

ABSTRACT

SOUND WORK AS CONTEMPORARY ART PRACTICE

BULUT, ZEYNEP

M.F.A, Visual Arts Visual Communication Design

SUPERVISOR: LEWIS KEIR JOHNSON

JUNE 2002, v + 101 pages

This thesis investigates and argues for ‘sound works in contemporary art practices’. In this context, it is a study on the works by Jody Elff, Susan Philipsz, Ann Lislegaard, and Laurie Anderson, from three particular exhibitions, namely, “New York New Sound New Spaces”, “Audible Light”, “The Record of The Time”. In each chapter, a particular work is considered, not simply in terms of the work ‘itself’, but also in terms of the experience of the work. Both suggest the discussion of the internal and the external dynamics of the works. Therefore the aim of this thesis is not to find a possible definition of what a sound work is. However the intention is to consider the possible indications, proposals, extensions and expansions of a sound work.

Key words: sound work, sound, voice, other, otherness, oscillation, daydream, emergence, loss, spatiality, theatricality, uncanny, incompleteness, multiplicity, plurality.

ÖZ
ÇAĞDAŞ SANATTA SES İŞİ

Zeynep Bulut

Görsel Sanatlar Görsel İletişim Tasarım Yüksek Lisans Programı

Tez Yöneticisi: Yard. Doç. Dr Lewis Keir Johnson

Haziran 2002, v + 101 sayfa

Bu çalışmada “çağdaş sanatta ses işleri” incelenmektedir. Bu bağlamda, 2002 Lyon Müzik Bienali kapsamında gerçekleşen “New York New Sounds New Spaces”, “The Record of The Time” ve Oxford Modern Sanat Müzesi’nde sergilenen “Audible Light” sergilerinden Jody Elff, Susan Philipsz, Laurie Anderson ve Ann Lislegaard adlı sanatçıların işleri üzerinde durulmuştur. Her bölüm bir sanatçının işini veya işlerini içermektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı ses işine bir tanım aramak veya tanım vermek değildir. Bu çalışma seçilmiş ses işlerinin sadece kendisine bakmak yerine, belirli bir iş tarafından önerilen sesin olası deneyimlerini anlatmayı hedeflemiştir. Bu anlamda, bu tezde seçilmiş ses işlerinden yola çıkarak, ses işinin iç ve dış dinamikleri, bağlamı ve olası önerileri anlatılmıştır.

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In ‘search of sound’, I would like to thank my advisor Lewis Keir Johnson and my co-advisor Selim Birsal for their deep trust and help with my studies in the past two years, Hasan Bülent Kahraman and Erdağ Aksel for their criticism and guidance, Hüseyin Selçuk Artut, Ayhan Akman, Hülya Adak, Nancy Karabeyođlu, Sibel Kamışlı, Nuran Terziođlu and Soner Biricik for their friendly interest and help, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences for their generous contribution to my research endeavours at Lyon, Claire Chevrier, Isabelle Rodriquez and Musée d’art contemporaine de Lyon for their hospitality and support, other graduate warriors, especially Zeynep, Işın, İstem, Rita, Dođa, Nihan, Talha, Murat and Umut, and my family and all friends for sharing my bad and good times.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	i
ÖZ	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF FIGURES	v
INTRODUCTION	1
Before sound works: a route to sound works	4
Contemporary Art Practices	14
Other and Otherness: Voice and Sound	20
The uncanny	23
The Third: The undecidable too many	27
CHAPTER I: Portal & Ziggy Stardust	30
CHAPTER II: Sarah's Panorama	47
CHAPTER III: Laurie Anderson: The Record of The Time	61
The Record of The Time	65
Tape Bow Trio	65
The Parrot	68
Self-Playing Violin	72
Excerpt for "Raft"	76
Sh	80
CONCLUSION	86
APPENDIX I List of Figures	88
APPENDIX II/III CDs	96
BIBLIOGRAPHY	97

LIST OF FIGURES

1 Laurie Anderson, Tape Bow Trio, Revox audiotape playback head, bow, violin, 1977	88
2 Laurie Anderson, The Viophonograph, Violin, bow, needle, record, 1977	89
3 Laurie Anderson, Neon Bow, 1980 and Neon Violin, 1983	90
4 Laurie Anderson, Digital Violin, 1984	91
5 Laurie Anderson, Self-Playing Violin Violin, speaker, 1974	92
6 Laurie Anderson, The Parrot, Parrot model, stand, electronics, speakers, 1996	93
7 Laurie Anderson, Dummy With Violin, 1992/3	94
8 New York New Sounds New Spaces [David Abir, Laurie Anderson, Molly Davies (David Tudor), Jody Elff, John Hudak, Terry Neuheim, Erik Nauman, Susan Philipsz, Roulette, (Lianene Higgins et Zeena Parkins, Jarryd Lowder, Phill Niblock, Pauline Oliveros, William Parker, Laetitia Sonami), Micheal J. Schumacher, Stephen Vitiello] Publicity Photograph, 2002 [photo of Terry Neuheim, Entropic Flop, 2002]	95

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	i
ÖZ	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF FIGURES	v
INTRODUCTION	1
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Other and Otherness: Voice and Sound	20
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INTRODUCTION

And it was at that age ... Poetry arrived
in search of me. I don't know, I don't
know where
it came from, from winter or a river.
I don't know how or when,
no, they were not voices, they were not
words, nor silence,
but from a street I was summoned,
from the branches of night,
abruptly from others,
among violent fires
or returning alone,
there I was without a face
and it touched me.

Pablo Neruda, from *Poetry*¹

The tendency in Western culture, since Aristotle, has been to place sight first in a hierarchy of the senses, followed by hearing and the other senses. This primacy of the visual, however, has not always been constant; in medieval Europe, for instance, hearing as the sense through which the word of God was perceived often displaced sight, and the ranking of the senses itself was a popular theme. In Alain de Lille's allegorical epic *Anticlaudiaunus* (1183), as related by Constance Classen, the senses are represented by five horses that pull a carriage carrying Prudence to Heaven. 'Sight is first in the shafts as the swiftest of the horses, followed by Hearing, Smell (enveloped in the fragrance of flowers), Taste and Touch. The coach is unable to reach Heaven, however, so Prudence, persuaded by Theology, unharnesses Hearing and rides on to Heaven with him alone.' More recently, in *Notes sur le cinématographe* (1975), the film-maker Robert Bresson writes, 'The eye (in general) superficial, the ear profound and inventive. The whistle of a train engine imprints in us the vision of an entire station'²

What might be primary, certain, reliable, lucid, knowable and recognizable? This thesis does not invite readers to discover a single answer to this question. We've been told of "the primacy and the dominance of the visual", "the certainty, clarification and justification of reality through vision"³ by Western culture. However we've been also told of the 'illusionary reality of the visual'. Thereupon this thesis attempts to shift the focus of the readers, to tickle and trigger them via a different discovery, by carrying them to the imaginary, the fantasized, the uncertain, the

¹ Neruda, Pablo, *Poetry*, <http://mbhs.bergtraum.k12.ny.us/cybereng/poetry/QMpoetry.html>

² Kruth, Patricia & Stobart, Henry, "Introduction", *Sound*, eds. Patricia Kruth & Henry Stobart, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 4.

³ Vasseleu, Catheryn, "Introduction", *Textures of Light*, (Routledge: London, 1998) 3.

inadequate and the incomplete, rather than the illusionary. In this context it invites readers to a modest, but also a unique journey.

The possible destinations of the possible journeys might be obscure, yet what transports the reader to this journey will be a sonic experience. As Charles Taylor conveys, “sound involves the changes in the pressure of the air, and travels as waves in the air”.⁴ Sound travels in time, bringing the temporal and the spatial, producing the reflections and echoes in hearing and understanding. Sound is fluid, transitory, and mutating. In that respect it is lost and open to change, challenging the “first” and the “foremost”.

.... There is no perfect point of hearing; only interpretations. (Kruth & Stobart, 2000, 4)

One can recognize another from his/her footsteps, voice, laughter, cough, or even sneezing. Yet such a recognition does not guarantee a full presence, but rather suggests many spaces between appearance and disappearance, presence and absence, promising the plurality and multiplicity in and through, due to its imperfection, incompleteness and inadequacy. Sound does not simply indicate ‘is’, yet ‘becomes’. This is hopeful, encouraging ‘many’, ‘undecidable too many’ interpretations, bringing other possibilities.

Sound has neither a discrete beginning nor a discrete end. In that respect it is unfinished, and never fully present in the first place. This is an imaginary presence, indicating a loss, neither describable nor indescribable, neither completely visible nor completely invisible, but rather providing a becoming of the third and the “in-finite”⁵ something else, perhaps even in-finite spatiality. Through this third something else, this thesis introduces the readers to its object of study, within which, instead of the hierarchy between sight and hearing, the interplay of the sonic and the spatial will be investigated. The interplay does not suggest a simple combination of sound and vision, but rather a third space, where neither sound nor vision can be clearly differentiated, and where none is primary, yet where both bring an ambiguous scene, or scenario, which cannot become a full whole or a ‘work’ on ‘its’ own.

The aim of this thesis is not to define what a sound work is. Rather, the endeavour is to consider and discuss its internal dynamics, external environment and

⁴ Taylor, Charles, “The Physics of Sound”, *Sound*, eds. Patricia Kruth & Henry Stobart (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 34.

extensions. More concretely, sound works are neither fully ‘pieces of music’ nor fully ‘works of plastic arts’. Instead it is possible to argue that they partake of something from both music and plastic arts.

Specifically, the thesis involves works from three particular exhibitions: “NewYork NewSounds NewSpaces” by the group, NewYork NewSounds NewSpaces,⁶ exhibited in the Contemporary art museum of Lyon during the “Biennale Musiques en Scène 2002”, “Audible Light” by various artists, exhibited in MOMA, Oxford, 2000 and “The Record of The Time” by Laurie Anderson, exhibited in the Contemporary art museum of Lyon during the “Biennale Musiques en Scène 2002”. From each exhibition, certain sound works are selected as objects of study. Each chapter indicates particular works from a particular exhibition, and their sonic citations, the audio cd/catalogues. More specifically, chapters use and refer to the cd tracks. Exceptionally, the cd/catalogue of the exhibition, “Audible Light”, is a cdrom. However, the other CDs are not simply audio CDs either, since they already operate as the catalogues of the exhibitions, which represent the works in the museum space. Yet the works are in a different medium, order and duration within the CD, whereby each work becomes different as a ‘cd track’. Within this framework, the CDs and the selected works are neither simply and fully the representations of the works, put on show in the museum space, nor simply and fully something else.

It is perhaps for this reason worthwhile and effective to analyse the works with respect to both museums and their CD/catalogues. This does not encourage and promise a description of the works, exposed in the museum space. The aim is not to carry readers to the works in the museum through the works’ descriptions either. However the suggestion of these CD tracks is a journey, which may take the reader to a particular experience of sound, encouraged by a particular work, becoming a different experience, and addressing a different spatiality in a different atmosphere. The CD, as a medium, as a record, already indicates such a journey, penetrating into different spaces, and bringing listening activity to anywhere possible, not just representing a space, but also producing a space, challenging ‘the first place’, and becoming in-finite.

⁵ In-finite is a term used by Luce Irigaray

⁶ See figure 8, page 95

The reader will be introduced and told about the tracks, the ‘sonic citations’, due to the invitation of this thesis, which offers a particular experience of sound by becoming a reader, a listener and a spectator at the same time.

‘Before sound works’: a route to sound works

What does the notion of ‘before sound works’ indicate? Before does not fully determine and guarantee after. Yet there is no rupture between before and after either, since one can be considered the extension of the other. Perhaps what is arguable is to understand this extension and continuation between the two, instead of linearity and causality. In this context, ‘before sound works’ does not suggest a ‘background’ or/and a ‘historical past’, of this thesis’s object of study, but rather suggests a way, a route going back and forth, between past and present, to reexamine and requestion sound work as contemporary art practice, particularly the works by Ann Lislegaard, Jody Elff, Susan Philipsz, and Laurie Anderson.

Before sound works, what is sound? Does it exist as an autonomous entity? Alexander Castant asks this question:

What we are dealing with comes somewhere between silence and the articulated expression that is language or music. As a phenomenon standing outside any system of notation or writing, conceived and recorded as such, can sound be meaningful? Pierre Schaffer’s *Traité des objets musicaux* (Treatise on Musical Objects) remains exemplary in its approach to sound as an autonomous entity.⁷

The interest in sound “as an autonomous entity”, and not simply in music, leads us back to the late 19th century. Unlike musical composition, the search for sound implies a decomposition, a fragmentation, a discovery, which seems to be more scientific, rather than aesthetic. The search for sound demands from the technologies of living and of producing, addressing a particular contingency or condition. In the late 19th century, the condition of the “industrial” becomes stressed, as one of the indications of the modern. The “reproduction of music” via the “industrial object”, as Kihm mentions, turns out to be a new road to music. Eric Satie’s term “phonoscientific music”, encourages the reproduction of music via the industrial object.⁸ Kihm introduces Satie as follows:

⁷ Castant, Alexandre, “Identification des Objets Sonores: Experiments in Aural Objecthood”, *Art Press*, (no. 211, March 1996) 44.

⁸ Kihm, Christophe, “Redefining Musical Space”, *Art Press*, (no. 271, September 2001) 21.

Satie was employed as a pianist at the Chat Noir cabaret and at the Auberge du Clou, where he played along behind other artistes and he composed songs- “coarse filth” – for Paulette Darty. Debussy called him a “medieval musician”, a references to the use of plainsong in his compositions. But Satie was no medievalist lost in the modern world. His wariness of the expression of the feelings and lyricism and his interest in sound spaces, opened a new avenue towards the modern aesthetic. For if the orchestra defined by Berlioz in 1844 welcomed both music and noise, Satie put the emphasis on silence in relation to sound, on a certain form of “phonography” He took two decisive steps in this direction with the *Vexations* (1893) and the *Musique d’Ameublement*. (*Music as Furniture*, 1920) (Kihm, 2001, 21-3)

Eric Satie composed “coarse filth”, which implied the unrefined, inferior, dark and “medieval”, as opposed to modern and enlightened. Nevertheless, Satie, via the ‘dark’, the ‘ignored’, and the ‘secondary’, presents a new form of “entity” or “whole” within which he fragments the musical structure and attempts to emphasize its dynamics, silence and noise in relation to sound. For “*Vexations*”, Kihm suggests that, rather than the musical structure itself, what is stressed is the duration, via which “the sequence is repeated, mechanically reduced until the melody is exhausted, emptied-until, in a word, silence takes over.” (Kihm, 2001, 23) With the “*Musique d’ameublement*”, Satie invites the listener to hear and listen to the noise of everyday. Yet, Satie implicitly encouraged decomposition, since he composed music. Thereby it is possible to argue that Satie presents a new form of making music, by introducing the ‘spaces’ and the ‘conditions’ of his music through sound, silence and noise. In that respect Satie becomes one of the cornerstones that carries the reader to the road taken for sound.

On this road of the imaginary, the “imaginary landscapes” can be found via sound, as John Cage offers us. The term “panaurality” already advocates the spatiality and *durée*, which is a “construction” in Paul Valéry’s terms, presenting “all sound and always sound”. All sound and always sound promote two points. First, Cage speaks of silence and noise both as musical sound and as sound, involved in duration and space, and verticality and volume. Second, sound addresses an in-finite and incomplete construction, a “less natural becoming”, as Douglas Kahn conveys:

Sounds proliferated by incorporating a greater diversity of cultural codes and worldly sources and generated still greater variety through internal means; the sheer number of sounds increased as they became freighted with multiple, shifting allusions and meanings.⁹

A reading and a discussion of the “panaurality”, and of “all sound and always sound” through the in-finite becoming in space and time, are thinkable. Nevertheless,

John Cage argues for a dangerous thing in relation to “all sound and always sound”, by saying “let sounds be themselves” (Kahn, 1999, 163). Cage supports this statement with his notion of “sound in itself”, by the influence of the “Orient” and its philosophy. (Kahn, 1999, 173) Thereby he deals with the “disinterestedness” and the “integration of personality” in making music:

If one makes music, as the Orient would say, disinterestedly, that without concern for money or fame but simply for the love of making it, it is an integrating activity and one will find moments in his life that are complete and fulfilled. (John Cage quoted in Kahn, 1999, 173)

However, rather than an integration, what Cage suggests is a ‘reduction’ of personality, of its cultural other, and multiple layers, resulting in an expeditious adequacy and completeness.

