

## Biography Margriet Kicks-Ass:

Margriet Kicks-Ass is an interdisciplinary Artist working both in the Netherlands (Ijmuiden) and Berlin. Her artistic process can be described as investigative. In a Dadaistic manner she combines art with technology. Already as a child Margriet asked herself: 'Why are the dishes not arranged alphabetically?' Margriet refuses to be intimidated by calls for efficiency and functionality. She is juggling the context and meaning of everyday objects with an analytical attitude which also reflects her fascination for natural phenomena and technology. This is the starting point for the development/invention of playful kinetic sound sculptures, which she later exhibits as autonomous works of art or in theatrical live performances. She ignores trends in art and follows her own path, instead, while drawing inspiration from artists such as Theo Jansen, Kurt Hentschläger and Karlheinz Stockhausen.

Margriet's best known work so far is the recent '[SPLASHBOX](#)', her 8th kinetic sound-sculpture, rewarding her with an entry for the Guthman Instrument Design Competition' held at the Georgia Technical University in Atlanta (US) 2014.

Her current project, the Sound Case consists of an empty vinyl-case filled with electronics. Here for the first time she's experimenting with making artistic choices based on pure and authentic sounds. In this process Margriet is trying not to do any sound technical concessions for the purpose of their visual appearance. More specifically, she's making decisions combining the extremes of the sound spectrum i.e. analogue sounds of sensor operated electrical circuits producing creaks and beeps combined with very polished sounds from a synthesiser. By this type of combination an authentic and direct sound image (without effects) derives. Although this is different to the way she has worked before, the sound images that derive prove to be typical for Margriet's artistic sound world: rough extremes without dull average greys. She has chosen to turn off the visual element by using the light purely functional. Playing in absolute darkness with a little lamp fixed on her head to trigger the light sensor, the result is that visitors can "see" the changes in sound.

For 2015 Margriet wants to further develop this detached visual aspect to let it come to live anew in autonomous kinetic objects or audio-visual environments whereby again no sound technical concessions will be made. This means they will be more suitable for exhibitions in museums and galleries. Her approach will be monumental. She's going to throw herself into the adventure of interactions and reactions. Margriet wants to try to find an answer on the question whether real surprises could be caused by mechanisms as well. How can one create an intense audiovisual experience that has complex parameters and is not just a piece of sensationalism. How does a human interact with a machine or environment that he or she does not know?

The next step will be to address the artwork directly to the visitor, without the need of a performer in between. She will add an extra layer incorporated in the device trying to interact with the visitor, which will be more complicated than the "just-push-the-red-button art."

## SUMMARY OF OTHER PROJECTS:

Recently Margriet has initiated a successful series of museum workshops called [Asking Stupid Questions](#) and she's also organised an almost annually returning event : A well known soundart and performance festival called [Rammelfest](#). Furthermore she has, together with Lukas Simonis, initiated a release of the [Dutch-Experimental-Music-Scene](#) to support Motorschiff Stubnitz in September 2014. In november 2014 she was involved in a compilation of sound works of international female composers, called [Urban Arts Berlin](#). Her most recent record can be played and purchased [here](#).

## EDUCATION:

- \* ArtScience (former Sound & Image) at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts and the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague. (graduated in 2004)  
This academy was about art and technology, combining disciplines, interactivity, triggering all the senses, overall environmental installations, art in public space and performance art
- \* Audiovisual Art at the Academy of Fine Arts Tilburg (containing film, photography, video, sound, and sculpture in an autonomous way)

## COURSES:

- \* Designing interactive guided tours in museums of modern art
- \* Pure Data visual programming on an open source platform
- \* DIY Electronics like Arduino and soldering sensors and trigger-modules in sound and image
- \* Experimental sound by film (Steim)
- \* Landcape Photography (Fotogram)
- \* Sound-engineer (IAB - Utrecht)
- \* Director television (Hilversum, regie 1)

## MASTERCLASSES:

### 1. SELECTED FOR THE SONIC ACTS MASTERCLASS OF KURT HENTSCHLÄGER (Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Feb 2015)

Kurt Hentschläger (AT) creates audiovisual installations and performances. Between 1992 and 2003 he worked within the artist duo Granular Synthesis. Hentschläger's work is characteristically visceral and immersive, as in ZEE and FEED, with extreme perceptual effects composed from light, sound and fog. These works literally transport the viewer into other worlds. Hentschläger's CLUSTER series builds on the uncanny by portraying 3D representations of humanoid creatures that can only exist in dynamic flux, swirling and flowing like the wind, apparently unhinged from the screen on which they are projected. Hentschläger's most recent, emerging body of work centres on how we perceive nature in the 21st century.

