

**THE LISTENING ACADEMY / PROGRAM**

# Welcome

In what ways can listening be mobilized as a form of critical intervention, one that can impact onto scenes of personal and political struggle? How is listening utilized or figured within experiences of trauma, supporting acts of domination as well as healing and recuperation? What forms of knowledge emerge from sonic practices and projects, where listening is taken on as an experimental, relational position? And are there new opportunities for supporting listening as what can aid in reworking current attention economies? Following these lines of questioning, The Listening Academy aims at fostering transdisciplinary discussions on the topic of listening which can contribute to understandings and acts of recognition and repair. This includes nurturing new imaginaries and knowledges around what it means to hear and be heard, to voice and respond, within today's planetary environment.

This edition of the Academy brings together an international group of scholars, researchers and practitioners whose creative and critical expertise are supportive for diversifying what an art or science of listening may be. Through individual presentations, discussions and performative works, we'll engage listening as the basis for storying other narratives and how it may enable thinking alongside and with the complexities of global experience.

# The Listening Academy

OCTOBER 17 - 19, 2022

FACULTY OF FINE ART, MUSIC AND  
DESIGN, UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN

&

THE UNFINISHED INSTITUTION

Nathalie Aghoro

Leah Bassel

Miguel Buenrostro

Dániel Péter Biró

Wanda Canton

Rebecca Collins

Nanna Hauge Kristensen

Brandon LaBelle

Margarida Mendes

Sara Mikolai

Merete Røstad

Mhamad Safa

Luísa Santos

Andrea Szigetvári

James Webb

## **OCTOBER 17: OPENING RECEPTION & PERFORMANCE, 18:30**

**The unfinished institution, Damsgårdsveien 229, 5160 Laksevåg**

### **BRANDON LABELLE**

**Professor, The Art Academy, University of Bergen**

#### **Introductory Welcome /**

Brandon LaBelle is an artist, writer and theorist, and Professor at the Faculty of Fine Art, Music and Design, University of Bergen. His work focuses on questions of agency, community, pirate culture, and poetics, which results in a range of collaborative initiatives, including: The Listening Biennial and Academy (2021-), Communities in Movement (2019-), The Living School (with South London Gallery, 2014-16), Oficina de Autonomia (2017), The Imaginary Republic (2014-19), Dirty Ear Forum (2013-), Surface Tension (2003-2008), and Beyond Music Sound Festival (1998-2002). In 1995 he founded Errant Bodies Press, an independent publishing project supporting work in sound art and studies, performance and poetics, artistic research and contemporary political thought. His publications include: The Other Citizen (2020), Sonic Agency (2018), Lexicon of the Mouth (2014), Acoustic Territories (2010, 2019), and Background Noise (2006, 2015). His latest book, Acoustic Justice (2021), argues for an acoustic model by which to engage questions of social equality.

### **JAMES WEBB**

**Artist, Stockholm / Cape Town**

#### **A series of personal questions addressed to the North Sea /**

Started in 2016, this ongoing series is staged as a series of interviews with select objects and spaces. The artwork takes the form of the presentation of the item in question, in this case the North Sea, and an audio speaker installed above where the audience are seated. The audio speaker broadcasts a series of questions written specifically for, and addressed to, the chosen interview subject. No answers are written, given, or suggested; each question is left hanging, unanswered for approximately 10 seconds before the next question is posed.

The North Sea has long been a source of life, a contingent link between landmasses, and a living border: a key concern in historical and contemporary sociopolitical discourse. From extracted oil and natural

gas to contested fishing rights, the “Morimaru” as the Celts named it, is a site of ecological wonder and calamity, untold and unseen ecosystems, and projected, poetic longing.

This series of artworks has been presented as installations and, occasionally, performances worldwide with various objects, including 5 litres of Nigerian crude oil, an original set of Rorschach plates from 1921, and a trumpet sold when its previous owner moved house. This edition, the 12th in the series, has its rehearsal in Bergen at the Listening Academy.

