

Scala

Sasha Ercole and Christian Kingo

DES
BAINS

13 February – 3 April, 2026

Private View: Thursday, 12 February, 18:00 - 20:000

DES BAINS is pleased to present *Scala*, the first collaborative presentation of work by Sasha Ercole and Christian Kingo.

Comprised of scanned documents, photographs, and auditory sculptures, *Scala* explores systems of standardisation in music through reproductions and sampling. The exhibition takes its title in reference to the historical opera house, Teatro alla Scala. Shaped by a multitude of readings, the term itself stems from an etymology in geometry, anatomy and music. *Scala* – meaning scale – is a unit or instrument of measure. Defined as a graduated sequence, it is an arrangement of musical notes differing in pitch. Scale is a relative magnitude: the ratio between the size of something and the representation of it.

Hung throughout the exhibition space are a set of annotated documents outlining the legal pages of The British Standard on Musical Pitch. Originally formulated from imperialist rule in 1939, these codes were later adopted by the International Organisation of Standards (ISO) and implemented within contemporary models of governance. The regulation stipulates a tuning of A at 440hz as the universal measure of pitch, to be used in everything from music, television, to radio and broadcasting, determining how sound frequencies are read, recorded, and in turn, circulated.

Positioned around the perimeter of the room are excerpts of freestanding walls. Titled, *Adaptations*, these works also formally function as an ambisonic speaker system for the gallery, resonating sound through each wall unit expelled by ceiling vents. The organ, a drone instrument that embodies the reverb of the room it occupies, plays the standard A of the composition. Tuning towards this, are disharmonic melodies arranged across four channels of the ventilation system. By recording the acoustic reverb of the Gray's Inn Court in London, the musical score is played within a digital reconstruction of the chamber hall.

Composed from an open access sample library, the score is made with a compilation of individual instruments tuning as a classical orchestra. Formulated in part using machine learning as a generative technology, where harmonies loop and respond, the artists play with sampling to pose questions around value, latency and authorship.

Central to the room is a segment of an orchestra riser, arranged in part like the curved desk of a court room or assembly hall, visitors are offered to use this stage as collective seating in the exhibition space. It operates as a recording device that continues to trace the patina of each performance and public interaction through the wear of its veneered façade.

On the closing of this exhibition, *Scala* will present a performance by cellist Kirke Gross, composed by Christian Kingo.

This project is supported by Statens Kunstfond (DK). With thanks to Carmen Gray Puente, Khalid Jauffer, Harry Jones, Harmeet Rahal, Sam Tromp and Joel Wycherley.

Thursday - Saturday
11am — 6pm

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Sasha Ercole (b. 1998) is an artist and programmer in London. Her research-based practice explores methods of standardisation, examining how power is inscribed through bureaucracy and forms of corporate governance. Working across installation, performance and moving image, she explores how unseen structures shape contemporary life and its economies. Currently, her work focuses on the relationship between theatre, law and speculation, looking at the study of history as choreographic composition.

Christian Kingo (b. 1993) is a composer and filmmaker based in Copenhagen. His practice researches pre-digital records in correlation to socio-technical encounters. Through the exploration of modular software, machine learning and experimental composition, he develops audiovisual tools to display the constraints and sensitivities of symbiotic systems. From his interest in drone music, sound is presented as an informative potential, where timbre, tone and time hold the properties of both investigative and musical arrangements.

Alongside this body of research, Ercole & Kingo are developing a multidisciplinary moving-image project, which will present a series of episodic films enacted as an epic theatre play, held at the Inns of Court of London.