floor acts as a sounding board for layered recordings made in the basement, here played through bass speaker drivers.



EXIT





In the Place of Sound, In the Sound of Place
—Marnie Fleming

I realized the place was awash in noise. The toneless systems, the jangle and skid of carts, the loudspeaker and coffee-making machines, the cries of children. And over it all, or under it all, a dull and unlocatable roar, as of some form of swarming life just outside the range of human apprehension.¹

That is how Jack Gladney, the protagonist of Don DeLillo's *White Noise*, describes the supermarket din of grocery shopping—an everyday experience that often goes unacknowledged. Jack perceives his world through sound, both natural and artificial. In keeping with the novel's title, background sounds hum and buzz throughout the narrative.

I recalled this DeLillo passage when visual artist Marla Hlady first described her proposal for a 2011 show at Oakville Galleries in Gairloch Gardens. Hlady had spent a long weekend at Gairloch estate, staying in the third-floor apartment reserved for visiting artists. During that time she had become fascinated by the acoustic life of the building as the basis for her exhibition. Like DeLillo's protagonist, she too was drawn to sound as it animates prosaic events: the anxieties and mysteries that infuse daily life.

For over twenty years, the programming at Oakville Galleries has engaged concepts of *place*—a difficult term to define, for there are many ideas of what place is. Some authors and artists use the word as a synonym for space, location, site, or territory; others use it to describe our relationship to the world around us. The geographer Yi-Fu Tuan contends that space and place are codependent: a space requires movement from one place to another place; simi-

larly, a place requires a space to be a place. Further, he suggests that "when space feels thoroughly familiar to us, it has become 'place.'"² For Tuan, the term is about the domestication of space, its subjection to the organizing intentions of settlement and habitation—and habituation. For artists like Tacita Dean and Jeremy Millar, "Place is something known to us, somewhere that belongs to us in a spiritual, if not possessive, sense and to which we belong."³ In past programming at the Galleries, these and many other aspects of place have been pursued by a variety of artists who were invited to explore and mine the meaning of place, especially as it pertains to Gairloch estate.

The roster of artists responding to Gairloch have understood "home" as a "place" relative to its surroundings and having a particular constellation of social relations. Their site-related installations have revealed a variety of positions on and about place. They have explored different ways of being, knowing and thinking while conducting research and installing their work at Gairloch, now a contemporary art gallery. Numerous exhibitions have demonstrated that Gairloch offers much more than just a space. It is a place that can elucidate notions of class and taste, a place where power relationships are revealed and where museum practices can be questioned.

Ultimately the artists, each in their own way, have demonstrated that place can open the mind to imagined places, vistas of memory, contemplation, and understanding.

The hidden sonic life of Gairloch had not been explored—that is, until Hlady proposed to turn the entire 1923 building into a concert of spaces, mapped, modelled and reassembled. Her concept for *Rooms* included the construction of three-dimensional scale models of every room in Gairloch. She referred to the models as “sound-ing objects,” for they would also function as speakers to emit the recordings of each space’s unique tones. She outlined four installations for her exhibition—one for

each storey of the house: *First Floor Cubed*, *Basement Bass*, *Second Floor Window Fill*, and *Third Floor Radiator* (all works 2011).⁴

The aural and spatial framework for *Rooms* demonstrated how sound and place are inextricably linked and mutually reinforce each other. While it must be emphasized that Hlady’s practice is concerned with balances between what we hear and what we see, this essay will focus on how she shaped the contours of sound in this place, gave it materiality and directed us to a unique sound-based experience within a specific location and context. Wherever appropriate, I have incorporated the artist’s own voice regarding her process.

Hlady’s multidisciplinary practice can be characterized by her playful explorations into the mechanics and expressive possibilities of structure and sound. As she explains in a 2005 artist’s statement:

Within this complex dynamic [of structure and sound], material investigation is critical. My studio practice is characterized by the play of content, form, functionality and material, where material stands to mean as much what is heard as what is seen. I am interested in the relationships between the work, the space it occupies and all the multifarious possibilities inherent in a viewer (both a physical body and a social construction) interacting with the work in the space.⁵

This last sentence recalls Tuan’s ideas regarding familiar space becoming place. Like other artists

of her generation, Hlady offers a heightened consideration of listening to the place of sound.

Hlady scrupulously studied the sound experiments of earlier generations. In particular, she explored important benchmarks in the relationship of sound and space from the 1950s to 1975. This era saw the flourishing of radical new music compositions such as John Cage’s *4’33”* (1952), a piece void of written music and often described as silent, but not really silent at all. Rather, this composition broke tradition by shifting the attention from the stage to the audience and to the concert hall itself. In recalling the performance, Cage said, “There’s no such thing as silence. What they [the audience] thought was silence, because they didn’t know how to

listen, was full of active sounds. You could hear the wind stirring outside ... raindrops pattering on the roof ... and people themselves made all kinds of interesting sounds as they talked or walked out."⁶ Cage used the space of the concert hall as a total environment; he sought out the concert hall as a space for altered and renewed listening. Emphasizing the here and now of sound, whether in a concert hall or a grocery store, was for Cage about conveying the unity of art and life.

A composer of experimental music and sound installations, Alvin Lucier explored acoustic phenomena and the auditory perception of spaces. *I Am Sitting in a Room*, created in 1969, is his best-known work. It begins with Lucier narrating a text and then playing the recording back into the room and re-recording it over and over. Little by little, the "natural resonant frequencies of the room"⁷ erode the source material, blurring and blending his words. As the words become indecipherable, his speech is transferred into the pure, resonant harmonies and tones of the room itself. Both works by Cage and Lucier rely on sound as a relational phenomenon operating through modes of spatiality.

Soon after these experiments, interactive artworks combining sonic and visual messages began to occupy the specificity of place. For example, La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela realized a series of installations in their TriBeCa home, *Dream House*. By 1964 *Dream House* had become a complete

iteration of this specific environment. Their loft's white interior was bathed in Zazeela's colourful light designs while oscillators continuously emitted the frequencies of Young's drone music; these oscillators emitted waveforms that resonated more loudly or softly depending on one's position in the room.⁸ Location-based installations like those of Maryanne Amacher followed suit. Her *Music for Sound-Joined Rooms* (1980–2002) employed the architectural features of a building to customize sound, visual and spatial elements for an intense sound experience. As Amacher wrote:

I created very discrete placements of sound emphasizing distinct characteristics in four adjoining rooms... I discover[ed] the special acoustic features of each room, exploring how they interact sonically with each other, and develop[ed] the aural imaging and spatial characteristics of the installation. Creating the detailed sound design is very much like scripting a sonic choreography.⁹

Amacher's idea was to create an atmosphere that allowed the audience to "walk" into the world of a narrative and experience a total immersive environment.

The artists and composers mentioned above are a select sampling of those who have explored sound as a medium through which we perceive the interaction of space and place. Their contributions to sonic structure helped to lay the groundwork for the innovators who followed, such as Hlady.

By the end of the twentieth century this new generation of artists revelled in sound's possi-

bilities. A fundamental shift had occurred, particularly with the increasing sophistication of the personal computer, offering artists the ability to capture, manipulate and create new sounds—through live streams, webcasts, broadcasts, and spatial circuitry—thus achieving new models for artistic activity.¹⁰ Not only did the new technologies boost spaces, volumes and dimensions, they also permitted a looping concept of the sound feed, as well as the creation of audio inventories of the everyday.

Hlady's approach, in earlier works, was to use everyday objects—mechanized toys, cocktail shakers, teapots, and suitcases—and turn them into performing machines that behaved in unexpected sonic and poetic ways. *Playing Piano* (2006–2008) was an ambitious precursor to her 2011 Oakville installation. This piece represented a John Cage-like foray into a “prepared piano”—a piano whose timbre has been altered by the introduction of amplification and mechanical components. Hlady partially gutted a 1928 player piano (that typically ran off a pneumatic system) and began by modifying it with various mechanisms fashioned from junked machine parts. A strumming machine was created from components that once belonged to an old photocopier; while it strummed the strings, a whistle blew. Metal pie plates built into two other machines pressed against the strings to achieve a sound like a snare drum. Surface resonating speak-

ers amplified some of the piano's preparations through the sounding board. The various preparations were controlled by an array of sensors placed on the piano's strings. The piano roll that came with the piano, once a familiar jazz tune, was rendered so slow as to be decidedly un-jazzy, while gentle chords punctuated random plinks, plunks and squeaks. Equally important here was the visual play of the piano's mechanics with the space it occupied. Viewers were able to dwell in an environment of animated visual and aural sensations for an altered, expanded experience.

