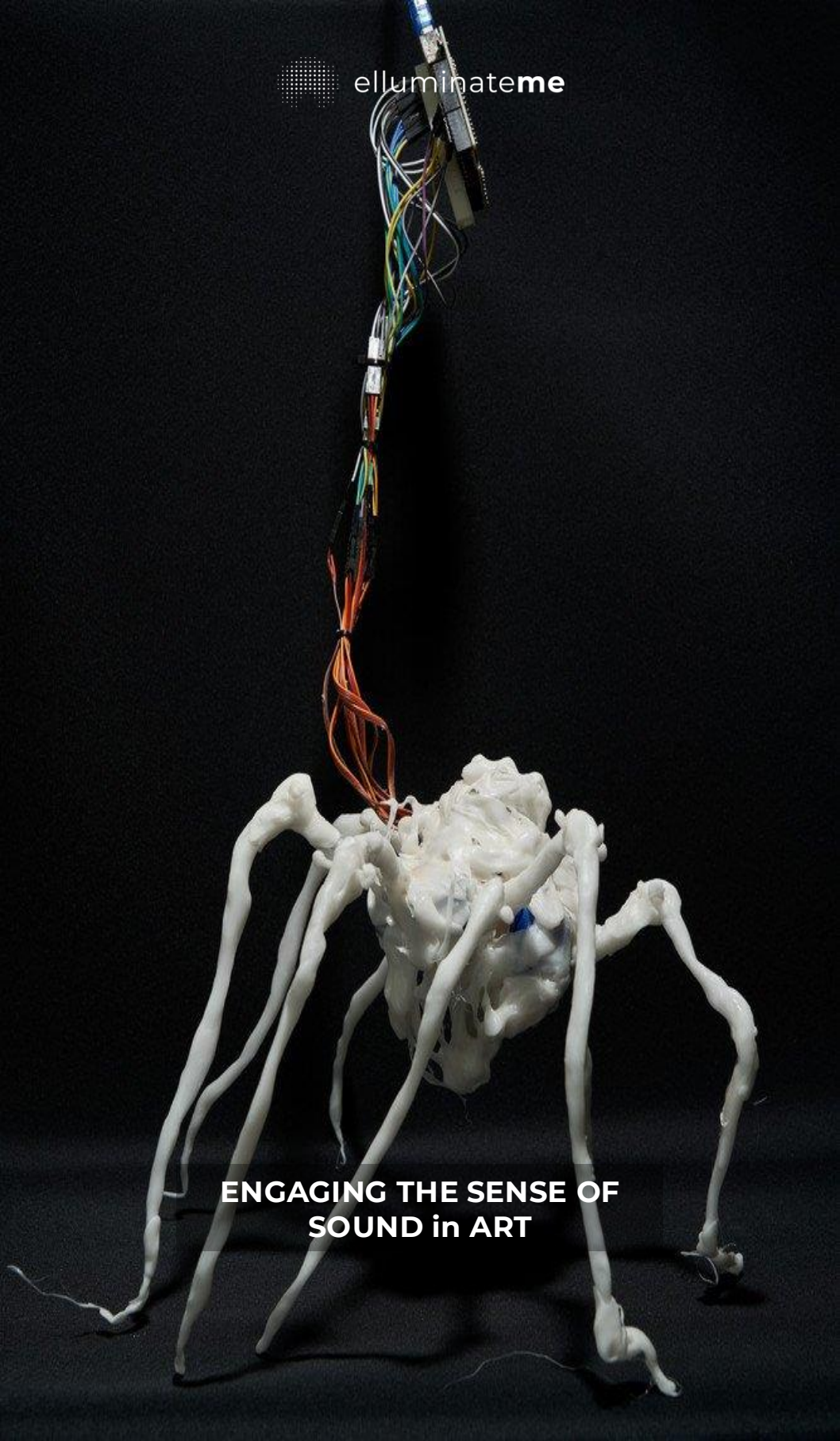

elluminateme
ENGAGING THE SENSE OF
SOUND in ART

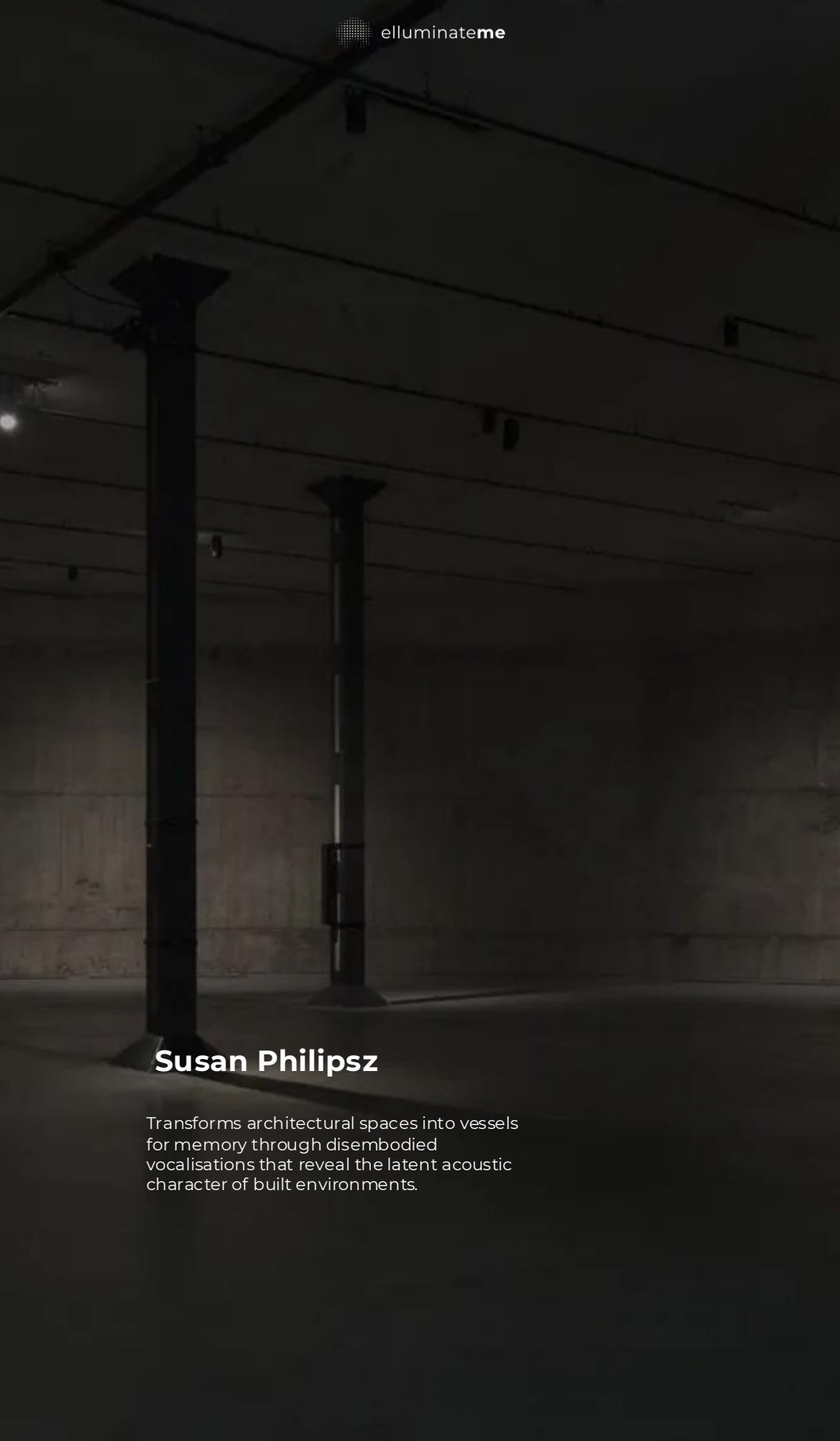
VIEWWORKS: ENGAGING THE SENSE OF SOUND in ART

Hello

Best,
Steven Kainth
Founder, Elluminate Me

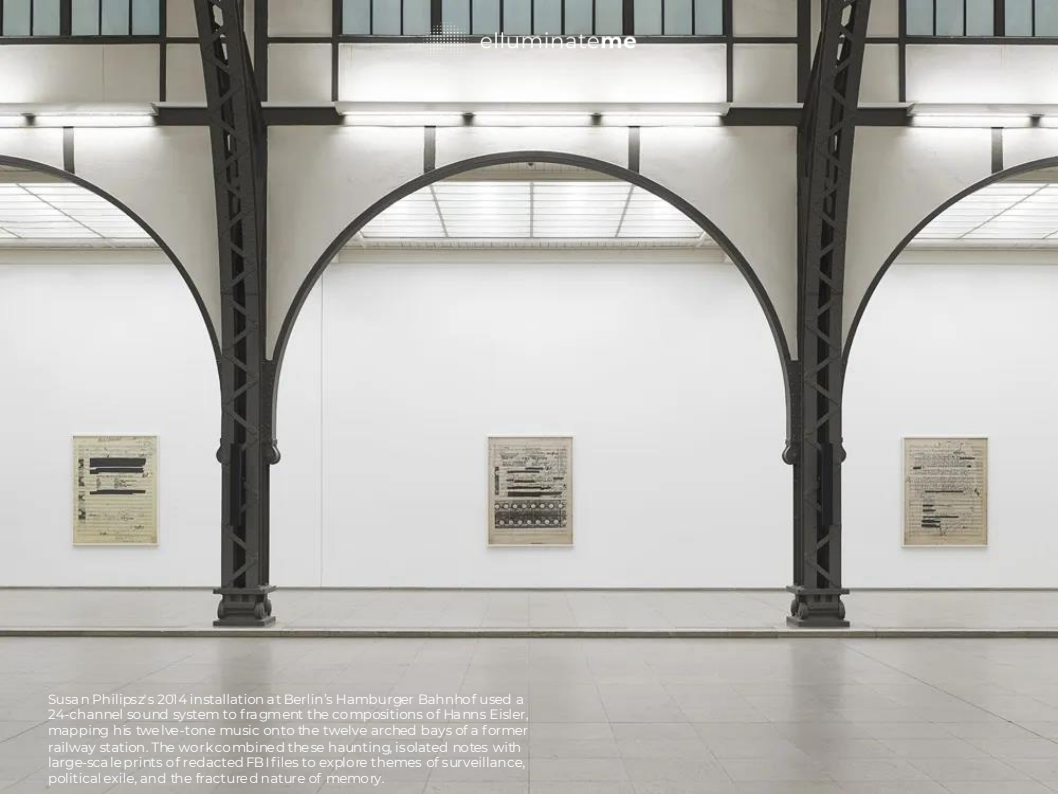
p.s. Feel free to share this document with anyone who may also find it valuable.

Cover page image: Kim Hankyul



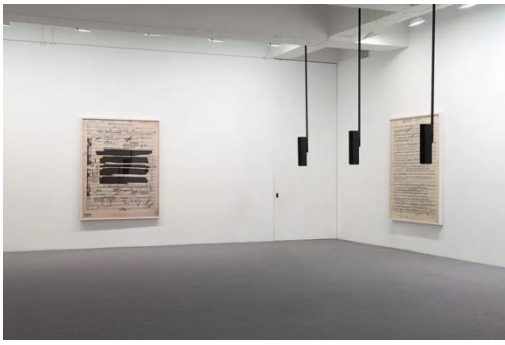
Susan Philipsz

Transforms architectural spaces into vessels for memory through disembodied vocalisations that reveal the latent acoustic character of built environments.

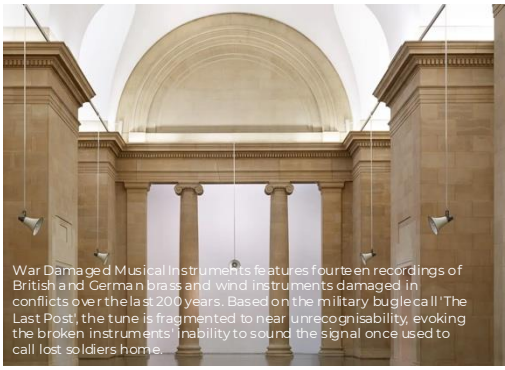


Susan Philipsz's 2014 installation at Berlin's Hamburger Bahnhof used a 24-channel sound system to fragment the compositions of Hanns Eisler, mapping his twelve-tone music onto the twelve arched bays of a former railway station. The work combined these haunting, isolated notes with large-scale prints of redacted FBI files to explore themes of surveillance, political exile, and the fractured nature of memory.

Susan Philipsz constructs site-specific sound installations that transform architectural spaces into vessels for memory and historical resonance. Her practice centres on the human voice as a sculptural material, recording herself singing fragments of folk songs, classical compositions, and historical melodies that she then distributes through multi-channel speaker systems. These disembodied vocalisations occupy corridors, stairwells, and voids, creating an uncanny sense of presence that persists in absence. Working with sound engineers and acoustic consultants, she calibrates each installation to respond to the unique resonant frequencies of its location, treating buildings as instruments that amplify and modify her voice. This approach reveals the latent acoustic character of spaces, making audible how architecture shapes and contains sonic experience.



Philipsz engages sensory sound through spatial dispersion and the physical impact of vocal frequencies on the body. In works such as "Lowlands," she multiplies her voice into a chorus that seems to emanate from the structure itself, creating a tactile sensation of being enveloped by sound. The fragmented nature of her compositions requires visitors to move through space to assemble complete melodies, turning listening into a physical journey.



War Damaged Musical Instruments features fourteen recordings of British and German brass and wind instruments damaged in conflicts over the last 200 years. Based on the military bugle call 'The Last Post', the tune is fragmented to near unrecognisability, evoking the broken instruments' inability to sound the signal once used to call lost soldiers home.

By stripping songs of their instrumental accompaniment and presenting bare vocals in unexpected locations, she strips away cultural familiarity and exposes the raw emotional charge of the human voice. This creates an intimate yet unsettling experience where sound becomes a medium for encountering history, loss, and the persistence of memory in built environments.

Images: Tanya Bonakdar Gallery



The Resonance of Memory in Susan Philipsz's "Returning"

Susan Philipsz's 2016 exhibition at the Kunstverein Hannover, titled "Returning," functioned as a profound site-specific exploration of architectural memory and German-Jewish history. As a sculptor who works primarily with the medium of sound, Philipsz utilised the gallery's physical layout to create a circular journey that mirrored the cyclical nature of grief and historical recovery. The centrepiece of the installation was "Seven Tears," a work inspired by John Dowland's 1604 composition, "Lachrimae or Seven Tears." For this piece, Philipsz recorded herself circling the rims of water-filled wine glasses, then pressed these singular, haunting tones onto seven vinyl records. Each record player acted as a separate sculptural element, playing a different note that fluctuated like the physical descent of a tear.