James Webb is an artist whose practice often involves sound, found objects, and text, invoking references to literature, cinema, and conceptualist traditions. By shifting objects, techniques, and forms beyond their original contexts and introducing them to different environments, Webb seeks to create new spaces of tension. These spaces bind Webb’s academic background in religion, theatre, and advertising, offering poetic inquiries into the economies of belief and dynamics of communication in our contemporary world. James Webb has had solo exhibitions at, amongst others, the Art Institute of Chicago, 2018; SPACES, Cleveland, 2018; Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield, 2016; Hordaland Kunstsenter, Bergen, 2015; and the Johannesburg Art Gallery, 2012. Group exhibitions include the 16th and 8th Biennale de Lyon (2022 and 2007), 13th Biennial of Dakar (2018), 4th Prospect Triennial of New Orleans (2017), 13th Biennial of Sharjah (2017), 12th Bienal de la Habana (2015), 55th Biennale di Venezia (2013), and the 3rd Marrakech Biennale (2009).

## **OCTOBER 18: PRESENTATIONS, 10:00 - 16:30**

**The unfinished institution, Damsgårdsveien 229, 5160 Laksevåg**

### **LUÍSA SANTOS**

**Assistant Professor, Faculty of Human Sciences, Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Lisbon**

#### **imag(in)ing narratives via care and listening /**

By the mid-20th century, following WWII, when unity was understood as essential for the survival of Europe, monocultures appeared as a solution to maximize agricultural production. Today, despite the knowledge

of the danger of monocultures, European art institutions and universities mimic monocultures in their practices, which are not racially and gender diverse and harm the environment. Existing literature on the environmental impact of creative industries focuses on the (ab)use of material resources and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (shipping artworks, international exhibitions, mobility programmes) but not much is discussed about the loss of knowledge/aesthetic epistemologies in monocultural practices in art institutions and universities.

How does the marginalization of diverse knowledge and aesthetic epistemologies (produced by people of diverse genders and races) impacts in what we know about/how we live with our environment? In this presentation, we will discuss intersections between race, gender, and the environment via examples of works by contemporary artists and design principles of permaculture in their caring ethos and listening methodologies to attempt at drafting a series of speculative proposals for how art institutions and universities could shift from monocultural entities (re)presenting grand-mono-narratives towards permacultural organisms imagi(ni)ng new narratives.

Ph.D in Culture Studies by the Humboldt & Viadrina School of Governance, in Berlin, and M.A. in Curating Contemporary Art by the Royal College of Art, in London, Luísa Santos is an Assistant Professor and Researcher in Culture Studies / Artistic Studies, since 2016, at the Faculty of Human Sciences and the CECC of the Universidade Católica Portuguesa. An independent curator since 2009, she conducted research in curatorial practices at the Konstfack, in Stockholm, in 2013 and, since 2019, she is a research fellow at The European School of Governance (EUSG), in Berlin. At the CECC, she takes the roles of coordinator and artistic director of the 4Cs: from Conflict to Conviviality through Creativity and Culture, which she has initiated with a consortium of 8 European institutions in 2017. She has curated numerous exhibitions with artists such as Miguel Palma, Nikolaj Larsen, Yorgos Zois, Ângela Ferreira, Amira Hanafi, Marilá Dardot, Jeppe Hein, Jane Jin Kaisen, and Rouzbeh Akhbari. Having authored various publications in the domains of art and society, Luísa Santos is, since 2021, editing a book series on the politics of immaterial cultures with Routledge. Since 2018, she is the co-artistic director of the nanogaleria, which she co-founded with Ana Fabíola Maurício.

## **NATHALIE AGHORO**

**Postdoctoral Researcher, Catholic University of Eichstaett-Ingolstadt**

### **Listening, Sonic Practice, and the Contemporary American Stage /**

The rhythm and sound of embodied voices, funk music, rap beats, and hip hop moves fuels Will Power's playwrighting and stage presence. In plays and performances like *Flow* (2002-2003), he combines the artistic self-expression that resides in voice, body, and music with political reflections on social justice issues. This paper reflects on the sonic methods and lessons that, among others, Will Power conveys through his theatrical engagement with the history of slavery and the civil rights movement. It carves out the relational principles of listening and sonic practice on the contemporary stage in the United States as well as its acoustic anchoring of empowerment and resistance in the everyday. In order to do so, this paper focuses on the discussion of sound-driven forms of playwrighting and their usage of sound and listening as critical methods that brings histories of displacement, resistance, and empowerment into conversation with contemporary audiences.