When Hlady began her research at Gairloch for what ultimately was to become her *Rooms* exhibition, her first reference point was *Playing Piano*. She wondered if she could “sound the house in the same way as I sounded the piano.”¹¹ As she noted:

My original stay at Gairloch was seminal in the development of the work. It was important for me to be immersed, uninterrupted in the house over a period of time.

I soon discovered that the sound of the house wasn't very interesting—and I mean this in reference to how a piano can sound—so in a way, the correlation was bound to fail. Yet in art terms, anything bound to fail usually results in something interesting... if you pay attention.

I intended to pay attention to more idiosyncratic, smaller sounds and what I discovered was that the air system of the building drowned out any delicate sounds. Feeling a bit defeated, I thought I might as well pay attention to the very thing that demanded my attention—the air circulation system. This, for me, seemed like a risky endeavour as this quality of sound wasn't what

I usually worked with, nor something I paid attention to.¹²

During her stay at Gairloch, Hlady recorded and compiled the sounds within each room in the house to reveal their unique acoustic qualities. She acquainted herself with how sound waves propagate through the spaces of the building and how they undergo changes produced by the surrounding dimensions and acoustics of the architecture. Spatial acoustics produce reflection, resonances, reverberations, dead zones, focused intensity, sonic channels, dispersion, and so on.¹³ As she later explained, if you clap your hands, consider how the architecture influences the sound. Clapping in a small ceramic-tiled bathroom creates a very different sound than clapping in a large carpeted living room. Sound navigates geographically through space, moving around obstacles and into crevices. It vibrates, contracts, amplifies, and silences. It is boundless on one hand and site-specific on the other.

Relying entirely on the stereo microphones of her digital recorder, Hlady sampled and collected sounds from several spots in each room, with each room recorded at the same volume level. Thus, she began to harness the found sounds—the whirl of fans embedded in the HVAC (air circulation) system, the subterranean drones of the boiler, the chirping ticks of the security system—and pushed them up against the particular spaces of Gairloch.

The recordings brought to light the vast range of sound or, as she put it, “the recognition of a very noisy house.” What intrigued her in particular were two kinds of aural experiences: the non-sound of the HVAC air circulation and the potential for rhythm. She wrote:

The HVAC sound was and still is a kind of noise pollution. I have never considered paying attention to this sound; we have been surrounded by this environmental technology and we’ve learned to ignore it. As well, there are many systems designed specifically to make this kind of sound in places where people are sensitive to privacy. These systems create a sound barrier. It is ironic really—it seems pervasive and unescapable. When it is not being generated as a byproduct of the mechanical system, it is generated purposefully.¹⁴

For inspiration on how to handle the pervasive insistence of the sound, she returned to the work on resonant space by Alvin Lucier and John Cage, who surmised rhythms to be the defining structural element of music. Hlady often referred to a quote by Lucier: “If a room can intrude its personality on whatever sounds occur in that room, then any other size environment can do the same thing.”¹⁵

Trying to discover the nature of sound—what it is, where it comes from and how it resonates within architecture—led Hlady to also explore its rhythm. The sustained repetition of the long tones emitted from the air system offered a fertile area for sonic investigations.

I can't help but think in terms of music—by music I mean post-John Cage experimental music. My influences include a range of Canadian composers whose approach to composition tends toward non-narrative musical structure and whose sounds are delicate, often repetitive. "Minimalism," "drone," "non-focused multiplicity," "singularity" are terms that start to touch on some of my interests. Within the sensibility of sameness and difference over time is the rhythm. Duration allows me to reside within the experience, not as just an observer looking on. It made me think of sound construction from the perspective of generative music.¹⁶

The "generative music" Hlady refers to is music generated by processes that are designed and/or initiated by the composer.¹⁷ It involves very simple rules that can produce complex and often surprising results in tones and textures. In what is perhaps the most famous example of process music, *It's Gonna Rain* (1965) by Steve Reich, a set number of sound patterns are systematically looped to play and replay indefinitely. Hlady's recordings eventually articulated two kinds of operations: the use of concrete sound found in the spaces and the sound formation of relay, delay and volumes through computer software to create compositions.

Before Hlady could compose and orchestrate her sounds, she needed to develop a system for organizing the visual elements to correspond to the sonic experiences. While the ideas driving the exhibition seemed straightforward enough, the systems and mathematics employed took *Rooms* to

yet another level of complexity.¹⁸ The artist embraced this moment to bring together the sonic qualities of the space with visual equivalents through an organizing structural logic. As she determined:

We don't experience a place only through our senses; we often mix perception with conceptualization. I wanted to bring together the conception of the building with the perceptual experience of the building. Playing with each of the four storeys of the house, I took four different approaches. It became a play with the architecture in terms of scale, ratios and volumes, which helped determine the corresponding visuals that allowed for a form, and place, for the sound to resonate.

Once I established the forms of the "sounding objects," I started working on the compositions. The compositions were a result of the imaginings of the play of scale, image and system. Really, once I understood the individual works based on resonate containers, I understood what form the sound would need to take in order to make a correspondence. At this point, I was following through with my source material, assembling the sounds according to predetermined systems, or image.¹⁹

For Hlady, the process of working through an idea is like a game or puzzle that needs resolution. Her trial-and-error experiments resulted in solutions that turned chaos into form. The shaping of the installation and the establishment of the conceptual framework to activate Gairloch's architectural spaces alerted her to the generative potential and possibilities of other spaces. She would eventually apply similar organizing principles to *Walls* (2012) at Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center in

Buffalo, New York.

Walking through *Rooms*, we were presented with many things, from the processes behind the formulation of the show to the perceptual pleasures and riddles of its meaning. Amidst speakers of various heights in *First Floor Cubed*, we could wander from sounding object to sounding object—each one representative of a room on the first floor. Here, in the north gallery, Hlady re-jiggered the window blinds to rise and fall—adding to the particularities of the Gairloch location. This action provided yet another kind of visual prompt, alerting us to corresponding interior and exterior sounds. Other physical effects could be experienced in the centre gallery: in *Basement Bass*, if we stood or even lay down on the floor (representative of the basement space), we could feel the sonic vibrations emitting from the bass speaker below. Through a porthole-like opening in the south gallery wall, we could poke our heads into *Second Floor Window Fill* and hear the sounds of the second storey, while the opening itself framed an idyllic outdoor view. The final gallery exhibited *Third Floor Radiator*, a three-dimensional model, in typical dollhouse scale, of the top storey. Here, Hlady's mechanical dexterity prompted one side of each "room" to open and close, thereby having the effect of a trumpet damper on the emanating sound. The result of these corporeal experiences prompted a heightened sense of our visual and acoustic

environment and an awareness of being physically grounded in a location while at the same time provoking our imagination.

Hlady's meticulous measurements, mathematical ratios and calculated volumes supported analogous visual and physical arrangements in each of the gallery spaces. Each model or "sounding object" was fastidiously constructed and doubled as a speaker, with its own particular resonant space. In a sense Hlady transposed one acoustical space into another: the room and its representation. The sounds vibrated not only within the "sounding object" but within the whole architectural space, penetrating and absorbing into our bodies as the installation unfolded. Free-flowing speaker wires playfully animated the installation throughout the four galleries and hinted at the interconnectivity of sculpture, sound and place.

Hlady created an installation in which rhythmic beats in one room were exaggerated through multiple manipulations, while in another room the volume was turned down to the lowest, most ghostly utterances of expression. The sounds were strangely discordant, as if carrying an ominous or cautionary warning. However, sound is always shaped subjectively, depending on the attitude, the psychology and the culture of the listener. "There is no universal approach to listening: every individual, every group, every culture listens in its own way."²⁰ What Hlady set into motion was a multi-sensory dialogue, to be

interpreted by our individual listening practices, memories and introspection.