The exhibition was deeply anchored in the local heritage of Hannover, specifically paying tribute to Emil Berliner, the Hannover-born inventor of the gramophone. This connection informed her decision to use vinyl records as primary sound carriers for the first time in a gallery setting, bridging the gap between historical invention and contemporary art. Philipsz further layered the experience by incorporating the sounds of a historical synagogue organ that had survived the destruction of Kristallnacht in 1938. By reintroducing these specific frequencies into a public space, she made the weight of the past feel physically present and resonant.

Throughout the galleries, the artist continued her "War Damaged Musical Instruments" series, which featured recordings of the "Last Post" played on instruments recovered from various conflicts. In "Returning," she specifically highlighted the sound of a shofar, an ancient Jewish liturgical horn. The breath moving through these battered objects served as a visceral reminder of human survival and trauma. Visitors were forced to navigate the rooms to assemble the disparate sounds, turning the act of listening into a physical movement through time and architecture. The work ultimately presented a landscape of absence, where the displacement of sound reflected the displacement of people and the persistence of memory.



Christine Sun Kim

Interrogates the social and political dimensions of auditory experience from the perspective of Deaf culture through drawing, performance, and sound installation.

Installation view, Christine Sun Kim: *Oh Me Oh My*, 2023. The Tang Museum, Saratoga Springs, USA

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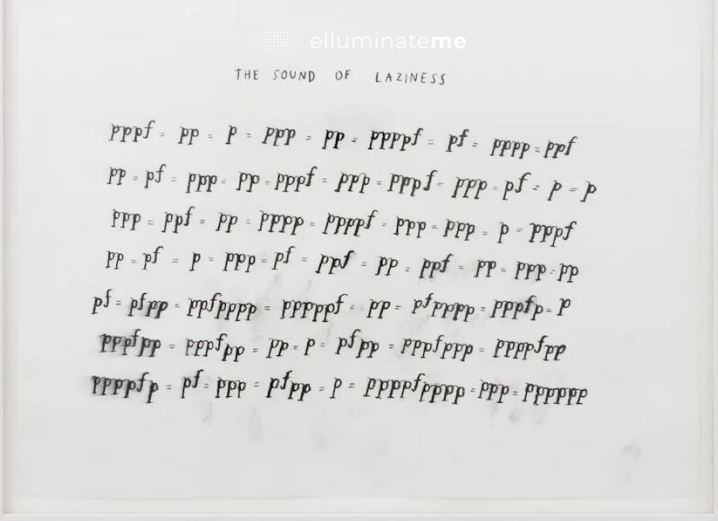


The Sound of Laziness
Explores how "laziness" in signing is judged by hearing audiences. A performance and drawing series reframing Deaf experience as alternative sensory knowledge, not absence of sound.

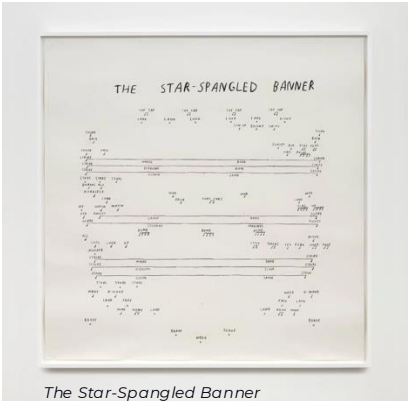
Christine Sun Kim works across drawing, performance, and sound installation to interrogate the social and political dimensions of auditory experience from the perspective of Deaf culture. Her practice emerges from the tension between American Sign Language (ASL) and the hearing world's sonic hierarchies, employing musical notation, infographics, and body movements to make visible the structures that govern sound and silence. She treats sound as a material that is owned, regulated, and culturally coded, exposing how norms of listening exclude those who cannot hear. Through large-scale murals, charcoal drawings, and multi-channel installations, she maps the "double burden" faced by marginalised communities navigating systems designed without their participation.

Kim engages sensory sound through vibration, visualisation, and the physical expression of sonic concepts. Her "Community Sigh" installation captures the collective exhalation of Deaf individuals as a tangible manifestation of shared experience, presenting these sighs as vinyl records weighted by hand-formed objects. In drawings such as "MIND ROCK," heavy charcoal masses collide with musical staves to depict immovable mental states, while her "Heavy Relevance" series distorts staff lines under pressure to critique the precarious visibility of Deaf culture.

By translating sound into visual and tactile forms, she constructs alternative sensory hierarchies where vibration, gesture, and spatial awareness become primary modes of aesthetic engagement. This challenges the hegemony of auditory perception and proposes forms of listening that operate through the entire body rather than the ear alone.



When I Play the Deaf Card



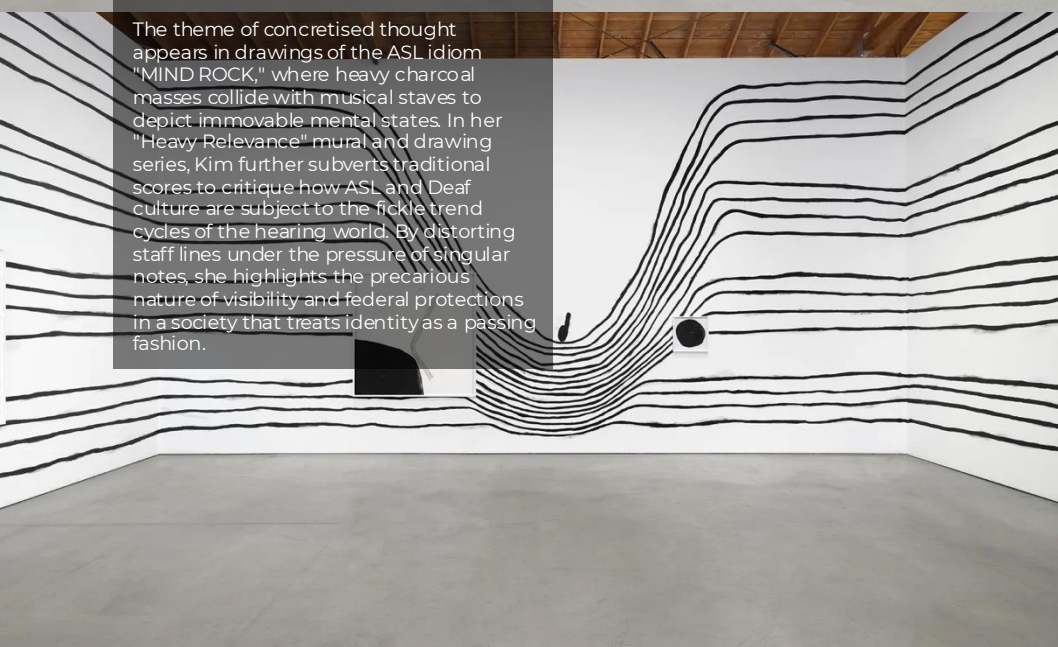
The Star-Spangled Banner

All images: Ghebaly





"American Sigh Language" coincides with Christine Sun Kim's major museum survey, "All Day All Night," currently touring from the Whitney to the Walker Art Center. The exhibition uses musical notation, infographics, and sign language to explore the "double burden" of marginalized groups facing the erosion of civil rights under current political pressures. Kim captures this atmospheric weight through "Community Sigh," a ten-channel sound installation featuring the recorded sighs of sixty-six Deaf individuals, played on vinyl records topped with symbolic, hand-formed weights.



The theme of concretised thought appears in drawings of the ASL idiom "MIND ROCK," where heavy charcoal masses collide with musical staves to depict immovable mental states. In her "Heavy Relevance" mural and drawing series, Kim further subverts traditional scores to critique how ASL and Deaf culture are subject to the fickle trend cycles of the hearing world. By distorting staff lines under the pressure of singular notes, she highlights the precarious nature of visibility and federal protections in a society that treats identity as a passing fashion.



Zimoun

Constructs minimalist kinetic installations that generate autonomous sound compositions through the mechanical interaction of simple materials.



25 woodworms, wood, microphone, sound system

Zimoun constructs minimalist kinetic installations that generate sound through the mechanical interaction of simple materials. His practice involves arranging DC motors, cardboard boxes, cotton balls, and wires into precise configurations where repetitive physical movements create complex acoustic textures. These self-operating systems function as autonomous compositions, continuously producing sound without human intervention. The artist treats the exhibition space as an instrument, carefully calibrating the placement of each element to exploit the room's acoustic properties. This approach draws on traditions of mechanical music and sound sculpture while rejecting the expressive gesture of the composer in favour of systematic, process-based generation.



1 prepared dc-motor, wire, cork, brass

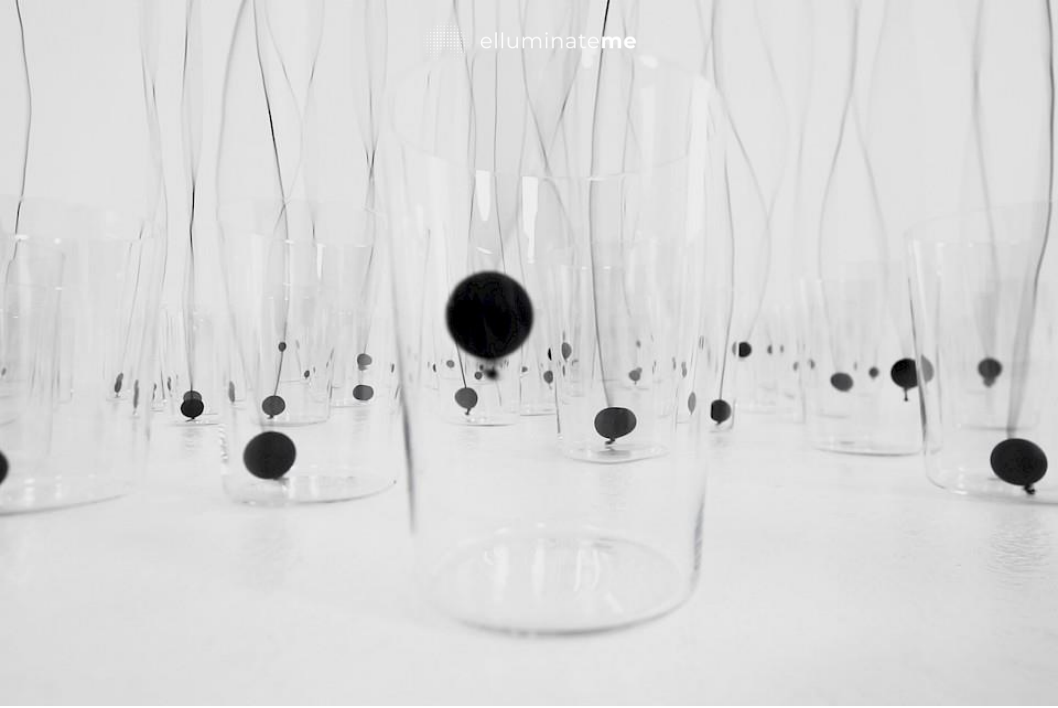
Zimoun engages sensory sound through physical vibration and the tactile perception of mechanical rhythm. His installations create dense fields of acoustic activity where the boundaries between individual sound sources blur into a collective drone. Visitors experience these works as immersive environments where the physical presence of moving objects is inseparable from their sonic output. The repetitive, almost meditative quality of the mechanical rhythms produces a bodily response akin to the effects of low-frequency vibration.



1 prepared dc-motor, water container, piano string

By making the production of sound visible and the machinery transparent, he creates a direct connection between seeing and hearing, where the physicality of the installation becomes the content of the aesthetic experience. This reveals the inherent musicality of industrial processes and the acoustic potential of ordinary materials.

Image: Zimoun



49 prepared dc-motors, rope, glass, polymer is an installation by Swiss artist Zimoun featuring forty-nine DC motors mounted on a wall, each rotating a rope that rhythmically strikes glass and polymer elements.

The motors are prepared to run at slightly different speeds, creating a complex, layered soundscape of delicate clicks, hums and resonant tones.

The work transforms simple mechanical components into an autonomous acoustic system, where repetition and variation generate a meditative, almost organic sonic environment.





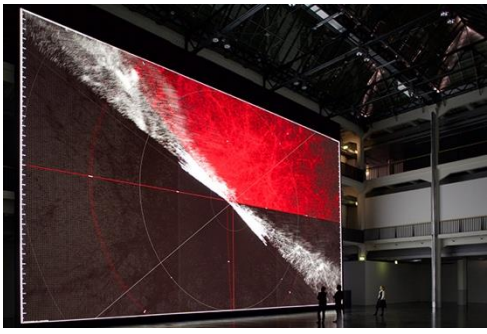
Image: James Ewing

Ryoji Ikeda

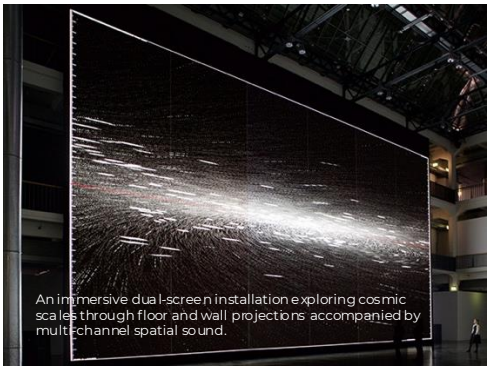
Produces immersive audiovisual installations that explore the materiality of data and the thresholds of human perception through extreme frequency ranges and precisely calibrated sensory stimuli.



Ryoji Ikeda produces immersive audiovisual installations that explore the materiality of data and the thresholds of human perception. His practice employs high-resolution projections, stroboscopic light, and precisely calibrated sound frequencies to create environments that overwhelm and reorganise sensory experience. Working from his studio in Kyoto, he collaborates with computer programmers and mathematicians to generate visualisations of vast datasets: DNA sequences, astronomical measurements, and particle physics collisions. These abstract information streams are translated into flickering patterns and pure sine waves that push the limits of what eyes and ears can process. His approach treats the exhibition space as a laboratory for investigating the boundaries between signal and noise, pattern and randomness.



