FIELD NOTES

WRITINGS
Angus Carlyle
Adam Diller
Bernd Herzogenrath
cory ryan kasprzyk
David Vélez

SOUNDS
Adam Diller
David Vélez

PHOTOGRAPH BY LINA VELANDIA

FIELD NOTES MAGAZINE ISSUE 5
FEBRUARY 2023

fieldnotes.gruenrekorder.de

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PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBIN CHRISTIAN

On his own and in collaboration with others, Angus Carlyle explores the representation of place through sound, image and text, often seeking ways to combine all three.

METERS

ANGUS CARLYLE

MARCH 6TH, 2021 The sea swells again. Before the family tread on the XLR cables placed on the coastal defence boulder (their three voices offering a question, a suggestion and then the conclusion that my recorder is a radio), the surf spreads slowly and subsides softly across the shallow shingle. After I rescue the equipment (in two minds as to whether to keep it running, I decide that these easy susurrations are as good as it will get), the waves build a more theatrical presence, surging sharper, sending splashing jets, landing forcefully, spinning pebbles, scouring shells and sighing sand, gurgling, choking and hissing.

JULY 10TH, 2019 The smoke curdled through the streetlamps' nebulae, dimmed the glints of rain, softened the flares of flies and raised my eyes to catch – out of their corners – one sudden flash of fast fabric flight, then another, shapes, tracing ~~dissolving~~ lemniscates in the drizzle. "I saw them – I did" sent people and devices to congregate like carollers at junctions, to delve like dowsers in the thicker air by the stream, under the tree, above the grasses. Nothing for antennas or dials, nothing in the sky for sight, until that one abrupt burst of signal condensed from static – that dissipated again

AUGUST 25TH, 2017 I am listening to how the cavern sounded out, how it was heard as rock. In my headphones, the circling screams of swifts and the shifting calls from jackdaws provoke an immediate memory of entering the vast opening in the cliff face and walking along a jagged shard of brightest sunlight until it surrendered to the coolness of a dim interior. The pulse of cicadas and the more strident frequencies of a police siren recede as whistles, camera shutters and voices (both distinct and muffled) audibly approach the microphone, funnelled nearer and nearer by the contractions of an invisible geology.

JANUARY 13TH, 2017 Crouching behind our concrete balcony, I could only hear the neighbourhood weave itself an early morning. Doors squealed open again, wind sent another crisp winter leaf into summersaults, broom bristles bent once more to scatter stones, children's softer voices tramped laden schoolbags. From high and low, air forced from tiny lungs through tinier bronchial tubes left quivering beaks in sweeping song. This delicately woven scene is ripped into unpitying shreds by the rumbling, whining,

roaring USAF F-15s that screech seaward then score the sky in figures of 8. The atmosphere settles back and then comes the tearing: repeat, repeat, repeat.

June 4th, 2015 The sun fell away and the moon rose over the skyline, Chiara and I found our project: the darkness of night and its temporalities. The turbine lights shone like red stars, artificial cousins to the white millennial stars in their clusters that we call constellations and mechanical sisters to the fireflies that rose floating from the hedges. For my microphones the draught of fan blades and wind, frogs (louder, stranger, in chorus this time), night birds, insects, bats in inhuman synthesis racing after moths and flies, and (using a special device) the sounds of the cosmos itself: voices, stories, dreams.

June 1st, 2015 Bright from the window, from the brass door fittings (handle burnished, hinges pristine), from the diamond patterned floor (struck by heels and soles, scraped by chair legs), from the marble counter (ready for car keys, for impatient coins tapped by thumb and forefinger); bright from the cutlery (into the dishwasher and out again, onto the saucer and then up), from the change counted out, from the cash register closing, from the grinding, the forcing water, the rushing steam, from the tearing of the sugar packet, the chinking turn of the spoon, from the lifted cup and the smack of lips.

September 8th, 2015 Door hinge squeals, paces become gallop, hushed voices swell, speech finds form, three crow croaks, gravel grates underfoot, something unshielded, glass meets glass, mobile phone jingle, children scamper, granny calls me, crowd gathering, whispering behind hands, granny calls louder, camera shutter clicks, carer placates granny, excitement building, granny more insistent, shoes scuffing stones, granny cackling brightly, nearby greetings, door slides open, coughing, sniffing, granny still calling, phlegmy male laugh, ceramics rattle, cigarette lighter sparks, unrepeated bird call, granny not calling, crow caws, crowd rushing, clothes rustling, soles stepping then stopping for silence, insect buzz, claps, prayers, shutter clicks, “uncoi” echoed.

April 24th, 2011 The crowing crows reconstruct the contours that the years had eroded: closeness is cast from one set of hoarse repetitions and the softer apparent answers give a distance and a sense of a stretched, spreading mass, the near and the far connected when the sounds of the sounds of a single bird diagram its flight between. If the trees’ topography is sketched in the recording’s 225 corvid ‘caws’ and coloured by fizzing finches and bulbul song, it is the insect stridulations and buzzing wings that shape the understory, and the glutinous frog communication that draws a reminder of the river.

May 3rd, 2010 Tabi shoes that press into soft earth, the bright green squeak of onion stalks as they are gathered in armfuls before being planted, the snipping of secateurs, the crisp rustle of broccoli leaves laden with drops of last night’s rain, the raucous report of the tractor as its motor coughs into its first combustion cycle, the wheel-barrow’s bright aluminium trundle, digging and tilling, the loosening and straightening of polyurethane in the breeze, the rattle of grain for the chickens and the dripping of the water that they drink, the pigs snorting and squealing and jostling, voices caught on the wind.

June 23rd, 2008 Quiet, tired creaks issuing in isolation from Spring undergrowth. The effect seemed mechanical rather than biological, more the dull groans of some material under stress than anything likely to be produced by living tissue and beating blood. Sweeping my microphone like a metal detector across the low grasses by the river, I could never quite focus on the audible call of an individual animal. I set a microphone up on a tripod and uncoiled a long cable back to a safe distance. I could hear the river running, flies alighting, leaves rustling, the murmur of voices but still no frogs.

November 3rd, 2006 Everything reflects: the fountain ripples the overhanging trees (some leaves bronze), it swells and shrinks the roof tiles and undulates the sparse white clouds in the bright sky. The windows of the gardener’s hut show me to myself and show the green mountains behind my neck. From my knees I rise up inside the bell; my shaven head pushes the bell’s tongue softly back against its body and tilts it sideways on the two chains. More of a clack than a ring but something was struck and something still lingers. The crow slides over the microphone and gifts me NR_CROW.aiff.

September 4th, 2003 The revving of American muscle cars beneath their pristine bonnets; B-52s taking off from Fairfield airbase *en route* for Iraq; the tininess of Lambretta motors next to the solid roar of a Triumph at an Ace Cafe reunion; the wasp-in-the-jamjar contained fury of petrol-driven radio-controlled cars racing a miniature circuit; the idling, cycling engine of a snow-clogged coach at continental Europe's most northerly bus-stop. No shushing the awed cries of children as we watch a huge track straightening train amble through a small French village, no walking away from the busker who started up her violin on the Vancouver underground.

October 7th, 2002 Rest In Peace, Jim McGrane. We came to work but the corridors were barricaded by metal-tubed chairs with pale veneer seats and backs; upended tables blocked doorways. Leaving the classrooms, we headed towards the sounds of chanting. Bodies close enough for warmth, you with a scarf and a smile, making new friends and sharing old memories of other times on the streets with flags and whistles and the songs of several generations. The crowds parted around two men in boiler suits striking flares against the tarmac, burning streaks of black, reeking carbon and sudden red lights vivid aloft, billowing, crackling.

March 6th, 2001 With each car a wake of wind and sound shivers the meter's needles. Feet shifting for stability against the embankment's angle of grass, right arm aching from holding the same weight steady, the ground around the layby's bin is decorated with wrapper rubbish, with bottle caps, soft drink and beer cans (squashed and intact), archipelagos of orange peel, two nappies, and matchsticks in the hundreds, perhaps even thousands (tips burnt black, tips still crowned with red). Headlights flare the fragments of glass (clear and mirrored) and coloured plastic (red and orange) that my shoes crackled across on the way here.

AC

28 OUTFALLS

ENGAGING THE POETICS OF INFRASTRUCTURE prompts us to move beyond analyzing ways that component parts of systems work together and to think about the conceptual, ideological, political, and aesthetic dimensions of infrastructural processes.[a] Foregrounding these discursive dimensions acknowledges the role of infrastructure in producing systems of beliefs and structuring power. In addition, infrastructure also produces affective and aesthetic relationships. Sonic practices can attend to these affective and aesthetic dimensions contributing new insights into the many infrastructural crises of the present.

This project – first a short film, now an audio recording and text – attends to New York City's sewer systems' "combined sewer overflows" [also called outfalls] or CSOs. Common to many U.S. cities, this design routes stormwater from street runoff drains into the "combined" sewer, which also contains human – and other – waste, on its way to sewage treatment plants. When too much stormwater enters the system, it exceeds its capacity, and the contents of these combined sewers are released at CSO sites throughout the city. Optimally, these releases should only be triggered by extreme weather events – or not at all – but due to over-taxed sewer systems, even very small rainfall amounts can trigger releases. According to the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, there are 700 CSO sites along the rivers, bays, and oceans around the city's five boroughs.[b] These sites pass more than 20 billion gallons of untreated sewage each year.[c]

Adam Diller's film, audio, and installation works explore more-than-human ecologies through a practice informed by phonography, critical geography, and landscape film. He has exhibited in venues including Anthology Film Archives (New York), Interfilm (Berlin), Kassel Documentary Film and Video Festival (Kassel), Athens International Film and Video Festival, Northwest Film Forum (Seattle), Knitting Factory (New York), Roulette (New York), Issue Project Room (New York), Sugar Refinery (Vancouver, BC), D-22 (Beijing), JZ Club (Shanghai), CHOP (Tokyo), London International Documentary Film Festival, Big Sky Documentary Film Festival (Missoula, MT), Seattle Improvised Music Festival, Center on Contemporary Art (Seattle), Susquehanna Museum of Art (Harrisburg, PA), and Martin Art Gallery (Allentown, PA). He has released recordings on labels including Line (12K), Locust Music, DRAFT, Gift Tapes, and Present Sounds. His writing has been published in *The Journal of Cinema and Media Studies, Studies in Documentary Film,* and *In Media Res.* www.adamdiller.com

While there are many ways to address this infrastructural problem from an engineering perspective: re-engineering sewer systems, using bioswales to retain stormwater, planting trees, and building green roofs, these approaches frame CSOs as a technical problem to be solved, ignoring the ways that CSOs contribute to the poetics of the city's infrastructure. My project is not a critique of these mitigation projects, but rather attends to the affective – and sonic – experiences produced as part of these CSOs. This premise reframes these obscure sites – almost all on various "peripheries" of the city – placing them at the center of an experience of the city. What happens to our thinking if instead of Grand Central Station, we think of Flushing Bay as the center of the city?