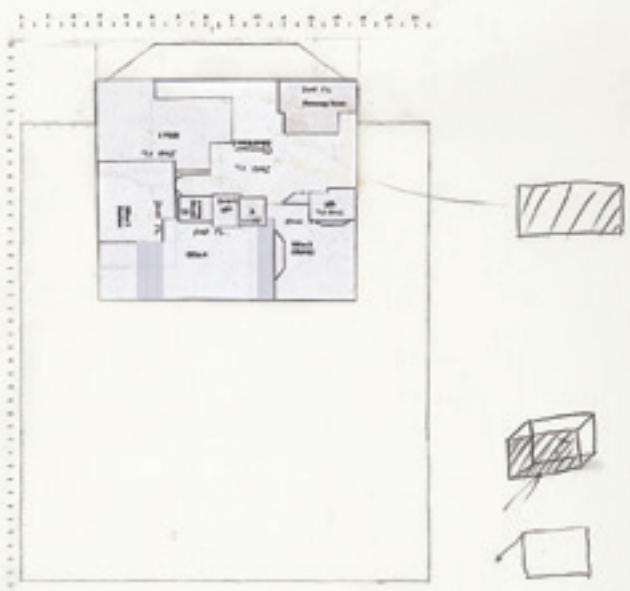
In *Rooms*, the most banal everyday sounds were utterly transformed and afforded the potential for immense significance. The dynamics of listening, of resonance, of spatial form and corporeal experience all came to the

fore—"space not as static object, but as live instrument."²¹ What Hlady revealed to us is that structures vibrate, spaces resonate, and our listening directs us to the experience *of* and immersion *in* place through sound. Sound is a medium that shifts and defines place—the specificity of where location and listening intersect.

- 1 Don DeLillo, *White Noise* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1985), 45.
- 2 Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 73.
- 3 Tacita Dean and Jeremy Millar, *Artworks: Place* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2005), 14.
- 4 Gairloch retains the floor plan of an elegant private house. The galleries were at one time the living room, reception room, dining room, and office. Offices on the second floor were once bedrooms. The third-floor apartment, formerly the servants' quarters, is reserved for visiting artists.
- 5 Artist statement for *NGC 224* (New General Catalog 224, Brooklyn, NY), cameandwent.com/theonehlady.html.
- 6 Richard Kostelanetz, *Conversing with Cage* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 70.
- 7 Alvin Lucier's recited text describes the process of his piece. It begins, "I am sitting in a room, different from the one you are in now. I am recording the sound of my speaking voice" and concludes with "I regard this activity not so much as a demonstration of a physical fact, but more as a way to smooth out any irregularities my speech might have [referring to his stuttering]." Hlady was so enthralled with Lucier's compositions that she dedicated an amusing yet disquieting sculpture to him in 2006: *Wah-wah Teapots (Landscape for Alvin Lucier)*.
- 8 Another *Dream House* operated from 1979 to 1985, a six-storey building inhabited by Zazeela and Young. It is still possible to experience this project, now run by the Mela Foundation in New York City.
- 9 Maryanne Amacher, "Music for Sound Joined Rooms," Amacher Archive Project, 24 October 2009, maryanneamacher.org/Maryanne_Amacher/Amacher_Archive_Project/Entries/2009/10/24_music_for_sound_joined_rooms.html.
- 10 For example, David Rokeby's *Very Nervous System* energized a small gallery at Oakville Galleries at Centennial Square; sounds responded to visitors' movements in the space via computer technologies. Christian Marclay's 2001 Oakville Galleries exhibition, *Cinema*, gave equal billing to perceptions of sound and visual representation. In particular his video collage *Up and Out* imposed the sound of one film onto another, thereby creating a peculiar remix of both sensory elements. Janet Cardiff's audio walk *A Large Slow River* (2000) created an acoustic space in parallel to the physical space of Gairloch Gardens in which found sound and live recordings were brought together seamlessly.
- 11 Marla Hlady, "Process Notes," email correspondence, 4 March 2012.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 How sound moves through a space is something that Hlady continues to explore in delicate line drawings that depict imagined sound events. They typically feature hundreds of directional arrows that have a centre point, swirl with activity and then move towards the periphery, dissolving and dissipating in the process. In the drawings, she makes visible the emotional, physical and metaphorical properties of sound.
- 14 Hlady, "Process Notes," email correspondence, 19 March 2012.
- 15 Alvin Lucier, *Reflections: Interviews, Scores, Writings, 1965–1994* (Cologne: MusikTexte, 1995), 64.
- 16 Hlady, 19 March 2012.
- 17 Hlady often refers to the composers Steve Reich, Terry Riley and Brian Eno when speaking of this genre.
- 18 Found elsewhere in this publication are Hlady's notes, which elaborate on the measurements, ratios and calculated volumes that support the visual and physical arrangements in each gallery location.
- 19 Hlady, 19 March 2012.
- 20 Andreas Bick, "Jean-Francois Augoyard and Henry Torgue—Sonic Experience, A Guide to Everyday Sounds," *silent listening* (blog), 9 May 2008, silentlistening.wordpress.com/2008/05/09/.
- 21 Brandon LaBelle, *Background Noise: Perspectives on Sound Art* (New York: Continuum, 2008), 192.

For *Second Floor Window Fill*, the average square footage of the rooms on the second floor of Gairloch estate was calculated and then scaled down at a 1:4.5 ratio. This was done in a shape equivalent to the window in the gallery where this piece was shown. The sculptural volume of the piece was determined in the same manner: the total cubic area of all rooms on the second floor of Gairloch have been added together and then reduced using a 1:4.5 ratio.

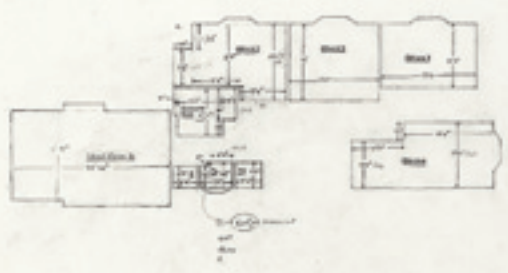
Sounds recorded on the second floor have been edited in proportion to the size of the room in which they were recorded. These sound clips are then strung together consecutively, and fade in and out of one another.



Draw floor to ceiling
 with measurements
 ↓
 volume to extract

- 3D 1. what is the average ^{height} of the ceiling of the house
 2D 2. average ↓ fill in the calculator
 1D 3. total volume of all the rooms
 apply ↓
 add

3D Floor



3D
 2D
 1D













Marla Hlady's *Rooms* got me thinking about surrealism. Not at the time I experienced the work, but later, when I reflected back on that experience. (I do tend to think of *Rooms* as one entity made up of many components rather than separate, if closely related, installations.) As I moved through the galleries, discovering and apprehending the machinations of Hlady's work, any initial connections I made to art-historical genres certainly did not include or even touch on surrealism. This act of discovery eventually involved reading: the didactic panels on the gallery walls, information from the artist available at the reception desk, and Oakville Galleries' promotional text.

The facts set out in this written material are very much a part of the work itself and not at all extraneous to it. *Rooms* is a radically site-specific, viewer-reflexive work. The promotional text focuses on the generative role of sound: "Invited to produce a new work at Oakville Galleries in Gairloch Gardens, Hlady was drawn to the acoustic nature of this former home. To her well-tuned ears, the building is awash with noise, from the whirring fans and subterranean drones of the boiler, to the chirping ticks of the security system."

Hlady recorded these sounds and made musical compositions out of them: layers of hollow, open-mouthed humming, the density of the layering slowly shifting as recorded tracks occasionally fade in and out; sounds of air passing through conduits, streams of noise activating the resonant frequencies of ducts; and the occasional softer buzzing of machinery. The source sounds were recorded in every room of the house.¹ And the resonance of each room forms part of the recordings.

The house has four floors, and Hlady had four spaces on the main floor to show in. And (and I think “and” is the better word here than “so” or even “and so;” wondering about causality led me to think about surrealism—we’ll get back to “and” later) she had each of these spaces correspond to a floor, each space playing back the composition sourced from its corresponding floor. This kind of site specificity often gets theorized under the rubric of situational aesthetics, where “situational” is “applied to new ‘impermanent’ modes of art that emphasized the experiential, temporary situation over the ‘stable’ art object.”² The situational concerns of *Rooms* go beyond the abstraction, heightening and displacement of site-specific materials. *Rooms* deconstructs the institution of the gallery through privileging its suppressed identity as a continuous generator of sounds over its intended function of being a more or less neutral receptacle for displaying art.