The investigation of “sound in itself” and “sounds as themselves” can be considered as an attempt to discover “sound as an autonomous entity”. However, though separate and independent, sound does not travel as a complete and fulfilled whole. The travel of sound and the travel via sound, ‘become’ or/and indicate something else, which is not fully definable, but rather, fluid, incomplete, spatial, and thereupon plural and multiple. Yet, Cage reduces sound to a definable category, by means of the notion “sound in itself”, which contradicts the indications of “all sound and always sound”, encouraging a removal from sound, from spatiality, but rather bringing a “silencing” as Kahn argues:

When he celebrates noise, he also promulgates noise abatement. When he speaks of silence, he also speaks of silencing. (Kahn, 1999, 163)

The “imaginary landscapes” of sound and via sound cannot emerge through such a “silencing”.

The imaginary landscapes produce a “geographical fable” in Kihm’s terms. The geographical fable is neither totally silenced nor fully articulated, since it is not fully present in the first place. It is rather imaginary and becoming multiple through the imaginary. In that respect, a geographical fable does not have a map, yet floats, as Kihm conveys:

The musical space uses the capacity of stereo engineering to localize the sound sources and, consequently, it invokes a geographical fable. The music creates aural spaces but also brings the listener into the fiction of these floating architectures and landscapes and leaves him free

⁹ Kahn, Douglas, *Noise Water Meat*, (Cambridge: MIT, Mass, 1999) 162.

to wander around there.... The geographical fable is only fiction, it projects us into another place where we become multiple.... An experience of travel, a journey to be made rather than a map to be contemplated. (Kihm, 2001, 25)

Sound spaces are already imaginary spaces, which become demanding and change according to the atmosphere in which they are experienced. A sound space offers a particular experience, which cannot be fully described or translated. Each sound space brings an experience within and through. In that respect a sound space becomes an experience of space via sound, and an experience of sound via space, where sound becomes a spatial experience. A sound space does not suggest the one and the only, the particular, but rather it suggests many particularities, whereby it already presents other open spaces, atmospheres and unfinished journeys, through which a sound space is incompletely produced.

Brian Eno, introducing ambient music, invites the listener to these imaginary sound spaces, unfinished journeys and many particularities. Kihm interprets Eno as a musician who has been impressed by the idea of a “rootless conceptual music with no aural landmarks, no defined meaning”. (Kihm, 2001, 25) Eno introduces ambient music as follows:

It is a particular color. Ambient music must be able to accommodate many levels of listening attention without enforcing one in particular.¹⁰

In one of his interviews, Eno articulates “the aural surfaces”, which involve “the richness of textures”. (Mallet, 2001, 27) With respect to that, Eno is not interested in one particular color. Yet he investigates different colors and shapes within aurality. In that sense, for Eno, aurality is already plural and multiple, promising the “richness of textures”.

The ambient presents a setting, an atmosphere. Eno expresses that his strength is in creating settings, “unusual aural environments”. (Mallet, 2001, 31-2) By this, he encourages the fragmentation, relocation and rearrangement of aural textures. In particular Eno’s aural setting addresses avoidance from a particular personality, and voice. In that respect, Eno, in some of his works, uses voice as a critical source, through which he decomposes and recomposes voice, and approaches sound. Voice is a sound, but not singularly heard as sound, since it has a tone and an accent,

¹⁰ Brian Eno quoted in Mallet, Franck, “L’enosphere: In the Enosphere”, *Art Press*, (no.271, September 2001) 27.

indicating a personality, a representation of a body. Voice suggests someone's presence, yet not a full presence. Sound, on the other hand, oscillates between presence and absence, appearance and disappearance, implying the lost, the imaginary, becoming less and less definable, and more and more enigmatic, plural and multiple. Sound easily and fluently travels within space and time, providing different aural settings, sound spaces and spatial experiences. Eno's effort and desire is to create these possible aural settings, the ambient. Thereby he looks at sound, decomposes and recomposes voice, through which he invites his listener "to enter the ambient":

I wanted to get rid of the element that up to then had been considered as essential in pop music: the voice.... If you leave your own personality out of the frame, you are inviting the listener to enter instead. Take a seascape. As soon as there is a human subject, however tiny, it captures all the attention, it's inevitable. So I started playing around with the voice, deforming it, merging it and ended up abandoning it altogether.... The song called "My Squelchy Life"- I wrote it, then I interviewed about thirty people and got them to read the text. After that I took snatches of phrases from here and there, constantly changing the voices. It was rap! Once again I will come back here to my central concern: how to get away from personalization, from the idea of the singer with the microphone. It's close to the video technique of morphing, Surrealist collage. Here, the same story was told by several different people. I like this record I always knew that its time would come... For many years the word "ambience" was an insult. It meant "weak, lacking in identity, disposable, without personality.".... My strength is that I know how to create settings, unusual aural environments.... (Brian Eno quoted in Kihm, 2001, 10,12,14, 15)

How to create an unusual aural setting? Pierre Schaffer, presented an answer to that question in 1948, by "Musique Concrete", which encourages a unique form of music, addressing sound and noise, discovering new sounds by recording and processing. Schaffer introduced a technology, and a new technics of making music, and making sound through musique concrete:

Pierre Schaeffer, a French radio broadcaster, working for the Radiodiffusion-Television Francaise (RTF), created the first electronic music studio. With a multitude of microphones, phonographs, variable speed tape recorders and sound effect records he created a new art form, musique concrete, and with it a world of new music opened up -- the world of electronic music.¹¹

Musique Concrete brought a new sonic experience, involving sounds from nature, which are distorted, and composed in different ways, not simply suggesting noise, but rather a flow of sound, which sometimes become noise, as long, rhythmically weak, and almost futuristic, implying an industrial and a mechanical texture. In that respect musique concrete encouraged an open and fluid space to deconstruct and reconstruct,

spread and vary sounds. Technically the world of electronic music involves musique concrete, synthesiser music and computer music,¹² through which new ways of making an unusual aural setting becomes possible. Brian Ferneyhough stresses the technologies of making a sonic environment:

Musique Concrete, in which natural sounds (coins spinning, distorted voices etc.) were recorded close up and subsequently played back at different tape speeds, reversed and edited into other sounds.... Nevertheless, it was not until the advent of digital editing and transformation that means began to become available for the wholesale moulding and reshaping of our sonic environment.¹³

Technically John Potts conveys the possibilities and advantages of digital audio recording and editing:

Digital audio is fundamentally a numerical technology. Unlike analogue audio, which creates an analogue of the waveform in various media (voltage control, deviations in a groove, magnetic patterns on tape), digital audio represents a sound event as a set of numerical values. This binary data is processed and stored -- as information -- to be reconverted to the original waveform at the point of output. The most cited advantages of the digital process are its lack of degradation in copying, its ability to error-correct, and its flexibility in editing.

....

Discrete time sampling has been called 'the essence of digital audio'. This technique encodes the analogue wave form into infinitesimal pieces of information. Each slice is discrete in time.¹⁴

As Potts argues, the discreteness in time encourages a non-linearity of time and space by non-linear editing. The places of fragments can be easily changed, rearranged and remixed. And the fragments can be easily cut, copied, pasted, drawn, erased, and re-drawn. In this picture, multitrack recording and editing present multi-linearity in Potts's terms, yet more crucially, multi-non-linearity. The digital codes can be displayed on a screen. Thereby the experience of digital audio is a visual-aural one, as John Potts mentions. However this vision is not simply a representation of sounds, but rather promotes both temporal and spatial conditions, through which "infinite number" of possibilities can be practiced. Yet is this production or reproduction? And more crucially which one promises the production of a possible sonic experience?

Walter Benjamin argues that the "uniqueness of the artwork", the "aura" is lost through reproduction. Benjamin defines "aura" as "unique phenomenon of a

¹¹ Musique Concrete, *Writings*, <http://www.musespace.com/writings/essays/musique.html>

¹² Musique Concrete, *Writings*, <http://www.musespace.com/writings/essays/musique.html>

¹³ Ferneyhough, Brian, "Shaping Sound", *Sound*, eds. Patricia Kruth & Henry Stobart (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 168.

distance”.¹⁵ The condition and the medium of the “contemporary”, is interpreted as “the contemporary decay of aura” by Benjamin. For him, the uniqueness of distance indicates the presence, the presence of time and space, which is damaged by reproduction. With respect to Benjamin’s this reading, reproduction brings the collapse of the first and the foremost, the loss of the original whereby the uniqueness of distance, the aura, disappears.

However, the presence of time and space already indicates a contingency, a particular context and an environment. There is no aura ‘itself’. In this framework, the uniqueness of distance, the aura, ‘becomes’ in process within and through a particular environment, time and space. The aura is thereby under construction, through which it already challenges the first and the foremost, and already becomes lost, mutable, fluid and reproducible. More specifically, the reproducible does not simply bring reproduction, but rather suggests production. The reproducible is incomplete, and involved as an internal and inadequate dynamic within the whole which is experienced. However, the whole of the reproducible, does not complete the reproducible either. Instead it makes the reproducible available for another incomplete whole, which becomes more and more enigmatic and unfinished, promising the ‘many’ journeys through different spaces and times. In this context, a whole never becomes a full whole. The uniqueness is included in fiction, bringing fiction, a fictitious atmosphere.

In this respect, “the contemporary decay of aura” in Benjamin’s terms, can be reconsidered as ‘the contemporary ‘condition’ of aura’, suggested by the reproducible, bringing production by means of the digital. Michael Rush interprets digital technology’s numerical and discrete structure, and its cut, extract, select, copy and paste possibilities as an “electronic palette”:

Utilizing the easily available techniques of pasting, erasing, displacement, and multiplication the artist developed an ‘electronic palette’.¹⁶

The electronic palette in the computer medium suggests “fragmentation” and “randomness”. (Rush, 1999, 197) As mentioned, the fragments are flexible,

¹⁴ Potts John, “Schizochronia: Time in Digital Sound”, [from *Essays in Sound 2 : Technophonia*], http://autonomous.org/soundsite/csa/eis2content/essays/p17_skiz.html

¹⁵ Benjamin, Walter, “The Work of Art in the Age of Reproduction”, *Illuminations*, ed. H. Arendt (London: Fontana, 1992) 222.

¹⁶ Rush, Michael, “Digital Art”, *New Media in Late Twentieth Century Art*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1999) 177.

destroyable, and reproducible. It is at that point necessary to remind the reader of the indication of the 'reproducible', which is 'many in quantity and in quality' within its environment. The reproducible with the electronic palette, encourages a production, and the digital media offers "a new form of production", rather than reproduction, as Rush argues.

The contemporary condition has already questioned and fragmented what has been done before. Yet, more crucially, it has not attempted to test the artwork. What is contemporary has already and implicitly opposed to modern aesthetics, and its principles. In that respect it has not looked for the beautiful, the sublime, the untouchable, and the distant. Rather it has encouraged the possibilities of 'experience' and 'process'. What is tickling is that the contemporary does this, not with the technics of the modern, but with modern technologies. Thereupon the contemporary possibly becomes subversive, implicitly telling short stories. Contemporary may be read as a word, yet modern as a sentence. Both have not finished, still involved in an unfinished play.

A particular experience of sound, a sonic experience, is addressed by the contemporary. The intention of this thesis is not to question such experiences in terms of "work of art". However the attempt is to read this experience, to understand and tell what it promises, instead of translating. Tracing back the question, 'which one promises the production of an experience of sound?', as an answer, it becomes possible to say that the digitally reproducible promises the production of a particular experience of sound. The digital technologies present a play between appearance and disappearance, and presence and absence, by recording, deleting, fragmenting, and composing. Alexander Castant argues somewhere between presence and absence, through the record and recording:

And you image a record as something on which, or within which, music resides... you show records that are completely impossible to play and yet, even if you don't play them, the music is there" This statement by Milan Knizak, who was associated with the Fluxus movement, is about the recording of time.... The record becomes a reservoir of memory, the locus of its simultaneous representation.... If recording a sound implies a deposit of information, a memory, it also implies that memory is being placed under control and subjected to verification. (Castant, 1996, 47-8)

A sound record might function as a memory, indicating a fabrication of the past in the present. And this fabrication in the 'present' is "under control" and "verified",

implying that it can be zoomed out, fragmented, changed and recomposed, bringing another possible fabrication of memory.

Recording, processing and rendering sound contribute to the production of a possible experience of sound. The computer introduces a virtual medium, within which a sound is transformed into different sounds. However an experience of sound is not totally available through those recording and processing technologies. The actual space, within which a particular sound is heard or/and listened to, and the mental and the emotional spaces of the listener, also encourage such an experience. The possibility of an experience of sound is imaginary, both actual and virtual, whereby it cannot be fully translated, and defined, but is involved in an ambiguity, an ambiguous flow, through which it pluralises and multiplies itself.

Tristan Murail, who carried out projects in IRCAM (Institut de Recherche et de Coordination Acoustique/Musique), interprets the musical experience in terms of this sonic flow, as Ferneyhough conveys:

Murail insists that there are no insuperable boundaries separating sound from noise, and that the same is true of other conventional distinctions such as those of frequency and rhythm or harmony and timbre. He argues that the overly rigid nature of older categories of ordering prevented efficiently organized intermediate states precisely because it forcibly imposed inflexible conceptual grids onto the fluid nature of sonic reality. For him, the natural structure of sound, rather than those aspects of sound most amenable to notational and procedural categorization, lies at the core of musical experience. (Ferneyhough, 2000, 169)

The extension and expansion of sound suggest inventing new sounds and new spaces. Electronics calls for such new sounds and new spaces, through which an experience of depth, verticality and volume occurs. Electronic space can be considered as a technological space, producing “a mode of experience in another time and space”, as Oxley, Petry and Oliveira argue.¹⁷ Another time and space is already an extension of another space and time. Thereby it becomes impossible to discuss a rupture or an “isolation” between those spaces and times, in McLuhan’s terms. Depth renders ‘another’ imaginable, already indicating a non-singularity. More crucially, depth suggests open, unfinished, blurry and plural journeys. McLuhan articulates the significance of depth as follows:

Anything that is approached in depth acquires as much interest as the greatest matters. Because ‘depth’ means ‘in interrelation’, not in isolation. Depth means insight, not point of

¹⁷ De Oliveria, Nicholas & Oxley, Nicola & Petry, Micheal, *Installation Art*, (London:Thames and Hudson, 1996)

view; and insight is a kind of mental involvement in process that makes the content of the item seem quite secondary. (Quoted in Oxley, Petry, Oliveira, 1996, 80)

Depth indicates volume, which already links sound to space, and space to sound, addressing both extensive and distant travel in time. Composer, Harry Partch uses the term “sound sculpture”, which emphasizes this connection between sound and volume. Castant explains why and how the sculptors are attracted by sound:

Sound sculpture, a genre initiated by the iconoclastic composer Harry Partch combines ritual, chance, games, and the perpetual structuring of volume.... What attracts sculptors to sound works is the fact that while they unfold in the dimension of time, the sound itself also spreads through space. The relationship between sculpture and sound may bring together the two axes referred to by John Cage when he said that “what is horizontal in the visual arts should be vertical in a musical work...” The horizon is important for the eye but time is important for the ear. (Castant, 1996, 47)

