

Sound Studies and Sonic Arts

Summer Semester 2023

Phase Focus

Module Practice, Listening

Course Title **Voice, sonic memory and presence** | Seminar

Course Times and Location Thursdays | 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. | LIE 314

Instructors Alessandra Eramo

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Office Hours and Location upon request

Possible Credit Points Practice 2CP (G/NG), Practice 4CP (G/NG), Listening 2CP (G/NG), Listening 4CP (G/NG), Free Focus 2CP/4CP (NG)

Course

The course is an exploration of oral and written phenomena in sound, with a focus on voice moving between inside and outside. Through the aesthetic and political practice of listening to space, vocal improvisation, drawing, the use of extended vocal techniques, storytelling, and the recording of the voice and environmental sounds in the urban space, in the nature or in the studio, in the course we will investigate the possibility of extension and transformation of sound. We will adopt intermedial compositional practices, develop visual strategies for sound, reflecting one's own practice in sound art and performance.

On top of that, we will delve into the concept of "margin" touching on questions related to the personal and collective sonic memory. If we consider the body as the central place of political negotiation processes, how can we express the presence of the voice and the body from a poetic and feminist perspective?

The voice is ephemeral. How can I make the presence of my voice visible? The voice is our body, our memory and identity. The voice is the original human instrument, it can be expanded, transformed or symbolized, the voice can be recorded for the eternity. The voice becomes gesture, and it can emerge as drawing and graphic score. What are the relationships and tensions between these media?

In the course we will focus on the following topics and goals:

1. Voice and bodily presence

- observe our breath, deepen our listening and awareness of the environment and the own voice
- develop extended vocal techniques, distortion, and alienation of the voice in order to discover the original physical presence of the voice as a bodily expression
- elaborate a dramaturgy of songs, noises, lullabies, prayers and invented languages

2. Recording sound / Writing voice

- foster listening and work on the visualizing of the voice through the creation of abstract and automatic drawings
- the analysis of graphic and acoustic material we have produced and recorded
- develop one's own methodologies of sonic interpretation of the graphic scores

3. Creation of a sound performance or a fixed media audio composition

- use of mainly voice and field recordings
- experiment and learn new interdisciplinary methodologies in sound performance.

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The class is limited to 12 students.

Exam / Credit Points

2CP (graded: Practice, Listening; not graded: Practice, Listening, Free Focus) regular attendance and participation in the class. Creation and presentation of the drawing/score, plus an explanatory text (800 words +/-10%).

Consecutive assignment leading to 4CP for the class (graded: Practice, Listening; grading: mean of both grades): Creation and presentation of an original sound performance or a fixed media audio composition (approx. 8-12 minutes) which can be either a solo or a small group piece.

Supporting Media / Optional

- Zumthor**, Paul. "The Text and the Voice." In *Oral Poetry: An Introduction*. Theory and History of Literature, v. 70. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990.
- Bologna**, Corrado. *Flatus vocis. Metafisica e antropologia della voce*. Luca Sossella Editore, 2022.
- LaBelle**, Brandon. *Lexicon of the Mouth: Poetics and Politics of Voice and the Oral Imaginary*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2014.
- Kolesch**, Doris, and Sybille Krämer, eds. *Stimme: Annäherung an Ein Phänomen*. 1. Aufl., Originalausg. Suhrkamp Taschenbuch Wissenschaft 1789. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2006.
- Dolar**, Mladen. *A Voice and Nothing More*. Short Circuits. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2006.
- Cage**, John. *Notations*. New York: Something Else Press, 1969.
- Sauer**, Theresa. *Notations 21*. 1. ed. New York, NY: Mark Batty, 2009.
- Wiesenfeld**, Ruth: *The Fleeting Archive*. <http://www.towardssound.org/>
- Voegelin**, Salomé. *Listening to Noise and Silence: Towards a Philosophy of Sound Art*. New York: Continuum, 2010.
- Oliveros**, Pauline. *Deep Listening: A Composer's Sound Practice*. New York, NY: iUniverse, 2005.
- Stojanovic, Dragana. "The Inscription of the Feminine Body in the Field of Sound: Vocal Expression as a Platform of Feminine Writing (Écriture Féminine)." *Muzikologija*, no. 18 (2015): 115–29.
- Weber-Lucks**, Theda. "Electroacoustic Voices in Vocal Performance Art - a Gender Issue?" *Organised Sound* 8, no. 1 (April 2003): 61–69.
- Cavarero**, Adriana. *For More than One Voice: Toward a Philosophy of Vocal Expression*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2005.
- Butler**, Judith, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. *Who Sings the Nation-State? Language, Politics, Belonging*. First printed in paperback format by Seagull Books in 2010. London New York Calcutta: Seagull Books, 2010.
- Hooks**, Bell. *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black*. New edition. New York: Routledge, 2014.
- Khosravi**, Shahram. "Illegal" Traveller: *An Auto-Ethnography of Borders*. Global Ethics Series. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.