

# Finnbogi Pétursson

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*Selected Works*

Persons  
Projects

## Certain Rhythms for Space

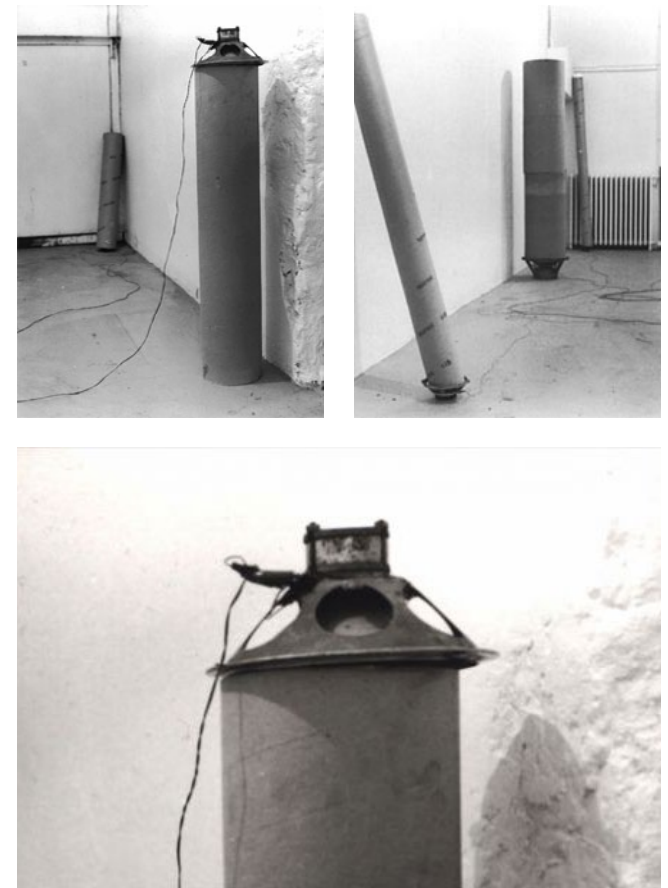
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*Amsterdam, 1985*

For *Certain Rhythm In Space*, the artist placed an old-fashioned gramophone with no record on it in the middle of the floor, connected to ten loudspeakers surrounding it on the enclosed walls of the space. Cardboard tubes of varying lengths and widths were placed either above or below the speakers, funneling dramatically different tones back and forth across the room. The gramophone controlled and evened out the rhythmic interval between the modulation control and each successive loudspeaker, sending 24-volt, direct-current tones, coloured by the different tubes, out toward and into the audience.

This was an audience, as one description put it, which was experiencing a flow of rhythms while also being completely unable to locate or relate to their origin. At its most basic level, all rhythm consists of time and change. At its most intriguing level, that of interacting sound waves and brain waves, Pétursson's work permits us to become part of the rhythmic space rather than merely observing it as spectators. This was also one of the earliest examples of a process which he called "sound drawings."

(Donald Brackett)

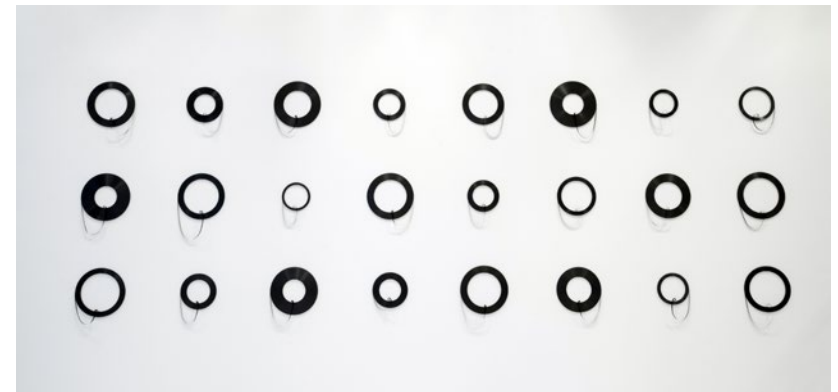


# Logg Loops

2020

*Mixed media, dimension variable*

*Logg Loops* is a visualization of the transitions between the visible and the audible, the interface, the area where those qualities intermingle and elude clear categorization. In *Logg Loops* Pétursson worked with gathered radio broadcast material from the 1980s. At that time Icelandic authorities pursued the goal of archiving all Icelandic media products. However, as this proved to be an utterly hopeless task, what had been archived so far was left to decay. After years of closed storage, these reels have turned into a sort of cement. If their murmur can be played at all, they will only be played once. After that, the tape will be ruined. Thus, the infinite loop has in this work no sonic quality but a visual one in the way the tapes are montaged by the artist: he glued the ends of the tapes to the beginnings. The materiality of the tapes makes the lost or destroyed sound waves visible and tangible like a metaphor of sound itself. It is preserved, like a modern-day magnetic fossil capturing the sounds of a specific time.



# Circle

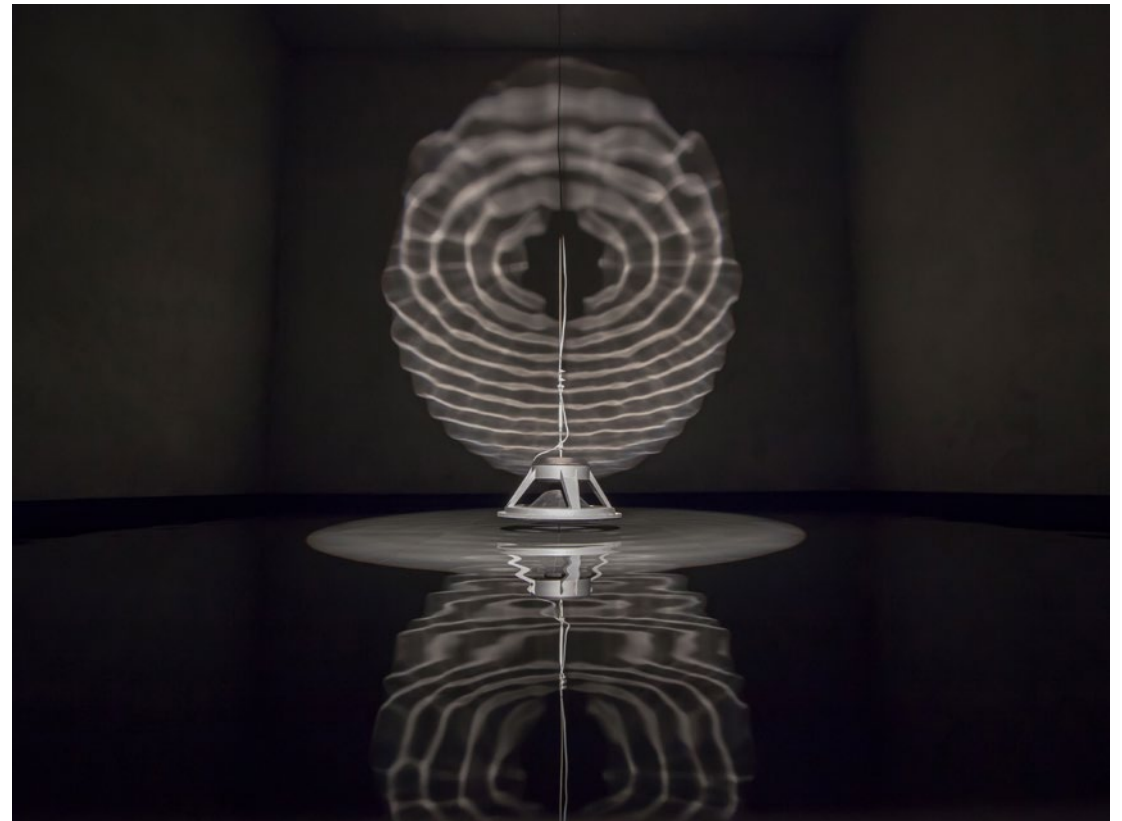
1991-2005

*Water, loudspeaker, electronics, dimensions variable (according to space)*

In 1991 at the Living Art Museum, Pétursson installed a large loudspeaker suspended over a darkened pit filled with water.

The work was titled *Circle*, since the loudspeaker formed a sound wave whose frequency was boosted to 0-200 khz and rippled the surface of the water so that the wave motion formed regular circles at certain moments of the process.

As the pitch of the wave rose the pattern on the surface of the water changed, and was projected on to the wall. Aided by the water and the projector, the artist managed to make the amplification of sound visible. Variations of this work will be made (ACE).