## 2. SELECTED FOR THE SONIC ACTS MASTERCLASS OF ANTHONY MC CALL, IN CLOSE COLLABORATION WITH THE EYE FILM INSTITUTE (September 2014)

The masterclass provided a unique opportunity for professional artists, musicians, composers, film makers, academics and advanced students to gain in-depth insight into McCall's concepts, working process and methods.

Anthony McCall (UK/US) has a cross-disciplinary practice in which film, sculpture, installation, drawing and performance overlap. McCall was a key figure in the avant-garde London Film-makers Co-operative in the 1970s and his earliest films are documents of outdoor performances that were notable for their minimal use of the elements, most notably fire. He gained international recognition through his 'solid light' film series, notably *Line Describing A Cone* (1973) which was presented at the Sonic Acts festival in 2010.

## 3. SELECTED FOR THE SONIC ACTS MASTERCLASS OF CM VON HAUSWOLFF & MIKE HARDING (feb 2013)

CM von Hauswolff (SE) is a composer and a conceptual artist. Sound recording devices are his main instrument as a composer; as a conceptual artist he works with performance art, light- and sound installations and photography. Mike Harding (UK) is a curator, producer, lecturer and music publisher. He runs the Touch label together with Jon Wozencroft. In the masterclass led by CM von Hauswolff & Mike Harding, participants will work on their own version of *freq\_out*. For *freq\_out* - a concept by CM von Hauswolff - twelve participants are allotted ranges of frequency within the audible sound spectrum. Participant number one will be allotted 0-25 Hz, number two 25-65 Hz, and so on. Over a period of four days, the task of the participant is to compose one sound work each. The work cannot contain any sounds beyond the allotted frequency range, but can be of any length and is played back as a loop. The final work consists of 12 smaller works joined together into a whole.

## NOMINATIONS:

- \* Selected as semi-finalist in a contest Instrument Design, the Margaret Guthman competition at the Technical University in Atlanta, USA at Department Music Technology. With participants worldwide. February 2014.

## PERFORMANCE ART:

- \* With my playable sound sculptures I performed in the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany, such as Urban Spree Gallery in Berlin, the Robodock Festival in Amsterdam, Urban Explorers in Dordrecht, MotorSchiff Stubnitz in Hamburg and cities like Brussels and Mainz and many more since 2006 until now.

## \* PERFORMANCES WITH THE "SOUNDCASE"

- playing in Madame Claude Berlin, 20th op april 2015
- playing in de Berckepoort basement in Dordrecht (march 2015)
- participating in an international streaming performance événement in Nantes in Frankrijk, organised by apo33 (February 2015)
- LOOS in Den Haag (Wonderwerp) (Januari 2015)
- NOODLEBAR in Rotterdam (december 2014)
- STEIM in Amsterdam (november 2014)
- VROOOM in Rotterdam (sept 2014)
- Birthday ADM Festival Amsterdam (july 2014)

## \* SPLASHBOX

Started the Splasbox (Plonsbak) with a crowdfunding project on the platform Voordekunst. Immediately after that I built this sod sculpture during an artist-in-residence at Artspace Flipside in Eindhoven. Between 2012 (first with prototype) and september 2014 The Splashbox has been in different places, festivals, galleries, a competition in the USA, a ship in Germany and in theatrical settings.

- Joep van Lieshouts "HAPPY INDUSTRY" Museumpark Rotterdam (sept 2014)
- URBAN EXPLORERS FESTIVAL Dordrecht, (2014)
- [LAUT] Klangkunstfestival MAINZ, (2014)
- MS STUBNITZ in Hamburg, (2014)
- Musical Instrument Competition Atlanta in USA, (2014)
- RAMMELFEST -MIN 40 Amsterdam, (2014)
- Galerie ROODKAPJE Rotterdam, (2013)
- WORM ver-uit-de-maat, (2013)
- PNEM Soundart Festival, (2013)
- NACHT VAN DE DODEN at NDSM, (2013)
- MAFF Festival Almelo, (2013)
- URBAN SPREE GALERIE in Berlijn, (2013)
- KULTER Amsterdam, (2013)
- STORK Hallen, (2013)
- SOTU Festival, (2013)
- Diner DADA Rijkshemelveert Amsterdam, (2013)
- VOLKSROOM in Brussel, (2013)
- studio LOOS Den Haag, (2013)
- Salon DADA in Amsterdam, (2013)
- Theaterfestival Alkmaar, (2012)
- (h)ear experimental audio research in Heerlen, (2012)
- De Bunker at NDSM Amsterdam, (2012)