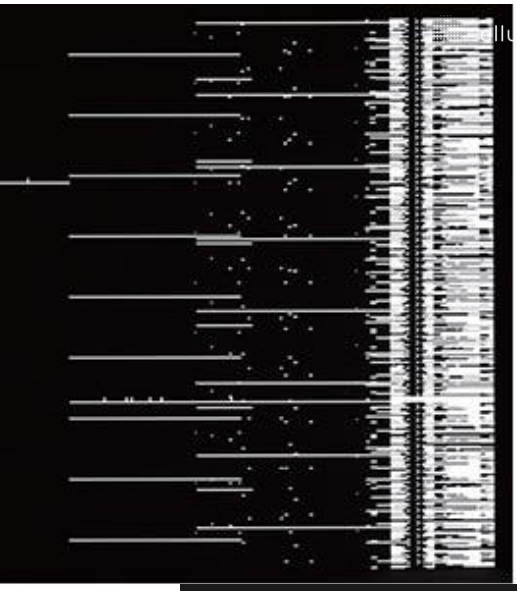
Ikeda engages sensory sound through extreme frequency ranges and the physical impact of pure tonal vibration. His "datamatics" and "test pattern" series subject audiences to stroboscopic visual fields and high-frequency audio that produce physiological responses beyond conscious control. The installations often operate at the threshold of audibility and visibility, with sounds pitched at the edges of human hearing and visual patterns that flicker too rapidly to be perceived as stable images. This creates a disorienting experience where the body responds to stimuli that the mind cannot fully process.

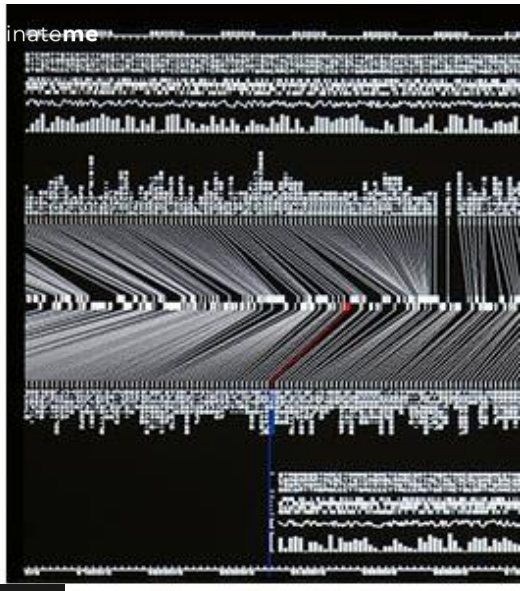


An immersive dual-screen installation exploring cosmic scales through floor and wall projections accompanied by multichannel spatial sound.

By pushing perception to its limits, he reveals the material substrate of digital information and the biological constraints of human sensory apparatus. His works propose that aesthetic experience can operate at the boundary between comprehension and overload, where the failure of perception becomes its own form of knowledge.

Images: Ryoji Ikeda

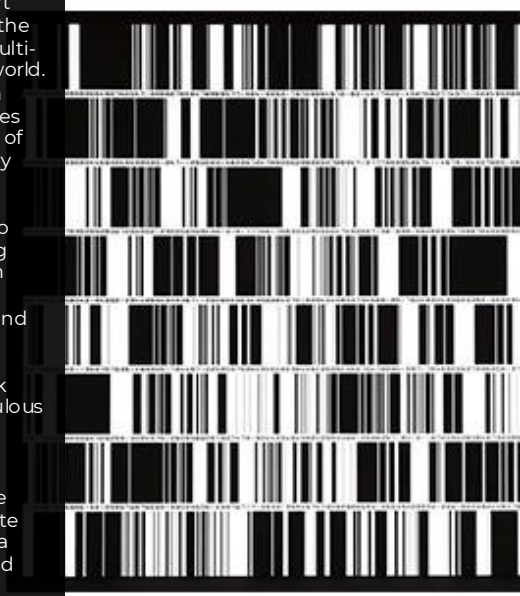


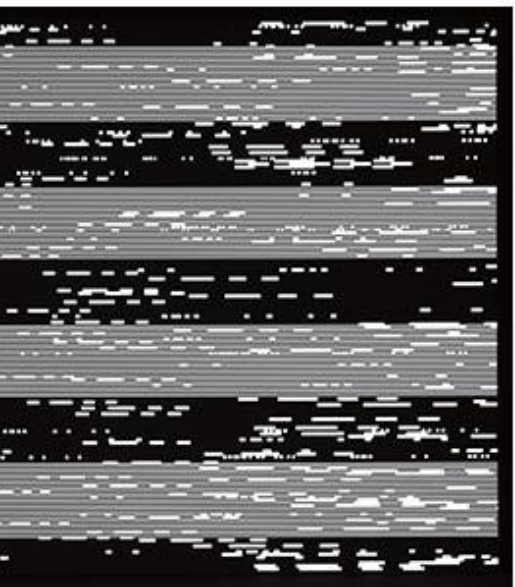


Datamatics is an audiovisual concert and installation series that explores the potential to perceive the invisible multi-substance of data permeating our world. Using pure data as a source for both sound and visuals, the work combines abstract and mimetic presentations of matter, time, and space. The imagery transforms from two-dimensional sequences derived from hard drive errors and software code studies into dramatic three-dimensional rotating views of the universe, culminating in four-dimensional mathematical processing that opens spectacular and seemingly infinite vistas.

A powerful and hypnotic soundtrack reflects the imagery through meticulous layering of sonic components to produce immense and apparently boundless acoustic spaces. The installation version employs multiple LED displays and computers to create immersive environments where data becomes tangible through visual and auditory materialisation.







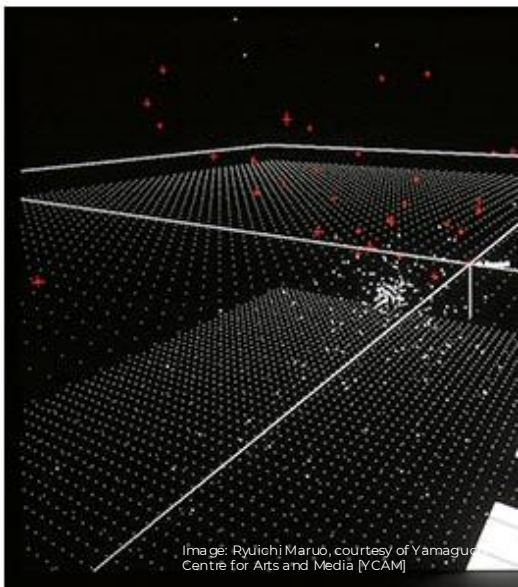


Image: Ryuichi Maruo, courtesy of Yamaguc
Centre for Arts and Media [YCAM]



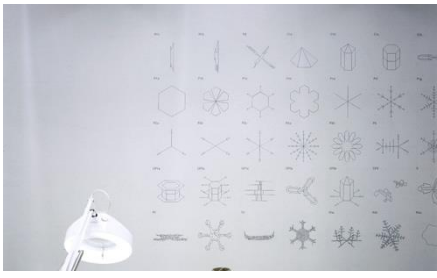
Carsten Nicolai

Investigates the "in-between colour" grey through monochrome paintings and sound installations that blur boundaries between visual and auditory perception.

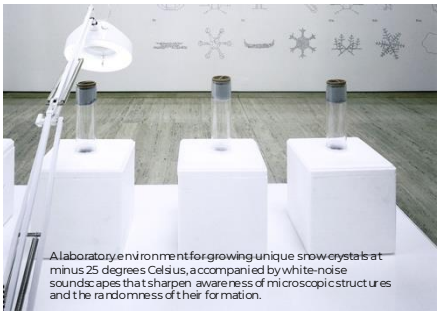
Autonomo features nine bell plates struck at random by balls from an autonomous machine, turning the gallery into a three-dimensional instrument where chance and physics determine the composition.



Carsten Nicolai operates at the intersection of visual art, music, and scientific research, creating installations that explore the physical properties of sound and light. His practice employs custom-built instruments, oscillators, and projection systems to generate phenomena that challenge the boundaries between sensory modalities. Working under the moniker Alva Noto, he produces electronic music that investigates frequency, rhythm, and the mathematical structures underlying aesthetic experience. His visual works often utilise moiré patterns, stroboscopic effects, and minimalist geometric forms to create perceptual disturbances that parallel his sonic experiments. This interdisciplinary approach treats art as a form of research into the fundamental patterns that organise human perception.

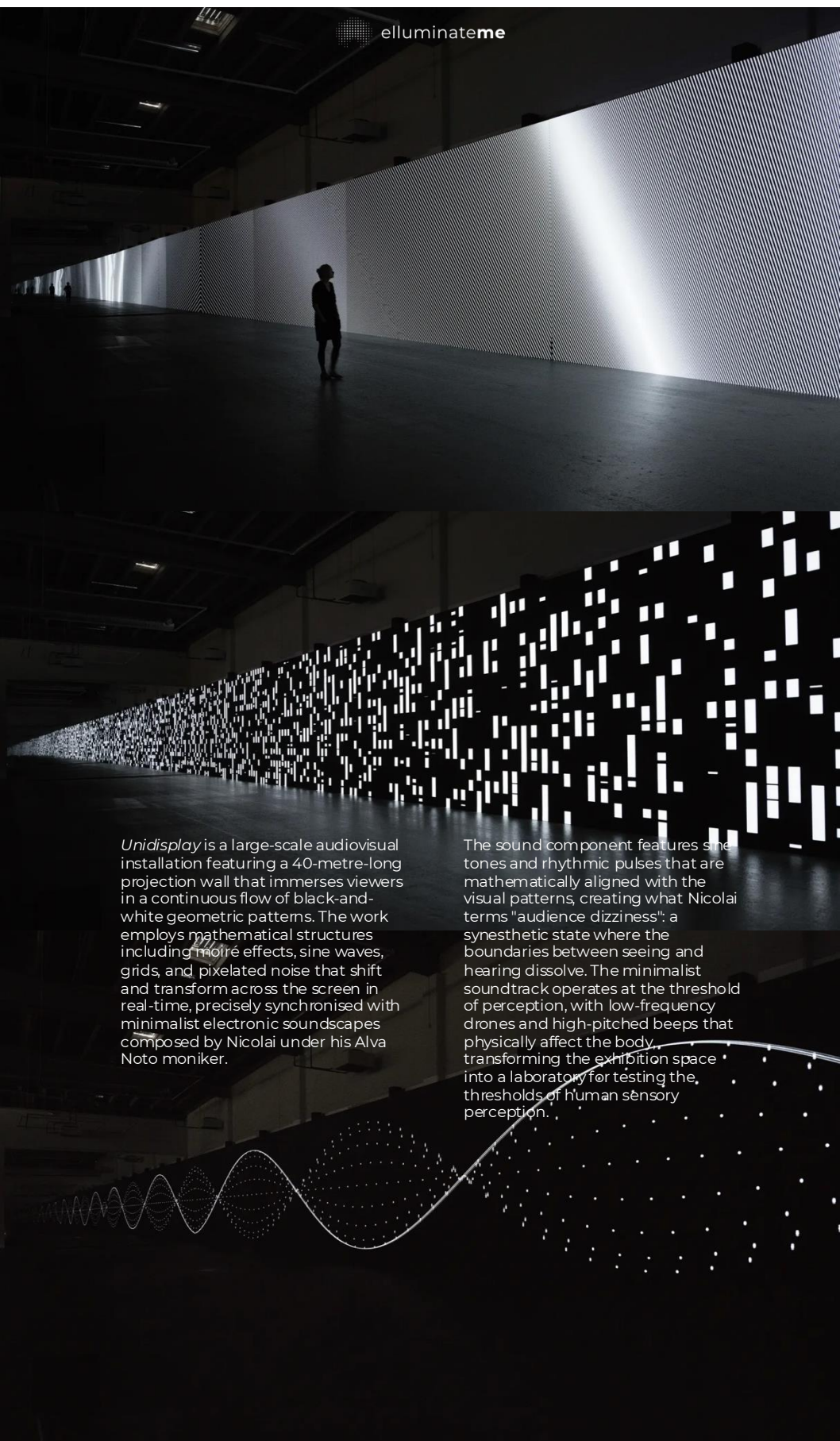


Nicolai engages sensory sound through synesthetic experience and the physical manipulation of electromagnetic fields. His installations frequently pair low-frequency audio with pulsating light to create environments where visitors cannot separate what they hear from what they see. The precise calibration of these stimuli produces physiological responses that bypass conscious interpretation, accessing direct neural pathways. In works such as "Unidisplay," he constructs monumental arrays of fluorescent tubes that flicker at frequencies correlated with sound waves, making the propagation of acoustic energy visible as light.



A laboratory environment for growing unique snow crystals at minus 25 degrees Celsius, accompanied by white-noise soundscapes that sharpen awareness of microscopic structures and the randomness of their formation.

By revealing the underlying unity of sensory experience, he proposes that sound and vision are not separate channels but interconnected aspects of a single perceptual field. This challenges the compartmentalisation of the senses and offers a holistic model of aesthetic encounter.



Unidisplay is a large-scale audiovisual installation featuring a 40-metre-long projection wall that immerses viewers in a continuous flow of black-and-white geometric patterns. The work employs mathematical structures including moiré effects, sine waves, grids, and pixelated noise that shift and transform across the screen in real-time, precisely synchronised with minimalist electronic soundscapes composed by Nicolai under his Alva Noto moniker.

The sound component features sine tones and rhythmic pulses that are mathematically aligned with the visual patterns, creating what Nicolai terms "audience dizziness": a synesthetic state where the boundaries between seeing and hearing dissolve. The minimalist soundtrack operates at the threshold of perception, with low-frequency drones and high-pitched beeps that physically affect the body, transforming the exhibition space into a laboratory for testing the thresholds of human sensory perception.



Elena Laurinavičiūtė

Creates ceramic sound installations that explore the acoustic properties of clay and connect industrial history with contemporary urbanisation through wind resonance.

Image: Liepa Grušaitė



Soundscrapers is an interactive installation of ceramic wind instruments and cooling fans that won the JCDecaux Prize. Porous clay sculptures produce humming and whistling sounds as air cuts across sharp edges, forming three-dimensional soundscapes. The work draws upon the 17th and 18th century ceramics industries of Vilnius's Snipiskes district, connecting historical craftsmanship with contemporary urbanisation. Viewers activate the fans, creating a shifting sonic environment through collective interaction. The artist reimagines the natural sounds of ceramics - the cracking of cooling glaze and the chirping of escaping air - through historical wind instrument mechanisms.

Elena Laurinaviciute creates ceramic sound installations that explore the acoustic properties of clay and the historical resonance of materials. Her practice combines traditional ceramic techniques with contemporary sound design to construct wind instruments and resonant objects that produce sound through air currents and physical interaction. Drawing on the history of the Snipiskes district in Vilnius, where ceramic industries thrived in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, she connects fragmented architectural remnants with contemporary urbanisation. Her works often incorporate cooling fans and ventilation systems to generate airflow, transforming passive sculptures into active sonic generators that respond to environmental conditions.