Nathalie Aghoro is a postdoctoral researcher in North American Literary and Cultural Studies at the Catholic University of Eichstaett-Ingolstadt with an interest in auditory culture, nineteenth to twenty-first century literature, theory, and social justice. Her book *Sounding the Novel: Voice in Twenty-First Century American Fiction* (Universitätsverlag Winter, 2018) examines the sonic mediality of voice in the works of Richard Powers, Karen Tei Yamashita, Jennifer Egan, and Jonathan Safran Foer. She is the editor of *The Acoustics of the Social on Page and Screen* (Bloomsbury, 2021) and her publications include essays on postmodern novels, contemporary literature, and Afrofuturism. She is also on the editorial board of the De Gruyter book series *Video Games and the Humanities* and faculty member of the interdisciplinary DFG research training group "Practicing Place - Socio-Cultural Practices and Epistemic Configurations" (GRK 2589/1). Her current book project deals with the ties between social justice and situated cultural practices such as the writing, building, and picturing of shared places.

## **MERETE RØSTAD**

**Assistant Professor / Head of Research, Department of Arts and Craft, Oslo National Academy of the Arts**

### **Embodied Sound Archive /**

What is an embodied sound archive? How does listening create art experiences in the public sphere? This talk introduces the thought that all of our sound and auditory experiences are embedded within us and that they constitute our own personal embodied sound archive. Our memory confines all our auditory experiences and stores the sounds that we experience. By introducing the term embodied sound archive, this talk investigates if listening can be a conducive method to work with sound art in the public sphere. It furthermore points at ways of incorporating the methodology of radical listening into art in public spaces.

Merete Røstad is a visual artist, educator, and artist-researcher whose projects are rooted in examining collective memory, representation, and archives. Røstad completed her doctorate in artistic research with her investigation *The Participatory Monument – Remembrance and Forgetting as Art Practice in Public Sphere* (2018). Røstad lives and works in Berlin and Oslo and is an Associate Professor in Art and Public Space (MFA) and head of research at the Department of Arts and Craft at the Oslo National Academy of the Arts (KHiO).

## **MIGUEL BUENROSTRO**

**Artist, Berlin**

### **Cosmoaudiciones /**

Cosmoaudiciones is an artistic project that traces the relationship between sound archives of The Berlin Phonogramm-Archiv and the musical worlds that traveled in and out of the Atlantic, into the Americas. This investigation departs from what linguist Carlos Lenkersdorf calls *Cosmoaudición*. If our worldview (Cosmovision) is the way we perceive and interpret the world through a vision, then our *Cosmoaudición* would be the way we perceive and interpret the world through the act of listening (followed by a *Cosmovivencia*). *Cosmoaudición* therefore, implies a way of experiencing the world from a po-

sition of openness, it is also the beginning of a relationship with beings and sound formations through shared horizons.

This investigation is motivated by listening to broader worlds of meaning, which have been preserved statically, enclosed and absent from their relations. The archive was part of a German colonial apparatus in which travelers, ethnologists or colonial officers brought recordings of music and voices to the Berlin Ethnological Museum. These sonic documents have contributed to a preservation of colonial structures of power and knowledge. In our engagement with the archive, we have acknowledged the violence, the power structures, the politics of archiving and the supremacy that is embedded in ethnographic collections. In parallel we have listened to journeys, exchanges and trajectories of music by situating our practice within a listening ethic. In our collective listening sessions, we shared knowledge through conversations and musical improvisation with musicians of the diasporas: This has opened a space for thinking about possibilities of restitution beyond the return of material heritage. The outcome of this investigation has manifested through a series of compositions, gatherings and actions within the public realm that propose a mode of Listening-Sensing-Receiving music and re-embodiment rhythm and plural time.

