

Panels
Paul Devens
NAiM / Bureau
Europa

An inquiry
into the spatial,
the sonic and
the public

Featuring:
Theo Ploeg
Brandon LaBelle
Justin Bennett

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Panels 02



'Panels. An inquiry into the spatial, the sonic and the public' by Paul Devens, as exhibited at the Wiebenga Hall (NAiM / Bureau Europa, Maastricht) between September 2010 and February 2011. Installation view (detail).

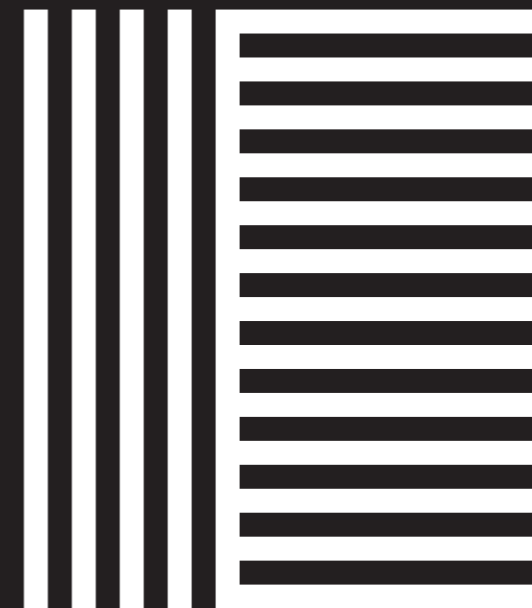
Sound Effect

Introduction to 'Panels. An inquiry into the spatial, the sonic and the public'

**The sound effect of a shell roof
by Paul Devens and NAiM / Bureau Europa**

In the prestigious urban quarter of Ceramique in Maastricht, where the last building was recently completed, one can still find a relic of the past, from the period of the ceramic industry: the Wiebenga Hall. This was one of the first Dutch buildings (built in 1912) with a self-supporting prestressed concrete roof. Nowadays the revamped monument accommodates Bureau Europa, formerly known as the Netherlands Architecture Institute Maastricht, and a few other organizations. In the period between September 2010 and February 2011, the sound installation called 'Panels. An inquiry into the spatial, the sonic and the public' by Paul Devens was exhibited here, in the hall directly under the shell roof, the Bogenzaal (Arched Hall). The installation is an intervention in the acoustic properties of this former factory hall. The application of space as an instrument is a recurring principle in the work of Paul Devens. He uses the technique of acoustic feedback (the so-called 'Larson effect') as a way to make a space '(re)sound', as is also the case with his work called 'Pole' (2008/10)'. For this installation, four microphones and loudspeakers were placed opposite a constructed wall with a parabolic hollow. Another leading principle in the work of Paul Devens is the transfer of sound from public space to a different context. For instance, field recordings are deployed in newly designed spatial constructions, as in the work entitled 'Display' (2009).

'Panels' consists of four semi-circular arches that match exactly the contours of the roof vault, and that can also move in relation to one another. Each one of the arches is mounted on rails and is moving electrically along the longitudinal axis of the hall. The upper hall of the Wiebenga Hall, with a total surface of 800 m², is acoustically complex: the hardness of the concrete causes numerous sound reflections such as echo



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and resonance. The arches are equipped with acoustic muffling foam so that the sound is stripped of these reflections. With the aid of loudspeakers, microphones and a computer, the space is utilized as an instrument so that the experience in the Bogenzaal (Arched Hall) continually changes, both acoustically and visually.

'Panels. An inquiry into the spatial, the sonic and the public' does not only refer to the relative autonomy of the artwork in relation to the environment and to the discourse around space and sound. In 2010, the sonic-architectonic installation formed the exceptional environment for a symposium and a series of performances on space and sound, where the installation literally functioned as the subject. The installation, the symposium and the various activities addressed the force field between organized sound, designed space and social impact. For the symposium, theorists, architects, artists and composers were asked to reflect on this topic from each of their specific backgrounds, from a theoretical perspective as well as from the practice of creating, referring to history as well as current events.

This publication is not a report of what happened during the symposium. Rather, it intends to be a follow-on, a sequel based on the knowledge and perspectives that were gained during 'Panels'. What happens when you listen; what position do you occupy as a listener; how does sound behave; what does sound do to power; what is silence and how does the social fabric 'sound'? The essays by Theo Ploeg and Brandon Labelle and the interview with Justin Bennett offer the reader access to their respective conceptual frameworks regarding sound.