Laurinaviciute engages sensory sound through wind resonance and the tactile qualities of ceramic surfaces. Her "Soundscrapers" installation creates experimental wind instruments from porous clay, where sharp edges cut the air to produce humming and whistling sounds that form three-dimensional soundscapes. Members of the audience can activate or deactivate the fans, creating a shifting sonic environment shaped by collective interaction. The artist was inspired by the natural sounds of ceramics: the crystalline cracking of cooling glaze and the chirping of air escaping porous clay underwater.



By reimagining these phenomena through historical wind instrument mechanisms, she constructs installations where the material memory of clay becomes audible. This creates a sensory connection between industrial history, geological time, and the immediate physical experience of sound as vibration.

Image: Alanas Gurinas



Low Frequency Memory is an exhibition by emerging Lithuanian artists Elena Laurinaviciute and Roma Sale at the Liepkalnis Water Reservoir in Vilnius. Laurinaviciute explores the relationship between material and ephemeral elements, including clay and sound, through distinctive sound installations that render the invisible audible. Air currents, vibrations and rhythmic motion become an active acoustic medium. Sale's light-wielding objects reflect the memory and historical layers of the space, revealing spatial memory through precise manipulation of light and pointing to changes in the building's function and history.

Together, they explore a synthesis of sound, light and space that evokes invisible states of transformation and instability, using the reservoir's acoustic architecture as an integral component where echoes form a living body of sound. The exhibition examines how sound and light interact with space to influence human perception, inviting viewers to experience subtle, often unnoticed states of change through a synaesthetic interplay of rarely observed waves. Presented by (AVI7) Gallery as part of a project showcasing young Lithuanian interdisciplinary female artists in non-traditional spaces.

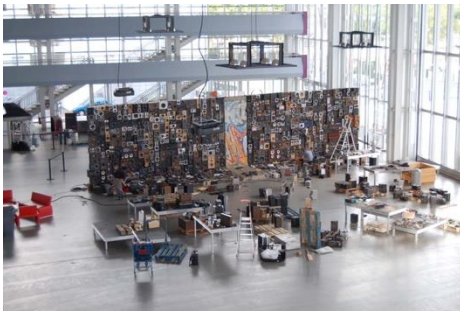


Benoit Maubrey

Constructs large-scale interactive audio sculptures that démocratise sound art through public participation and mobile performance.



Benoit Maubrey is a French-American sound and installation artist known for large-scale, interactive audio sculptures that transform public spaces into immersive sonic environments. Working primarily with repurposed electronics and speaker systems, Maubrey creates monumental works that blur the boundaries between sculpture, architecture, and performance. His artistic practice centres on democratising sound art, making it accessible, participatory and deeply integrated into urban landscapes. Rather than creating static objects for passive contemplation, Maubrey builds social instruments that invite public interaction, often incorporating telephones, recording devices and broadcast technologies that allow passersby to become co-creators of the work.



Maubrey engages the sense of sound through several distinct methodologies that emphasise participation and spatial experience. His signature Audio Ballerinas and Audio Peacocks feature performers wearing speaker-equipped costumes that broadcast sounds triggered by movement, effectively turning the human body into a mobile sound source. In his Speaker's Wall installations, he constructs massive walls from salvaged loudspeakers, often numbering in the thousands, that function as interactive communication devices; visitors can call phone numbers connected to the wall and broadcast their voices across public squares. For The Temple, a replica of the Greek Temple of Diana built from over 300 loudspeakers, Maubrey created a structure where sound itself becomes architectural material, with visitors able to phone in and have their voices modulated through the building's audio matrix.



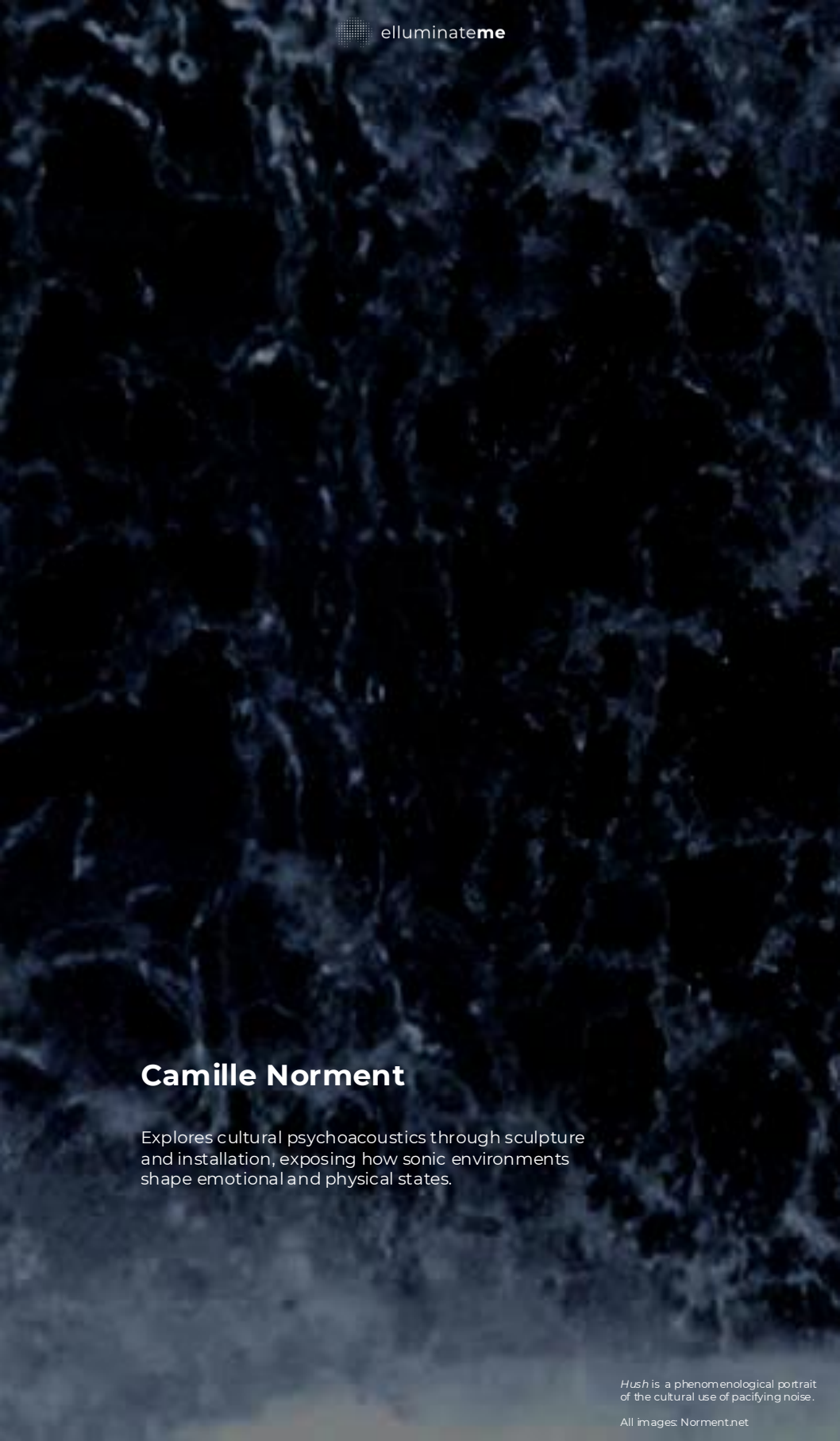
His Diasporic Voices series employs answering machines and recording equipment to collect oral histories from local communities, then broadcasts these testimonies through speaker installations, creating layered soundscapes of memory and identity.

Images: benoitmaubrey



The AUDIO BALLERINAS are a group of performers who use light sensors to generate sound through the interaction between their movements and ambient light. A range of additional electronic instruments, including digital samplers, contact microphones, light-to-frequency controllers, movement sensors, MP3 players and radio receivers, allows them to engage with the sounds, surfaces and spatial qualities around them in both solo and group choreographies.

Originally created in 1989 as solar-powered tutus for the Festivals Les Arts au Soleil in Lille at Aéronef, the Audio Ballerinas remain a key project of Benoît Maubrey's group. They have since been presented at numerous international festivals worldwide.



Camille Norment

Explores cultural psychoacoustics through sculpture and installation, exposing how sonic environments shape emotional and physical states.

Hush is a phenomenological portrait of the cultural use of pacifying noise.

All images: Norment.net



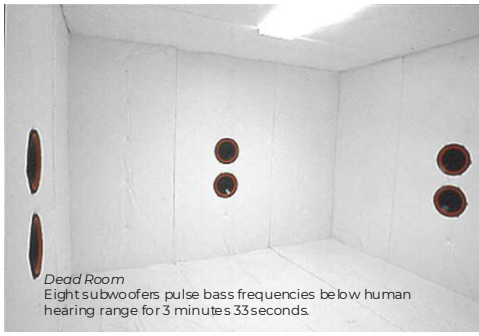
Everything but Noting
Kinetic sculpture using a brass singing bowl, boarding balls, modified cymbal stands, and electronics. The boarding balls roll and strike the singing bowl, producing resonant, meditative tones. Modified cymbal stands act as both support and sound modifiers. Electronics amplify and process the acoustic vibrations, creating a layered soundscape that shifts between physical and electronic presence.
Image: Thor Brødreskift

Camille Norment creates installations that explore the cultural and physiological dimensions of sound through sculpture, performance, and drawing. Her practice investigates what she terms "cultural psychoacoustics": the ways in which societies construct and regulate sonic experience.

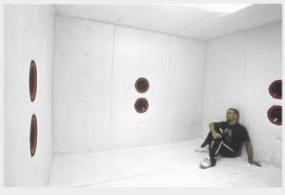
Working with materials such as glass, metal, and electronics, she constructs instruments and environments that make audible the tensions between comfort and anxiety, presence and absence. Her research spans historical medical instruments, vibrational therapies, and the social history of sound, informing works that expose how acoustic environments shape emotional and physical states.

Norment engages sensory sound through low-frequency vibration and the tactile impact of infrasound. Her installation "Triplight" employs a rotating mechanism that generates rhythmic light patterns and associated hums, creating a synesthetic experience where visual and auditory perception merge. In "Dead Room," eight large subwoofers pulse bass frequencies too low for conscious hearing, producing physical sensations that bypass the ear entirely. The space is charged with subtle erotic tension, accentuated by a diamond-shaped mirror that reflects only the lower half of the body. Her "Music Box" presents an enlarged child's music box that chimes a repetitive, hypnotically dissonant tune, its directionless sound weaving through the listener's mind as they navigate a floor scattered with stiletto-enhanced pointe shoes.

By manipulating frequencies that are felt rather than heard, she constructs environments where sound operates as a physical force that reshapes bodily awareness.



Dead Room
Eight subwoofers pulse bass frequencies below human hearing range for 3 minutes 33 seconds.



The duration references average pop song length on radio; the inaudible sound nods to Cagean silence, physical vibration without perceptible tone, presence through absence.

Images: Camille Norment Studio



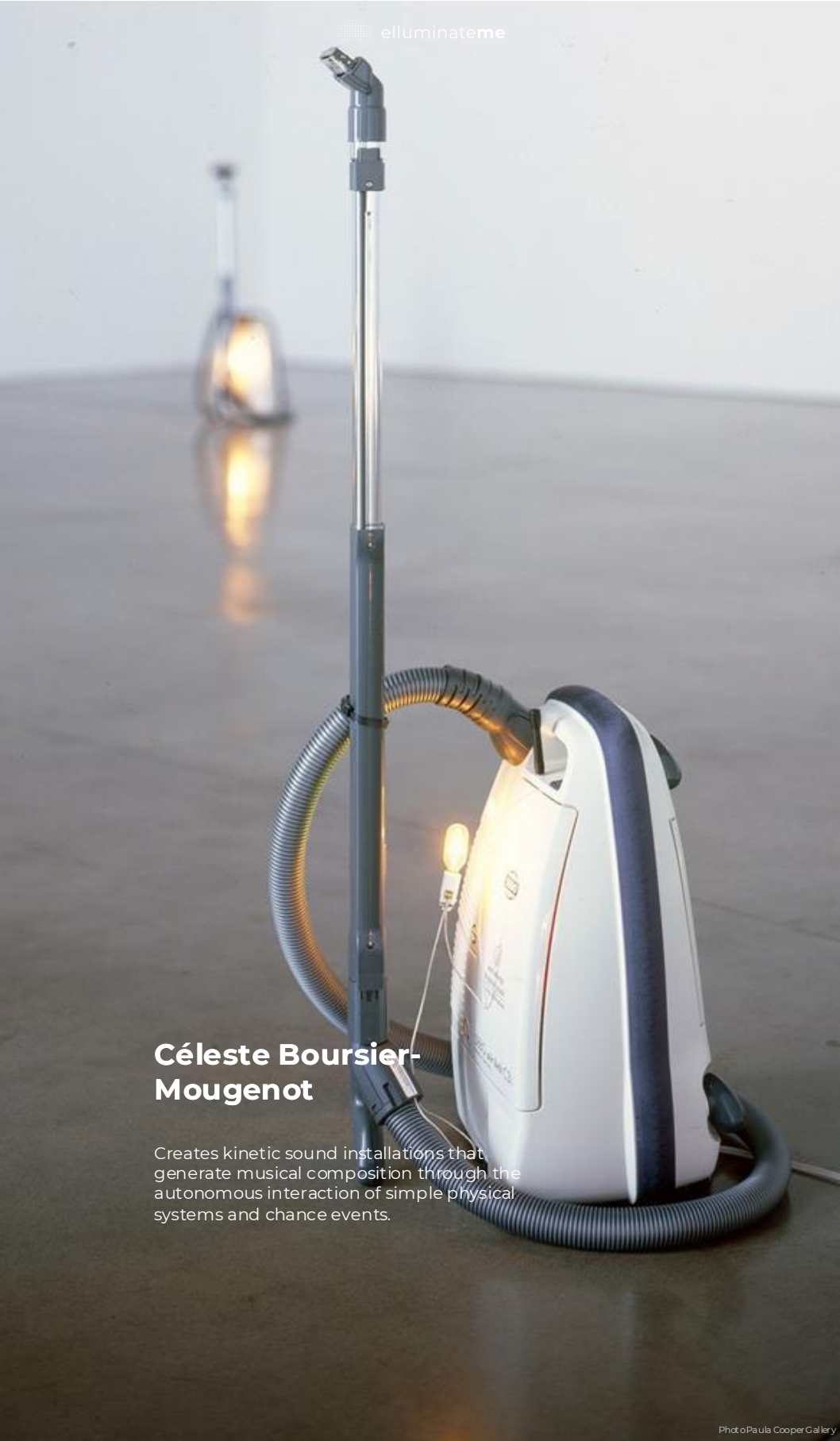
Music Box

In the centre of a blackened room, a larger-than-life child's music box chimes a repetitive, hypnotically dissonant tune, familiar yet elusive like a memory just out of reach, stirring a deeper urge to recall it.