## EXHIBITIONS:

- \* Participation with a video-clip in an exhibition in MELBOURNE, Australia curated by Lee Ann Joy in 2013.
- \* Participation in the **DUTCH DESIGN WEEK** 2012 in Eindhoven with my interactive monumental sound sculpture the Rauschmaschine. Visitors are invited to explore and play themselves.  
[http://www.margrietkicks-ass.nl/picture\\_files/flipside.html](http://www.margrietkicks-ass.nl/picture_files/flipside.html)
- \* Participation with the Rauschmaschine in an exhibition on Futurism in **GALERIE ROODKAPJE** in Rotterdam. Visitors were invited to play themselves on the instrument during the whole exhibition period. (2011)  
[http://www.margrietkicks-ass.nl/picture\\_files/roodkapje.html](http://www.margrietkicks-ass.nl/picture_files/roodkapje.html)
- \* A sound walk designed for CBK Dordrecht (2009), invited by Edwin van der Heide en Joost Rekveld  
[http://www.margrietkicks-ass.nl/2009\\_files/tentoonstelling.html](http://www.margrietkicks-ass.nl/2009_files/tentoonstelling.html)

## ARTIST IN RESIDENCE, AIR PROJECTS ON LOCATION:

Most of my kinetic sculptures I developed during an artist-in-residence period. I've been in:

- \* **Satellietgroep Den Haag**, the coastal project called BADGAST in 2014. Creating a composition of sounds of Scheveningen (coastal town near The Hague) under and above the water. Using the primal elements (water and wind) as a red thread in the composition led by my own interpretation of the theory of avantgarde composer and visionair Karlheinz Stockhausen. The label Zesde Kolonne from Eindhoven is interested in producing a vinylrecord of my final composition.
- \* **Artspace Flipside** in Eindhoven in 2013: Built kinetic sound sculpture "The Splashbox" based on underwater resonancies. Research about water, sound, resonance and video projection and light.  
<http://www.margrietkicks-ass.nl/splashbox.html>  
[http://www.margrietkicks-ass.nl/splashbox\\_files/Splashbox-updates.html#Flipside](http://www.margrietkicks-ass.nl/splashbox_files/Splashbox-updates.html#Flipside)
- \* **Rhizomatic Artspace for artistic research** in Amsterdam in 2012  
Artistic research about projection combined with sculpture. Video mapping on my soundsculpture combined with live performance .  
[http://www.margrietkicks-ass.nl/picture\\_files/rhizomatic.html](http://www.margrietkicks-ass.nl/picture_files/rhizomatic.html)
- \* **NDSM Treehouse**, a creative hotspot in Amsterdam. I Built my sound sculpture the Rauschmaschine during a stay in NDSM Treehouse in 2011  
<http://www.margrietkicks-ass.nl/sound-quaker.html>

## TEACHING:

### -LECTURES

- \* Invited to provide an online lecture for the university in Scotland on Music Technology department, about my take on interactive sound sculptures. Because of my walking completely my own path in between the different art forms, designing and building kinetic sound sculptures which can be interactive or combined with performance, it is difficult to put me in a specific scene. (2014/2015)

### -WORKSHOPS

- \* My self-developed workshop "asking stupid questions". This workshop trains participants to get rid of (unconscious) automatic mechanisms and exercises to observe precisely. It tries to break free of our habits to behave cool and act intelligent. Asking free questions is a huge liberation and encourages free thinking. The workshop takes place in museum of modern art de Pont in Holland (Tilburg) and is used to look in a different way to modern art with the help of stupid questions (2015)

<http://dommevragenstellen.nl/>

<https://www.facebook.com/WorkshopDommeVragenStellen>

## GRANTS:

- \* The Amsterdam Fund for the Arts (2014) \* A Crowdfunding Platform (Voordekunst) to cover material costs to build the Splashbox. (2013)

<http://www.voordekunst.nl/vdk/project/view/707-splashbox-plonsbak-a-self-built-instrument>

## ART-EVENTS:

Organizer of my own art-event: **RAMMELFEST**. This is a playful and unexpected festival filled with soundart, performances, self-built instruments and modern dance. Get inspired by a laboratorium set-up of many live acts, in which different art-forms are combined. At unexpected moments a new edition will take place on an unexpected place. This event is funded by the Amsterdam Fund for the Arts. Until now 5 editions took place since 2010 until present. And it's still growing in its size. Sometimes connected to a residency, sometimes not. Always in collaboration with a local cultural platform.

