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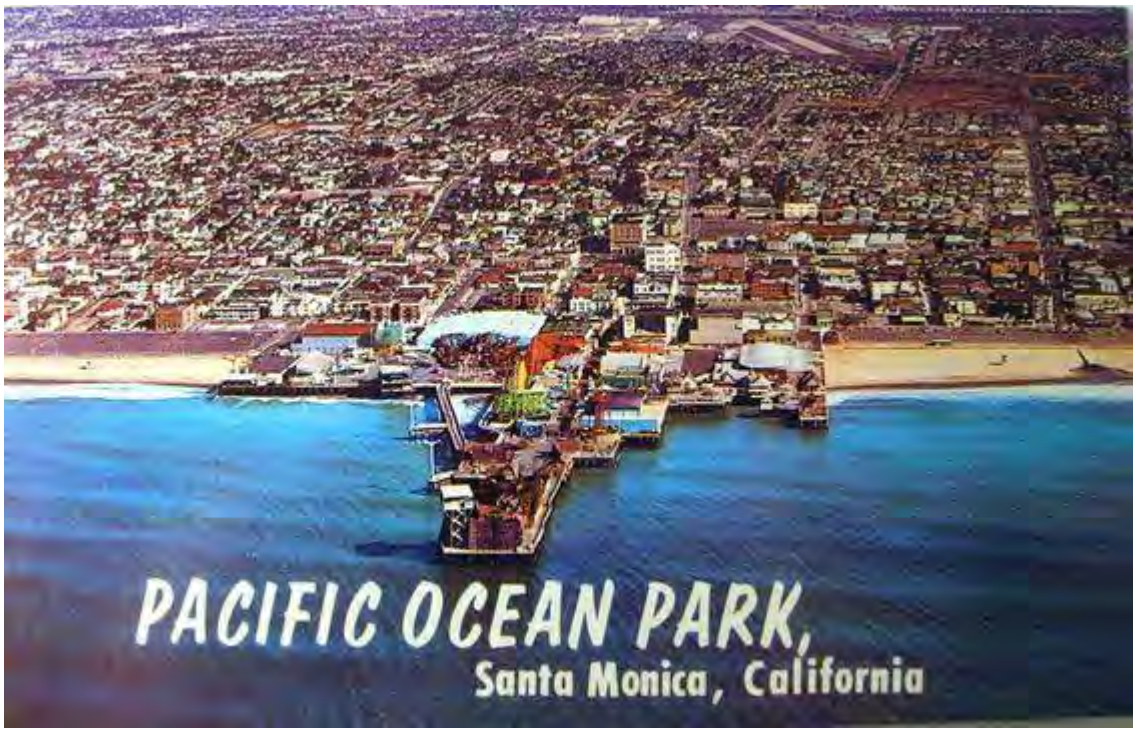
THE TIME IT TAKES A NOTE TO DIE

The inventor of radio Guglielmo Marconi had a theory. He proposed that no sound ever truly dies, it just decays beyond the point that a human being can detect it with our own ears (Hayes, 2009). He imagined a machine, a radio that could resurrect sounds lost in time, once thought to have decayed to nothing but a memory. He thought that sound could last forever.
Sonically, decay is just one component amongst many others that make up a sound. It's the manner in which a sound ceases. We hear the word decay in another context and we may think of something rotting, deteriorate and decline.
In Physics we can look at the concept of Entropy (Clausius R, 1865). The second law of thermodynamics tells us that left to time and the elements things fall apart, they decay. When we hear a song or see a piece of art that once was chaos we see energy expounded to create some order, to arrange the notes, to select the right colour. In doing so we've made something with low entropy. This law though also reminds us that over time entropy increases, that gradually this energy will dissipate back into the universe, that these things will slowly disappear. Be it from our memory or the physical world.

The Time It Takes A Note To Die will examine decay through 4 artifacts from Music, Culture, Art and Technology and through each object we will echo Marconi's theory that No sound ever truly dies.

When we refer to "sound" for the exhibition let us replace this word with "Performance". Every piece selected could be considered as an initial action on behalf of its creator, an performance of sorts. Once that initial action or performance has finished what remains? Why does it matter and how does a performance's matter remain (Mannien,S 2011).
When faced with the task of selecting material for such an exhibition we are faced with a problem, albeit at this moment in time a first world one. In a world of excess information the value lies in what we select, find and what we throw away. Here the idea of Curation serves us as a way to make sense of the world around us (Bodanis D, 2016).

