

# SHALLOW LISTENING

## SONIC UNCONSCIOUSNESS

### Introduction

This workshop is part of a project under development which is a continuation of some of the ideas I have been researching in recent years and which have previously materialized in projects in different formats.

In the wake of a crisis both personally and professionally with the electronic music industry over the past five+ years, I have observed how new forms of communication and consumption of information affect our relationship, not only with our creative practice, but also with our connection to the present moment, thus generating psychological disorders and decreasing our cognitive capacity.

The dynamics of certain music industries increasingly replicate the dynamics of industries such as fashion or advertising. This in combination with an acceleration of the distribution and consumption of data which simultaneously forces a constant and frantic updating of trends, which force musical and artistic production to quickly become obsolete and irrelevant, thus depriving the artist of the space and time necessary to develop ideas with a minimum of depth. During the time that I have been conducting this research, publications and studies have been published investigating this issue, one example is *After Death* (Urbanomic, 2020) by the theorist, composer and director of the INA-GRM in Paris, François J. Bonnet. In this essay Bonnet makes a portrait of today's society, where he reflects on the idea of the present, as a state in which we are trapped, a hyper-present where compulsions colonize the past and the future, and they prevail over the sense of duration or appreciation of the "thickness of reality".

In my research, the idea of the present has become a recurrent and important subject, but especially of the present as understood in philosophies such as Buddhism: the idea of the present as the only space we can possibly inhabit, in this case without negative connotations and rather as a goal, as a refuge, or a space for self-knowledge. This idea of the present is also found in recurring practices of the so called experimental music or sound art, where in parallel with practices similar to meditation an attempt is made to direct attention to this present moment. Attention, then, is a crucial trait in order to be able to fully inhabit the present moment and particularly in connection with the act of listening.

This is where I came across a problem: If attention is crucial in both creation and in the act of listening, what happens when our environment demands constant attention from us? New forms of communication require us to be constantly "connected" and ready to give an immediate response, both professionally and personally through for example emails, messaging apps or social networks.

Social media itself is designed to keep us on the lookout for external stimuli. Richard Seymour in his book *The Twittering Machine* (The Indigo Press, 2019) tells us how some of the people who developed social networks like Facebook actively refrain from participating in them: "Social networks are basically a feedback loop of the validation that ensures the monopolization of the maximum possible user time." According to the book, the hackers who developed these networks sought to exploit vulnerabilities in human psychology. The almost total normalization and proliferation of these networks has brought us to this point. There are already studies that talk about the difference in cognitive abilities between the so-called millennial and Z generations. The latter with a high capacity for assimilating information through stimuli more based on visual information but allegedly unable to deeply access this information. Like most of the products our consumer society currently offers us, information is constantly outdated, made to be assimilated quickly, and also quickly forgotten. François J. Bonnet describes this moment as an anesthesia, an amnesia. For him, "anesthesia is not caused by a lack of sensations, but by a sensory overload that ultimately makes all sensations identical." And cites as an example new tools offered by the film industry, and more specifically a concept called "Second Screen" of the Disney company, which integrates "breaks" in the narrative, during which you can play interactive games related to film themes using touch screens. These signs of disruption of attention are a clear example of the market trend, which defines how we consume, but also how we relate to each other and to the world.

In 2006, already an adult, I was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder. This condition which I had never heard of, and with which I would have lived from my childhood to my adulthood, pointed to the possibility that a whole series of difficulties I had experienced academically, professionally and even on a personal level, perhaps were not the result of a lack of interest, or a lack of effort as my environment had tried to make me think. Academic and professional failure had

been part of my early life and were leaking into my adult life, with consequences such as low self-esteem, anxiety and stress.

My argument is that the kind of technocratic society that we are in right now is accelerating this, crippling our cognitive capacities, producing all kinds of disorders while demanding a higher production rate, higher neurological capacities from us.

This diagnosis made me question my place in this productivist society, where the speed of production and assimilation of information is taken for granted.

And while this stigma becomes normalised I can't help but question our society and how it not only generates and accelerates "mental disorders" but demands that we fit right into this model.

Where does this idea of "staying in the present" fit into this reality? Who has access to the time and knowledge required for us to be with ourselves, to practice this Mindfulness?

I have questions.

Silicon Valley appropriated practices from the 70's New Age culture (which by the way were already appropriated from ancestral practices from different cultures) and fed these into this ruthless neoliberal idea of endless labour. Through this capitalist promotion of self-care we are left with this extreme idea of individualism, quite the opposite of what practices like meditation were originally intended for.

The branding of certain practices such as "Deep Listening" just feels off.