<http://www.margrietkicks-ass.nl/rammelfest-min40.html>

Rammelfest 2.1 and 5.vis at NDSM Amsterdam,  
Rammelfest 7 komma 5 at Das Spectrum in Utrecht  
Rammelfest 8.nat at Artspace Flipside in Eindhoven  
Rammelfest -min 40 in de Toren in Amsterdam

## ART INSTALLATIONS AND THEATRICAL ENVIRONMENTS:

Mixed technology with presenting an environment:

- \* in 2005 I worked for theatre group Dogtroep, helping with the technical art-installation and theatre-show "**CARWASH**", built on a trailer
- \* in 2012 I worked for Hummelinck and Stuurman, helping with a big background decoration piece consisting of mechanical flowers growing slowly during the piece
- \* In 2013 I worked for "**NACHT VAN DE DODEN**" Van Convoi Exceptionel, at NDSM in Amsterdam. A festival on the former dry dock, filled with performances, artworks, light-effects and professional decoration.

## INTERACTIVE ENVIRONMENTAL ART INSTALLATION:

- \* 2012: During **BLIKOPENER FESTIVAL** in Delft I made an installation called DADA- Absinthbar. After drinking one glass with absinth, visitors were invited to throw mushrooms towards the gnomes, hidden in an Alpenkreuzer trailer. Inside we made a spooky environment with atmospheric sounds, smoke and abstract light and color patterns.

## RELEASES:

**January 2015:** My solo Bandcamp release, also available as real cd, called: If the ocean was square and filled with bits.

Connected to this album there's a video clip on Vimeo:

<https://margrietkicks-ass.bandcamp.com/album/if-the-ocean-was-square-and-filled-with-bits>

<http://vimeo.com/113127990>

**November 2014:** Selected in a compilation of sound works of female composers working professionally in the sonic field, from all over the world (Vietnam, China, South Africa, Bolivia, Venezuela, Mexico, Australia, Europe and the US) called Urban Arts Berlin.

<https://urbanartsberlin.bandcamp.com/album/synthesis-vol-1>

**September 2014:** Initiated **SOS save MS Stubnitz Release** together with Lukas Simonis. This online compilation contains 30 tracks of actual sound artists to support the German cultural ship Ms Stubnitz. Because this vessel moored several times in Rotterdam and Amsterdam, we decided to look over the borders of our country, to support this international important crossover initiative. Some tracks were played on the concertzender recently:

<https://dutch-experimental-musicscene-supports-ms-stubnitz.bandcamp.com/>

## **INTERACTIVE (KINETIC) SOUND SCULPTURES:**

From 2004 until now: developing and building (interactive) SoundSculptures

IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER BACK IN TIME:

### **Sound-case (2014/2015)**

Her current project, the Sound-Case, consists of an empty record case. This case is filled with self soldered electronics. Margriet is combining the extremes of the sound spectrum: analogue sounds of sensor operated electrical circuits producing creaks and beeps combined with more polished sounds from a synthesizer. The sound images that derive prove to be typical for Margriet's artistic decisions: an authentic and direct sound world of raw extremes and no dull average greys or effects. Still in development

### **Splashbox (2012/2014):**

(In dutch: Plonsbak) This is an interactive sculpture on wheels consisting of a visual interesting construction containing of 2 pipes filled with water. The moving of the water is regulated during a live performance or in stand-alone modus. By adding small objects to the water it creates an under-water composition based on the vibration of these materials. Different small daily life ingredients are suitable as sound source. In this way this instrument functions like a playing back machine of (small pieces of) the environment.

For example melting ice cubes and shells from the beach give a rich sound spectrum. During this wet dance a mini camera is connected to project moving images of the sound soup so that the public can take a look into the source of this real time sound kitchen. This mini-laboratories shows a real-time study of vibrating objects, mixed with sparkling sounds of water.

Although the Splashbox is used primarily in a live performance setting, it is also convenient as an autonomous kinetic sculpture. During a performance it looks like an old steam machine, transferred by a sound witch into a real time audible and visual sound-soup.

### **Rauschmaschine (2010/2012):**

This monumental sound sculpture is a converted file cabinet, which sounds like the cadence directly from the engine room of a large ship. Using bare frequencies the whole unit literally starts to quake. This movement causes everyday (kitchen) objects which are fixed on the cabinet to resonate. Depending on the frequency, different objects start to vibrate. The sounds of these everyday objects are amplified by microphones. Together with the resonating fundamental tones arises an interactive changing landscape of sound layers. The physical energy causes an complete sensation, reaching all the senses. The sounds are in contrast with the form (filing cabinet). normally fully stored with slant archives and files. This dadaistic contrast makes the sensation surrealistic and hilarious.