The box's form and the natural resonance of its wooden body make the sound appear directionless, weaving through the listener's mind as she navigates a floor scattered with stiletto-enhanced pointe shoes.

The space is further charged with a subtle erotic tension, accentuated by a diamond-shaped mirror that reflects only the lower half of the body.

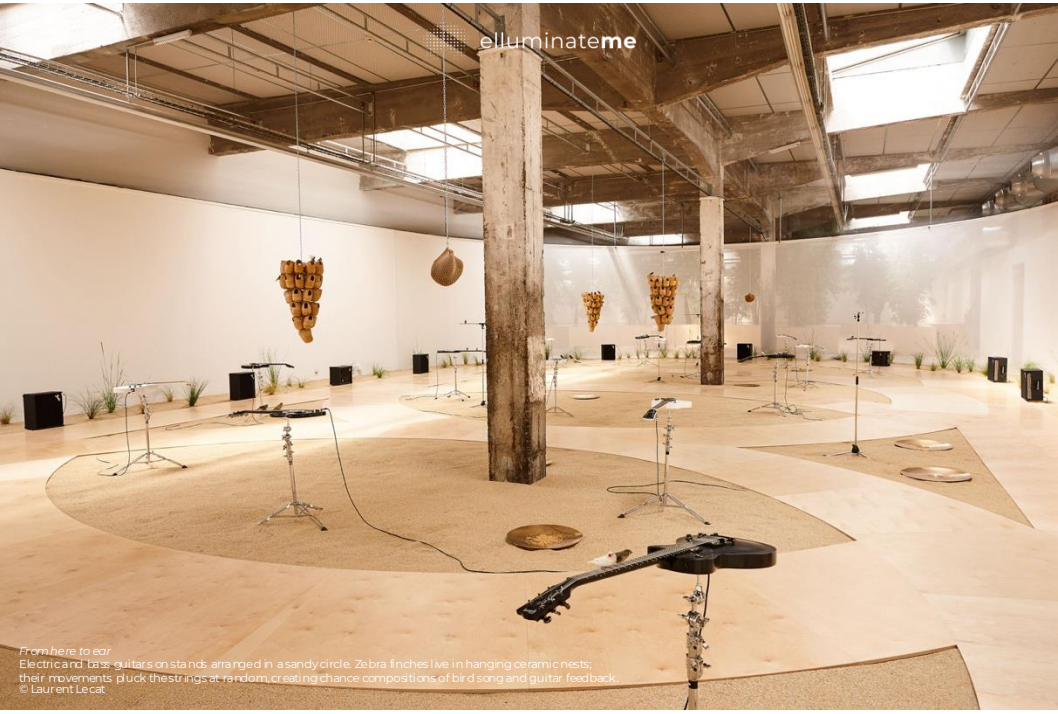




Céleste Boursier-Mougenot

Creates kinetic sound installations that generate musical composition through the autonomous interaction of simple physical systems and chance events.

Photo Paula Cooper Gallery

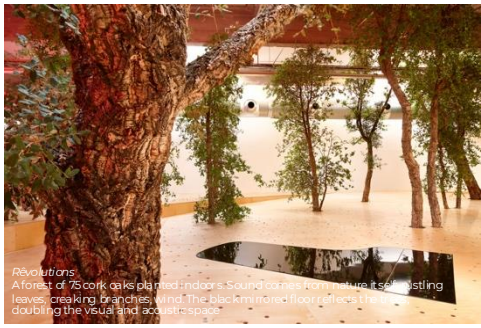


From here to ear
Electric and bass guitars on stands arranged in a sandy circle. Zebra finches live in hanging ceramic nests; their movements pluck the strings at random, creating chance compositions of bird song and guitar feedback.
© Laurent Lecat

Céleste Boursier-Mougenot creates kinetic sound installations that generate composition through the autonomous interaction of simple physical systems. Trained as a musician at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Lyon, he approaches sculpture as a form of musical notation, arranging objects and mechanisms that produce sound without human performers. His installations often employ water currents, air pressure, and gravitational forces to propel objects through space, creating chance acoustic events that accumulate into complex sonic textures. This methodology treats the exhibition space as a musical instrument that plays itself, where the artist's role is limited to establishing initial conditions rather than determining specific outcomes.

Boursier-Mougenot engages sensory sound through continuous, slow-moving processes that invite prolonged contemplation. His "clinamen" series fills large basins with water across which white porcelain bowls drift and collide, producing delicate bell-like chimes that resemble Tibetan singing bowls. The title derives from Epicurean physics: clinamen refers to the unpredictable swerve of atoms as they move through the void, a concept that mirrors the work's inherent indeterminacy. Each collision generates unrepeatable sounds, and as the artist notes, if one attempts to anticipate the resulting note or timbre, the actual sound typically defies expectation.

By removing human performers and allowing physical processes to generate music, he creates dreamlike states between uncertainty and floating, where listening becomes a form of meditation on the passage of time and the emergence of order from chaos.

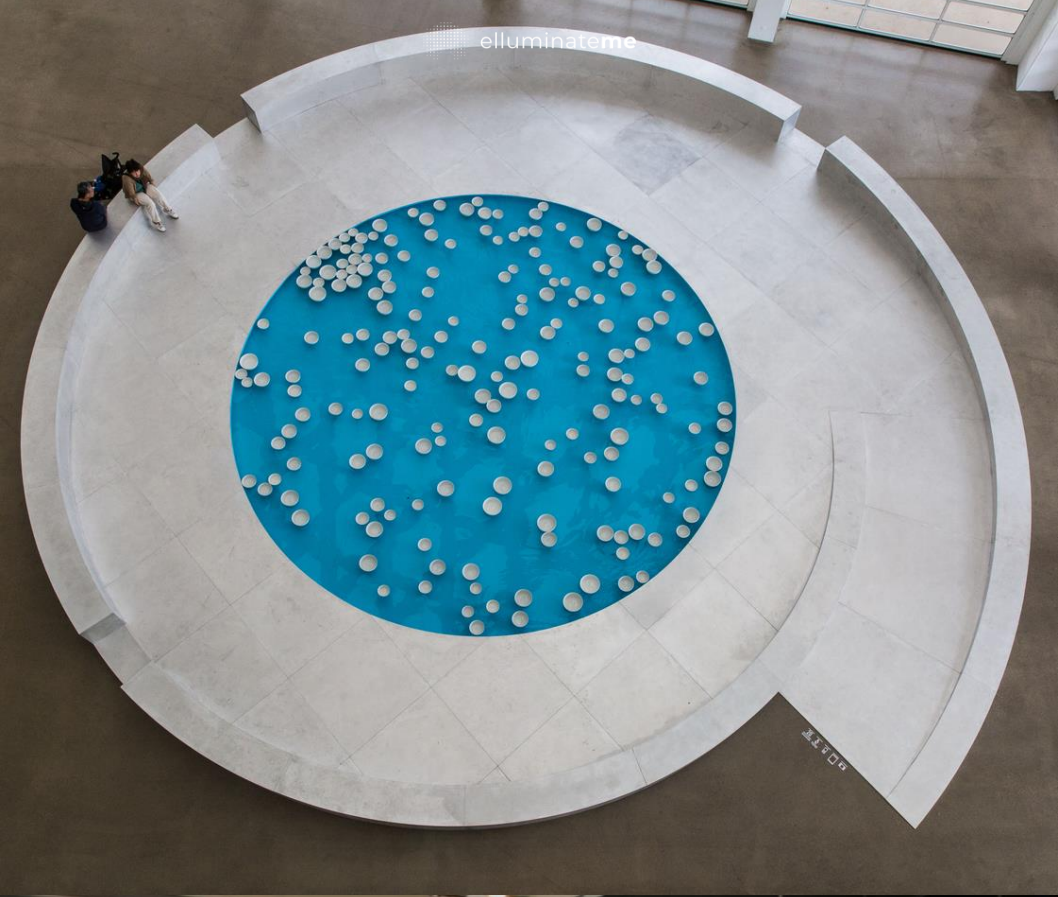


Révolutions
A forest of 75 cork oaks planted indoors. Sound comes from nature itself: rustling leaves, creaking branches, wind. The black mirrored floor reflects the trees, doubling the visual and acoustic space.



Aura
A drum kit sits in a 7-metre gravel circle. Cherry stones rain down onto the drums, triggering sound. An electromagnetic detector senses visitors — the more people approach, the denser the rainfall and the richer the rhythm.

Photo Paula Cooper Gallery



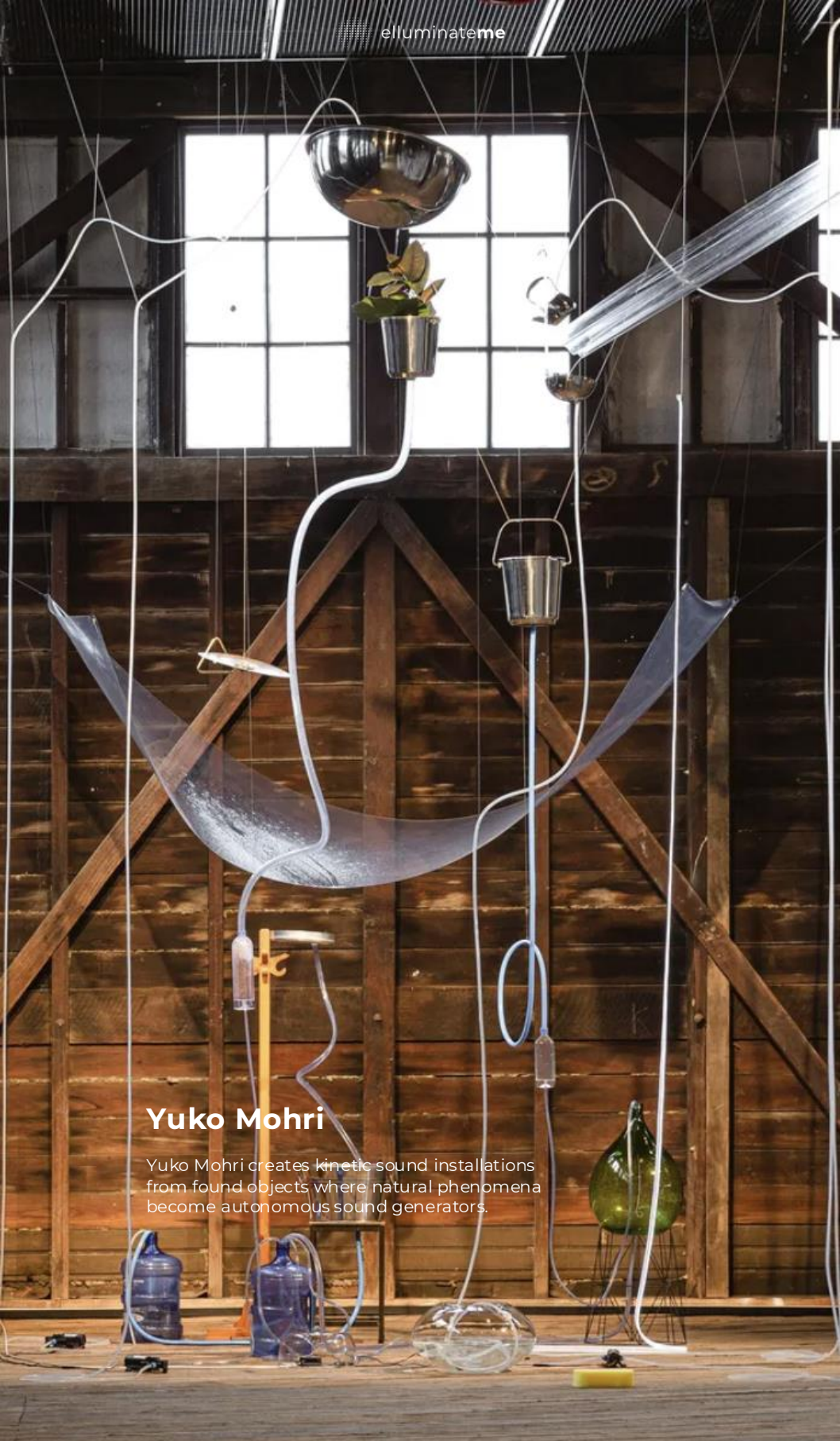
Clinamen v.2

is an acoustic installation comprising a large blue basin filled with water, across which white porcelain bowls drift and collide.

The installation operates through a carefully calibrated mechanical system. A water pump generates gentle currents that propel the porcelain vessels across the pool's surface. As the bowls drift, they collide with one another, producing delicate, bell-like chimes that resemble the tones of Tibetan singing bowls . The artist controls variables including water temperature, current speed and the size and number of bowls to shape the sonic outcome, treating the entire apparatus as a musical score made visible.

The title derives from Epicurean physics: clinamen refers to the unpredictable swerve of atoms as they move through the void, a concept that mirrors the work's inherent indeterminacy . Each collision generates unrepeatable sounds; as Boursier-Mougenot notes, if one attempts to anticipate the resulting note or timbre, the actual sound typically defies expectation.

Trained as a composer, Boursier-Mougenot approaches the work as a living composition rather than a static sculpture. The installation requires no human performers; instead, the porcelain bowls themselves become the instruments. The resulting soundscape is both percussive and melodic, creating what the artist describes as a dreamlike state between uncertainty and floating. The work invites prolonged contemplation, using retinal and auditory persistence to draw visitors into sustained, focused listening.



Yuko Mohri

Yuko Mohri creates kinetic sound installations from found objects where natural phenomena become autonomous sound generators.

elluminateme

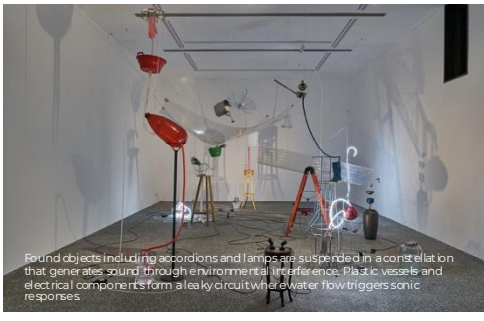


Suspended paper strips and metallic objects create an autonomous soundscape triggered by air currents and magnetic fields.