# Quotes

## On Attention

“ensuring that the details of everyday life, the random constellations of objects that surround us, stop going unnoticed.”  
(on *Drip Music* 1962)

— George Brecht

I composed Sonic Meditations, a body of work that could be done by persons without musical training. Sonic Meditations are based on patterns of attention. In other words these pieces are ways of listening and responding. Sonic Meditations is the basis of Deep Listening.

I noticed that many musicians were not listening to what they were performing!

There was good hand-eye coordination in reading music, but listening was not necessarily a part of the performance.

The musician was of course hearing but listening all over or attention to the space/time continuum (global) was not happening. There was disconnection from the environment that included the audience as the music was played.

Observing these phenomena prompted me to investigate human attention processes and strategies.

—Pauline Oliveros, *Deep Listening. A Composer's Sound Practice*

## On Cognition

A human being takes in far more information than he or she can put out. “Stupidity” is a process or strategy by which a human . . . commits him- or herself to taking in no more information than she or he can put out

Samuel Delany, *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand*

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Sean Parker, the Virginia-born billionaire hacker and investor of the file-sharing site Napster, was an early investor in Facebook and the company's first president. Now he's a “conscientious objector”. Social media platforms, he explains, rely on a “social validation feedback loop” to ensure that they monopolize as much of the user's time as possible. This is exactly the kind of thing that a hacker like myself would come up with, because you're exploiting a vulnerability in human psychology. The inventors, creators, . . . understood this consciously. And we did it anyway. The social industry has created an addiction machine, not as an accident, but as a logical means to return value to its venture capitalist investors.

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To inhabit the social industry is to be in a state of constant distractedness, a junkie fixation on keeping in touch with it, knowing where it is and how to get it. But it is also to loop what the psychoanalyst Louis Ormont calls “the observing ego” into an elaborate panopticon so that self-surveillance is redoubled many times over. This is central to the productive side of the social industry.

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Addiction is all about attention. For the social industry bosses, this is axiomatic. We attend to what feels good, to “rewards”. And, in an attention economy, the social industry platforms are waging a constant battle to manipulate our attention in real time.

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It exercises a veto over other loves, aspirations and dreams. It occupies attention, when attention is subject to economic

scarcity. It usurps our ingenuity, when the goal in life becomes maintaining access to the object, staying close to it. For the Twittering Machine this is good: it keeps us writing. In an attention economy, addiction is not so much a scourge as a mode of production.

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In the attention economy, we are all attention-seekers.

The attention economy is not new. Writing before the advent of the social industry, Jonathan Crary described a concerted effort since the nineteenth century to get individuals to shape themselves in terms of their ability to pay attention. Life became, thanks to changes in audiovisual culture, a patchwork of jagged, broken states of attending, of being riveted by a sequence of stimuli. Advertising, movies, news cycles, all relied on their growing ability to force attention.

Today, the platforms use a number of forcing techniques. These might be compared to the techniques used by mentalists and magicians, which are designed to give the impression of a free and fair choice being made.

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— Richard Seymour, *Twittering Machine*

### **On Musical Practice**

“one can conceive of a continuous acoustic flow that traverses the world and that even encompasses silence. A musician is someone who samples something from this flow”

Gilles Deleuze

### **On Sound Phenomenology**

In Their simplest form, all sounds are audible and inaudible vibrations that are happening all the time. On an individual level, your ears absorb information in a more abstracted way than your eyes, allowing you to hear beyond your direct vicinity.

Consider a time when a startling sound made you jump with fear. This is the same place to which our intuition can guide us, a place of discomfort and uncertainty, whether it's over what to do next or arising from the emotions coming to surface. (...)

Our intuition can lift us up into an enlightening crescendo of revelation.

Absolute silence doesn't exist; there is vibratory sound occurring at all times, even if it's inaudible. (...) But even if silence is unattainable, we can still be receptive to what approximations of it we can find, utilizing them as open spaces to reflect on our surroundings, sensations, emotions, and inner monologues — since, in the absence of other stimuli, the quiet can lift those elements to the top of our perceptions (...)

In a world where silence feels rarer and more precious every day, noise pollution exists as an omnipresent threat to the environment and our well-being.

—Lavender Suarez, *Transcendent Waves*

### **On Listening**

Wherever we are, what we hear is mostly noise. When we ignore it, it disturbs us. When we listen to it, we find it fascinating.

—John Cage, 1937)

Oliveros describes the practice of Deep Listening as “a way of listening in every possible way to everything possible, to

hear no matter what you are doing.”