Hlady didn’t stop at what could have been a somewhat clinical displacing and heightening of latent, ambient noise. The multifarious constructions that make up the visual components of *Rooms* can be thought of as elaborate playback systems for the sound compositions. There’s a floor built six inches above the existing floor, a subtle architectural intervention reminiscent of post-minimalism (*Basement Bass*). This raised floor stands for the basement floor directly below it, brought up into the gallery. And it also functions as a large soundboard set vibrating by multiple bass speaker drivers playing back a composition made from basement sounds.

Eleven white cubes with circular holes cut into them sit on made-to-measure metal stands,

initially reminiscent of the primary structures of early minimalism (*First Floor Cubed*). Each cube corresponds to one of the eleven rooms on the first floor, at one-sixth its corresponding room's volume. And a didactic panel let me know that 1:6 is a scale commonly used for dolls with articulated limbs like G.I. Joe and Barbie. And each cube is a speaker cabinet, a sounding structure set vibrating by a magnetic speaker driver. And each cube-speaker plays back compositions made from first-floor sounds. How this music was made is partially explained within the accompanying written texts that are a part of *Rooms*.

A large wooden construction, finished like the white cubes, sits on a made-to-measure metal stand with a circular hole cut into it (*Second Floor Window Fill*). Its volume is a rationalized reduction of the combined volumes of all ten rooms on the second floor of the house, shrunk into a single wooden enclosure—the proportions of which are dictated by one of its sides exactly fitting the window in its corresponding gallery space. When you stick your head in the hole, the enclosure acts as an acoustic chamber for the stereo speakers lodged inside it. And it also functions as a tunnel, a large scope to direct the viewer to the scenes framed by the window. And the stereo speakers play back a composition made from second-floor sounds.

Six irregularly shaped wooden boxes are kinetic sculptures with mechanized lids that open and close (*Third Floor Radiator*). Each wooden box corresponds to one of the six rooms on the third floor, being one-twelfth its corresponding room's volume. And 1:12 is a scale commonly used for dollhouses made for adult collectors.

And each wooden box is a speaker cabinet with a built-in acoustic-mechanical wah-wah and sound amplitude effect (produced by the opening and closing of its lid). And each wah-wah wooden box speaker plays back a composition made from a recorded third-floor sound.

And there's the sound constructions themselves, the music. In his *Phenomenology of Perception*, philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty makes a brief reference to music: "Music is not in visible space, but it besieges, undermines and displaces that space."³ It's a remarkable claim, but Merleau-Ponty is putting it forward as an anomaly. It comes at a stage in *Phenomenology* where he is proposing the compatibility of the senses in working together to present a unified world to a pre-rational, unified body; he calls this "natural perception" and opposes it to sensory experience, which is the operation of a single sense: "Sensory experience is unstable and alien to natural perception."⁴ He concedes that music, with its displacement of visible space, is at odds with natural perception. The sound of *Rooms* is music: it's no longer only an aural index for the HVAC system; it displaces space.

And space is not displaced. This, for me, is one of the most wonderful aspects of the "and"-ness of *Rooms*: I am fully in its musical world and I am fully in its visual, tangible sculptural installation world, and the two experiences neither coalesce nor seem at odds; they're together, connected in my sensorium, but perceptually incommensurable.

The phenomenal experiential possibilities and textual contents of *Rooms* are not confined to what is within the gallery. The deconstruction of the art gallery, of its intended function as a more or less

neutral receptacle for displaying art, is furthered by the way *Rooms* breaks down the perimeter of this receptacle, undermining its ability to effectively contain work. It does this by irresistibly calling attention to the windows and what they show us of the outside—views onto the landscaped gardens, in striking contrast to what is inside the gallery. This deconstruction is most obvious in *Second Floor Window Fill*. And Hlady has automated the blinds in *First Floor Cubed* to focus attention on space at regular intervals—when the blinds go up, the recorded sound compositions stop; the space becomes quieter, and you’re encouraged to look outside. And, given the subtlety of its architectural intervention, the main visual stimulation in *Basement Bass* comes from the wall of bay windows right in front of you as you enter the gallery; in daylight, these windows offer a gauzy image of the outside, seen through the translucent blinds. And so on. So many “ands.” Their use is inspired by Gilles Deleuze, whose ideas regarding thinking with the conjunction “and” are not only relevant to my use of the word here but also speak to something I find powerful and productive in Hlady’s work:

Philosophy’s weighed down with discussions about attributive judgments (the sky is blue) and existential judgments (god is). [...] they all turn on the verb “to be.” [...] AND isn’t even a specific conjunction or relation, it brings in all relations, there are as many relations as ANDS, AND doesn’t just upset all relations, it upsets being, the verb ... and so on. AND, “and ... and ... and ...” is precisely a creative stammering, a foreign use of language, as opposed

to a conformist and dominant use based on the verb “to be.” AND is of course diversity, multiplicity, the destruction of identities....⁵

I mentioned above that wondering about causality led me eventually to think about surrealism. Could it be that the references to G.I. Joe, Barbie and dollhouses diverted my speculations away from internal conversations with post-minimalist and conceptual art strategies, situational aesthetics and site-specific reflexivity, kinetic art and interactive systems? I came to realize that, rather than explaining and clarifying the work, the more facts I read about *Rooms*, the stranger it became. And the more I experienced *Rooms*, the more I was seduced by the delirious nature—the “and ... and ... and...” —of Hlady’s interconnections and rationalizations.

It strikes me that the various ways one can compile experience and information, the particular ways one can create psychogeographic mazes of polyvalent, fluctuating connections moving through and interacting with *Rooms*—with all its phenomenal possibilities and intertwining texts—are all distinctly complex. It strikes me that there’s a copious wildness with which experience and information can compound and proliferate into unstable, un-tied-off lacelike formations, threads of “and ... and ... and ...” looping and twisting. All this led to my eventual connections to surrealism. I’m not proposing any deep or thorough application of Surrealist thought and its various agendas to push above and beyond (that is, *sur*) the conscious real, above and beyond reason, logic and the rational. Hlady’s *Rooms* got me thinking about surrealism, but more precisely,

it got me thinking about the importance the Surrealists gave to dreams and how the influence of dreams manifested itself in some of their output.

Many of the original French Surrealists, including André Breton, had sympathy for Dada's anarchist critique of society. But they wanted to go beyond critique and subversion and discover a means by which they could defeat and replace oppressive and repressive forces within the socio-cultural regime they found themselves in. Breton starts the first Surrealist Manifesto:

We are still living under the reign of logic, but the logical processes of our time apply only to the solution of problems of secondary interest. The absolute rationalism which remains in fashion allows for the consideration of only those facts narrowly relevant to our experience. Logical conclusions, on the other hand, escape us. Needless to say, boundaries have been assigned even to experience. It revolves in a cage from which release is becoming increasingly difficult.⁶

He believed that greater access to psychic states and activities that operate outside of waking, socially functional consciousness could be one way out of that cage; and dreams are one of the most ubiquitous yet powerfully affecting and marvelous of these psychic states. From the Manifesto again: "Surrealism is based on the belief in the superior reality of certain forms of association heretofore neglected, in the omnipotence of the dream, and in the disinterested play of thought."⁷ Risking a generalization, I would contend that through various techniques—extreme

juxtapositions, patently bizarre imagery, the irrational results of automatism—the Surrealists attempted to emulate the wonder of dreams. But I would also contend that this often resulted in creations that, while not attempting to represent actual dreams, nonetheless attempted to represent the strangeness of dreamlike states. That is, much Surrealist work strikes me as demonstrably strange; it declares, narrates its strangeness.

But a dream isn't strange per se when you're in it; it has its own kind of reality—a superior reality, according to Breton—even if that dream reality is unpredictable and unstable. That's how *Rooms* got me thinking of surrealism: while in no way representing a dream state, my eventual experience of *Rooms* was powerfully akin to being in a dream. With the maze of possible relationships and references—continuously arranging and rearranging themselves—*Rooms* has the weird coherence of a dream. I mean “coherence” in its etymological sense: from the Latin *co* = together + *haerere* = to stick, a coherence of local connections, a morass of elements and events ephemerally sticking together but never forming a rational, consistent unity. The copious wildness of “and ... and ... and ...” has something of the copious wildness of a dream.