Participants in the 'Panels. An inquiry into the spatial, the sonic and the public' symposium (29 and 30 October 2010) were:

Justin Bennett (NL/UK, sound artist / composer);
Karin Bijsterveld (NL, historian/extraordinary professor of Science, Technology and Modern Culture at the University of Maastricht);
Emre Erkal (TR, architect/sound artist);
Raviv Ganchrow (NL/IL, architect/sound artist);
Brandon Labelle (DE/US, artist/composer/writer);
Wim Langenhoff (NL, chemist/musician/founder of The New Electric Chamber Music Orchestra);
Eran Sachs (IL/DE, curator/sound artist/composer);
Janek Schaeffer (UK, sound artist/musician/composer);
Basak Senova (TR, curator/writer/designer);
Kees Tazelaar (NL, composer/head of the Institute for Sonology in The Hague),
Esther Venrooy (BE/NL, sound artist/composer);
and chairman of the day Armeno Alberts (NL, sound artist/radio maker).

Footnote:
1/ www.vimeo.com/pauldevens/pole

Photography: Johannes Schwartz

Sound as Matter

Sound as matter – An interview with Justin Bennett by Paul Devens, edited by Gé Huismans

The British Dutchman Justin Bennett likes to see himself as a visual artist who works with sound, rather than as a sound artist. As a graduate sculptor, Justin Bennett connects primarily with the theoretical framework of visual art. Bennett elucidates his basic principle: 'According to Joseph Beuys, everything is sculpture; sound can also be sculpture. So everything you can work with, can act as a medium.' Accordingly, in Bennett's view 'sound art' is a difficult concept. However, at the time that he worked as a teacher for the Sonology Department of the Hague School of Music (1989 – 1996), it was a useful concept when it came to reacting against the prevailing music-theoretical discourse. 'I thought it was wrong to look at the sort of work I was making – whether it was field recording, performance, text, or a combination of sound and image – from a musical perspective. That sort of work springs from the thought of visual art more than anything else. It just won't do to assess it merely in terms of melody, rhythm, theory of composition or harmony.' At the same time, various authorities such as the Fonds BKVB (Netherlands Foundation for Visual Arts, Design and Architecture), galleries and curators expect an artist's oeuvre to show consistency and development. Bennett, however, is a stickler for working thematically. 'When I start, form is not my main consideration, like a sound walk or animation. I begin with a rough idea or story and, depending on the location or situation, I arrive at different results.' It will be clear that this does not make it easier to trace the consistency or the development. Bennett, however, is fairly indifferent.

Commitment

In 2008, Justin Bennett was invited by the Virtueel Museum Zuidas to be artist-in-residence at Zuidas, Amsterdam's new business district, for five months. Initially, the area was primarily a cause of frustration. In his view, the public space of the district was designated to facilitate economic activity and growth, and not much else. The town planning did not allow for skating, playing, lingering, lounging and living, filled up as it was by rules and formats. Consequently, he refuses to use the term 'public' for the public space of Zuidas. For his work 'Shotgun Architecture' Bennett fired a starting pistol amidst the tall office blocks. The shot and the subsequent pattern of echo and reverberation were recorded with microphones and recorders. These recordings were entered into a computer model, and the parameters produced the so-called 'impulse response'. Bennett fired another few shots, at different public spaces of Zuidas. The impulse responses of these spaces were used to reverberate the gunshot sounds so that what was left in the end was a sound from which the original shot has disappeared, but whose tonal colour was entirely determined by every reverberation among the mirror glass of the high-rise blocks, the walls, the pillars, the entrance halls of the office buildings, the pavements and the stairways. Eventually, this method resulted in a graphic print of the 'sonar' or sound analysis, photos of the locations and a vinyl disc as a sound carrier. In a way, the work seems an aggressive action in the space, but in fact it merely articulates the problematic nature of the existing situation. Another work that was created during Bennett's residence was

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'City of Progress'. This work is an animated video of a city plan being drawn in pencil, in its various stages of transformation – together with an accompanying text. The city is growing, but in fact its rush to perdition is implied in each stage of growth. A quotation by Paul Virilio is included in the text: 'The invention of the boat was the invention of shipwrecks... the invention of the aeroplane was the invention of the plane crash.' Free-market processes and conflict, idealism and reality, followed by destruction and war, form the city. More and more radically, parts of the drawing are rubbed out. Destruction is often followed by construction, but what is left on paper at the end of the day is a grey empty surface. Bennett is interested in how politics shape the city.

