

# Sound Studies and Sonic Arts

## Summer Term 2026

**Phase** Focus

**Module** Practice, Listening

**Course Title** Voice And Poetics Of Water | Seminar

**Course Times and Location** Mondays | 10 am - 2 pm | LIE 314

**Instructors** [Alessandra Eramo](#)

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**Office Hours and Location** upon request

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

## Course Description

The seminar explores the voice - both human and non-human - and listening as aesthetic and political practices. Drawing inspiration from the metaphorical dimensions of water, the seminar will focus on the voice as a means of creative expression. Through exercises in listening, radical imagination, vocal improvisation and the use of extended vocal techniques, as well as storytelling, drawing and recording the voice and environmental sounds in urban spaces, nature or the studio, we will investigate the possibilities of transforming sound. How can we interact with our surroundings through the voice? We will adopt intermedia compositional practices and develop visual strategies for sound, reflecting one's own practice in sound art and performance.

The voice is our body, our memory and our identity. It is the original human instrument and can be expanded, transformed or symbolised. It can be recorded for the eternity. The voice becomes gesture and can emerge as a drawing or graphic score. What are the relationships and tensions between these media? Moreover, the seminar will explore the concept of "ecological memory", which is understood as a relational process that develops from listening to environmental sounds and water. This process unfolds as an attempt to imagine how voice and listening practices can activate transformations toward a future coexistence of nature and human presence. In the seminar we will focus on the following topics and goals:

### 1. Voice and bodily presence

- observe breath and deepen listening practices in relation to the surrounding environment, with particular attention to real or imagined acoustic spaces close to water
- develop extended vocal techniques, distortion, and alienation of the voice in order to discover the original physical presence and potential of the voice as a bodily expression
- elaborate dramaturgies of songs, noises, lullabies, prayers, invented languages and sonic rituals emerging in dialogue with water and soundscapes

### 2. Recording sound / Writing voice

- foster listening practices and work on the visualizing of the voice through abstract and automatic drawing
- the analysis of graphic and acoustic material we have produced and recorded
- develop individual methodologies for the sonic interpretation of graphic scores

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

- use of mainly voice and field recordings, including recordings made in environments close to water experiment and learn new interdisciplinary methodologies in sound performance

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consider and reflect possible forms of public presentation, such as a collective sound performance or an alternative form of publication

## Requirements for attending

max. 15 students

## Exam / Credit Points

### 2CP assignment (graded: Practice, Listening; not graded: Free Focus)

Regular attendance and active participation in the seminar, creation of graphic scores, and presentation in class.

### Consecutive assignment leading to 4CP for the course ((optional, graded: Practice, Listening; grading: mean of both grades; not graded: Free Focus):

Creation and presentation of an original sound performance or a fixed-media audio composition (approx. 8–12 minutes) plus an explanatory text (800 words  $\pm$ 10%), due Oct. 1st.

## Schedule

- 1) 13 April
- 2) 27 April
- 3) 11 May
- 4) 18 May
- 5) 1 June
- 6) 15 June
- 7) 22 June

## Supporting Media/ Recommended Publications

Not required but advised reading

**Bologna**, Corrado. *Flatus vocis. Metafisica e antropologia della voce*. Luca Sossella Editore, 2022.

**Cage**, John. *Notations*. New York: Something Else Press, 1969.

**Cavarero**, Adriana. *For More than One Voice: Toward a Philosophy of Vocal Expression*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2005.

**Chattopadhyay**, Budhaditya. *Sound Practices in the Global South: Co-listening to Resounding Plurilogues*. Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2022

**Dolar**, Mladen. *A Voice and Nothing More*. Short Circuits. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2006.

**Eidsheim**, Nina Sun. *The Race of Sound: Listening, Timbre, and Vocality in African American Music*. Duke University Press, 2019

**Kolesch**, Doris, and Sybille Krämer, eds. *Stimme: Annäherung an Ein Phänomen*. 1. Aufl., Originalausg. Suhrkamp Taschenbuch Wissenschaft 1789. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2006. **LaBelle**, Brandon. *Lexicon of the Mouth: Poetics and Politics of Voice and the Oral Imaginary*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2014.

**Oliveros**, Pauline. *Deep Listening: A Composer's Sound Practice*. New York, NY: iUniverse, 2005.

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**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.

**Voegelin**, Salomé. *Listening to Noise and Silence: Towards a Philosophy of Sound Art*. New York: Continuum, 2010.

**Weber-Lucks**, Theda. "Electroacoustic Voices in Vocal Performance Art - a Gender Issue?" *Organised Sound* 8, no. 1 (April 2003): 61–69.

**Wiesenfeld**, Ruth: *The Fleeting Archive*. <http://www.towardssound.org/>

**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. ("Introduction à la poésie orale" 1983)