

Brooke Ferguson & Erika
Scott (Scott Ferguson)
Two Souls Speakers

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In Stereo

This writer has always had a problem with the name ‘Etch-A-Sketch’.

Brooke Ferguson
and Erika Scott
(Scott Ferguson)
Two Souls Speakers
18.05.16—04.06.16

Given even the most cursory peek behind the curtain, there is no way that the name is an accurate representation of the device, designed by the French electrical technician André Cassagnes in the middle of the last century, and its mode of operation. One of the most significant characteristics of the ‘Etch-A-Sketch’ is that the user is, in fact, invited to ‘Etch-Innumerable-Sketches’. Static charge holds very fine aluminium powder to the underside of the gadget’s face, creating the off-white drawing surface that is inscribed by a metal stylus, scraping the powder away and exposing the darkness inside the case. Shaking the device re-coats the drawing surface, ready for new interactions in perpetuum.

Depending on the goal of the user, the toy can be immensely challenging. Curved lines require significant coordi-

nation and the line produced is inherently unbroken, entailing careful planning. Additionally, errors are unable to be erased without eliminating the full image. These challenges are of course the source of much of the enjoyment for the user. Brooke Ferguson's drawing practice employs strategies of chance and risk, establishing at times parameters of challenge in the construction of a composition. This is contrasted directly with the consideration and attentiveness apparent in the work's production, making for an engaging interplay between relinquishment and reservation of control.

Like a user agitating Cassagnes' invention, Erika Scott shakes up material, resulting in a surface that is somehow both full of matter and simultaneously a void. These works repurpose photographs of domestic settings without clear inhabitants. As presented it is difficult to discern, but one can imagine the photographer of each selecting and framing specific subjects, only to have them erased by Scott, leaving only their intentional or unintentional contexts for recombination.

Together the two artists have produced a series of vinyl records, physical documents of their collaborative sound work as Scott Ferguson – Scott's spoken word accompanies Ferguson's performance using GarageBand software instruments. Some measure of ink has been spilled regarding the use of Apple's GarageBand as a creative tool. While other digital audio workstations also afford the possibility to record, mix and master tracks at home, often these software packages adopt the language and workflow of the traditional studio. This can be seen as a barrier to entry for those outside of this specialist field. Given that this is a field historically dominated by males, some have identified the software package as initiating a powerful expansion of

access to musical production – in a 2015 Pitchfork article the musician Sadie Dupuis posited that GarageBand “introduced a whole lot more people of all genders to an array of options for home recording and self-producing (while) an overwhelming majority of engineers in studios are still male”. This was reaffirmed in the same article by Dee Dee of Dum Dum Girls, who said that the “feminist implication of GarageBand definitely encouraged a lot of my female friends to explore something that had previously seemed out of reach”.

Before it was the ‘Etch-A-Sketch’, the toy was called ‘L’Écran Magique’, or, ‘the Magic Screen’. If there can be said to be any genuine magic to the device, it is in the division between the observable properties of the object and the hidden physics inside – the user is given just two dials and visual feedback on the screen, imagination needs to be used to fill in the cognitive gap. The individual and collaborative practices of Ferguson and Scott similarly challenge audiences to map real objects to experiences that are not necessarily visible, consistent or easy to understand.

Danny Ford, May 2016.

ⁱTavana, A. (2015, September 30). Democracy of Sound: Is GarageBand Good for Music? Retrieved from Pitchfork: <http://pitchfork.com/features/article/9728-democracy-of-sound-is-garageband-good-for-music/>

ⁱⁱ *ibid* .

Two Souls Speakers includes collages by Erika Scott, drawings by Brooke Ferguson, and vinyl records featuring collaborative sound work as Scott Ferguson.

Erika Scott's collages form part of an ongoing body of work made through processes of tearing and binding photographs in an effort to bring to mind shifting psychological points-of view and fragments of time. These collages deal with interiors, the domestic, and aquascaping, in an attempt to suspend or slow processes of perception.

Brooke Ferguson's abstract drawings on paper use chance based strategies and simple everyday objects to form the basis of the compositions. The works form part of an ongoing series that explore drawing as inscription, notation, and score. Following on from Fluxus, these works examine how drawing can be transformed through working with objects, images and sound.

Brooke and Erika first came together as Scott Ferguson to investigate how their individual practices differed on many levels yet have a shared affinity for absurdist humour, and an interest in unpacking what it means to identify with feminism/s. The vinyl records feature their collaborative experiments of live performance, music, and spoken word. Scott Ferguson first performed live at the Institute of Modern Art's 40th Birthday party celebrations in 2015.