Yuko Mohri constructs intricate ecosystems from salvaged everyday objects, allowing natural forces to compose their own sonic narratives. Her practice centres on the unpredictable interplay between environmental conditions and discarded materials, where humidity, temperature fluctuations, and magnetic fields trigger acoustic responses without human intervention. Working across sculpture, installation, and sound, she transforms mundane items such as umbrellas, plastic bottles, and decommissioned musical instruments into sensitive conductors that translate invisible atmospheric changes into audible phenomena. This approach rejects traditional compositional control in favour of what she terms "leakage" - the uncontrollable seepage of energy between objects that generates unforeseen harmonic relationships.



Her engagement with sensory sound operates through tactile and spatial immediacy rather than conventional auditory experience. In her "Moré Moré" series, water dripping from suspended vessels creates electrical circuits that activate sound-producing mechanisms, making visitors acutely aware of humidity and temperature through their ears. The installations require physical navigation through dense fields of hanging objects, where proximity alters acoustic perception and bodily movement becomes a means of mixing the soundscape.



Found objects including accordions and lamps are suspended in a constellation that generates sound through environmental interference. Plastic vessels and electrical components form a leaky circuit where water flow triggers sonic responses.

By rendering environmental conditions audible, Mohri invites audiences to perceive their own sensory entanglement with atmospheric processes, experiencing sound as a physical manifestation of invisible natural forces that continuously reshape the installation's sonic character.

Images: Yasushi Ichikawa / Frieze; Marina Melchers / Tanya Bonakdar Gallery



Compose is a site-specific installation created for the Japan Pavilion at the 60th Venice Biennale, where Mohri responded to the pavilion's leaking roof by creating an elaborate system of vessels, umbrellas, and musical instruments that transform water drips into electrical impulses and sound. The work makes visible the invisible forces of humidity and gravity, creating a collaborative composition between the building's deteriorating architecture and the artist's sensitive apparatus.

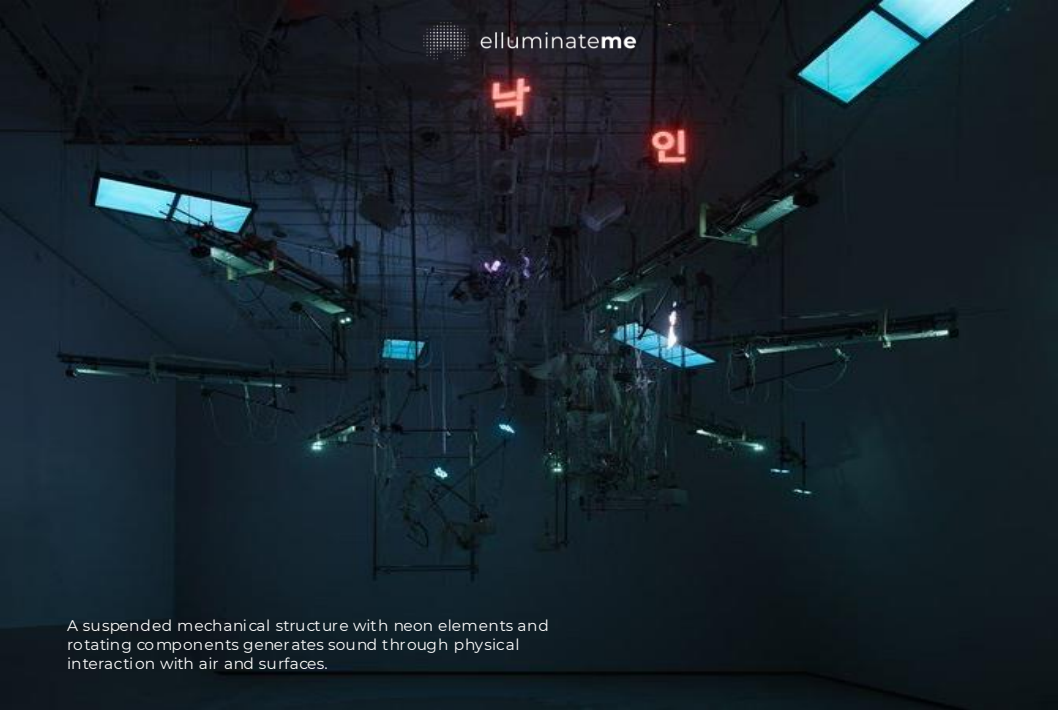
Visitors move through a forest of suspended objects, experiencing sound as a physical presence that shifts with their movement and the changing atmospheric conditions.

Image: Yasushi Ichikawa / Sculpture Magazine



Kim Hankyul

Kim Hankyul engineers kinetic sound sculptures where mechanical instruments perform physical Foley techniques to explore tactile auditory experience.



A suspended mechanical structure with neon elements and rotating components generates sound through physical interaction with air and surfaces.

Kim Hankyul fabricates elaborate mechanical orchestras that generate sound through direct physical manipulation of materials. His installations combine motors, holographic projections, and custom-built instruments to create what he terms "audio-visual sculptures" where sonic production is inseparable from visible mechanical action. Drawing on his background in Foley artistry, he constructs machines that strike, rub, and vibrate surfaces to produce acoustic effects normally hidden in film production, exposing the physical labour behind seemingly ephemeral sounds. The works often incorporate elements from Korean temple architecture and Buddhist iconography, reimagined through contemporary mechanical systems that transform spiritual symbolism into sensorial immediacy.



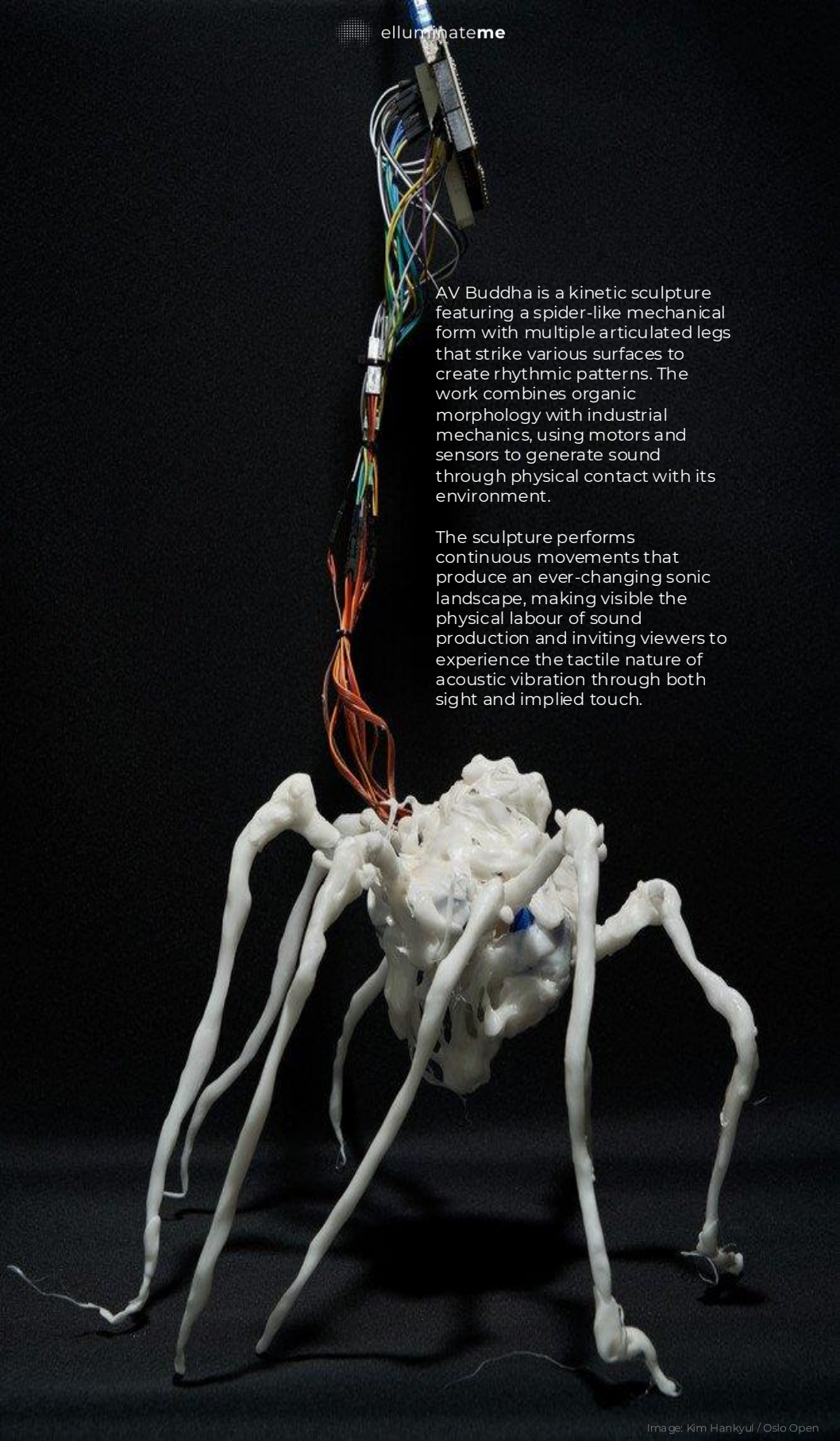
White sculptural forms and green screens create a laboratory environment where mechanical instruments perform automated Foley techniques.

The artist engages sensory sound through haptic and spatial manipulation, emphasising the physical vibration of air as a tangible presence. Visitors encounter installations where speakers are mounted on mechanical arms that move through space, creating Doppler effects and shifting acoustic focal points that respond to bodily position. His use of bone conduction technology and tactile transducers allows sound to be felt through floor surfaces and architectural elements, dissolving the boundary between hearing and touch.



By making the mechanical production of sound visible and the physical impact of sound waves palpable, Hankyul constructs environments where auditory experience becomes a full-body engagement with vibrating matter.

Images: Kim Hankyul



AV Buddha is a kinetic sculpture featuring a spider-like mechanical form with multiple articulated legs that strike various surfaces to create rhythmic patterns. The work combines organic morphology with industrial mechanics, using motors and sensors to generate sound through physical contact with its environment.

The sculpture performs continuous movements that produce an ever-changing sonic landscape, making visible the physical labour of sound production and inviting viewers to experience the tactile nature of acoustic vibration through both sight and implied touch.

Image: Kim Hankyul / Oslo Open

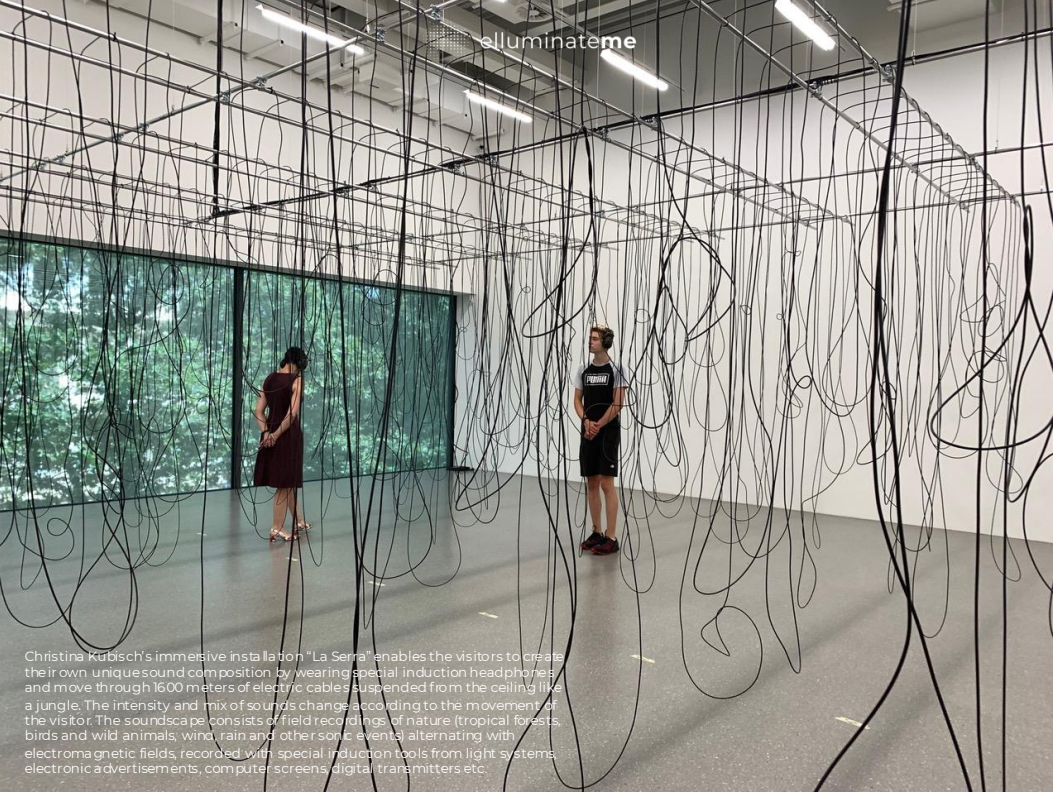




Christina Kubisch

Christina Kubisch pioneers electromagnetic sound art, transforming invisible urban frequencies into audible experiences through custom induction headphones.

Image: Christina Kubisch

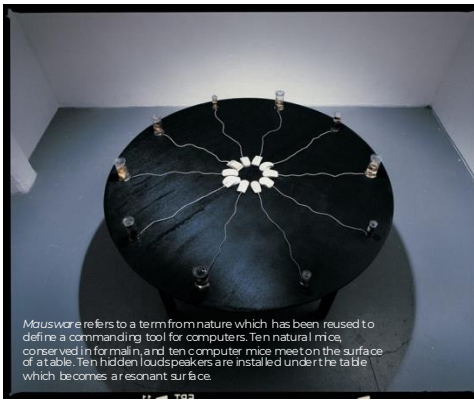


Christina Kubisch's immersive installation "La Serra" enables the visitors to create their own unique sound composition by wearing spatial induction headphones and move through 1600 meters of electric cables suspended from the ceiling like a jungle. The intensity and mix of sounds change according to the movement of the visitor. The soundscape consists of field recordings of nature (tropical forests, birds and wild animals, wind, rain and other sonic events) alternating with electromagnetic fields, recorded with special induction tools from light systems, electronic advertisements, computer screens, digital transmitters etc.