<https://www.deeplisting.rpi.edu/about-us/>

What is Deep Listening?

This question is answered in the process of practicing listening with the understanding that the complex waveforms continuously transmitted to the auditory cortex from the outside world by the ear require active engagement with attention.

Prompted by experience and learning, listening takes place voluntarily. Listening is not the same as hearing and hearing is not the same as listening. The ear is constantly gathering and transmitting information—however attention to the auditory cortex can be tuned out. Very little of the information transmitted to the brain by the sense organs is perceived at a conscious level.

Reactions can take place without consciousness.

(...)

To hear physically means that vibrations or waveforms that are within the range of human hearing (in frequency typically 16hz to 20,000hz and amplitude 0.05dB to 130dB) can be transmitted to the auditory cortex by the ear and perceived as sounds.

However, the word hear has many more dynamics and meanings within a cultural history that is continually changing.

Listening has very little definition compared to hearing. Though the two words are often used interchangeably, their meanings are different. To listen according to the Miriam Webster Dictionary means “to give attention to sound or sounds or to perceive with the ear, to hear with thoughtful attention, to consider seriously.

To hear and to listen have a symbiotic relationship with somewhat interchangeable common usage. I differentiate ‘to hear’ and ‘to listen’. To hear is the physical means that enables perception. To listen is to give attention to what is perceived both acoustically and psychologically.

“Hearing turns a certain range of vibrations into perceptible sounds.”

Listening takes place in the auditory cortex and is based on the experience of the waveforms transmitted by the ear to the brain. We learn to associate and categorize sounds such as mama, papa, meow, running water, whistles, pops, clicks and myriads more sounds through experience. Many waveforms after first experience are discarded unnoticed without conscious interpretation. Understanding and interpreting what the ear transmits to the brain is a process developing from instantaneous survival reactions to ideas that drive consciousness. The listening process continues throughout one’s lifetime.

Physical descriptions of sound properties and listening do not explicate the phenomenal world of perception that takes place in the auditory cortex. According to Stephen Handel in *Listening: An Introduction to the Perception of Auditory Events*, “There is no sound pressure variation that will always lead to one and only one perception”. Similarly, there is no perception that always comes from one and only one pressure variation.

Physicists then continue to study the nature of physical descriptions of sound and psychologists the perception of sound. Physicists can measure acoustics and pressure waves. Psychologists must measure the experience of the listeners. Thus neither discipline can solve auditory perception. Sound pressure patterns assist hearing but cultural history and experience influences listening.

(...)

Deep Listening Practice in class consists of a variety of training exercises drawn from diverse sources and pieces especially composed by Pauline Oliveros and other Deep Listening practitioners.

Exercises include energy work, bodywork, breath exercises, vocalizing, listening and dreamwork.

These exercises are intended to calm the mind and bring awareness to the body and its energy circulation, and to promote the appropriate attitude for extending receptivity to the entire space/time continuum of sound. This kind of receptivity is essential for creative activity in the arts and can be applicable to any discipline.

—Pauline Oliveros, *Deep Listening. A Composer's Sound Practice*

By taking the time to listen intentionally, you become a more thoughtful participant in your life.

How do you listen when you listen online? What about the halts, jumps, rapidly switching tabs, the multiple streams going at once?

—Lavender Suarez, from *Transcendent Waves*

To listen is to receive by actively pulling sounds towards you through your body and your mind and in a sense to also be participating in their creation while in turn releasing new patterns of thought into the world.

—Max Neuhaus

For the composer—and for the listener too—the “great challenge” will always be to learn to hear—that is, to trust in the instinctive processes that lead from the pure “sonorous” to the pure “musical”. Honing this ability to make out forms in advance, to discover landmarks of organization within sound, in movements both spontaneous and directed by listening intent, the mind is able to make intuitive and conscious choices and to adjust its activities accordingly.

François Bayle - *For an Invisible Music, an Acousmonium*

Let's look at some unreported musical events (cultures) on this planet before they become surrounded and swallowed by contact with the self-conscious-making magic of recording and broadcasting technologies, and allow them to take their rightful place in the evolution of consciousness.

overuse=trivialisation

(...)

In Western technoculture, the use of totally abstract music à la Muzak as background for human events inevitably results in trivialization and a loss of the sense of specialness and meaning. Brian Eno's creation of the genre “ambient music” formalizes this affectless situation as it exists. In effect, the concept of ambient music says, “If there's such constant sound input that you can't listen to it all, why not say it's okay not to listen and here's some music for listening or not.”