Diffusion in time and space encourages the sculptors, as Partch puts it. Space is in time, turning to a “spacing” in Derrida’s terms. Spacing of sound addresses a possibility of multiplicity, many other spaces within one space, more crucially introducing the space as open, and the work as incomplete. This is perhaps where we can reconsider a sound work in relation to the phrase “site specific”. The site specific does not simply suggest a particular work within a particular space. Rather it indicates the interplay between a work and a space, introducing the possibility of change for a work in another place, where the work neither fully represents ‘what was once before’ nor fully is something else. The site specific does not simply suggest the ‘primary’, since it already demands and is involved within a becoming, passing through different bodies, becoming anonymous, removing away from its first appearance, yet never completely leaving its previous appearance either, but rather oscillating between the first and the third, indicating the ‘multiple’, the ‘many’. Thereby the site specific promises an open space and an incomplete work. Oxley, Petry and Oliveira explains site specificity as follows:

Site specificity implies neither simply that a work is to be found in a particular place, nor, quite, that it is that place. It means, rather, that what the work looks like and what it means is dependent in large part on the configuration of the space in which it is realized. In other words, if the same objects were arranged in the same way in another location, they would constitute a different work. (Oxley, Petry, Oliveira, 1996, 35)

Through site specificity, it is worthwhile to extend the discussion to consider Max Neuhaus, an experimental percussionist and sound artist, who particularly

stresses space and spatiality, through his work, *Sound Lines*, that are put in public space. For his works, Neuhaus uses the term “sound installation”:

“Neuhaus brackets began to make sound works which were neither music nor events and coined the term 'sound installation' to describe them. In these works without beginning or end, the sounds were placed in space rather than in time. Starting from the premise that our sense of place depends on what we hear, as well as what we see, he utilized a given social and aural context as a foundation to build a new perception of place with sound. With the realization of non-visual artworks for museums in America and Europe, he became the first to extend sound as a primary medium into the plastic arts.”¹⁸

One of Neuhaus’s works, *Sound Lines*, is installed on a bridge, put in public space, addressing the multiple becoming of a sonic experience. Public space involves the oscillation between visible and invisible, appearance and disappearance, and encourages a play between private and public everyday for everyone. Neuhaus’s *Sound Lines* become public, no one’s property, yet merging with others, and other sounds, reproducing and reproduced by them on an open stage, changing for all, bringing different experiences and scenes. Significantly this invites the reader to read the work according to a sense of “theatricality”, through which acts and roles are put into scenarios, which can never become complete, by changing roles and acts. Neuhaus indicates not one particular, but many sonic and spatial experiences, particularities, through public space, through sound, through a possible theatricality.

A sound work is not simply a sound work. It might be another work in another space and time. It represents a space, indicating spatiality in and through. While representing a space, a scene, a sound work brings, produces and extends to another experience, scene, and scenario, suggesting theatricality, flow of act, change, movement. It is in that respect always open and incomplete, addressing the imaginary, through which it challenges the illusionary.

Contemporary art practices

“Contemporary art” Belting wrote, “manifests an awareness of a history of art but no longer carries it forward”.... It is in part the sense of no longer belonging to a great narrative, registering itself on our consciousness somewhere between uneasiness and exhilaration, that marks the historical sensibility of the present.... It is characteristic of contemporaneity- but not of modernity- that it should have begun insidiously, without slogan or logo, without anyone being greatly aware that it happened.... The basic perception of the contemporary spirit was formed on the principle of a museum in which all art has a rightful place, where there is no a priori criterion as to what that art must look like, and where there is no narrative

¹⁸ www.emf.org/subscribers/neuhaus, www.emf.org/artists/neuhaus99/soundline.html, and www.betweenoundandvission.org/maxneuhaus.html

into which the museum's contents must all fit. Artists today treat museums as filled not with dead art, but with living artistic options.¹⁹

What does the contemporary say? In some sense, Danto asks this question, by referring to the possible indications of the “contemporary”. The modern has been promising, but seemed to fail to keep its promises. Yet failure does not address an end. Modernity is not finished. It is an incomplete project, as Habermas calls it, suggesting that there is no rupture between the modern and the contemporary, though they are not one and the same. The contemporary does not simply mean, “what is recent”, since it is an extension of the modern as a condition. In that respect the contemporary does not simply coincide with the modern, but rather, they live together, implying a passionate relationship, through which one challenges, attempts to change, seems to leave, but reconciles with the other, without sticking to the present, without assuming the future, and without knowing the end. Danto reiterates the ‘trap of the recent’ as follows: “just as “modern” is not simply a temporal concept, meaning, say, “most recent”, neither is “contemporary” merely a temporal term, meaning whatever is taking place at the present moment”. (Danto, 1997, 9)

Within this context, contemporary art may not simply be something new. Nevertheless, unlike modern, the contemporary does not seem to pursue a grand narrative, a linear and a progressive history. It does not intend to produce the heroic, the sublime, the beautiful, the didactic, the rational and the reasonable. On the contrary, contemporary art encourages staying away from those adjectives and reveals minor but many other possibilities, implying an open space. Thereupon it does not choose a particular style, yet permits a style within which different styles are used and “everything becomes possible”, as Danto mentions. Although technology does not guarantee such a possibility, it assists to extend and expand the field of the artist and the audience. Danto interprets this spread as a special trait of the contemporary, bringing “our art”:

“Contemporary” in its most obvious sense means simply what is happening now: contemporary art would be the art produced by our contemporaries. It would not, clearly have passed the test of time. But it would have a certain meaning for us which even modern art which had passed that test would not have: it would be “our art” in some particularly intimate way. (Danto, 1997, 10)

¹⁹ Danto, C. Arthur, “Introduction: Modern, Postmodern, and Contemporary”, *After the End of Art*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997) 5.

Does “our art” address the possibility of ‘anything anywhere’? Or does the condition of “everything possible” imply freedom, encouraging the participation of everyone, whereby more intimate stories are written? Can the condition of the contemporary, its operation, and particularity be understood via this intimacy and freedom? And for all of these questions, does Danto indicate an answer with what he says: “nothing need mark the difference, outwardly, between Andy Warhol’s Brillo Box and the Brillo boxes in the supermarket”? (Danto, 1997, 13) This last question brings the contemporary art space.

The contemporary museum encourages and approves the ordinary, by showing it and by letting it become something else, which is not necessarily definable. In this context, both suggest new possibilities in and through space, addressing and animating different journeys. It is perhaps at that point worthy to investigate these possible journeys, in order to re-consider the operation of contemporary art space.

Sometimes in winter, standing in a warm room, at a window, the flakes of snow told silent stories to me, which I never quite grasped, for too thickly and unremittingly new things forced their way forward in amongst the familiar. Hardly had I intimately attached myself to one snowstorm, when another one caught up within it, demanded submission. But now the moment had come, in the flurry of letters, to chase the story, which had escaped me at the window. The distant lands I met here played together like the snowflakes. And because what is far away when it snows no longer travels into distance, but inside, so there lay Babylon and Baghdad, Acco and Alaska, Tromso and Transvaal inside of me.²⁰

....

The journeys were all along not into an ‘out there’, but a trip inside, into memory and time. And the landscapes- and the objects found-may be read as allegorical hieroglyphs. (Leslie, 1999, 120)

Esther Leslie reminds the reader of journeys outside and inside, by referring to Walter Benjamin. A journey outside is already a journey inside, since “out there”, is a trip inside, into memory and time, as Leslie argues. A journey addresses an oscillation between different times and spaces, which is a construction, a story that becomes a scenario, a fiction. These scenarios indicate dream spaces, daydreams, which are imaginary and fantasized, yet neither fully attached to nor fully detached from the actual, and might be happening everyday. As Kavanagh mentions, dream space encourages an “endless range of personal associations”.²¹ What do the remembered and the forgotten depend on? How are they made? The actually present and the

²⁰ Leslie, Esther, “Souvenirs and Forgetting: Walter Benjamin’s Memory-work”, *Material Memories, Design and Evocation*, eds. Kwint Marius, Breward Christopher, Aynsley Jeremy, (New York: Berg:Oxford,1999) 120.

virtually possible are both internal and external to the individual. Neither the internal nor the external is pure. But rather they are intertwined, and mutually dependent, representing, reproducing and activating each other. The internal is not fully visible, but not fully invisible either. Yet what is on stage?

Where do the immaterial, the disembodied, and the imaginary turn into something material? And where does the invisible become visible? The imaginary is visited, on stage, and becomes audience-oriented in public space, where the invisible becomes visible, as Habermas conveys.²² Habermas carries the reader to the Greek cities, where the private and the public are separate spheres:

In the fully developed Greek city-state the sphere of the *polis*, which was common (*koine*) to the free citizens, was strictly separated from the sphere of the *oikos*; in the sphere of the *oikos*, each individual is in his own realm (*idia*). The public life, *bios politokos*, went on the market place (*agora*), but of course this did not mean that it occurred necessarily only in this specific locale. The public sphere was constituted in discussion (*lexis*), which could also assume the forms of consultation, and of sitting in the court of law, as well as in common action (*praxis*)... (Habermas, 1989, 3)

The Greek cities introduce the split between public and private spheres. The public is common to all, where everyone has a right to appear. In this context, common addresses “ordinary” and “accessible to all”, as Habermas puts it. (Habermas, 1989, 6) Public space, which is accessible to all, becomes a stage on which the symbolic production of values and exchange occur.

Sociologically, in Habermas’s terms, with “the polarization between state and society”, the boundaries between the private and the public become bold. Private is “home” and “intimate sphere”, whereas public is where the state and society relations are arranged. The boundaries of each operate to produce homogeneity, a definable enclosure, through which the functioning of the individual, and attributed norms and roles become definable, as well. In that respect, a public space is arguable in terms of Bourdieu’s notion of “habitus”.²³

The habitus is the universalizing mediation which causes an individual agent’s practices, without either explicit reason or signifying intent, to be none the less “sensible” and “reasonable”. That part of practices which remains obscure in the eyes of their own producers

²¹ Kavanagh, Gaynar, *Dream Spaces, Memory and the Museum*, London and New York: Leicester University Press, 2000, p.3

²² Habermas, Jurgen, trans., Thomas Burger, “Social Structures of the Public Sphere”, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1989, pp. 27-57

²³ Bourdieu, Pierre, trans., Richard Nice, “Structures, habitus, and practices”, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge:Cambridge University Press, 1977,pp.78-87

is the aspect by which they are objectively adjusted to their practices and to the structures of which the principle of their production is itself the product. (Bourdieu, 1977, 79)

Habitus forms the public, suggesting a homology, through which the legitimate and the socially approved are built and actualized. In that respect, as Bourdieu argues, habitus produces the common sense:

One of the fundamental effects of the orchestration of habitus is the production of a commonsense world endowed with the objectivity secured by the consensus on the meaning (sens) of practices and the world, in other words the harmonization of agents' experiences and the continuous reinforcement that each of them receives from the expression, individual or collective (in festivals, for example), improvised or programmed (commonplaces, sayings) of similar or identical experiences.... The habitus could be considered as a subjective but not individual system of internalized structures, schemes of perception, conception, and action common to all members of the same group.... (Bourdieu, 1977, 80, 86)

Through the common sense, habitus does not simply form the public, but also forms the private. Yet what is common and what is particular? None can be easily categorised, and well defined. In that respect, to argue for a certain "same group", might remain superficial. Rather it might be debatable to stress the non-singularity of habitus, through which the homogeneity is not homogenous in itself, yet involves diversity; and there are habituses, standpoints and different commonalities. Thereby habitus indicates plurality in and out of itself. Public sphere is the medium where different habitus-s coincide, coexist and cohabituate, where state and society relations are exercised, where the technologies of power are practised, where common sense and "dream spaces" are produced, and the daydreams are experienced.

Habermas and Bourdieu separate the 'functioning' of the public and the private sphere. However, through the terms they argued, public and private is not that separable, the visible is not fully visible, and the invisible is not fully invisible either. Thereby the question of where the immaterial becomes material, is not a question 'itself', but rather addresses another question, which is where the material becomes immaterial. The interplay between the external and the internal does not introduce an easy categorisation, and separation, yet brings an oscillation through which the boundaries of each are neither lucid nor discrete.

Common sense, and the production of common as "ordinary" in Habermas's terms, become crucial by operating as a bridge between public and private, determining everyday and everywhere, whereupon the boundaries between public space and private space turn into something ambiguous. The common is involved

within the particular, which is in process via the common. The two are not simply opposable and distinguishable.

A dream space is unique to the individual, tracing one's own particular stories, desires and fantasies, which indicate the other's stories and fantasies. Thereby a dream space becomes a bridge between public and private, common and the particular, providing an oscillation between the two. Kavanagh argues that a museum involves a dream space. In this context, he refers to Sheldon Annis, who uses this notion in his paper:

The idea of the dream space comes from a paper by Sheldon Annis (1987). He described the museum as an expressive medium and the visit as a movement through three overlapping symbolic spaces: cognitive, pragmatic (social) and dream. (Kavanagh, 2000, 2)

According to Annis, in a museum, through the cognitive space, a spectator becomes a reader, who learns from the museum; through the social space, s/he becomes a visitor and a social actor, who fulfils, represents, and reproduces the socially approved and anticipated roles; and lastly through the dream space, s/he fantasizes fictitious scenarios. Through the three, a museum brings a space via which the oscillation between public and private is experienced. A museum becomes a medium of communication, a bridge between the two. Therefore it can be considered as an agent, which puts something on stage. By that, a museum, on the one hand, makes 'the thing' it shows 'recognizable' and 'knowable', and, on the other hand, opens a door to a particular sensation and feeling, through the 'thing' it shows, which can orient the spectator to the imaginary and to the fantasized.

A museum does not only work to fabricate the visible, the remembered, but also the invisible, the forgotten. In that respect Kavanagh promotes that museums are making memories, and shaping past and present, as a critical resource. A public space invites the individual to participate, by opening and validating a medium of discussion and 'reading'. What is in museum is valued, suggesting 'different readings', by taking the audience to "journeys in memory and time", which are emotional, as well as cognitive and social. Kavanagh emphasizes the emotional, as a way of communication with others, and as a "fuel" of the dream space:

Emotions are not just internal impulses but the way we communicate who we are or want to be with others. It is the power behind the memory and how it is received. Perhaps this is what fuels the dream space and the flux of the rational and irrational that museum visits can provoke. (Kavanagh, 2000, 169)

Contemporary art encourages this “fuel” of dream space, through its invitation for short, small, modest, journeys to “imaginary landscapes”. Danto designates modern art as “the art of manifestos”. Though contemporary art is not loaded with such manifestos, it has an implicit discourse and narrative, which stands for the plurality in terms of its text and practice, promising many possibilities, and producing many small narratives. The contemporary does not simply indicate the visible and lucid.

Contemporary does not look for the dominant and the primary. It neither makes nor hopes for a ‘superman’, a hero. In that respect contemporary art privileges neither vision nor sound. Instead it encourages the possibility of ‘experience’, many experiences, promising multiplicity, “textual impurity”²⁴ against the “formal purity of traditional artistic mediums” in Foster’s terms, and thus, the possibility of ‘work’, which never becomes a ‘complete work’, but rather addresses ‘practices’. David Harvey addresses the “postmodern”, as a condition, between being and becoming.²⁵ The contemporary is neither simply modern nor simply postmodern. And everything is not simply contemporary. However the contemporary art practices partake of all, suggesting a ‘becoming’. In that respect, Arthur Danto’s indication of the contemporary remains as one of the possibilities of arguing the contemporary. It is in that sense, insufficient, yet workable and worthy to approach the works by Jody Elff, Susan Philipsz, Ann Lislegaard and Laurie Anderson, put on show in Musée d’art contemporaine de Lyon, and in MOMA, involved within the ‘contemporary art practices’ and dream spaces, making its visitor a spectator, a listener and a reader.

