

affects and aesthetic speculations



nicola di croce

The album is a collection of edited field recordings dealing with the concept of affective atmosphere and human/listener positioning within the sonic environment.

Over the past years I found myself recording sounds in many different places around Europe. In each location I wasn't simply interested in grasping the character of the place, rather through long recording sessions I was fascinated to explore how to attune to these places, how to dive and disappear within their sonic textures.

This led me to consider listening and recording practices as tools to approach the atmosphere of a place, which could be defined as the intensity emerging from the relations between bodies and the environment.



_some notes on sound and atmosphere

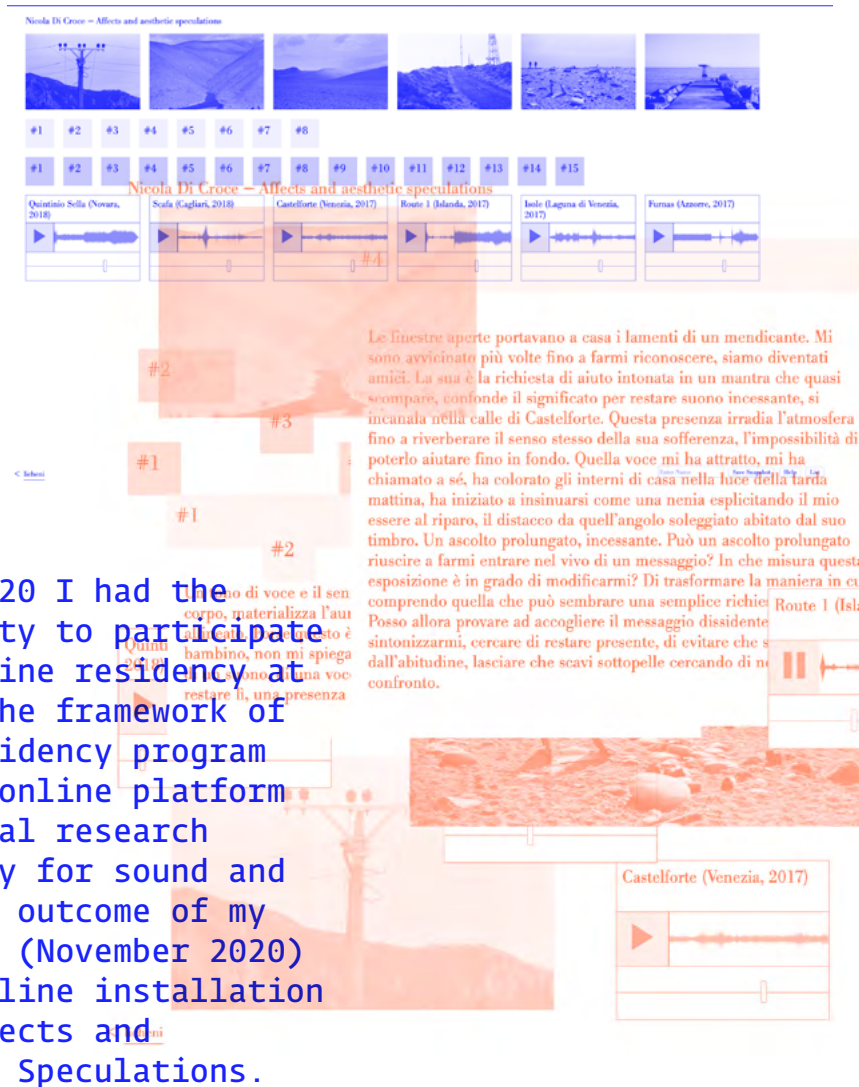
This attention to listening and recording as entry points to the atmosphere of a place, are in line with what Chris Watson argues in the liner notes of his masterpiece "Stepping into the dark": finding yourself in a special place, a place that has an atmosphere, and try to document this process through recordings.

What matters here is how an attentive listener asks: why is this the right place, the right moment to record? In such a decision lies the magic of field recording practice, where the recording itself becomes more than a documentation of the sonic environment by turning into the manifestation of the personal relationship emerging between the listener and the environment – a special and deeply affective relationship.

