

Sound Studies and Sonic Arts

Summer Semester 2022

Phase Focus

Module Theory

Course Title Political Sounds | Seminar

Course Times and Location Fridays, 10–14 | hybrid course: online & LIE313

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Office Hours and Location Upon request by email

Course Description

Can sound be political? What are the political possibilities of music and sound art? – to paraphrase Salomé Voegelin. What can art do in terms of the questions of our time: climate change, equality, living together. In which ways can sound be abused?

In this theory seminar, we will ask those questions, read and discuss texts and analyze music and artworks. The participants can offer texts, works, and topics beyond the ones in this syllabus.

Methodologically, we will hone our academic writing and research techniques, and we will work on forming an argument and structure for a paper.

Requirements for Attending

No requirements.

Max. 10 participants.

Exam / Credit Points

2CP (graded: Theory):

- regular attendance (in case of missed session: 2 pages summary of texts handed in two weeks later),
- 20-minutes presentation,
- moderation of one session including preparation of the assigned reading,
- minutes,
- reading of assigned texts before every session, participation in class discussions.

Consecutive assignment leading to 4CP for the course (graded: Theory; grading: mean of grades of both assignments):

- all of the above,
- a term paper of 8.000 words on the presentation's topic (Final paper due: 1 October 2022)

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Schedule

- 6 May** **1) Introduction**
- 20 May** **2) Engaged Music**
reading: Payne, Emily; Philip Thomas (2021), music: Nono *Fabbrica illuminata* (1965)
- 10 June** **3) Environmental activism in sonic art**
reading: Vandsø, Anette (2020), artists: Winderen, Kierkegaard, Cusack
- 24 June** **4) Sound in public space**
reading: LaBelle, Brandon (2018), artist: Kubisch
- 1 July 5)** **Sound and body politics**
reading: Lewis, George (2020), watching: Emma Frid (2021)
- 15 July** **6) Sound as weapon**
10–14 reading: Cusick, Suzanne G. (2013), art: Lawrence Abu Hamdan, *The missing 19 db* (2016)
hand in paper topic, title, literature and outline
- 15 July** **7) Final discussion**
14–17 reading: Voegelin, Salomé (2019)

Supporting Media

- Cusick**, Suzanne G. "Towards an Acoustemology of Detention in the 'Global War on Terror.'" In *Music, Sound and Space*, edited by Georgina Born, 275–91. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511675850.017>.
- Frid**, Emma. *Sonification of Women in Sound and Music Computing*. Féminisme - Musique - Technologie / Rencontre ManiFeste-2021: Brussels, 2021.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jXmNvd9ty_o&list=PL6MqWe5aRuOCfdPEJLe7euukPtuDF4mx&index=4.
- LaBelle**, Brandon. *Sonic Agency: Sound and Emergent Forms of Resistance*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2018.
- Lewis**, George. "New Music Decolonization in Eight Difficult Steps," 2020. <https://www.van-outernational.com/lewis-en/>.
- Payne**, Emily, and Philip Thomas. "Getting Exercised. Ensemble Relations in Christian Wolff's Exercises." In *Finding Democracy in Music*, edited by Robert Adlington and Esteban Buch, 101–24. Musical Cultures of the Twentieth Century. London New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2021.
- Vandsø**, Anette. "The Sonic Aftermath: The Anthropocene and Interdisciplinarity after the Apocalypse." In *The Bloomsbury Handbook of Sound Art*, edited by Sanne Krogh Groth and Holger Schulze, 1., 21–40. Bloomsbury Handbooks. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020.
- Voegelin**, Salomé. *The Political Possibility of Sound: Fragments of Listening*. New York; London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019. 17–43.