Other and Otherness: Voice and Sound

Sound travels without a map. It cannot be easily found, leading to curiosity. This is the point of pleasure, encouraging a daydream, not fully but possibly a detachment from something else, captivated by a journey, which is unknown again, and which provokes the desire to know the source of ‘the thing’ that brings this journey.

²⁴ Foster, Hal, “Postmodern Politics”, *Recordings Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics*, (N.Y: New Press, 1985) 121-139.

²⁵ Harvey, David, “The Condition of Postmodernity”, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, (Cambridge:Blackwell,1990) 327.

Where does this thing derive from? A Freudian reading suggests the mouth as the first organ of pleasure for the infant, and the mother's breast as the source of pleasure. The separation of infant from mother's breast brings the loss of the "source object", in Laplanche's terms, resulting in desire and fantasy of the source object, repression and anxiety. In this context, it is possible to say that the source object is already the external, which is "taken in" and 'digested'-though not fully-, and whose loss brings repression and anxiety. John Fletcher supports this, with reference to Jean Laplanche and his reading of source object:

The 'source object' designates the external object and its enigmatic 'co-excitations' that, implanted, taken in and metabolised as an internal foreign body, come to function as a source.²⁶

How does sound become enigmatic? More crucially, how is it linked to the "internal foreign body"? Sound and voice, ear and mouth, can be thought in relation to the erogenous zones due to the penetration effect. Sound and voice penetrate and are penetrated by ear and mouth. Penetration suggests a path via and within, already indicating the internal, the interior, and the invisible. Yet the invisible is neither fully invisible nor fully visible, but rather imaginary. The invisible is linked to the sites of fantasy and pleasure by the imaginary. The pleasurable involves and is involved within an enigma and a seduction deriving from an undecidable oscillation between the invisible and the visible. Sound is neither fully visible nor fully invisible, creating tension and enigma, and implying a relation to the "internal foreign body", repression and the unconscious.

Freud tells the story of the unconscious through "repression", possibly addressing a loss, and the repressed desire for the lost. The unconscious thereby works as a "reservoir" or a "storage" of the past, of the passed, the repressed and the lost. Yet what might be the unconscious other than that? Laplanche investigates and reconsiders the Freudian thought of the unconscious, which introduces a 'trace back', addressing a 'representation of an event', which passes from the conscious to the unconscious state by repression, as Laplanche says.²⁷

The unconscious does not simply involve the "thing-like representations", but rather involved within a process, a process of becoming, indicating a production via

²⁶ Fletcher, John, "Introduction: Psychoanalysis and the question of the other", in Jean Laplanche *Essays on Otherness*, trans. John Fletcher, (London & New York: Routledge, 1999) 32.

the external. According to Laplanche, Freud depicts the unconscious as an “instinctual kernel”, which is hidden and closed. However the unconscious already indicates the external thing, a critical resource that is open to change. Becoming implies an incomplete and constantly mutable process, almost always leading to an “untranslated remainder” in Laplanche’s terms. Untranslation or an untranslated message suggests the external, the unconscious of the other, becoming more and more enigmatic, and losing its value as ‘primary’. Such a reading carries to the “path” Laplanche took for the unconscious:

The path I deliberately took consists in considering the unconscious element or trace not as a stored memory or representation, but as a sort of waste-product of certain processes of memorisation. (Laplanche, 1999, 89)

The waste-product already implies the “untranslated remainder”, which is the other thing for Laplanche, as Fletcher argues. The other thing is involved within the unconscious, which is neither simply external nor simply internal, yet remaining as the enigma, which cannot be fully translated, as “the untranslated remainder” of the other, as Laplanche conveys. The other thing carries the reader to the notion of the otherness, the “quintessence of otherness”, as the “promise of a reopening”. (Laplanche, 1999, 109)

Otherness is neither simply present nor simply absent. The individual is attached to the other thing of the Other, which is incomplete and always under construction, becoming multiple and plural. The otherness is neither fully definable nor fully indefinable. Rather it is enigmatic and seductive, encouraging an oscillation between the internal and the external. Otherness of the other addresses the enigma of the other, a space that cannot be easily found, between ‘emergence and loss’, ‘visible and invisible’. Thereby otherness indicates an imaginary presence. The imaginary is already lost, and what is imaginary is already what is lost.

Voice suggests the other and sound suggests the otherness of the other. Neither voice nor sound is present in the first place. A voice is not fully embodied, but involved within a body. In that respect it is framed, yet not the frame itself. Voice is an echo, a representation of the body. It has a particular tone and an accent, indicating the personal. Yet voice is constructed both via the internal and the external, carrying

²⁷ Laplanche, Jean, *Essays on Otherness*, trans. John Fletcher, (London & New York: Routledge, 1999) 89.

the external other thing, the otherness of the other in and through. In that respect voice implies several other voices within.

Voice travels through this other thing. And thereby voice is not simply framed. It is not fully translated either, due to this other thing. Rather voice goes beyond body, beyond here and now, involved within there and then. In beyond, voice is not simply a tone, or an accent. In beyond, it becomes universal, unlimited and ideal as Derrida suggests. Maybe this “transcendence” of voice, in Derrida’s terms again, presents the point where we should not consider voice simply and fully in relation to super ego, as Laplanche argues. (Laplanche, 1999, 254) However voice does not simply promote “an ideal object”, the untouchable, the fixed and complete. Instead it urges the incomplete and the in-finite through the other thing, the otherness of the other, encouraged by sound. Voice can be damaged, fragmented, deconstructed, and spread, extended. And when it is fragmented, it approaches sound, which might indicate a possible otherness.

Sound is lost, oscillates between the invisible and the visible, encouraging a pleasurable game, whereby it operates with the imaginary, and becomes imaginary and virtual, bringing scenarios, daydreams, which are possibly pluralised and multiplied. Sound does not have a body, and travels without a body. It is plural, and indicates ‘many’, whereby it cannot be fully translated. Sound is both internal and external to voice, possibly working as an internal foreign body within voice, which is neither fully attached nor fully detached. This suggests an oscillation between voice and sound, the other and the otherness, the first and the third.

The uncanny

Otherness of the other interrupts the attributed roles, acts, and scenarios. Due to this interruption, a scenario neither remains the same nor becomes a ‘whole’ in Weber’s terms.²⁸ Otherness does not let a scenario fully be played. Fletcher reminds the reader of what Laplanche addresses by otherness:

He writes this ‘otherness’ as a neologism in French-not just *étrangeté*, strangeness, foreignness, alienness, but *étrangereté*, stranger-ness, foreigner-ness which we have attempted to translate as ‘alien-ness’- in order to insist that it is only in relation to the other and the other’s signifying and desiring actions that the alterity of the unconscious can be upheld. (Laplanche, 1999, 47)

²⁸ Weber, Samuel, “Uncanny Thinking”, *The Legend of Freud*, (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2000) 1-35.

Is it possible to analyse the otherness of the other then? Before an answer, it is perhaps necessary to argue what a possible analysis promises. An analysis fragments and brings disintegration, rather than integration simply. Thereupon it already suggests a remaking process, through which steps, or traces can be changed, and become non-linear. In that respect, the analysis of the otherness possibly indicates a production, through the fragmentation, disintegration and reintegration of the “traces” and “movements” taken. At that point an analysis promises two possible things: translation and construction, by detranslating and deconstructing, and by retranslating and reconstructing. Laplanche introduces the term “detranslation” as a way to stop translating, indicating “beyond translation”. In that respect he argues for analysis:

Analysis is a movement towards the past, a going back over- the *Lösung* [‘solution’] is an *Auflösung* [‘dissolution’], a term which well indicates the movement. What should be added emphatically, however, is that it is going back over which dissolves, which resolves, and not a going back to the so-called ultimate formula of my being. Beyond translations and past constructions, beyond the weavings it undoes, analysis goes back along the threads of the ‘other’: the other things of our unconscious, the other person who has implanted his messages, with, as horizon, the other thing in the other person, that is the unconscious of the other, which makes those messages enigmatic. (Laplanche, 1999, 258)

The enigma of the messages, “the other implanted in me” and “the metabolised product of the other in me” in Laplanche’s terms, can always be analysed, fragmented, remade, deconstructed and reconstructed, but can never be fully translated and found, and in that respect always remain as an “internal foreign body”, as Laplanche argues. (Laplanche, 1999, 256) The “internal foreign body” is incomplete and changing, thereby, forever lost and cannot be completely found. It rather oscillates between familiar and unfamiliar, becoming the “uncanny”.

The uncanny for Freud involves the return of a familiar phenomenon, made strange by repression, as Hal Foster argues.²⁹ Foster encourages referring to the German etymology where the uncanny indicates the *unheimlich*, deriving from *heimisch* (homelike). What is *unheimlich* was *heimisch* once. Nothing is completely familiar or unfamiliar. In accord with that Freud interprets the prefix “un”, not as a simple negation, but as a token of repression. (Foster, 1995, 8) By referring to Freud, Foster shows that the familiar or the case of “I have been there before” addresses the mother’s body, a case, which advocates “un” as a token of the repressed that never fully disappears or leaves the body:

There is a humorous saying: “Love is homesickness”; and whenever a man dreams of a place or a country and says to himself, still in the dream, “this place is familiar to me, I have been there before” we may interpret the place as being his mother’s genitals or her body. In this case, too, the unheimlich is what was once heimisch, homelike, familiar; the prefix “un” is the token of repression. (Sigmund Freud quoted in Foster, 1995, 8)

The uncanny is involved within a play between familiar and unfamiliar, an oscillation between appearance and disappearance, involving and indicating movement and change. This is the reminder of an ‘incomplete visible’ and an ‘incomplete invisible’.

A play between appearance and disappearance demands “a perspective” put into a scenario, as Weber suggests. More crucially, since the uncanny emerges via that play and oscillation, Weber argues that “the uncanny cannot be separated from the question of perspective”. (Weber, 2000, 18) A perspective is not singular and cannot be self-sufficient. Thereby there are perspectives, which bring ‘many’ scenarios, involving others, and others’ perspectives, scenarios, attributed roles, and acts through which theatricality occurs, in Weber’s terms:

The site of the subject is no longer unified and self-contained; it is a scene from which “others” can never be fully excluded.... Through the intrusion of these others, the narrative function and position of the self “finds itself” in a theatrical space. A space is theatrical when the representation that takes place “in” it plays to the “gallery” to others out “there”. Representation is thus turned inside-out, but the audience, conversely, can be said to be turned outside-in. (Weber, 2000, 6)

Theatricality and oscillation produce each other. Oscillation between “inside-out” and “outside-in” is imaginable within a theatrical space, where the roles are attached, detached, constantly changing and never become finished. Theatricality is on the other hand possible within and via such an oscillation. The two are thinkable through the uncanny, which never lets us fully be home, as Weber argues, with reference to Heidegger. (Weber, 2000, 25) Thereby the uncanny presents incompleteness, an enigma, a dream space, where ‘what is not home yet’ is imagined, and fantasized, and where ‘what was home once’ is lost again. The oscillation between the familiar and the unfamiliar-strange-alien, is where we re-find, and re-lose this loss. In other words, the oscillation is between emergence and loss, encouraging a repetition, and a rediscovery, yet almost always unfinished, never remaining same, and never completing its way, journeys.

²⁹ Foster, Hal, “Beyond The Pleasure Principle?”, *Compulsive Beauty*, (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1995) 7.

Voice is not simply lost, and does not simply suggest the uncanny. Yet the uncanny may work through sound. Sound encourages the play, the oscillation between familiar and unfamiliar, homelike and foreign. In that respect, it does not let us fully be home, and complete our journey. The play between voice and sound implies an oscillation between emergence and loss, which is produced by and produces the “perspectives and positions”, and the “uncanny theatricality” in Weber’s terms. With respect to the Weberian reading of the “theatrical space”, the space of sound and voice is already theatrical, since they are included in a space, which is both inside and outside. On the stage, many voices and sounds coincide, contradict and compromise. In that sense, the theatrical space positions the other spaces, through which the space of sound and voice is not singular, yet many, indicating the non-singularity of the roles and acts on stage.

Voice is on stage, masked, playing the leading role, representing a character, a body, making a character, bringing an appearance for the audience maybe. Voice speaks of a particular part. Yet it cannot be the particular part itself, since it is not present itself. Thereby voice is involved within other roles, other parts, other voices, other characters of the others, and other voices of the others. This suggests a possible deconstruction and reconstruction of voice, providing a workable “analysis”, which may take in different settings, and scenes. An analysis, fragmentation, and reintegration already open a pathway to change a scene, to leave ‘what was on stage once’ and to put ‘something else’ on show. However ‘what was on stage once’ cannot be easily and totally erased, though changed, since ‘what was on stage’ cannot be simply differentiated from this new scene, as ‘something else’. Thereby neither the former nor the latter can be finished and fully independent. Rather one approaches the other, sharing a special play through which they oscillate between on stage and off stage.

Sound travels through different positions. More crucially sound repositions the positions. As Weber argues, positions and perspectives, become roles and acts, yet never become a complete “whole” or a “work”. Sound indicates a position, a scene, yet does not guarantee one complete scenario. Rather it moves us away from ‘one particular scenario’, advocating many particularities and many scenarios. Sound this time removes us away from “one particular voice”, introducing the otherness of the other voices, the otherness of the other characters, and roles.

Sound encourages the uncanny, involving and involved within the uncanny theatricality, and bringing the oscillation between homelike and foreign. In that respect it never lets voice fully be at home, fully be 'my' voice and 'my' property. Rather sound calls for the otherness, for the other voices, as 'something', which cannot be fully translated, and always remains foreign as the other thing in my voice, whereby it plays between an unbeing and being that are no longer simply opposable or distinguishable, as Heidegger suggests. (Weber, 2000, 23)

An experience of sound can be considered as a daydream, which is neither fully attached to nor fully detached from both 'here and now' and 'there and then'. A daydream cannot be discrete, when and where it appears and disappears cannot be completely known. However a daydream is not continuous either. How is a daydream animated, through a kind of disappearance, electricity, and depth maybe? All three suggest a play between emergence and loss, again and again. Fear of loss animates the subject. It seduces to move in time and space, multiplies and pluralises the journeys, which operate with the imaginary, and encourage a possible construction of temporality and spatiality by the imaginary.

Durée addresses this temporality and spatiality. For Bergson, durée consists in the virtual becoming actual, as Turetzky mentions.³⁰ Durée cannot be actual, but becomes virtually actual, yet "never entirely actualized" in Turetzky's terms. Thereby it is an unfinished process, which suggests a possibility of imagining other possible journeys.

A particular sonic experience is possible with durée, inviting a construction, a scenario via sound. Durée does not demand a discrete end or a beginning, rather its intuition is involved within the oscillation between presence and absence. Sound in that respect is experienced via a flow of time and space, yet not one particular time and space. Durée involves and produces many. Its possible flows already suggest a travel between past, present and future. Thereby it extends and carries one place to another, one time to another. Durée is not just and not entirely continuous or enduring itself, yet suggests "an enduring becoming", as Turetzky mentions. (Turetzky, 1998, 210) A particular experience of sound is involved within this "enduring becoming".

³⁰ Turetzky, Philip, "Multiplicity and virtuality", *Time*, (London, NewYork: Routledge, 1998) 207.