Form will follow

'In 2010 I was asked to take part in a project in Aalst, involving the economic, social and cultural revaluation of the 'Chipka' industrial area. Artists are frequently asked to help regenerate districts of a city. Sometimes this happens within the context of urban planning, but more usually it's unplanned. In such a district or community, which is often dilapidated, artists often have a cheap studio and start up projects. Gradually a neighbourhood develops into a place that is attractive to live in, with fun shops and other facilities. It becomes a trendy community, and fashionable bars and stylish galleries open their doors. But with rising prices and rent, the boutiques and artists disappear again. To put it briefly, artists and other 'cultural entrepreneurs' are recruited to start a process that will lead to their own downfall. Their creative capital is transformed into money that will eventually be exchanged for luxury yachts by property developers.'

Bennett's method of working was characterized by the listing of any information connected with the location. 'Before I got started with the project in Aalst, I had read some of Louis Paul Boon's books. Many of them are set in that area, against a background of industrialization, social abuse in the factories and the rising workers' movement. I also talked with local



Sound as Matter

residents and explored the area. And I recorded sounds, such as underwater recordings of the River Dender. You can hear the humming of the machines in the factories – a restful sound.' Initially, this process-driven method of working was not reflected in a form. This did not happen until many drawings had been made and all sorts of sounds had been recorded and released in a vinyl issue. 'The two identical 12-inches contain short pieces and several 'loops' in 'locked grooves', where the needle gets stuck in a circular groove, with different textures and rhythms. Then you can combine the various excerpts, the same way a DJ does. You perform the piece yourself.'

Leading into temptation

'I am still thinking in terms of sound as matter, even in the works that start from a narrative approach, such as sound walks. Sound as the identification of its source, in which you can also hear the material aspect of that source.' Bennett strives to be aware of – and if possible to intervene in – each stage in between the actual source and the space where it is located, the intermediate space with the motions and fleetingness of sound, and the space where the listener finds himself. At all times the perception of the beholder comes first; to ensure this the artist himself is the model of his audience. 'When I work with field recordings, I go into the city with my equipment and I listen. Then I think about my next step: am I going to move or not; which microphone am I going to use? It is a kind of improvisation – I anticipate how people (may) listen: as if it were music or a story, or a sound in the background or foreground.' 'I switch from one way of listening to another – ways that may be different for any two persons, for that matter. It is an interesting field: when does a certain mode of listening prevail, and can you process or change the sound in such a way that it is heard differently? The noise of a fan, for example, that you may hear in a city, can have a musical effect in another context – and that is also the artist's latitude.' 'Similarly, when there is a voice that says something that you can understand as coherent language, you can turn it into a 'sound object' detached from the context. This can be a gradual transformation. An example of this is the work 'I am sitting in a room' by Alvin Lucier, from 1969. Lucier spoke this sentence and then replayed it in the same room while a second machine recorded it. This process was repeated many times. In this way, the resonant frequencies of the room increasingly gained the upper hand. If you begin to listen halfway through the piece, you may not understand it because it sounds so abstract. But if you have been listening from the start, you will be able to retrace the original sentence through the rhythm and tone.' Where Lucier's work can only be identified if its beginning was understandable, Justin Bennett's work offers a guiding principle for listening to more abstract sounds. 'People do not go to a museum to listen – there must be something on display that they can see. So you have to lead and tempt them. In the eight minutes of 'Sundial' (2005 – 2011), you can hear a day go by in a city. Originally this work was shown without pictures. I found that people did not bother to listen; they entered the room and left straight away. Later I made a 'screening' of the work: the screen displayed the title and the moment of recording. Then people did sit down to watch the screen,

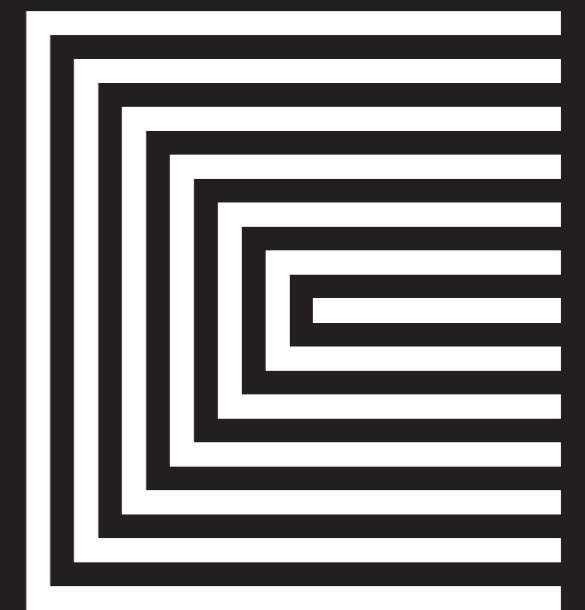
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although there was nothing really to be seen. But still it served as a focal point that made people listen. So within the context of visual art, you can seduce visitors to listen by making them look, or through some other way.'