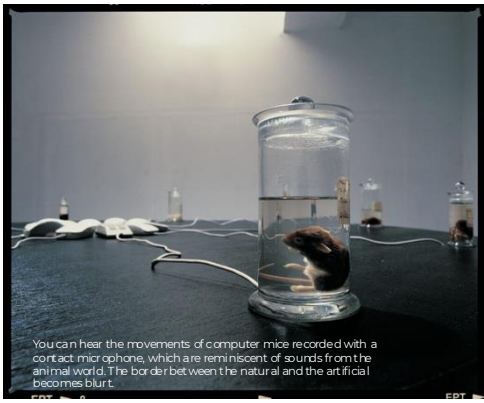
Christina Kubisch has spent four decades mapping the hidden electromagnetic landscapes of cities, revealing the sonic richness of invisible technological infrastructures. Her practice began with magnetic field recordings and evolved into the creation of custom-built headphones that detect and amplify electromagnetic emissions from everyday devices, transforming the act of listening into a form of urban archaeology. Through her "Electrical Walks" series, now realised in ninety-four cities worldwide, she constructs site-specific routes where participants wearing her induction headphones discover the complex acoustic signatures of traffic lights, security systems, and wireless networks. This work redefines public space as a multi-layered sonic environment where invisible technological forces become palpable sensory experiences.

Kubisch engages sensory sound through electromagnetic induction, creating a tactile relationship between listener and environment that bypasses traditional audio transmission. The headphones function as prosthetic extensions that translate invisible radiation into immediate auditory sensation, making the body a direct receiver of environmental data. Her installations such as "Cloud" suspend complex wire configurations that emit electromagnetic fields, allowing visitors to physically navigate through zones of varying sonic intensity.

By rendering the electromagnetic spectrum audible, she exposes the dense web of invisible communications that permeate contemporary space, inviting a form of listening that is simultaneously physical exploration and technological critique, where the body becomes a sensor detecting the invisible currents of modern urban existence.



Mausware refers to a term from nature which has been reused to define a commanding tool for computers. Ten natural mice, conserved in formalin, and ten computer mice meet on the surface of a table. Ten hidden loudspeakers are installed under the table which becomes a resonant surface.



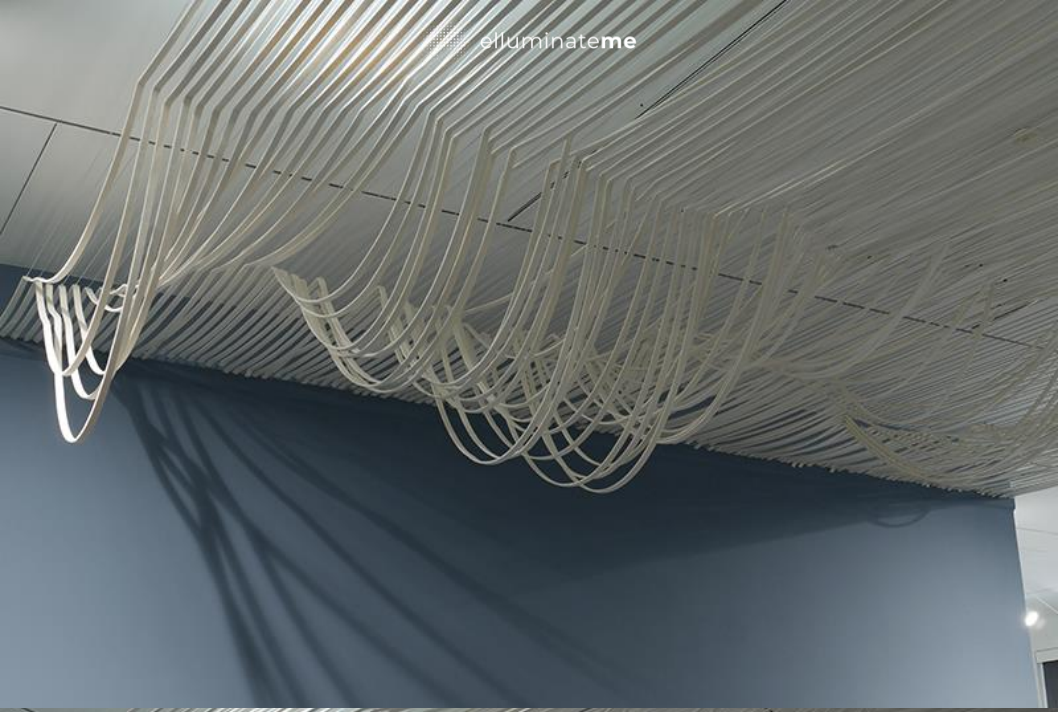
You can hear the movements of computer mice recorded with a contact microphone, which are reminiscent of sounds from the animal world. The border between the natural and the artificial becomes blurt.



Cloud is a large-scale installation composed of thousands of metres of blue copper wire suspended in a dense, chaotic formation that emits complex electromagnetic fields. Visitors equipped with Kubisch's custom induction headphones move through the gallery space, discovering zones of varying sonic intensity created by the interaction of their bodies with the invisible fields.

The work transforms the gallery into a three-dimensional sonic instrument where movement becomes composition, and the electromagnetic spectrum is made palpable as a physical presence that surrounds and penetrates the listener's body.

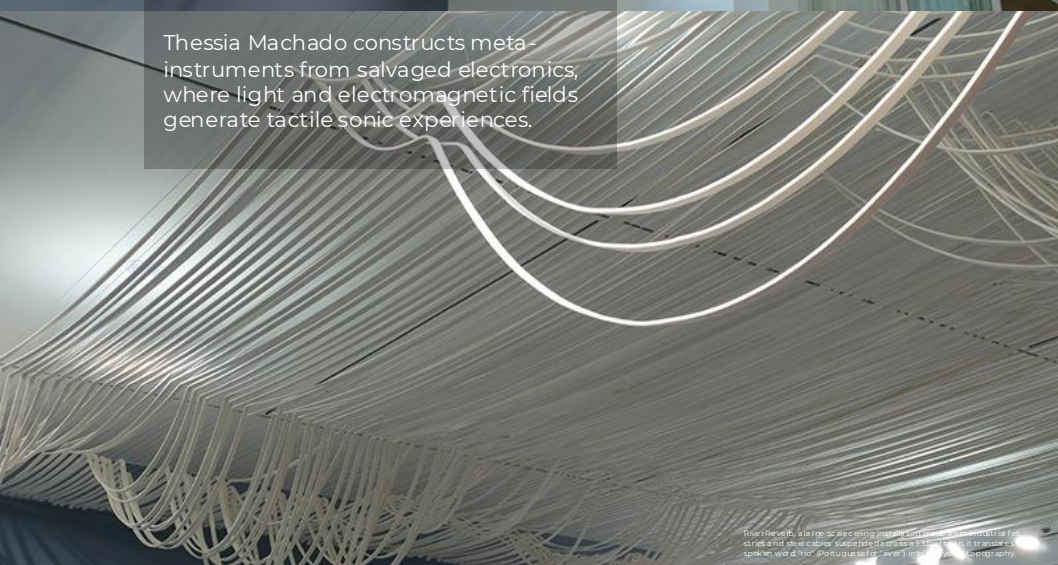
Image: Simina Gorescu / Christina Kubisch



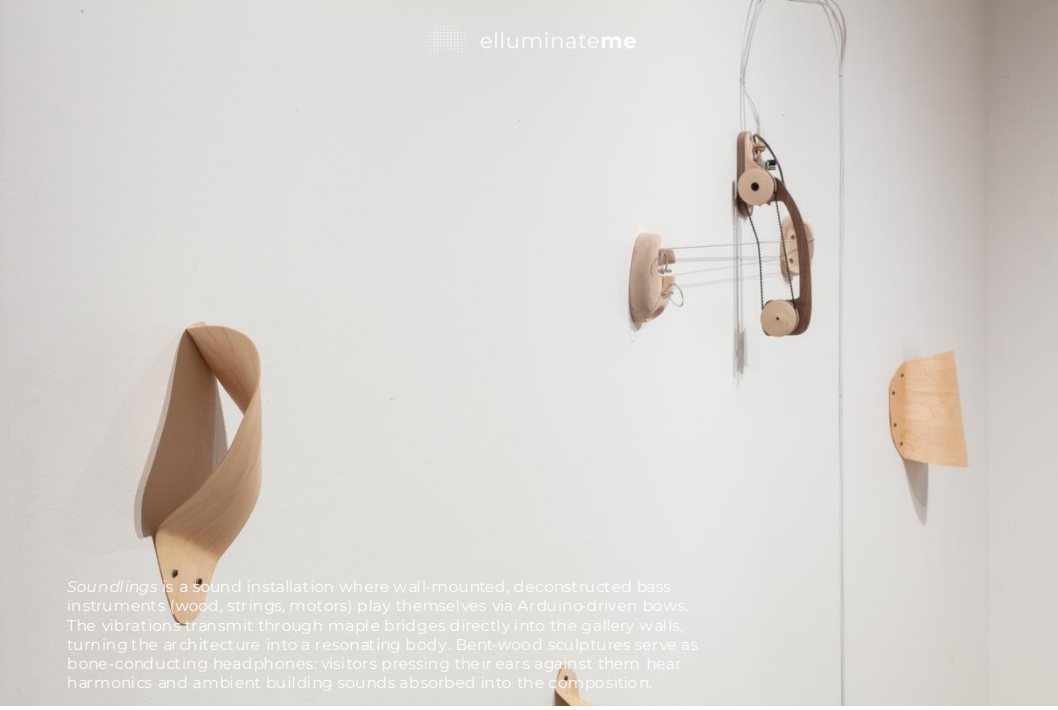


Thessia Machado

Thessia Machado constructs meta-instruments from salvaged electronics, where light and electromagnetic fields generate tactile sonic experiences.



Rivei Reverb, a large scale ceiling installation made from industrial felt strips and steel cables suspended across a 33 metre in it translates spoken word 'rio' (Portuguese for 'river') into a [illegible] topography.



Soundlings is a sound installation where wall-mounted, deconstructed bass instruments (wood, strings, motors) play themselves via Arduino-driven bows. The vibrations transmit through maple bridges directly into the gallery walls, turning the architecture into a resonating body. Bent-wood sculptures serve as bone-conducting headphones: visitors pressing their ears against them hear harmonics and ambient building sounds absorbed into the composition.

Thessia Machado fabricates what she terms "meta-instruments" by repurposing discarded consumer electronics into sculptural sound generators that challenge conventional musical interfaces. Her practice emerges from the intersection of circuit bending, kinetic sculpture, and experimental music, where obsolete technologies such as turntables, answering machines, and CRT monitors are transformed into responsive sonic environments. She exploits the inherent instability of aging electronic components, allowing temperature fluctuations and electromagnetic interference to introduce unpredictability into her systems. This methodology treats sound not as composed output but as emergent phenomenon arising from the physical properties of materials and their environmental interactions.



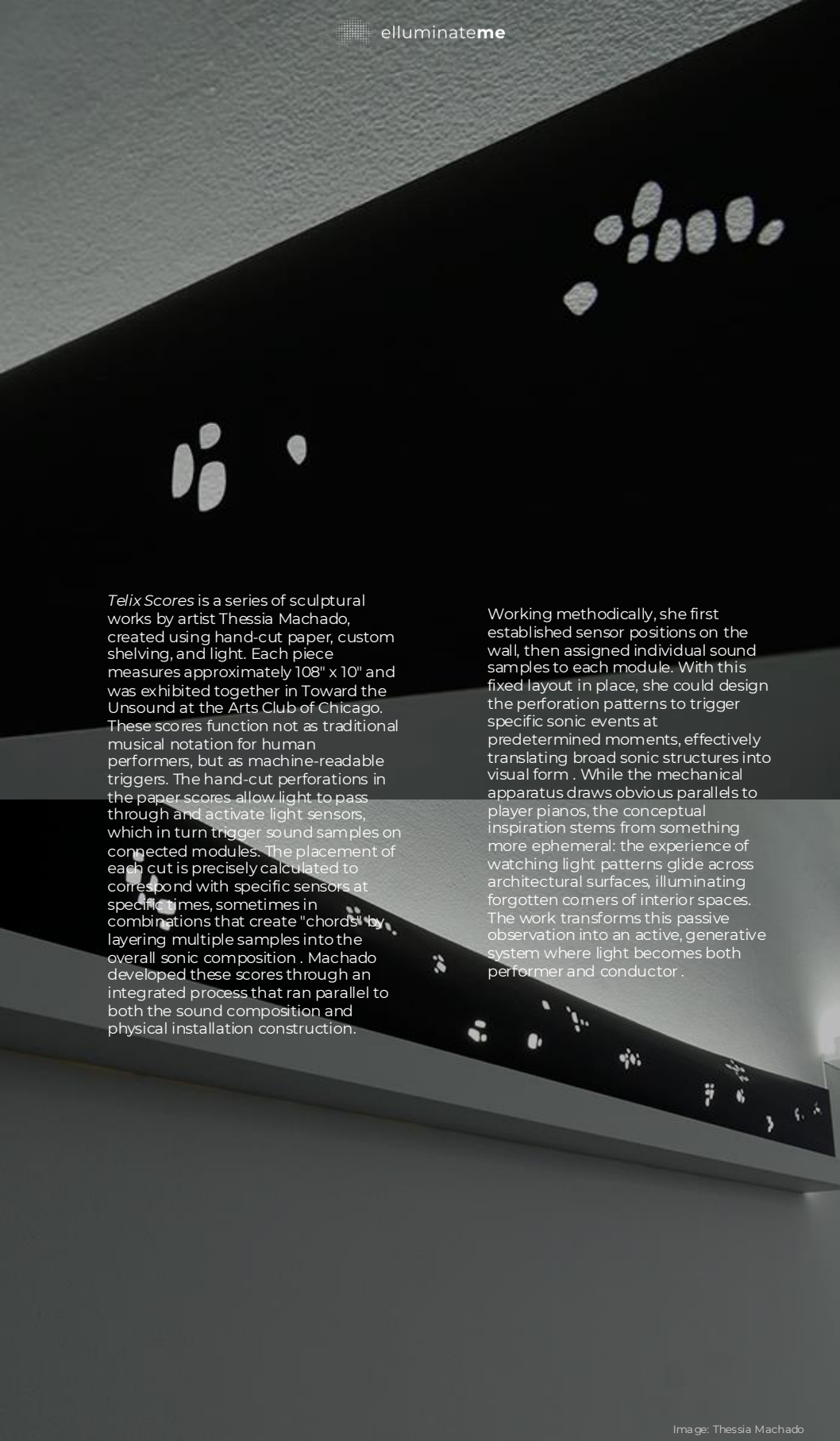
Homespun turns spoken street addresses into sonic form. The artist recorded herself saying her first and current home addresses, then translated the waveforms into 3D sheetrock sculptures: one hangs from the ceiling, the other lies on the floor.