The space we will inhabit will involve a spot of time traveling.


PACIFIC OCEAN PARK,
Santa Monica, California





Ocean Pacific Park in its heyday was a rival to Disneyland. Located in Santa Monica this pier/theme park represented an optimistic 1950s America - Fig one. Within 20 years it would be symbolic of LA's growing urban decay (Miranda, C 2014) - Fig Two/Three.

I chose this space as it represents a facet of decay that is hugely popular and we can examine why.

Described as "The psychology of ruin Porn" (Greco J, 2012) these abandoned, decaying spaces offer a escape from the order in our lives and, for the visitor who ventures into them, offer an opportunity to stalk spaces on the edge, filled with old and obscure objects. Being able to see and feel things that you can't in the ordinary world (Edensore, T 2012).

The impact of this environment will greatly affect the way the visitor will see each selected artwork. I will construct amongst the ruins of the park a glass structure with no roof. This will provide the visitor with a view of the surrounding park and the objects within it. The environment can become part of the exhibition. In his book *On Curating,* Hans

Ulrich Obrist gives examples where the gallery itself becomes a frame for the art contained within it (H, Obrist, 2014)

As sound will play a significant part of the exhibition, I will install two sets of speakers at either end of the space.

The artists and their respective works have all been chosen to represent how great pieces of art and expression can be born out of decaying states. The entry point for the venue is either side of the space.

FIG. ONE





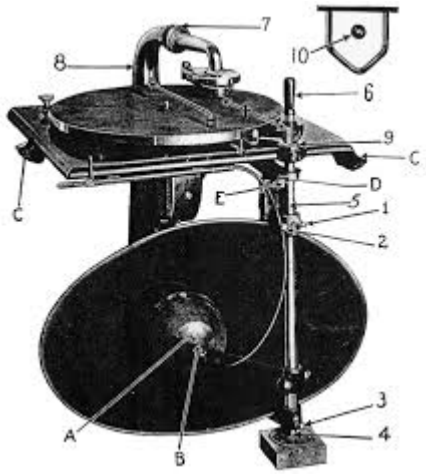


FIG. TWO





On September 17, 1915 the Edison Diamond Disc Phonograph was debuted - Fig One. The product of 38 years of work by Thomas Edison, this phonograph was to produce a perfect sound that the human ear would struggle to distinguish from reality. To sound like life itself (Milner G 2004).

A concert was arranged to display the phonograph's power. This would be done by means of a "Tone test". The phonograph would share the stage with a human performer. A recording was played of an aria from Mendelssohn's *Elijah.* Echoing the turntablism and DJ culture that would arrive many years later (Milner G 2004), the phonograph was manipulated to play and stop as and when the human performer sang the same aria. The crowd were astounded.

Fast forward 90 years and the "echoes" of this tone test were felt in the Caliburn turntable – *Fig. Two*. Costing £90,000 the Caliburn's aim was to "Release every last nuance of recorded information without adding additional artefacts' ' (Milner 2004 p.8).

Situated at the exhibitions Entrance – *Fig. One and Fig*. Two, both turntables will be demonstrated for a visitor and separated by a significant distance, with the sound from one gradually disappearing into the sound of the other as the spectator moves. This gradual decay in sound will mimic that despite the leap in technological achievements between the two machines, the aim is the same: 'how can representation of music be as real and authentic as the music it represents" (Milner 2004 p13). Edison and Caliburn both strive to capture a moment in time, to perfectly preserve a sound for it to last forever.