The Third: the undecidable too many

Roland Barthes uses the phrase “third meaning” for the cooperation of sound and image, in terms of a cinematic model. The third meaning is the “other meaning” somewhere else brought by sound and image together, but neither fully describable nor fully indescribable for Barthes, remaining enigmatic. The third thereby promises many possibilities, yet never fulfilled, always unfinished. Roland Barthes suggests an adjective to approach the third, which is “obtuse” in contrast to “obvious”:

Obvious means *which comes ahead* and this is exactly the case with this meaning, which comes to seek me out.... As for the other meaning, the third, the one “too many”, the supplement that my intellection cannot succeed in absorbing, at once persistent (immovable) and fleeting (passing, sudden), smooth and elusive (shy), I propose to call it the *obtuse* meaning. Obtusus means that which is blunted, rounded in form.... An obtuse angle is greater than a right angle: an obtuse angle of 100 degree, says the dictionary; the third meaning also seems to me greater than the pure, upright, secant, legal perpendicular of the narrative, it seems to open the field of meaning totally, that is infinitely.³¹

Through this openness and incompleteness, the third cannot be entirely found. Rather it provides a “hide and seek” game in Barthes’s terms. In that respect the third is carried by and carries the uncertain, the undecidable, indicating an anxious, yet a pleasurable state, what Barthes calls an “emotion-value”. More specifically, Barthes argues that obtuse meaning carries a certain emotion, which is never sticky, but simply designates what one loves, what one wants to defend: an emotion-value, an evaluation. (Barthes, 1977, 59) An emotion value, “what one loves”, “what one wants to defend”, can be considered as where one is interrupted, what one fantasizes and desires, what one becomes lost through the imaginary, though not fully. The third in that respect carries the reader to the other, to the external thing, and to the otherness of the other, indicating an interruption, an obscure journey, an oscillation between the ‘first’ and the ‘third’.

As mentioned above, Roland Barthes has articulated the “third” and the “obtuse” for a cinematic image, not simply for sound. Yet as Michel Chion puts it, sound is already “cinematic”. (Kruth & Stobart, 2000, 4) If sound is cinematic as Chion suggests, sound already addresses a vision, a flow of movement, and a scenario, promoting the possibility of other possible scenarios. In this sense, sound already encourages the third, the obtuse, the undecidable too many, the indirect, the implicit, the lost, and the imaginary, not as itself, but via its possible scenarios.

³¹ Barthes, Roland, *Image, Text and Music*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977) 54-55.

However sound does not ensure an end, what it suggests is already open and unfinished, whereupon it does not provide a complete loss and emergence, a complete inside and outside, a complete detachment and attachment, a complete first and third. Rather, sound moves, destabilizes the fixed positions, interrupts, brings a becoming, and turns to be more and more promising to find, lose, and re-find the otherness, the oscillation between the first and the third.

As Barthes says, the third meaning is theoretically locatable but not describable. (Barthes, 1977, 65) This thesis 'locates' sound works theoretically. In that respect it introduces neither a possibility nor an attempt to describe what sound works are. Rather through these sound works, it offers "in-finite", in Irigaray's terms, and 'undecidable too many' journeys between emergence and loss, presence and absence. A sound work oscillates, not simply as a sound work. Its work is never done. Works by Jody Elff, Susan Philipsz, Ann Lislegaard and Laurie Anderson invite the reader to a discovery, to a strange play, whose work is never done.

CHAPTER I

Portal

I did not know what to say, my mouth
had no way
with names,
my eyes were blind....

Pablo Neruda, from *Poetry*

The resound project are all derived from their structures, based on the idea of “sound from sound”. In other words, all the elements you hear in any resound piece are extracted and determined by the ambient sound in the room or environment where the piece is installed. Each piece involves a process of analysis in order to collect the information necessary to form a new audible construction. There is a tremendous amount of sonic information available in any environment. By placing a microphone in a room and feeding its output into a computer, I can vary closely monitor, variations of volume, pitch and other sonic activity as it’s happening. This information then becomes the building blocks of the results that you are hearing. Indeed, which is installed in the entrance of the museum uses the resound model very directly. The piece functions purely by comparing the sounds gathered by the microphones placed into the entrance of the museum lobby. The pitches contained in the ambient sound in the lobby, are compared and used to create the harmonic structures that you hear. Portal is an examination of a journey. When we move through different spaces, we are seldom aware of the sonic changes that surround us, unless they are particularly drastic, like moving from a noisy room to outside of a building. With Portal the unique sonic environment is very focused and available only in a particular space in the room. When the origin or destination of a journey are eliminated, all that remains is the journey itself. Well the contents of resound installations often have strong musical characteristics but it is important to remember that these combinations are never pre-recorded compositions with a specific start or end point. They never repeat and are completely unpredictable because their behaviour is determined by the sonic activity in the room, which is constantly changing. Each instant of a resound installation is a unique listening experience.¹

Jody Elff , from NewYorkNewSoundsNewSpaces

Portal is installed as a separate room within the museum space. The room involves only a door frame and sound, which is noisy and indistinct. Thereby it is possible to argue that the room is not simply a room, but rather a sound room. As a part of the catalogue/cd, *Portal* still promises to be a sound room, addressing a journey, and demanding a play through the representation of a sound room, in which the “focused and available particular space in the room” can be found. Yet what is a sound room? And where is “the focused and particular space available” within this room? A room is not itself a complete space. It is an area ‘within’ some other

¹ This is Jody Elff’s monologue, only involved within the cd/catalogue, transcribed by me.

enclosure, possessing a door opening to another room. In that respect a room is in need of another room to sustain its presence as a room, and its expansion to its outside. A sound room is 'within' some other sounds. It is not complete as itself, but in need of other sounds so as to be present. What makes the present possible is the door, which is either open or closed, but extending the room in any case, as it is simultaneously internal and external to the room itself. A portal is not simply a door. Its door is imaginary and can be imaginarily closed. A portal is already an entrance, but framed, and functioning both as a separator and as a bridge between two spaces. In that respect it is also extending or stretching the internal to the external, and vice versa, belonging to both. Thereby a portal itself might be the oscillation between two spaces, and the oscillation itself is a play and a journey in Elff's terms, within which many focused and particular space-s can be found.

Within the CD, *Portal* involves Jody Elff's speech and a processed sound. When the whole work is fragmented, it seems like the processed sound works as a background to Elff's speech. Elff's text brings two rooms, one for voice and one for sound. However, none of them tells the work itself, since sound and voice appear to become distinguishable with reference to each other and bring a spatiality together; and since the work itself might have many entrances, many portals, addressing its extensions and other rooms. The speech makes a transition from "voice to sound", from one room to another, by separating them. Specifically the processed sound, heard behind Elff's speech, by itself, is not a distinguishable sound. It is rather lost and indistinguishable from the ambient sound of the room that the listener listened to it. With the speech, processed sound becomes audible and distinguishable, although it is not central and noisy enough. As Douglas Kahn puts it, "sounds are inaudible usually because they are small, they take place where we cannot hear, or we cannot hear them unaided." (Kahn, 1999, 201) Speech gets attention to the sound, and "helps" or "amplifies" it so it can be heard. Yet, on the other hand, sound is hidden in speech and voice, due to the voice and language centered hearing. At that point, speech functions both as a separator and as a bridge between the ambient sound of the listener's room and sound. By hiding the sound, speech and voice, on the one hand, stress the sound, and, on the other hand, the two situate the sound as secondary and as a background behind a door, indicating an inside. But speech is not simply a door. On the one hand, it is already open, since what is behind and in it can be heard, and, on the other hand, it is framed and framing the sound, and can be imaginarily closed. In

this sense, speech can be considered as a portal. Then what is the focused and particular sound in *Portal*? Is it speech and voice, or is it both the veiled and revealed sound? It seems that both become focused and particular with respect to each other. Sound and speech can be focused, isolated, yet extended, transmitted and integrated as well. A portal does not simply indicate a particular isolated room, but instead, suggests an entrance to other rooms, an extension to others, outside in, and inside out.

Technically, the extension of sound is possible via electronics as Joel Chadabe argues:

Any instrument or object could be extended with electronics, thereby giving a composer or performer the combined benefits of controllability, complexity, and an expanded range of sounds.²

Within *Portal*, the processed sound is an extended sound by electronics. This already offers the multiple and the plural via sounds. Many in quantity and in quality can come into the picture, addressing different and many rooms, via the *Portal*. The different and many are not totally visible and actual, but rather imaginary. At that point it is necessary to mark that the portal of *Portal* itself is also imaginary.

In *Portal*, speech is both external and internal to sound. It has in that sense a complex structure, within which many combinations are possible and latent as sound. Technically, as Chadabe mentions, “sound is complex, because different levels of change and control are interrelated in so many different ways”. (Chadabe, 1997, 242) However speech addresses not only sound but also human voice, which is taken as a model of an ideal synthesizer of sounds:

We can also learn a lot from the human voice. With its expressivity and its complexity of sound modulation in changing from vowels to fricatives to sibilants, and the immediacy of its translating human intentions into actual sound, the human voice has been viewed by many as the model for an ideal synthesizer. Xavier Rodet’s CHANT software, developed at IRCAM, and Perry Cook’s Spasm software, developed at CCRMA, used the human vocal tract as a model for electronically-produced sound. As Poet Chris Mann put it, “Speech is portable synthesis”. In *Anticredos* (1980), Trevor Wishart used the human voice to produce primarily nonverbal sounds. As he said, “Before writing the piece, I spent four years exploring the possibilities of the voice for producing sounds.” (Chadabe, 1997, 243)

The possibilities of voice and of sound, the various latent combinations, promise plurality and multiplicity of sound and voice. The “unique experience of listening”, suggested by Jody Elff, is at that point possible, not one, but through many available

² Chadabe, Joel, *Electric Sound: The Past and Promise of Electronic Sound*, (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1997) 244.

focused and particular sounds, provided by the multiplicity and the plurality of sound and of voice. Douglas Kahn conveys the plurality of sound as follows:

What would soon become evident is that a sound is in fact many sounds, arising from both acoustical and psychoacoustical vicissitudes, creating their own variations and modulations of time, and, given time, evolving their own organization often richer than any given musical structures through which they might be directed. (Kahn, 1999, 232)

Plurality and multiplicity of sound, as opposed to singular, suggest different and many sounds, indicating a depth, a spatiality within which the becoming of an outside in and an inside out, difference, and incompleteness emerge. A possible coexistence and cooperation of the two may bring the unique experience, the process through which the different and many can be followed by the audience.

In *Portal*, the sound is hardly heard first, but in time becoming recognisable through the speech whereby the audience may pursue and enter both sound and speech with reference to each other, as mentioned above. This is where the experience turns to be another room, or/and space for the audience. Another room is neither describable nor indescribable. Another room already implies many other rooms. It is on the one hand unique and particular to one particular listener, and, on the other hand, not. This other room and other experience are not singular, and that is why it is not easy to describe this room or experience itself.

Within *Portal*, instead of defining or describing what the experience or room is, it is possible to investigate what it involves, which are the monologue of Elff, the imaginary words suggested by the sound, the actual and the possible sounds, and the imaginary spaces represented and suggested by the sound. Elff verbalizes a monologue, involving meaningful and informative sentences. Since the beginning of this essay, the monologue has been designated as the speech, functioning as portal. Speech may be the first and foremost. As Maconie mentions, “before language comes speech”.³ *Portal* involves both language and something else, sound. And Elff’s monologue does not simply indicate speech. Rather it is involved in language, addressing words and sentences. The monologue becomes stressed within the work, since it suggests the possible meanings that can be extracted from the work. In this way, the monologue operates to orient the audience towards what to understand. The sentences and automatically Elff’s voice inform the audience, emphasizing both possible questions and answers about the work, making the listeners knowledgeable

about the technics of making a resound project. This can be considered, on the one hand, as an obstacle, and, on the other hand, as an open door to the generation of plural other meanings for two reasons. First, words are easily and primarily extracted and followed, resulting in the concentration on what has been said. Second, since words are that easily pursued, the separation between the verbal and the non-verbal becomes apparent whereby sound turns to be distinguishable.

Technically speaking, by itself, the sound in *Portal*, is an “indiscriminate pitch, noise”, which is the region of emotional expression and spatial awareness as Maconie puts it. (Maconie, 1997, 56) Words simultaneously function to veil and reveal the sound. This is where the actual and the virtual sounds emerge for the audience, stretching its rooms to others, the different and many. The actual sound indicates the distinguishable sound that is heard within *Portal*. Yet its distinction does not guarantee its description, since sound might have many references. It is already plural, implying and addressing many spaces, and changing according to different places. At that point, sound is already imaginary, and may have imaginary words, which are already lost. In that sense, the monologue is not alone. Sound, on the one hand, blurs the monologue, opening doors to new meanings, and, on the other hand, it highlights the actual words. What is crucial is the contrast between the two, since this contrast carries the listener and reader to the ambiguity encouraged by sound. The ambiguity promises the enigmatic messages, the lower frequencies, bringing the “emotional expression and spatial awareness” as Maconie suggests, imaginary spaces, voices and sounds within which we can articulate the other and otherness.

The other is both external and internal to Self. Yet the sense of the other is within Self through the otherness, the other thing. Thereby it is possible to stress someone’s otherness, which is not definitive, not finite, and “not fully translatable” in Laplanche’s terms. For reminding the reader of what Laplanche indicates by otherness, it is necessary to refer to John Fletcher again:

He writes this ‘otherness’ as a neologism in French-not just *étrangeté*, strangeness, foreignness, alienness, but *étrangereté*, stranger-ness, foreigner-ness which we have attempted to translate as ‘alien-ness’- in order to insist that it is only in relation to the other and the other’s signifying and desiring actions that the alterity of the unconscious can be upheld. (Fletcher, 1999, 47)

³ Maconie, Robin, *The Science of Music*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997) 50.

Otherness is neither fully present nor fully absent within me. It is rather lost, not easily found or categorised, and becoming enigmatic in that way. Otherness is in becoming of something, in fantasy, in-finite, and incomplete. What I attach to others, and what I am attached to, the other thing, are always in process. Thereby what is perceived and understood are also under construction. This incompleteness or metamorphoses addresses ‘loss of referentiality or/and loss of source object’ and ‘presence of an “untranslated remainder”’, bringing anxiety and uncertainty. Initially, with reference to Fletcher and Laplanche again, the source object is introduced as an external object:

The source object designates the external object and its enigmatic ‘co-excitations’ that, implanted, taken in and metabolised as an internal foreign body, come to function as a source. (Fletcher, 1999, 32)

The loss of the other thing indicates the loss of source object in this way of understanding. As Fletcher puts it, Laplanche considers the other thing itself as the untranslated remainder:

.... the other thing in the unconscious as the untranslated remainder, the by-product of the second moment of reinscription and translation. (Fletcher, 1999, 17)

The other thing is involved within the unconscious. According to Laplanche, the unconscious itself is the other thing, the external thing. In that respect, the attempt is not to dig in the unconscious as “a reservoir of past”, but rather to consider the unconscious itself as a lost and an in-finite space, not because of the blurry past, but because of the blurry present, made by the other via the otherness. With respect to Fletcher’s reading of Laplanche, the unconscious does not represent anything other than itself:

The unconscious element cease to be ‘a representation to be referred to an external thing whose trace it would be’ for ‘the passage to the unconscious is correlative with a loss of referentiality.’ As the untranslated remainder of the process of primal translation-repression, it ‘loses its status as representation (as signifier) in order to become a thing which no longer represents (signifies) anything other than itself.’ (Fletcher, 1999, 36)

At that point it is necessary to indicate that the other himself/herself, is not alone, h/she has “an internal other” as well, as Laplanche argues. The other thing in me is neither singular nor alone. On the contrary, otherness is already plural, as what is attached is many and divided, splitting and joining, contradicting and

compromising, approving and disapproving, and assimilating and reassimilating. This is where the oscillation between the internal and external comes into the picture, implying the “excess of messages” in Laplanche’s terms. The excess of messages, which are gradually becoming more enigmatic, reveals the play between the describable and the indescribable meanings. The play is, on the one hand, already strong, due to its openness to plurality and multiplicity of meanings, and, on the other hand, already weak, due to its liquid and slippery structure. Yet there is already a play, that is pleasurable and seductive in terms of its oscillation, strangeness, temporality, and “hide and seek” attitude. Through that game, instead of translation, it is worthwhile to suggest what Laplanche suggests, which is “detranslation”, “the ‘hollowed-out’ transference-transfert en creux”, on the contrary to the “filled-in”. (Fletcher, 1999, 49)

The unique listening experience, by stressing the particular and “sound from sound”, transmitted from one place to another, as Jody Elff addresses, invites the listener to be a reader, to oscillate via the ‘undecidable too many’ meanings and sounds, within a particular duration. In that respect the unique listening experience involves a play that is neither describable nor indescribable, and calling for detranslation. *Portal* has the word to possess this unique listening experience, partaking of a seductive and a pleasurable game via the sound and Elff’s words, and implying “a hollowed-out transference”, since the words are not only and exactly saying ‘what is inside’ the *Portal*. Yet a portal and *Portal* suggest showing ‘what is inside’. Thereby *Portal* is neither completely translating nor completely detranslating itself, but rather encourages an oscillation between the two. Such an oscillation is seductive due to its duration, which is limited, resulting in anxiety and excitement.

