

Artist

JAN HANDEL



Future Forest, 2020-21, steel pipes, aluminium rods, PVC pipes, concrete discs, polycarbonate sheeting, paint, sound, 5 'cells' each 2.6 x 2.6m, installation dimensions variable.

Information from Jan Handel

How does it feel to be in a forest? Bathed in dappled green light, surrounded by trees. Listening to the rustle of leaves in a gentle breeze. Future Forest is an immersive installation interpreting the experience of walking amongst tall forest trees using the visual language of abstraction, with colour, light and sound. But here there is pretence. These trees are made of plastic, their trunks are painted steel, the sound is a recording. No natural elements are to be found in this place. Future Forest hopes that it will never become reality. It hopes that we will never need artificial forests to remind us of what used to be.

Jan Handel's practice includes drawing, painting and installation. She represents human experience, situations and natural events through physical forms, utilising the formalist language of geometric abstraction. For the site-specific installation *Future Forest*, Handel has used man-made materials such as steel and polycarbonate sheeting to describe the subject through use of opposites. Visitors walk amongst the work, immersed in a cool green artificial light created with translucent lighting gels, mimicking natural daylight filtering through a tree canopy. Forest Bathing involves the slowing down and connecting with nature through the sensory experiences of sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. The work refers to the practice of Shinrin-yoku or Forest Bathing which originated in Japan in the 1980s.

Studying

To experience Forest Bathing find a place that's close to your home, where you can walk slowly, quietly and mindfully. While you walk enjoy the sounds, sights and smells, allowing your nose and body to guide you. Notice colours and patterns, rocks, flowers, plants and trees. Find a comfortable place to stop and sit quietly for 20 minutes, to become ever more aware of your surroundings.

Making

Create a playful site-specific installation in response to a natural environment or outside space. Attach rolls of primary coloured cellophane to wooden rods, that can be easily moved in different directions, to create patterns such as arcs and circles. Explore colour mixing by placing colours in front, behind or alongside each other. Experiment with space, distance, direction and height. Video the experience of moving through the installation, to show how it captures the play of light and interacts with its environment.