

CAT HOPE

> SUB DECORATIVE

SEQUENCES

LIN
DEN NEW
ART



Cat Hope offers us a new way to visualise sound as she steps away from the confines of traditional musical notation to create her own unique system that provides a new way of seeing sound and testing how sound might be composed for different spaces.

Her work is inspired by Linden's Victorian architecture and takes its cues from the decorative elements within the building. The tiles surrounding the fireplace become the inspiration for the colour palette as Hope then transcribes these details into a graphic notation and creates a unique score for the space. Here the space dictates the sounds that can be heard, and the walls ultimately hold the score and come to life when played by musicians, creating a sound that

INTRODUCTION

gives voice to a distinctive Linden.

Hope's work provides for a unique conversation between history, place and sound. It offers a way to experience Linden and listen to the space.

MELINDA MARTIN
Director
June 2019

Cat Hope is an international leader in the combined fields of experimental composition, animated graphic notation and improvised performance. Hope's work is characterised by her ongoing research into low frequency sound, drones and noise. The connection between the visual and the sonic is of crucial importance in her work and live performances represent the culmination of her multifaceted practice.

Since 2008, when Hope began notating her compositions in order for them to be performed, she has developed a distinctive and progressive style of graphic notation that has been used to guide performances within both galleries and recital centres. Hope has explained that the genesis of her passion for graphic notation came from its capacity to express her unique compositions, the qualities of which simply could not be contained within traditional notation. As she states,

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"I studied composition at University, but was never able to notate the ideas I had. I just accepted I wasn't good enough at it, and kept my focus on performing, a decision that I now realise has very much informed my compositional practice. It wasn't until much later that I realised that the tools were just not right for me. My ideas, which I began as freehand 'sound drawings', involved long droning sounds, complex timbres and the complete absence of any kind of pulse or rhythm."¹

The development of Hope's practice has run in tandem with technological progress, allowing her to communicate her compositions in clearer and more refined ways. Together with her frequent collaborators, the Decibel New Music Ensemble, she designed an iPad application that enables a coordinated reading of her graphic notation so that ensembles can follow the scores, such as the one created for *Sub Decorative Sequences*, simultaneously in performances.

Hope's compositions exist in several states throughout her creative process. The scores usually begin as freehand drawings, which are then transferred into a digital format and the different parts for each different instrument are assigned colours. In performances, the musicians read Hope's scores in their digital form, sometimes including an embedded track.

¹ Conversation between Cat Hope and Juliette Hanson, June 2019



IMAGE > Cat Hope, *Sub Decorative Sequences* [installation view], 2019.
Image courtesy of the artist. Photograph: Theresa Harrison Photography.



IMAGE > Cat Hope, *Sub Decorative Sequences* [installation view], 2019.
Image courtesy of the artist. Photograph: Theresa Harrison Photography.

For *Sub Decorative Sequences*, Hope has printed four graphic scores in vinyl and displayed them in an enlarged format on the gallery walls. The scores have been inspired by the decorative aspects of Linden's heritage interior. Hope traced over a series of photographs that she took of the gallery spaces, as well as the external decorative aspects visible from the front window. Hope has explained that she can 'hear' the lines and shapes, which she has used as a foundation for the compositions. The colours used for each separate part of the score have also been sampled from the photos, most of which reflect the colours of Linden's fireplace tiles.

The four scores can be performed individually and also as an ensemble piece. Hope has described these compositions as "*sequences that expand the buildings' decorative aspects into the sonic*"². The specificity of this work, in terms of its deep connection to the gallery space, is manifold. The architectural design of the gallery has provided both an aesthetic and sonic starting point for the compositions, but they will in turn have a profound effect on the way that the sound is heard when performed in the space. The physical shape of the gallery has a unique resonant frequency that will affect the quality of the sounds when they are performed. The work represents a feedback loop between the architecture, the score and the sound of the performance.

