

HAIR

TEMPORARY STRUCTURES

CARLY FISCHER

Since 2018, sculptor Carly Fischer has collaborated with audio visual artist Edwina Stevens, seeing the two evolve a set of patient, perceptive and tactical co-authored gestures, combining practices in a parallel path that extends alongside both artists' long-standing individual aesthetic and political preoccupations with attention, space, and scale. With their genesis at least partially locatable in the strangely nebulous time-spaces of Narm Melbourne's extended Covid-19 lockdown period, and associated meanderings around areas of the Merri Creek and the old industrial zones of Fawkner and North Coburg, works like *Conversation Piece* (2021) and *Velodrome* (2022) form small, intimate circuits of exchange that open up an emphasis on acutely concentrated forms of close attention, and a careful listening to multiple layers of territory.

Taken together as an ongoing shared trajectory of thinking and making, these works could be understood as a project of strategic optimism enacted among the glitching, jarring drosscapes and incongruously spatialised ruins of twenty first century late capitalism. They are part of a wider tendency within contemporary audio art practice that positions sound as a way to articulate and reveal embedded, evolving and ongoing forms of relating to space and commitments to the local, through improvisational, holistic, anti-extractivist, experimental methods that are equatable to a counter-mapping. In approaching the possibility of a commons outside the commodification of space and the legacies of colonial approaches to land management and property delineation that are still with us, I hear them as a set of generously tactical meditations on what it is to steal time back from this context, forms of poetic resistance to address the challenge of making artistic work in a contemporary theatre of the absurd that amplifies and repeats *ad nauseum* its attempted exhaustion of its participants through a constant co-option and interpellation of their energy, labour and agency. In her writing, Stevens explicitly links trespass and transduction, equating the uncertainty of deviation from known pathways to the forming of what she calls "resonant relationships" through the transferral of sonic energy through matter.

A preoccupation of Fischer's current work is the austere aesthetic legacies of Modernist abstract sculptural Minimalism. As a young artist living in squats in Berlin and Melbourne, she witnessed the ways in which remnant material fragments of destroyed industrial buildings became subject to commodity fetishism – *you too can have your own budget Judd, Andre or LeWitt* – through their reinvention as abstract sculptural elements in gentrified "Industrial Style" interior design. Fischer folds these arch observations into her longstanding process of iterative mimicry, which has in the past included creating meticulously rendered hyperreal copies of discarded consumer objects, to suggest what happens to nostalgic yearnings for the simplicity of pure form in a world of depthless surfaces.

In her works, as though under the immense pressures of a tectonic late Capitalism that imagines itself both a force of nature and the end of nature, we see the Primary Structures of historical Minimalism and their reliance on axiomatic structures – the seemingly “self-evident” truths of basic forms – become ruptured, fractured, fragmented, faux surfaces, fractious fictions of themselves. Forms of visual reconnaissance take these lessons - and related ones such as the transformation of Bauhaus utopianism into IKEA Modernism – faithfully back to base-materials, looping the historical twentieth-century trajectory of the found object back on itself. Here, Minimalism is placed into context as part of a self-devouring historical avant-garde, a series of continuous art-historical loops that eat themselves alive until they are exhausted. This is the snake of Capitalist exchange-value chasing its own tail – what Fischer calls a “minimalist ouroboros.”

Despite their often uncanny realism, her resulting sculptural forms have a cognate – at one remove - in corrupted, deconstructed, seemingly authorless digital forms, the “poor image” of contemporary photography. The forms are aligned with inbetween places and ruptures, they are poised in a state of unfinishedness and migration from one state to another. Each attempt is an autonomous zone, battling the ironies of history, the flat facades of the tilt slabscapes positioned “like suburban Donald Judds”, the hilarious stripped back surfaces of Neoliberal rent-to-own apartment minimalism in shades of greige, the flatpack iterations of early 20th century utopian design movement shorn of their politics, the all-too-real precariacy and ongoing displacement under the seeming stasis of the gentrified “suburban drone.”

These “temporary structures” are also already akin to music, rife with repeated motifs; stilled whorls of significance garnered from the dense lattices of knowledge that emerge from everyday experiences of wandering in the same place, accumulated meaning distilled from the repetitive everyday experience of environments, from solitary and companionable wandering with foxes, birds, trees and other humans, finding attentiveness, again and again through the ostensibly attention-deficit wastelands of the suburbs. Moving between and among iterations, the memory of the solidity and stability of materials is a reflexive response that remains simultaneously open and active, a feedback loop that elides the fiction of permanence with its ongoingness. The discarded shell of an energy drink can, empty as a shed insect carapace, is lovingly reimagined as a mould to be cast with the jagged rocky surfaces of abandoned basalt quarries on the edge of the ancient western Victorian volcanic plains. A situational poetry of care, attention and slow noticing.

Sally Ann McIntyre, July 2026

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'Temporary Structures' is a sculptural installation by Carly Fischer that responds to the shifting peripheral spaces of her local area in Melbourne's north, situated between industrial zones, remnant waterways and generic suburban development, through the concept of a Minimalist ouroboros. Drawing on the industrial spaces, forms and materials that originally inspired Minimalist sculpture and its primary structures, the installation reflects on its contemporary extension through the temporary assemblages of discarded objects, traces and tones accumulating and merging at Melbourne's suburban peripheries. Incorporating an array of inversions, glitches and loops, the installation references the serial and divergent forms and materialities of industrial scrap yards intersecting with discarded IKEA hard rubbish, post-war concrete social housing flipped into generic townhouse development, volcanic basalt quarries filled in as sports fields and NuFarm toxic sites, where the components of Agent Orange were once produced, capped under quiet streets. Slipping between form, materiality and context, sculptural assemblages reimagine specific traces of hidden industrial histories looping back to bite the generic surface of Minimalism and its mundane suburban extensions through a generative feedback loop.

Reflecting on these abstractions and the feedback loops that they refer to, sound artist and frequent co-collaborator Edwina Stevens will respond to the sculptures through an improvised performance of synthesised and analogue sound for the closing of the exhibition. Through oscillating drones, the sonic response considers feedback, where the output of a signal is sent back to the input in a continuous loop, in relation to the generative noise, resonance and dissonance that is emitted from a minimal tone. Resonating with the architecture of the space of HAIR and its shifting and overlapping aesthetics, histories and functions, the current version of which is minimally stripped back, the sonic performance extends this loop between Minimalism and its origins in peripheral, in-between places.

Carly Fischer is a sculptural artist from Narrm who often works collaboratively with sound artists across sculpture and sound to create place-responsive installations. Drawing on the smaller details, forgotten fragments, hidden histories and peripheral dialogues of specific places and sites, her installations weave alternate narratives within familiar environments, through incidental intersections, tangents and diversions. Ambiguously merging found fragments with subtle reconstructions, her sculptural assemblages and installations slip between form, materiality and context, creating generative interruptions and glitches within the overlapping details of our local environments.

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Back large sculpture

Under your spell (2026)

Pine, particle board, MDF, concrete, castors, wall plugs, adhesives, fixings, spray paint, acrylic paint, stucco. 100 x 50 x 150cm.

Front large sculpture

Out of my grip (2026)

Pine, MDF, Tasmanian Oak, concrete, found milk crates, castors, wall plugs, adhesives, fixings, spray paint, acrylic paint. 45 x 45 x 175cm.

Side small sculpture

That's the only way I live (2026)

Paper, adhesives, concrete, acrylic paint. 45 x 25 x 30cm.

Front window sculpture

Under your shoe, under my skin (2026)

Paper, adhesives, found seed pods, spray paint. 30 x 10 x 10cm.