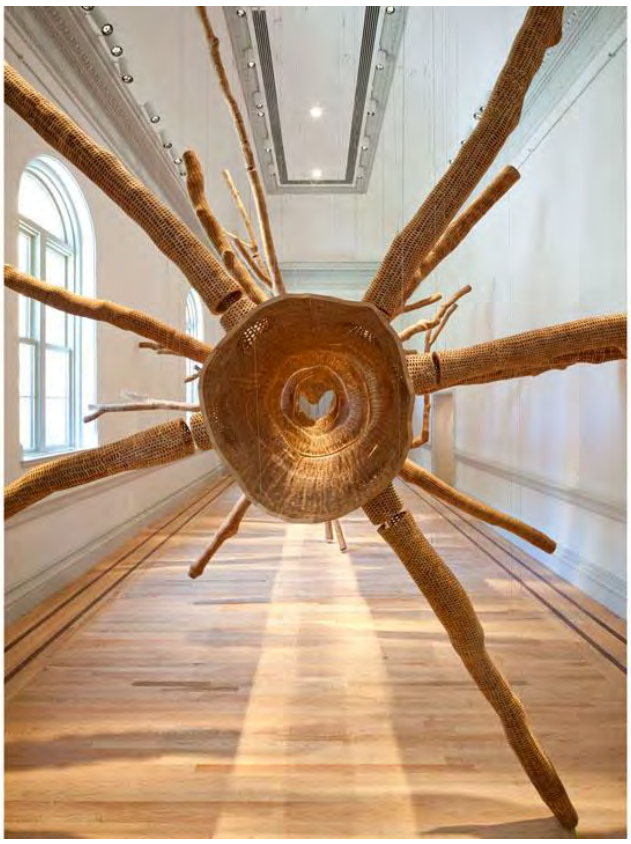


FIG THREE





Situated in an elevated position in the centre of the exhibition, John Grades, *Middle fork,* is a 105ft tree sculpture – Fig. Three. Its genesis began when the artist took a plaster cast mould of a 140 year old hemlock tree (the 'middle fork' refers to the tree's location on the Snoqualmie River in Washington state). The cast was removed and the artist along with 3000 volunteers began the painstaking process of gluing a million pieces of customised tiny cedar wood to the cast. The cast was removed producing a reproduction of the original tree, separated into 13 trunk sections. Middle Fork will eventually be planted next to the original tree and, over time, decay and disappear.
"It will at first be this kind of beautiful shadow of the original form, but then over the years it will moss over and fall apart and eventually just completely disintegrate," (Grade J, 2015).

Grades, when creating Middle Fork, opted to forgo digital technology to scan the trees dimensions and chose a more analogue path. This reverberation can be traced to our Two Turntables in that again, we, by means of reproduction, wish to record an event (in this case a tree) onto a storage medium we want to feel, touch, inhabit. This idea of reproduction, we can argue also transmits meaning to the visitor. This artwork in its current form is 'being put to use'. Although Middle Fork began its life as a beautiful tree, anyone who could visit its reproduction can transmit a whole new set of ideas to the visitor (Berger, 1972).