Erika Scott completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Visual Art) with Honours at the Queensland University of Technology in 2010, and was a founding director of the Artist Run Initiative 'Accidentally Annie St Space' in Brisbane. She has exhibited at Artist Run Initiatives including Screen Space in Melbourne and Boxcopy in Brisbane. Scott is participating in the emerging artist category of the 2016 Redlands Konica

Minolta Art Prize.

Brooke Ferguson is a visual artist currently based in Brisbane. Ferguson graduated from the Queensland University of Technology with a Bachelor of Fine Art (Visual Art) with Honours in 2011. She has exhibited at Boxcopy, LEVEL, No Frills*, inbetweenspaces, Accidentally Annie Steet, Blindside and Inflight. Ferguson was Metro Arts' 2012 Artists in Residence, and QAGOMA's 2015 Melville Haysom Memorial Art Scholarship recipient.

<http://erikajscott.blogspot.com.au/>

<http://www.brookekferguson.com/>

Scott Ferguson Volume 1

A Side

Pocket Full of George Pell

Light Bends

I Live Through You

Sun and Moon Bedspread

Rear View Mirror Quiver

Long Fingernails

Decorative Tree Sap

B Side

Silos of Venom or Love

Pick or Choose Your Degradation

Horizontal Day, Vertical Night

Shaved Masses

Breadfruit

Crumbs Cast Shadows

Scott Ferguson Volume 2

A Side

Pulling Your Hair in Shopping Fair

You're in So Much Trouble

Seagull Speakers

Typical Nightgown

Doorbells in The Convention Centre

B Side

Is That Blood or Is That Paint?

Body Casserole

Corridor Trains

Egg Whites Between Sheets
Next Time There Will Be Flowers
Try It You Said

Scott Ferguson Volume 3

A Side

Knickerbockers in The Wetlands
When Your Mouth Squats
Manual of Zim
No Shirt On and A Bloody Finger
Low Bottoms and High Reliefs
Yellow, Red and Blue

B Side

Tip of The Day
Veins Roll Over
Error On The Car Stereo and Stains On The Snow White
Chair
Beginning in Order To Continue
Patterns of Electronic Technology
Following That Fence Around



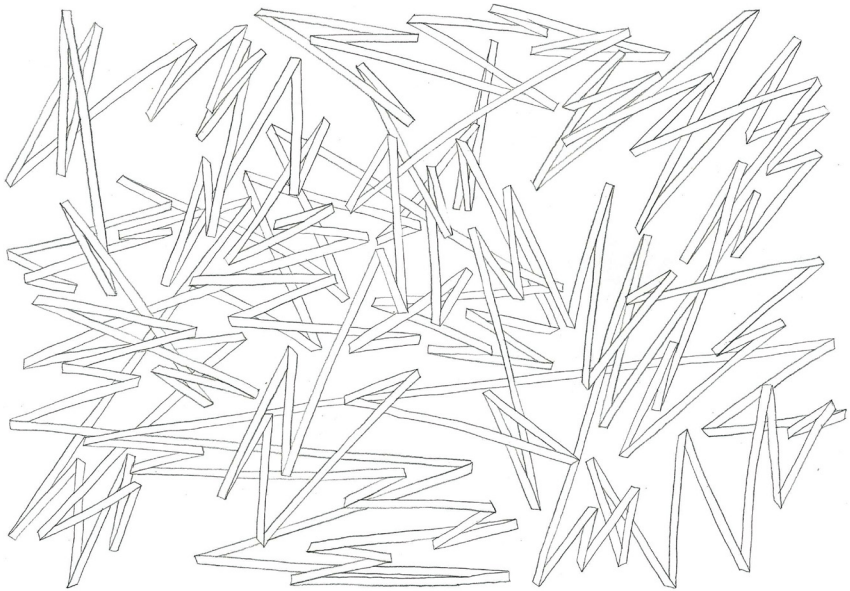
Brooke Ferguson, No. 6 (2015) pencil on paper. 21x 29.7cm



Erika Scott 'a sneeze in a dark alley' (n.d.) photographs, glue. 10x15cm



Erika Scott 'the cradle of things' (n.d.) photographs, glue. 10x15cm



Brooke Ferguson, No.10 (2013) pencil on paper. 21x 29.7cm

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