

Susan Philipsz  
The Fall (provisional title), 2021  
Eight channel sound installation

The interior of the Oude Kerk presents an amazing set of vistas and volumes. Large empty spaces that do not just appear empty but emptied. My first impulse was to fill this space with sound; a fragmented sound that would use the entire floorplan of the church and that would evoke absence and distance.

I was partly inspired by the iconoclastic attacks in the Oude Kerk and their assault on the imagery and decoration inside the church, the gaps and absences that remain are compelling. I propose a fragmented and dismantled vocal piece that will be loosely based upon a choral work by the Dutch composer and organist Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck titled *Mein junges Leben hat eine End*. The composition has a recurring descending scale that I propose will culminate in a crescendo of falling voices to evoke a sense of collapse of fragmentation and absence.

In this installation I will suspend a set of precast translucent industrial silos from the ceiling of the church. The silos echo the other verticals in the space, like the long, stained-glass windows and may even suggest candles hanging low into the space. Each of the silos will have a speaker inside. The speakers project raw elemental tones made with my own voice that will resonate inside the body of the container. The silos are arranged in the space so that they appear to call to each other. At some point the sounds overlap and harmonise, creating random patterns of sound that continually shift and draw your attention to yourself in that particular space.

There will also be a separate organ pipe sculpture in an adjacent room. A set of new organ pipes lay on top of each other. I have taken each pipe and recorded myself blowing through it. The sound of each pipe is recorded and then relayed through a speaker placed inside the pipe. The sound is a human sound, evoking the rhythm of breath and the combined effect alludes to mortality.

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