Justin Bennett at 'Panels' by Paul Devens, edited by Gé Huismans

The force field between organized sound, designed space and social impact formed the motivation for the choice of the participants in the 'Panels' symposium. The installation by Paul Devens provided a biotope within which the respective (sub)disciplines of the guests were opened up to the public. In addition, 'Panels' formed an open structure for the artists invited: they had the freedom to reorganize the space and the acoustic workings of the installation, and make these a precondition of the performance.

These were all good reasons to invite Justin Bennett (UK, 1964) to the symposium. The working domain of this artist, originally educated as a sculptor, addresses precisely those issues covered by the symposium. In addition, he is no stranger to dealing with exceptional conditions in the generation of a work. Bennett has been engaged as an artist since the early nineties, and can take pride in having been present at and having participated in a large number of festivals, exhibitions and projects all over the world, such as the tenth Biennial of Istanbul, the Centraal Museum in Utrecht, the Gemeentemuseum in The Hague, the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Netwerk (Aalst) and Palais de Tokyo, Paris. A presentation of his work could be seen in the daytime during 'Panels'. In the evenings he was onstage in the upper hall of Bureau Europa with the performance group BMB con, of which he is a member, along with Roelf Toxopeus. The performance made use of the extraordinary qualities of Devens's installation with the movable arches, equipped with muffling material.

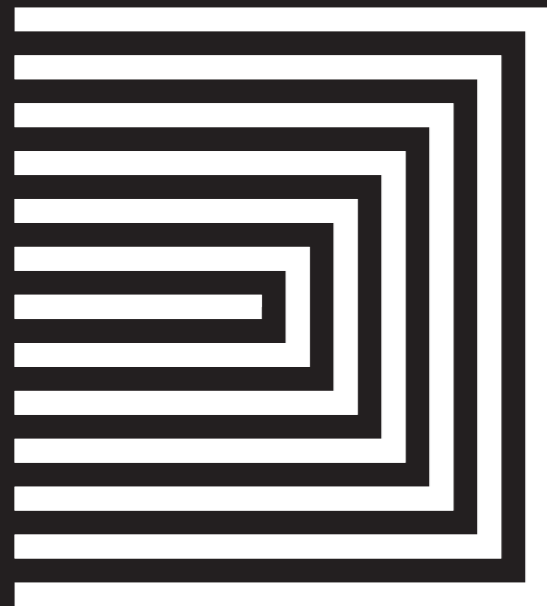


Acoustic Space

The battle for acoustic space
by Theo Ploeg

Sound and silence play an important role in the development of our modern society. Electronic media have created a new acoustic space in which sound plays a major part. This can lead to liberation. However, this promise of liberation has not been fulfilled, not yet at least. The semi-private space of the Internet offers opportunities in this direction. For three nights in a row I slept poorly. I surfed all the music channels on the gigantic flat screen on the wall until very late. Phil Collins, Kraftwerk and Tokyo Hotel honoured me with a visit. Perhaps the mattress was too soft? Or was my insomnia caused by the many impressions that I gained during the C/O Pop Festival for electronic music, the reason for my stay in Cologne? Probably not – I'm there every year. And every year I stay at the same hotel. Was it stress? It couldn't be. After I came home, I slept like a log. It took me a week before I realized that my poor night's rest was caused by sound. Or rather: the absence of sound. It had been too quiet in that hotel in Cologne.

A year ago, I moved from Haarlem to Heerlen. There, I moved into an apartment on the eleventh floor of the Homerusflat, one of the first high-rise blocks of flats in the Netherlands. The building is situated right next to the Keulseweg, a motorway that connects Aachen to Antwerp. At the end of the sixties, when the flat was built, there was much less traffic on the motorway than there is nowadays. Nonetheless, even then the sound of traffic must have been very audible on the second highest storey of the building. Nowadays you constantly hear a kind of agreeable zoom, despite the double-glazing. The noises from individual cars and trucks blend together, creating a hotch-potch of sound. The result is a constant drone. You soon get used to it and it can be quite pleasant. It is never truly silent in my apartment. However, that thin layer of noise is not disturbing. It is too imperceptible for that. My visitors have the same experience. You only notice the sound when it stops. The drone of traffic has nestled in the core of my experiential world.