# Earth

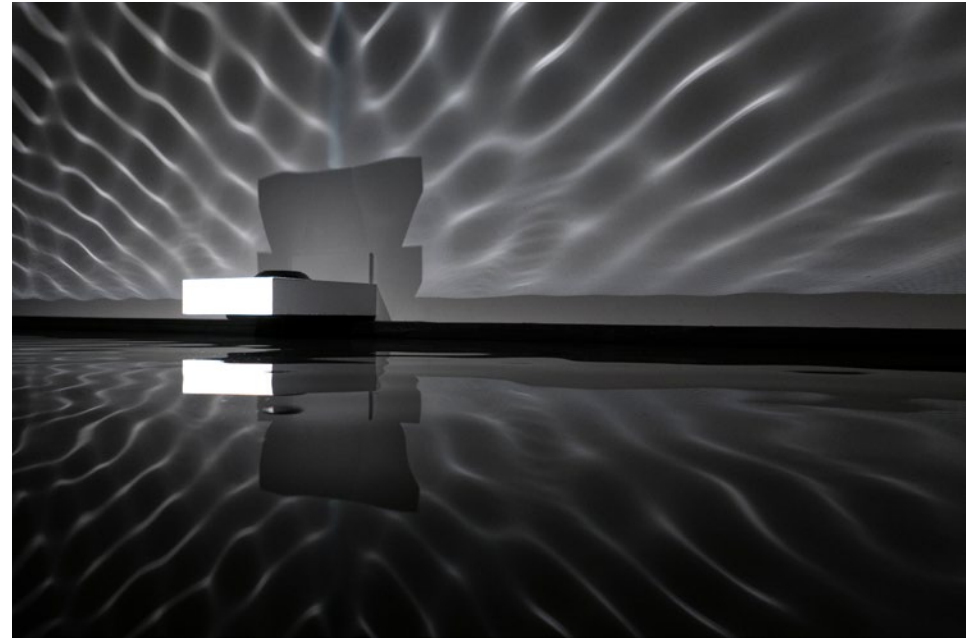
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*1994-2009*

A transfixing installation that utilizes sound, light and shadow. employing low frequency sound to continually move the water. The reflections radiating from the piece form an ever-changing environment in the gallery, creating a deeply compelling installation.

Play video

<http://vimeo.com/85292137>



# Infra-Supra

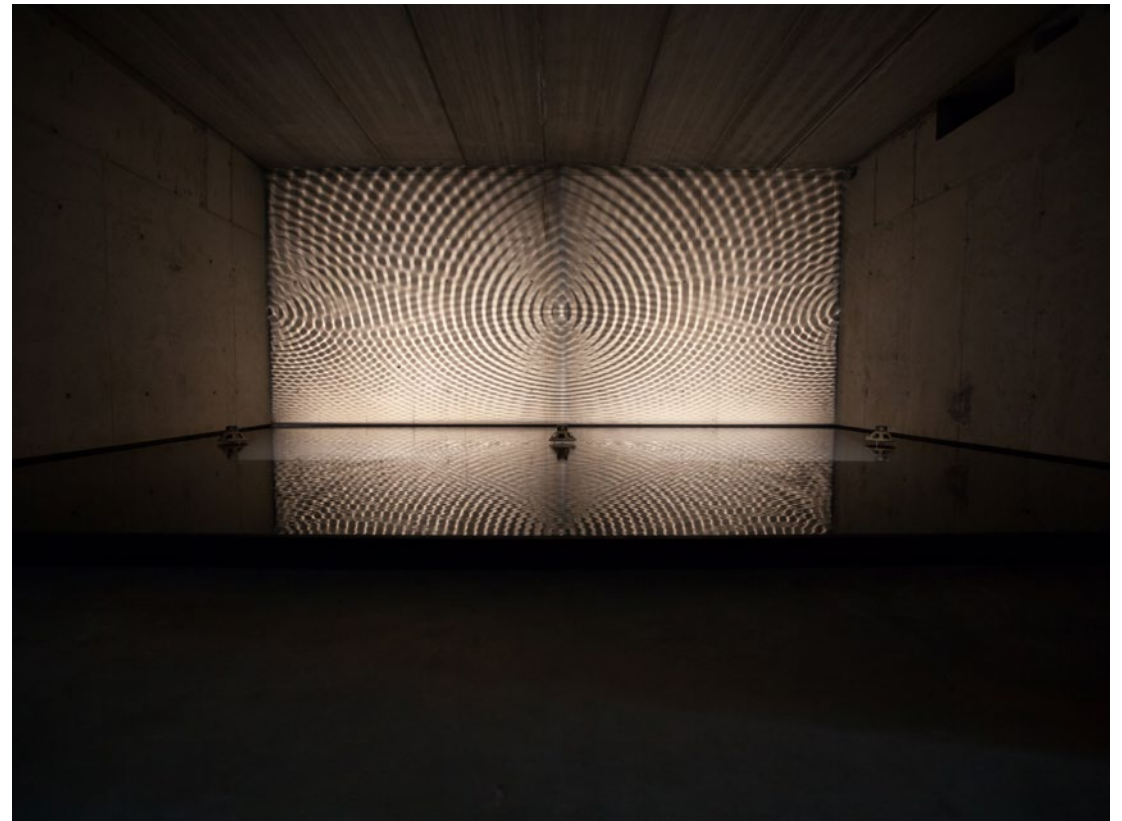
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2014

[Play video](#)

<http://vimeo.com/107773601>

*Infra-Supra*, 2014, has a long, shallow pool of water on the ground with three equidistantly placed small speakers just above the water's surface. The speakers repetitively deliver the equivalent of three hertz of sound onto the water below and these recurring sound waves generate expanding concentric circles in the pool. Via strategically placed lighting, the patterns on the water then project onto the wall in the form of shadows and create a fluid, animated dance, which is reflected again on the water, resulting in a quasi-infinite interfusion of below (infra) and above (supra). The central wave pattern is mirrored symmetrically on the wall, creating a billowing flame-like shape that swells and deflates. At times all three speakers pulse at once, causing three sets of intersecting patterns; at other times, one or two speakers remain silent and the wall above them remains empty. To the visitor, the three-hertz sound waves register as a barely audible humming and are more felt as a pulse than heard. This exact frequency mimics that of the brain in a restful state, and, together with the visuals, provides the essentials for a meditative trance.

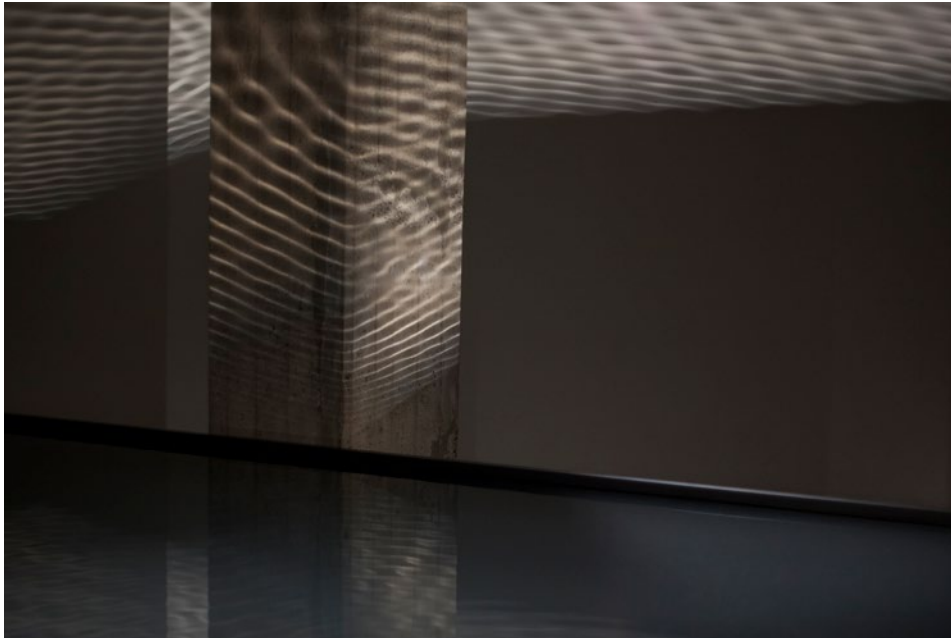


# HZ

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2019

At the exhibition in Reykjavík Art Museum - Hafnahús sound waves are led into a large pool and the ripples of the water are reflected on the walls of the hall in an immersive installation.



# The Watertanks

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*Water-Earth, Reykjavik, 2005*

7.8, 14, 20, 26, 33, 39, and 45 Hz – The Schumann resonance. This phenomenon is one of the naturally occurring magnetic fields that have always surrounded us. It appears that the space between the earth's surface and the ionosphere forms a gigantic resonant cavity with physical dimensions that give it a frequency somewhere between 7hz and 8hz, 7,83 to be exact. Producing sinus tones from 30hz - 42,8hz and run them parallel two and two. I create an interference wave of 7,8hz, known as the Schumann resonance.  
(Finnbogi Pétursson)