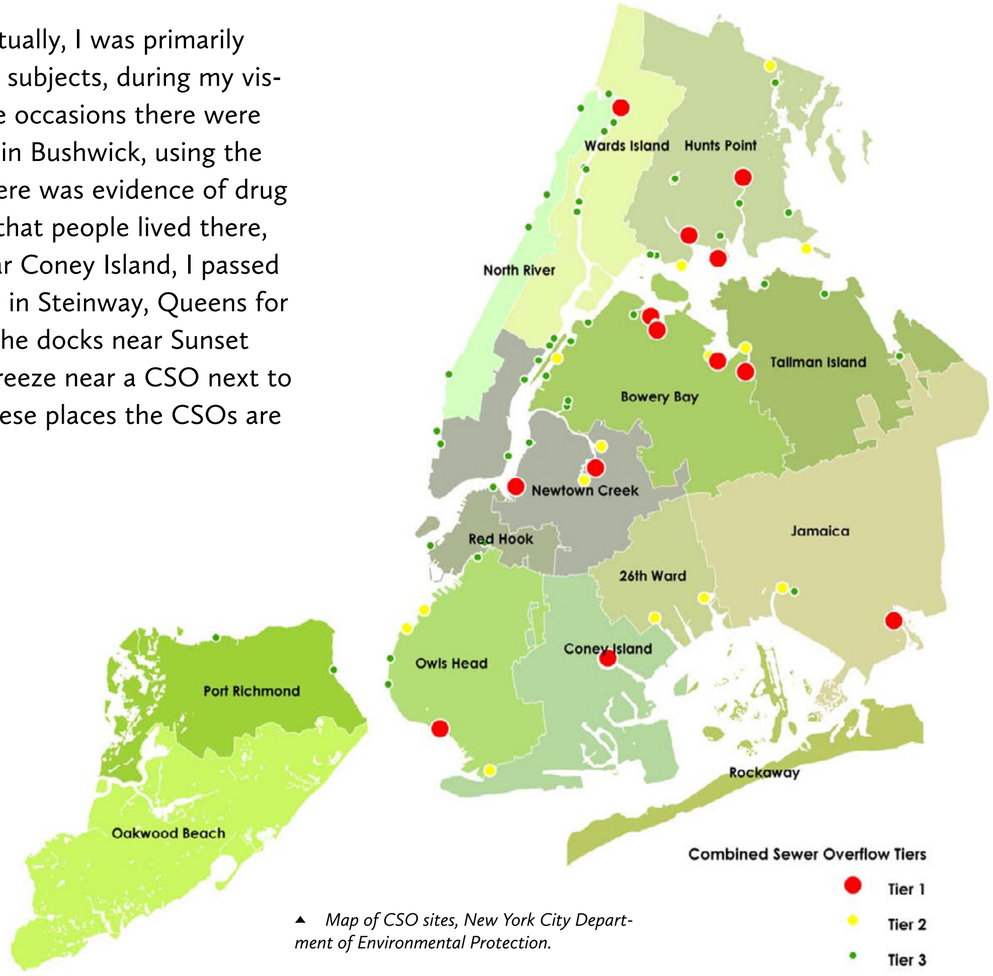
a I am alluding here to Brian Larkin's *"The Politics and Poetics of Infrastructure,"* Annual Review of Anthropology, 2013, Vol. 42 (2013), pp. 327–343.

b This number is often listed elsewhere as around 460.

c This figure also varies according to year and source. There is not a precise measurement of these flows.

What ecologies are produced in these spaces? What can we learn by inhabiting and listening to these sites? What confluences emerge from listening to a series of CSO sites? How does the more populated part of the city sound and look from this vantage point? Underlying all these questions is a desire to incorporate these places into our everyday awareness of the city, highlighting CSOs' central role in the sanitary spaces we inhabit.

For a period of six months, I visited the twenty-eight "Tier 1" and "Tier 2" CSO sites that together emit most of the city's sewage outflows. I cycled to these sites and listened, recorded, and filmed. While conceptually, I was primarily interested in nonhuman – or more than human – subjects, during my visits I often encountered other people. On multiple occasions there were music-video shots at a site along Maspeth Creek in Bushwick, using the green water, filled with debris, as a backdrop. There was evidence of drug use in the area around the water, and it seemed that people lived there, at least intermittently. During a visit to a site near Coney Island, I passed a man practicing golf. Another person used a site in Steinway, Queens for raising chickens and goats. Kids ride bicycles on the docks near Sunset Park. Families picnic, play music, and enjoy the breeze near a CSO next to the base of the Whitestone Bridge. In most of these places the CSOs are not immediately apparent.



▲ *Map of CSO sites, New York City Department of Environmental Protection.*

◀ *Sewage outfall near Gate Ave, Brooklyn, New York* (video still).

Adam Diller: 28 Outfalls 4 tracks (31:20)

Recorded 2014 at New York City's outfall sites, mixed in 2020.

free download: *gruenrekorder.bandcamp.com/album/28-outfalls*

Sewage outfall near Morgan Avenue, Brooklyn, New York (video still). ▸

These CSO sites foreground the tangled relationships between human cultures, politics, material flows, and more than human ecologies that often recede from our everyday experiences. Rather than making CSOs visible only as a problem to be fixed within an otherwise effective sewage infrastructure, I use these sites to rethink concepts of waste and urban place-making. My earliest questions focused on interrelationships between waste and space: How do we organize waste and non-waste? How can we think about flows in, out, and around our cities by listening to these spaces of transduction – from "human" sewage infrastructure to "natural" waterway? What do waste spaces feel like? What relationships do they produce and support? Who benefits from these flows?

Recording sound in the field, editing these recordings, and presenting to a public is its own infrastructural process. Intersected with these sewage infrastructures, the transductions between these two processes illuminate one another. The assemblage of recordist, recording gear, editing, speakers, and listening space becomes entangled with flows of water, wind in leaves, traffic, rain, and sewage. In the studio, recordings from each site blend into one another. The recordings highlight the dissonances in dimensionality and scale at these sites, plants, birds, and insects contrast with the dense "roar" of the city heard from a distance. These perspectival dissonances are produced, shifted, and manipulated through microphone selection and placement.

Usually, I recorded with four to six microphones simultaneously.[d] I spent significant amounts of time setting up multiple stereo pairs. Once I listened to each pair individually, I recorded for long stretches, listening to the blend from all microphones, alternating between pairs, shifting my perspectives during the recording process. Back in my studio, I edited to produce similar effects, adding or subtracting multiple recordings from the same space and time through fades that structure the affective dimensions of these recordings. I often use sonic density and mass to reflect and evoke power, producing new affective relationships with the places I visit and the places I live.

The practice of placing microphones in the field, listening again (and again…) in the studio; editing, mixing, and equalizing to inflect and shape the sounds grounds my encounter with these CSO sites through my sonic practice. Rather than attempting to map the many entanglements of New York City's sewer system, or to understand the labor integral to its maintenance, I apply my practices of recording, listening, and editing in order to build another, parallel infrastructure, one which entangles my own sonic practices with this set of CSOs, producing a hybrid assemblage that brings sewage infrastructure into my creative process.

d I initially intended these recordings for a four-channel installation.

▲ *Sewage outfall Flushing Meadows, Queens, New York* (video still).

Sewage outfall, Flushing Bay, Queens, New York (video still). ▲

This is one way of engaging the poetics of infrastructure. Without working towards explicit solutions, conclusions, or evaluations of the "naturalness" of these places, this sonic process defines CSO sites as sources of recordings, intensifications of affect, narratives of experience, and evocations of the city's density.

Early in my process of vising these sites, I noticed that due to their distance from more inhabited, busy regions of the city, most sites shared a removed sonic perspective that I had not experienced elsewhere. In many cases this blended, wide-range "roar" dominated my impressions of the site. Traffic, anchored by the freeways around Brooklyn and Queens and bridges elsewhere, was a dominant sound. This blended mass of traffic is very different from the more immediate traffic sounds inhabitants of the city are accustomed to hearing in dense New York neighborhoods. Airplane sounds also dominate many of these sites. The flight paths of both LaGuardia and JFK are often above CSO sites. The blending of sounds at these sites led me to reflect on the massive movements of materials around the city. At a distance, these sounds blend into a roar that captures a thickness, density, intensity, and energy often difficult to notice while immersed in more inhabited spaces.

Water dominated of many of my experiences on this project. Not only did flows of dirty water orient my work, but waves along New York's coastline, rain, water leaking from fire hydrants, water flowing from expressway drainpipes, water misting from car tires, boat engines from across the New York harbor, underwater creaks recorded by my hydrophones, and resonances of water running through a sewer informed my listening with a sense of the many ways water moves through the city. Listening to these sounds oriented my experience of CSO sites, foregrounding ways that water shapes the city and vice versa.

Sewage outfall, Flushing Bay, Queens, New York (video still). ▸

Listening to these places prompted me to reflect on the relationships subsumed in our infrastructures. Many of these relationships have consequences beyond those intended, often beyond the scope of our definitions of the "system." CSOs work as designed, but as capacity for growth is stretched and extreme weather events increase, a new – unintended – consequence emerges, significant flows of untreated sewage and the ecologies that result from these flows. Centering these CSO sites positions the "human" somewhat differently, looking at the city from the end of a wastewater pipe, rather than from midtown Manhattan. From this perspective, the "human" is both material – in the form of waste – and conceptual, defining these places as CSOs, waste sites. These places do not fit our expectations of "natural," yet they do not mesh with our definitions of "human" either. While, at this point, it is not remarkable to point out the many ways that all "natural" spaces are human – and vice versa – much work remains in inhabiting these entanglements, learning from them sonically, aesthetically, and affectively as a mode of cultivating responsibility and participation in our more than human infrastructures.

CSO sites are not only problems to be solved, but also places that can help us understand the affective, political, and aesthetic dynamics of our cities. As we work to fix the problems of CSOs are we adequately addressing the relationships inherent in the concept of CSOs – the notion of "outflow." Where is "out?" Are the waterways of our cities outside of the city? Is nothing beyond the ocean shoreline connected to the "human?" As the frequent beach closures and fishing warnings due to bacteria from CSOs attest, these sites are more immediately entangled in the lived "human" city than we might wish to acknowledge. Our conceptualizations of a "clean" inside and "dirty" outside need to shift, by visiting, engaging, feeling these CSO sites, we might begin to open up our conceptions of waste to other possibilities. Rather than attempts to "clean" our cities – usually reliant on exporting, displacing, or hiding the waste somewhere less visible to those

◂ *Sewage outfall, Sunset Park, Brooklyn, New York* (video still).

with wealth and power – we might think in terms of integrating waste into the fabric of our urban experiences. Acknowledging waste as an integral component of all communities is a first step towards identifying the many ways waste shapes our urban ecologies and neighborhoods. All the top tier CSO sites are located within – or adjacent to – neighborhoods of relatively low-income inhabitants. By accepting these practices, we support the "slow violence" against these communities, affirming the power of those of great wealth to export their waste elsewhere.[e]

Listening to these sites, I began to hear a new perspective on the city, one which centers the waste it produces and the water that enlivens and sustains it, opening space for ways in which the city might become more engaged with the ecologies it produces, rather than attempting to eliminate, externalize, or hide them. On my final day of visiting and recording these sites I felt a surprising range of emotions. A sense of accomplishment, having cycled to these sites repeatedly over a period of six months, sometimes before sunrise, in extreme heat, heavy rain, at night, in parts of the city that I barely knew. I also had a sense of seeing the city for the last time. I knew that shortly after completing this project I would move from the city. These sites reoriented the memories of my eight years of living in New York. They wove into my experiences, forming their own self-contained layer, a set of places with views across and through the city, separate but integral to all of my other experiences here.

Revisiting these recordings during the early months of the Covid-19 pandemic in the U.S. was a chance to reconnect with this moment. Listening to these recordings in my new studio, in a different city, reminded me of the ongoing importance of this sort of mediated research into place and space. I find great value in intersections between sonic practices and infrastructural sites. Subsequent projects led me to nuclear power plants, a nuclear waste-storage site in the New Mexico desert, a stretch of the Atlantic City, New Jersey coastline populated by abandoned casinos, and a series of data centers in the northwestern U.S. Each of these projects employed many of the models of listening and recording developed during my work on these outfall sites. The knowledge de-

e Here, I am referring to Rob Nixon's *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor.*

▲ *Airplane landing near sewage outfall, Flushing Bay, Queens, New York* (video still).

Water near sewage outfall, Rainey Park, Queens, New York (video still). ▲

veloped by entangling my own creative infrastructure – microphones, modes of listening, and studio techniques – with these CSO sites, highlights the value of practices of listening and recording as modes of critical engagement with the processes underlying the Anthropocene.

Like my account of engaging – or inverting – an urban infrastructure, our practices of recording sound can also be inverted. Microphone selection, placement, mixing of multiple sources, studio processes such as editing, fades, layering of recordings, and equalization are an infrastructure of field recording. This infrastructure may share more with CSO sites than is at first obvious. How do methods of microphone placement produce waste? How does an editing process structure an encounter with place, producing an "inside" and "outside"? What ecologies and imaginaries are produced by the "outfalls" of field recording? I am not referring to the – not negligible – impacts of the material production of our recording instruments, but rather the conceptual dimensions. How do our conceptions of "good" recordings produce "waste" recordings? What can we learn by spending more time with these "waste" recordings? Are there specific combinations of place and microphone that produce "waste?" Why? What spatial and technological hegemonies do these conceptions produce? How can sonic waste – engine noise, HVAC systems, airplane engine noise, subway noise – become more integral to our conception of sound recording? Is it possible to work with waste sounds of urban environments by weaving narratives through them, acknowledging how integral they are to our lived experiences, and working to center the affective intensifications they produce in our recording practices? While much work has been done to record, abstract, and re-present these sorts of urban "noises," are there more ecological approaches that interweave these sounds with the urban, civilized, and "clean" spaces they produce and support?

▲ *Entrance to combined sewer, Gate Avenue, Brooklyn, New York* (video still).

▼ *Near sewage outfall, Coney Island, Brooklyn, New York* (video still).

▼ *Near sewage outfall, Newton Creek, Brooklyn, New York* (video still).