The optimistic view might be that we're going to reach such an overload level of symbol density that we'll be forced to arrive at a new simplicity—an ability via artificial intelligence to combine many individual symbols operating in complex relationships into “chunks” of information which then can be treated as a single megaword.

The heading “new simplicity” is itself a simple example of chunking or a higher-level description of the detailed information in these paragraphs. Douglas Hofstadter, in his book *Gödel, Escher, Bach*, refers to this as “pruning the giant tree of possibilities.”

—Jon Hassell. *Possible Musics*, 1981

<https://jonhassell.com/jon-hassell-possible-musics-2018/>

Acoustic Ecology

“A listening walk and a soundwalk are not quite the same things...a listening walk is simply a walk with a concentration on listening...The soundwalk is an exploration of the soundscape of a given area using a score as a guide”

—Murray Schafer 1977

Some scholars, including David Toop (2010) and Steve Goodman (2010), have criticized Schafer's idealized view of nature and see nature as a weapon of power.

<https://ecomusicology.info/max-neuhauss-sound-works-and-the-politics-of-noise/>

The popular concept of "noise pollution" is a dangerously misleading one. In reality, dangers to hearing do exist in prolonged, excessively loud sound levels. However, the residue of the idea that has ended up in the mind of the public because of misleading publicity is that sound in general is harmful to people.

A brief examination of a pamphlet, "Noise Makes You Sick," published by the Department of Air Resources of the city's Environmental Protection Agency, is typical of the literature and clearly illustrates the problem.

The first sentence, "Sound is instantly transmitted from your ears to your brain and then to your nerves, glands and means," is of course literally true. Actually the reaction doesn't normally go as far as the glands and internal organs.

However, we are left with the impression that we have absolutely no defense against unwanted sound. This is untrue. The body has automatic reflex barriers, both physical and psychological, to deal with sounds it does not wish to react to.

The pamphlet goes on, "Any loud or unexpected sounds put your body on alert." This is true with a newborn child or in primitive societies, both of which need this reaction to survive, but certainly the modern urban dweller is not put into a state of fright (except of course when there is actual danger) very often by the sounds around him.

A human being conditions himself fairly quickly to what is "loud or unexpected" in his particular environment.

Office having "established" the impression that we are constantly in a state of "fright" though, the brochure goes on to extrapolate in august pseudo-medical terms: "Adrenalin, an energy-producing hormone, is released into your bloodstream. Your heart beats faster, your muscles tense, and your blood pressure rises. Sudden spasms occur in your stomach and intestines." This finally gives the impression that every honking horn brings us a little bit closer to death.

The law defines noise as "any unwanted sound." Surely several hundred years of musical history can be of value: At the very least, they can show us that our response to sound is subjective—that no sound is intrinsically bad. How we hear it depends a great deal on how we have been conditioned to hear it.

Through extreme exaggeration of the effects of sound on the human mind and body, this propaganda has so frightened, people that it has created "noise" in many places where there was none before; and in effect robbed us of the ability to listen to our environment:

Admittedly it may be necessary to oversimplify an idea to bring enough public pressure to bear on the producers of ear-damaging sounds in our environment to stop this victimization of the public. This degree of misrepresentation is not only unnecessary, but irresponsible and ultimately negative.

This present concept of noise pollution condemns all sounds by leaving, in the public mind, the impression that sound itself is physiologically and psychologically harmful.

It is this exaggerated and oversimplified concept that is doing most of the damage, not sound—damage that can and should be rectified by curtailing misleading propaganda and showing people other ways to listen to their surroundings.

Obviously we need to be able to rest from sound just as we do from visual stimulation, we need aural as well as visual privacy, but silencing our public environment is the acoustic equivalent of painting it black. Certainly just as our eyes are for seeing, our ears are for hearing.

—Max Neuhaus, BANG, BOOoom, ThumP, EEEK, tinkle (New York Times article, 1974)

Pierre Schaeffer's four functions of the "What Can be Heard":

1. A sonic entity is detected by its signal being picked up by the autonomous mechanism of hearing (ouïr)
2. The signalled sonic entity (having been detected) 'sound character' is deciphered by the active perception of listening (éncouter)
3. The signalled sonic entity is then subjected to a twofold focused attention that judges then describes it
4. The signalled sonic entities' significance is then understood by abstraction, comparison, deduction and by linking it to different sources and types (either the initial meaning is confirmed or if denied an additional meaning is worked out.

This leads to the acousmatic situation, as Schaeffer describes it. Under Schaeffer the acousmatic situation is focused on the subjective "listening itself which becomes the phenomena under study" rather than the object sound source.