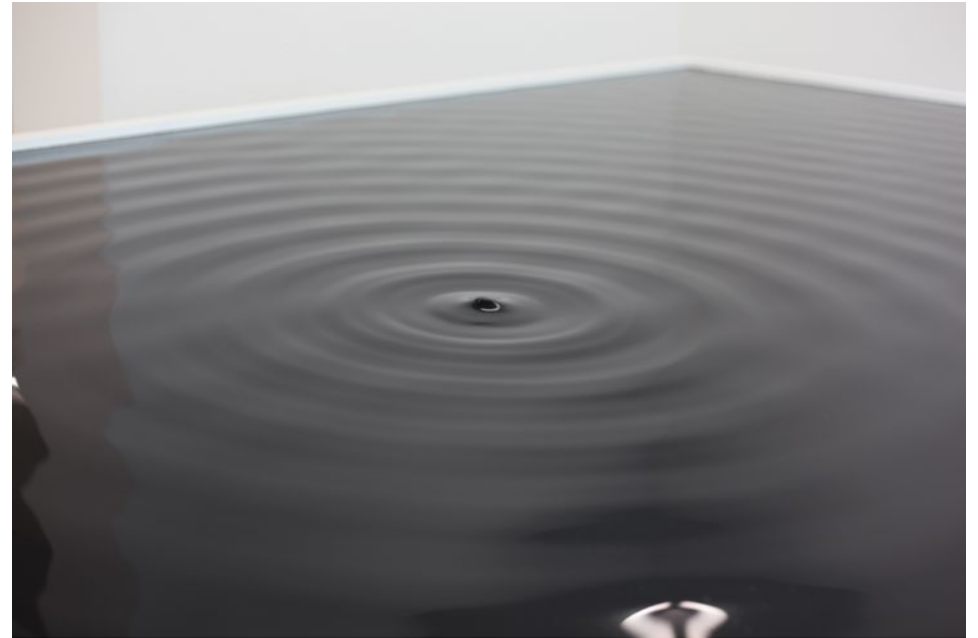
# Sinus Circle

*Berg Contemporary, Reykjavík, 2016*

*Mixed Media, 488 x 280 x 80 cm*

[Play video](#)

<http://vimeo.com/233465735>



# Tides

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2016

In Petursson's installation the light looks like sound. The simple shed is situated by – and slightly jutting over – a lake, with the side facing the water featuring an opening just above the surface. Seen from the outside, this simple volume is not very spectacular; however, on entering the space, it is an entirely different story for the viewer – with impressions of water, sun and fire seeming to mix right in front of your eyes. When the light on the outside bounces off the rippling lake, reflections spiral into the interior of the wooden pavilion, continuously drawing flowing waves on the walls and ceiling that share the warmth of fire and the continuity sound.

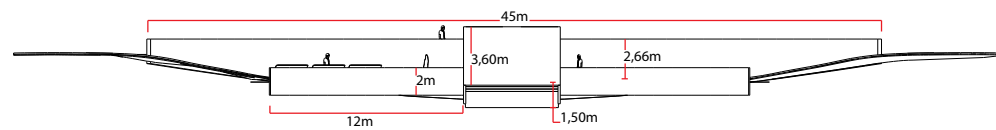
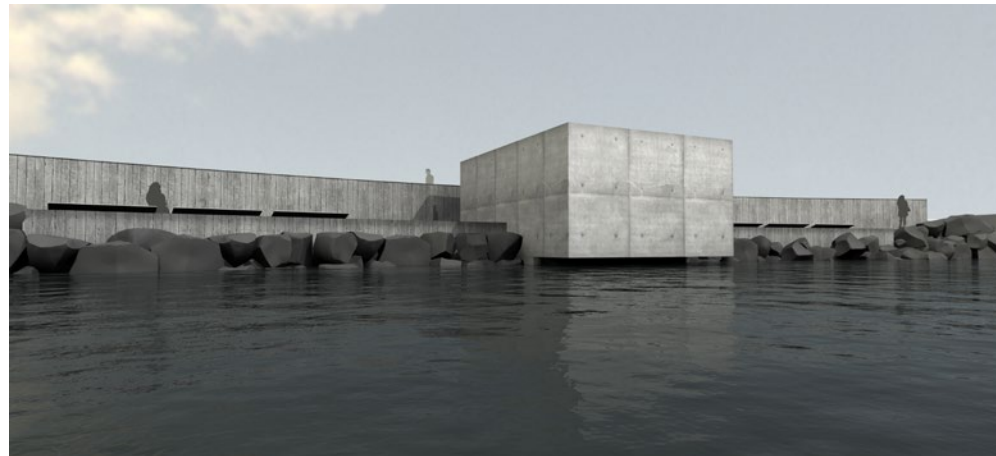
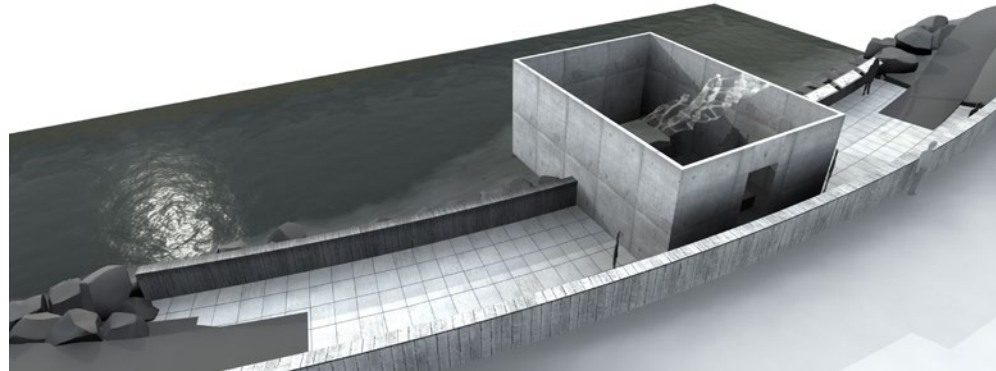
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<http://vimeo.com/169941946>



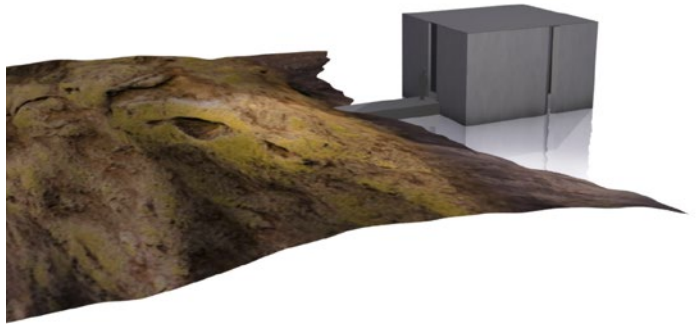
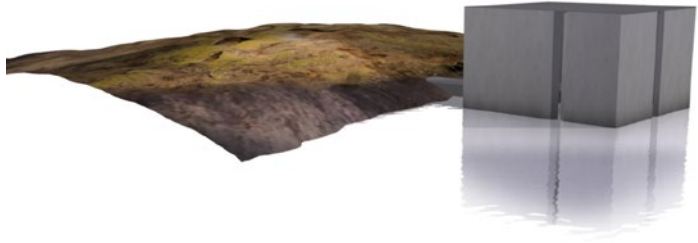
## Bank, 2018

*Proposal visualization*



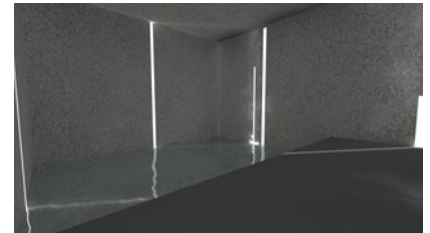
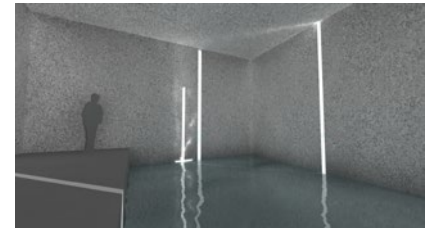
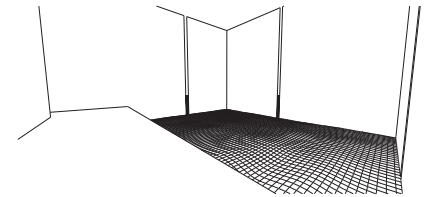
# Directions, 2018

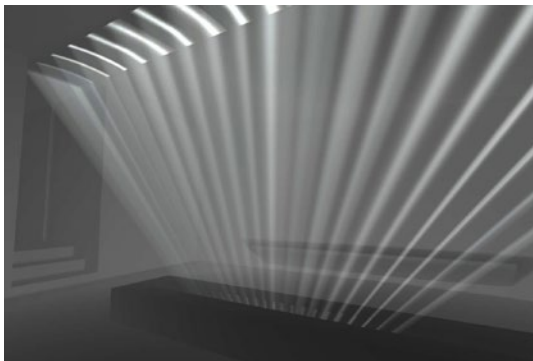
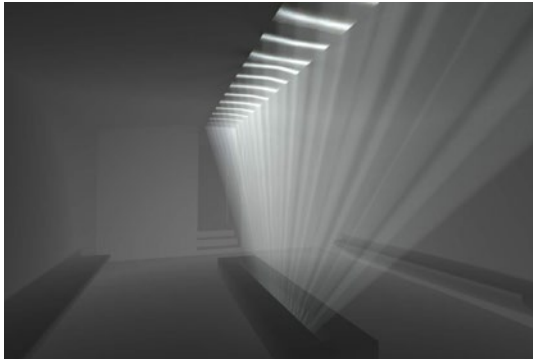
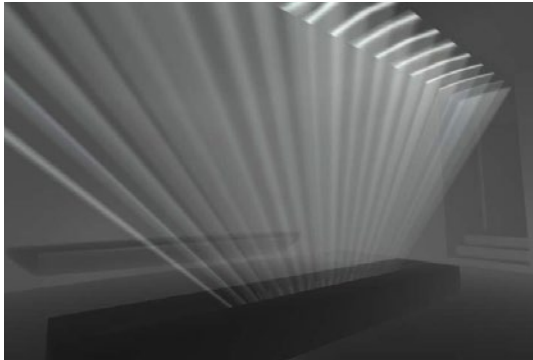
## *Proposal visualization*



Concrete, water, daylight. *Directions* is a concrete house that will be installed in a pond. Entrance into the piece to the north after a concrete ramp that enters the house and becomes a floor. The pond enters the house through three vertical slots, approximately 10 cm wide and extend from the ceiling and into the pond. The light flows in through open faces facing the main directions.

