

## PERCEPTUAL OBJECTS

### The objects

The models are made of paper mache and consist of spheres of various sizes. Their uneven surface is painted in white and black acrylic paint and the single spheres have been glued together to make an array of unique objects. A small number of them are held up with the addition of an internal wire.

I was fascinated by the simplicity and the immediacy of this material that made it possible to shape these organic forms and then combine them. The archaic shape of the sphere invites associations with the natural world, from microscopic cell-life to celestial bodies of the macrocosm.

The accumulation and repetition of these similar units also makes a reference to Brancusi's Endless Column, in which he stacked equal units high into the sky. (Brancusi was once asked why he had built it. "So that it would sustain the vault of heaven,") However the scale and character of these small unassuming objects will not be able to sustain the vault of heaven nor do they display any kind of heroism, but rather wobble upwards or sideways in an unsteady fashion. They seem to struggle with gravity and question the notion of sculptural monumentality.

These structures are covered uniformly with painted geometric patterns, accentuating the unification of single units into a complete whole.

The painting references the short-lived Optical Art movement of the 60's, which contributed significantly to the history of non-objective painting.

The artworks of that time emphasised the psychology and physiology of perception. They were predominantly paintings that engaged the viewers "eye and mind, by employing structural variations, contiguous compositions, linear patterns and colour interactions to generate formal ambiguity, spatial incongruity, and retinal vibrations" (Houston 2007: 17)

By employing similar strategies albeit not on a stretched out surface but on spherical objects, the retinal vibrations and visual ambiguities are difficult to maintain, as the pattern continually vanishes around the sides.

These works extend my ongoing investigation into painting and function as alternative grounds for painting. What interests me is the interaction of painting and sculptural form, the relationship of volume and pattern.

Are these works paintings on a sculptural ground or are they painted sculptures?