Miguel Buenrostro is an artist from Tijuana, Mexico and based in Berlin, Germany. His work reflects on the condition of the border as a site of knowledge production and interconnection. Working with listening practices, cinema and performative gestures in public space. His work has been presented in the Biennale Architettura di Venezia (2016); Armory Center for the Arts (2017); Museo Numismático Nacional de la CDMX, (2018) Mexi-Cali Biennial (2019) The Bauhaus Museum, Weimar Germany (2020) Musée National de la Rd Congo (2021) Konsthall C, Stockholm Sweden (2022); His films have been held in different film festivals ( Foro de Cine Etnográfico en México), exhibitions and Public screenings. His lecture - performances such as 'Otras Utopías' and DISFUNCIONALISTA have been held in the Southern California Institute of Architecture and the Anna Amalia Bibliothek in Weimar Germany. Miguel co-created "Nuevo Norte" a workshop in collaboration with local initiatives which investigate the politics of migration, borders and neoliberal agendas operating in the Americas.

## **NANNA HAUGE KRISTENSEN**

**Audio producer, Copenhagen**

### **Loss and Rain. Listening as an act of intimacy /**

For me listening entails a bodily attentiveness - an attunement to the Other. It creates a space where openness and exchanges can unfold. My work moves across anthropology, documentarism and art. In my sonic explorations of life-worlds and atmospheres, I seek to cultivate a deep ethnographic listening. Often my audio pieces revolve around loss and beginnings. What attracts me, both as a maker of sound and a listener, are the intimate, sensory, and open-ended representations of the complex world that we share. Representations that leave space for imagination and inner resonance. For my presentation, I will invite you into my practice, sharing examples of my work, and offering some reflections on listening as a creative and intimate method.

Nanna Hauge Kristensen is an audio producer and anthropologist based in Copenhagen. Her work has won several international awards, among others The Third Coast International Audio Award for Best Foreign Documentary.

## **SARA MIKOLAI**

**choreographer and interdisciplinary artist, Germany / Sri Lanka**

### **On a practice of listening as a decolonial strategy in dance aesthetics /**

Through a practice of listening I engage with manifold layers, which inform, influence and shape my approach to dance. Not seeking one particular answer, away from the focus on production, this practice developed from my continued engagement with epistemologies of dance: a field in particular pressured by questions of representation and gaze.

The foundation of my dance training is Bharatanatyam, a descendant of the temple and court dances of India, which has a complicated colonial and postcolonial history. As a practitioner, a balance between research and a listening practice enables me to re-enter the vocabulary and somatics of the dance, to more deeply comprehend what it teaches about the body, as well as the body's inner and outer relations in dance and everyday life. The different modes of listening central to my practice are listening to dance itself as a sonic experience; listening to the sounds of the environment; listening to music/sound compositions; listening to personal and historical narratives.

In the presentation I will share my reflections on how this listening practice can be understood as a proposal to critically, openly and poetically engage with passed on knowledge through decolonial strategies, queer reclamations and ecological reflections, as well as how it can assist in unravelling the dichotomies of *tradition* and *progress* in art aesthetics.

Sara Mikolai is a choreographer and interdisciplinary artist born in Berlin, of Sri Lankan Tamil-German descent. In her work she focuses on a critical and poetic engagement with epistemologies of dance through somatic practice, philosophic reflection and balancing an equilibrium of contextualizing the personal, historical and con-temporary in art and everyday life. Her works manifest through live performances, sound, video and installation works as well as writing. In her practice she explores the relationship between movement, body and sound and how one affects the other. Sara has studied and trained Bharatanatyam since 1994 under her teacher and mother Diana Mikolai at the Abhinaya Dharpana School for Indian dance in Berlin. She graduated in BA Dance, Context & Choreography at the Interuniversity-Centre for Dance - HZT Berlin (University of the Arts Berlin), as well as in the MFA in Performing Arts program at the Iceland University of the Arts. She further holds a diploma in Bharatanatyam from the Oriental Fine Arts Academy of London. Currently she is doing research in the MPhil in Fine Arts postgraduate program at the University of Peradeniya in Sri Lanka.

