

ISOLATION INTERVIEWS

MARK HOSKING





ISSUE 15

Continuing the Isolation Interviews: a new series of weekly artist and curator profiles highlighting current concerns, accompanied by a selection of available works.

We know that these are precarious and uncertain times for everyone and with so many people staying at home, self-isolating or social distancing, we want to be able to continue sharing some of our favourite art and artists with you. The Isolation Interviews are a weekly series of conversations with artists and curators that will explore how these new circumstances are affecting their practices, projects and productivity. We'll hear how they are finding solutions - and even opportunities - and what their plans and hopes are for the future.

Brooke Benington is committed to supporting and creating opportunities for artists. We believe that this is needed now more than ever. Most artists are self-employed, often supplementing their income by working as technicians, fabricators, assistants, teachers and a whole host of other jobs. Now, many have very suddenly lost a vital source of income. With this in mind, we are accompanying each Isolation Interview with a curated selection of work by that artist, available for purchase.

Thank you for your continued support. Stay safe and look after one another.

Lily & George
Directors, Brooke Benington



sustainability important to you or are you more interested in the materiality and misapplication of objects?

All of those aspects are interesting to me, the line between form and function I find a fascinating one, especially if it can be held at a point of continuous fluctuation. where perceptions need to shift accordingly. I feel like I can address value and waste by supplying a new narrative to discarded objects. Equally, I want to explore the traditional realm of inactivity and inertia attributed to material artworks, by alluding to some sort of utilitarian potential.

Over the last year, you have begun a series titled - 'Sonic Form' that straddle the worlds of sculpture and musical instrument design and innovation. Could you tell us about the genesis and evolution of this series?

Has your practice been interrupted or disrupted much by recent social distancing measures? I imagine that your studio routine is fairly solitary anyway but your work, particularly recently, does often require an audience or viewer to "activate" it.

Very little interruption I would say, in fact, I was able to continue working throughout. Certain projects had to be adapted to suit the new world order, so I'm in the process of sending work to potential collaborators rather than inviting them in to work on live performance. I'm already seeing and hearing some exciting results and I'm hoping to initiate more, by installing other pieces into artist's and musician's lock-down situations.

Your practice can be seen as an ongoing enquiry into the nature of object-hood; often taking as a basis found or pre-existing objects, assimilating them into your work and challenging their assumed use and/or value. Are conversations around value, waste and



Well, I had a growing collection of musical instruments and banjos I discovered, are essentially just components. So I started making my own adjustments and embellishments. With my friends Thom Driver and Glenn Ryszko, we were regularly making music together in a band. They would happily embrace these additions and we ended up at a point of almost exclusively playing my self-built instruments. It was very liberating to play something with no past, in a way. No preconceived idea of how it should sound or be played. These modifications grew into some kind of hybrid-sculpture series that connected with this longstanding interest in functionality.



With my pragmatic side - from a family of makers, I wanted to use design as a foil or a grid to hold up against the art-making part. Something possibly contrary or a genuine tension that occurs, I like those moments as much as the harmonic ones, when form and function are achieved in balance. There's a conflict of interest and hopefully, the sensation, when the function is present - of a moment of stopping or unseeing the work, when the functionality, in this case, a certain musicality, transcends objecthood. This can be stopped whenever, and body given back, but the potential still remains. This dynamic possibility has always been around in sculpture. One could argue - it's a basic quality of everything figurative.

The most recent development or offshoot of the Sonic Form series you began once Social Distancing measures were

implemented in Holland (where you are based). These new wall pieces are an apparent bridge between your recent musical sculpture series, and a previous (and ongoing) series of paintings, via musical theory, minimal abstraction and performance. What can you tell us about this particular project and where do you see it going?

I wanted to expand on the theme of duality I was exploring with the paintings and have a new challenge to keep me occupied. So I'm building a musical-component into a series of custom-made wooden panels and reacting to this additional-ability in my treatment of them as paintings. They either celebrate this hybrid condition, by quoting from instrument design aesthetics, which fascinate me, or they are an inquiry, more in the realm of music and colour theory,



I want to make a symbiosis between the playing and the image-making part, where the colour and composition form a diagram for the fitted string's intonation, revealing the octave positions and having a possible influence on the object's playability.

