

“There’s so much entropy in what could happen if you’re performing with various 16mm projectors, synthesizers, live voice sampling,” says Sally Golding. “I often don’t know if they’re going to blow up or break, which they often do. I’ve been electrocuted!” The British born, London based Australian artist has created dozens of installations and performances in recent years, straddling lines between expanded cinema and sound art. She ceremonially piles dizzying sensations on to audiences, from the trembling light of multiple projectors to the serrated noise pulsations of the scores. She has also projected demonic figures over her face and chest while deploying blinding flashes of colour and extreme sounds, manifesting etheric visions amid the sensory threat. As Golding puts it, she’s “testing that primal response to flee or to stick it out within moments of auditory and visual overload and singularity”.

Golding spent her formative years in Brisbane. She was studying film when she realised she wasn’t interested in creating solely screen based works, and moved to London. The UK capital’s thriving improvised music scene at the turn of the century inspired her to meld live performance methods with analogue film. “For me,” she says, “contemporary expanded cinema has a very strong association with sound art, noise music and improvisation.”

Her performance piece *Breaching Transmissions*, which premiered in Melbourne in 2015, creates a

brutal Technicolor space of light and sound with live projections, software written by Golding’s partner Matt Spendlove (aka Spatial), and an eardrum-piercing noise score. Once it becomes apparent that silhouettes were being captured and projected back into the performance space, the audience began walking haphazardly through it, summoning a cacophony of colourised shadows. “It really just confuses people to be honest, but I kind of like that too,” Golding reveals, “that people aren’t really sure if that should be happening or not.”

Although she’s insistent that she would never consider herself a musician, Golding recently performed in a sound-only duo with saxophonist Seymour Wright at a series curated by Basque artist Mattin. Another exhibition piece *Spirit Intercourse*, featuring camera flash sounds and the hum of light sensitive devices, also began as audio originally intended for vinyl release, with overdriven samples from sound effect libraries, including voices, evoking the dark ritual grind of *Wolf Eyes*. Ultimately proving too tough to press in wax (it blew several fuses and broke as many needles in the process), the piece became a video installation in Tasmania. Its flashing visuals, made on iPhone, echo the late Tony Conrad’s infamous *Flicker*, which Golding once projected back in Australia with Conrad in attendance.

The physical interaction and decay of analogue media have informed Golding’s practice since day one,

and dominate her other job as an archivist preserving decaying newsreels. Utilising an Auricon Sound Camera – which actually records sound as a waveform onto 16mm film alongside the visuals – Golding has assembled soundtracks in unexpected new ways. “Once you process that film, you can then snip off the waveform. It’s about two millimetres wide. Once they were all labelled with stuff like ‘ghost’ or ‘yelling’, I was able to compose in the dark room. I could take a contact printing or photogramming approach to layering the sounds.”

Next came a pair of new installations under the title *Your Double My Double Our Ghost*, presented at South London Gallery over five days at the end of May. Golding gained access to the former Peckham Road fire station to gather audio and visual snippets for the piece, fleshing out her theme of the double (the old fire station is opposite the gallery; a “geo-dislocated reflection”). Fragments of image and sound captured at the abandoned site are staged around the gallery, played back to create a fractured embodiment of the building just over the road, presented in Golding’s physically overwhelming style.

“This feeling is not dissimilar to the effect of a dark carnival ride,” Golding explains, “the enjoyable fright when unexpected things happen. It’s a sensory assault, but one which hopefully makes you think.” □

sallygolding.com
Tristan Bath

Cut & Splice

Montaging cinematic ghosts and celluloid noise collages, **Sally Golding** delivers full spectrum sensory overload



Arianna Lago