**OCTOBER 18: EVENING CONCERT, 19:30**

**Grieg Academy, Studio A, Lars Hilles gate 3, 5015 Bergen**

## **ANDREA SZIGETVÁRI**

**Reader of Composition Faculty at the Liszt Academy, Budapest**

### **BeefKohlrabi Cantata / Marhakaralábé Kantáta (2017) /**

(electroacoustic cantata/music theater for soprano actress, electronics)

Performed by: Zsuzsa Zseni - soprano; Andrea Szigetvári - electronics

Duration: ca 35 min.

The inspiration for the piece "Marhakaralábé" (Beefkohlrabi) came from a field recording made by Andrea Szigetvári at the Keleti Railway Station in Budapest on the 2nd of September of 2015, when hundreds of ref-

ugees were camping out on a metro underpass. The recording captured a conversation of three Hungarian men, who were expressing their dissatisfaction about helping the refugees by some volunteers. At the most dramatic part of the conversation a man said he wanted to shoot those people, throw them on a truck and burn them, if he had some power. He called the refugees “funnily” marhakaralábé (beef kohlrabi in English).

To develop the recording, and to put its content into a wider context, different recordings were collected: interviews with refugees talking about their pitiful experiences and speeches by different contemporary leaders expressing their ideas about finding solutions for the migration crisis (building a wall – a borderline-line). The suprasegmental parameters or prosody of the vocal communication, it is the emotional and musical aspects of the speeches that serve as source material for the composition of both the acoustic and the electroacoustic parts. The melodies, glissandi, rhythms, tempi, structures of silences, accents, volumes and timbral characteristics resulting from the vocal material are embedded in soundscapes reflecting on the location of the recording (the Keleti Train Station) and meanings emerging from the spoken texts. The piece fuses different genres and music techniques like electroacoustic music, theater, soundscape, fractal music and political manifesto.

The piece was commissioned by University of Victoria, Canada as part of an EU-Canada project Narratives of Memory, Migration, Xenophobia and European Identity: Intercultural Dialogues

Andrea Szigetvári is an electroacoustic music composer. Her creative and research interests are timbre in new music, interactive performance, audiovisual art and politically involved electroacoustic music theater. She likes to compose every detail of her works leaving space for improvisation and expression as performative interpretations of her ideas. She studied in Warsaw and then as a Fulbright scholar in the USA, later completing her doctorate studies at the Liszt Academy Budapest. Currently she is a reader of Composition Faculty at the Liszt Academy, Budapest leading the Electronic Music Media Art program. In addition to composing and teaching she has organized international new music festivals, conferences and pan-european projects being the founder and leader of Hungarian Computer Music Foundation. Her pieces have been performed throughout Europe and the USA. She won the Prize at the Bourges Electroacoustic Competition in both Sound Art and Multimedia categories in 2001.

## **DÁNIEL PÉTER BIRÓ**

**Professor in Composition, Grieg Academy, University of Bergen**

Dániel Péter Biró studied in Hungary, Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Israel before receiving his Ph.D. from Princeton University in 2004. His dissertation examines historical relationships between orality, memory and notational development in Hungarian laments, Jewish Torah recitation and early Christian plainchant. From 2004 -2009 he was Assistant Professor and from 2009-2018 Associate Professor for Composition and Music Theory at the University of Victoria in Victoria, BC, Canada. In 2011 he was Visiting Professor at Utrecht University and in 2014-2015 Research Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University. In 2015 he was elected to the College of New Scholars, Scientists and Artists of the Royal Society of Canada. In 2017 he was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship. Since 2018 he has taught at the Grieg Academy, University of Bergen in Norway and in 2019 he was promoted to Professor for Composition. He is currently working on the project Sounding Philosophy as part of the Norwegian Artistic Research Program (2021-2024).

