

## DENISE HIGGINSON

### *Try Not to Believe*

Clay, nails, plywood

“*Try Not to Believe* is a double sign made from 2,160 ceramic discs. The discs spell out a part of a lyric from the song *Tree Trunks* by Hamilton band [Basement Revolver](#). The signs are made in the style of shimmer signs, common during the time the Anne Foster Music shop was in business. Shimmer signs were billboard-sized advertisements with text made up of what looked like large sequins. These sequined signs reference the world of popular music in Anne Foster’s era - sequins, disco, and the glamorous side of rock ‘n roll and pop music. In this piece, using the commercial language of the shimmer sign but making it by hand alludes to music’s dual nature as both an art form and a commercial product.



Artist Denise Higginson installing *Try Not to Believe*, one ceramic disc at a time.

Recreating a shimmer sign in ceramics was a labour-intensive process, and ultimately this piece came to be about labour - acknowledging another artist’s labour with my own. While the music business is inextricably linked with commercialism, promotion, the search for hit records, fame, glamour, and the pursuit of eventual royalties and economic comfort, a lot of work that goes into it goes largely unacknowledged - crafting the lyrics and accompanying music, rehearsing, getting proficient with an instrument, rehearsing, promoting, touring, lugging gear, and performing.

The nature of songs with lyrics is that often a snippet of the lyric will replay in a listener’s mind over and over, as we try to figure out what the artist is trying to convey, and what it evokes in us. Taking a part of a Basement Revolver’s lyric and making it visual will hopefully recreate this process in a visual form.”

- Denise Higginson

Denise Higginson has a BFA from Emily Carr University of Art and Design in Vancouver and a Masters of Fine Art from the University of Guelph. She has been a graphic designer by trade for the past 15 years. For the last year and a half, Denise has been documenting text in Hamilton from signs, to storefront entry mosaics, to handwritten garage sale ads. This is her first text piece and the first work where she has mixed fine art with graphic design. Find Denise on Instagram @ham.f.ont or via email at [hello@denisehigginson.net](mailto:hello@denisehigginson.net).

As part of the City of Hamilton, Tourism and Culture Division's ongoing support of the creative industries, local artists will be invited to create and install window displays that celebrate Hamilton's music scene. This space, the Anne Foster Windows, is a fitting home for music themed displays as the entryway lead to the Anne Foster Music shop for almost 50 years (1947-1995). For more information visit [www.hamilton.ca/music](http://www.hamilton.ca/music).

