

PRESS RELEASE

AUGUST art presents "Mirror House"

With Rob Olins and composer Douglas Benford

"Mirror House" is an exploration of acoustics, and our perception of it relative to vision. It is a soundscape collaboration between Rob Olins and composer Douglas Benford.

Benford's composition is made from sounds recorded from the city of Vancouver, Canada. Vancouver is filled with the same urban sounds of any major city – traffic and construction noises, snatched conversations. But it is surrounded by forests and coastal waters with less of a border between urbanism and nature and more of a diffusion of one into another, and as a result, the sounds of the shore, droning seaplanes, and bird calls can also be heard.

Olins uses an acoustic reflector to focus the Vancouver score such that it will be inaudible outside of one focal point. As one steps into the focal point, the background noise of central London is displaced by the sound of Vancouver.

The observer can choose to look at the acoustic reflector or out onto the East London high street, that is, can choose to explore the relationship between what is heard versus seen. If the 2 senses' information conflict, does it matter? Studies¹ show that our vision overrides sound to determine what we perceive, automatically and unconsciously. It is this perception of sound (versus sight) that we wish to explore.

"Mirror House"

1 Feb to 3 Mar

We to Sa, 1 to 6 pm, or by appointment

Opening drinks: 31 Jan, 6-9 pm

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¹ Studies include "Hearing Lips and Seeing Voices", Harry McGurk and John McDonald, 1976