▲ *Sewage outfall, Maspeth, Queens, New York.*

How can we better inhabit the production of space by our recording techniques? Stereo methods employed in this project include ORTF, double ORTF (quad), SASS, spaced omnis, spaced hydrophones. Multiple stereo sources were recorded simultaneously and edited into a mix that actively shifts and blends the recordings. This process led to reflections on how and why I was shaping space, what or whom I might be privileging, and what poetics and politics might inform my decisions. At times I wanted to employ more performative modes of recording, using contact mics, geophones, or electromagnetic antennae to produce a more abstract listening experience. Ultimately, I found much to be gained from resisting this impulse and working with "simpler" methods, listening for affective intensifications, narrative shifts, and articulations of the environment that feel meaningful. Rather than "solving" any of these important questions in field recording, this encounter with CSOs amplifies awareness of their importance.

It may be a useful to focus our sound recording practices not on extreme sites or suggest that our sonic practices illuminate new solutions to critical problems, but rather, more simply, perform acts of listening, empathy, and love to connect with the more than human spaces around us. Rather than requiring radical aesthetic interventions, these spaces may respond

best to simpler modes of attention. By raising our own awareness of how and why we come to record, what spaces our recordings produce, and how these recordings intertwine affect and place, sonic practices can be central to expanding our abilities to attend to the many crises at hand, without resorting to the despair – or thin optimism – so easy to fall back on in ecologically grounded art and critique.

The field recording process is playful, fun, challenging, and often exciting. We can exploit these feelings to ground new engagements with places that are important to us. I believe that it is critical to situate our practices carefully, to be aware of the entanglements of technique, affect, and our ambitions to produce "products" as all integral to our process, tools for engaging with the more than human world. **AD**

Sewage outfall, Maspeth, Queens, New York (video still). ▸

PHOTOGRAPH BY KIM LEWIS

UNITED DETACHMENT: RECORDING SPACES IN THE ANTHROPOCENE

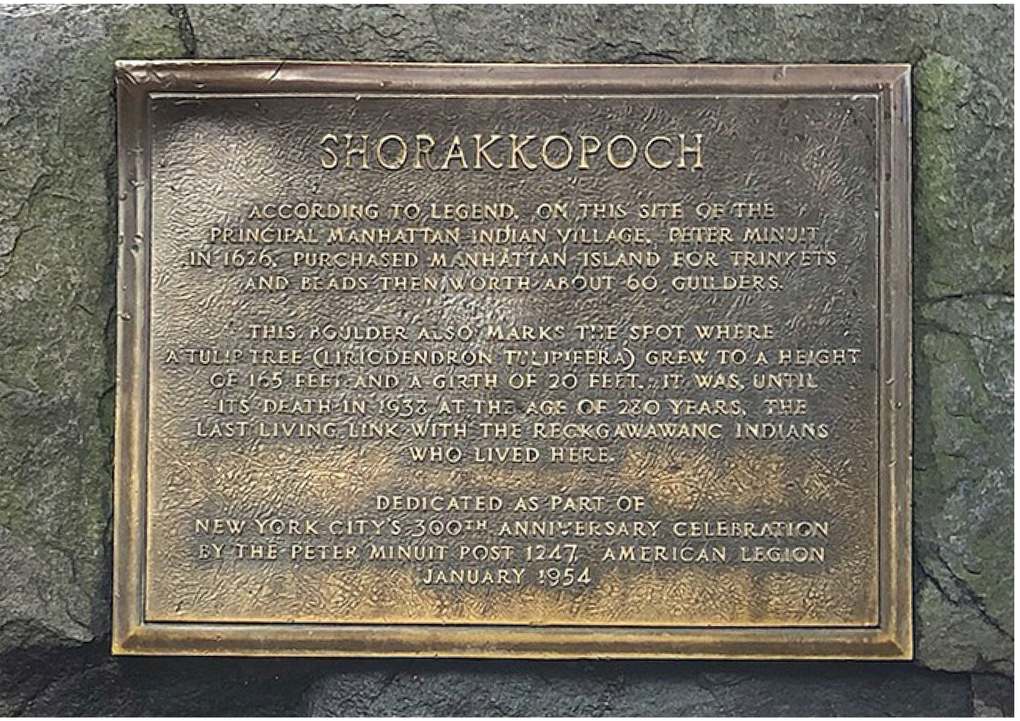
cory ryan kasprzyk

forged space

i live on the island of Manahatta. To experience time
outside my apartment, i venture to the nearest park. A boulder (i.e., Shorakkopoch Rock)
indicates where the ventured island was ostensibly sold, evolving to the urban setting now known to
most. What can be considered as i discover
created spaces, their objects, and the manner in which we listen?

moving slower, my feet feel the construction of runningshoes
muscles grow accustomed to moving on a more frequent basis
miosis sets in as pupils calibrate from halogen to sunlight
miscellaneous smells waft, each varying in pleasantry
muffled sounds enter my ear canals, also captured by a binaural microphone setup

The masked walk provides imperative contrast for all senses—
distinct from the scene of a single space seeking safety. i also have a headworn windscreen.
While it is necessary for this binaural recording, it looks as though i am prepared
for the coldest of winter days. Even in NYC,
this visual oddity offers observation from others.



Defined by walls, door keys reinforce the idea that this apartment is mine. The park's walls are trees. The island itself is bordered by water—i do not own this either.
Culture can reflect
where one neighborhood ends and another begins. We may consider a *space*
a small section
of the planet for which we assume ownership. Within this space 800 die each day; some are placed in makeshift morgues (i.e., refrigerated trucks). At what frequency?

From a frequency domain, the space created in our minds construct a reality that does not seem holographic.[a] These physical and social structures help understand the dynamics of production, consumption, and power. The spaces exist because
we inhabit, not because they were physically built; they are an extension of one's participation in a duration. Henri Lefebvre elucidated these structures and those producing a space can define its meaning. We participate, and are inherently intertwined,
in a space's creation.[b]

Many individuals do not enjoy the luxury of an apartment. Many individuals
make sounds above 20kHz without care for other species. Many
have homes with walls, ceilings, and floors that keep them from outside. Rosalyn Deutsche felt that since outside is constitutive, "it can never really be excluded, only domesticated or enclosed." [c] A pandemic can e x a g gerate the experience felt when public is forced to be one's restrictive home—the same public for which many others yearn. Perhaps the space
that is their thoughts has its own walls—the enemy within.

a Michael Talbot. *The Holographic Universe: The Revolutionary Theory of Reality.* New York, Harper Perennial, 2011.

b Henri Lefebvre, *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life.* London: Continuum, 1992.

c Rosalyn Deutsche. *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics.* Cambridge, MIT Press, 1996, p. 228.

i round the paved corner, continuing through the park as others sporadically pass. i listen
now, paving the way to listen later to what has been recorded. Microphones are in my ears; speakers
are in others'. We create a fabricated personal space. The space created in our minds constructs
many walls: enthusiastic pride for being from a particular place or unjustified hate for those that do
not live in the same way. My space is within spaces. i am, reside,
and persist through these spaces by way of staying among all. i go through these spaces
by persisting through them.[d]

The constantly changing relationships
of the space at large unfolds in time. i walk for minutes, thinking not of where i am physically,
but duration and the relationships of all around me. This distracts from individual moments
or physical spaces. i used to live where cars are essential. Even then, an emphasis would be on
how long it would take to get somewhere. In a car, on foot, or on a train, the physical measurement
between two spaces is not as much a concern
as duration. On foot, i can be free to listen despite living amid an eye culture.

Those that can will restrict individuals with their power to define public. Others redefine
a space through personal discovery, (sub)consciously deviating from norms. Other species
navigate in their own manner, unaware of laws. At times, those that have the largest
metaphorical microphone have power and can write a fabricated history. Our spaces continue
to be inherently intertwined. i record and observe these relationships further. i preserve, enhance,
and exploit the found environmental context, enhancing my awareness and others'.
Each soundwave is dipped within countless interactions.[e]

d Martin Heidegger. *Basic Writings.* London, Routledge, 1993, pp. 358–59.

e Barry Truax. *Acoustic Communication.* Norwood, N.J., Ablex, 1984, p. 207.

f Martin Heidegger. *Poetry, Language, Thought.* New York, Harper Collins, 1971, pp. 163–84.

an object's authority

Within the spaces we believe we have created are numerous objects. i see the park's benches, trees, an abandoned bike, a cigarette butt. i am also an object; the individuals passing are objects. What is in that person's bag? Within my bag, there is an audio recorder... a wire sneaks through an opening of the zipper, climbing to the microphones in my ears.

These microphones are also objects that have a function and can be touched. Their authority as an object reveals understanding of their ability to facilitate the translation of sound into the digital realm. Even once i return home and put them in their case, they continue to be microphones. If they were broken, they would continue to be objects, known as microphones, in the absence of their original function. They are still not a thing and have potential to be repurposed.

The sounds i hear and capture with these microphones are always in the present. They are not objects, but things thinging.[f] Language allows me to capture seeing the microphones as microphones, even in a broken state. Sound requires listening and generates possibilities. Particularly in the absence of visual cues, this cultivates imagination (e.g., what could be) instead of offering an individual truth. i pass a portion of the park adjacent to a road. i hear the sound of a large vehicle. *The sound of the large vehicle* is not the sound's name, but the vehicle's attribute. It does not confirm the speed of travel or the color of the vehicle. It is not an object, but a thing thinging with diverse possibilities. i finish my espresso in a tiny single-use cup. The paper cup (i.e., object) has a past and future; the latter reinforces my guilt.

Hundreds of blocks from here, i once recorded a stairwell. The building has since been demolished. In returning to this location, does absence let me hear the object's resonance, or do i just see dust? i experience the past, but how do i imagine the present?

listening to the conclusive and ephemeral

i walk back to my apartment. A couple passes; su conversación reforcé los límites de mi Español y mi necesidad de tener traducciónes. Hearing and sound are inherently physical acts; the former creates a space that is both here and there. i arrive home and listen to the familiar quiet. It appears slightly dimmer than before. Time is a human perspective. What are the implications of recording a space fabricated in our minds?

In listening, there is a cognitive process: a transLation of what is heard. Listening to things we may appreciate new perspectIves, moving beyond what is seen. i remove the microphones from my earS. They enabled another translation: from acoustic pressure to electric currenT. i affix contact microphones to the window near my desk. 32-bit float allows me to ultimatEly alter our perspective. They were microphones even while in their case. We can see their piezo crystals as geologic material. Sounds outside vibrate the window, which vibrates the crystals. Do materials listen?

An even larger vehicle passes; i feel its rumble, likely below 20Hz. Sound does not acknowledge our fabricated walls or forged spaces. i open the window. Clapping, banging pots, yelling. We blur spaces, appreciating first responders. The nightly News blares the insistent, admirable sound of a protest, sonically obliterating other spaces.

All that i see is thought of as solid definitive objects. The spaces we observe are built upon waves of possibilities, not particles of matter. They are locations where an electron might appear as a particle once observed. “There is evidence to suggest that our world and everything in it [are] projections from a level of reality so beyond our own that it is literally beyond both space and time.”[g] i record out there, yet there is no *out there.*

Motocross motorcycles repeatedly rumble past the window as though they are soundmarks[h] of the neighborhood. They make me question the levels
on my recorder. i record my sonic space, imagining the next viewer;
they redefine it. i read they had recently killed someone, ignoring public traffic laws. i do not alter
the recordings; they are left untouched in f o r m. Even in NYC,
do i not have a right to quiet?

It is now safer to travel; i could return to my childhood home. i do not, my family no longer owns
this space. If i did, i could capture this sonic space to discover if any artifacts potentiate memory of my mother—gone now for 15 years. Does absence let me hear the object’s resonance? How do i remember the future?

It is now safer to travel. Some go to great lengths, recording their perceived version of *nature.* Ignoring objects’ connections, they gather the voices of others as commodities
and reinforce stereotypes. We continue fabricating the serene space of nature in our minds and add to the anthrophony.[i] Nature is just their material object.[j] Do you feel you may invade a space in this way?

g Michael Talbot. *The Holographic Universe,* p. 54.

h R. Murray Schafer, *Tuning of the World,* p. 10.

i Human generated sounds, as defined in Acoustic Ecology.

j Neil Smith, “The Production of Nature,” in *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital and the Production of Space.* Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1984, pp. 34–65.

It is now safer to travel. Many roam. Catcalling returns to sonic spaces. “Ooooshe gotta backpack. She educated.” Do you feel you may invade a-
nother’s space in this way?