Staying true to the function of her scores and maintaining their formative methodology, driven primarily by their capacity to express sound, has been an exercise in restraint for Hope in the realisation of this exhibition. She has explained that she has resisted the temptation to be led by aesthetics, knowing that the scores will be judged visually in a gallery context. The tracings however are subject to music composition processes such as repetition, variation, reversal and inversion, which hold their own aesthetic qualities.

It is the conflict between the functionality of the scores and their aesthetic, or decorative, appeal that inspired the title *Sub Decorative Sequences*. This title refers to the way that graphic notation can be seen as somehow below or not as complete as traditional music notation. Hope likens this to the way that the value of decorative arts has been seen as somehow less than (lower, or sub) that of fine art.

² Conversation between Cat Hope and Juliette Hanson, June 2019

The exhibition title also refers to the low frequency sound, or sub tone, that accompanies every part in Hope's score. These are notated using extended pink lines (the only notation not based on Linden's decorative aspects) and represent the only audible sound that will be a continual part of the exhibition. Consisting of sub tones emanating from the bass amplifier, the notation for this sound begins within each compositional sequence, then wraps around the main gallery and out into the 'bass room'. They sound as a constant low hum with occasional 'beating' patterns created when individual parts are layered. The continuity of these bass sounds is a reference to the fact that low sounds have been a constant source of inspiration for Hope, uniting the last 25 years of her practice, including her bass guitar improvisations. Hope describes the bass amplifier in this show as, "*like my ghost, playing the sub tones of these compositions in my absence!*"³

Sub Decorative Sequences is essentially an interrogation of space, demonstrating how a sound-based practitioner explores the formal, decorative and acoustic properties of a given area using the tools most familiar to them. In this case, the tools include graphic notation, low frequency sound and live performance. They envelop and describe the gallery simultaneously.

Sound is at the core of Hope's work, but the importance of the visual in her practice is undeniable. The work reaches its climax during the performances, when all aspects of her practice combine. It is the exceptional way that Hope is able to transform sound into a visual format that makes her work so valuable in the field of sound art and so potent as a vehicle for sonic expression.

JULIETTE HANSON
Curator
June 2019

³ Conversation between Cat Hope and Juliette Hanson, June 2019



IMAGE > Cat Hope, *Sub Decorative Sequences* [installation view], 2019.
Image courtesy of the artist. Photograph: Theresa Harrison Photography.

Cat Hope is an artist and academic with an active profile as a composer and musician internationally. Cat's composition practice is engaged with animated notation - graphically notated music notation put into motion using computers. As with her music performance practice, it focuses on low frequency sound, drone, noise and improvisation and has been discussed in books such as *Score Writing* (Thor Magnusson, 2019), *Loading the Silence* (Kouvaris, 2013), *Women of Note* (Appleby, 2012), *Sounding Postmodernism* (Bennett, 2011) as well as periodicals such as *The Wire*, *Limelight*, and *Neu Zeitschrift Fur Musik Shaft*.

CAT HOPE

She maintains collaborations with visual artists such as Kate McMillan, Tracey Moffat and Erin Coates, and directs the Decibel New Music Ensemble. In 2013 she was awarded a Churchill Fellowship to study digital graphic music notations internationally, and she is a Fellow of Civitella Ranieri. Cat is the co-author of 'Digital

Arts - An introduction to New Media' (Bloomsbury, 2014) and is currently Professor at the Zelman Cowen School of Music at Monash University, after moving to Melbourne from Perth in 2017.

www.cathope.com



IMAGE > Portrait of Cat Hope. Image courtesy of the artist.
Photograph: Karl Ockelford.

Karl Ockelford, M.A.N.E.

The performers involved in sounding this work:
Monash Animated Music Ensemble (M.A.N.E)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PERFORMANCES:

Vocalists Karina Utomo, Sage Pbbt and Judith Dodsworth

These three outstanding vocalists featured in Cat's opera 'Speechless', which premiered as part of the Perth Festival earlier this year.