Fletcher argues that Laplanche designates the temporality of afterwardsness as the temporality of seduction. (Fletcher, 1999, 10). Duration makes the seductive possible. More obviously, perception of sound depends on duration and temporality. In *Portal*, the words frame the sound, simultaneously by concealing and setting it free. The temporality of words determines the temporality of sound and its afterwardsness. It is perhaps possible to say that the loss is experienced through that temporality. Laplanche asks about loss:

What more suitable terrain is there for this than that of loss: of the human being confronted with loss; to the extent that the dimension of loss is probably co-extensive with temporalisation itself? (Laplanche, 1999, 241)

In a contradictory way, it seems that within a particular duration, it is possible to find a particular sonic experience, indicating spatiality, not simply visible, not simply invisible either. What can be lost and found within and through such a sonic experience? Sound oscillates between emergence and loss, then, it cannot always be lost, and cannot fully be found either. What is lost is the visible, the visual, through sound. Within Portal, the journey of “sound from sound” indicates the journey from ‘voice to sound’, whereby it turns to be the journey from ‘emergence to loss’, from ‘symbolic to imaginary’, from ‘visible to invisible’ from ‘actual to virtual’, and from ‘Other to Otherness’.

Ziggy Stardust

.... and something started in my soul,
fever or forgotten wings,

Pablo Neruda, from *Poetry*

Ziggy played guitar, jamming good with Weird and Gilly
The spiders from Mars.
He played it left hand
But made it too far
Became the special man, then we were Ziggy's band

Ziggy really sang, screwed up eyes and screwed down hairdo
Like some cat from Japan, he could lick 'em by smiling
He could leave 'em to hang
Came on so loaded man, well hung and snow white tan.

So where were the spiders while the fly tried to break our balls
Just the beer light to guide us,
So we bitched about his fans and should we crush his sweet hands?

Ziggy played for time, jiving us that we were voodoo
The kids were just crass, he was the nazz
With God given ass
He took it all too far but boy could he play guitar

Making love with his ego Ziggy sucked up into his mind
Like a leper messiah
When the kids had killed the man I had to break up the band.

Oh yeah
Ooooooo
Ziggy played guitaarrrrrr⁴

⁴ David Bowie, “The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust”, London: EMI RECORDS, 1990

“Whose song is this? And in whose voice could it be sung? The song Ziggy Stardust was never sung in the first person. There was always a persona, an impression of an impossible character, conflating drag with Rock’n’ Roll cliché. But even this “signature” song does not speak in the voice of Ziggy himself but through other people. And what could it mean to sing it again? Without disguise? Now a woman’s voice, not so much playing the part but claiming the song quietly, momentarily, as her own, no performance, as such, but to herself. This has something to do with nostalgia. It is always a case of nostalgia. Instant nostalgia for the moment we first or last heard. And we repeat it to ourselves, as best we can. Inadequately that inability to conjure that moment past contributes to the nostalgic present. Whose song then? To have sung it again is to lay some claim to it. It is to change the song. It never forgets its original form, we rely upon our memory of it even as we hear it sung again. We stand in one place, but recall another at the same time. In this one quiet voice we hear several at once.”

(Andrew Renton, London, February 2002)

Ziggy Stardust, a David Bowie song, is re-sung by Susan Philipsz, who put this song in show as a part of the exhibition, by NewYorkNewSoundsNewSpaces. Susan Philipsz uses only her voice and sings the song on her own. Yet within the museum space, the work is not simply the song itself, rather it is a part of an installation, which involves four chaise longues made of cotton, placed around a table on which the headphones are put, and a CD player, settled on a shelf, installed on the wall. The audience sits on a chaise longue, puts on the headphone, and listens to the song. This can be considered as a comfortable setting for listening, and may take the listener back to his/her house, where s/he might experience a similar situation. Yet the crucial point is that the work *Ziggy Stardust* offers a room for listening with others. This is not simply a collective listening activity, since the listener still listens on her own with the headphone. In that respect it can still be considered as a private experience. However s/he is involved within a common space, seeing the others and seeing the listening act of the others, encouraging a spatial awareness, and indicating a position between the private and the public.

Within the CD/catalogue, *Ziggy Stardust* is a song, a track by Susan Philipsz. Yet it still addresses a comfortable and domestic setting, by entering the audience’s private spaces via the medium of a CD. And Susan Philipsz is still someone singing the song only with her voice. However *Ziggy Stardust*, as a cd track, is not simply a representation of the work installed within the museum space. In that sense, it does not return the audience back to the work in the museum. But rather it reminds the listener of a particular experience of sound, which is not finished or finalized yet. The unfinished experience can be read as a justification of an unfinished song.

Ziggy Stardust is sung as an incomplete song in different voices. But why and how? It is at that point worthy to remember Andrew Renton’s questions: “whose song

is this?" and "in whose voice can it be sung?". Yet before that, another question is waiting to be asked. Who is Ziggy? Is it an alien or a virus? Is he really a singer, as the lyrics tell us? Or is this a "signature" song, as Renton says? Ziggy might be no one and anyone. His voice and song was never present in the first place, but rather represented. Neither within the song nor within someone's voice, is Ziggy himself present. He is rather imaginary, fantasized in different voices via a song. Ziggy is a word, an acoustic figure of speech, and a sound, appearing and disappearing via the act of singing. Ziggy is revealed and concealed by voice, as a fragment, yet not as a simple part of the song, and of the voice either. Ziggy is a constructed character, which may be de-constructed and re-constructed, incomplete and imaginary. Thereby his imaginary voice may be sung by someone else's voice, represented by someone else's body within which Ziggy is included as a stranger, as an alien, becoming a "stranger-ness" and "alien-ness" in Laplanche's terms, addressing the other thing that is both internal and external to me. According to Laplanche, the other thing, the external within me, is not fully translatable. In that respect the question "who is Ziggy?", does not have an obvious answer. He has neither an actual body, nor an actual voice, but might be represented through someone's body and in someone's voice. With reference to that, he cannot simply be a "he" or "she". Rather Ziggy is "something", which is neither fully visible nor fully invisible, but experienced as a sound within the song, indicating the imaginary presence of many sounds and voices as Ziggy.

Ziggy, as internal and external to body and to voice, indicates the oscillation between a Ziggy 'coming home' and a Ziggy 'becoming alien', reminding the reader of the uncanny in Freudian sense. Samuel Weber introduces the uncanny with reference to Freud and Heidegger:

For Heidegger, what is uncanny is the recognition of the "human" as that which defines itself by departing from itself and becoming something else, something all too familiar and yet irreducibly alien, strange, and singularly overpowering. (Weber, 2000, 22)

For Freud, "uncanny" is a subset of "canny" which in itself contains the notion of "familiar" but also that of "concealed". (Weber, 2000, 25)

Ziggy sang with the spiders from Mars, and became a "special man", as the lyrics tell us. He is himself not completely an alien, but "special", implying a uniqueness between "being and unbeing" maybe, in Heidegger's terms, which are no longer simply opposable or distinguishable, as Weber puts it. (Weber, 2000, 23) Ziggy is the

leader of the band, superior to and different from the others, “*like a leper messiah*”, guiding, yet avoided and untouchable.

Between the familiar and the strange, Ziggy cannot be fully at home, never completes his way, and thereby becomes unfinished, carrying the “uncanny theatricality” in itself, as an imaginary character and as a part of a sonic experience. As Weber argues, the uncanny proposes acting, the performative, since it brings stories, and put stories into scenarios, involving different narrations and narrative positions, which demonstrate the dynamic social process of I and the Other. Through that, Weber explains the theatrical space:

The site of the subject is no longer unified and self-contained; it is a scene from which “others” can never be fully excluded.... Through the intrusion of these others, the narrative function and position of the self “finds itself” in a theatrical space. A space is theatrical when the representation that takes place “in” it plays to the “gallery” to others out “there”. Representation is thus turned inside-out, but the audience, conversely, can be said to be turned outside-in. (Weber, 2000, 6)

The roles are open to change, making the listener also a speaker and a spectator, encouraging him/her to be an actor through writing and reading possible other stories. The uncanny, in that sense, brings many positions by positioning the actor itself. With respect to that, Weber articulates the “uncanny theatricality”, as a “disunited stage” on which the “instability between and within narrative positions” take place. According to Weber, this situation addresses the polarity between the first and the third person:

The stage is disunited, as a story cannot be told from a single point of view, but must first be written in the first-person discourse, in letters to his friend, and then, following an abrupt and awkward shift, and continued in the discourse of a third person narrator.

....

The uncanny cannot be treated as a series of object of study because it entails feelings and is therefore not sufficiently objective or objectifiable. And yet, the uncanny is neither simply subjective feeling nor objective event. Rather it marks the confounding of this polarity: of first-person and third-person discourse. But the instability is not just between narrative positions: it is already within both of them. (Weber, 2000, 16)

The uncanny theatricality reveals the non-singularity, multiplicity and plurality of narratives. In that respect, it involves different “perspectives” in Weber’s terms, through which the enigmatic signifiers become many and incomplete. Weber explains and investigates the uncanny theatricality with reference to a story analysed by Freud, namely “The Sandman”. Weber summarizes the story of “The Sandman” as follows:

In a letter to his fiancée's brother, Nathanael, a young student, recounts an ostensibly banal event that recently "happened to me" (mir widerfuhr): "An eyeglass vendor walked into my room and offered me his wares. I bought nothing and threatened to throw him down the stairs, whereupon however he left on his own" In order to explain his surprisingly violent reaction to this apparently anodyne scene, Nathanael recalls another encounter he had experienced as a young boy, when his house was regularly visited by an ominous "Sandman" whose identity remained concealed from the boy for a long period. All he knew was that whenever this mysterious Sandman came to visit, the children were sent off to bed by their parents. These visits were accompanied by a sense of gloom and foreboding, and yet were apparently impossible to avoid. Nathanael's parents seemed incapable of keeping the Sandman out, just as Nathanael himself, so many years later, is unable to stop the eyeglass vendor from simply coming "into my room" (in meine Stube trat); it is almost as if neither walls nor doors presented the slightest obstacle.... This is not the least ominous sign of the Sandman's overwhelming power: his ability to penetrate domestic space, suddenly to be there, his arrival announced by the sound of his "heavy, slow steps mounting the stairs".... How does Nathanael respond to this truly terrifying situation? He seeks to *locate the threat*. To do this, he attempts to turn what is initially an *acoustical* encounter into a *visual* one, at first by asking his mother: "Mama who is the evil Sandman, who always drives us apart from Father-What does he look like"? To determine the identity of the Sandman is to know what he "looks like", wie er aussieht. The Sandman, Nathanael is told by his mother, "doesn't exist", except possibly as a turn of phrase: "When I say, the Sandman is coming (der Sandmann kommt), that only means that you children are sleepy and can barely keep your eyes open, as though sand had been thrown into them (als hatte man euch Sand hineingestreut)" (Weber, 2000, 8)

.....
 He is told by his mother that the Sandman is merely a figure of speech. (Weber, 2000, 9)

....
 The sound of the Sandman's heavy steps mounting the stairs, and Nathanael's realization that he must leave, go to bed, get out of the way, separate from his parents-all of this provokes great anxiety in the young boy, against which he reacts with the scopophilic desire to see the Sandman and thereby *to discover* just who he really is. This defensive and reactive desire impels Nathanael to slip into his father's study sight unseen and hide "behind the curtain of an open wardrobe standing right next to the door, in which my father's clothes hung". Barely hidden behind his father's clothes, Nathanael takes up his precarious position as observer while the menacing steps of the Sandman grow ever louder. He hears human noises, albeit involuntary ones such as coughing, together with animal and inanimate sounds such as growling (brummen) and rustling (scharren). The noises come over closer before suddenly being punctuated by a series of more definitive sounds: "A sharp step-a violent blow on the doorknob, the door springs open, rattling (rasselnd)," and Nathanael finally sees "the Sandman standing in the middle of my father's study, the bright glow of the lights shining in his face! The Sandman, the fearful Sandman, is the old lawyer, Coppelius, who sometimes eats lunch with us". (Weber, 2000, 11)

The Sandman oscillates between presence and absence for Nathanael, between being anyone and no one. The desire, the fantasy of whether the Sandman exists or not, relies on his appearance, which is illusionary bodied and clothed as someone, approaching no one. However, as a figure of speech, the Sandman is already present. This is not an illusionary presence, but rather imaginary. Weber reiterates the problem of identifying the Sandman, as follows:

To find out "who the Sandman is" is to discover "what he looks like". The Sandman, however, turns the tables: not only does he not look like anything familiar and recognizable, but he makes others look like him. (Weber, 2000, 14)

The Sandman's imaginary presence involves many possibilities, making Nathanael not only a spectator, who is in search of a vision of this mysterious person, but also a writer and actor, who constructs different Sandmen, which can never be fully fulfilled, and are always in process. Thereby the Sandman is never singular, neither in itself nor for Nathanael, since he can not become a fulfilled whole. He is the lost, as the source of anxiety, leading to inadequacy. Like Ziggy, he is not a simple 'he', since he is not just a stranger, but also a "stranger-ness", which is internal and external to Nathanael. Thereby the Sandman is an attached fragment, the other thing 'within and out', the otherness of the other, which is liquid and open to change.

Considering the story, Weber highlights the uncanny involved in and experienced via an experience of sound, whereupon sound oscillates between presence and absence, through its indecisive and many possibilities:

The uncanny crops up again and again, as a figure of speech, an atmosphere in a story, an allegorical instance. Announced by the sound of approaching steps, of heavy breathing, wheezing or coughing, or other semi-articulate sounds, uncanny figures and situations return to remind us of the difficulty of distinguishing clearly between language and reality, between feeling and situations, between what we know and what we ignore. Defiguring of the figure, the Sandman marks the spot where what is (there) and what is not, presence and absence, coming and going, can no longer be clearly distinguished. The uncontrollable possibility-the possibility of a certain loss of control. (Weber, 2000, 19)

Voice is not simply the uncanny. When it becomes fragmented, when it loses its distinct tone, it becomes uncanny, almost indistinguishable, and lost. *Ziggy Stardust* does not directly lead to a loss, since what is heard is voice, before sound. Yet what is heard in the first place is arguable as well, due to Ziggy, working as a stranger and stranger-ness. The story of "The Sandman" bridges the reader to the story of Ziggy, who is a fragment of singing voice, a figure of song, a word, a sound, and an imaginary and fantasized character, not singular; not actual, but plural, virtual, lost, metaphysical, and in-finite, transcending and transforming time and space.

As a song, *Ziggy Stardust* is neither that indistinguishable nor that continuous in our lives. Rather, the song is sung within a particular duration whereby it is perceivable via its temporality. This temporality suggests spaces of performance. The sense of temporality brings "the temporalization of sense", which is a "spacing" in Derrida's terms.⁵ Spacing of the song carries the listener to the possible experiences

⁵ Derrida, Jacques, *Speech and Phenomena*, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973) 86.

of vision. Yet that is a limited possibility, laying a claim to appearance. As a sonic experience, a song does not simply offer one particular appearance, but rather it blurs, multiplies and pluralises many appearances. In that respect the imaginary quality of a sonic experience challenges the possibility of the illusionary.