We rape
a cow and gather her milk. A few profit and others acquire cancer. i am not permitted to record any of this. i venture to 12th Ave and W 38th St, recording what was a concrete cow tunnel
not even a century ago. Weeds brush against piezo crystals, rustling. In recording, absence augments absence. Others do not hear the space in this way. They do not hear
the weeds. They do not hear these objects. Dipping hydrophones into the nearby water, what do i hear? *Presque rien?* No. Human activity. The locale has changed and we have not. Do you feel you may invade another’s space in this way? Underwater, my stereo field should be spaced further apart.

i go out again for a soundwalk and stay for substantial time. i record the social structures present. If at all altered, is it possible to confirm the reality of a space? How long do i record for this to be accepted?[k] Listening to spaces and their objects, “... going out, i found, [is]
really going in.”[l] Some spaces are changed or changing; we are not.

crk

k Ambrose Field. “Simulation and reality: the new sonic objects,” in *Music, Electronics Media and Culture,* edited by Simon Emmerson. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2000, pp. 43–44.

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His work has garnered performance credits including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Steinway Hall, the Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center, and others throughout North and South America, Europe, Asia, and Australia. He has also presented at festivals including BEAST FEAST, CEMIcircles, Electroacoustic Barn Dance, Electronic Music Midwest, CMC, PASIC, SEAMUS, SCI Region/National Conferences, Symposium on Acoustic Ecology, Third Practice, and others. Alongside a TEDx talk and other speaking engagements, his publications and recordings can be found on Computer Music Journal (MIT Press), Green Field Recordings, New Focus Recordings, and SEAMUS. Commissions and performances have led to collaboration with Alarm Will Sound, Kevin Toksöz Fairbairn, Dana Jessen, Kylwyria, Conor Nelson, Andrew Pelletier, among others.

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in|human rhythms

"Time is rhythm: the insect rhythm of a warm humid night, brain ripple, breathing, the drum in my temple – these are our faithful timekeepers; and reason corrects the feverish beat."

— Vladimir Nabokov. Ada, or Ardor: A Family Chronicle.

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IN MANY WAYS, the twentieth century can be regarded as art's attempts to escape the "tyranny of meter" [*"Tyrannei des Tactes"*] (Schumann 1854: 126).[a] This phrase is Robert Schumann's, and he himself tried to free himself from that "law of metric cruelty" [*"Gesetz der Tactesschwere"*] (ibid: 125) by ever finer and braver syncopations (see for example his *Kreisleriana* and *Kinderszenen*).

For the American context, Charles Ives breathes a similar sensibility. Henry and Sidney Cowell report, that "Ives' whole approach to his complex rhythms should be understood as an attempt to persuade players away from the straitjacket of regular beats, with which complete exactness is impossible anyhow" (Cowell 1955: 172). Instead, the performance should strive for a "variety of rhythmic tensions and muscular stresses that make constant slight changes of pace" (ibid: 173) – Ives' "Over the Pavements" may serve as an example here.

It might be argued, though (as for example Saxer does), that all these Modernist attempts to evade what Nabokov has called the "miserable measurement of time" (Nabokov 1969: 538) are still marching (in relation to) a steady beat, be it in their scores (which still betray an adherence to "tradi-

a See also (Saxer 2004).

tional notation"), be it in ever more adventurous deviations from that pulse (see for example Messiaen's "added value rhythms," "symmetrical permutations," "non-retrogradable rhythms," etc.).

So, is there a way to think rhythm otherwise?

For Deleuze and Guattari, the "tyranny of meter" is related to it being a nonproductive (or only reproductive) and thus empty periodicity, a static repetition that does not produce difference, a difference they relate to becoming: "Meter, whether regular or not, assumes a coded form whose unit of measure may vary, but in a non-communicating milieu, whereas rhythm is the Unequal or the Incommensurable that is always undergoing transcoding. Meter is dogmatic, but rhythm is critical" (*Thousand Plateaus,* 1987: 313). Metric repetition is thus the repetition of the identical, creating equal units of time, whereas rhythm – real productive repetition, repetition with a difference – involves inequalities, maybe non-linear logics: intensities that create "incommensurabilities between metric equivalent periods or spaces" (Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition,* 1994: 21).

These equivalent metrical periods are what clock-time consists of – as Frank Kermode has so beautifully put it in his *The Sense of an Ending,* "[t]he clock's 'tick-tock' I take to be a model of what we call a plot, an organisation which humanises time by giving it a form; and the interval between 'tock' and 'tick' represents purely successive, disorganised time of the sort we need to humanise" (Kermode 1967: 45). The disorganised time "in between," the non-pulsed "time in its pure state" (Deleuze, *Cinema 2,* 1989: xi) is thus what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as rhythm.[b]

According to Deleuze and Guattari, as they outline in their Plateau "On the Refrain," rhythm and the refrain are closely connected to a certain territory and geography, and simultaneously to the forces of deterritorialization, and of becoming. In turn becoming itself is closely connected to a notion of geography – "[b]ecomings belong to geography, they are orientations, directions, entries and exit" (Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues,* 1987: 2). Deleuze's concept of "history as becoming" thus reveals a close proximity to the "geohistory" (Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?,* 1994: 95) of Fernand Braudel – "[g]eography wrests history from the cult of necessity in order to stress the irreducibility of contingency" (ibid: 96). With the concept of *longue durée,* Braudel commented on the "geographic aspects" of (historical) time itself. According to Braudel, "history exists at different levels, I would even go so far as to say three levels but that would be simplifying things too much" (Braudel, 1982: 74). History – thus Braudel, thus Deleuze – happens at ten, at a hundred levels and time spans [at thousand plateaus] simultaneously. This coexistent and dynamic becoming is to the static succession of being what locus is to datum, space is to time, and in analogy regards "geography as opposed to history, the rhizome as opposed to arborescence" (*Thousand Plateaus,* 1987: 296). History is a rhizome that historiography aims at translating into an ar-

b Deleuze refers to the Proustian idea of "time in its pure state" also on his IRCAM Seminar on music (Deleuze 1978) – hence, a vague correspondence between *meter – movement-image* and *rhythm – time-image* might be proposed.

The first publication of this text appeared as "in|human rhythms" in *sonic thinking. a mediaphilosophical approach.* Bernd Herzogenrath, New York/London: Bloomsbury, 2017, p. 111–134.

borescent order, with the rhizome standing for the complex interplay of necessity and chance, human and non-human, culture and materiality, intention and self-organization.

This notion of geohistory corresponds to a perspective on rhythm of one of the profoundest "escape artists" of the metric tyranny – Olivier Messiaen. In a dialogue with the internationally renowned organist and interpreter of Messiaen's organ works Almut Rößler, Messiaen puts forward a "time-philosophical" notion of rhythms:

> *What could be more useful for a musician than to create a link between movement and change* [...] *Of even greater significance, however, will be an awareness of time-scales, superimposed on each other, which surrounds us: the endlessly long time of the stars, the very long time of the mountains, the middling one of the human being, the short one of insects, the very short one of atoms (not to mention the time-scales inherent in ourselves – the physiological, the psychological). Whenever the composer sets the tempo-change machine going, he'll become conscious of these different slownesses, these different quicknesses.* Rößler 1986: 40

Deleuze and Guattari's own concept of rhythm (and of the refrain) owes much to Messiaen's experimentations. When Messiaen refers to the composer's 'tempo-change-machine,' he basically talks about a synchronization of nature (that other tempo-change machine) and the composer's activity. Even if Messiaen's notion of nature still smacks of a transcendental concept (a God-centered harmonious *kosmos*), one can easily see how Deleuze and Guattari adapt that idea and relate it to their machinic conception of nature. Nature thus becomes un-natural, in-human – machinic. From such a perspective, Messiaen's (and also Braudel's) classification of different time-scales and time-spans relates to a notion of the in|human that I want to discuss here in connection to three different composers and works. What I would like to call *in|human* corresponds to Jeffrey Jerome Cohen's "inhuman" reading of the term "inhuman," which "signifies 'not human,' of course, and therefore includes a world of forces, objects and nonhuman beings. But *in-human* also indicates the alien within (any human body is an ecosystem filled with strange objects)" (Cohen, 2014: 271) – a materialist, anti-"human"istic perspective that sees "the human" inextricably connected to and even emerging from in|human forces.

In the following, I would like to discuss three instances of in|human rhythms in works of John Luther Adams, David Dunn, and Richard Reed Parry, carefully heeding Deleuze's advice to not see this endeavor as "a matter of setting philosophy to music, or vice versa," but rather as "one thing folding into another" (Deleuze, *Negotiations,* 1995: 163).

IN|HUMAN RHYTHMS: THE LONGUE DURÉE OF THE EARTH

JOHN LUTHER ADAMS – THE PLACE WHERE YOU GO TO LISTEN

John Luther Adams is a contemporary composer who lives and works in Fairbanks, Alaska, approximately 125 miles south of the Arctic.[c] Adams' work is highly influenced by his environment, this "hyperborean zone, far from the temperate regions" (Deleuze, *Critical and Clinical,* 1997: 82), far from equilibrium.

From his early works onwards he has always pointed out that he wants his music to be understood as an interaction with nature – as a site-specific "contact" with the environment that he calls "sonic geography" (Adams, "Resonance of Place", 1994: 8).

Adams' sonic geography comprises a cycle called *songbirdsongs* (1974–1980), consisting of various imitations of Alaskan birds reminiscent of Olivier Messiaen's *Catalogues d'oiseaux.* Although Adams in the compositional process and the transcription brings birdsong on a "human scale" in terms of tempo, modulation, pitch, etc., he conceptualizes the different melodies – or "refrains" – as a "toolkit," so that during the performance, an ever-new aggregation of phrases and motifs comes into existence, an open system, indetermined in combination, length, intonation, tempi, etc. *Earth and the Great Weather* (1990–1993), an evening-long piece – or opera – consisting of field recordings of wind, melting glaciers, thunder in combination with ritual drummings and chants of the Alaskan indigenous people, was "conceived as a journey through the physical, cultural and spiritual landscapes of the Arctic" ("Sonic Geography", 1998).

c Adams, it has to be noted, is also an environmental activist and founder of Alaska's Green Party. Mitchell Morris thus dubs Adams a "'Green' composer" (1998: 131), referring, however, to the notion of ecology as in *Deep Ecology,* wheras I would suggest to place Adams firmly within a Deleuzian Exology that is based on a non-dualistit ontology.

In a further step, Adams combined his "sonic geography" with the concept of what he calls "sonic geometry" ("Strange and Sacred Noise", 1998: 143). Adams is more and more interested in the "noisier" sounds of nature and refers to findings of Chaos Theory and Fractal Geometry in order to find sonic equivalents for nature's *modus operandi* – *Strange and Sacred Noise* (1991–1997) is an example of this approach.[d]

To date, the culmination of Adams' sonic geography|geometry has been his recent project *The Place Where You Go to Listen,* the title of which refers to an Innuit legend according to which the shamans hear the wisdom of the world in [and get their knowledge from] the whisper of the wind and the murmur of the waves, being sensitive to what Deleuze, with reference to Leibniz, calls "little perceptions" (*Difference and Repetition,* 1994: 213).[e]

Adams aims at the realization of a "musical ecosystem, [...] A work of art [...] that is directly connected to the real world in which we live and resonates sympathetically with that world and with the forces of nature" (Mayer, "Northern Exposure", 2006) – Adams does not only *imitate* nature in its manner of operation, like Cage still does, he taps into nature's dynamic processes *themselves* for the generation of sound and light. Adams developed this project in close collaboration with geologists and physicists – as Adams stated in an interview, "[a]t a certain level, it was like... they were the boys in the band" (Adams, *Living on Earth,* 2015).

In Adams' installation, real time data from meteorological stations all over Alaska and from the five stations of the Alaska Earthquake Information Center are collected, coordinated, and made audible through pink noise filters. As Curt Szuberla, one of the physicists involved in the project, explains, "[t]he strings and bells and drumheads are plucked, bashed and banged based on the geophysical data streams. And the geophysical data streams [...] are the fingers and mallets and bells that hit things and make things sound" (ibid). *The Place Where You Go to Listen* is a permanent installation at the Museum of the North in Fairbanks, where sound and light are generated in real time through data processing of the day and night rhythms, the rhythms of the seasons, of the moon phases, the weather conditions, and the seismic flows of the magnetic field of the Earth – nature itself, as well as the music it produces, operates according to its own times and speeds [and slownesses]. Hours, even days [and more] might pass between perceivable seismic changes or changes in the magnetic field of the Earth. *The Place* is an open system, a machinic aggregation operating according to what Deleuze calls "differences of level, temperature, pressure, tension, potential, *difference of intensity*" (Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition,* 1994: 222) – just like the weather. Adams' noise-filter-machine is plugged into the sun-machine, and also into the wind-machine, rain-machine etc., these in turn couple together to form the weather-machine – different milieus, different rhythms resonate with each other. Digital machines cut into the flows of nature, but within a machine|-nature ecology|ontology which is not based on the strict separation of these two spheres, where nature is either a fixed, unchanging essence, or the mere retro-effect of culture and representation, but an ecology|ontology of dynamics and production. Adams' installation thus presents "modes of individuation beyond those of things, persons or subjects: the individuation, say, of a time of day, of a region, a climate" (Deleuze, *Negotiations,* 1995: 26).

