

Denis Glaser obituary

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The Guardian, Sunday 15 May 2011 17.59 BST



Denis Glaser studied chemistry at Oxford University.

My husband, Denis Glaser, who has died of cancer aged 78, was a scientist who became a conceptual artist. Denis's extensive knowledge of materials and mechanics led to his daring and varied installations, which involved circular motion, water, video projection and sound. In the 1990s, he exhibited at many group shows and venues including the Barbican and Lisson Gallery in London, as well as in Düsseldorf, Caracas and Seoul.

Denis was born in London. He was evacuated during the second world war to live with an aunt in Argentina from the age of eight to 12. On his return to Britain, he attended William Ellis school in London. He graduated with a degree in chemistry from Oxford University in 1954 and spent the next 40 years working in the aircraft and motor industries.

He had made stoneware pottery and jewellery in his spare time and, in 1992, Denis changed direction to study fine arts at Middlesex University and Chelsea College of Art, where he gained his master's degree in 1997. Initially making figurative sculpture, Denis moved on to abstract installation art. His love of, and keen eye for, aesthetics was not his primary goal; he was far more concerned with expressing the conceptual and

emotional meaning of his creations, often infused with memories.

At home in London, and at our retreat in Yorkshire, alongside being a hands-on father, Denis was perpetually engaged in DIY, ranging from plumbing, wiring, carpentry and machine and car repairs to building a harpsichord. Although reserved and often quiet in company, he was engaged in communal affairs, including our children's schools' governorship, chairing the neighbourhood association, local community radio and community action.

A secular, Liberal Jew, he nevertheless held some affection for Jewish tradition. His love of Israel led him in his later years to increasing concern about the actions of the Israeli government. He participated actively on the Board of Deputies of British Jews and with Jews for Justice for Palestinians.

Single-mindedly pursuing his various goals, typically on his bicycle, he was driven by a wish for minimum waste and maximum economy in time, resources and words: his written communications were telegraphic. Denis eschewed convention and formality but was scrupulously considerate and courteous.

He is survived by me, his children, Daniel, Michael and Eliane, and five grandchildren.