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Sound as second nature

Noise caused by road traffic is the most important source of noise pollution in the Netherlands, explained Karin Bijsterveld, extraordinary professor of Science, Technology and Modern Culture at the University of Maastricht, in her lecture at the 'Panels' symposium. Nevertheless, in my apartment I do not experience traffic noise as a problem. On the contrary, it belongs there. That drone may have been caused by the interaction of architecture, distance and intimacy, and it was of course not deliberately conceived by the architect of the Homerusflat. It is an unintended side effect, although it does not seem so. Along with the 't Loon shopping centre below – the first American-style shopping mall in the Netherlands – the Homerusflat is representative of the industrialisation that engulfed Heerlen in the mid-sixties. The apartments are spacious, light and large, and the steady, inconspicuous flow of sound from the traffic far below amplifies – better yet completes – the dream of modernization. In the intimate surroundings of one's own experiential world, the onrushing outside world has become a hum. It links the resident to the exciting, fast-paced world outside, without imposing. It is a perfect hybrid between the need for tranquillity and the desire for progress. In short, there is no longer any distance between inside and outside, and both are more present than ever. The unintended sound that penetrates one's experiential world can have a substantial effect. In a 1981 BBC documentary on the genesis of heavy metal music, guitarists K.K. Downing and Glen Tipton gave the reporters a guided tour of Birmingham, their hometown. The razor-sharp metal guitar sound of their band Judas Priest can be traced back directly to the industrial sounds of the heavy industries that dominated the city in the seventies, they explain. In their homes, these sounds also penetrate into their private domain. 'That sound has become second nature. To outsiders, the noise is disturbing, but I don't even hear it anymore', says Tipton. His guitar sound represents his own intimate environment. In his book entitled 'Turn the Beat Around: the Secret History of Disco' (2005), Peter Shapiro describes the way in which the German group Kraftwerk took inspiration for their mechanical electro-sound from the monotonous pounding of the trains that rode the railway tracks next to the apartment the band members lived in.

Silence as sound

Sound in the public space penetrating into the private domain often forms a source of inspiration or emotional attachment/detachment. In his publication 'Haunted Weather: Music, Silence and Memory' (2004), David Toop examines the influence of sound and silence on peoples thoughts and actions. He gives the example of his mother, who mentions the sound of bombing by German zeppelins during the First World War – 'the zeppelin sound was a drone' – as one of her first memories. The same goes for silence, and the fear that it would be broken. She always carried that anxiety with her. Could that be the source of Toops obsession with sound and silence? In his last book, which was issued last year, the majestic 'Sinister Resonance: the Mediumship of the Listener', he investigates the immeasurability of sound. To Toop, sound is disturbing and scary in an indirect way. It is a presence of which the exact location cannot be determined and one that is fluid in time. In this context, the subjective experience of the listener is essential: this makes sound an abstraction that is

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impossible to describe in an objective fashion. Toop articulates it as follows: 'Listening, then, is a specimen of mediumship, a question of discerning and engaging with what lies beyond the world of forms.' You can also listen to silent media – a book or a painting. Toop refers to the Old Masters, Johannes Vermeer and Adriaen Coore in particular, to demonstrate that there is music in still lifes. 'There is a secret music in these still lifes that I would like to hear, not a formal music of regulated construction, but an organic music which can register the infinitely slow decay of strawberries, the inconceivably condensed life cycle of a butterfly, the audible atmosphere of a Chinese interior overlaid by its palimpsest of a Dutch interior, and the quiet hum of darkness.'

Unsound

Toop places silence, 'present absence', opposite noise, the ultimate 'absent presence': 'On one hand, noise is just one of many collateral damages resulting from transportation, construction and manufacturing, all central to the destructive demands of economic growth; on the other hand, noise remains a potent symbol of rebellion and resistance.' Toop, who has been seeking the essence of 'silence as sound' since the nineties, has an ambivalent attitude towards noise. To him, noise is an unwitting side effect of our present society in which economic growth is paramount and people are looking for strategies to disrupt this. Toop seems to claim that all this noise makes it impossible to discover sublime silence. But that is not true, according to Steve Goodman, as expressed in his book 'Sonic Warfare: Sound, Affect, and the Ecology of Fear', which was also issued last year. The lecturer in Music Culture at the University of East London believes that silence – although he prefers the term 'unsound' – is to be colonized. The acoustic space is a battleground where there is an ongoing fight for every scrap of territory, even if there is no clear division into place and time. According to Goodman, sound forms a large part of the culture and ecology in which we are currently living. Anyone who has sonic weapons at his disposal has a greater chance of winning the battle. As a dubstep producer he also participates in this battle. Under the alias Kode9, he makes music that he describes as the 'present incarnate'. 'Contemporary reality is what we once saw as the future. So we can no longer look forward. And still we are not satisfied with reality. Dubstep brings a longing for the moment when a future was still possible. It is change in the most abstract form. It is all about yearning, both physical and psychical. It is the last straw that we can cling to', as noted in an interview with Goodman in British music magazine Wire.

