

Sound Studies and Sonic Arts

Winter Term 2022/23

Phase Basic

Module Theory

Course Title Sound, Media, and Modern Culture: An Introduction to Sound Studies and Sonic Arts | Lecture

Course Times and Location Thursdays | 13:15-14:45 p.m. | LIE 314

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Office Hours and Location upon request LIE 310

Course Description

This lecture is an introduction to contemporary positions of sound studies and the sonic arts. We will cover theoretical and scholarly key questions of this still young academic discipline as well as aesthetic and musical topics of the only slightly older discipline of sonic arts. Parallels and differences between scholarly and artistic approaches can be easily demonstrated on the basis of mutually central topics.

These are in particular the aesthetics and history of (audio) media, which have caused radical changes in listening and the production of music and have enabled the spawning of new genres such as the sonic arts. The different effects of audio media are one of the central topics of sound studies and sonic arts. One of these effects is the radical dissolution of the musical, which is nowadays almost location-independent. The result is a profound transformation of the musical performance practice: music may not only be produced anywhere, but also transferred to any desired location. It has become in itself mobile and accompanies us during all ventures, no matter how long or short the paths connected may be.

But audio media have not only influenced the musical performance practice and the places where we listen to music, but also our listening and listening habits themselves. These changes can not only be understood in the context of the changed sound production, but the alterations of listening have to be examined in relation to our other senses.

The lecture will go over the different developments on the basis of exemplary concepts and works of the sonic arts and discuss the changes for the self-image of musicology, that have arisen and given rise to the sound studies. The lecture offers a broad overview of aesthetic positions of sonic arts and contemporary theories of sound studies. At the same time, we will investigate exactly how the young discipline of sound studies may position itself in relation to its two most important theoretical and scholarly reference systems – cultural studies and systematic musicology.

Schedule

27 Oct	Intro
3 Nov	Sound studies 1: On sound and media
10 Nov	Sound studies 2: An interdisciplinary concept, historical perspectives, methods, topics
17 Nov	Sound studies 3: Concepts of aesthetic research
24 Nov	Sound studies 4: Voice – body – gender: The listener's perspective
1 Dec	Concepts of the sonic arts 1: Soundscape, and atmosphere
8 Dec	Concepts of the sonic arts 2: Field recording, soundwalks
15 Dec	Concepts of the sonic arts 3: Participation, remembrance

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5 Jan	The avant-garde in music 1: The conceptualization of music since the 1960s
12 Jan	The avant-garde in music 2: New relations between music and fine arts
19 Jan	The avant-garde in music 3: Exploring the media
26 Jan	The production of space 1: Event, performance situation, and performativity
2 Feb	The production of space 2: White cube, public space, non-places
9 Feb	Sonic materialism and the ontology of noise
17 Feb	Resumé and communication: Time for questions

Exam

See exam schedule.

Supporting Media

- Cox**, Christoph, and Daniel Warner, eds. *Audio Culture: Readings in Modern Music*. Revised edition. New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Inc, 2017.
- Daniels**, Dieter, and Sandra Naumann, eds. *See This Sound: Audiovisuology*. Köln: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2015.
- Kahn**, Douglas. *Noise, Water, Meat: A History of Sound in the Arts*. 1st MIT Press paperback. Cambridge, Massachusetts London, England: The MIT Press, 2001.
- Kane**, Brian. *Sound Unseen: Acousmatic Sound in Theory and Practice*. Oxford New York Auckland Cape Town Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Kelly**, Caleb. *Cracked Media: The Sound of Malfunction*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2009.
- Kim-Cohen**, Seth. *In the Blink of an Ear: Towards a Non-Cochlear Sonic Art*. New York: Continuum, 2009.
- Schrimshaw**, Will. *Immanence and Immersion. On the Acoustic Condition in Contemporary Art*. London, New York: Bloomsbury, 2016.
- Sterne**, Jonathan. *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.
- Sterne**, Jonathan, ed. *The Sound Studies Reader*. New York: Routledge, 2012.
- Voegelin**, Salomé. *Sonic Possible Worlds: Hearing the Continuum of Sound*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014.