**OCTOBER 19: PRESENTATIONS, 10:00 - 16:30**

**The unfinished institution, Damsgårdsveien 229, 5160 Laksevåg**

## **LEAH BASSEL**

**Professor of Sociology, University of Roehampton, UK**

**Listening for Migrant Justice: The London Permanent Peoples’ Tribunal “The Hostile Environment on Trial” /**

International peoples’ tribunals date back to post World War II era, starting in the 1960s, with the Russell Tribunals on Vietnam and Latin America. Many related initiatives have followed, variously termed ‘peoples’ tribunals’, ‘civil society tribunals’ and ‘global civil society tribunals’ which are of diverse lineages, reach, and ambitions (Byrnes 2018), (Çubukçu 2018). This article explores one such initiative: the Permanent Peoples’ Tribunal (PPT) hearing, ‘The Hostile Environment on Trial’, which took place in London, United Kingdom in 2018. When calling a gathering a ‘peoples’ tribunal’, certain kinds of listening and attention become possible, that are shaped by specific histories and contexts.



In this presentation I consider the kind of listening that took place during the London PPT and what changed as a result. I argue that the legal framing that comes with calling a gathering a ‘tribunal’ both compels and excludes, and the politics of listening for migrant justice within such a space is laden with imperial pitfalls and power relations that must continuously be worked through. Instead of a legal remedy, what results is a social relation, an ‘Us’ created through the mutual effort (Lugones 1990) of organising and participating in the Tribunal that can open different understandings of migrant justice and its connection to wider struggles.

Byrnes, A., & Simm, G., Ed. (2018). *Peoples’ Tribunals and International Law*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Çubukçu, A. (2018). *For the Love of Humanity. The World Tribunal on Iraq*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

Lugones, M. (1990). *Hablando cara a cara/Speaking face to face. Making Face, Making Soul/Haciendo Caras: Creative and Critical Perspectives by Women of Color* G. Anzaldúa (ed.). San Francisco CA, Aunt Lute.

Leah Bassel (pronouns: she/her) is Professor of Sociology at the University of Roehampton, UK. Her research interests include the political sociology of migration, intersectionality and citizenship. Leah’s books include *The Politics of Listening: Possibilities and Challenges for Democratic Life* (Palgrave, 2017), and *Minority Women and Austerity: Survival and Resistance in France and Britain* co-authored with Akwugo Emejulu (Policy Press 2017).

She is Associate Editor of the journal *Citizenship Studies*. Before pursuing an academic career, Leah was an emergency outreach worker in Paris where she provided humanitarian assistance to asylum seekers and created a circus camp project for refugee youth.

### **MHAMAD SAFA**

**PhD candidate in International Law, University of Westminster, UK**

### **Collateral Listening: Aural Shocks Beyond Quantification /**

This study establishes and examines the concept of Collateral Listening, as an inherent aural condition to atmospheres of loudness, particularly in armed conflict. Informed by the controversial category of collateral dam-

age, that operates within the fundamental principles of the Laws of Armed Conflicts, Collateral Listening examines the obscured zones of violence. Territories where untargeted bodies absorb the audible excess of armed conflicts. Spaces, where sheltering victims experience the diffused yet “legitimate” sonic repercussions of shockwaves. As neither targets nor collateral casualties, ear witnesses to aerial strikes are systematically excluded from legal consideration and categorisation. The alienation of the listener, as such, is instrumentalised further by retributive and coercive military practices. Through this extreme listening dimension, entanglements between acoustics, psycho-social trauma, laws of war, geography and technology come to matter. Additionally, this investigation into the sonorities of loud, percussive blasts, their geographical make-ups, and the legal status of their listeners exposes the uncertainties in the laws that oversee hostilities and govern the usage of weapons.

Mhamad Safa is an architect, sound artist and researcher in sonic matters, based between London and Beirut. His work focuses on multi-scalar spatial conditions and their sonic make-ups. He explores their intersections with aural legacies of traditional and subcultural practices, as well as environments of conflict and violence. He graduated from the Centre for Research Architecture at Goldsmiths and is currently a PhD candidate in International Law at the University of Westminster. He is also an associate lecturer in Media Studies at the Royal College of Art.

