Audio description:

**The artist invites you to touch the hanging metal artworks and collide them together.**

**To follow is an audio description of the artwork followed by an artist commentary. The recording will play in a continuous loop.**

This installation by Aaron McPeake is titled Subjective Acuity, 2022, and is comprised of prints on aluminium (29 x 80cm each) and bell-bronze castings, each of which is a plate measuring 20 x 7cm.

We find two prints mounted on the wall, each drawing on the theme of the Snellen Chart, used by opticians for the measurement of visual acuity, where those being measured or tested have to read out what parts, if any, of the chart they can see from a set distance.

Set in slender portrait format, both chart-like prints feature letters made in black capitals on a plain white background. One however is in high resolution, and the other is heavily blurred, reflecting the artist’s own level of visual acuity.

The letters are set out in scale order, with a single large capital H at the top, and on the row below it, a P and an N. Other letters continue in rows to the bottom of the chart, the letters decreasing in size all the way down, and increasing numbers of letters grouped along each row.

The bell-bronze castings, in a slate grey colour, replicate the Snell chart and its spacings, here with engraved letters that appear with subtle degradations in their forms as they descend the rows.

They hang on lines, enabling visitors to discover the shapes of the letters by touch or for the castings to be collided together, creating sound.

Artist commentary:

My name is Aaron McPeake. I’m a tall caucasian male, in his 50s, quite slender, with brown hair, grey blue eyes and a short beard.

This work is titled Subjective Acuity. It centres around the Snellen chart; an eye test chart developed in the 1860’s by Dutch Ophthalmologist Herman Snellen.

The installation has two elements, a wall hung pair of prints of the chart about 80cm high and about 25cm wide and much smaller castings in bronze of the same chart. The bronzes are around 20 cm high. One of the wall hung prints is a clear reproduction of the Snellen chart whilst the other is distorted which goes some way to represent my visual acuity.

At the top of the chart the letters are largest and in the case of the prints, the first letter H, being around 10cm high and these decrease in size in steps until the bottom line is reached where the letters are around 6mm high.

Hanging near the wall works are the small bronze plate castings of the same chart. The letters are recessed into the plates and beholders may touch this work, feeling the text as well as sounding the plates. These also function as a type of gong being made from the same metal as bells.

The idea of a visual test is related only to the sense of sight but here I have added other sensory elements of touch, sound and smell. Beholders can touch and feel the letters, strike the plates or make them collide to generate a sound. But also the metal will leave a very particular but not disturbing sense of smell, or trace of smell on the hands.

As I have such low visual acuity, I deliberately leave flaws within the castings, I don’t weld or repair. I believe this gives them additional character and a kind of uniqueness.