As we enjoy the sun, it shines through the slots continuously from morning to night, forming a ever-changing interplay of light and shadow, reflection and refraction of the surface of the pond on the inside walls of the work. *Directions* are a reference to the primary forces of water, fire, air and earth. It also refers to the main avenues, the moon and the sun, as well as the hour of passing. The work is polished on the outside and the filter drilled. Inside the concrete is terasso sanded. Access to electricity must be provided for the work due to possible lighting and cleaning





## Steam Room, 2006

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### *Proposal visualization*

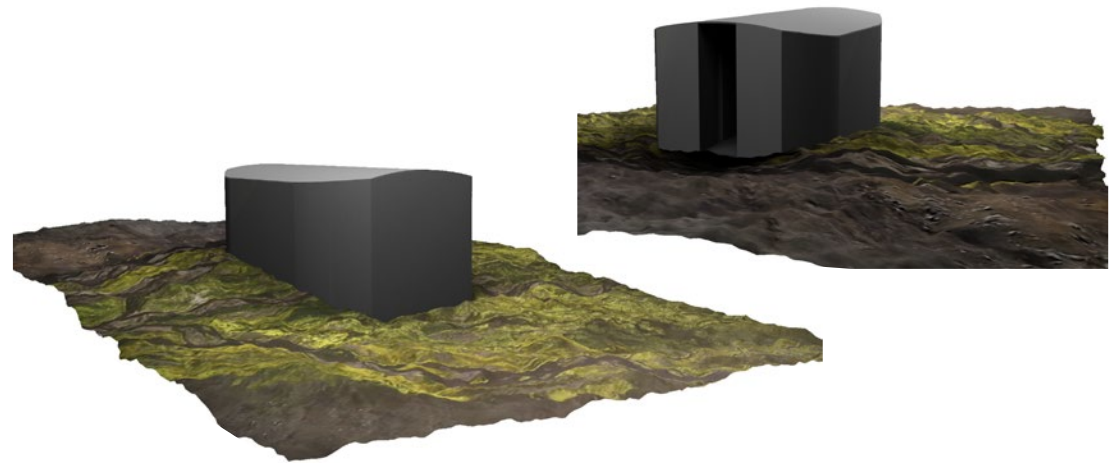
The piece is a concrete house with an entrance at the northern end. On both sides of the entrance are dressing rooms with showers, and two steps down in the Baðstofa, is a long concrete “trough,” half-filled with water, in the center of the floor. Concrete benches line the walls on either side. At the bottom of the trough, in the center, is a halogen bulb that shines up through the water.

Devices generating sound waves and corresponding intersecting ripple patterns at the surface of the water are located at both ends of the trough. There are two frequencies that together create a particular fifth tone. Steam is brought into the room from under

the trough in such a way that the ripple patterns are made visible as continually changing movement of light beams through the steam.

While Baðstofa can be translated as “steam room,” it is also the name of the room in which Icelanders from centuries past would gather around the warmth of a strip of fire in the middle of the floor to share stories through rhyming song—sometimes chanted by two people simultaneously in parallel fifths.

Baðstofa is a concrete work throughout—floor, walls, and roof. The outside is wet-sanded and treated for a semi-fine finish. The inside is terrazzo polished. The work requires electricity, water, and steam.



# Diabolus

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2001

For his high-profile debut at the Venice Biennale, Pétursson constructed *Diabolus*, a rectangular tunnel about 16 meters long which protruded from the Icelandic pavilion and could easily have been mistaken for a hoarding structure until one entered its inviting mouth and discovered tantalizing tones pulling one further into the interior. At the other end, the tunnel narrowed down into a vertigo-inducing 50-centimeter-wide and 2-meter-high square organ pipe. Within it was embedded a low-frequency loudspeaker producing a sequence of tones which triggered the air pump blowing into the organ, which in turn emitted a second tone that made manifest an interference wave of 17hz, a wave which was referred to as a “diabolus” in ancient music.

he transformed the pavilion into a huge resonance organ pipe, where the audience could move about to experience the dissonant tritone known in medieval times as Diabolus in musica, the devil expressed in music. This rare musical interval forms the core of a strong tradition in Icelandic song.

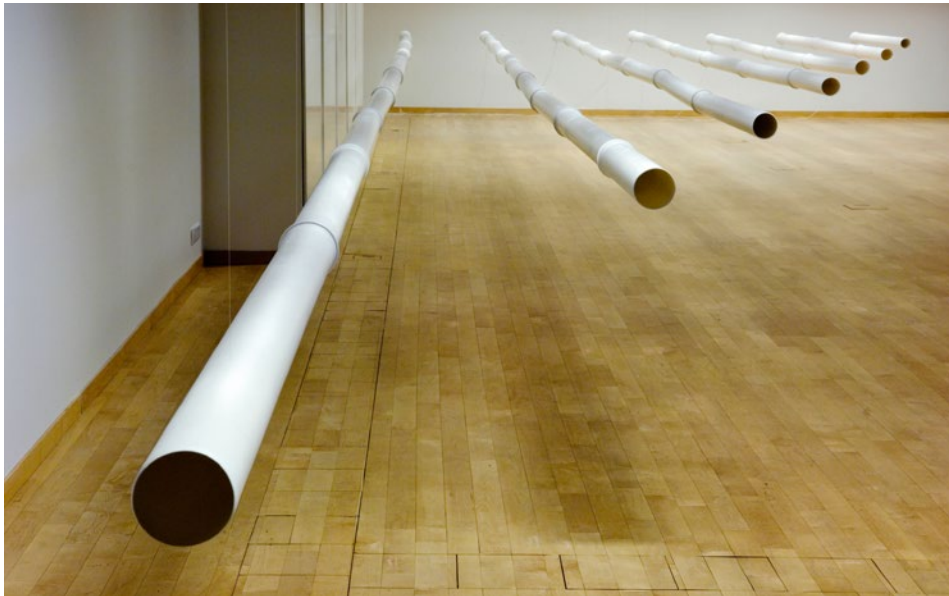


# Tesla Tune

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2014

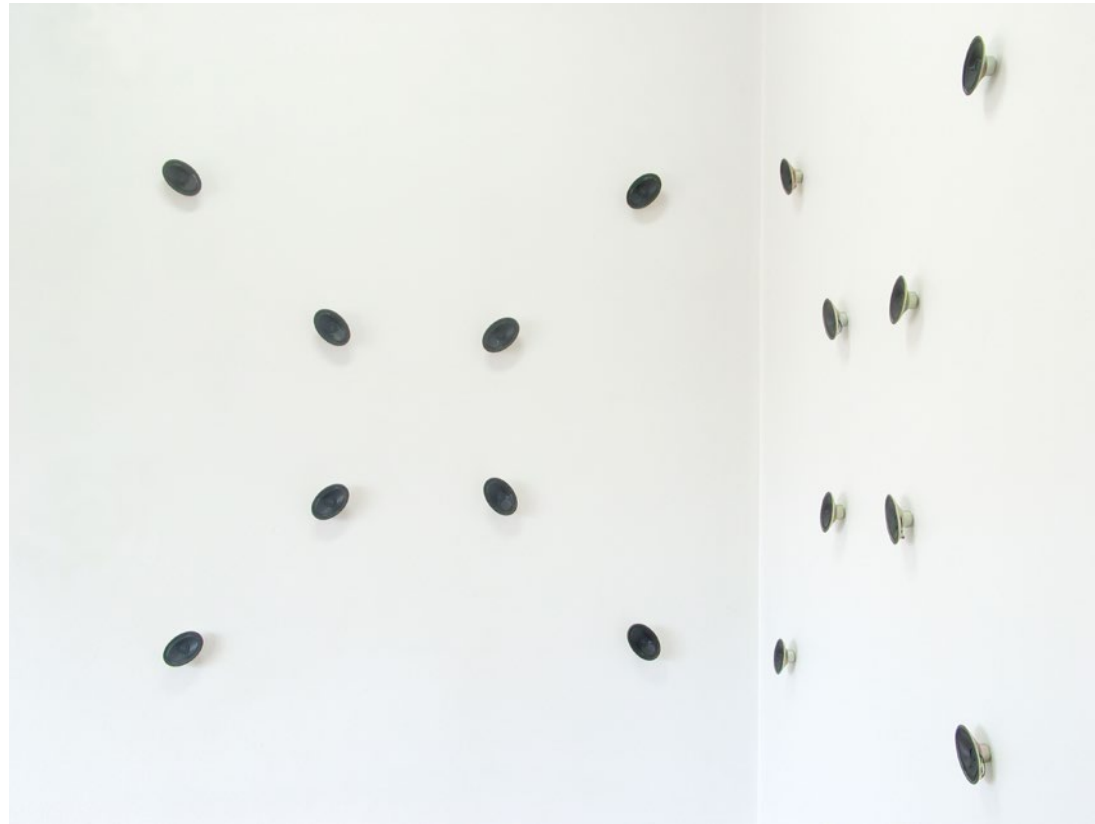
*Tesla Tune* fills the third floor with a lush soundscape. The performing instruments are eight white PVC pipes of varying lengths, which are suspended from the ceiling by fishing lines and arranged from shortest to longest, evoking a pipe organ on its side. Entering the space, one is enveloped by a pleasant cadence of sound emanating from the tubes. The humming stems from the sequential pulsing of sixty hertz, and while the input frequency remains a constant for each tube, the output tonality differs according to their lengths. The visitors' sound perception changes depending on their physical position to the pipes. As you move around the space, you "compose" your own tonal pattern. The steady rhythmic pulsing eventually transports you into a pleasing hypnotic state.