### **WANDA CANTON**

**Doctoral researcher, University of Brighton, UK**

### **Radical Listening as Abolitionist Praxis/**

Identifying the difference between hearing and listening is central to abolitionist activism. Hearing, a physical and involuntary experience, threatens to destroy the integrity and autonomy of the hearer by announcing the presence of a troubling Other. Policing what is and isn’t heard in public space subsequently consolidates certain social relationships. Listening on the other hand, is a pro-active, self-reflective engagement with the noisy Other and is radical through creating and tolerating different forms of knowledge. Deconstructing difference and policing, be it social or institutional, is funda-

mental to abolitionism. The ongoing criminalisation of rap is an opportunity to practice Radical Listening as a philosophy and practiced action (praxis). This presentation will include a 'RapScape' providing an aural history of the relationship between rap and policing as an opportunity to practice Radical Listening.

Wanda Canton is a doctoral researcher at the University of Brighton, UK. Her PhD explores the criminalisation of UK rap music and argues that rap provides scope to understand and prevent violence, both in the street and policing it. She recently founded 'Sonic Rebellions,' a project exploring the relationship between sound and social justice. She is an artist and facilitator, with an interest in how rap and spoken word can be conducive in recovery from trauma.

### **MARGARIDA MENDES**

**Researcher, curator and educator, Lisbon**

#### **Somatic listening and the expansion of the sonic imagination /**

The formulation of listening as aurally diverse and deterritorialised across different sensing organs is crucial to the thesis project I am completing, that attempts to re-think and rewrite how listening practices can foster better interspecies and intersensory community relations. For this purpose, I am developing an expanded understanding of how listening takes place on the body, beyond the cochlear space. This reconceptualization enlarges our understanding of the auditory process and sensing mechanisms that reframe listening as a somatic experience. I do so by speculating about sensorial similarities in how different organisms perceive sound, nominally by looking into fish audition and the neural distribution of human beings. I reflect about the biophysiological and social conditions of listening and the repercussions that extractivism has upon it, looking at how the faultline between what is somatic and environmental may be expressed through the traumatic discontinuities of the extractive zone.

Margarida Mendes is a researcher, curator and educator, she explores the overlap between systems thinking, experimental film, sound practices and ecopedagogy. She creates transdisciplinary forums, exhibitions and expe-

riential works where alternative modes of education and sensing practices may catalyse political imagination and restorative action. She has been long involved in anti-extraction activism and ecopedagogy, collaborating with marine NGOs, Universities and institutions of the art world.

### **REBECCA COLLINS**

**Lecturer, Edinburgh College of Art, University of Edinburgh**

#### **On Scientific Misuse, or What's the Use of a Sonic Detective in an International Interdisciplinary Scientific Experiment? /**

Advanced techniques of sonic detection and acoustic engineering are currently deployed within scientific experiments deep within the mediterranean ocean. Interdisciplinary experts use this apparatus (dubbed the 'eyes and ears' of the sea) to investigate microscopic (and invisible) particles that comprise our universe. The usefulness of sound and the sonic as technique offer new angles and new information for scientists, engineers, and acousticians. At the same time, bioacoustic investigators make use of the data to study bioluminescent (light emitting) behaviours of cetaceans and other creatures found in the depths of sea. How might an artist researcher make use of an invitation to engage with these research processes? What might such technological advances offer to aesthetic, and sonic modes of thought? Whilst the technical nuances of such experiments and their hard data might be of limited use or usefulness for artistic research (with the exception of those making use of data sonification/visualisation) I pursue the resonances, residues, remainders and seemingly redundant details lurking within scientific research. Casting myself as a sonic detective, a figure developed in my previous collaborative work 'Stolen Voices (2014-2020), I attune to what wanes and emerges whilst I meet with, converse, and engage (over time) with experts closely involved with sonic-inflected discoveries. For 'The Listening Academy' I aim to share a series of qualitative accounts developed whilst embedded as artist-in-residence amidst astroparticle physicists, acoustic technicians, and engineers working on the aforementioned experiment. By engaging with Sara Ahmed's notion of 'queer uses' (2019, 26) I attend to the nuances of scientific research infrastructure when put to use for a purpose other than that for which it was intended. In doing so, I argue how narrative techniques, and descriptive acts can enable a means to 'linger'(ibid.), or loiter,

alongside underrepresented aspects of an investigation thereby ‘rendering them all the more lively.’

