

Module 2, Diploma Course, June–July 2022

Practice-Based Sound Studies for Installation and Performance

This course provides a hands-on and research-based approach to site-specific practices in sound, in which participant's experimental research is focused on their own specialisations and particular interests. The course culminates in a project week wherein participant's work is featured for the public at a four-day mini-festival at Berlin School of Sound in the Acud Club Room and an exhibition at Errant Sound Project Space.

Lecturers: Jeremy Woodruff and Katharina Bévand

Guest Lecturers: Professors Brandon LaBelle, Åsa Stjerna and Buddhaditya Chattopradhyay

Cooperation: Singuhr's "Unexpected Territories" Festival Workshops, Composers-Inside-Electronics artists John Driscoll and Phil Edelstein, and Michael Johnson. (extra application required: see the CALL FOR APPLICATIONS under the Course Schedule below).

This course provides a theoretical basis in sound studies as a jumping-off point for empirical and artistic research in sound. The course culminates in the development of publically presented sound works, theoretical writings and presentations.

Sound studies has been called the anthropology of sound – we will consider the significance of sound in history, film, music, media, science and technology, cultural studies, psychology, politics and sociology, disability studies, gender studies, post-colonial studies and more; how have developments in all these fields impacted on contemporary modes of listening? We will explore concepts behind sound sculptures, sound installations, sound art for the white cube, for public space or in performances and socially engaged art, to discuss the implications of embodied listening both for individuals and for the public.

On the applied level, sonic worlds of objects and their resonant qualities will be experienced through a series of assignments using contact microphones and transducers, through the inaudible worlds of electromagnetic waves, or through the

propagation of sound through water and other mediums. These assignments will also explore different processes of recording and spatial composition. From field recordings we will extend beyond the concept of soundscape and the aural environment to generate abstract sound textures and sonic fictions; investigating noise, low-fi, feedback and resonance, while learning methods how to work with “errors”, probability, and other intuitive approaches.

This course is designed to introduce you to dealing at once both discursively and practically with sound to integrate theorization, new skills and knowledge into artistic practices through readings and hands-on experimentation. In addition you will be led on seminars and workshops by guest professors who are foremost scholars and artists in the field of sound studies and sound art. At the end of the course, presentations of the participants, be it in the form of sound art, performances, or lecture-presentations will form a public 4-day mini-festival at the Kunsthaus Acud Club and exhibition and Errant Sound Project Space. The events will be documented on video and as a radio production to be aired on FRBB 88,7 Berlin School of Sound Radio.

Participants: Max 16

Fee: 475€, Unexpected Territories (additional application necessary) +25€

OBJECTIVES:

To expose students to recent developments and practices in the field of sound art and sound studies.

To engage students in current debates and approaches to sound art and sound studies.

To help students identify specific topics within sound studies and sound art relevant to their own primary area of focus and integrate knowledge from those fields into their research and artistic work.

To introduce extended field recording techniques, site-specific methods and resonance and feedback as artistic tools.

To be informed about, discuss and write about the philosophy of sound and perception, phenomenology, space and materiality.

To analyse types of sound art ranging from public art to institutional art, gaining a wide knowledge and fluency in contemporary artistic approaches to the field.

To gain experience in the applied designing and implementing of experimental sound performances and sound installations in a publicly presented event featured by Berlin

School of Sound [and Errant Sound].

OUTCOMES:

A basis for critical thinking in sound in culture and sound artworks in social context.

A critical framework to synthesise concepts from a diverse array of subject areas related to sound studies and art.

Conversance in current debates in sound studies and art.

A background in theoretical concepts adequate to undertake specialised cross-disciplinary research in the field of sound studies and sound art.

A personalised approach to sound art and sound studies, including analysis and writing skills.

A personalised approach to composition and improvisation skills with extended techniques of field recording, and sound in space using various objects and mediums.

Applied ability to develop a sound installation or live performance and technical proficiency in exhibition making.

Documentation of a publicly produced artwork, performance or lecture-presentation

Classes and Workshop Schedule

Each week there are at two 3-hour seminars representing a practical and theoretical emphasis respectively

Week of June 5th

Class 1: Audio culture, histories of listening, and listening in cultural context

Class 2: Contemporary artistic approaches - introduction to sound installations and sound sculptures, between music and art.

Week of June 12th

Class 3: Acoustemology, soundscape and the aural environment. Critical theory: sound phenomenology, space, place and the senses.

Class 4: Composing space - philosophical approaches to site-specific sound art and concepts of time. Space related art installations and acoustics as artistic element.

Week of June 19th

Class 5: Philosophies of voice, phonemes, theories of voice and voicing. Decolonising sound; racism, indentity and sound and "the sonic color-line"

Class 6: Guest artist Prof. Åsa Stjerna: Vibrating Matter - Extended fieldrecording techniques: sonification, inaudible sound, outer space recordings, plants. Listening session.

Week of June 26th

Class 7: Gender and sound; sound ethnography and urban geography. Sound perception and cognition, embodied listening

Class 8: Practical Session - Extended field recording explorations II, transducers and objects. Starting to conceptualise individual or group works. Beginning.

Week of July 3rd

Class 9: Media theory and film sound. Signals transmissions and sonification.

Class 10: Writing about art - concepts and self presentation, artist text types. Performative installations: roles of audience, publics, the listener. Continuing production of works.