## Corners

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*2000*



## Parallel Circles

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2016

[Play video](#)

<http://vimeo.com/233466441>

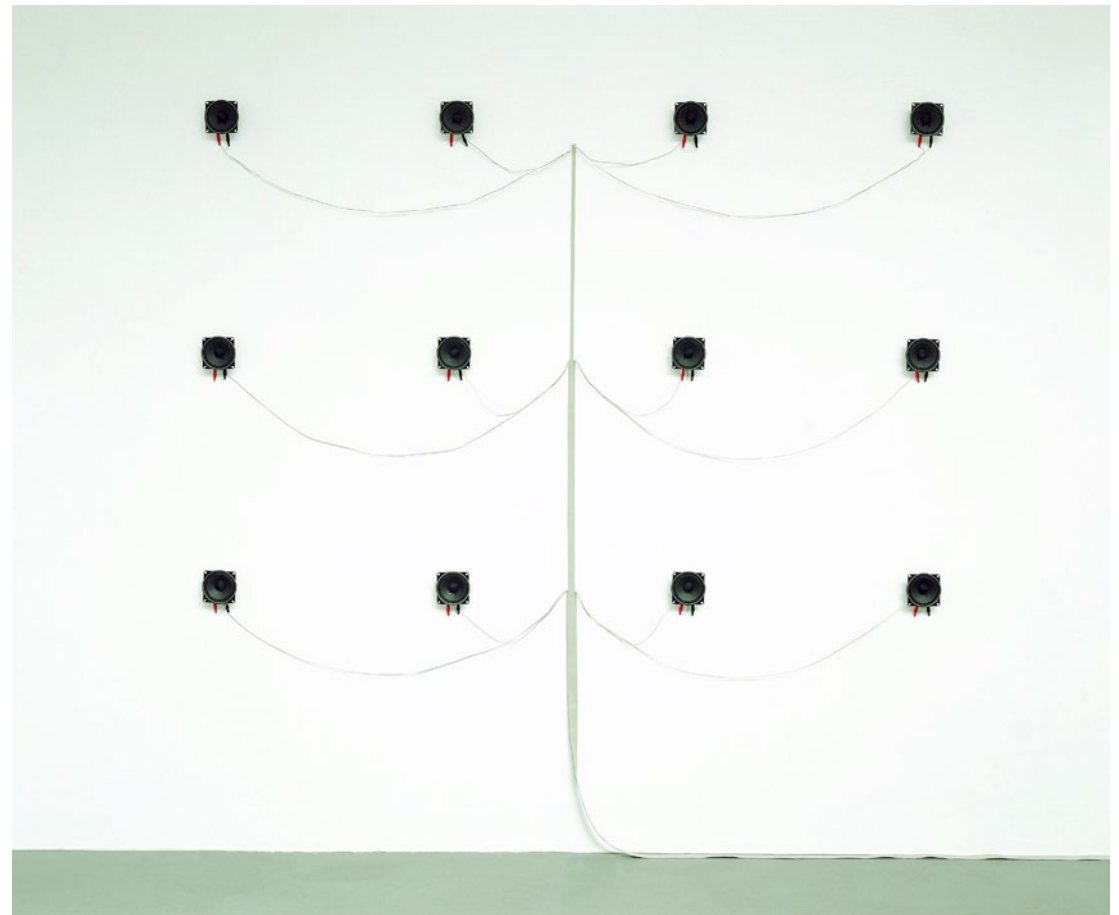


## Drawing

1989

12 loudspeakers, programmer

Indeed, the sound signals from the loudspeakers can be seen as different ends of invisible lines drawn in the space around the work. This idea is in fact very prominent in his Drawings from 1989, which was composed of 12 slender rectangular loudspeakers and a programmer and, unlike *Certain Rhythms for Space*, was presented in profile. The loudspeakers were arranged into four regular vertical series of three each. The irregular sound drawings formed when the sound jumps between such a configuration of loudspeakers can form different patterns in 2040 steps



## Wind-drawing

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*Gallery Artec, Finland, 1999*

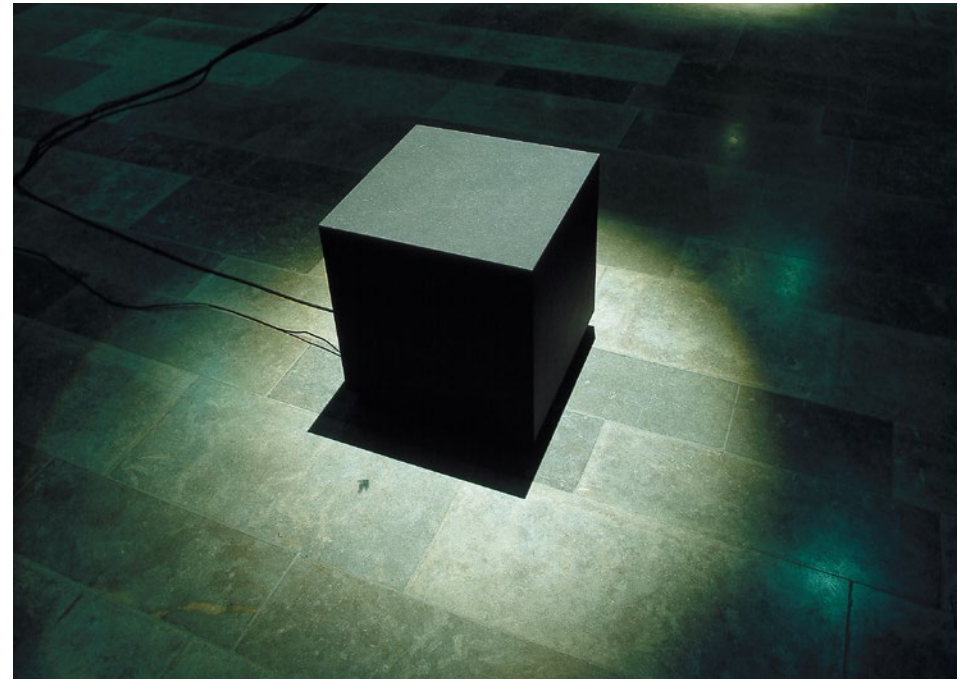
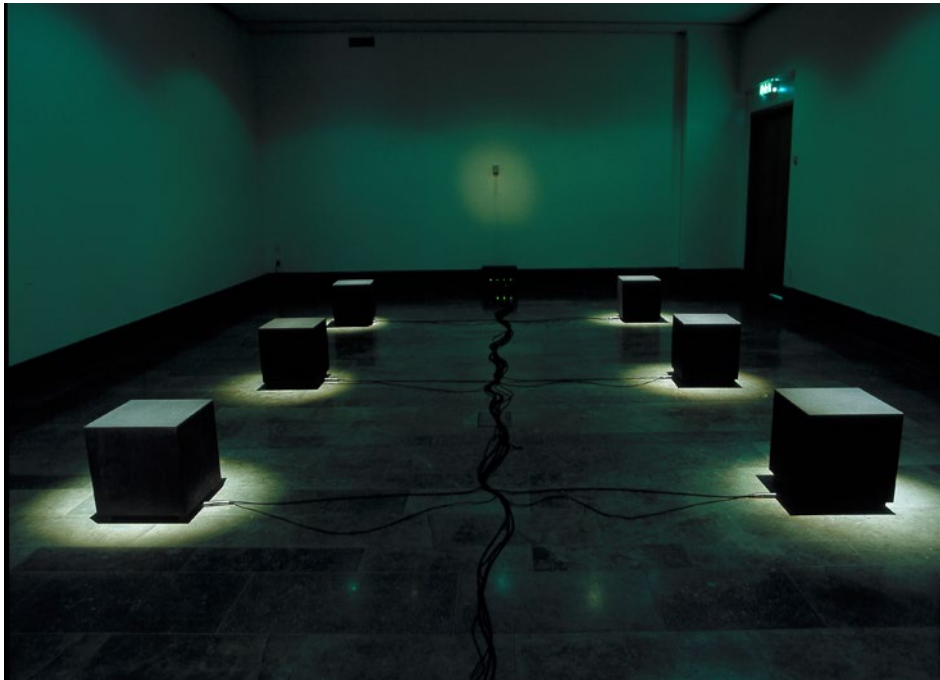
Finnbogi Petursson's *Winddrawings* (1995) used the assistance of wind and electronic programming. The least material element, the wind, and the immaterial programming have a parallel in their ability to rearrange substances with uncompromising strength. For digital nomads in the recently expanded universe of the art world, indifferent to the place of living, forming matter is still conditioned by the material conditions set at the beginning. But reshaping one's space is not the same as reshaping one's own body, no matter how informing and enlightening playing games with virtual space/identity is. Who, might one ask, is the looking/experienceing subject implied in the disturbingly defamiliarised images of space? Urban, Internet-user, smart and Englishspeaking. (Charlotte Bydler)