Then, it is possible to argue that an experience of sound is not completely discrete. This does not suggest that it is fully continuous and inseparable either. The temporality makes the experience possible, and in this sense, an experience is particular and separable from others already, saying something as itself and in itself within a particular time and space. Yet temporality does not indicate only 'what is in', since it already refers to the others to draw its lines. Thereby temporality does not guarantee the fully separable, what is completely in, and what is completely out. What is passed might not totally be passed, and might be repeated. In that respect, nothing completely appears and disappears. There is this incompleteness and inadequacy carrying us to nostalgia, tracing us to the past, which is made in the present. Nostalgia provides neither a simple representation nor a simple repetition of the past. Rather it is a remembering, which consciously or unconsciously, willingly or unwillingly, but almost always pleurably becomes imaginary and almost fantasized. It is a play between pain and pleasure, just like melancholy, addressing an oscillation between forgetting and remembering, an anxiety for loss, and a conscious or an unconscious attempt to own 'your past', to make it within 'your present', which is desired to become known and recognized as well as your past.

The uncanny, offers a journey between past, present and future, latent with unfinishedness, by carrying the reader to the position of a speaker, of a listener and of a spectator. Thereupon nostalgia appears and is remade through the uncanny. What is remembered and recognized, is already uncertain, and imaginary, whereupon the possibilities are indecisive and many. Weber uses the word "shock" to convey the instant of recognition, but which is rather misrecognition:

There is the shock of recognition, to be sure, but that recognition-and everything uncanny entails such a recognition-is at the same time a misrecognition, a misapprehension, for reasons that are condensed in this play of or on words. For recognition presupposes repetition or recurrence, but what repeats and recurs never entails simply the return of the same. (Weber, 2000, 11)

However the uncertain possibilities and different returns produce the fact that there is always a room for hope, and for wishful thinking in nostalgia, transporting us to

present and to future. Nostalgia might be considered as an endeavour to put a signature, to 'become' present with your signature within your past and present. However even 'my' past cannot simply be 'my' past. Thereby I cannot simply own 'my' signature.

A signature should be, but cannot be signed at one stroke. It is particular and has a value, just like a proper name has. It is in that sense not translatable, and cannot be fully imitated. A signature can be considered as a representation of body. It is a justification of presence, functioning as a password. A voice is a representation, an echo of body. It is not worldly, as Derrida argues, voice is beyond "here and now" as an ideal object, which tells us its power:

In order to really understand where the power of the voice lies, and how metaphysics, philosophy, and the determination of being as presence constitute the epoch of speech as technical mastery of objective being, to properly understand the unity of *techne* and *phone*, we must think through the objectivity of the object. The ideal object is the most objective of objects; independent of the here-and-now acts and events of the empirical subjectivity which intends it, it can be repeated infinitely while remaining the same. Since its presence to intuition, its being-before the gaze, has no essential dependence on any worldly or empirical synthesis, the re-establishment of its sense in the form of presence becomes a universal and unlimited possibility. (Derrida, 1973, 75)

This "unlimited universal possibility" suggests the continuous transcendence, which is independent from "here and now", via voice whereby "a particular voice" becomes ambiguous. Then it is worthy to ask what Renton asks: "Whose voice is this in *Ziggy Stardust*?" and "Whose song is this?" As mentioned, Ziggy's body and voice is never present in the first place. It is already lost, imaginary and under construction. But more crucially, the loss of one particular signature, and of one particular voice makes Ziggy incomplete and unlimited.

However is this the only possibility? Voice suggests a potential beyond, yet is it simply and always an ideal object, presenting an unlimited and universal possibility? Does voice's transcendence make it frameless and limitless? Does voice leave body? Voice is both internal and external to body. It emerges within a particular space. Voice is in that respect not fully unlimited, but rather framed, and may be dependent on "here and now", and involved within 'there and then'. When it leaves the throat, it goes out as an internal echo of my body, neither simply nor fully, but possibly addressing the external echo of the Other's body. Yet it does not fully leave my body. Derrida conveys this as follows:

Where does this complicity between sound and ideality, or rather, between voice and ideality, come from? When I speak, it belongs to the phenomenological essence of this operation that I hear myself at the same time that I speak. The signifier animated by my breath and by the meaning intention, is in absolute proximity to me. The living act, the life-giving act, which animates the body of the signifier and transforms it into a meaningful expression, the soul of language, seems not to separate itself from itself, from its own self-presence. (Derrida, 1973, p.77)

Act of speech and act of singing involve voice and words. My voice and “my words” do not leave me, as Derrida argues:

My words are alive because they seem not to leave me: not to fall outside me, outside my breath, at a visible distance; not to cease to belong to me, to be at my disposition “without further props”. (Derrida, 1973, 76)

Nevertheless, my voice or my words are addressed to others, they do not simply belong to me, and they are not simply my property. Otherness of the other is potentially beyond my words and my voice. Thereby my voice and my words are not simply and always a representation, a reflection, or an echo of my body, but instead, the Other’s construction, interruption, which is inadequate and incomplete, whereupon transcending and transforming.

Neither Ziggy, as an imaginary and fantasized character, nor *Ziggy Stardust*, as a song, is a property. The voice of Susan Philipsz, is on the one hand, ‘her’ voice, and, on the other hand, someone else’s voice. Her voice is neither simply limited nor simply unlimited, but instead, transcending, transforming, and overflowing, whereupon it can be reframed, and reshaped, never completes its way, never remains same, and never becomes fully ‘her’ voice through other voices, the otherness, the interruption of the other voices. It becomes, in that sense, both her voice and someone else’s voice, both particular and ordinary. In this context Renton reminds the listener of a necessary question: “What could it mean do sing it again?”

.... And what could it mean do sing it again? Without disguise? Now a woman’s voice, not so much playing the part but claiming the song quietly, momentarily, as her own, no performance, as such, but to herself. This has something to do with nostalgia. It is always a case of nostalgia. Instant nostalgia for the moment we first or last heard. And we repeat it to ourselves, as best we can. (Andrew Renton, London, February 2002)

Susan Philipsz is heard as just voice, but not without disguise, since a voice is not itself pure, but rather, disguised by involving several other voices. She is singing as an ordinary person, not laying a claim to it, but not just to herself, since “herself” is not alone, and not a single and a complete unity, and since she puts the song in show, and

has an audience. And there is already a performance, a bodily act, and a singing act, with voice. This has something to do with today and more obviously with the everyday between public and private, for the moment we sing this song to “ourselves”, as immediately we can between its emergence and loss, as a ‘daydream’ and as a ‘fantasy’, which is not fully attached to and detached from the actual. Repeating the song, singing it again, then is a re-discovery of the loss, of the imaginary via an in-finite play, which is possible because of theatricality, and constructed roles, which never become a whole. As Weber suggests, “positions” and “perspectives” become “roles” and “parts” of a process that never gets its “act” together to become a whole, or a “work”. (Weber, 2000, 19)

CHAPTER II

Sarah's Panorama

.... and I made my own way,
deciphering
that fire,

Pablo Neruda, from *Poetry*

She walks to the apartment
She turns on the lamp
Hmmm...
And then sits down at the table
She opens the window
She opens the door
She opens the window
She moves the chair...
Narrator, Sarah's Panorama

Sarah's Panorama, a work by Ann Lislegaard, is introduced as a sound installation in the CD/catalogue of the exhibition "Audible Light". The CD is neither a full representation of the exhibition nor fully 'something else', yet represents the museum space, where the work is installed within a separate room, within which the audience can 'watch' and listen to *Sarah's Panorama*.

Sarah's Panorama seems to indicate a movie. Yet it does not involve a moving image, though promises a flow of action and a "cinematic image" through sound, in Michel Chion's terms.¹ More specifically, within a room, one projected image on the front wall, and two speakers on the corners at the back, are arranged. The projected image is blurry and remains inadequate to answer two particular questions: Where is this place, represented in the image? What does it tell? But the image is not alone within the work. A voice is speaking. A woman narrates the sounds of movements, indicating a presence of another woman, which is not fully present, but rather imaginary. In that respect, does the narrator present imaginable images and spaces through voice and sound? Or does she encourage a particular image and space just with her voice? Both are arguable for *Sarah's Panorama*, as the possible flows of movements and stories are presented via sound and voice together.

¹ Chion, Michel, "Audio-Vision and Sound", *Sound*, eds. Patricia Kruth & Henry Stobart, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 201-222.

Each voice is also sound, but each sound is not voice. Sound is travelling, a drifter, a nomad. It does not have a frame; what frames it is image as Michel Chion mentions. It does not have a distinct beginning or an end, by itself lost and plural, due to its enigmatic presence, open-ended journey-‘s’, and obscure destination-‘s’. Yet voice is part of a map while mapping the map, addressing a presence of ‘someone else’ other than simply a drifter. Voice has a tone and a particularity, involved within a temporal trace, transcending via its internal being while extending to its external other. Thereby, voice does not simply imply the internal and the external, but also beyond, which might bring beyond here and now, even perhaps carrying us to there and then. Derrida argues voice in terms of an ideal object, independent from here and now, promoting an unlimited and universal possibility. Beyond “here and now” does not guarantee such a possibility, yet seems to promise this:

.... The ideality of the object, which is only its being-for a nonempirical consciousness can only be, expressed in an element whose phenomenality does not have worldly form. The name of this element is *the voice*. (Derrida, 1973, 75)

Voice extends and moves as sound. Sound and voice are not one and the same. Yet one approaches the other, oscillates through the other, whereby the two are, via each other, involved within a pleasurable game. Neither voice nor sound simply indicates a material and a certain ‘thing’ or ‘being’. But rather they move through a ‘becoming’, promising a journey, which does not have a distinct beginning and an end, but which is temporal and spatial when it is encountered. In terms of an encounter, an experience, flow of voice and sound, separately or jointly, is involved within a particular *durée*, which is the condition of anything actual and possible, in Bergson’s terms. (Turetzky, 1998, 194) Sound and voice are actualized through *durée*, indicating the possibility of movement, “flow”, in Turetzky’s terms, via temporality.

Neither sound nor voice are temporal objects. In that respect they do not have fixed time, place and physical positions, but rather they are involved within a temporal flow, whereby experience, construction and movement of each become possible. Such a possibility encourages and emerges via multiplicity, addressing the different many. Bergson attenuates the conception of multiplicity to “qualitative differences” and to “qualitative multiplicities, containing differences of kind in

concrete durée” as Turetzky mentions. With reference to Bergson, Turetzky distinguishes the quantitative and qualitative within the notion of durée:

Durée forms a whole that cannot change without altering qualitatively; in succession, it contains differences of kind that permeate one another, fused together in a whole rather than juxtaposed in an abstract space. Since durée is successive, it divides continuously, changing as a whole, where quantitative multiplicities do not change. Since durée also continuously changes in kind, it is not a quantitative multiplicity.... Everything quantitative, all matter and space, is completely actual; it can be divided indefinitely without a change in the totality of actual or possible qualities perceivable in the object. In contrast, only pure tendencies, not existing actually but solely virtually, in principle differ in kind. What differs in kind differs only potentially, as a tendency, i.e. virtually. Although the qualitative multiplicity of durée is as real as any actual quantitative multiplicity, its reality is purely virtual. (Bergson quoted in Turetzky, 1998, 196)

According to that theoretical picture, durée has a flux, a changing whole and a succession in which each stage appears to be different. Durée’s reality is multiple, heterogenous and virtual. At that point, the difference between the actual and the virtual is considered within the difference between the possible and the real. “The possible would include more than the real, since not every possibility is realized, but would be less than the real, since no possibility can, qua possibility, be real.” (Turetzky, 1998, 197) Instead of this reading, Bergson suggests that the possible includes a retrospective nature. In this context the possibility is an image in relation to the past, which must be real and concrete. The possible cannot become possible without being realized, implying that the real produces the possible. Yet past is made within the present. In that respect, it might not be true to claim that the possible next is derived from the lived, real and concrete past, since there might be no concrete past. Rather what is concrete might be present, which is ‘actually’ making the past not as a reserved and fixed memory, but as a resource, which is open to change, produced within the present. Past and present are both actual and virtual, suggesting an extension and a continuation between each other, and, though not fully, implicitly addressing coexistence and cooperation.

The virtual is “real without being actual”, and produces the actual in Bergson’s reading as Turetzky puts it:

.... The virtual actualizing itself. Consequently the virtual is inherently in flux. It is qualitatively multiplicity continuously differentiating and creating its own actualization in differences of kind. (Turetzky, 1998, 198)

According to Bergson, *durée* is pure multiplicity growing in its actualization, spatializing time, as an enduring becoming, but never entirely actualized. (Turetzky, 1998, 210)

In *Sarah's Panorama*, the spectator experiences sound and voice within a particular duration, suggesting a “construction” in Paul Valéry’s terms. Through that duration, a story can be pursued and other ‘multiple’ latent spaces, plots, and stories are generated. The narrator neither fully tells nor fully indicates a ‘panorama’ through her voice. Rather, instead of a fixed, one particular panorama, ‘undecidable too many’ scenarios, encouraging virtuality and multiplicity, via a blurry image, and suspended sounds, are followed by the audience. Multiple and virtual scenarios become imaginable within a specific *durée*, bringing the sense of temporality and spatiality.

Laplanche conveys that the sense of time can be replaced by the sense of the other, advocating the possibility of multiplicity and latent virtuality via the sense of the other. The other is already an object, which is both internal and external to the subject, drawing out an ambiguous figure that cannot be localized or spiritualised. The subject experiences the uncertainty or fluctuation of the other, through the otherness of the other, which is neither fully present nor fully absent, cannot be easily found, and interrupts. According to a Freudian reading, such a scenario carries us to the unconscious.

Laplanche argues that the Freudian reading introduces the unconscious in “me”, working as an “instinctual kernel”, implying a storage or a reserved space for desires and goals, which assists and provides a pathway tracing back of the individual psyche. The unconscious, in that Freudian respect, functions as a source, or a pathway waiting for the individual to get in. On the contrary, what Laplanche indicates is that the unconscious is not a physical or a biological part of my body, and thus it is not imaginable to localize the unconscious in “me”. Subsequently, it can not be a “reserved space” and a storage hidden or buried within my body waiting to be extracted. In that respect, the unconscious is neither an “instinctual kernel” nor an individual property, yet “the unconscious is the other thing” as Laplanche puts it.

The investigation of the imaginary presence of the other in me becomes thinkable through the otherness of the other, which is neither fully attached nor fully detached, indicating that ‘my’ presence is possible via the presence of the other. What is internal is already what is external. More crucially, internal and external neither address a fixed position, and positioning nor promote two distinct polarities and sharp

contrasts, but rather introduces an oscillation, through which the third, the undecidable too many, the incomplete and the in-finite become possible. Thereby the problem is not the split between other and I, yet the otherness of the other, the third, and the oscillation between the first and the third.

Who is the third person in *Sarah's Panorama*? Is she the guide, the narrator? Who is Sarah? The answers cannot be easily found since none is fully present in the work. Sarah is an imaginary character, indicating the protagonist. The narrator never says Sarah, rather she says "she". Sarah is not a name, not a word, not a sound, articulated by the narrator. Rather Sarah is involved within the title of the work, as a figure, as a word, as a sound, possibly articulated by the audience. In that respect, Sarah might indicate an imaginary body, an imaginary space, which represents other sounds, becoming Sarah's footsteps, or Sarah's plastic bag, for the audience. However Sarah might be anyone, and no one. She does not stick to one particular body in the imaginary, yet already promotes the possibility of 'Sarah-s', other bodies and other spaces through the imaginary, the fantasized. Thereupon Sarah loses its proper name, its untouchable and unique quality. Instead it becomes a critical and an open space, through which Sarah is involved in an enduring remaking process. Within that process, the narrator might be Sarah as well. The narrator seems to be an outsider, as the third person, yet her voice is also internal to other sounds. The answers to the questions 'who is Sarah' and 'who is the third person' remain uncertain, due to this open space and remaking process. Thereby, the oscillation between Sarah and the narrator more crucially comes into the picture.

