



*Late Listening*

Generator Projects, May 2018

*Late Listening* presents a series of abstract paintings which contain elements of text.

The paintings are mostly vertical in format, analogous to a page. Fragments of lettering are discernible but don't amount to legible words. The lettering has the character of print or inscription, with its even verticals and the small horizontals of serifs; it's impartial, reported not handwritten.

In making the paintings I use various sources to work from. The process of looking at a source and transferring information, transcribing it into another material, looking back and remembering where you were and adding to or adjusting the information you put down before: that ongoing feedback loop is at the heart of what making artwork is for me. I suppose in one way it describes a state of being present, a very basic state of seeing and noting, a way of dealing with the world.

Transcribing this information in paint in one sense feels like an impartial process; I'm transcribing line and shape and tone without pushing the information to become meaningful. Some of this information amounts to letters and a rhythm of words, but the letters are quite vulnerable, physical entities few of which have retained their capacity to specify sound or meaning.

On the other hand the materials themselves and my actions make their own contribution too, so the result is as much about how paint and liquid mediums behave, the nature of my own physical movements and my mental focus or fatigue, all of which are innately personal.

I am now starting to make an assembly of cast plaster pieces that derive from the fragmentary characters or letterforms that have come up in the paintings. It felt like the next stage in making the paintings was to extrapolate these shapes into three dimensions. I have made text-derived sculptures before, as part of ongoing research into relationships between text and the body. That letterforms have clear links with physical bodies as is borne out by typographic jargon that describes their anatomy – terms such as spine, ear, tail, arm and leg. When you encounter three-dimensional letterforms, such as in shop signage for example, or discarded advertising, that relationship with your own body can become more explicit. I'm interested in making work which explores and questions this dynamic.

What does it mean to create text without legible meaning?

Is there an activity somewhere between looking and reading?

What is the experience of reading words can't be read?