July 4-6th: Workshops with John Driscoll and Phil Edelstein on Space, Resonance and Feedback, using transducers and Michael Johnson with circuitry in Singuhr, Unexpected Territories: additional application necessary for participation

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION in singuhr's UNEXPECTED TERRITORIES FESTIVAL (Works of DAVID TUDOR) WORKSHOPS on 4-5th of July (15:00 - 21:00)

Participation Fee 40€ for both days

contact@berlinschoolofsound.com

APPLICATION: Please send applications to contact@berlinschoolofsound.com . Applications should include a short (150 - 500 word) artistic biography and an equally brief description of your motivation to participate in the workshops.

Workshop: Speaking in Tongues

In this workshop John Driscoll enables participants to explore a variety of ultrasonic feedback sound generators based on his work-in-progress Speaking in Tongues. Each instrument created has a distinct voice and character due to slight physical movement of reflectors using an assortment of

playful mechanical and motorized controllers. No technical familiarity is needed. The workshop will lead to an ensemble performance of multiple instruments.

Ultrasonics1 member5 items

<https://www.fridmangallery.com/slight-perturbations>

Workshop: Resonance and Space

Instrumental objects, modular and standalone circuits, transducers, contact microphones, room sound and their various permutations, as well as software convolutions will all be used in this workshop to explore sonic possibilities. Participants are encouraged to bring all manner of gadgetry to use in this exploration. Prerequisite is a basic understanding or interest with analog or digital audio techniques for performances and installations.

<http://composers-inside-electronics.net/pedelstein/home/Chaos>

<https://youtu.be/qLAI1WE63PQ>

Workshop: Acoustic and Electronic Feedback as a Productive Tool

This workshop will observe, appreciate, and occasionally harness the unruly elemental energies of feedback which flow in the heart of all electronic sounds. Feedback is fundamental enough to be feared and avoided by traditional safe practitioners. Working from the circuit scale to open spaces, we'll find feedback at home and try to make friends with it. Some familiarity with the tools of analog electronic sound or general tinkering would be helpful, but is not required.

<https://vimeo.com/69916070>

<https://www.ubu.com/emr/index.html>

All the workshops will culminate in the final performance/presentation in the Acud Club Room at Berlin School of Sound: ***Improvisational Feedback Approaches on 5th of July at 19:00***

Week of July 10th

Class 11: Materiality of sound, acoustic ecologies, the non-human and unsound. Noise, interference and further ontologies of listening.

Class 12: Documentation approaches and graphic notation. Funding for sound art and grant writing. Careers in sound studies.

July 15th: Guest lecturer Prof. Budhaditya Chattopradhyay: with this provocation, titled, an eclectic bunch of artists and composers aim to approach the phenomenon of sound leakage from any controlled environment from various positions of intervention: compositional, political, sociological, artistic, infrastructural, architectural, subversive, among others. The day-long gathering at Berlin School of Sound will result in presentations, performance, and invocations engaging with the

students in the process.

Week July 17th

Class 13: Sound and war, sound and protest, sound and trauma. Sound and consciousness, sound and theology.

Class 14: Finetuning of final sound works and final discussion in the group.

July 21st: Guest Seminar with Brandon LaBelle: this seminar will discuss how sound operates in experiences of cooperation and communal effort, as well as its place within expressions of social recognition. This includes reflecting upon listening as the basis for new understandings of agency: while recognition is often conceived by way of speaking out, listening is fundamentally key to the making of more egalitarian worlds. The seminar will examine these perspectives both theoretically and in relation to ways of practicing.

July 22-25: Public presentations, performances and installations of soundworks at Acud.

July 20-25: Exhibition at Errant Sound

ONGOING TRAINING:

Literature review, field-recording and sound composition. Critical thinking development of artistic approaches through listening exercises and group discussions. Analysing and development of own artistic practice and philosophy through assignments and experimentation. Assignments to integrate theorisation, new skills and knowledge into artistic practices. Text writing for projects, documentation, grants, and biography.

SELECTED READING:

Steven Feld, 'Aesthetics as Iconicity of Style'

R. Murray Schafer, *The Soundscape*

Michel Serres, *The Five Senses*

Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past*

Emily Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity*

Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*

Paul Hegarty, *Noise/Music*

Marie Thompson, *Beyond Unwanted Sound*

Brandon LaBelle, *Acoustic Territories*

Brandon LaBelle, "Noise, Over-hearing and Cages 4'33'"

Augoyard and Torgue, *Sonic Experience: A Guide to Everyday Sounds*

Rick Altman, "Four and a Half Film Fallacies"

Holger Schulze, *Sonic Fiction*

Schulze, Groth Eds., *Bloomsbury Handbook of Sound Art*

Brian Kane, *Sound Unseen*

Stanyek and Piekut, "Deadness: Technologies of the Intermundane"

Blessner and Salter, *Spaces Speak, are you listening?*

Douglas Kahn, *Earth Sound/ Earth Signal*

Hermann et. al., Eds., *The Sonification Handbook*

Marina Peterson, *Atmospheric Noise: The Indefinite Urbanism of Los Angeles*

Cathy Lane, Ed. *On Listening*

Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision*

Michael Bull, "The Audio-Visual iPod"

Jouili and Moors, "Introduction: Islamic sounds and the politics of listening"

Matt Sakakeeny, "Resounding Silence in the Streets of a Musical City"

Steven Goodman, *Sonic Warfare*

Martin Daughtry, *Listening to War*

Alan Licht, *Sound Art Revisited*

Douglas Barrett, *After Sound*