

COUNTERBALANCING CHAOS

New works by ROBBIE AVENAIM

An innovative Australian sound artist with an international reputation for bold, sonic exploration.

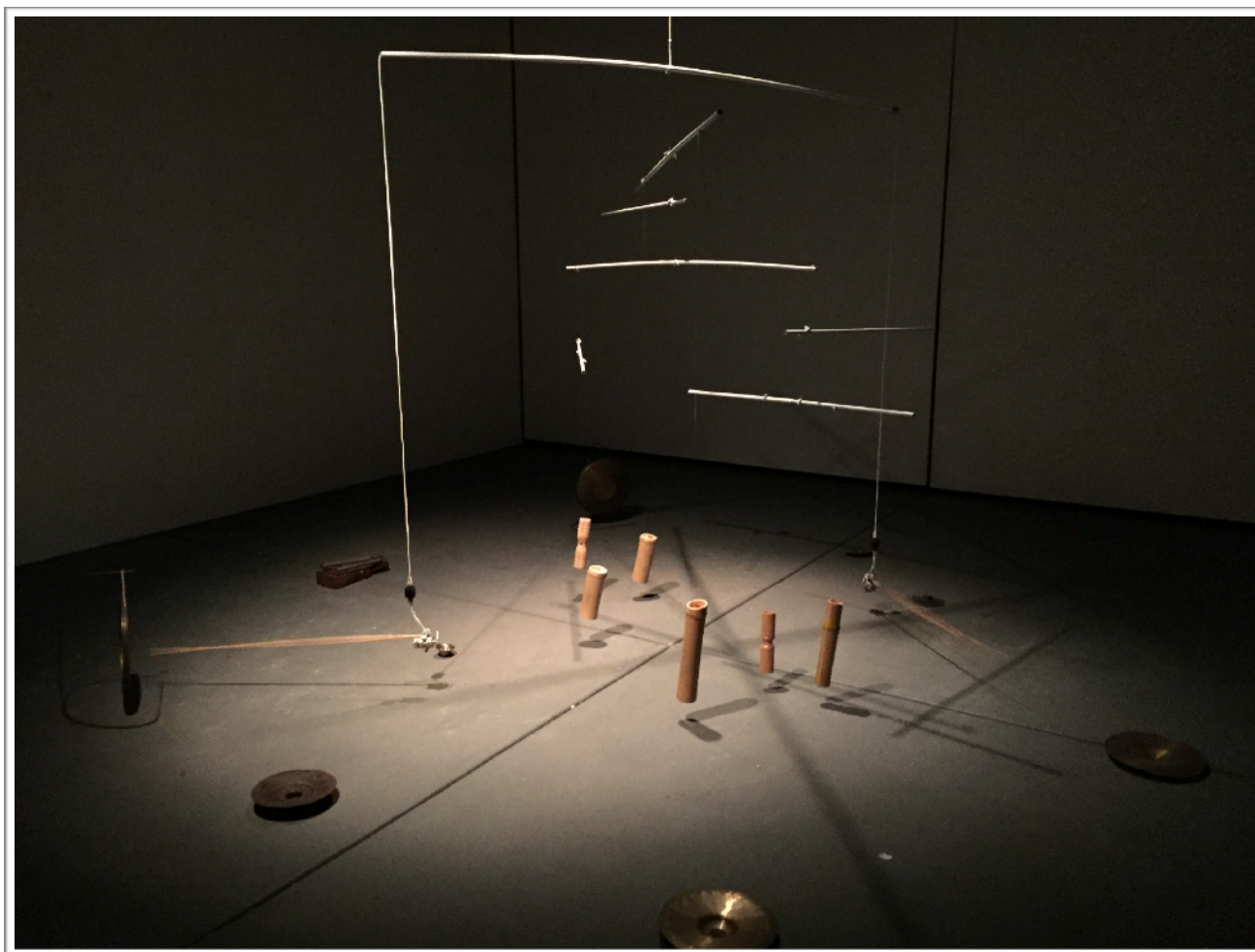
For over 25 years, Avenaim has been at the forefront of the Australian experimental music both as a installation artist , performer and a curator. Avenaim's primary focus is on percussion and instrument building. He has developed a unique approach to performance and exhibitions which draws from a range of traditions: from non-idiomatic improvisation, to aleatoric, structural approaches and more formalised compositional frameworks-utilising both extended and traditional techniques, and percussive automation.

Over recent years, Avenaim has been exploring and developing robotic and kinetic percussive machines to augment his acoustic practice, which has resulted in the creation and refinement of the RMS (rotational mechanical sticks) and SARPS (semi automated robotic percussion systems). Through inventing and implicating machines in an improvisational context, Avenaim experiments with new directions in rhythm, texture which are simultaneously autonomous and manipulated, contingent and compositional.

He uses the findings of these experiments as raw materials for durational sound installations for presentation in a gallery context. The design of new instruments is an integral part of Avenaim's improvisatory and compositional processes in providing access to a greater vocabulary of sounds, as well as expanding the role of percussion in experimental and contemporary classical musics. Avenaim's practice spans the domains of experimental improvisation and avant-garde composition.

The most recent of Avenaim's inventions and applications of motorised percussive mechanisms, the RMS (Rotational motorised stick) is a kinetic device that uses 12v DC motors with a counterbalance attached and clamped to a flexible rod. Whilst in operation, the RMS oscillates the stick attached and allows it to produce complex orbital paths by which it will strike an object or surface, propelling the stick to the next object.