Affects come in as a central notion that expresses the capacity of sound to affect bodies and be affected by them, outlining a pre-personal force field that is eventually "translated" into feelings and emotions. In the past few years, listening to affective atmosphere has become the center of my artistic and academic practice. The recordings presented in this album are a contribution towards this direction. (see more at www.nicoladicroce.com)



_the process



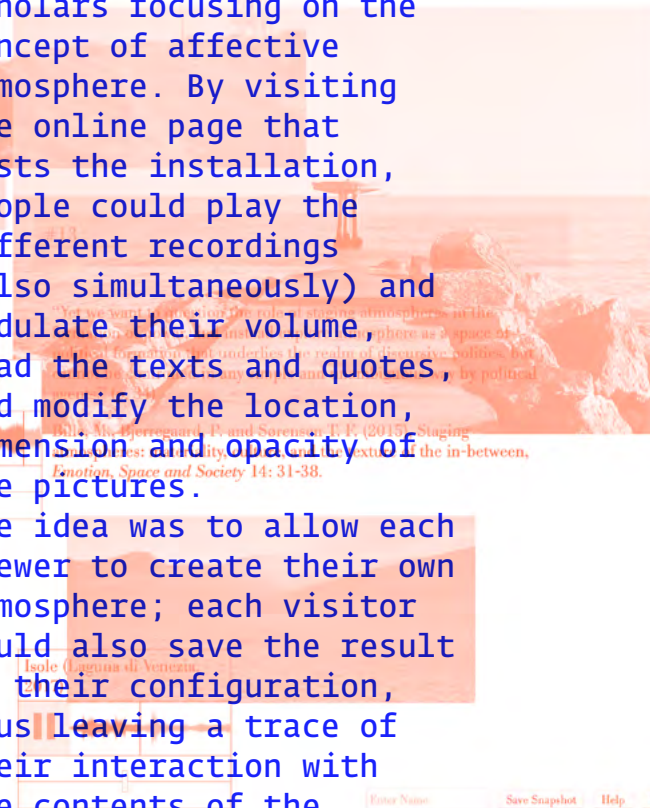
During 2020 I had the opportunity to participate to an online residency at NUB, in the framework of their residency program Licheni (online platform and virtual research laboratory for sound and art). The outcome of my residency (November 2020) was an online installation named *Affects and Aesthetic Speculations*.

> link

_about the installation

The installation was a collection of field recordings I took in recent years around Europe, photos taken in the same locations, personal notes in text format, and quotes from scholars focusing on the concept of affective atmosphere. By visiting the online page that hosts the installation, people could play the different recordings (also simultaneously) and modulate their volume, read the texts and quotes, and modify the location, dimension and opacity of the pictures.

The idea was to allow each viewer to create their own atmosphere; each visitor could also save the result of their configuration, thus leaving a trace of their interaction with the contents of the installation, which could also be recalled at a later stage.



_about the album and the
compositional process

Over 2021 I re-edited the material in its final form. Drawing from the experience of the installation, the field recording-based compositions presented in this album aims to move a step forward as new material has been recorded and added to each of the recordings.

While the unfolding of the different recordings has not been altered, subtle sounds often taken from the same recordings, although filtered and granulated, has been used to enhance the atmosphere of each recorded location.



1_scafa
9:12 min

The recordings were taken in Cagliari (Italy) in 2018 while I took part in a series of events promoted by the cultural association "L'ambulante". Their project "Videoritratti in Sardegna" hosted a workshop I curated called "Reframing 3: Sounds, films, margins". Through this workshop, I investigated the sonic environment of Cagliari's one of the most marginalized areas of the city, the Doks, together with a group of participants.

Thanks to Margherita Pisano and Gaetano Crivaro, who invited me to Cagliari.





2_quintinio sella

10:40 min



The recording was taken in Novara (Italy) in 2018, where I was doing location scouting for a sound installation. Walking along a canal, I was fascinated by this urban area for its proximity to the historical center, to the main railway station and for its post industrial character.

Thanks to Corrado Beldi who invited me to Novara.

3_furnas

8:00 min

The recordings were taken in Sao Miguel, Azores (Portugal) in 2017, where I travelled to join the conference "Invisible places. Sound, Urbanism, and sense of place". After the conference, I went on a field recording trip through the island, exploring the Volcanos, shores and geothermal steam sites.