The Place Where You Go to Listen focuses on nature as process and *event* – in an almost Stoic emphasis on *becoming* versus *being,* Adams privileges time-sensitive *dynamics,* not clear-cut *states.* In his study *La théorie des incorporels*

d *Strange and Sacred Noise* is a concert-length cycle of six movements for percussion quartet. Its first and last movements ("...dust into dust..." and "...and dust rising..." are based on the Cantor set and Cantor dust (the two-dimensional version of the Cantor set). These fractals model the behavior of electrical noise, which Adams takes as a diagram for the percussion set to explore "the dynamic form of the Cantor dust, whereby in an infinite process, line segments are divided into two segments by the removal of their middle third" (Feisst n.d.). See also Feisst (2001: 4–14).

e A direct Leibnizian reference can be found in his *New Essays on Human Understanding:* "To hear this noise as we do, we must hear the parts which make up this whole, that is the noise of each wave, allthough each of these little noises makes itself known only when combined confusedly with all the others, and would not be noticed if the wave which made it were by itself [...] [w]e must have some perception of each of these noises, however faint they may be; otherwise there would be no perception of a hundred thousand waves, since a hundred thousand nothings cannot make something" (Leibniz 1996:55). Such a "sonorous ocean," it can be argued, the becoming-perceptible of micro-sounds "underneath the [human] radar," also provides a more materialist version of the Pythagorean idea of "sphere music": contrary to a harmonious universe rotating according to "well-tempered" intervals, it would refer to the multiplicity of sounds of "the world" – nature changes constantly, everything moves, and everything that moves oscillates according to a certain frequency, the total result of which would be white noise (the murmur of the universe). Such a concept, I argue, also defines much of today's electronic music (see, e.g., Murphy 2004, in particular pp. 161, 162). Lately, Adams has transferred the sound of the little waves that make up a sonourous body of water in his Pulitzer-Prize awarded *Becoming Ocean* (2014).

dans l'ancien stoicisme, to which Deleuze refers in *Logic of Sense,* Emile Bréhier states that, according to Stoic thought, "one should not say, 'the tree is green,' but 'the tree greens' [...] what is expressed in this proposition is not a property, such as 'a body is hot,' but an event, such as 'a body becomes hot'" (Bréhier, 1970: 20, 21).[f] This becoming, writes Deleuze, passes the line "between the sensible and the intelligible, or between the soul and the body" (*Dialogues,* 1987: 63) – or nature and culture – and places itself "between things and events" (ibid). By getting rid of the *is* of representational thought, where an object's quality is at least potentially related to a subject that expresses this quality as an attribute, by replacing fixity with process as both the subject's and the world's manner of operation, these 'infinitive-becomings have no subject: they refer only to an "'it' of the event" (ibid: 64). Adams' installation goes further in the direction of the event than Ives and even Cage – although these two composers had also already pondered the conflict between the processuality of nature, and the means of art. Ives asked himself: "A painter paints a sunset – can he paint the setting sun? [...] [Is] [t]here [...] an analogy [...] between both the state and power of artistic perceptions and the law of perpetual change, that ever-flowing stream, partly biological, partly cosmic, ever going on in ourselves, in nature, in all life[?]" (*Essays,* 1999: 71).

Ives tried to master these problematics by way of the ever increasing complexification of his compositorial means.

f My translation of: *"On ne doit pas dire, pensaient-ils : › L'arbre est vert ‹, mais : › L'arbre verdoie ‹.* [...] *Ce qui s'exprime dans le jugement, ce n'est pas une propriété comme : un corps est chaud, mais une événement comme : un corpse s'échauffe."*

Cage also emphasized that he did not think it correct to say "the world as it *is*" – "it *is* not, it becomes! It moves, it changes! It doesn't wait for us to change... it is more mobile than you can imagine. You're getting closer to this reality when you say as it 'presents itself;' that means that it is not there, existing as an object. The world, the real is not an object. It is a process." (*For the Birds,* 1981: 80).

But – Ives was still the subject in control of chaos, and Cage, in spite of all indeterminacy, regretted that he was still creating "clear-cut" objects. Adam solves this problem by leaving the executing|processing energy to the processual forces of nature *itself.* Music and environment thus become an ecosystem of a dynamics of acoustic and optic resonances interacting in|with an environment in constant flux. "Music" in this sense thus for Adams becomes something entirely different than a "means" of human communication about an external world: "If music grounded in tone is a means of sending messages to the world, then music grounded in noise is a means of receiving messages *from* the world. [...] As we listen carefully to noise, the whole world becomes music. Rather than a vehicle for self-expression, music becomes a mode of awareness" (Adams, "Ecology of Music," 2006).

Thus, *The Place Where You Go to Listen* leaves the conceptualization of a music about nature, of music as a means of the *representation* of nature and landscape, on which e.g. Ives still relied, and creates music as a part of nature, as coextensive with the environment – "Through attentive and sustained listening to the resonances of this place, I hope to make music which belongs here, somewhat like the plants and the birds" (Adams, "Resonance of Place," 1994: 8). Even more direct than Cage, Adams emphasizes nature's "manner of operation" in not only taking it as a model, but by directly "accessing" and relating to the becoming of a site-specific environment and creating works that *are* this relation – a music of place, of a place where you go to listen.

In this work, then, rhythm consists in the interpenetrating longue durées of cosmic milieus and seismic forces – the *Place Where You Go To Listen* emerges out of "an extraordinarily fine topology that relies not on points or objects but rather on haecceities, on sets of relations (winds, undulations of snow or sand, the song of the sand or the creaking of ice, the tactile qualities of both). It is a tactile space, or rather 'haptic,' a sonorous much more than a visual space" (*Thousand Plateaus*, 1987: 421). Deleuze and Guattari are referring to an ice desert here, but their notion of *haecceity* also describes Adams' installation very well:

> *A season, a winter, a summer, a time of day, a date have a perfect individuality that lacks nothing, even though it can't be confused with that of a thing or a subject. These are haecceities, in the sense that everything about them is a relationship of movement and rest between molecules or particles, the power to affect and to be affected.* (*Thousand Plateaus,* 1987: 261)

IN|HUMAN RHYTHMS: BECOMING-INSECT

DAVID DUNN – CHAOS AND THE EMERGING MIND OF THE POND

From the *longue durée* of Adams, the "endlessly long time of the stars" (Rößler 1986: 40), we move further (down? the scale?) to the "short one of insects" (ibid), exemplified in the work of David Dunn.

In 1935, the naturalist Hugh M. Smith observed the following spectacle in Thailand:

> *Imagine a tree thirty-five to forty feet high thickly covered with small ovate leaves, apparently with a firefly on every leaf and all the fireflies flashing in perfect unison at the rate of about three times in two seconds, the tree being in complete darkness between the flashes.* [...] *Imagine a tenth of a mile of river front with an unbroken line of Sonnerati trees with fireflies on every leaf flashing in synchronism, the insects on the trees at the ends of the line acting in perfect unison with those between. Then, if one's imagination is sufficiently vivid, he may form some conception of this amazing spectacle.* Smith 1935: 151

Smith marveled at this unexplainable wonder – surely, these insects did not possess intelligence that made them intentionally flash in unison? It seems that this spectacle (which is still popular today, e.g. as a tourist attraction in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park) attracted lots of observers and commentators who published their responses in the journal *Science* in the early 20th Century. As one commentator put it:

> *If it is desired to get a body of men to sing or play together in perfect rhythm they not only must have a leader but must be trained to follow such a leader. Imagine the difficulty of keeping together on 'Old Hundred' if the notes were started with an interval so long as six or nine seconds between each. Do these insects inherit a sense of rhythm more perfect than our own?* Hudson 1918: 574

The question of how to keep a rhythm without a maestro, conductor or click-track puzzled the naturalists and scientists. Today, it seems that the answer to all this is the concept of emergence, self-organization and spontaneous order. In fact, as Hudson already pointed out, the fireflies – or crickets, for that matter, where the emitted signal is not light, but sound – do not perfectly harmonize, unison is not total, but interspersed with slight variations, accelerandos, ritardandos, and stringendos etc.: "[s]trictly speaking, there was no *measured* regularity in this response and therefore no *true rhythm* [...] There was present the influence of suggestion on what may be called a 'mob-psychology,' but there was *no special leader*" (Hudson 1918: 573). In their slightly out-of-sync, non-linear unison, the insects – no matter if fireflies or cicada – are monitoring their collective boundaries rather than individual insects establishing breeding fitness.

Now, with these sounds we enter what Deleuze and Guattari call the "refrain." Taking their cue from their analysis of birdsong (which already shows the more cosmic vision in which they locate their concepts of "rhythm" and "refrain" and which they do not connect to music alone), Deleuze and Guattari state that a refrain is "any kind of rhythmic pattern that stakes out a territory" (Bogue 2003: 17). And even if Deleuze and Guattari take birdsong as a primary example, the same relation of song and rhythm to territory can also be seen in "human music" – the *deçî-tâlas* (the 120 Hindu rhythms), the Greek Συρτός (Sirtos), the Delta Blues, New Orleans Jazz, or East Coast versus West Coast Hip Hop. The refrain thus is a territorial marker that is always open to its surrounding milieus, which are constituted by different rhythms – rhythm itself is thus the difference between milieus, with chaos being the "milieu of all milieus" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 313). Chaos thus is the pool of the virtuality of rhythms, out of which rhythmic patterns emerge in a self-organizing manner.

David Dunn is a sound artist, ecologist and researcher who is both interested in "the natural world" (and its sounds), as he is in science and complexity theory. In fact, quite a lot of his work can be considered "artistic research" in that it is based on active collaborations with scientists, e.g. complexity theorist James Crutchfield.

In his work "Chaos and the Emergent Mind of the Pond" [g] (1991), Dunn had entered the acoustic world of underwater-life. He recorded the sound of aquatic insects in ponds in New Mexico and Africa, thus fusing insect-rhythms of different milieus and territories. In this underwater world, Dunn "hears a rhythmic complexity altogether greater than that in most human music" (Raffles 2010: 323). In fact, Dunn's work accomplishes a twist on the standard *musique concrète* aesthetics and ideology. Whereas in the *objet so-*

g daviddunn.bandcamp.com/track/chaos-and-the-emergent-mind-...

nore the identification of the sound's origin was to remain concealed, Dunn on the one hand keeps the representational level of the sound, he wants it to be identified as "something in|of the world," but he also stresses the uncanniness of these sounds:

> *While the sounds above water are comfortable and familiar, those occuring* [sic] *under the surface are shocking. Their alien variety seems unprecedented as if controlled by a mysterious but urgent logic. The minutiae which produce these audible rasps and sputters remain mostly unseen amongst the tentacles of plants and layers of silt but each contributes to a sonic multiverse of exquisite complexity.*
> *The timbres of these sounds are obviously magnificent, a tiny orchestra of homemade percussion seemingly intoxicated by the infinite diversity of audible colors, but what strikes my ears most readily are the rhythmic structures.* [...] *Amid a background hum of distant chatter the persistent clicks of several different insects pulsate. Many of these sounds are continuous but elastic, their constancy appears sensitive to the assertions of others. This fabric is punctuated by the intermittent cries of something unseen or the wheezing of larger beetles carrying their air supply between their legs. Steady state bands of sawtooth resonance waft across the distance between schools of insect thought that together form an emergent cognition. This infinitessimal* [sic] *world seems complete.* (Dunn 1992)

Dunn's piece is both field recording, composition, and, first of all, a transposition to a human scale of those sounds which are "below the radar," inaudible to the human ear – it takes special technology (in this case, omnidirectional hydrophones) to pick up these patterns, frequencies, rhythms.