Rooms does not represent a dream state. Putting forward a representation is a kind of storytelling or narration, and Hlady is not telling stories or narrating. Being in *Rooms* is like being in a dream. Finding my way through the maze of *Rooms* is so compelling that I'm sure the dream is mine and not Hlady's. I've heard Hlady talk about the rigour she brings to constructing the quasi-functional systems that activate her work, while recognizing

the radical arbitrariness of many of the choices that go into the system. (It relates to the fact that the systems have no actual, practical function that they need to efficiently focus on.) I know what she means, but I think "arbitrary" is the wrong word. It comes from the Latin *arbitrarius*, from *arbiter*, to judge, supreme ruler. It's the kind of choice an uncontested dictator can make on a whim; it's the kind of choice many artists, the supreme rulers of their art, are happy to have their work evince. But what I find particularly powerful about Hlady's work is that her choices don't seem to appear as reflections on or expressions of herself, let alone her taste. Rather they seem to inhere within the system of the work itself. Her works are complex systems that never give up all of their possibilities, systems that operate concurrently on many irrational, radically discrete planes but with no hand of an arbiter in sight; and ... and ... and ... I'm in *my* dream.

Marla Hlady's installation *Walls* would seem to fit many archetypal notions of surrealism even more closely than *Rooms*. To quote from the artist's website:

Two of Hallwalls' movable walls have been reduced to approximately 1:5 scale and then reimagined as machines. In the scale model version, one wall now turns a full 360 degrees and plays a hip-hop record backwards. Both the record and the machine's platform are amplified and heard through two speakers placed in proximity to the machine. The other wall, now paper, rolls back and forth via a lever-like movement. As the wall dips down, it at times bangs and at other times brushes

amplified strings. The sound from this machine is heard from two other speakers, also placed proximally.⁸

And, oh yeah, one end of each amplified piano string is attached to the amplified platform of the turning, record-playing wall. Why? Because where else would it be convenient for Hlady to attach them? These last two questions really cut to what I find surreal or dreamlike about *Walls*. With *Rooms* the waking dream experience is fuelled by the way the readily apparent situational, critical texts (and not just the ones written down in language) incommensurably cohabit with a porous, unnarrated irrationality. With *Walls*, it's almost an inverse relationship: most apparent is the phantasmagorical scenario described above; but, as such, it only represents or narrates a dream. What places me in a situation more like a dream is the way this phantasm gives way to a set of pragmatic concerns that form links of local causality (if not logic).

I'm not sure how Hlady came to make this work but here are some possibilities that occur to me: she wants to animate the movable walls at Hallwalls (who wouldn't?), but they're too big so she needs to make smaller wall-surrogates. The wall-surrogates can move, and motion always includes sound for Hlady. And what's a moving thing that makes sound par excellence? A turntable. And so the turntable will turn one movable wall-surrogate not because it is strange/unexpected/surreal but because it turns. And the surrogate wall will be on wheels. But how will the wall-surrogate be turned by the turntable without flopping around? It needs a support structure. And so metal armatures, also on wheels, are attached to the

wall-surrogate. And the other is paper, so it can't be on wheels; it has to move attached to a rail. And it's paper not because that would make it strange/unexpected/surreal; it's paper because it has to be; it has to be paper to strum the piano wires. And one end of each amplified piano string is attached to the amplified platform of the turning, record-playing wall. Why? Because where else would it be convenient for Hlady to attach them? And so on.

Hlady seems to work from practical need rather than expressive desire. Her work takes shape from connections made during problem-solving—a problem-solving that displaces and absorbs aesthetic judgments. It's one of the ways she doesn't narrate, one of the ways she doesn't project the aura that as the artist her motivations are pre-eminent. Hlady doesn't represent dreams but she produces through a kind of dream work. And what she produces subsequently envelops, activates and embodies my own dream work.

Notes

- 1 Oakville Galleries in Gairloch Gardens was originally a residence, built in the early twentieth century, sitting on 11.4 acres of lushly landscaped gardens.
- 2 Kirsi Peltomäki, *Situation Aesthetics: The Work of Michael Asher* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010), 12.
- 3 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2002), 262.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 44–45.
- 6 André Breton, *Le Manifeste du Surréalisme* (1924) as quoted in Patrick Waldberg, *Surrealism* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971), 66.
- 7 Ibid., 75.
- 8 Marla Hlady, "Walls," <http://www.marlahlady.com/sculpture/walls.html>.

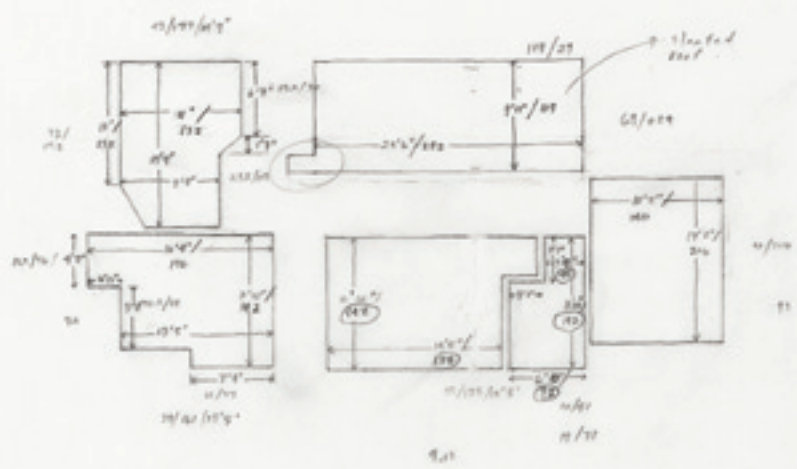
For this work, the third floor of Gairloch estate was reduced at a 1:12 ratio, a scale popularly associated with adult dollhouses. Arranged in relation to the actual architecture of the third floor, each scaled form in this work is a sound object, painted the colour of the room on which it is based. The simple machine attached to the side of each object opens and closes its external face, creating changes in the resonant character of the space and, by extension, the sound it emits. A simple recording of a radiator permeates all of the objects.







THIRD FLOOR



1/2" = 1'-0"
 1/4" = 3/4'
 1/8" = 1/8'
 1/16" = 1/16'





Marla Hlady's Fucked Up Shit
—John Massier

Rounding the corner into the Hallwalls gallery at the tail end of Marla Hlady's installation of *Walls*, I found the artist standing off to one side, arms folded. She was gazing intently as the dual components of her installation moved at full speed, one sliding across piano wires and the other spinning wildly around the vinyl record at its centre. A brutal but rhythmic atonality filled the space as the piece realized its full frenzied self.

Without shifting her stance or breaking her concentration, Hlady turned her eyes toward me.

"It's doing some pretty fucked up shit," she quietly remarked.

It wasn't frustration; it was a declaration that all was well, that the work was doing exactly what it should. We had never discussed the notion that Fucked Up Shit was our ultimate goal, but I knew that we had arrived in the space she was seeking to realize. It was a space where physical sculptural objects—carefully designed and constructed—were finally let loose as free-range beasts generating results both planned and unplanned.

It was almost a mind-bending moment, as it jettisoned me backward twenty years to when Hlady and I had first worked together to exhibit an early work of hers called *Beauty* (1992). In that piece, fifty Disney figurines of the character Belle from *Beauty and the Beast* were each fitted to rotating motors and installed in a strict line through a gallery space. They were all connected to motion detectors, which the audience could not avoid tripping, sending the Belles into controlled yet manic spins. Thinking back, I realized that Hlady's work had, for me, always distinguished itself by its combination of the contrary impulses of control and abandon.

As with *Beauty* in 1992, Hlady has always applied an extremely rigorous approach to the physical construction of her pieces, with an obsessive attention to the details of the visible physical forms and their sometimes hidden (but often exposed) technical elements. I can recall the fifty separate lines of wiring that comprised *Beauty* and how acutely

straight and measured they were pinned to the wall. They functioned, like the speaker cords in *Walls*, as drawn elements of the larger sculptural work.

This is not unique to Hlady; lots of artists operate on the cusp of obsessive-compulsive details, getting all the physical elements just so. What has made her practice unique for me is that this attentive obsession to detail is eventually untethered in some way. The controlled elements of her work do not vanish, but they find a way of opening up space for the chaotic abandon that will ensue. Despite *Beauty's* extremely tight construction, when all those elements were spinning, an inchoate and full-throttle craziness redefined the space.