Machado engages sensory sound through photoelectric and electromagnetic sensitivity, creating instruments that respond to ambient light conditions and proximity. Her "Ruby" installation employs photosensitive circuits that translate shadows and movements into frequency modulations, making visitors' bodies active participants in sonic production without physical contact. The works often incorporate tactile elements such as modified speakers that transmit vibration through surfaces, inviting touch as a mode of listening. By exposing the internal mechanisms of sound production and emphasising the material fragility of electronic systems, she constructs environments where auditory experience is inseparable from visual and haptic engagement, revealing the physical substrate of seemingly immaterial digital technologies.



Wall-mounted copper forms cast geometric shadows that trigger sonic responses through embedded photosensitive circuits.

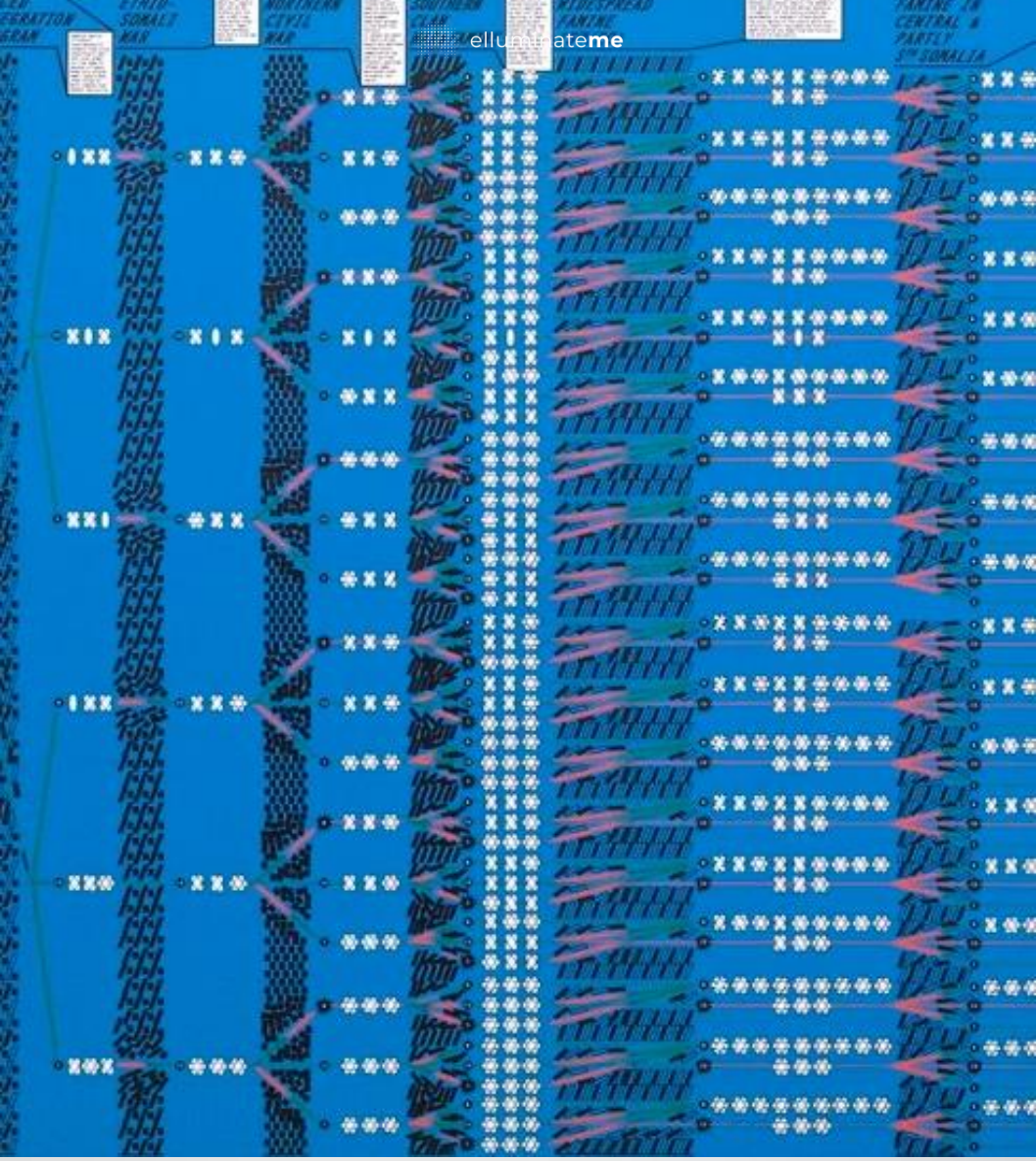
Images: Thessia Machado



Telix Scores is a series of sculptural works by artist Thessia Machado, created using hand-cut paper, custom shelving, and light. Each piece measures approximately 108" x 10" and was exhibited together in Toward the Unsound at the Arts Club of Chicago. These scores function not as traditional musical notation for human performers, but as machine-readable triggers. The hand-cut perforations in the paper scores allow light to pass through and activate light sensors, which in turn trigger sound samples on connected modules. The placement of each cut is precisely calculated to correspond with specific sensors at specific times, sometimes in combinations that create "chords" by layering multiple samples into the overall sonic composition . Machado developed these scores through an integrated process that ran parallel to both the sound composition and physical installation construction.

Working methodically, she first established sensor positions on the wall, then assigned individual sound samples to each module. With this fixed layout in place, she could design the perforation patterns to trigger specific sonic events at predetermined moments, effectively translating broad sonic structures into visual form . While the mechanical apparatus draws obvious parallels to player pianos, the conceptual inspiration stems from something more ephemeral: the experience of watching light patterns glide across architectural surfaces, illuminating forgotten corners of interior spaces. The work transforms this passive observation into an active, generative system where light becomes both performer and conductor .

Image: Thessia Machado





Lawrence Abu Hamdan

Lawrence Abu Hamdan practices forensic listening, transforming sonic evidence from legal and political contexts into sculptural installations.

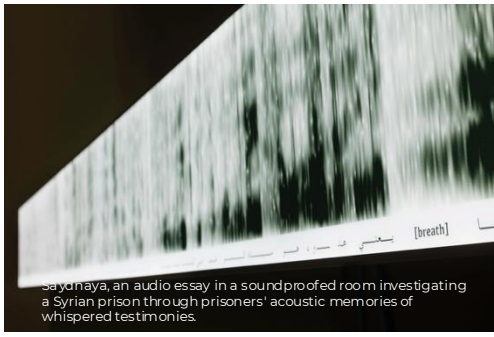
Conflicted Phonemes (2012) is an installation of vinyl wall prints and takeaway sheets presenting diagrams that visually protest the use of phonetic analysis to reject asylum claims, exposing how European migration systems attempt to fix identity through accent while the work's complexity performs the irreducibility of voice to passport.



Lawrence Abu Hamdan investigates sound as a form of political evidence and bodily testimony, working at the intersection of audio forensics, human rights documentation, and sound installation. His practice emerged from years of analysing voice recordings for asylum hearings, developing methodologies to expose how sonic data becomes instrumentalised within legal and security frameworks. He treats sound not as aesthetic material but as documentary evidence that carries traces of violence, coercion, and survival. Through meticulous reconstruction of acoustic environments from witness testimonies, he creates immersive installations that make audible the gaps and distortions introduced by surveillance technologies and bureaucratic listening practices.



Abu Hamdan engages sensory sound through what he terms "earwitness" testimony, exploring how memory encodes sonic experience with physical and emotional intensity that exceeds visual recollection. His installation "Walled Unwalled" uses directional speakers and architectural reconstruction to demonstrate how walls filter and transform sound, making the acoustic properties of barriers viscerally apparent. In "Saydnaya," he reconstructs the architecture of a Syrian torture prison from survivors' sonic memories, using their descriptions of whispered communications and acoustic isolation to model spatial relationships.



Saydnaya, an audio essay in a soundproofed room investigating a Syrian prison through prisoners' acoustic memories of whispered testimonies.

By foregrounding the physical impact of sound on the body and the political implications of listening technologies, he constructs environments where auditory experience becomes a means of witnessing trauma and asserting the evidentiary power of embodied memory.

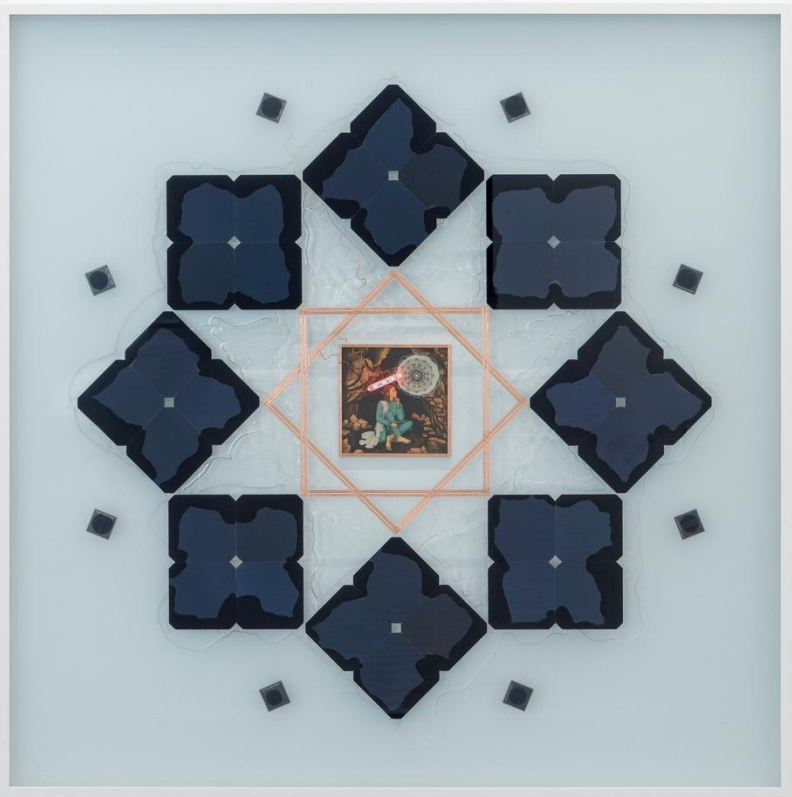
Images: Lawrence Abu Hamdan



Walled Unwalled is a four-channel video and sound installation presented within a specially constructed glass and metal structure that visitors can enter. The work explores how walls function as acoustic filters that transform sound, using testimony from former detainees and architectural acoustic research to demonstrate the physical properties of barriers.

Directional speakers create zones of audible and inaudible sound within the space, making visitors' bodies experience the selective permeability of walls through their own shifting auditory perception as they move through the installation.

Image: Lawrence Abu Hamdan



Haroon Mirza

Explores the intersection of electricity, sound, and light through kinetic installations that transform energy into sensory experience.



Ceremonies and Rituals explores electricity as a mystical medium, featuring Cymatic Ceremony where sound at 111 Hz creates visible sacred patterns on a vibrating plate, alongside solar powered circuits that generate light and magnetic fields around meteorites and shamanistic imagery, merging scientific vibration research with ritualistic experience.

Haroon Mirza treats electricity as his primary medium, manipulating its frequency and wavelength to create installations where light and sound become materially interconnected. His practice combines found objects such as solar panels, bass amplifiers, and LED systems into precarious assemblages that generate autonomous audio-visual compositions. Through careful calibration of electrical currents, he transforms invisible energy into perceptible phenomena, creating environments where the boundaries between sculpture, performance, and sonic architecture dissolve. His work often incorporates ritualistic and ceremonial elements, exploring how mystical experiences might be elucidated through neurological and scientific processes.



Mirza engages sensory sound through cymatics and vibrational phenomena, making visible the physical patterns that sound waves create in matter. In his recent work, seeds scattered on vibrating plates form intricate mandala-like structures in response to specific frequencies, demonstrating the tactile reality of acoustic vibration. Visitors experience sound not only through their ears but through observing its physical effects on granular materials.



By rendering sound visible and touchable through these vibrational patterns, Mirza creates synesthetic environments where auditory perception extends into visual and tactile domains, revealing the underlying geometric order of sonic energy.

Image: Nobutada Omote



Stone Circle is a large-scale land art installation in the desert near Marfa, Texas, commissioned by Ballroom Marfa. It consists of nine stones arranged in a circle: eight smaller stones embedded with LED lights and speakers, and one central "mother" stone equipped with solar panels.

The installation accumulates solar energy over a 28-day lunar cycle, and on the full moon, it releases a synchronised sound and light composition.

The speakers embedded in each stone emit electronic soundscapes generated by the solar energy itself, creating an immersive audio environment that transforms the desert into a resonant ritualistic space where electricity, sound frequencies, and celestial cycles converge.





Tarek Atoui

Creates tactile sound instruments and installations that reimagine listening beyond auditory perception through vibration and spatial composition.

Image: Galerie Chantal Crousel



I/E is an archaeology of sound that unearths the hidden sonic layers of port cities, capturing seaside, underwater, and underground recordings to reveal each place's unheard identity. These raw materials become compositions and performances that project a site's buried stories back onto itself, creating a feedback loop between place and sound.

Tarek Atoui constructs elaborate instrumentations that challenge conventional boundaries between composer, performer, and listener. His practice emerges from extensive research into traditional music, architecture, and agriculture, particularly in the Pearl River Delta region of China. He collaborates with instrument makers, software engineers, and Deaf communities to create hybrid objects that generate sound through water circulation, air pressure, and mechanical rotation. These installations function as both autonomous compositions and interactive environments, where the distinction between the artwork and its activation blurs into a continuous process of sonic exploration.



Windhouse #2 creates low-frequency sounds through air current division, producing bodily resonance. © Kunsthaus Bregenz

Atoui engages sensory sound through tactile vibration and spatial distribution, creating instruments that privilege physical contact over distant listening. His Wind Houses serve as both architectural spaces and massive musical instruments, where visitors feel low-frequency resonances throughout their bodies. The SubBass Prototone allows individuals to enter a giant Helmholtz resonator and experience sound through tactile sensation alone.

By designing instruments that respond to touch, movement, and proximity, Atoui constructs environments where Deaf and hearing visitors share equivalent sensory experiences, democratising access to sound through its physical properties.



Organ Within combines church pipe organ research with Deaf sonic experiences in a hybrid sculptural installation. © Council / kurimanzutto



The Reverse Collection is a body of work comprising eight original instruments that merge string, wind and percussion elements into hybrid sonic objects.

Among these, The Pipe Koto features strings stretched across plexiglass combined with organ pipes, creating a resonant dialogue between plucked tones and wind-driven harmonics.

The Lithophone consists of a percussion set of 31 stones, each selected and tuned to produce distinct pitches when struck, transforming geological matter into a melodic instrument.

These works emerged from Atoui's collaborative research with instrument makers and musicians, reimagining acoustic principles through unconventional material combinations.



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General manager, Berkshire Hathaway company

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