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The aforementioned effect of dubstep described by Goodman is the same as that of the traffic drone that permeates my apartment. It is an echo from a past in which the future was the focus of attention. And yes, that does indeed offer some consolation. Is that the kind of sonic weapon with which Goodman is so contented? Media expert Marshall McLuhan would undoubtedly have confirmed this. The Canadian academic, who died in 1980, had written his most influential work in the sixties. McLuhan, too, places the emphasis on acoustic space. With the advent of electronic media, he claimed, a new acoustic space is generated that somewhat resembles acoustic space as it used to be before the

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introduction of the alphabet. At that time, hearing was a person's most important sense: hearing was believing. Stories were told, bards travelled around, fact and fiction were inextricably linked. With the invention of writing, the written word assumed the role of the truth machine. The consequences were enormous, argued McLuhan in his world-renowned book 'The Medium is the Massage', dating from 1967. 'Until writing was invented, men lived in acoustic space: boundless, directionless, horizonless.' Since then, we describe everything in a visual way. The invisible remains invisible and therefore no longer exists. Acoustic space has been ousted by visual space. A mistaken development, according to the Canadian. The written word is rigid, directive, rationalizing, controlling and one-dimensional. Electronic media – television, radio, amplified instruments – bring salvation, McLuhan states joyfully. 'If Homer was wiped out by literacy, literacy can be wiped out by rock', he writes. A parallel with Goodman's sonic weapons – dubstep, for example – whose task is to colonize acoustic space, can be drawn easily. The electronic media enable a space in which the old idea of causality no longer exists. After all, the relationship between man and machine is consistently changing. Man and machine are hybridizing, and that influences perception. The dualism of object and subject – the essence of alienation – formed by writing, is disappearing.

Noise

According to McLuhan, the new acoustic space is liberated from dead conventions such as the alphabet. Once more, people are the focus of attention. It is all about being present and manifesting your presence. In this, sound is the most important signature. As Toop claimed, sound is always timeless and placeless. People are surrounded by sound, arriving from all sides. That is the big difference with visual space, that is organized in a uniform way. Acoustic space is one that embodies simultaneous relationships. The objective perceiver – another dead convention – vanishes. In short, the author makes way for transcendental anonymity. According to



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McLuhan, the absence of a point of orientation ensures a new type of communication. No longer is there any mention of the transport of a message from the sender to the receiver. There is a transformation going on, where sender and receiver blend into one another. This will ultimately lead to a world in which people free themselves from rigid, hierarchical relationships and dead conventions. In an acoustic space without a beginning and an end, without points of orientation, people will rediscover their creativity. It has been suggested on several occasions that McLuhan thus described the Internet, which did not yet exist in 1967. But nothing could be further from the truth. Since the beginning of the 21st century, it is precisely the Internet space that has been increasingly colonized by old rules and conventions. To use Goodman's terminology: in the sonic war, the battle for the Internet has been lost, at least for the time being. However, McLuhan's acoustic space is not by definition virtual and it is actually located in public space. There, sound has undergone a remarkable development. Noise has been colonizing city centres at a rapid rate since the sixties. Trendy shops play deafening electronic dance music that reinforces consumption as an act of submission. The government uses an increasing quantity of noise to maintain control. The many cameras in the cityscape are an excellent example of this. They produce a silence that evokes anxiety.

Liberation

During the 2005 Haarlem (toon)-festival for sound art, sound artist Robin Rimbaud (aka Scanner) attempted to make consumers aware of acoustic space. In the heart of the V&D department store, he recorded the sound of shoppers, processed it and played it through loudspeakers spread throughout the store. The effect was disappointing. The modern consumer is so accustomed to noise that Rimbaud's efforts were hardly noticed. In short, the struggle for public space has been lost, thanks to new technologies that we take for granted once they have been accepted. This acceptance is occurring increasingly rapidly, as Karin Bijsterveld demonstrates in her book 'Mechanical Sound:

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Technology, Culture, and Public Problems of Noise in the Twentieth Century' (2008). We do not know better. What role is left for the sound artist, now that an excess of noise has populated the acoustic space? Making even more noise, as Goodman argues? Or retreating into silence, as Toop advises? It is a difficult issue, one that is certainly worth investigating.

