

Florent Ghys – Artist Statement

A passing train. A tennis match. A weather report. A bowed string. I'm a composer, visual artist, and double bassist working with audiovisual media, and much of what I do starts with one of these ordinary sound objects or images. I transform found or recorded material through processes of accumulation and saturation, creating sound and visual worlds that are at once intimately common and entirely strange. By pausing and lingering on something trivial, I investigate its banality until it becomes unfamiliar. Through this transformation, I invite audiences to listen and observe more closely, and to open up a heightened sense of hearing and seeing the world around us.

The audience's perception is central to my work. I'm interested in playing that perception: starting with something simple — a musical idea, the sound of a passing train — and letting it grow more complex until the audience loses track of where it began. Relationships between sound and image shift and become less obvious through accumulation and transformation, until analytical thinking gives way to something else: a moment where the mind stops trying to follow. What's left is a state of playful surrender, situated and embodied. Less thinking, more being in the room.

My pieces are often experiments with perceptual saturation. We're all immersed in a saturation we didn't choose: scrolling culture, the "please like and subscribe" overload, tutorials about everything. Mine is a different kind — an "information superhighway" curated by me rather than an algorithm. By using saturation as a compositional tool, I want that excess to feel different, even pleasurable, inviting a focused and playful experience that can leave audiences unsure how to respond emotionally.

Some of that material invites social commentary, poking critically at contentious matters without discourse or explicit affinities. Working with a video in which someone explains how "real men" should dress, I question the expectations it conveys, without landing on a verdict — my work stays in dialogue with the material rather than judging it. That refusal to resolve is a choice: rather than telling an audience what to think, I leave them the space to arrive at their own response, be it critical, sympathetic, amused, or all at once. I'm drawn to that exact boundary, the moment humor and seriousness blur and neither quite wins out.

A DIY approach runs through my work, as the process of making matters to me as much as the finished, polished product. I move freely between the roles of composer, performer, recording and mixing engineer, and video artist, often circling back and forth between them and letting each inform the others. That same value on process shapes the tools I build for myself: Max for Live devices and Jitter patches that follow simple, "non-intelligent" rules. Rather than trying to anticipate my intentions, and that I've used to compose several albums. At a time when AI can generate polished material in seconds, I find particular value in the slow, painstaking work of making things myself — work that lets the piece carry the trace of how it was learned and shaped.