Mixing styles as diverse as death metal, throat singing and classical music, these artists come together to interpret *Sub Decorative Sequences I - II*

Decibel new music ensemble are an ensemble of 6 musicians with expertise in reading graphic notation, and the combining of electronic and acoustic instruments. Based in Perth, WA, they will feature in this concert presentation of *Sub Decorative Sequences I - IV*

Mary Doumany (Harp)

Mary Doumany is a remarkable harpist and vocalist, whose performance will create a different take on the *Sub Decorative Sequences III-IV*

www.marydoumany.com

CAT HOPE

Sub Decorative Sequences I, 2019
vinyl and acrylic paint
\$800

LIST OF WORKS

Sub Decorative Sequences II, 2019
vinyl and acrylic paint
\$800

Sub Decorative Sequences III, 2019
vinyl and acrylic paint
\$800

Sub Decorative Sequences IV, 2019
vinyl and acrylic paint
\$800

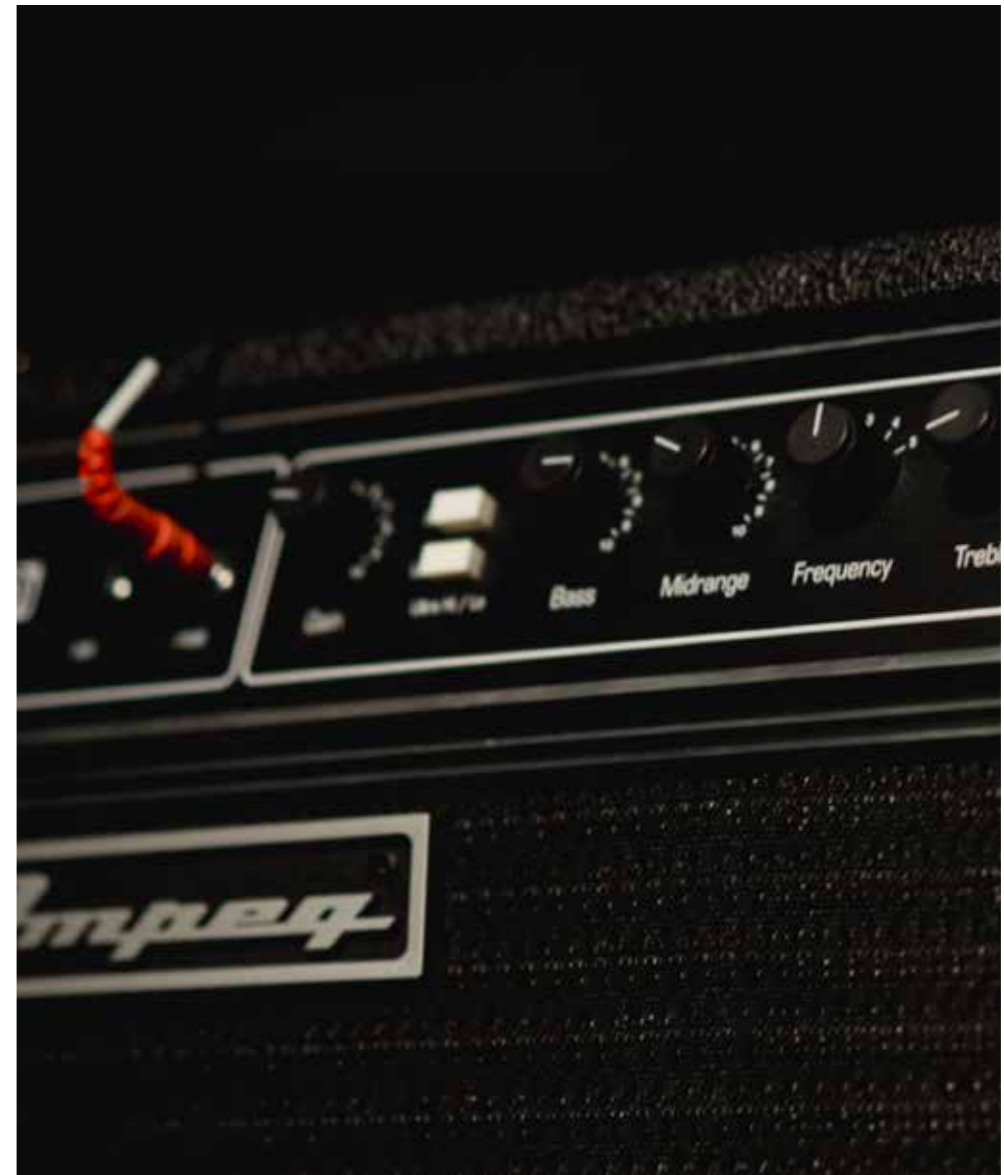


IMAGE > Cat Hope, *Sub Decorative Sequences* [installation view], 2019.
Image courtesy of the artist. Photograph: Theresa Harrison Photography.

EVENTS

PERFORMANCE

> SUB DECORATIVE SEQUENCE WITH CAT HOPE

Listen to the sounds of Linden's gallery walls in the performances of *Sub Decorative Sequences* by **Cat Hope**. Inspired by the decorative elements of

Linden's interior and exterior design, Hope has created graphic scores that will be performed by musicians in a series of special events.

> MONASH ANIMATED NOTATION ENSEMBLE (M.A.N.E) > 28.06.19 > FREE

M.A.N.E is an ensemble of composers and musicians performing works notated using notation in motion.

> KARINA UTOMO, SAGE PBBT AND JUDITH DODSWORTH > 20.07.19 > FREE

These three outstanding vocalists featured in Cat's opera 'Speechless', which premiered as part of the Perth Festival earlier this year. Mixing styles as diverse as death metal, throat singing and classical music, these artists come together to interpret *Sub Decorative Sequences I-II*.

> MARY DOUMANY (HARP) > 10.08.19 > FREE

Mary Doumany is a remarkable harpist and vocalist, whose performance will create a different take on the *Sub Decorative Sequences III-IV*.