By fusing different rhythmic refrains (of different insect ecologies and milieus) Dunn is trying to reflect "in the mix" what he estimated the most striking feature of that underwater invertebrate communication – he basically faces a super-organism, and, ultimately, a consciousness:

> [...] *there are these emergent rhythms, these elastic pulsations of life, sounding as if the very morphology of these little beings and the pond's macro body were dependent upon this aquatic jazz for the maintenance of time and space: primal drummers collectively engaged in the creation of worlds through jamming together the stridulatory resonance of their viscera. This is a dance between periodicity and chaotic swirl, the expansion and contraction of momentary self-resonance within the mutuality of mind.* [...] *Perhaps the complexity of these tiny rhythmic entrainments and chaotic cycles of microcosmic heart beats hover around that basin of attraction known as thought and together bring into being an awareness which I cannot fathom. The placidity of the water's surface takes on the sense of a membrane enclosing a collective intelligence. I know that this is not a rational thought but I find it to be irresistible.* [...] (Dunn 1992)

In a mode strongly reminiscent of Whitehead or Bateson, Dunn asserts:

> *My direct experience of nature convinces me that the worlds I hear are saturated with an intelligence emergent from the very fullness of interconnection which sustains them.* [...] *To assert that human consciousness, arising out of a network of material interactions similar to those which give rise to the very existence of all life, is more important than other forms of mind not operating within the human linguistic domain is absurd.* (Dunn 1992)

Dunn's description of the alien sounds (clicks, sawtooth) is reminiscent of computer music (Dunn is a pioneer of electronic music himself). And indeed, Achim Szepanski, former owner and founder of the labels *Force Inc.* and *Mille Plateaux,* has explained that in Techno, "you can hear a multitude of noises, shrieks, chirps, creaks, and whizzes. These are all sounds traditionally associated with madness. [...] Techno in this sense is schizoid music" (qtd. in Anz and Walder 1995: 140–41). For Deleuze|Guattari, these sounds point towards a becoming-insect, towards a molecular deterritorialization of the territorializing refrains of birdsong:

> *the reign of birds seems to have been replaced by the age of insects, with its much more molecular vibrations, chirring, rustling, buzzing, clicking, scratching, and scraping. Birds are vocal, but insects are instrumental: drums and violins, guitars and cymbals. A becoming-insect has replaced becoming-bird, or forms a block with it. The insect is closer, better able to make audible the truth that all becomings are molecular.* (Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand Plateaus,* 1987: 308).[h]

h Compare with Deleuze|Guattari who point out that "a musician

In his sonic becoming-insect[s], then, Dunn deterritorializes the territorial refrains of different insects in order to make expressive the concept that everything is connected, and that mind – or consciousness – is not a human *quale,* but the multiplicity of virtual connections, intra- and inter-species, human and non-human: in|human.

IN|HUMAN RHYTHMS: THE CARDIAC AND RESPIRATION SYSTEM *RICHARD REED PARRY – MUSIC FOR HEART AND BREATH*

In 1988, the Swedish Pop duo Roxette issued a double command to everybody willing to obey – they not only released their second studio album Album *Look Sharp!,* the album also featured their hit single "Listen To Your Heart." The lyrics of this song show that to listen to one's heart equals to listen to your feelings, emotions, to the cultured expertise of one who "truly loves" – and all this in 86 bpm. The mathematical/metronomic indication of beats per minute seemingly correlates the musical metrum with a bodily, organic function – that of the heartbeat. From this perspective, Roxette's 86 bpm is in a significant mismatch with the emotional state this song talks about – nothing excited/exciting about this measure, a bpm number of 60 to 100 signifies regular heart activity, while with 120 bpm we enter zones of excitation. 86 bpm relate rather to a state of sitting on the couch than of emotional turmoil – it thus rather follows the standard rules and conventions of a soft rock ballad, of a cultural refrain, that is.

What is even more important – the cardiogenic mimesis of the bpm-system is in itself already a stabilization of a more chaotic rhythmic milieu, an abstraction. Consider the following quote by Ralph Waldo Emerson:

> *We are lovers of rhyme and return, period and musical reflection. The babe is lulled to sleep by the nurse's song. Sailors can work better for their yo-heave-o. Soldiers can march better and fight better for the drum and trumpet. Metre begins with pulse-beat, and the length of lines in songs and poems is determined by the inhalation and ex-halation of the lungs. If you hum or whistle the rhythm of the common English metres, – of the decasyllabic quatrain, or the octosyllabic with alternate sexisyllabic, or other rhythms, you can easily believe these metres to be organic, derived from the human pulse, and to be therefore not proper to one nation, but to mankind.* (Emerson 1875: 41–42)

Emerson here clearly locates the origin of rhythm (in poetry, in music, etc.) in the organic movements of walking and heartbeat (in close *d'accord* with the fact that much of (post)Transcendentalist Poetry was structured not by the metrics of "good poetry," but determined by the length of breath). However – it is meter he is talking about, not rhythm. English meters and the marching rhythm are in fact no rhythms at all – Messiaen complained about this, and Deleuze and Guattari followed – "there is nothing less rhythmic than a military march" (*Thousand Plateaus,* 1987: 313). Meter thus is revealed as a territorializing refrain, a stabilization and regulation of the different rhythmic chaotic milieus of the human body. Thus, if you actually listen to your heart, you won't get a clean bpm-structure, but something more chaotic, more non-linear.

"As animals our lives are marked by rhythms, and the rhythmical activities of ventilation and heart beat are tangible evidence of the life force in each of us" (Taylor et al., 1990: 900). But what about the "subtle processes of generation, regulation, and integration of these internal rhythms" (ibid)?

Meter – marches, sonnets, bpm, Roxette – are linear systems, and linear systems are well-behaved. Because of their regular repetition of identical patterns, they can be completely understood and even predicted – by dissecting them into their components, which always add up.

Non-linear systems, on the other hand, do not add up – dissection will not work here, because the components are coupled, looped, involved in emergent processes. The research on the seeming synchronicity of crickets and fireflies, mentioned in the section on David Dunn, is also interesting because cardiac pacemaker cells function in a similar manner – the heart beats in a non-linear way, with subtle but complex fluctuations. Indeed, a completely regular heartbeat in homeostasis might signify illness, while the slightly chaotic fluctuations might indicate a healthy state[i] (with the flat-line as both the point zero and point

requires a *first type* of refrain, a territorial or assemblage refrain, in order to transform it from within, deterritorialized, producing a refrain of the *second type* as the final end of music: the cosmic refrain of a sound machine" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 349).

i See Goldberger et al. (1990).

of infinity of metric regularity). The same, one might argue, goes for the respiratory system, and, in addition, these two systems are not only interdependent, but also coupled to hormonal and chemical stimuli (in|human here with the stress on "in" as an inclusive preposition), external excitations: a myriad of interconnected internal, external, intermediate etc. rhythmic milieus, "differences of level, temperature, pressure, tension, potential, *difference of intensity*" (Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition,* 1994: 222) – so much for your bpm.

So, how if one *TAKEs THAT* as a "rhythmic template"?

Enter Richard Reed Parry.

The multi-instrumentalist of your favorite Indie-Rock-Band *Arcade Fire* is also a classically trained musician and composer, who fearlessly and successfully straddles the two worlds of Pop and Classical – a tightrope-act he shares with the likes of Bryce Dessner (*The National*), Jonny Greenwood (*Radiohead*) and Glen Kotche (*Wilco*).

Parry's Music for *Heart and Breath* (2014) listens to one's heart in a mode very different from Roxette's. With the musicians of these pieces wearing stethoscopes, "the concept for the entire record [...] is that every note and everything that any of the musicians plays is played either in sync with the heartbeat of that player or with their breathing or with the breathing of another player. And it depends piece-to-piece what exactly is happening" (Parry, Interview, 2014).[j] Referring to the influence of Cage, Reich and Eno that Parry cites in his Liner Notes, one could say that *Music for Heart and Breath* ingeniously combines Cage's indeterminism, Reich's phasing, and Eno's idea of Generative Music. But I'd argue there is more to Parry's very singular way of trying to escape from the tyranny of meter.

The players of *Music for Heart and Breath* have to listen to their own bodily rhythms as well as to those of their co-players, while at the same time external stimuli (responses of the audience) and internal stimuli (excitation of the players, the feedback-loop of responding to responses, etc.) further destabilize the rhythmics of the piece being played. Parry's compositions attempt to "translate directly into music the quiet internal rhythms of the body [...] to guide and shape the dynamics of the pieces [...] following the subtly rhythmic 'instructions' of the body" (Parry, Liner Notes, 2014: 6) – we need to add, though, that because of the complex feedback loops mentioned, we cannot be speaking of "internal rhythms" alone, rather of rhythms situated at the fold of inside|outside.

The musicians body thus becomes a pivotal instrument in the performance – the body, that according to commentators from Roland Barthes to noted American Jazz Pianist and Composer Yijay Iyer has always been suppressed in (cultural constructivist or semiotic) interpretations of music.

Consider Barthes' love for Schumann. Listening to Schumann's *Kreisleriana* (Opus 16, 1838), Barthes claims that he does not hear notes, themes, or even meaning – "I hear this body that beats" (1991: 299). However, interpretations and performances of that beating body that Barthes hears – "there is no beating except the heart's" (1991: 302) – are rendered too docile, in general, those beats are played "too timidly; the body which takes possession of them is almost always a mediocre body, trained, streamlined by years of Conservatory or career, or, more simply by the interpreter's insignificance, his indifference" (1991: 303).

For Parry's *Music for Heart and Breath,* it takes an interpreter not indifferent to the differences in intensity that the beating heart provides. Barthes' description of the "mediocre" and streamlined Conservatory player, a highly trained technician of music, might be described in Deleuzo-Guattarian terms as a "paranoiac performer."

For Deleuze|Guattari, the body ultimately oscillates between two poles, "the paranoiac, reactionary, and fascizising pole, and the schizoid revolutionary pole" (*Anti-Oedipus,* 1922: 366). It is important to point out that, despite the origin of the terms "paranoiac" and "schizoid" in psychoanalysis, Deleuze|Guattari have chosen the terms to refer to different logics and dynamics of social organization. Whereas *paranoia* designates an Oedipal and ultimately transcendental mode of a hierarchically structured and rigidly segmented, striated and solid body, controlled by an external authority, *schizophrenia* marks liberating potentialities and "lines of flight," vectors of deterritorialization,

j This concept had already been put to use by American composer Christopher Shultis in his 1994 piece "Written on the body, for musicians and dancers," where the musicians "have a contact microphone attached to any part of the body that produces an audible heartbeat. This is amplified into an earpiece that is placed into the musician's other ear."

a fluid body constituted by openness, dynamics, self-organization, and by a constant "becoming." Thus, while the "paranoiac performer" is Maestro or click-track fixated, what *Music for Heart and Breath* calls for is indeed a "schizzo performer," open to the irregular dynamics of his own body, to rhythms that are not metric and solid ("Solid as a Rock"), but fluid and marked by intensive differences.[k]

The headline of the NPR interview with Arun Rath claims that "Richard Reed Parry Turns Musicians into Metronomes" – which in fact he does not: the irregular rhythms of heart and breath provide anything but stable metric regularity, the effect is rather a stuttering.

Deleuze has related the concepts of "stammering" and "stuttering" to the question of style. And even though he mostly related stuttering to the realm of literature, I argue that stuttering bears a close affinity to the ideas of "rhythm" and "rhizome." Taking his cue from Proust, Deleuze claims that "great literature is written in a kind of foreign language" (Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues,* 1987: 5). To write or speak in a foreign language is to write and speak in a minor and deterritorialized language, escaping the solidified and molarized variables, variations, potentialities – virtualities – of any major language, making any "language" (literal, symbolic, music) "affective and intensive" (Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical,* 1997: 107). It is this deterritorializing and rhizomatic quality that links the idea of stuttering to the rhythmic complexities of *Music for Heart and Breath* – Rhizome is a Dancer!

k See also Szekely (2003) for a somewhat similar observation.

In their various attempts to escape from the "tyranny of meter," Adams, Dunn, and Parry have also commented on what might be called "Music in the age of the Anthropocene." With the idea of the human becoming a geological (i.e. non-human) force itself, art has the responsibility to create an awareness of how we live not only in the world, but also are part of that world. A music that "performs" these "cosmic dimensions" of the interdependence of human and nonhuman, by focusing on the in|human of the concept "human" might also teach us something in regard to artistic (or musical) form – form as a molar concept tied to the intentionality of a subject that in|forms brute matter:

> *[t]here is no longer a form, but only relations of velocity between infinitesimal particles of an unformed material. There is no longer a subject, but only individuating affective states of an anonymous force. Here the plan is concerned only with motions and rests, with dynamic affective charges.* (Deleuze, *Spinoza,* 1988: 128)

These rhythmic "relations of velocity" ultimately reveal rhythm as the in|human nonlinear pulsation of life – "a life" – that escapes conscious control and the all-too-human "tyranny of meter." **BH**

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We Never Cook for One, We Never Eat Alone

AN AUDIO PAPER BY **DAVID VÉLEZ** IN COLLABORATION WITH **CYANCHING WU**

Download Full Audio 1 track (2:08:00)
Recorded 2018 in Dalston, London.
gruenrekorder.bandcamp.com/album/we-never-we-never

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROSSANA URIBE

PHOTOGRAPH: TSONAMI

Cyanching Wu: cooking, commentary and notes.
David Vélez: recording, treatment, mastering. Article.