This sense of both control and abandon has continued to permeate most of Hlady's work—from spinning wigs (*Waltzing Matilda*, 2000), to tethered and partially boxed-in motorized toy vehicles (*Off-Roader*, 1993–1994), to a crazy piece I purchased called *Make Robin Fly* (and its companion piece, *Make Batman Fly*, 1993). Hlady's use of rooms on every level of the house in Oakville Galleries' Gairloch estate, from the basement to the third floor, adroitly demonstrated that even in the most controlled situation, there was plenty of space for the unanticipated to emerge. It was frankly thrilling to experience the Oakville show, which seemed a culmination of all the elements I'd come to associate with Hlady's artistic practice.

In applying certain forms of control—establishing certain physical parameters through the size and shape of elements, the specific applications of sound and a pointed understanding of what site-specificity is and how best to utilize it—Hlady manages to direct control toward a panorama of possible outcomes. It sounds simple but is, in fact, extremely difficult to realize. Too much control, and the thing becomes tight, predictable and uninteresting. Too little, and it risks entropic failure. The butter zone wherein you can control certain aspects of the work and enable other aspects to go ape crazy is extremely slim, but Hlady is often right in the butter.

When we first discussed a project at Hallwalls, Hlady was particularly entranced with our system of interior movable walls, two of which slide across the space and one of which pivots on one end. She had originally asked me if we would consider acquiring heavy-duty industrial motors so that moving the actual walls could be a central feature of the new project. I immediately responded, why not?—though, for the physical integrity of our interior structure, it's probably best that Hlady ultimately opted to combine the scale-model aspect of her Oakville project with the peculiar characteristics of the Hallwalls space.

The resulting pair of sculptures mimicked the key movable features of our gallery, in a 1:5 scale treatment of the space, with one "wall"—a square sheet of paper hanging from wheels within an aluminum armature—sliding across a series of piano wires in a regulated motion that was nonetheless unique with each slide. The paper of Hlady's model wall would sometimes slide across the wires with an elegant strum, only to get caught abruptly during the next cycle with a loud twang or, even more interesting, get shaved along its edge or cut and torn. It was awkwardly elegant and beautifully violent. There was always a hint of mellifluous sound within its noisier, chaotic gestures.

A companion sculpture, to which the piano wires were connected, mimicked the pivoting-wall motion of one of the gallery walls and extended that motion 360 degrees. Swinging a model gallery wall around to animate a turntable in reverse, it injected a bass-heavy undercurrent to the higher-pitched cacophony of the strings. The works were separately amplified through pairs of speakers, triggered by a motion detector that would set off the works for a set period of time. Yet the moving parts in these two structures ensured that the soundscape remained a haphazard-seeming dialogue.

A key aspect of Hlady's *Walls* was the viewer's ability to see the scale-model walls framed by the actual gallery walls. A self-reflexive perspective, it emphasized the specific physical references to

which the sculptures allude while framing a space within which sound and meaning could reverberate. Through their semi-autonomous sounds and actions, they appropriately reiterated Hallwalls as a zone of experimentation, spontaneous action and even potential failure.

Failure, in this case, would both flummox and enhance the dialogue. While sturdy and durable, the sculptures contained built-in elements that might temporarily break down and disrupt the already ragged flow. Piano wires would break or audience members (or even the artist or curator) might (and did) walk directly into them. The needle would need resetting on the vinyl. Paper would break down and require replacing. Rather than a design flaw, this further illustrates Hlady's awareness and trust of uncertainty. If you're going to make space for fucked up shit, you prepare yourself for these eventualities and then let the shit fuck itself up.

Walls was particularly interesting in the wake of the Oakville installation, which had an entirely different presence about it, as it was contextualized solidly within the space it inhabited, controlling sound and sightlines. Hlady's installation at Hallwalls seemed to have a wilder fragility about it, using physical tension as a formal accent to aural tension. Control and abandon were in constant, perpetual flux, stable physical structures articulating a malleable psychological space. The installation thereby created its own shamanistic ritual, with enough regularity within the chaos to effect a hypnotic and alluring presence.

Also at Hallwalls, Hlady re-exhibited the ongoing work *A Case for Sound: Nina*, a series of viewer-activated sound cases each containing a sample from a live recording of Nina Simone performing the insipid 1970s soft-rock ballad *Feelings*. Playable in any configuration the audience chooses, the upright positioning of the individual cases activates the piece. This version of the piece features Simone, though the cases are conceived as an instrument capable of containing any number of possible sound works. It's telling that much of what Hlady has

sampled from Simone are the spaces between sung lines, the hesitancy, the audible gaps, emphasizing the work as both sound sculpture and a postmodern compositional instrument.

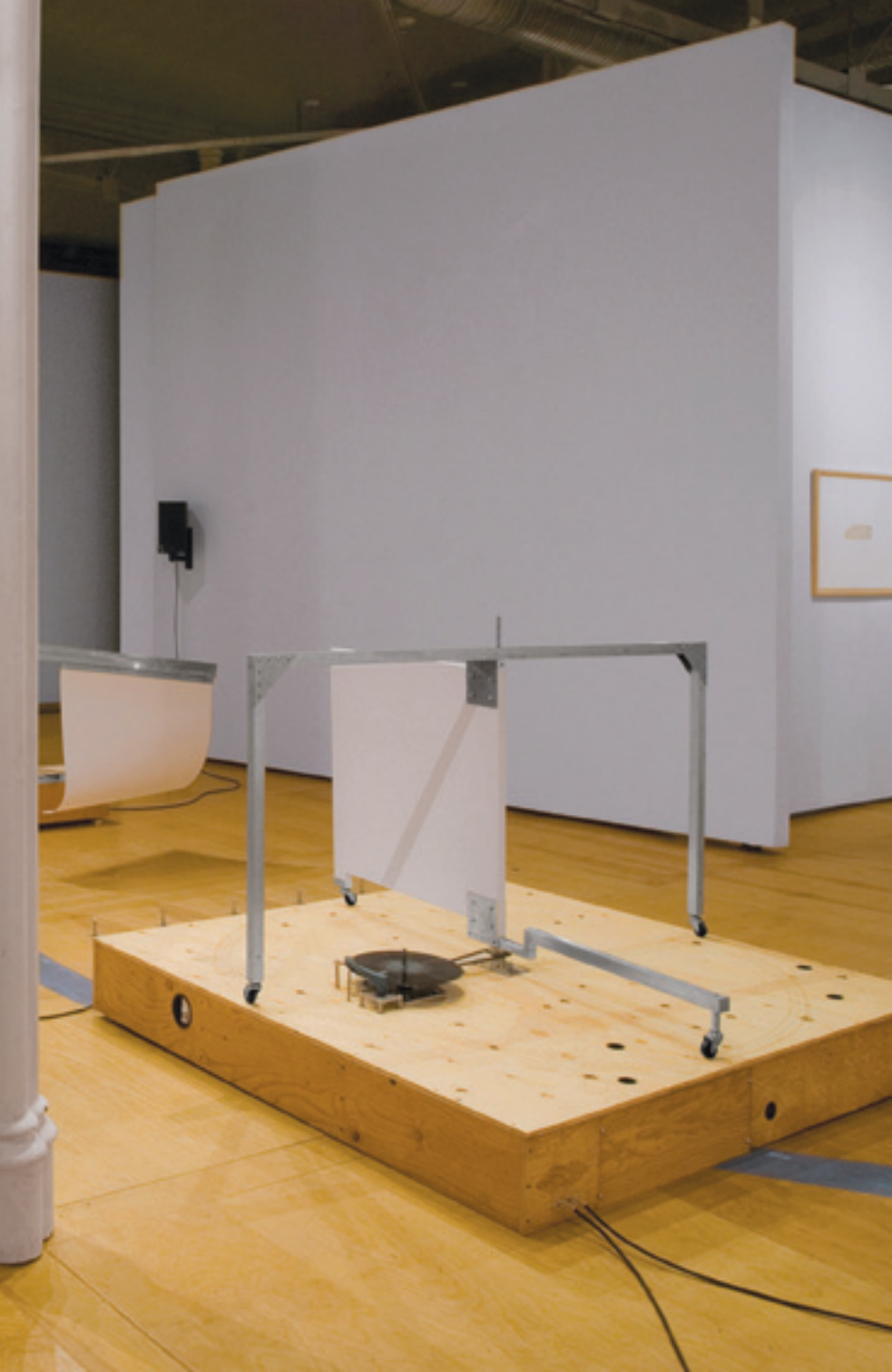
As with the larger sculptures in *Walls* and much of her previous works, *A Case for Sound*'s highly refined objects would appear to be created for specific purposes—and they are—but that specificity routinely gives way to a rapturous ambiguity. It's a trajectory that is plotted, devised, designed, and assiduously built but whose ultimate iteration even the artist is unable to predetermine. It's a dynamic equation because it questions how much of an artist's control is actual and how much is illusory.

