

Sound, Media, Urban Space

DM-7037-01

Fall 2010, CIT Building
Monday 1:10 – 6pm

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Description

This studio-based course explores the role of sound in defining urban experience. Through seminars, group activities and individual projects, we will investigate how sound interacts with everyday objects, urban architecture, people, media devices and networks. With sound as our lens, we will look for new perspectives and interactions in, with and within our media-saturated cities.

An important part of the class will consist of practical outdoor sessions in our conveniently urban environment that will highlight how we interact with urban space and media via sound. Critical discussions will be guided by short readings and presentations covering work from the fields and histories of sound art, media art and public art.

Assignments

Most weeks will include a short reading assignment (about 25 pages). Readings are to be completed before each meeting. Be prepared with at least one question to prompt discussion.

Three short exercises will help question, challenge, disturb and play with the role of sound in, on and around different sites. Projects can be hi-tech, low-tech or no tech; therefore there are no technical prerequisites.

Each student will be responsible for a final presentation/piece/exploration/performance to be completed by the end of the term. Project proposals are due November 15th.

Lastly, each student will give one 20-minute presentation on the work of two relevant artists, practitioners, architects and/or thinkers.

Evaluation Breakdown

Attendance is mandatory unless you are breaking out in a highly contagious oozing blue rash or have an otherwise brilliant excuse (and even those should be delivered beforehand)

Participation and Discussion:	20%
Short Exercises:	30% (3 x 10%)
Artist Presentation:	20%
Final Project:	30%

Required Materials

The Auditory Culture Reader (edited by Michael Bull and Les Back 2006) is available for purchase online as well as at the RISD store. All other readings will be downloadable pdfs.

A good set of headphones is also a requirement for this course. Resources and links are posted on the course blog. You'll be expected to bring headphones to each class session.

Weekly Topics and Assignments

9.20.2010: Introduction

Questions answered, answers questioned, and an introduction to the basics of sound

Lab: Unmediated Listening, Sensory Deprivation Walk

Required Lecture: Christina Kubisch @ Brown, Time/Location TBA

9.27.2010: Microphones and Documentation

Types of Microphones, Recording Techniques, and methods of capturing and documenting sonic and audio-visual environments

Reading: Deep Listening, Pauline Oliveros

Lab: Group Field Recording Session and Playback

Remember to bring headphones!

10.04.2010: Listening and Composition

Working with recordings, software and techniques, sound composition

Reading: Studio As a Compositional Tool, Brian Eno

Lab: Creating a sound collage

10.11.2010: Noise

Noise and desirability, sonic hierarchies, disruption, disturbance and silence

Reading: The Art of Noises, Russolo

Lab: Build a contact microphone

Project One Critiques

- 10.18.2010: Soundscapes and Mapping
- What is a Soundscape? Acoustic Ecology, The Soundtrack Project, and data mapping
- Reading:** R. Murray Shaeffer
Lab: Creating a sound collage
- 10.25.2010: Real-time Audio
- Interactivity, Programming, and Feedback Systems
- Reading:** John Cage on Silence
Lab: Introduction to Max/MSP
- Visiting Artist Presentation | Ed Osborn**
- 11.08.2010: Site Specificity
- Finding a site. What is a site anyway?
- Project Two Critiques**
- 11.15.2010: Mobile Music / Locative Media / GPS
- Locative music/media, Smartphones and other mobile devices, and sound and location data
- Reading:**
Final Project Proposals Due (to be presented in class)
- 11.22.2010: Virtual Spaces and Network Remixes
- Reading:**
Project 3 Critiques
- 11.29.2010: Final Projects Workshop
- 12.06.2010: Final Presentations and Critique (Group A)
- 12.13.2010: Final Presentations and Critique (Group B)