ABSTRACT

This audio paper presents sound documentation following the preparation of traditional Taiwanese recipes cooked by artist Cyanching Wu (TW) in London. A complementing article will provide tools to understand and appreciate the recordings and their context.

> *(Food's) disintegration in the stomach, its assimilation in the blood, its diaphoresis in the epidermis, its metempsychosis in the large intestine; its viscosity in okra, gumbo, oysters; its elasticity in jellies; its deliquescence in blancmanges; its tumescence in the throats of serpents, its slow erosion in the bellies of sharks; its odysseys through pastures, orchards, wheat fields, stockyards, supermarkets, kitchens,* [...]
> —**Maud Ellmann, 1993: 112.**

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROSSANA URIBE

PREFACE

Cyanching Wu (TW/UK) is an electronic musician, cello player and cook whom I met in 2018 while we were both studying at the University of Huddersfield. Our interest in sonic art and food and our experiences as immigrants from cultures that contrast with the British drew us to collaborate on this project. For the recording session presented

here, she prepared traditional Taiwanese fried chicken, cabbage and white rice, recipes which she has adapted to her new environment. It was part of our rehearsal to perform *Taiwanese Live Cooking,* a gastronomic concert in Café OTO's Project space. There, her food-making sounds were amplified and mixed with field recordings and sine waves performed by me to a blindfolded audience who, afterwards, consumed and enjoyed these dishes. I made the audio register presented in this audio paper on the evening of October 8th of 2018 in the kitchen of her apartment in Dalston, London.


PHOTOGRAPH BY LINA VELANDIA

This article presents two questions that will aid in advancing a context for a significant appreciation of the recordings presented here:

- In which way do food sounds connect with aspects pertaining to diasporic identities?
- How can sonic artists implement food acoustics to address social and political aspects regarding identity and migration?

1. CONTEXT

1.1. *FOOD AND IDENTITY*

Kate Gardner Burt (culinary nutritionist) investigates the strong connection between identity and culinary culture, indicating that dietary habits reflect our distinctiveness, subjectivities, and social, geographic and environmental context. She claims that our gastronomic habits bias our engagement with those of other individuals and groups and urges us to subvert these preconceptions by establishing an empathetic approach towards unfamiliar culinary cultures. In doing so, she acknowledges the ability to recognize diversity and encounter meaning when examining social and political aspects in food (Burt, *Challenging Perceptions,* 2022). The theories of Gardner Burt connect with the research of anthropologist Harry G. West in Mozambique, who studied how communities there establish familiarity with visitors and guests by offering them dishes that would seem unappealing or repulsive to the outsider. If the visitors subvert their prejudices and eat them, the community welcomes them (Cezar and Burrows, *Politics of Food,* 2019). The research of West presents subjective preconceptions preventing us from sharing pleasant, joyful and nourishing experiences of otherness and considering Gardner Burt, we can infer that overcoming reticence at the dining table advances empathy between divergent cultures, which is vital in circumstances of migration involving diasporic and hosting communities.

Fabio Parasecoli (food studies) researches culinary cultural and social aspects in immigrant communities when they experience uprooting and unfamiliar circumstances in which they can't replicate the elements of their traditional culinary culture.

> *Among other strategies, immigrants cope with the dislocation and disorientation they experience in new and unknown spaces by recreating a sense of place around food production, preparation, and consumption, both at the personal and interpersonal levels. In fact, the solidification of these practices and the norms and ideals that develop around them is not just a by-product of the relationships within already existing dynamics, but actually constitutive of their emergence.*
>
> —**Fabio Parasecoli, 2014: 416.**


PHOTOGRAPH BY STEPHAN HARVEY

PHOTOGRAPH BY LINA VELANDIA

In Parasecoli, a linguistic structure connects every ingredient, utensil and technique involved in the dishes constituting a culinary culture. This structure, he adds, undergoes a continuous process of redefinition and resignification under the agency of the internal and external factors that emerge in migratory circumstances. In this sense, Parasacoli detects a coherence defining food behaviours and objects as adequate or devious, which he interprets as a form of culinary competence. This competence in the diaspora brings forth plastic and fluctuating culinary identities that embrace the alterity that advances in circumstances of migration, he adverts. The connection the immigrant establishes with their new environment, Parasecoli asserts, fluctuates between a desire to eat unfamiliar dishes (neophilia), a rejection to do so (neophobia) and the subsequent in-between paradoxes. For him, unfamiliar elements permeating the diasporic experiences expose them to an Otherness that can be intrusive and overwhelming, which they challenge using food preparations that provide familiarity and build a sense of belonging (Parasecoli, 2014:415–439). Here, we can imagine diasporic subjectivities mitigating their inevitable transformation through food preparation and consumption, slowing down the adaptation process in which they will modify how they identify themselves through the dishes they cook and eat.

In the analysis made by Parasecoli, the culinary habits surging in diaspora communities evidence the plasticity of the human body constantly feeding from its biophysical surroundings, sustaining transformations to undergo a sought-after continuous state of incompletion (ibid). He connects this state with the concept of rhizome developed by philosophers Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, which appropriates a botanic term describing a modified organism capable of producing the shoot and root systems of a new plant to illustrate how systems with no beginning or end operate (Thousand Plateaus, 1987). The human state of corporeal unfulfillment, suggested by Parasecoli with the help of Deleuze and Guattari, finds in food a perfect ally to perpetuate its voracious incompletion, an idea that this article complements with the theories of philosopher Jane Bennett who studies the material of food:

> *Food will appear as actant inside and alongside intention-forming, morality-(dis)obeying, language-using, reflexivity-wielding, and culture-making human beings, and as an inducer-producer of salient, public effects.* **Jane Bennett, Vibrant Matter, 2010: 39.**

For Bennett, food is an agential embodiment that operates alongside and within the human body that, in Parasecoli, helps perpetuate the constant unfolding of the human body (Parasecoli, 2014:415–439). In reciprocity, the human body aids food matter to expand and transform, avoiding interruption and stagnation.

> *When migrant food traditions are turned into heritage, they can become museum objects that may be admired but not experienced. In these degenerative processes, communities, just like rhizomes, lose their capacity for expanding and connecting to extraneous bodies, a phenomenon that inevitably leads to the refusal and eventual destruction of any element that can be perceived as a foreign pathogen.* **Parasecoli, 2014: 436.**

The ideas of Parasecoli present food as a vital ally for the diaspora to connect with their new environment, where sensorial paradoxes gradually redefine what is familiar, relatable, and desirable and what it is not. Immigrant food cultures and identities bring together the mutability of the human body and the corporeal plasticity of edible matter, collaborating and thriving in non-completion and continuous unsettlement.

1.2. *FOOD SOUNDS IN CULINARY CULTURE*

The role of food sounds in the advancement of culinary cultures is a subject relatively unexplored, as addressed by Tara Brabazon (cultural studies) in her article *The Sounds of Food: Defamiliarization and the Blinding of Taste* (Brabazon, 2017). She indicates that in food literature, the attention given to sound is reduced, approaching the acoustics

PHOTOGRAPH: LA RADIO CRIOLLA

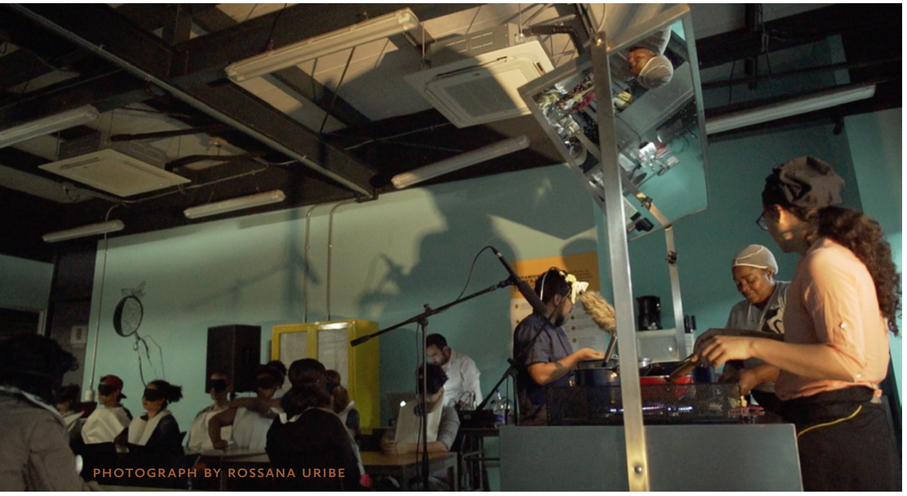
of food as an "oral history" of the obsolete, unheard, undocumented geographies created around food, questioning the cultural hegemony of the visual, the tactile, and the gustatory. Brabazon presents a research methodology that combines audio recording and writing, which she supports on two considerations: the acoustic phenomena of food sounds and the exegesis of such phenomena. For her, food sounds are accidental in the absence of a *narrative.* To find meaning, she interprets the accidental character of these sonorities by establishing a signifier and a significant, where Brabazon acknowledges a large diving gap. This discrepancy, she contends, creates doubt, agitation and unpredictability, perturbing meaning systems. Brabazon's analysis results in interesting observations about cooking sounds. For example, the information that emerges through recording the cooking processes revealed to her the leakage of media such as television, radio, tablets, mobile phones and the conversations taking place in the kitchen (ibid).

> *The unexpected sounds – that I had no awareness of before this research project – reveal the scale of the packaging encasing food. Plastic wrapping, including bags of fruit and vegetables, not only occupy space and time in the cooking process, but reveal underdiscussed sounds.* **Tara Brabazon (ibid).**

Brabazon concludes that creating linguistic meaning in food requires translation from the experience of taste, the sensorial paradigm of food experience. In food sounds, she distinguishes ambiguous and unsettled ways of establishing meaning and indicates that the acoustic research of food benefits from decontextualizing food sounds from the everyday scenarios in which they resonate (ibid). Her theories suggest the importance of establishing a mechanism to appraise meaning in food sounds while pinpointing the linguistic disruption we encounter when approaching them to signify the dish preparation that causes them. This semantic disruption, we can infer, evidences the need to bring forth new models of meaning to study food sounds and their connectedness with the other senses involved in our gastronomic experiences. This article estimates that the assertion that Brabazon makes regarding that there is no narrative in cooking sounds is debatable, considering that there is a sequentiali-

PHOTOGRAPH: LA RADIO CRIOLLA

ty and outcome in cooking recordings, where each step is a sonic event that is a prerequisite to the following one and, altogether, they advance the final sounds in such preparation. In that, we detect a narrative in which, for instance, chopping sounds precede those of frying or boiling, where each presents its unique material and acoustic qualities.



PHOTOGRAPH BY ROSSANA URIBE

Anna Harris is an anthropologist studying topics related to well-being and nutrition who wrote the article *The Hollow Knock and Other Sounds in Recipes,* (Harris, *Gastronomica,* 2014: 14–17) where she examines how cooks use sound to communicate and instruct the preparation of a group of food recipes including bread loafs (ibid).

> *Knocking on a loaf of bread to see if it is ready is another one of those rare times the novice cook is explicitly instructed to listen to their cooking. Such a mysterious sound, this hollow knock! And one which divides the cookbook writers.* Anna Harris (ibid).

Harris cites anthropologist Tim Ingold, who points out how tapping an egg and listening to the sound produced, helps chefs to know how to split the shell into halves. Harris also presents the cookbooks of Madhur Jaffrey, for whom the popping sound of mustard seeds indicates that they have released their flavour in the cooking oil. In her article, Harris suggests the strong connectedness between our senses in our experience with food and examines the terms sizzle and crunch, in which hearing connects with touch and sight. This association helps her approach the hungry human body and its receptiveness to food-related stimuli as a cohesive perceptive unity to which a five-sense categorisation is unfitting (ibid). The ideas of Harris present food sounds with a special significance in culinary culture with an implementation to disseminate recipes via oral tradition and cookbooks in which sound and listening communicate specific steps in the preparation of a dish. Her study of food sounds also presents a new understanding of the receptiveness of the human body, challenging prevailing approaches that date back to Aristotle's *Book III.* To complement how Harris studies sensibility and the senses, this article will connect her theories with the research of experimental food psychologist Charles Spence. A series of experiments advanced by him and Betina Piqueras-Fiszman indicate a correlation between sound and olfactory stimuli, evidenced when food intake sounds affect how flavour is perceived, thanks to the

PHOTOGRAPH: LA RADIO CRIOLLA

mechanisms by which our brain processes stimuli (Spence & Piqueras-Fiszman, *The Perfect Meal,* 2014). Other experiments by Spence suggest that environmental sounds and food colours could influence the perceived taste of food (ibid). The ideas of Harris and Spence suggest synaesthetic gastronomic experiences where our means of pleasure and subsistence underline the connectedness of our body.