Thanks to Leandro Pisano and my parents, who shared this experience with me.





4_carbonera e altre isole

13:58 min

The recordings were taken in the Venice lagoon in 2017, and explored the sonic environment of some abandoned islands of the lagoon, namely Carbonera, Buel del Lovo, and Poveglia. Commonly described as places haunted by spirits, these islands unfolded a deeply natural environment while showing at the same time their closeness to human made infrastructures, such as the Venice international Airport.

Thanks to Angela Pescolderung and Enrico Coniglio and for sharing this experience with me.



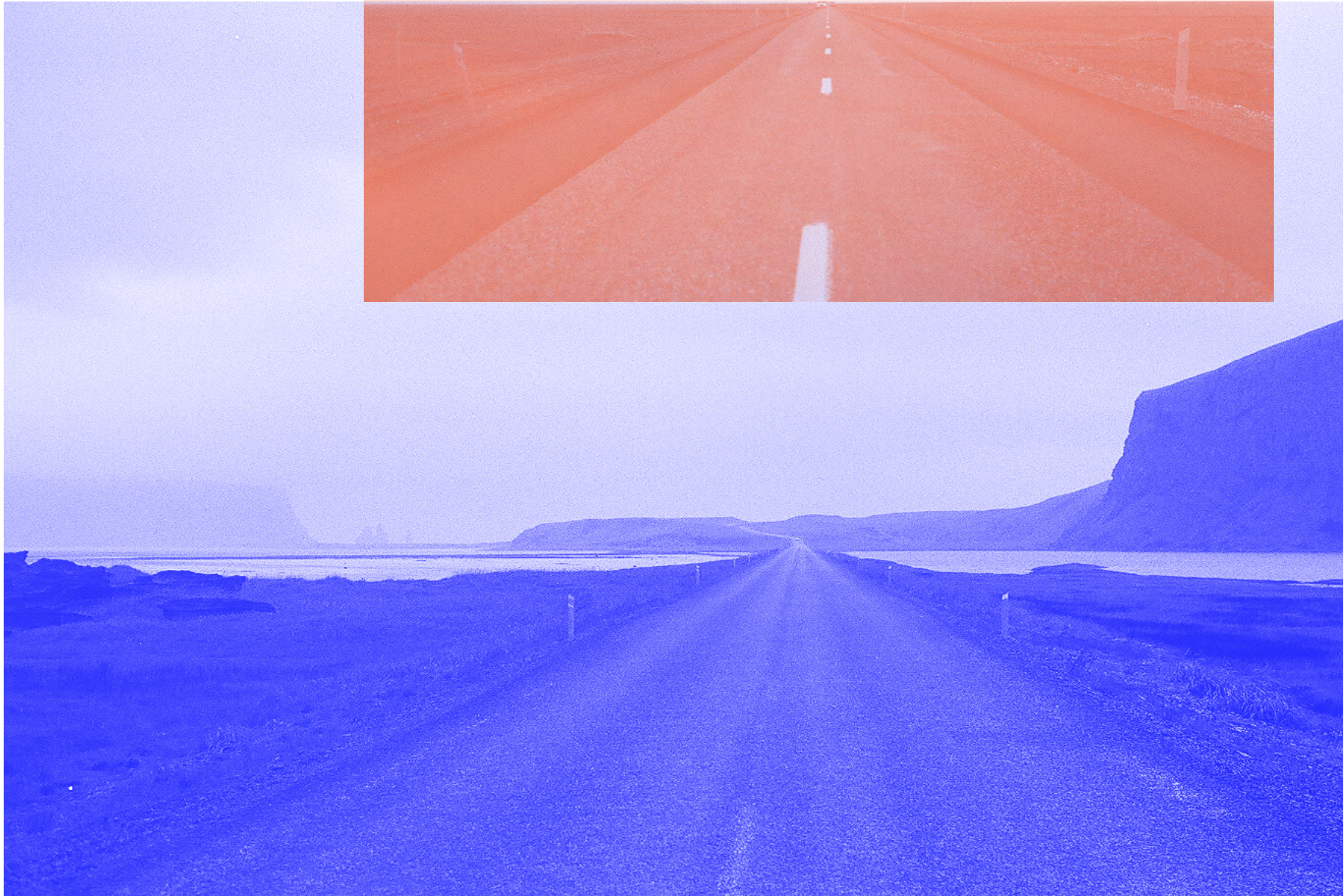
5_rounte 1

7:15 min

The recordings were taken in Iceland in 2017 following the Route 1, the only national road that circles the entire island. Crossing small towns, fjords and glaciers, I was able to record an environment under deep transformation, whereas the impressive fractures of icebergs are among the most important tourist attractions.