Whatever the case, there are opportunities in the new acoustic space that the Internet could become. A growing number of people are permanently connected to the web. They withdraw from public space by passing through it with their headphones on, or, in bars and other meeting places, by accessing the Internet by means of smartphones or tablets. The semi-private space thus created provides opportunities that have hardly been used until now. One exception is RjDj, a smartphone application that makes it possible to create sonic experiences yourself. The user can make field recordings, add new sounds by moving the telephone, and then process them. Other users can process and supplement the result, or use it as the basis for a new sonic experience. In this way, interaction is generated between the user, (public) space and the acoustic space of the Internet. Is this an example of sound art? Not in the classic sense of the term. But the new acoustic space also demands a different attitude from the artist. Authorship changes into anonymity. Is everyone a sound artist? McLuhan would have thought that to be marvellous. Reality is more unruly, unfortunately. But sound artists can point the way to a more creative reality, to a space in which people can liberate themselves from dead conventions and old rules. In short, the Internet must be colonized!

Auditory Paradigm

Mapping an auditory paradigm by Brandon LaBelle

Sound moves across, between inside and outside; it animates materiality, stirs emotion; it disturbs what may appear static, while also providing moments of proximity and deep connection. It flows through the environment as temporal material, lending dramatically to the experiences we have of being in particular places. These features of auditory phenomena point toward an appreciation of sound as a specific paradigm that organizes, gives definition and sets in motion the flows of the imagination, along with the force of signification and social relations, according to the dynamics of hearing. I'm interested in teasing out the particulars of this auditory paradigm and how it comes to inform temporal and spatial geographies – to follow sound as it imparts meaningful exchanges for and against the singular body, and further, to explore how it locates such a body within a greater social weave. From my perspective, sound operates as an emergent community, stitching together bodies that do not necessarily search for each other, and forcing them into proximity, for a moment, or longer. Such movements bring forward a spatiality that is coherent and inhabitable as well as being immediately divergent, diffuse. Acoustic spatiality forces negotiation: it is something we can point to and identify as a stable referent, only as it emerges over time, and while always already disappearing. I suggest that acoustic spatiality locates one's sensibility within a particularly temporal flux of perspectives. The circularity, the vibratory and the resonant all begin to suggest a spatiality that is oppositional or in supplement to the sightlines of the ocular; that is, in addition to looking, wrapping our locational view in various atmospheric pressures, stirrings. Through its ability to disrupt or unsettle the lines between inside and outside, between skin and the other, sound can be heard to pull into its movement the private and the public. Sound brings us together without necessarily cohering into any traditional form of community – it affords instances of collectivity that automatically includes something or someone beyond the perimeters of a given identity; a sound is never truly one's own, nor does it settle within any fixed boundary. It is a territory onto which many claims can be performed. All these sonic movements and behaviours must be taken as indicating a unique paradigmatic structure or frame, lending to recognizing sound as an epistemic matrix that generates specific spatial coordinates, social mixes and bodily perceptions. It is my perspective that sound may be understood to act as a hinge, bringing into contact particular contradictory or divergent forces, spaces and materials. As an example, the performativity of the voice may begin to highlight this unique ontology of sound. As a special kind of sound, the voice can be heard to give presence to an individual body, figuring as an identifiable sound of personhood, while at the very same instant, it leaves the body behind, separating from its origin to ultimately circulate outside the self. The voice is always already mine and not mine; it animates the body, it comes from inside, while pushing outward, to navigate and carve out relations: to occupy space as a sonorous intensity, as a potentiality. The voice embodies the contradictory and dramatic force of sound in general: the voice hinges together self and surrounding in a seeming paradox – I am in the world at the moment my voice travels beyond me.