1.3. *CYANCHING WU, IMMIGRATION, COOKING, SONIC ART AND GASTRONOMIC CONCERTS*

In this section, the article will present a series of texts and notes advanced by Cyaching Wu, plus a text written by

one of the audience members in *Taiwanese Live Cooking,* the gastronomic concert that Cyanching and I presented in Café OTO.

> *As an immigrant, I face a lot of challenges in my daily life, sometimes feeling like I don't belong and that makes finding the right balance difficult at times. Feeling a lack of familiarity with the world around me makes me struggle to find a sense of comfort and calm my mind. Cooking provides me with that safe space where I can feel comfortable and express myself. Recreating the dishes I used to eat in Taiwan isn't necessarily out of feeling homesick, but rather out of a willingness to give them a new context in my current surroundings. After all, you can't change the fact that you're not home anymore, but you can bring a little bit of home with you. The entire process of planning dish preparation, selecting the ingredients, going out to buy and then preparing them; cooking and finally tasting makes me feel fully in control and it's a wonderful feeling to focus on completing one simple task without distractions and enjoy the outcome. I find it very meditative.* **Cyanching Wu.**

PHOTOGRAPH BY LINA VELANDIA

Cyanching's words, which she wrote for this article, connect with the ideas of Parasecoli, evidencing the role of food in creating a container in which the immigrant individual immerses to establish a physical and emotional mediation between their former and new environments. In cooking her traditional recipes, she also perceives the possibility of giving them a new meaning which demonstrates the embodied agency of food, suggested by Parasecoli and Jane Bennett, using the bodies it feeds to advance and continuously unfold.

> *Most of the time, I cook in the kitchen myself, it's like working in the studio making music myself. Once you know what you are doing, the workflow in the kitchen is like making music with a computer. In the kitchen, you start from one task and extend to multitasking (chopping, boiling the water, washing ingredients and others). You gradually have layers of sounds surrounding you. It's like making music, start an idea, play around the others, and put them together, take one out and add one in, develop a bit of the previous one and add another new element. They both (cooking and making music) are very similar processes and there's another thing they are so similar. It's the intuition of taste coming from your background, your daily life, what you've been exposed to.* **Cyanching Wu.**[a]

The layers of cooking that Cyanching perceives allow her to follow up the advancement of the different preparations and dishes, which evokes the ideas of Anne Harris discussed in the first section of this article. For Cyanching, listening is essential to monitor such multiplicity of physicochemical events operating in autonomy and yet interconnected by a timeline determined by a recipe. It evidences the importance of an

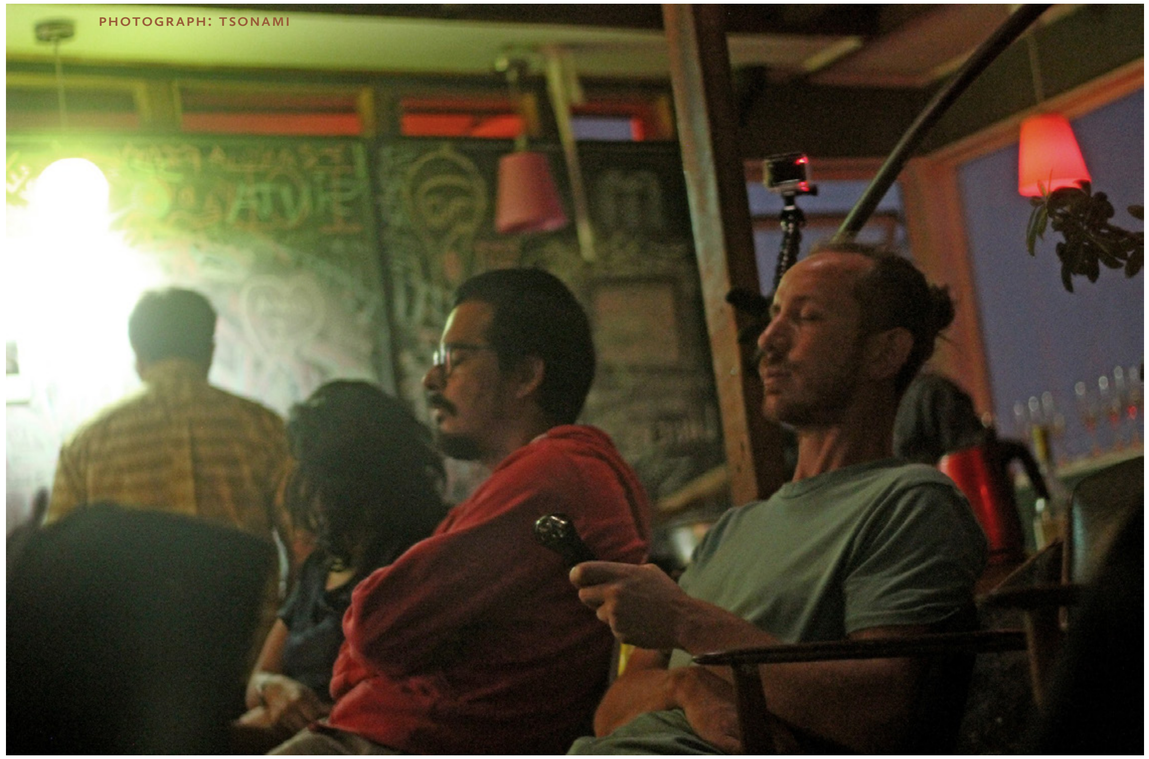
a Wu, C. quoted (2019). *Interview with Taiwanese composer Cyanching.* Sonic Field. [URL]

acute sensibility to sound in food and music-making to advance creative processes focusing on the details and the overall process.

This article will now present a text written by Faiz S. Hussain after his experience in the gastronomic concert *Live Taiwanese Sounds,* which we created with Cyanching:

> *It was a torturous hour to the salivating, hungry, blindfolded connoisseur audience enduring an hour of intoxicating aromas emanating from the gangway of the concert tent, seats arranged though we were hearing someone speak. In that hour of immersion into sounds of live food preparation, we were taken through soundscapes of every city, a rowdy bustle of lunchtime fare, the yearning of waiting in long lines for communal eating, the clang and friction of industrial sounds and handmade care into meals we would consume later. It wasn't quite time-travel, but it was nostalgia all the same.* Faiz S. Hussain.[b]

The text of Faiz S. Hussain suggests the possibility of cooking sounds, together with the corresponding aromas, to induce sensations of hunger and food craving, which presents them with a special significance that this article links to the Tara Brabazon ideas presented here. The amplified textures, timbres and rhythms of Cyanching's



PHOTOGRAPH: TSONAMI

cooking, resonating in connectedness with food aromas, act as a prelude to a luscious dinner. Here, food sounds find meaning in their possibility to advance expectations prompting the listener to desire and anticipate their experience with the dish.

2. CREATIVE RECORDING AND STUDIO NOTES

The documentation presented here follows the entire sequential preparation of the rice, chicken and cabbage dishes which, after minor editing, have a duration of 2h 8min, covering every step of their recipes. While Cyanching usually would advance them simultaneously, we decided to give each preparation space and time to surface all the details involved. After the session, she mentioned that she was paying exceptional attention to her cooking sounds during the preparations, aiming to bring forth the rhythmical, melodic and harmonic aspects of the techniques applied, which is evident in her chopping of the ingredients and handling of the utensils. The decision to document every step praises the exuberant expressiveness of her cooking and the resonant qualities of the ingredients, utensils and techniques of her choice. My arrangement to present it as one audio track and not three consider how we consumed them afterwards. The recordings were made using a Sennheiser MKA 600 shotgun microphone which I selected to concentrate on particular sounds avoiding peripheral sounds, and which I operated as a magnifying glass. I recorded the sounds presented, aware that the luscious material resonating throughout the session was the food I was about

b *https://davidvelezr.tumblr.com/selectedperformances*

to eat with Cyanching later, as the positioning of the microphone towards the different preparations followed my craving for the aromatic ingredients she used manifested through my sensibility to her coking sounds. In this audio paper, I aim to present a piece with value as ethnographic documentation and as sound art and experimental music recording in which the perceived connection between cooking sounds and causality and their potential reduction offers two divergent ways in which the listener can appraise these recordings. The artistic process I followed in the studio was influenced by cooking audio recordings from Lee Patterson,[c] ASMR (Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response) videos, and Japanese YouTube videos documenting lengthy food preparations in their totality (T-BOX Japan, Goenventure, 1 Take Japan, and Japanese Noodles Udon Soba Osaka Nara).

3. REFLECTIONS

Food sounds connect with aspects pertaining to diasporic identities in their capacity to evoke familiar scents and flavours through synaesthetic experiences in which acoustic vibration arouses the sensibility through which the immigrant body engages with food. These experiences operate as a nourishing and vibrating container in which individuals immerse themselves to alleviate the adaptation to their new and unfamiliar environment and host culture. Furthermore, food sounds help the diaspora to transmit expertise and competence in the preparation of their dishes, where only sound can inform about the qualities of an ingredient or the advancement of a culinary technique, as evidenced in Cyanching's reflections and the recipes published by Madhur Jaffrey in which listening is essential to follow cooking instructions with accuracy.

Sonic artists can implement food acoustics to address social and political aspects regarding identity and migration by researching the cooking sounds which, for the diaspora, sustain a stronger perceptual connection with their edible causality, and those sounds which work as cues to follow the recipes that immigrant individuals recreate in their new environment. The assortment of cooking techniques, ingredients and utensils involved in Cyanching's cooking embodies the journeys, alliances and social assemblages that have advanced the vitality and radiance of her culinary identity and the gastronomic cultures in which she participates. The sounds of her cooking echo the comfort and familiarity she negotiated, the biases she subverted, the uprooting intrinsic to becoming an immigrant, and the mutability of her culinary identity, which resolutely adapts to strange and unfamiliar environments. The acoustic qualities of her food-preparation techniques obey her background as a musician and her subjective circumstances and embody the history of the recipes she cooks, which continue unfolding through her unique sensibility.

We never cook for one and never eat alone when the body we nourish is part of social, cultural and biological assemblages that feed from the subjectivities and sensibilities of their constituting elements, which becomes evident in circumstances of migration. DV

c Patterson, Lee. *Egg Fry #2.* Cathnor, 2012. [URL]

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Cyanching Wu, Monty Adkins, Daniel Knef, Lasse-Marc Riek, the University of Huddersfield, Café OTO, Lina Velandia, Fielding Hope, Felipe Rodríguez, Santiago Rodríguez, Lukasz Lewaszkiewicz, and CARMA Journal. DV

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PHOTOGRAPH BY LINA VELANDIA

PHOTOGRAPH BY WILL BEDFORD

PHOTOGRAPH BY SANTIAGO RODRÍGUEZ

David Vélez (PhD) is a Colombian sonic artist studying the acoustics of food, working in the intersection between sound ethnography and plant bioacoustics. His work oversteps the boundaries of installation art, field recordings, composition, performance and commensality, exploring gardens, kitchens and open food markets as exhibition spaces. Vélez is interested in the strategic artistic possibility of sound and its invisible, immersive, unstable and fluctuating material, attributes shared with the nourishing transference of energy in food.

habitatsonoro.com

Cyanching Wu is a Taiwanese sonic artist working with electronics, field recordings and cello with a personal approach to sampling in which she recreates existing sounds from scratch. In her work, she examines political aspects connected with her upbringing in Taiwan and the multiculturality of this region, addressing the importance of considering the diverse opinions and voices surfacing here. Her debut album, *Shadow of a Shadow*, published by Bezirk Tapes, earned her favourable reviews.

*With the exception of both artist portraits above, all photos illustrating this article were taken in **different gastronomic concerts** presented by David Vélez and a group of collaborators in **England, Colombia** and **Chile.***

PHOTOGRAPH BY LINA VELANDIA

PHOTOGRAPH BY LINA VELANDIA