(wikipedia)

### On Present as in Buddhism / Mindfulness

Where am I?

Stop. Physically stop moving. Look around. Locate yourself.

What am I doing?

Observe with no filters and no judgement. Bring awareness to your current actions.

Who am I with?

Am I with someone or am I alone? If I'm alone, I touch my arm or leg, look into my own eyes in a mirror, or close them and breathe. If I'm with someone, I take a deep breath and reestablish our connection.

—Thích Nhất Hạnh, Three Questions for Coming Back to Now

Impermanency and egolessness

Since both the body and its surroundings are originated by cooperating causes and conditions, they are continually changing and never can come to an end.

The human mind, in its never-ending changes, is like the flowing water of a river or the burning flame of a candle; like an ape, it is forever jumping about, not ceasing for even a moment.

—The Teaching of Buddha, Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai, Tokyo

Samadhi transcends time and space. There is no time in an everlasting present. There is no fixed point in boundless space.

(..)

(..) this is the origin of the deluded way of thinking of consciousness. It must be stressed that there is no constant ego, only moment after moment's ego appearing in succession. Your identification of yourself comes from the warm, direct feeling that pervades each ego. Now one can see the truth of the saying that this moment's thought sees through eternal time: it is because this moment is the eternal present. You can realize this eternity in your samadhi.

Eternal time is just this moment. What really exists is this present moment. In your samadhi this present is sustained as long as your samadhi continues, and there eternity is demonstrated.

- If you see through this moment's thought. This moment's thought can be the first, second, or third nen, or the first, second, or third ego, which plays its role at that moment.
- You see through the man who sees through this moment. The man who sees through this moment is the ego that plays its role at this moment. It can

be the first, the second, or the third ego. You, who see through the man, who see this moment's thought, are the reflecting action of the third nen, which recognizes all the preceding egos and synthesizes them into one ego. Thus self-consciousness is established, and seeing into one's original nature (pure ego) is accomplished. Nothing can be more fundamental than the recognition of one's own pure ego. That is realization.

—Katsuki Sekida, *Two Zen Classics*

The projecting sketch of the "possibilities" of being opens the future. Dasein exists as an advent, inasmuch as it exists by projecting "possibilities toward itself." In the future, which is "my" project, my own self is reflected for me. The future is my image. The future is the "arrival in which Dasein comes to itself in its own power to be." The "coming into oneself" is the fundamental feature of the future. The future springs from loving and projecting oneself. The "Primacy" of the future refers to that of the self. Care, as self-care, articulates time as "time of the self." It refers above all to the future. So to speak, this is the "head of time." Instead, careless time would be lingering in the present in each case.

(...)

This attitude of the spirit is correlated with a unique experience of time. We linger entirely in the present. This full, relaxed present is not "scattered" in the before and after. He does not look beyond himself. Rather, it rests in itself. That relaxed time leaves behind the time of caring. This calm present is also distinguished from that "instant" which, as a special moment in time, comes out of or emerges from the rest of time. It is a habitual time. It lacks all emphasis.

—Byung-Chul Han, *The Philosophy of Zen Buddhism*

In resolving to become more attentive, or to reach a state of complete awareness, an ideal goal is established in the mind. A division in time occurs: One's actual present negligence is separated from the idea of future attentiveness. Thinking of a future goal is an escape from our present discomfort and dis-ease that arise from inattention. We much prefer to think about developing into a better person and following a method to get there than to face the pain and root cause of our present insufficiency. Making resolutions becomes a comforting reassurance that we will accomplish in the future what we are not ready to do right now. Postponement is the perpetuation of inattention.

—*The Work of This Moment*, Toni Packer

## On Perception

This is the characteristic nature of thinking. The thinker forgets thinking while doing it. What concerns the thinker is not thinking, but the observed object of thinking.

Hence the first observation that we make about thinking is that it is the unobserved element in our normal spiritual life. It is because thinking is based on our own activity that we do not observe it in everyday spiritual life. What I do not produce myself enters my observational field as an object. I see it as something that arose without me. It confronts me; and I must accept it as the prerequisite for my process of thinking. While thinking about the object, I am occupied with it and my gaze is turned toward it. My attention is directed not toward my activity, but toward the object of this activity. In other words, when I think, I do not look at my thinking, which I myself am producing, but at the object of thinking, which I am not producing.

I am in the same situation even if I allow the exceptional state of affairs to occur and think about my thinking itself. I can never observe my present thinking; only after I have thought can I take the experiences I have had during my thinking process as the object of my thinking. If I wanted to observe my present thinking, I would have to split myself into two personalities, one that thinks and one that looks on during this thinking, which I cannot do. I can observe my present thinking only in two separate acts. The thinking to be observed is never the one currently active, but a different one.