the disintegration loops
william basinski

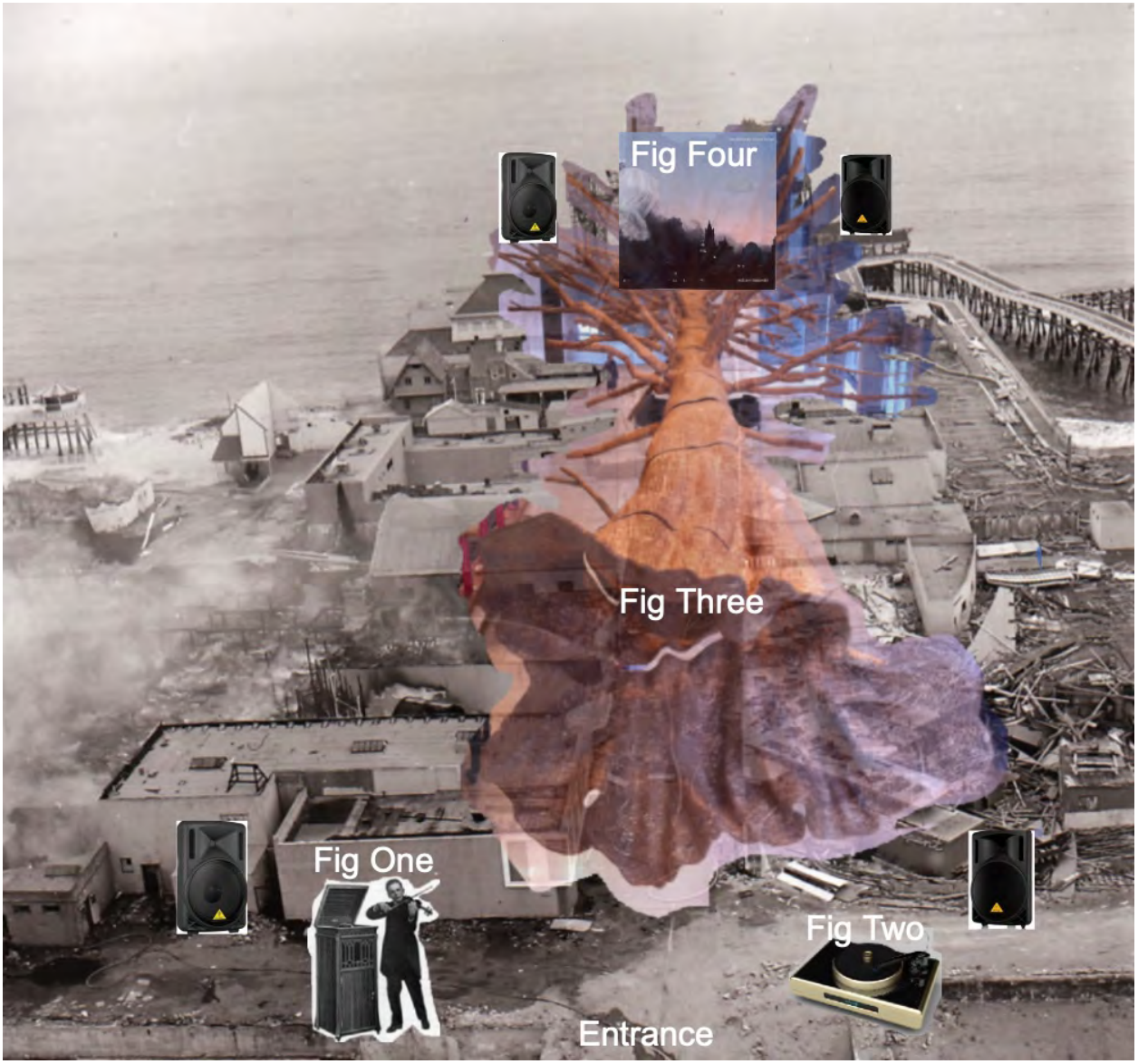
FIG FOUR


inzane_johnny
'IT'S CALLED DISINTEGRATION LOOPS, ARGUABLY THE MOST IMPORTANT AMBIENT WORK OF OUR GENERATION, I'LL SEND YOU A LINK TO THE 6 LP BOX SET'

September 11, 2001 the musician William Basinski has completed archiving a project he had begun in the preceding summer. His task was to simply transfer tape loops Basinski had created and amassed over many years into a computer. To do this, Basinski simply set up a tape machine and let it play. The tape started to decay, break down, instead of intervening in the process, Basinski let it play out. The physical body that this music was contained in was dying, its spirit leaving its body becoming digitised. The result was the *Disintegration Loops,* - Fig. Four.
I will exhibit the piece by playing a continuous loop of the album. The decay in Basinki's music is integral. Every flutter, gap in sound and, on the face of it 'defect' are the composer's tools. It may have started as a loop in its original form but now it is continually evolving. As the music dies, it emerges.

On seeing the events unfolding from his New York apartment on the morning of 9/11, Basinski played the loops, loud, and filmed the image we see on the front cover. This work now resides in the Historical Exhibition at the 9/11 Memorial and Museum playing alongside the video Basinski filmed. This will be replicated for the exhibition as shown in fig 4. Doing so will give an 'architectural effect – giving structure back to the towers and highlighting their recent and raw absence at the same time. For the brief time the visitor inhabits the exhibition, the towers return, not in an architectural form but more as a sonic representation, not unlike the phantasmagorical "tribute in light" installation that illuminates the Manhattan skyline on each anniversary of the 9/11 attacks (Balfour, L 2020).

EXHIBITION MAP


Fig Four
Fig Three
Fig One
Fig Two
Entrance

FIGURES

Fig.One: Edison,T. (1915) *Diamond Disc Phonograph*

Fig.Two: Continuum (2005) *Caliburn* [audio equipment] Available at:

http://www.continuumaudiolabs.com<http://www.continuumaudiolabs.com>[Accessed 4 May 2020].

Fig Three: Grade, J. (2015) *Middle Fork* Seattle Art Museum.

Fig. Four: Basinki, W. (2001) The Disintegration Loops

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