How long have we thought space to be a silent vacuum, earth to be where all the commotion is? All the while the stars are exploding and the planets radiating around us.

Ali Bezer is a Brisbane based artist currently undertaking her PhD at Griffith University. Her work explores the ontology of resonance through the creation of abstracted celestial like objects in response to astrological radio recordings, known as Radio Astronomy. Radio Astronomy is the study of planetary objects and cosmic noise at radio frequencies, which can then be listened to at levels audible to the human ear.

Space is often awed for its visual phenomena and perplexion of the time continuum, in fact most of our scientific understanding of the universe, such as the Big Bang Theory, comes out of the translation of electromagnetic waves. These include everything from simple radio waves, to the higher frequency waves of Gamma and X Rays. In the same way we can visualise this data on graphs in peaks and troughs, we can hear the complexity of the astrophysical. The resonance of these frequencies can be understood across all the senses, lingering and pulsating through memory. Bezer interprets the resonance of these abstract sounds into something physical, making the intangible tactile. It becomes a visceral depiction of the other-worldly feeling of noise, playing with the distant and foreign nature of unknowing.

The way Bezer uses heavy and processed materials gives them a seemingly organic quality that comes through their construction. Industrialised materials such as “damp course”, aluminium, speakers, wire, magnets, metal shavings, and cassette tape can be found twisting and weaving through her fluffy steel creations. The contrast between the nature of the materials she uses and their opposing appearance creates tension with the viewer. Ali Bezer makes 100m of dense aluminium look like delicate paper ribbons scattered across the floor, a luminescent lustre of inference powders glistening in the light. While her work appears alien and smooth from a distance, up close it is gritty and sharp. Her small wall sculptures, like exploding stars made of 8000 magnetic fragments, float seamlessly amongst the hovering suns and satellites.
Bezer’s work is informed by the contemporary understanding of Musique Concrète. That is, the creation and composition of sounds; not a composition of written notes to be played, but a formation of existing (or concrete) sounds. Musique Concrète is not generally applied to describe contemporary musical creation, however it is embedded in musical thought and theory. We can even apply the active concept of Pierre Schaeffer’s Musique Concrète to Bezer’s process as it involves material transference from sound to the ocular domain. The sounds are objects in and of themselves, as Pierre Schaeffer explains, it is the act of listening that becomes the original source. ——The creator works first with the “concrete material”, then through experimentation arrives at the “final expression”.

This process of listening and making is a phenomenological approach to the separation of “signal from source” ; subjective from objective, exploding star from interstellar noise, and interpreted sound from final work. Whilst similar in process, Ali Bezer’s sculptural interpretations are not as literal as Wassily Kandinsky’s painterly translations of musical compositions, or Semiconductor’s 20Hz video work interpreting the observation of a geo-magnetic storm. They are enacted through synesthetic traces, taking fundamental aspects of these recordings and presenting them as intricately layered formations. Through Bezer’s work, the sounds of the astrophysical universe are made palpable.

3 Ibid.