—Rudolf Steiner, *Intuitive Thinking as a Spiritual Path*

"All Memory is an Illusion, there's nothing but the present moment. There is no future and equally no past. But when you are liberated you have to come back in and play memory again. There's a cleaning process, you wipe off the blackboard and then you start writing again and this is the process in whereby life is kept going. We call this effort going through the motions. The echo which is memory is simultaneously what tells you you exist and what traps you, so in the sense that it tells you you exist it's an advantage to the extent that it traps you it's a debt. "

— Alan Watts (from lecture, location and date unknown)

As Wassily Kandinsky noted: "Repetition is a potent means of heightening the inner vibration and is, at the same time, a source of elementary rhythm which, in turn, is a means to the attainment of elementary harmony in every form of art"

—Lavender Suarez, from Transcendent Waves

A reading from a semiotic perspective on the vertebral slogan of the New Age, "Listening to oneself" would entail asking oneself about a series of questions related to the construction of the subject from the social device, the production of ideology and the need for meaning as a principle for existence. Therefore, approaching the subject from this perspective would mean moving away from the idea of a single being creator of its own truth and knowledge, which this movement has proclaimed so much, and understanding the individual in relation to the belief system that produces it and from of the study of the objects that it signifies.

The reflections that are proposed in this video-essay try to observe how the introspection process directs us, rather than towards an isolated interior space, towards an understanding of an external systemic framework that provides the individual with a semantic framework in which to assimilate.

— Violeta Mayoral, from Escucharse a un\_ mism\_

By including the observer's strategy of listening, active interest, and responses to the complexity of unverifiable causes, the acousmatics stance reveals the variety and the variation of points of view and listening intentions.

We are all aware of Pierre Schaeffer's work at the GRM, who, on the basis of the phenomenological attitude and the notion of the perceptual object, described "the musical object" as a particular type of sound object that lends itself to being used musically, in virtue of certain (appropriate) qualities that it presents in a given context. In Schaeffer's Treatise On Musical Objects this fundamental notion provides the hinge between a "typology" of all sonorous beings and a "morphology" that sets out in detail the criteria for "candidate" musical objects. But the perspective of the musical object is still couched in terms of phenomenological neutrality (better suited to the construction of a solfeggio or an inventory), preventing it from being able to address to the twofold dynamics of listening as it operates both at the level of the sensible and that of sense (seeking meaning).

Here I will set out the different aspects opened up by this hypothesis:

1. Music "means something", it contains and describes ideas (both sensible and semantic, obeying the laws of regulated open systems: harmony, stochastics, entropy...).
2. We create "meaning" when a phenomenon presents itself at the windows of our perception, by means of our faculties of representation, substitution, selection, and imagination (which obey laws specific to the psyche, to behaviours of expenditure and economy and, in general, to the specific "negentropic" quality of living systems).
3. The interrelation of these two levels of sense, in turn, gives onto a general "signification". acousmatic concerts Acoustic images projected by loudspeakers change the way in which we approach the question of contact between music and auditor. This new situation demands that new positions be taken, and introduces new reflexes. These forms of music, boasting the most diverse poetics, have one common denominator: the apparatus of listening itself.

—François Bayle - For an Invisible Music, an Acousmonium

The “actual music” only exists in the lived experience of someone who listens. But which of these two realities is the active one that invests the other? The most living, of course. The force of a work’s identity is to be observed in the result of this magical operation!

This suggests to what extent that intermediary object—the invisible work that an acousmatic music is—will come forth during the concert not by way of a “diffusion” (a dispersed neutral projection) but on the contrary through a will to concentration.

—François Bayle - For an Invisible Music, an Acousmonium

wonder if it hasn't been electronically produced.

The space is real, and unique. A large cathedral will return slap echos and uneven resonance characteristics. The cistern showed a very smooth frequency response and no echos, only a smooth reverberation, the amplitude of which appears to begin at the same decibel level as the source. Consequently, it is impossible to tell where the performer stops and the reverberation takes over. One additional aspect of the reverberation field that does not seem to record easily and which makes simulation very difficult, is that it slowly moved from the sound source along the walls until it enveloped the listener: a most remarkable and beautiful phenomena.

this objectively, but I found I couldn't do it. In a kind of acoustic uncertainty principle, there was no way to simultaneously pin down both the objective audio parameters *and* the audible reality of the situation. That is, the actual act of listening influenced the cognitive result. In this situation, therefore, I, an ostensible *observer*, became a virtual *performer*.