Is it better to lock down materials, process and meaning in a predetermined way or to put all these elements to work creating a space for some fucked up shit?

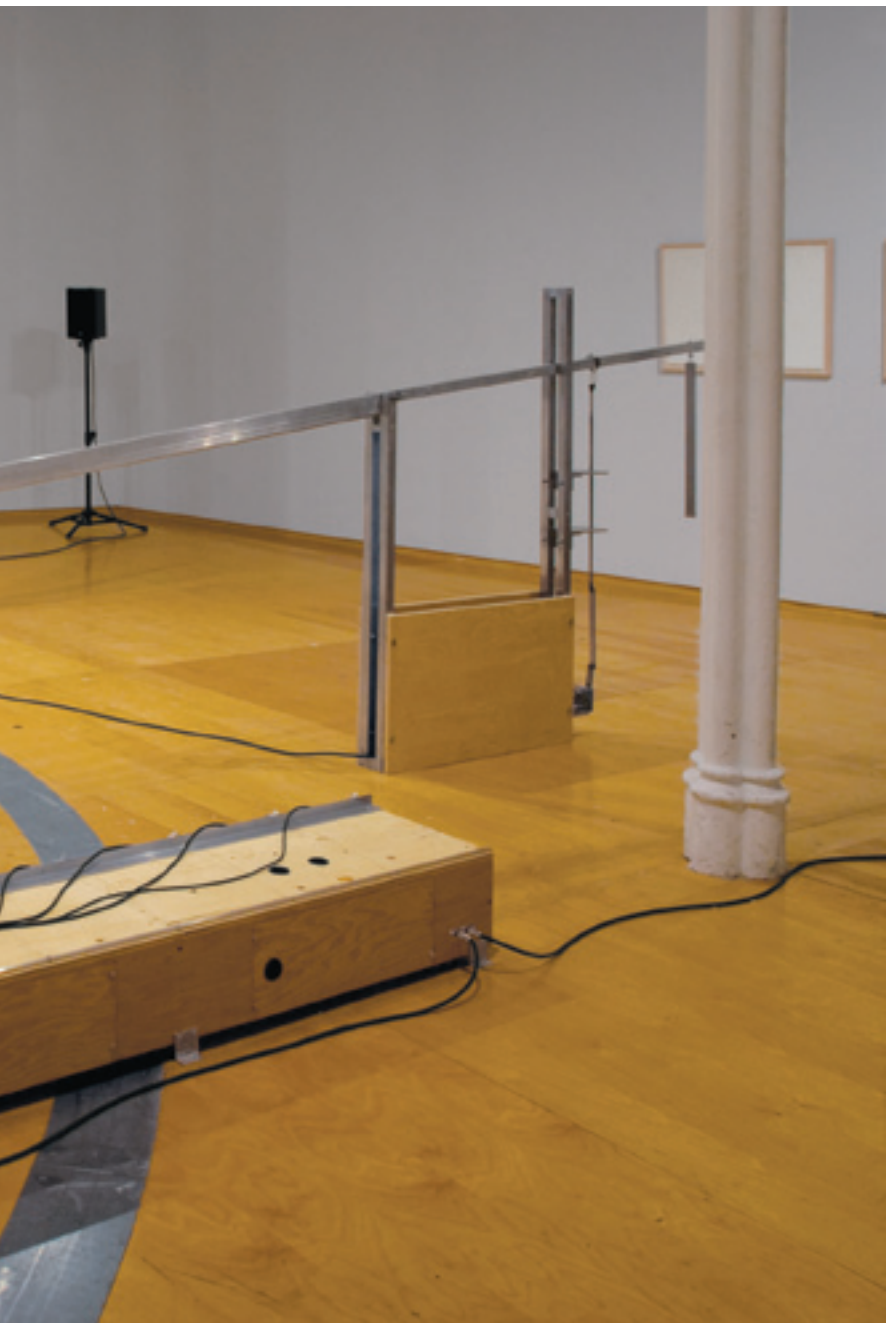
Walls
multimedia sculpture

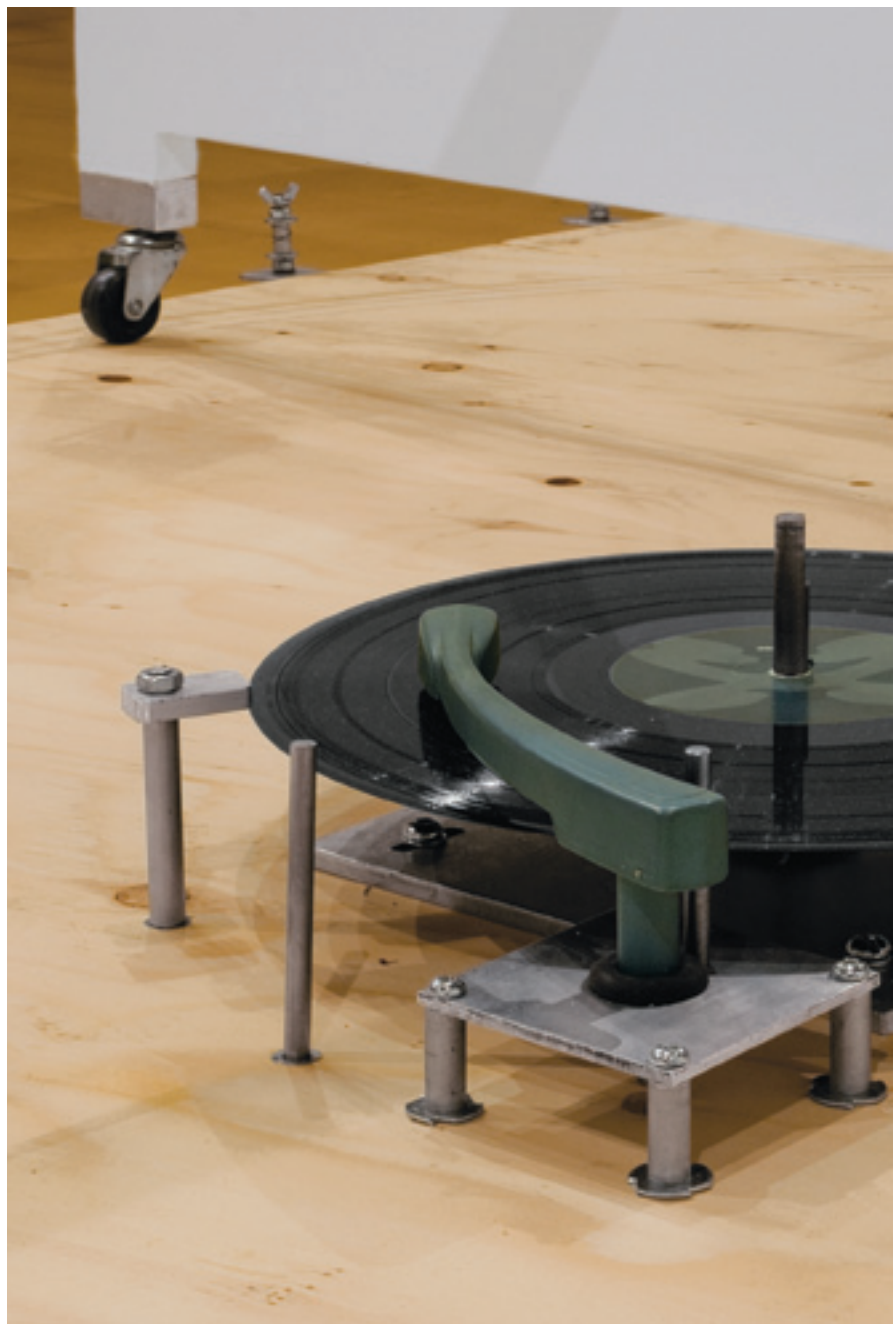
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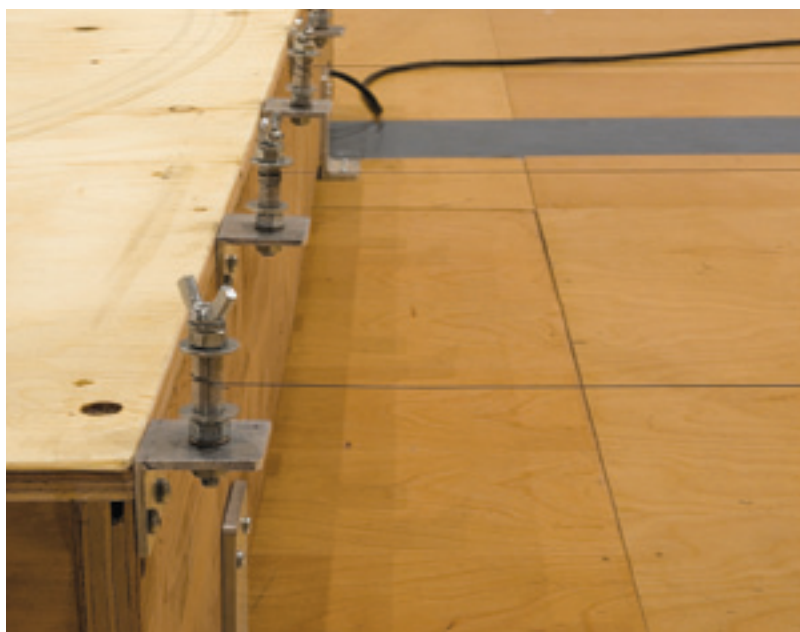
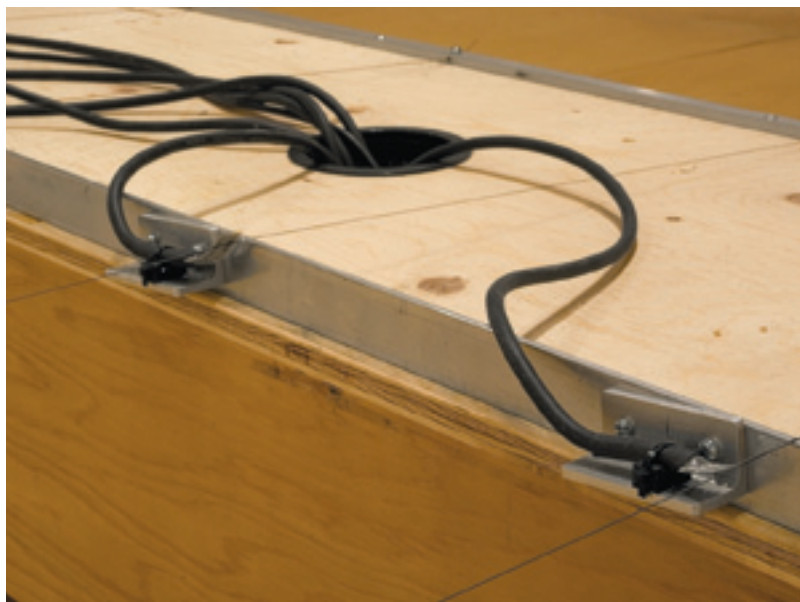