## Circular Cubes

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*2002*



# Motordrawing 45°

2011

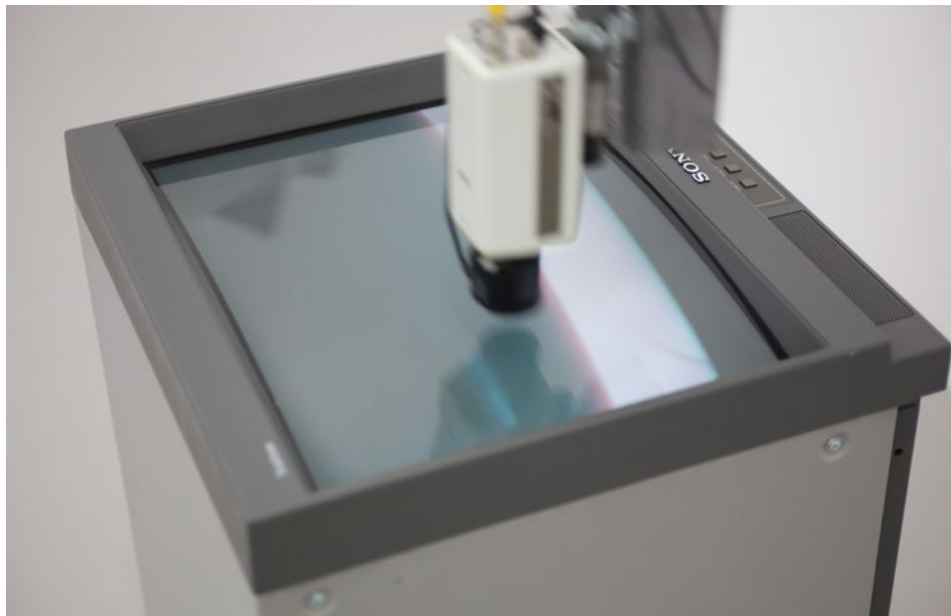
*Mixed media*

Motion becomes explicit in Finnbogi Pétursson's swinging video camera, rhythmically arcing from one side of the room to the other, over and over, while intermittently displaying what it "sees" on a monitor as sharp yet fleeting visual events. Pétursson's swinging camera suggests a grandfather clock from the old days, mechanically swinging and swinging and keeping track of the time, but it has many more connotations as well. Most of what it sees and experiences is hidden, but some of what it sees suddenly

comes into focus: flash insights, quick clarity, sudden illumination. This back and forth pendulum motion is restless and agitated, but also hypnotic and oddly comforting, suggesting rhythms of departure and arrival, exploration and return. As the tide advances on one shore it withdraws from another, only to later reverse course. (Gregory Volk, 2011)

Play video:

<http://vimeo.com/38267175>



# Traps

2006

*2 parts 80 x 60 x 12 cm, black chinese laquer, also: stainless steel, linolium-wood*

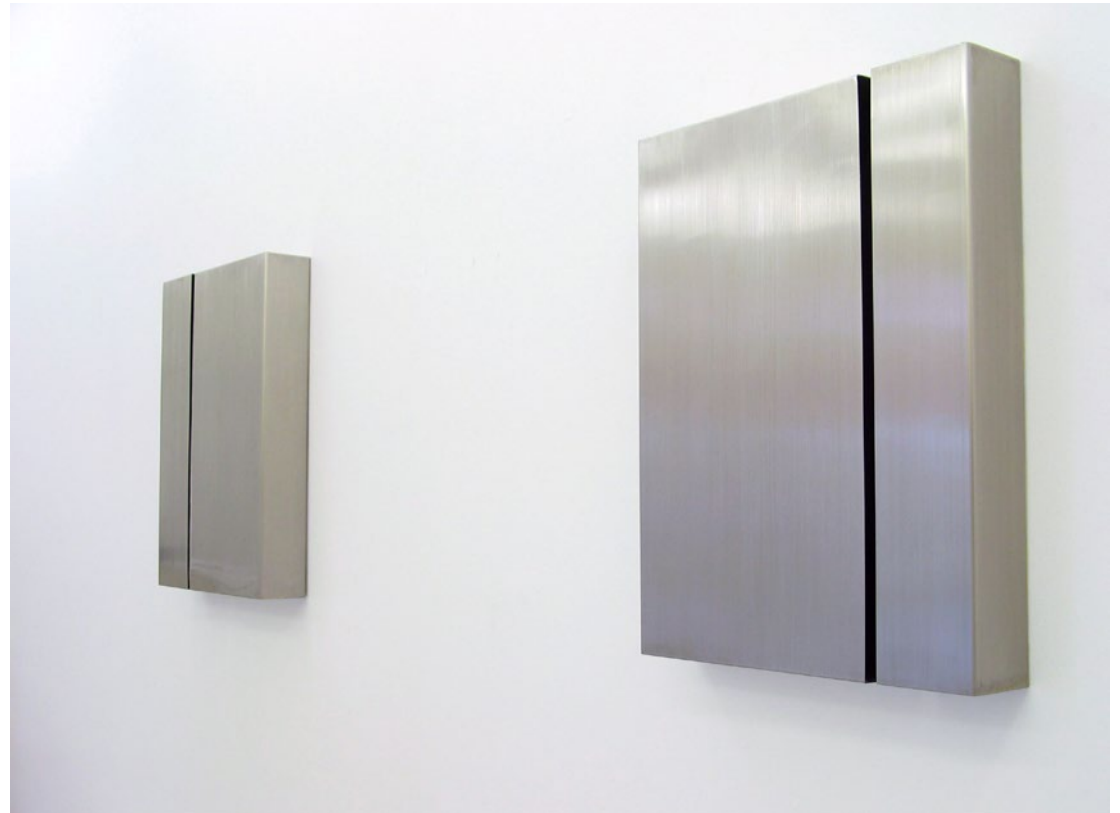
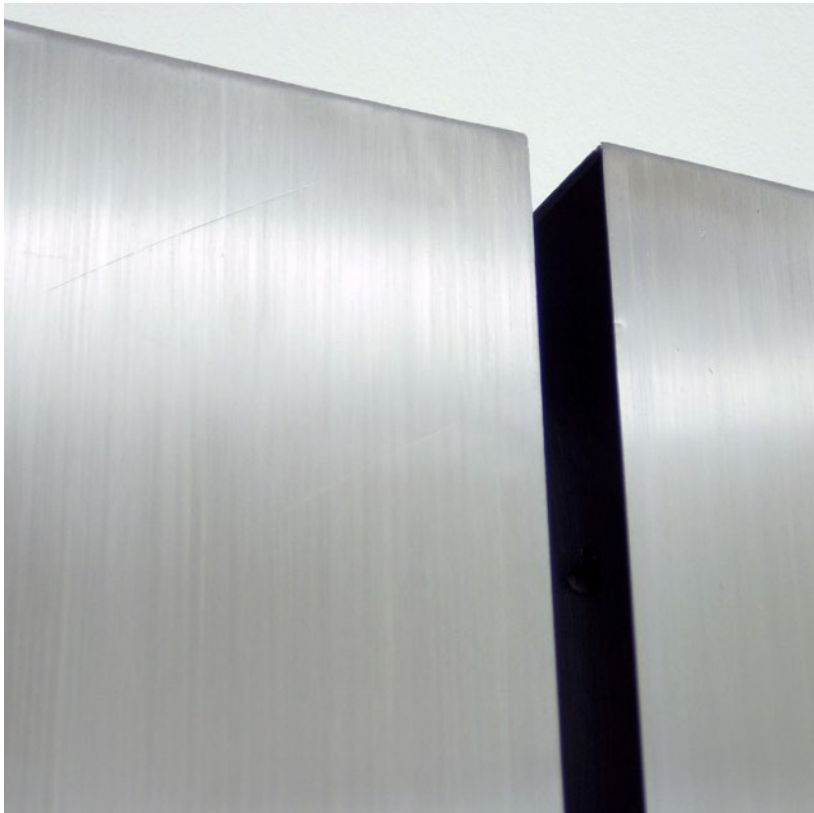
The boxes are thought of as a monument of certain wavebands in their surroundings. One could also call them 'sound-traps' that capture the frequencies from the environment. Each box will respond to a certain wave or frequency and all of them will be measured and will be allocated their own frequency. This is similar to the body of instruments like a guitar or a fiddle, these instruments respond to certain frequency best. The boxes hang together in pairs on the wall with the openings facing each other with 2 cm between them. When the waves get mixed up in the between-space they make another 'in between' frequency, an interference that makes the third tone. As an example of this: Box 1. The frequency measures 48hz Box 2. The frequency measures 36hz Box 3. The frequency measures 12hz - which is the difference between these two frequencies. This activity is barely heard but it can be sensed if one places the ear against the split.