This is real "observer-created reality" we're talking here (children, untrained to be objective, seem to perceive this better than adults: my 8 year old son, Stephen, was assisting me. During a break, he asked me, "Dad, what would this stuff sound like if we weren't listening?"). Interestingly, this feature carries through to later playback. The listener, too, is thus invited to become a part of the performance. In fact, it's difficult to avoid doing so. If you doubt this, try varying playback levels, listening positions, ambient noise levels and other distractions, mood, time of day, etc. I believe you'll find the music's "reality" always remarkable, but a very slippery proposition indeed!

## DEEP LISTENING

### STATEMENTS ON THE EXPERIENCE

*Deep Listening*, by Pauline Oliveros

"Composition is frozen improvisation," said Igor Stravinsky. Improvisation could be called speeded up composition. The risk in improvisation is that you can't change your mind once you have performed a note, nor can you improve the piece afterward. This riskiness gives an edge to performing that can create an unusual excitement and attentiveness different from prepared performance.

Each composer represented in *Deep Listening* has a very individual style of composition. As we improvise together, and listen intensely to one another, our styles encounter in the moment, and intermingle to make a collective music. I call the result "deep listening." In this recording, the acoustic space with its long reverberation time is an influential unifying

presence. Listening, not only to one another but to the transformative spatial modulations, is an essential process in the music. The cistern space, in effect, is an instrument played simultaneously by all three composers. The instruments—which are being played *without* any electronic processing—are accordion, didjeridu, trombone, voice and found metal pieces. The tonal qualities produced by each performer are constantly changed by interaction with the cistern acoustics, making it seem as if many more instruments are present.

The accordion is tuned in two systems of just intonation: a five limit system in the left hand and a seven limit system in the right hand. The voice, trombone, and adjustable didjeridu made of jointed PVC pipe easily adapt to these tuning systems. Because of the tuning the acoustic resonance of the ensemble is enhanced.

The *deep listening* style comes about through the interacting individual styles of the composer/performers, influenced by special tunings and acoustic space.

# ADHD Tests / Quizzes

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
When you have to sit down for an extended period - like at a dinner - you find yourself fidgeting or feeling uncomfortable				
You feel hyperactive and like you are on autopilot				
You struggle to start tasks that require you to sit down and concentrate for an extended period				
You sometimes forget meetings, appointments, or events				
You struggle to complete tasks or projects, even ones which are nearly complete				
You find it hard to properly organize, plan, or do things in the right order				

<https://www.mind-diagnostics.org/adhd-test>

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
How often do you have difficulty sustaining your attention while doing something for work, school, a hobby, or fun activity (e.g., remaining focused during lectures, lengthy reading or conversations)?			
How often are you easily distracted by external stimuli, like something in your environment or unrelated thoughts?			
How often do you avoid, dislike, or are reluctant to engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort or thought?			
How often do you have trouble listening to someone, even when they are speaking directly to you — like your mind is somewhere else?			
How often do you have difficulty in organizing an activity or task needing to get done (e.g., poor time management, fails to meet deadlines, difficulty managing sequential tasks)?			
How often do you fail to give close attention to details, or make careless mistakes in things such as schoolwork, at work, or during other activities?			
How often do you forget to do something you do all the time, such as missing an appointment or paying a bill?			
How often do you lose, misplace or damage something that's necessary in order to get things done (e.g., your phone, eyeglasses, paperwork, wallet, keys, etc.)?			
How often do you have trouble following through on instructions, or failing to finish schoolwork, chores, or duties in the workplace (e.g., you start a task but quickly lose focus and are easily sidetracked)?			
How often are you unable to play or engage in leisurely activities quietly?			
How often do you have difficulty waiting your turn, such as while waiting in line?			
How often do you feel like you're "on the go," acting as if you're "driven by a motor" (e.g., you're unable to be or uncomfortable being still for an extended period of time, such as in a restaurant or a meeting)?			
How often do you leave your seat in situations when remaining seated is expected (e.g., leaving your place in the office or workplace)?			
How often do you blurt out an answer before a question has been completed (e.g., completing another person's sentence or can't wait your turn in a conversation)?			

How often do you feel restless -- like you want to get out and do something?

How often do you fidget with or tap your hands or feet, or squirm in your seat?

How often do you find yourself talking excessively?

How often do you interrupt or intrude on others, such as butting into their conversation or taking over what others are doing?

Were several of the symptoms present prior to age 12?

Do the symptoms appear in at least two or more settings (e.g., at home and school)?