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50 YEARS OF ONTARIO GOVERNMENT SUPPORT OF THE ARTS
50 ANS DE SOUTIEN DU GOUVERNEMENT DE L'ONTARIO AUX ARTS



About the Artist

Marla Hlady draws, makes sculpture, works with sites and sounds, and sometimes makes video. Hlady's kinetic sculptures and sound pieces often consist of common objects (such as teapots, cocktail mixers, jars) that are expanded and animated to reveal unexpected sonic and poetic properties, often using a system-based approach to composition. She completed her BFA at the University of Victoria and her MFA at York University. Hlady currently lectures at the University of Toronto. She has shown widely in solo and group shows, and has mounted site works in such places as the fjords of Norway, a grain silo, an apartment window, a tour bus, the display window of a Hudson's Bay Company department store, an empty shell of a building, and a rooftop. Hlady lives and works in Toronto, where she is represented by Jessica Bradley Gallery.

Contributors

Martin Arnold is a composer and performer of music, an arts administrator, a writer, and a teacher based in Toronto. Martin's compositions have been played nationally and internationally and he is an active member of Toronto's improvisation and experimental jazz/roots/rock communities, performing on live electronics, banjo, melodica, guitar, and hurdy-gurdy. Martin works as a landscape gardener and lectures in the Department of Cultural Studies at Trent University in Peterborough.

Marnie Fleming is Curator of Contemporary Art at Oakville Galleries. Prior to assuming this position in 1991, she was Curator of Contemporary Art at Museum London, and also served as Education Officer at the Vancouver Art Gallery. She holds an MA degree in Art History from the University of British Columbia. Her curatorial practice relates to the two unique locations of Oakville Galleries, which have served as the basis for a long-term experiment with site-related projects within a suburban community. Her research accomplishments focus on the relationships between identity and the interplay of space/place. Fleming has organized over two hundred exhibitions, interventions and outdoor projects. The recipient of grants and writing awards, she has contributed to numerous catalogues, reviews and articles. In addition to recent publications for Oakville Galleries are those she produced for the National Gallery of Canada: *Is there a there there?* (2007) and *Angela Grauerholz: The Inexhaustible Image* (2010).

John Massier is the Visual Arts Curator at Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center. He has been a curator and writer of contemporary art since 1988. Prior to joining the staff of Hallwalls in 2001, he worked at the Koffler Gallery in Toronto, where he curated more than sixty exhibitions of emerging and mid-career Canadian artists. He has written articles, essays, artists' profiles, as well as exhibition and book reviews for various galleries and visual art publications, including *Canadian Art*, *MIX magazine*, *Coagula Art Journal*, *THIS magazine*, *Art in America*, *Art Papers*, the *Buffalo News*, *UB Art Galleries*, the Burchfield Penney Art Center, and the Albright Knox Art Gallery. In 1997, he co-founded the Toronto art publication *LOLA*. In 2010, he served as Project Director for the regional survey exhibition *Beyond/In Western New York 2010: Alternating Currents*, organized with the Albright Knox and ten other Buffalo arts organizations.

- pp. 4–9 *First Floor Cubed* 2011
multimedia installation
dimensions variable
- pp. 12–15 *Basement Bass* 2011
multimedia installation
dimensions variable
- pp. 28–35 *Second Floor Window Fill* 2011
multimedia installation
dimensions variable
- pp. 50–57 *Third Floor Radiator* 2011
multimedia sculpture
49 ½ × 25 ½ × 60 in
[125.7 × 64.8 × 152.4 cm]

— Marla Hlady: Walls
Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center

- pp. 66–73 *Walls* 2012
multimedia sculpture
dimensions variable
- pp. 80—inside back
cover *A Case for Sound: Nina* 2011
sound object
12 ¾ × 12 ¾ × 2 ¾ in
and 12 ¾ × 12 ¾ × 5 ¾ in
[31.4 × 31.4 × 6.5 cm and
31.4 × 31.4 × 14.1 cm]
- Proposition for Tracing a Sound
(base-bass line #1)* 2006
ink on paper
22 ¾ × 30 in
[65.8 × 76.2 cm]
- Proposition for Tracing a Sound
(base-bass line #2)* 2006
ink on paper
22 ¾ × 30 in
[65.8 × 76.2 cm]

*Proposition for Tracing a Sound
(rupture #3)* 2006
ink on paper
22 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 30 in
[65.8 × 76.2 cm]

*Proposition for Tracing a Sound
(rupture #8)* 2006
ink on paper
22 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 30 in
[65.8 × 76.2 cm]

*Proposition for Tracing a Sound
(rupture #12)* 2006
ink on paper
22 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 30 in
[65.8 × 76.2 cm]

sound—space—time #2 2010
graphite and ink on paper
22 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 30 in
[65.8 × 76.2 cm]

sound—space—time #3 2010
graphite and ink on paper
22 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 30 in
[65.8 × 76.2 cm]

sound—space—time #4 2010
graphite and ink on paper
22 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 30 in
[65.8 × 76.2 cm]

sound composition #2 2010
graphite and ink on paper
22 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 30 in
[65.8 × 76.2 cm]

sound composition #4 2010
graphite and ink on paper
22 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 30 in
[65.8 × 76.2 cm]

All works courtesy of the artist and
Jessica Bradley Gallery, Toronto