MEET THE CURATOR

> UNDERSCORING SOUND

26.07.19 > FREE

Join Linden for a special curator-led tour of exhibitions **Cat Hope** > *Sub Decorative Sequences*, **Lucrecia Quintanilla** > *A Ripple and an Echo* and **Mona Ruijs** > *Sympathetic Resonance* with Linden Curator **Juliette Hanson**.

IN CONVERSATION > CAT HOPE, LUCRECCIA QUINTANILLA & MONA RUIJS > 16.08.19 > \$11

Artists **Cat Hope**, **Lucrecia Quintanilla** and **Mona Ruijs** are coming together to talk about the experimental world of sound art.

CRAFTERNOON FOR ADULTS

> GENERATIVE PATTERNS WITH SOUND & CODE 17.08.19 > \$44

Code your own sound visualisation. Suitable for any skill level and with no prerequisites, participants learn coding fundamentals from scratch in Processing, a programming language made for visual artists.

CRAFTERNOON FOR KIDS

> SOUND COLLAGE

18.08.19 > \$15

We know you don't hear it often but – the louder the better! Join sound artists **Dale Gorfinkel** and **Bryan Phillips** for a special sound workshop. Using recycled materials, organic or kitchen objects to create sound sculptures, kids will bang, clash and make a collective music composition. Kids will be able to record their sounds and use digital manipulation to create experimental sound collages.

SPECIAL EVENT

> DECIBEL NEW MUSIC PERFORMANCE

29.08.19 > \$15

In a very special event, **Decibel New Music Ensemble** will perform **Cat Hope's** work *Sub Decorative Sequences* with special guest **Lionel Marchetti**.

Inspired by the decorative elements of Linden's interior and exterior design, Hope has created graphic scores to be performed by the ensemble in the gallery space. Featuring a cello, viola, bass clarinet, bass flute, percussion and electronics, this concert is part of their #Db10at10 celebration year.

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DEVELOPMENT MANAGER: LYN JOHNSON
EVENTS COORDINATOR: JASMIN MCNEILL
DESIGN & MARKETING COORDINATOR: MATHIEU VENDEVILLE
GALLERY ADMINISTRATOR: HANA VASAK & SEBASTIAN HAEUSLER
VOLUNTEER OFFICER: CHLOÉ HAZELWOOD

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