<https://psychcentral.com/quizzes/adhd-quiz#1>

# Glossary

## **acousmatic music**

Acousmatic music (from Greek ἄκουσμα akousma, "a thing heard") is a form of electroacoustic music that is specifically composed for presentation using speakers, as opposed to a live performance. It stems from a compositional tradition that dates back to the introduction of musique concrète (a form of musique expérimentale) in the late 1940s. Unlike musical works that are realised using sheet music exclusively, compositions that are purely acousmatic (in listening terms) often exist solely as fixed media audio recordings.

The compositional practice of acousmatic music features acousmatic sound as a central musical aspect. Other aspects traditionally thought of as 'musical' such as melody, harmony, rhythm, metre may be present but more often consideration is given to sound-based characteristics such as timbre and spectrum. Compositional materials can include sounds derived from musical instruments, voice, electronically generated sound, audio that has been manipulated using various effect processors, as well as general sound effects and field recordings.

The music is produced with the aid of various music technologies, such as digital recorders, digital signal processing tools and digital audio workstations. Using such technology various sound materials can be combined, juxtaposed, and transformed in any conceivable manner. In this context the compositional method can be seen as a process of sound organisation: a term first used by the French composer Edgard Varèse.

(source: wikipedia)

## **attention**

1a: the act or state of applying the mind to something

b: a condition of readiness for such attention involving especially a selective narrowing or focusing of consciousness and receptivity

2: OBSERVATION, NOTICE

especially : consideration with a view to action

a problem requiring prompt attention

3a: an act of civility or courtesy especially in courtship

b: sympathetic consideration of the needs and wants of others : ATTENTIVENESS

4: a position assumed by a soldier with heels together, body erect, arms at the sides, and eyes to the front

## **dasein**

Dasein is a German word that means "being there" or "presence", and is often translated into English with the word "existence". It is a fundamental concept in the existential philosophy of Martin Heidegger. Heidegger uses the expression Dasein to refer to the experience of being that is peculiar to human beings. Thus it is a form of being that is aware of and must confront such issues as personhood, mortality and the dilemma or paradox of living in relationship with other humans while being ultimately alone with oneself.

## **distraction**

1: something that distracts : an object that directs one's attention away from something else

2: the act of distracting or the state of being distracted

especially : mental confusion

## **negentropic**

Of or characterized by a reduction in entropy (and corresponding increase in order).

'In the following period of evolution, which can last several hundred or even thousand ka, soils degrade in regard to nutrient supply but species diversity keeps increasing for negentropic reasons.'

(source: lexico.com)

### **nen**

The word used to talk about mental activity in Zen is "nen", which is often translated as "thought impulse" but you might also describe it as a mental action or motion. It's not necessarily a fully formed thought, but rather the wisp of mental activity that might cohere into a thought or might pass without note or conscious attention.

(Katsuki) Sekida classifies nen into three different types (first, second, and third) based on the way they relate to other nen.

### **new age**

1: an eclectic group of cultural attitudes arising in late 20th century Western society that are adapted from those of a variety of ancient and modern cultures, that emphasize beliefs (such as reincarnation, holism, pantheism, and occultism) outside the mainstream, and that advance alternative approaches to spirituality, right living, and health

2: a soft soothing form of instrumental music often used to promote relaxation

### **samadhi**

1 Hinduism

a: a state of deep concentration resulting in union with or absorption into ultimate reality

b: a religious trance

2 Buddhism : the meditative concentration that is the final step of the Eightfold Path

3 Jainism : spiritual self-fulfillment : ENLIGHTENMENT

### **sound object**

In electronic music theory and electronic composition theory a sound object refers to a primary unit of music that could be played on an instrument or sung by a vocalist. A sound object specifically refers to recorded sound rather than written music using manuscript or a score.

It was believed to be coined by Pierre Schaeffer in his book *Traité des objets musicaux*:

*This unit of sound [sound-object] is the equivalent to a unit of breath or articulation, a unit of instrumental gesture. The sound object is therefore an acoustic action and intention of listening.*

Schaeffer believed that the sound object should be free from its sonic origin (its sound source, or source bonding) so that a listener could not identify it. This type of sound object forms part of what Schaeffer called acousmatic music, which involved a reduced listening, or concentrated listening.

Schaeffer went through an evolution of thought with regard to his work with recorded material/ sound as music.

(source: wikipedia)

### **trance**

1: STUPOR, DAZE

2: a sleeplike state (as of deep hypnosis) usually characterized by partly suspended animation with diminished or absent sensory and motor activity

3: a state of profound abstraction or absorption

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