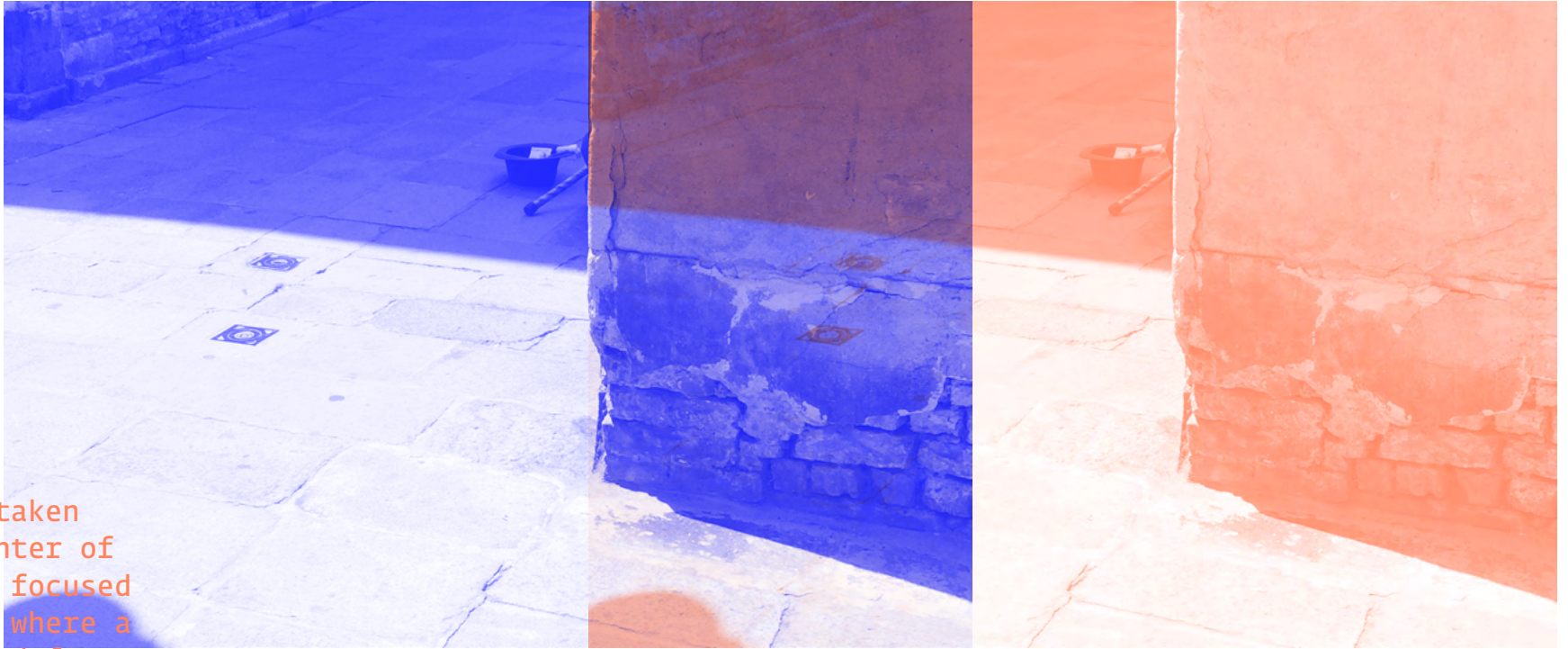
Thanks to Angela Pescolderung, for sharing this experience with me.





6_castelforte

4:59 min



The recording was taken in the historic center of Venice, Italy, and focused on a street corner where a beggar sat and asked for help while singing a chant that profoundly affected me, as I was living just around the corner.

Thanks to the singing man, who made me think deeply about otherness.



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Graphic design
Angela Pescolderung, Tapiro design

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