I build them like sound boxes, so they can be played on the wall or be liberated and played on the lap. Some are bow-able and the scale lengths would be recognisable to musicians. I've had them installed on the walls around the studio. They resonate well with the space and I'm working with additional amplification and loop systems. to experiment spacially with sound as a potential installation format. Future collaborations will help me develop these two lines of enquiry simultaneously. it's very likely that for some of these paintings, the sound will lie dormant and that's equally fine. The strings, tuners, bridges and sound holes I'm adding, can be features that suggest the promise of sound amongst all the painterly silence.

In this time of isolation and social distance we are starting to see people

find new ways of coming together apart; of sharing ideas and creating, of caring and communicating. Has anything in particular stood out to you? Are there changes you think could or should be made while the world pauses and waits to see what happens next?

Right now, in my situation, there is a real sense of gathering momentum, but I hope the sustained period of reflection and introspection will have positive consequences. I was struck by how spectacular nature seemed to become, enhanced by the pause in human activity. If it's possible to slingshot around the pull of adversity, perhaps we can move on in a better way. I feel privileged being an artist during events like this. to have goals, a methodology and an independent work ethic already in place. I liked seeing the way artists used the time proactively, making alternative systems like the Artist Support Pledge. As a maker and a viewer, I was reminded in lockdown of how I find enormous comfort in culture and how it can be such a brilliant source of conciliation.





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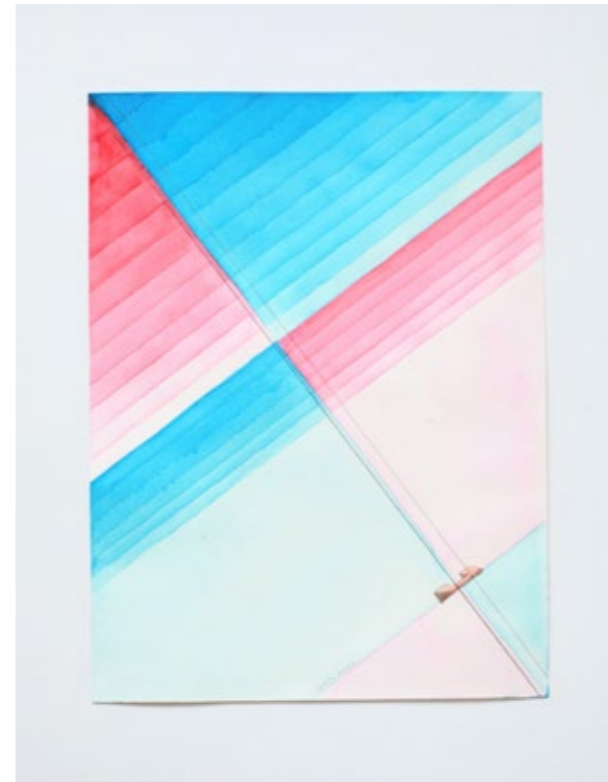
Mark Hosking (b. 1971 Plymouth, England) studied in London at Chelsea Collage of Art and The Slade School of Art and in Amsterdam at The Rijksakademie. Hosking's work has been exhibited in London at The Saatchi Gallery and Lisson Gallery. Other exhibitions include: West Collection, New York; The Arts Council Collection, United Kingdom; Bloomberg Space, London; Sharjah Museum, Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt; Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, USA. He currently lives and works in Amsterdam.



Untitled (blue painting with soundhole), 2020
 Acrylic and UV lacquer on wooden panel, machine heads, steel, wood, nickel and bone
 72 x 60 x 9 cm
 28 3/8 x 23 5/8 x 3 1/2 in.



String Theory 6, 2020
 Watercolour and pencil on watercolour paper
 40 x 30 cm
 15 3/4 x 11 7/8 in.



String Theory 2, 2020
 Watercolour and pencil on watercolour paper
 40 x 30 cm
 15 3/4 x 11 7/8 in.



Three Strings, 2020
 Acrylic and UV lacquer on wooden panel, machine heads, steel, wood, nickel and bronze
 60 x 40 x 6 cm
 23 5/8 x 15 3/4 x 2 3/8 in.



Red Tanglewood, 2020
 Acrylic and UV lacquer on wooden panel, machine heads, steel, wood, nickel and bone
 54 x 40 x 6 cm
 21 1/4 x 15 3/4 x 2 3/8 in.



String Theory, 2020
 Watercolour and pencil on watercolour paper
 40 x 40 cm
 15 3/4 x 15 3/4 in.

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