

Static

Materiality has always been central to my work as a painter. I've long believed that the closer the alignment between the painting medium and the subject, the more resonant the work becomes. This remains true for me today. As an artist with a deep engagement with materials, this relationship allows for an emotive dialogue between myself and the substances I work with.

Over time, I've cultivated an intimate understanding of my painting materials. By "intimate," I refer to the ability to explore, in an extended and focused way, the nature of the material itself. My primary medium—volcanic rock—has a history that predates me by hundreds of millions of years. This ancient felsic rock, composed of mica, feldspar, and quartz, forms the foundation of our planet and others like it.

Before reaching my studio, this rock has undergone transformations. It is mined from the earth, having once been molten magma deep within the planet's crust. And even before that, it existed in a constant state of flux—solid, liquid, gas. Alchemical transmutation. This progression inevitably leads to the question: what is the “pre-material” state?

Quantum mechanics experiments in the 1920s provided a glimpse into this mystery. They revealed that electromagnetic waves, such as light, exist in a wave state until observed, at which point they collapse into particles. Consciousness plays a key role in this transition—matter emerging from an otherwise formless potential. It's a reminder that the material and the immaterial are not separate, but coexist, continuously interacting.

Matter, like light, requires the other to be experienced. Floating in the vacuum of space, we would still perceive light—whether from distant stars or from its reflection off matter. Starlight is the result of material reactions within a star, elements undergoing transformation. This is a form of transmutation—energy becoming light, matter becoming energy.

The primal materiality of the Earth element grounds the experience of viewing my work. As someone observes my paintings, their consciousness interacts with the composition, triggering ideas—both recognized and unacknowledged. It's a process akin to tuning a radio, where certain frequencies are clearly received while others carry annoying noises.

This analogy of the radio tuner leads directly to my fascination with static. When tuning between stations, we encounter static, often dismissed as noise. But this “noise” is more

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than mere distraction. If you allow yourself to sit with it, as with the flicker of static on an old TV, you begin to notice things—faint sounds, images, moments of clarity. Static contains potential, messages just beyond reach.

In much the same way, our minds manage static in everyday life. Signals bombard us constantly, and we tune into certain things—our responsibilities, tasks, or interactions—while ignoring the rest. But in the quiet spaces between these thoughts lies something more. A bird at the feeder. A flower in bloom. If we pause to consider why we've noticed them, or what they might signify, we may find deeper meaning.

It's possible that what exists between the signals holds more weight than the signals themselves. In chasing clear messages, we risk missing the significance hidden in the static, the potential just outside our conscious focus.

My interest in static grew while listening to number stations. On short-wave radio frequencies, static dominates the experience. Over time, it sharpens the mind, leading to heightened concentration. In this meditative state, random clicks and faint voices begin to emerge from the noise—suggesting information just out of reach.

Static found a role in my life due to my tinnitus. The perpetual background noise not only keeps the idea of static top of mind but also affects my ability to hear other sounds fully. In both my art and my thoughts, I've grown used to navigating this interference, learning to sift through it, much like sorting through layers of static to uncover hidden signals.

These concepts have become central to my recent body of work. Over the last year, I've delved into the nature of static as both a personal and philosophical experience. My residency at GlogauAir allowed me to explore beyond my usual medium. I extended this exploration of static into a fully digital, time-based piece, stepping into the native environment of static itself—a space where pre-materiality and materiality intersect.