



Podcast Series: Transcript

Matt Macintosh speaks about his solo show in the Audio Guide for the exhibition: *Type and Token*

Curated by Emily McKibbon

Podcast and Interview by Linda Koenemund

This Audio guide has five chapters:

Overview

Part One: Sounds

Part Two: Images

Part Three: Installation

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Introduction by Christina Mancuso, Education Officer

Christina Mancuso:

Hi I'm Christina Mancuso, Education Officer at the MacLaren Art Centre. In this podcast the MacLaren is pleased to present regional artist Matt Macintosh as he speaks about key elements in his exhibition *Type and Token*.

Matt Macintosh: (overview)

So the work is divided up into several different sizes and several different ways of producing images, some of them are by adding things together, others are by subtracting parts. Some are by building, some are by taking apart and some are by making sounds out of the sounds that we don't normally like to hear, like saws and like bangs on construction sites. I think ideally this show calls on you to take on an actively receptive form of attention and give yourself the patient walk-through that this show needs and the time it needs.. to give it the time it needs to be walked

through. There's a want in me that really wants to produce spectacle; I'd love to make a real face-melter. But it seems that when I am responding to what appears to need to be made in terms of mounting a faithful response to the set of issues I see in front of me, and given context like this, that often softness and subtlety are the tools allow me to get closer to what form of attention I want to cultivate in the viewer.

Christina Mancuso: "PART ONE: SOUNDS"

Matt Macintosh:

So one of them is a sound component and that was produced by bringing an iPod onto walks of Nine Mile Portage and listening for sounds that were not made by humans. So "natural sounds".. so I brought a journal with me and an iPod and in the middle of January I broke Nine Mile Portage into nine separate walks of approximately 1 mile apiece. And when I heard these sounds I would document it in my journal and I would describe the sound and then take a snapshot of the trail in front of me. And then I'd move onto the next one. So these were slow walks with.. with a sustained focused sort of form of attention. I deliberately did not use the iPod to record sounds but I was interested in what happens when sounds are translated into words. And so how I documented the sounds was by describing them in written form in my journal. And then I tried to replicate the sounds using different sounds that in fact I did record on the iPod. So those different sounds include Barrie construction noises, some of the ambient noises in the MacLaren Gallery, and some web grabs of birds. And these birds were sort of what you might call non-natural. In my search for natural sounds I was interested in replicating them through non-natural or human made sounds - and these birds were all introduced after European settlement so they are all non-native bird species.

I tried to use cues where you can never fully relax into maybe an enjoyment of the sounds that are being produced

because with the way that the sonic component of the installation is installed it should have a bit of a natural atmosphere quality- which if you're in the space can be fairly enjoyable. But I don't want you to fall back into your kind of a attention La-Z-Boy and just totally believe it.. So the technology is quite visible.

Christina Mancuso: "PART TWO: IMAGES"

Matt Macintosh:

Simcoe County Archives worked really cooperatively with me in terms of allowing me to access variety of materials connected to the Nine Mile Portage. So I went in with a certain set of search criteria and found that there again are layers of access, layers of mediation, and layers of removal that distinguish you as a searcher from what you end up.. what box you end up fingering through. So based on the search criteria that I gave Simcoe County Archives it produced a variety of materials, some of them completely unexpected. And so I was interested in dividing up of the things that arose. So people camping or "wilderness or pioneering activities" that tended to fall into line with this Canadian narrative that we continue to uphold through Cub Scouts and other things about how we are in the wilderness. And so I introduced that among other themes and collapsed them all into each of these 13 photo pieces. So each of these themes that tended to emerge by way of having an archivist take your information, which has been translated into an accession number, retrieve the accession number from the stacks, bring it out, see what else is grouped in with this accession number, hope that it has some relevance to your search criteria, and sort of look for the patterns that happen in that. And how it's affected by people, how it's affected by other collectors that have donated to the collection which is how these accessions are typically organized. So it's pretty circuitous route to find what you're looking for in the layers of permissions.

So on top of these photographs I superimposed what looks like graphic symbols and in fact they are. these graphic symbols are pulled from the most recent proposed land-use map that I found in my archive search. And different parts of Barrie were classified through a variety of symbols for future land-use. So among them is extraction industrial, residential, special industrial, and a variety of other uses. And so I took the symbols and imposed them on these photographs. Again these photographs are collapsed images of certain activities that emerged as patterns in archive searches... certain kind of motifs like the excavation of remains of aboriginal populations, and to a certain degree flooding and disaster which tended to tie into this idea of way-finding, trail-making, and intervention as a means to intentionally or otherwise create pathways in town. So the archive photos are collapsed with photos that I took from the iPod for the sound pieces, all into sort of digitally collaged images and then on top of this was this designation of space as prescribed by this land-use map.

Christina Mancuso: "PART THREE: INSTALLATION"

Matt Macintosh:

I think there are a variety of scales that are occurring in this installation and a variety of senses that are engaged. And to the extent that I could introduce the haptic or something touch-based and allow people to feel that this was something in the room with them -without being fully immersive- the project seem to demand that element. There's something that's a bookmark for me too.

There is an end to the trail, and the destination point of the trail arguably is the entrance into Georgian Bay. And at that entrance there's a narrative of this boat that was used at some level as the destination point of Nine Mile Portage... so it was a receiver of goods and captained by a gentleman named Macintosh.

I found it interesting that the HMS Nancy ended up being scuttled by being burnt supplies and all in order for it to avoid falling into American hands during the war of 1812. Yeah so I had an interest

originally in doing a one to one model of the Nancy, but that seemed a bit literal and practically quite difficult because of the size of the gallery space.

Christina Mancuso: "PART FOUR: MAPS"

Matt Macintosh:

Another permeating interest for the entire show is this idea of the imposition of order, the application of grid, the charting of territory that tends to really find its fine articulation in cartography - which has been around here as long as colonization has- and how it creates legibility and omits the non-legible. So private experience and how experience to a degree has been prescribed by the systems of understandable-ness of legibility of the grid, of being mapped and charted. And that applies to day-to-day life as particularly under surveillance... so the general organization of life on the land. So Barrie in the last 20 years has been a pretty fine example of urban expansion through tract housing -incidentally these photos are spaced on 16 inch centers like studs in conventional framed houses- so the detritus that creates, the part that's not wanted, the part that's maybe not legible through in the language of tract housing was what I wanted to make use of to produce these items that respond to the charting of territory to the exclusion or the expense at times of private non-normative, non-legible, experience.

Christina Mancuso:

Type and Token, a solo exhibition by Matt Macintosh is on view from March 14 to June 21, 2015.

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