Rebecca Collins works at the intersection between contemporary performance and sound studies. Her practice, grounded in specific sites, communities, or institutional frameworks, investigates the relationships between social, political, and cultural phenomena. She is interested in how critical, fictional and performative interventions might cultivate attention towards our contemporary condition indicating potential levers for change. Her first album, *Stolen Voices 001* was shortlisted for a New Music Scotland Award. Rebecca is currently artist in residence at the Institute of Particle Physics at the Autonomous University of Madrid (UAM-CSIC) to undertake ‘Parametres for Understanding Uncertainty’, funded by the Royal Society of Edinburgh. Since 2017 she is lecturer in Contemporary Art Theory at Edinburgh College of Art, University of Edinburgh.

**OCTOBER 19: EVENING EVENT (THE PIRATE ACADEMY), 19:00**

**Art Academy, Knut Knaus, Møllendalsveien 61, 5009 Bergen**

### **BRANDON LABELLE**

#### **Ending comments, Poetics of Listening /**

Listening with, listening for, listening to... Following Silvia Federici’s call for listening to the body as a path towards health and healing, how might such listening take place? If the body is a power in need of reclaiming as Federici suggests, in what ways can such power impact onto the crafting of common worlds, or to figure other imaginaries related to voice and agency? In what sense does solidarity, and the acts that foster mutuality, necessitate an art of listening? From listening by way of the body to the practices and gestures that support health and healing, listening emerges as the basis for an expanded sense of being-with – to attend to the ways in which our bodies are never simply ours, but rather, are entangled within a range of social bonds, institutional dependencies, planetary environments. Such listening will be posed as a form of affective labor, a poetics, that may critically and creatively trouble the attention economy, forming the basis for *staying with each other*.

### **SARA MIKOLAI**

#### **Listening – sound narratives of a dance**

(choreography, performance, sound concept & recordings: Sara Mikolai  
music, sound design: Isuru Kumarasinghe)

This piece is an invitation to listen: to a body, a dance, a landscape - of sounds and silences alike. It is a fluid exploration of dance and how it can be shaped and experienced if the focus lies not in the eye, but in the ear. How does what we see change, transform, become, appear, disappear or remain if we experience them through their sounds?

It began through walks through a city and forests, where I noticed the effects of listening to the environment on my body: how I move, am moved and connect and digest inner and outer worlds. This developed into a practice of listening to trees, waters, bodies and as a dance practitioner further to movement. It became a way for me to engage with various layers, which inform, influence and shape my approach to dance. I am specifically engaging with the vocabulary of the dance practice Bharatanatyam, as well as its the historic, con-temporary, mythological narratives. In this piece I explore the sonic aspects of the dance and what it offers and becomes, if we listen in.

Sara Mikolai is a choreographer and interdisciplinary artist born in Berlin, of Sri Lankan Tamil-German descent. In her work she focuses on a critical and poetic engagement with epistemologies of dance through somatic practice, philosophic reflection and balancing an equilibrium of contextualizing the personal, historical and con-temporary in art and everyday life. Her works manifest through live performances, sound, video and installation works as well as writing. In her practice she explores the relationship between movement, body and sound and how one affects the other. Sara has studied and trained Bharatanatyam since 1994 under her teacher and mother Diana Mikolai at the Abhinaya Dharpana School for Indian dance in Berlin. She graduated in BA Dance, Context & Choreography at the Interuniversity-Centre for Dance - HZT Berlin (University of the Arts Berlin), as well as in the MFA in Performing Arts program at the Iceland University of the Arts. She further holds a diploma in Bharatanatyam from the Oriental Fine Arts Academy of London. Currently she is doing research in the MPhil in Fine Arts postgraduate program at the University of Peradeniya in Sri Lanka.

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