Over time, distinctive rhythms and textures emerge, sitting outside of the framework of traditionally conceived musical sounds. The automated device gives rise to a new kind of gestural sound by direct acoustic synthesis rather than by the musique concrete or digital technique of distortion of recorded sounds. The most recent of Avenaim's inventions and applications of motorised percussive



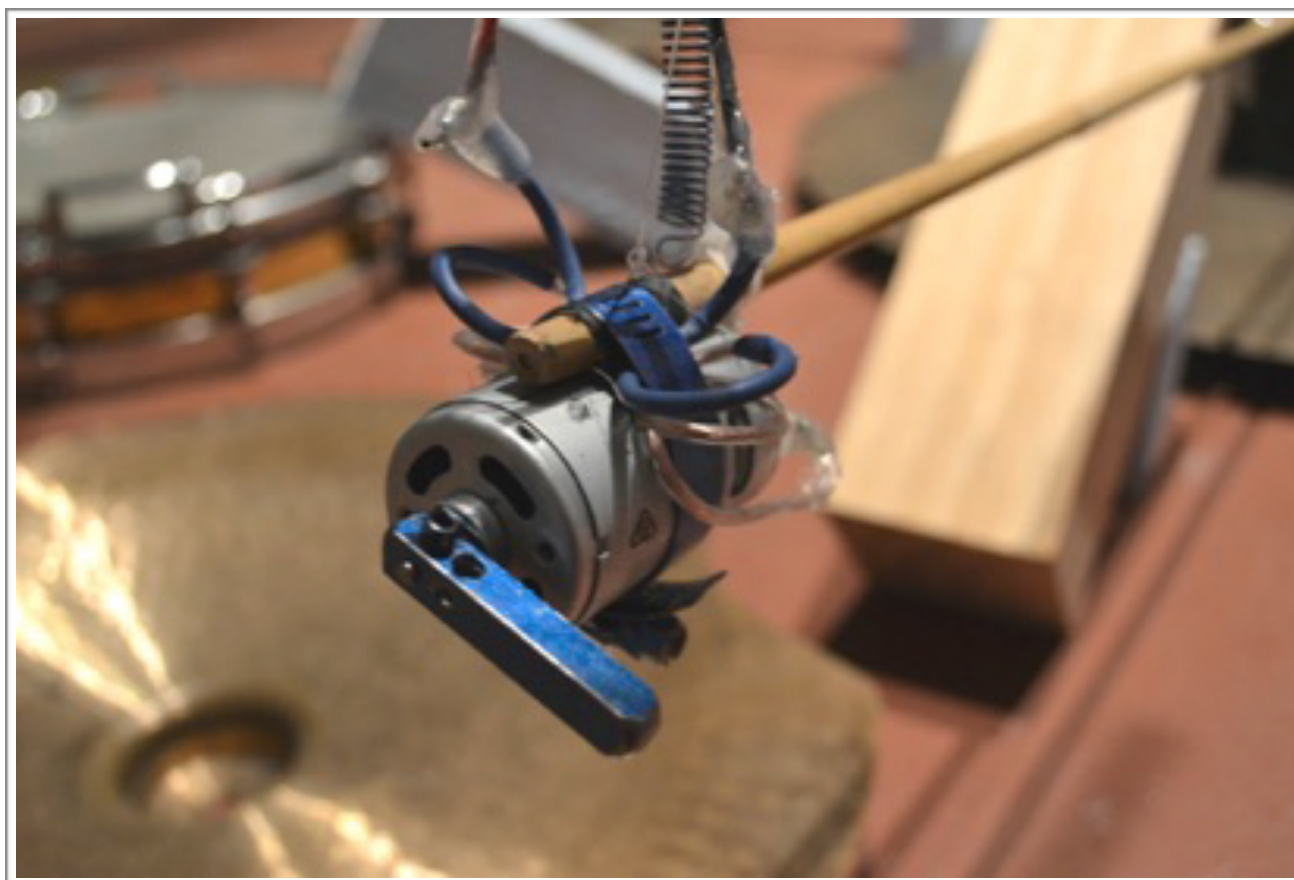
RMS 360° Rotary Mobile - (2018) – For 2x EMS, 6x suspended bamboo segments and acoustic percussion resonant terrain.

Video footage

Modifications to the original EMS 180° device saw the use of a longer, flexible stick, able to rotate a full 360° and therefore react with more volatility to the percussive environment laid out underneath. With updated technical characteristics came more opportunities to compose spatially, giving rise to new, untapped sonic qualities in terms of tempo, rhythm, variety of sounds, dynamics, etc. Similar in nature to the EMS 180° and 360° devices, this development adds moving sculptural (mobile) elements to allow the device to explore outside of its previous confines in space. Whereas previously the stick circulated around a fixed point on a limited plane, its (semi-) circular pathway is here liberated horizontally and vertically, opening it to an extensive number of available orientations and sequences of instrumentation, rhythm, texture, gesture.



RMS 360° - (2016) - with acoustic percussion resonant terrain.
[Video footage](#)





Ballet Aveugle: Pas de six. 2019
Video footage

Click to view

Compilation footage of Avenaim's work

More information

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