# Traps

2006

*2 parts 80 x 60 x 12 cm, stainless steel, also: black chinese laquer, linolium-wood*



# Relatives

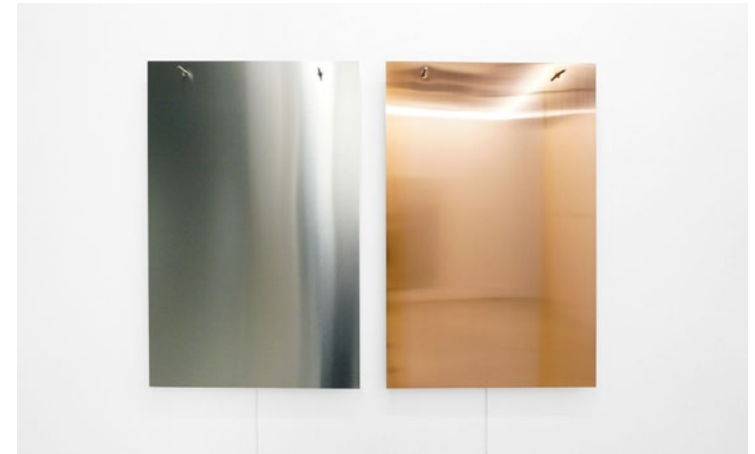
2018

Mixed media, 100 x 66 cm, each

One of Finnbogi Petursson's most recent artworks goes by the title of *Relatives*. It is part of a series of works consisting of metal plates made of different materials such as brass, copper and aluminium that are put together in versatile combinations of two or more.

*Relatives* unites two metal rectangles, more precisely aluminium and copper plates, fixated in parallel onto a wall in front of an amplifier which distributes information generated by sound files in form of vibrations through them. Petursson measures the quality of those metal plates relating to their specific thickness, density, size and weight. He then feeds them with a frequency of oscillation evoking them to drone on a certain amplitude coordinated to their inherent characteristics. Since Petursson fathoms the exact level of impulse needed for the most minimal volume to activate the fluctuations, the latter can be considered as the consumption and simultaneous output of itself.

Not only are they moved by and within themselves, moreover they are intended to trigger self-reflection and - perception to the beholders. *Relatives* thereby implies the essential message of life that is the movement of a form to a given time and in a particular space. What augments this confrontation with the individual itself is the mirror-like appearance the metal plates pledge whilst not providing the usual portrayal the viewer would expect. Resonating not only within itself but also according to the frequency of the adjacent plate, one metal blank eventually fertilises the other, hence consequently illustrates social relations in the space of human togetherness.



# Uno

2018

*Aluminium, 200 x 100 cm*

*Uno* is part of Finnbogi Péturssons series in which metal plates are fixated onto a wall in front of an amplifier which distributes sound files in form of vibrations, then feed with a frequency of oscillation evoking them to drone on a certain amplitude. In *Uno* an aluminum plate is polished in that way that the mirror-like appearance of the plate is even more enhanced. The plate becomes part of its surrounding by reflecting it.



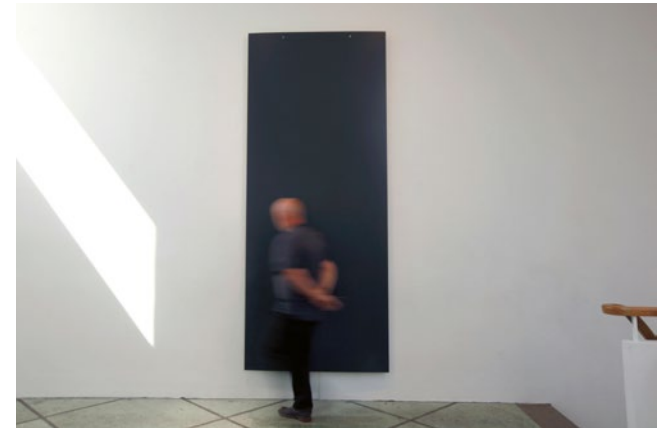
## Colored Aluminium

2019

*Aluminium, 200 x 100 cm*

In 2019 Finnbogi Pétursson exhibited *Four Colors* in the Hallgrímskirkja in downtown Reykjavík. The colors of the four aluminum plates – white, green, purple and red – are reminiscent of the liturgical colors reflecting the seasons in the Christian church year. What has interested Pétursson in working with those colors is that, each color has a different vibration they all differ in their frequency. For instance, the color red, on the edge of the visible spectrum, has a higher vibration and frequency than purple.

The cox gray aluminum plate refers to the common Icelandic way of covering the outside facades of houses with corrugated aluminum panels, often colored in dark gray tone. Similar to *Relatives* and *Uno*, Pétursson installed an amplifier behind the metal plate. The amplifiers responses to the exact frequency of 50 Hertz. This frequency is a reference to the pulsation of electricity in Icelandic and European houses. One can say that 50 Hertz reflects the heartbeat of electricity.



# Standwaves

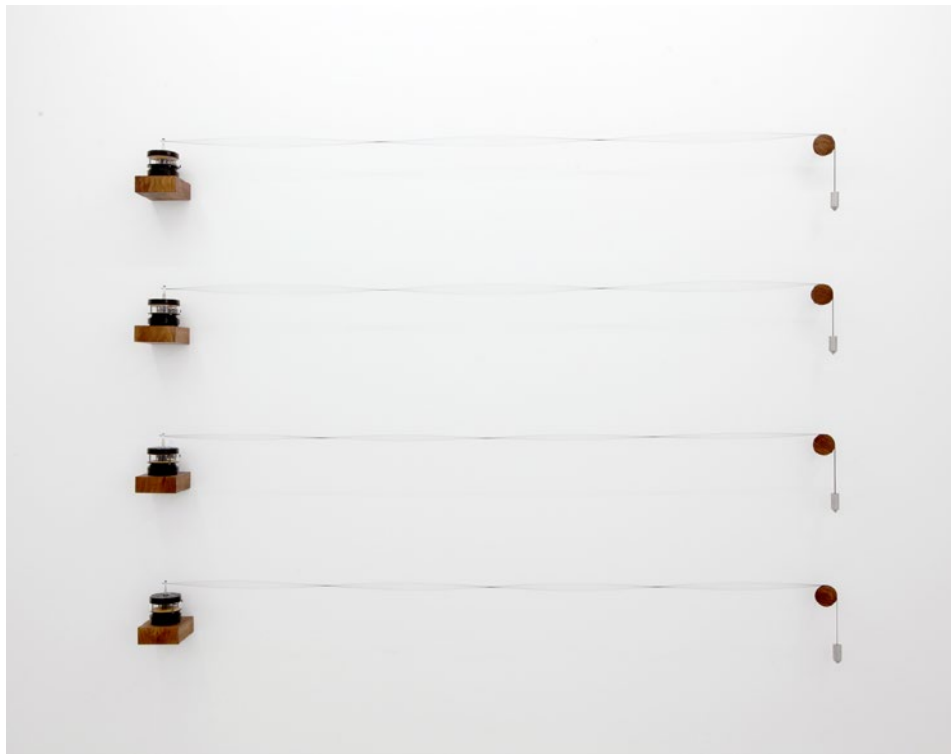
2016 - 2018

Mixed media, 148 x 202 x 14 cm

In *Standwaves* thin metal straps rotate and create delicately vibrating drawings. The movement is caused by rotating metallic apparatus reminding of the visualization of sound itself.

[Play video:](https://vimeo.com/232265536)

<https://vimeo.com/232265536>



# End

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2002

*Nagra field recorder, electronics, dimensions variable*

Audio field recorder is placed inside a glass box in downtown Reykjavik. The soundtrack has played to the end and spins endlessly.



## Sphere

*Wood Street Galleries, Pittsburgh, 2003*

The sound drawing method is made somewhat more literal by introducing the additional media of light and water in order to visually project the effects of different frequencies of sound on the surface of water as a means of demonstrating ephemeral patterns which are normally undetectable.