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Sound can be heard to function similarly, creating a space that is both here and there, concrete and ephemeral; it delivers the world in all its materiality, as pressures and movements of intensity, while already disappearing into the ether, as invisible energy. Importantly, such dynamics, of crossover, of hinging, of community in the making, further suggests that sound brings into conversation the unnameable with the nameable. If, as I suggest, sound operates as a particular paradigmatic structure, to form an enveloping dynamic onto how we perceive and interact, it can be heard to inform ways of signifying, of communicating, of understanding. Sound's ability to move in and out of focus, flowing as raw material and then, at points, cohering into meaningful exchange, lends to our sense of being in a certain place, at a certain time, that also integrates what is beyond ourselves. In other words, sound, as that which crosses over, that forces into proximity one and the other, brings into contact the representational with the non-represented. In this way, I take sound as the very means by which we come to negotiate the challenges of presence and absence, of the real and the virtual, to ultimately remake or transpose notions of difference and commonality. In a sense, the hinge of sound teaches us how to be present within the surges of the temporal, to locate ourselves in relation to all that disappears, or threatens to overwhelm. In this way, it can be appreciated as a particular form of the political, giving entry to the excluded, the repressed and the silenced through an ever-present flow of challenging noise that can also, surprisingly, mend, calm and restore. That is: to sound and to be heard function as dramatic instances of breakage, interruption, and new sharing.

Following the details of this paradigmatic structure, this flood and vitality of sonority, I might ask: how can we relish the noises around us? How can we use sound to instantiate forms of collectivity that remain full of difference? And further, what forms of spatiality might we build out, as a platform for giving narrative to this emergent community? To pursue such questions, and to expose further this auditory paradigm, I'd like to map out, in the form of a mini-glossary, a set of modalities or what I refer to as auditory figures. These I imagine as functioning as points of departure for nurturing further sound's particular discourse – a discourse found in the materiality of the sonic event. It is my feeling that these auditory figures function as micro-epistemologies, each giving way to specific perspectives onto the world, each as a mode of listening, whether in the differentiating break of the echo or the challenges found at the heart of silence. It is also my perspective that the proposed entries may operate as diagrams for imagining auditory spatiality: that each particular figure lends to mapping a form of dwelling and relating.

Echo – multiplication and repetition of a given sound; a break in the temporal vector of sound, folding back on itself and appearing as if from an unseen source: who's there? the echo speaks, giving shape to an unseen, acousmatic body. The echo brings forward a disorienting multiplication, shattering the clear arc of sound to give us the experience of difference: the echo, as an acousmatic body, a voice coming back from over there, out of the dark, haunts the listener; it returns our own voice as if from another, performing as an alter-ego, a shape-shifting sonority that replaces the single sound with



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a differentiating repetition; it instigates the othering of a given space, to multiply perspectives and locate us toward another (the stranger, the visitor, the passer-by): the echo might also be the beginning as well as the maintenance of friendship.

Silence/Noise – the imaginary edges to auditory experience; they provide physical as well as phantasmic points by which sounds are measured, fantasized, conveyed; they gather the intensities of auditory experience, locating sound upon a philosophical and ethical scale, making volume a community issue and audition a political process. Silence and noise are an oppositional antagonism, with noise rending the system open and silence allowing all things to find their place.

Rhythm – the making of a particular order; it rivets together time and space according to certain energy expenditures, defining a relation amongst bodies and things; it is a field (the percussive) in which different orders meet, regimenting bodies while also affording acts of modulation and breakage (to dance the night away...); the beat is a territorial dispute, an argument; it is a violence bringing together pain and pleasure, teaching us how to find place and also how to redefine, reorganize or disrupt existing patterns: to cut in, to beat back, to escape, and to find new orders.

Vibration – energetic materialization of an auditory event; it moves through given objects and bodies, shifting the particular borders of given architectures, and reconfiguring how things meet through an emphasis on contact; a tactility of sound from which we learn the sensual delight of the skin; vibration extends the sensing body, unfolds the skin toward a geographic field, putting into physical contact self and surrounding. As an undulation of pressures, vibration brings things together, giving us an experience of commonality: whereas the echo breaks sound into a differentiating repetition, a rupture, vibration creates links and bonds, togetherness.

Feedback – passing of energy between an input and an output; a communicational link between self and surrounding, feedback channels forms of participation within given environments; it creates a sensitive loop through which information, exchange, and transference occur. The loop of feedback importantly performs as a social-sonic field, continually shifting and modulating according to external influence, shared space, and other pressures; feedback may be a form of extreme echo grounded within the dynamics of communication, bringing the sensible into a sphere of exchange.

Transmission – the transference of sound from one place to another; it charges the already propagating verve of sound with electronic energy, sculpting and contouring a given sound according to the ontology of the signal (alien communication, utopian collectivity, magic); it supplies the imagination with the very potential of flight, disembodiment, aerial dissolution. Transmission is an invisible transgression and molecular reconfiguration of the body; it constructs a new version of space by connecting multiple points, giving potential to acts of agitation and propaganda, networks and creating community out of the air.

Colophon

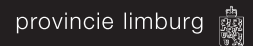
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