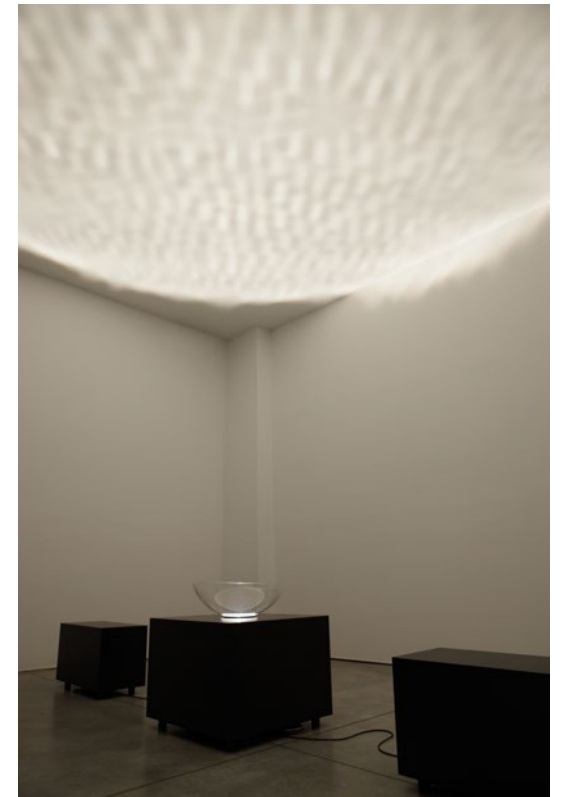


## Dream

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*Sean Kelly Gallery, NY, 2005*

In *Dream* two sinus notes are produced in a darkened room. These tones unite in the middle of the room, generating a new kind of soundwaves, on the same frequency as the brainwaves that occur in a person who is daydreaming. With a bowl of water lit from underneath Pétursson paints the ceiling with a state of mind.

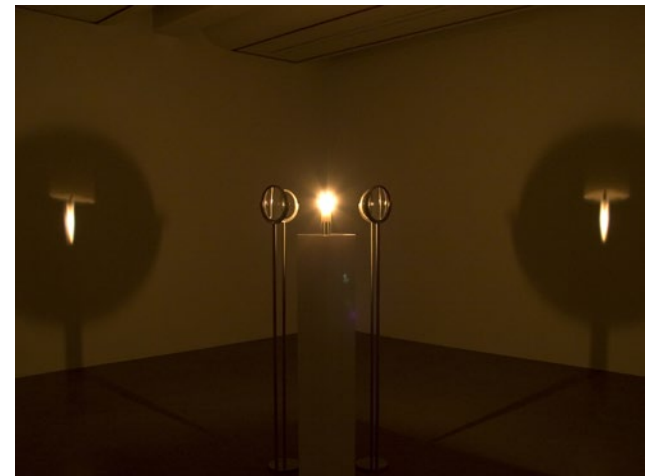


# Flame

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2008

In the installation *Flame* Finnbogi Pétursson works with the element of fire. Interference sound waves cause the vibrating movement of a flame. Four magnifying glasses reflect the vivid movement on the walls and create controlled geometric drawings of the dancing flame.



# Moment

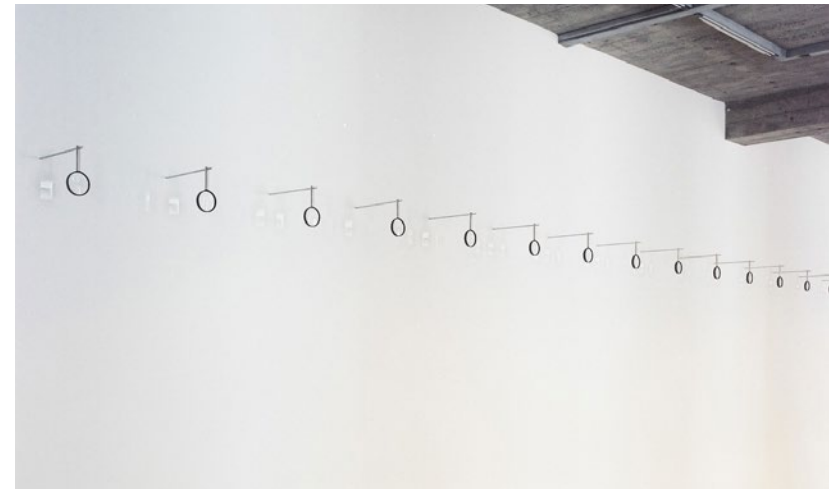
Reykjavik Art Museum, 2008

*24 magnifying glasses, dimensions variable*

A line of 24 magnifying glasses is placed on a wall. It sits approximately 2.50 meters from the floor. When exhibited at Reykjavik Art Museum in 2008 the length of the piece was 12m.

The magnifying glasses are directed to the same point, preferably facing a window. The gap between the lenses makes the image, which appears to be the same, shows the angle of view from a slightly different angle from one glass to another.

24 frames per second (fps) is non as a standard for motion films so the piece is showing you animated still second in a certain length.



## Reset

2016

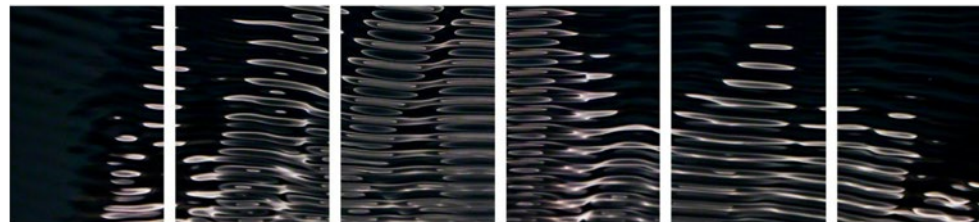
*Surface photographs, 63 × 112 1/5 in, 160 × 285 cm*



## Water Surface - 92hz

2017

*Pigment print, 9 2/5 × 13 2/5 in, 24 × 34 cm*



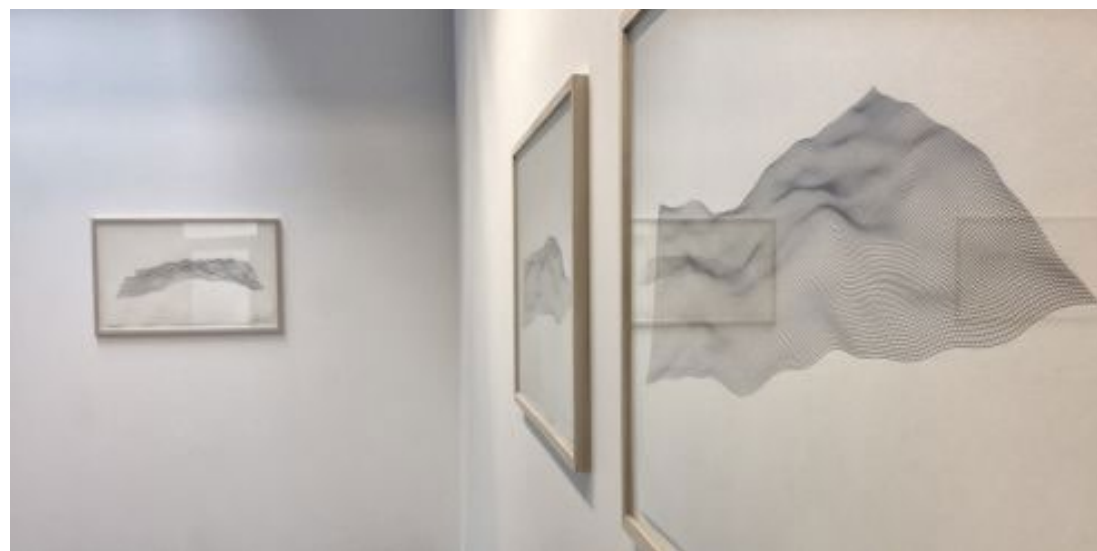
## Sea State

2014

*Ink drawings*

These works consist of drawings which he weaves by simulating the conditions in the rich fishing grounds outside the fjords of East Iceland, mouth of Reydarfjordur.

There are few better kept secrets in the history of Icelandic fishing than the location of resourceful fishing grounds, the more so the richer they were. Finnbogi employs advanced information technology to refer to those hidden places, adding the potential effects which the forces of nature may have on sea levels, wave height and ondulation. The moon is dominant factor, but one also has to allow for changing weathers, depressions and highs, storms and rains, aspects which render the Icelandic seas notoriously dangerous. Mastering and combining all those variables, aided by the programmes employed, Finnbogi assumes a devine role, steering through his equipment the gravitation of celestial bodies, precipitation, the weather.



## Border

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*Gallery i8, Reykjavik, 2006*

At the exhibition in Reykjavík Art Museum - Hafnahús sound waves are led into a large pool and the ripples of the water are reflected on the walls of the hall in an immersive installation.



## Square-Sphere

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*Berg Contemporary, Reykjavik, 2016*

*Steel, fiber glass, paraffin oil, electronics, 26x26x60 cm*

Ball draws its own shape within a white liquid square.

[Play video](#)

<http://vimeo.com/232276546>



## Centre

2005/2020

*Mixed media, 79 x 12 x 20 cm*

For his Centre work, Pétursson found beneath the Snæfellsjökull Glacier, which symbolically represents the entrance into the earth, a lava stone. He inserted a microphone within its center mass and used a FM radio transmission to bring out the sound inaudible under natural circumstances, perceptible and thus conveys a feeling of materiality and nature's life of its own, perhaps coming from the innermost part of the earth. He utilizes the mythical story in Jules Verne's book A Journey to the Centre of the Earth. Here we find Professor Otto Lidenbrock as the tale's central figure, an eccentric German scientist along with his nephew Axel and their Icelandic guide Hans going inside the volcano Snæfellsjökull and then encountering many adventures, including prehistoric animals and natural hazards. They eventually surface in southern Italy, by an active Stromboli Volcano.



# Persons Projects

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