This oscillation suggests the uncanny, a play, pleasurable, yet strange, which cannot be fully translated. Laplanche articulates the impossible full translation of a message. Instead, he emphasizes "detranslation", as a way to stop translating and to present a fictitious third space "beyond translation", in his terms. Perhaps it is worthwhile to argue that this fictitious space is pursued through sound, which includes and is included via multiplicity and virtuality. This point carries the reader to the question of how, which reveals the discussion of form.

Unlike meaning, form is distant and cold, discharging the meaning, bringing an obscurity, which seems to be left via meaning. However, what they share is an uncanny game, involving different position possibilities such as completing, fighting, dominating, overlapping, enhancing, extending and deepening. Are form and meaning separable from each other? Not that separable and not that inseparable either.

Meaning and form, in cooperation, leads to tension, an oscillation between emergence and loss maybe, as the former seems to reveal the obscure thing, while the latter seems to hide it. Such an oscillation brings an incomplete understanding and translation.

Barthes, in his book, *Mythologies*, calls this a “hide and seek” game. The meaning before form is complete according to Barthes. The hide and seek game distorts this complete meaning, creating a suspension and loss, yet it is not destruction and death.

“The meaning is already complete, it postulates a kind of knowledge, a past, a memory, a comparative order of facts, ideas, decisions. When it becomes form, the meaning leaves its contingency behind; it empties itself, it becomes impoverished, history evaporates, only the letter remains... The essential point in all this is that the form does not suppress the meaning, it only impoverishes it, it puts it at a distance, it holds it at one’s disposal. One believes that the meaning is going to die, but it is a death with reprieve; the meaning loses its value, but keeps its life, from which the form of the myth will draw its nourishment.”²

The oscillation does not simply indicate “a death with reprieve”, or a temporal loss. Yet it encourages a suspension, a vivid and exciting statement, a critical process, promising movement, animation. In that respect, the oscillation does not simply introduce a “distance”, yet suggests and becomes a distance between ‘full non-translation’ and ‘full translation’, ‘full satisfaction’ and ‘full dissatisfaction’. The oscillation rather brings ambiguity, hesitation, and possible fictitious spaces. *Sarah’s Panorama* includes and repeats this ambiguity, not simply implying a loss, but a re-discovery of the lost, the imagined, and the fantasized, through an already pleasurable “hide and seek” game.

What is in *Sarah’s Panorama*? The blurry projection might indicate or represent a corridor of a flat, which is both internal and external to the flat. Though the narrator does not tell where this place is, the sentences promotes “an apartment” within which a woman does something. By this, the audience can be involved within an interior of a house, a journey, through which travelling different rooms of the house via sound becomes imaginable. Chion uses the term “phantom image” for this situation. More concretely phantom image means the absence of the image, while hearing its corresponding sound. Since sound is plural and lost, implying many addressees, the term “possible correspondents” seems to be more appropriate than just one “correspondent”. However the “phantom image-phantom sound” situation

² Barthes, Roland, *Mythologies*, (London: Vintage, 2000) 117-8.

suggests a direct relation between a sound and an image. For instance the sound of footsteps can be considered as one of the ‘distinct’ sounds, which is not projected and seen, but only heard by the audience, becoming a phantom image. Nevertheless sound does not substitute for the image. In other words, sound is not a redundancy or an assisting component for the image. Chion designates this “illusion of redundancy”. In that respect, in Chion’s terms, “additional value”, a reciprocity between image and sound in a filtered whole is arguable. Beyond their particularities, what sound and image bring is a third space, which is an extended new space, in Chion’s terms “a projected shadow, a mental image”, carrying the audience to an imaginary and pleasurable state. This mental image is supported by and supports the suspension, encouraged by sound. Technically speaking, in terms of the talkie cinema, Chion calls this “vectorization”, which indicates the awakening anticipation, derived by “sound as image” and “image as sound” in terms of the flow of movements. More crucially, for an extension, a suspension and then an anticipation- in short- for a “projected shadow and transforming mental image”, an ambient, an atmosphere is required *Sarah’s Panorama* includes a sonic and a visual atmosphere, a spatiality, bringing sound as image and image as sound, extension and suspension, imagination and pleasure, and plurality and loss. More concretely, this atmosphere makes the experience of the third space workable for the audience. At that point how the audience perceives this work gains significance. Bergson suggests “sensory motor recognition” and “attentive recognition” for a possible perception. In the former the spectator does not focus his/her look and perception to the object. Rather, s/he passes from one object to another, remaining on one and the same plane as Deleuze argues in Bergson’s terms. On the contrary, in the latter, s/he focuses on the object, which is remaining the same but passing through different planes, as Deleuze argues:

In the first place we perceived a sensory motor image from the thing. In the other case we constitute a pure optical (and sound) image of the thing we make a description.³

The sensory motor recognition seems less superficial than attentive recognition, since the object is not reducible to an incomplete translation or description. Yet description or translation encourages a mental transformation, carrying the audience to possible new spaces, other spaces, which become the third

³ Deleuze, Gilles, “From Recollection to Dreams: third commentary on Bergson”, *Cinema 2 The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson & Robert Galeta, (London: The Athlone Press, 1989) 44.

incomplete and exuberant space to perceive, promising a unique experience of a unique atmosphere. The audience possibly encounters and actualises the plural, multiple and virtual via the attentive recognition. While proceeding with the work, different objects at different planes come into existence by memory and recollection-image. As Deleuze puts it, “each time description has obliterated the object, at the same time as the mental image has created a different one? Each circuit obliterates and creates an object.” (Deleuze, 1989, 46)

However the climax or the resolution for a possible destination is not entirely realized via the recollection image and attentive recognition as Deleuze argues:

In short, it is not the recollection-image or attentive recognition which gives us the proper equivalent of the optical-sound image, it is rather the disturbances of memory and failures of recognition. It is a whole temporal “panorama”, an unstable set of floating memories, images of a past in general which move past at dizzying speed, as if time were achieving a profound freedom. (Deleuze, 1989, 54-5)

With respect to that, what brings the third space is the distorted and ambiguous “panorama”. *Sarah’s Panorama* encourages the audience to experience this enigma, which can be elaborated by the projected image, voice and sound.

Particularly, neither sound nor voice is complete or completely appears in *Sarah’s Panorama*. Rather they present a journey through which one approaches the other. Sound approaches voice through the speech act, yet not fully becomes voice. Voice is centrally heard in the first place, yet does not address a full body, a being, and a presence. Instead it is a representation of the body, addressing both the internal and the external, and the imaginary through which voice extends, becomes multiple, involving a volume, within which it approaches sound. Both sound and voice animate the oscillation between the multiple virtual and the latent actual. The speaking voice of the narrator in *Sarah’s Panorama* can be considered as one of the sounds, involved within the other sounds, oriented by and orienting them, sharing an intertwined whole, rather than a split.

More concretely, the sound of a plastic bag turns into a phantom image, addressing not simply a plastic bag, but more crucially ‘her plastic bag’ via the speaking voice, which tells us the imaginary presence of another woman. Speech has words, but does not simply indicate words. In that sense, ‘her plastic bag’ is not simply and fully represented by the speaking voice, which does not simply and fully work through words either. Both speaking voice and sound operate via a particular

atmosphere, implying a particular experience, which are open to other particular atmospheres and experiences, within which words are hidden but not fully silent.

Barthes implies the fluidity, openness and incompleteness of this particular experience, while explaining “myth”:

Myth is a system of communication, that it is a message. This allows one to perceive that myth can not possibly be an object, a concept or an idea; it is a mode of signification. Everything can be a myth provided it is conveyed by a discourse. Every object in the world can pass from a closed, silent existence to an oral state, open to appropriation by society, for there is no law, whether natural or not, which forbids talking about things. (Barthes, 2000, 109)

Myth, as a “mode of signification”, and, as an envelope of a discourse, is involved within a particular contingency. Yet this does not suggest myth as a fixed entity. On the contrary, myth, as a socially loaded message, is open to constant change and flow, so that it can spread. What is being diffused? Is it a thing or a grain? A myth is not a thing, but spreads and continues its journey via a “hide and seek” game between meaning and form, as Barthes conveys. Such a game does not fully bring a translation, and a full meaning. Instead, it encourages a diffusion, a fragmentation of myth, of a single and complete meaning, and of a single and complete translation, indicating many possibilities and modes of translation, bringing multiplicity and plurality. A myth oscillates between full translation and full non-translation. It is perhaps in that way arguable to use the word ‘uncanny’ again, indicating the oscillation between the familiar and unfamiliar. Freud conveys uncanny as something what was once familiar, which comes back as the un-familiar, indicating “un” as the repressed, yet never becomes completely familiar and unfamiliar. (Foster, 1995, 8) Barthes calls the uncanny as the “absurdity”, which comes into existence via an ambiguous whole of meaning and form, within which neither meaning nor form can be simply separated as itself, as something singular and alone, marking that both cannot jointly bring or turn to a complete whole either. The position of the reader more crucially determines this state of ambiguity. Barthes presents three possibilities for the reader’s position:

If I focus on an empty signifier, I let the concept fill the form of the myth without ambiguity, where the signification becomes literal again. If I focus on a full signifier, in which I clearly distinguish the meaning and the form, and consequently the distortion, which the one imposes on the other, I, undo the signification of the myth, and I receive the latter as an imposture. Finally if I focus on the mythical signifier as on an inextricable whole made of meaning and form, I receive an ambiguous signification: I respond to the constituting mechanism of myth, to its own dynamics, I become a reader of myths. (Barthes, 2000, 128)

According to Barthes, the third possibility promotes reading an ambiguity, which comes into existence via “attentive recognition”, addressing the imaginary, and bringing an in-finite consumption of possible meanings, and myths. The ambiguity of myths already suggests an in-finite journey, which is imperfect, and not fully definable. Barthes reiterates this unfinished situation:

...Mathematical language is a finished language, which derives its very perfection from this acceptance of death. Myth, on the contrary, is a language, which does not want to die: it wrests from the meanings, which give it its sustenance, an insidious, degraded survival, it provokes in them, it turns them into speaking corpses. (Barthes, 2000, 133)

The life of a myth does not end via its distant and lost survival, distorted and suspended significations. Thus a myth is vital because of its incompleteness, change, multiplicity, plurality, and mental and emotional journeys among various social geographies through the imaginary. Although a myth is situated within a particular history and contingency, it might belong to anywhere, where mapping or localizing a myth becomes harder.

Voice spreads like myth spreads, not as a thing or as a concept but as a flow where its map becomes ambiguous, cannot be easily localized, and where ‘my’ voice is not simply ‘my’ voice, losing its ‘first’, persona, approaching the ‘third’, the other thing, the otherness of the other, oscillating between the first and the third. In that respect the speaking voice does not fully address a full appearance. Rather voice implies a flow of sound, which already promises a flow of action, a flow of scenes, bringing undecidable and incomplete too many appearances, and continuously changing positions. Flow of sound, involving flow of scenes and vision, addresses a continuum, which seems to be a new and unified dimension, as Deleuze argues.

...The sound components are separate only in the abstraction of their pure hearing. But in so far as they are a specific dimension, a fourth dimension of the visual image (which does not mean that they merge with a referent or a signified), then they all form together one single component, a continuum. (Deleuze, 1989, 235)

If sound is not a redundant component, and if it does not repeat what is seen, the continuum mentioned by Deleuze, is a higher point where flow of sound not simply indicates the fourth dimension of the visual image, but also carries us to the third space, within which the spectator and listener becomes a reader as well.

Yet reading might point out archaeology of vision and sound, highlighting their different status. As Deleuze argues, the visual image shows the structure of a society and what it reaches in this way is the nature of a society, the social physics of actions and reactions, even the physics of speech. (Deleuze, 1989, 225) In that respect, the visual frames and centralizes one's perception via presenting an external surface. However sound suggests an internal depth, which already decentralizes the perception. Deleuze expresses this as a "special relationship" between sound image and visual image, which is a "free indirect relationship, more distant than any exterior and that of an inside deeper than any interior." (Deleuze, 1989, 260)

Sound image and visual image in and of *Sarah's Panorama* address sort of an electricity, a chemistry, a disappearance and an appearance, a volume, a depth, not as isolated, but reconciled, not easily found, yet "more distant than any exterior and that of an inside deeper than any interior". The projected image, voice and sound promote an 'ambiguous whole', which always remains inadequate, incomplete, hopeful and pleasurable, yet never becomes a full whole. This ambiguity does not tell a finished work, a finished name, and does not translate Sarah, and her panorama. Rather it encourages other names and other panoramas, whereupon many 'panoramas' can be experienced.

However, 'within' this ambiguity, who tells *Sarah's Panorama*? At first, voice seems to have a dominant status, as it is easily selected compared to sound, acquiring a superior position, which is story telling. The narrator's monologue consists of short sentences, which are synchronized with other sounds, repetitive and convey only some repetitive actions. The monologue is not simply a monologue, but also internal to other sounds, intertwined with the projected image. Similarly, the narrator is not simply an observer, an outsider, but also a participant, playing its part, like the protagonist. The narrator says 'she', instead of a name. Under that 'she' construction, what is heard is a description of actions, which are loaded with commands and 'verbs', implying 'what to do'. The sentences such as "she walks to the apartment, she opens the door, sits down at the table" encourages the reader to imagine a woman, and her possible flow of actions within the domestic sphere. Speech starts to re-sound actions, suggesting a reading through words articulated by the narrator, which might be waiting for a reply, from the audience maybe. In this context, sounds are re-found and re-framed through words, in danger of losing plurality and becoming easily categorised-easily found. In *Sarah's Panorama*, sounds are re-found as a woman's

sounds, as 'her' footsteps or as 'her' plastic bag. However this 'her' also implies an ordinary 'her', not simply and fully identifiable, but more crucially an open and an incomplete 'her', a lost 'her', a fantasized 'her' maybe.

Voice is neither simply lost nor simply embodied in *Sarah's Panorama*. The terminology of talkie cinema calls the embodied voice "voice-in", which is simultaneously heard and seen on the screen, and the disembodied voice "voice-off", which is heard, yet not seen on the screen. Actually what the audience encounters in this work is voice-off, since it does not see an embodied voice in the projected image. Kaja Silverman argues that Hollywood cinema uses voice-off, bespeaking and bespoken by the male gaze, gaining presence and power through voice.⁴ Male subjectivity is addressed via male voice, bringing an imaginary presence through male voice despite his corporeal absence on the screen, and invoking symbolic power, approval, authority and impression via this corporeal absence and imaginary presence. On the contrary female voice indicates a corporeal presence on the screen, and therefore voice-in. *Sarah's Panorama* involves voice off, not as a male voice, but as a female voice. Yet what she voices is a repetition, a part of daily routine and activity belonging to the domestic sphere. At that point, the narrator represents and reproduces an ordinary 'she' deriving from a dominant subjectivity, pronouncing a male gaze.

However, within and via *Sarah's Panorama*, voice is already fantasized, indicating an imaginary presence rather than a corporeal presence. The sounds already become the sounds of an imaginary character, the sounds of an imaginary space, encouraging an imaginary scenario, and a setting, belonging to the fantasy of the audience, which cannot be easily found, silenced and categorised, yet always remains open to change and re-construction. In that respect Sarah does not simply and fully repeat or represent the dominant through the narrator's voice, but instead, other possible spaces and settings, fantasized by the audience, are both represented and produced within and through Sarah. This takes the reader back to the question of who Sarah is, and how she does not indicate a proper name.

The proper name is the untouchable, as Laplanche puts it: "The proper name, like the dead person, is untranslatable: it could only be exchanged, in a rigorous sense, for the person himself." (Laplanche, 1999, 244) A proper name implies a particular body, whose shape is not fully readable through the imaginary. A proper name

⁴ Silverman, Kaja, *The Acoustic Mirror*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988.

indicates a particular voice, by which it is articulated as a word, as a sound, which perhaps does not let a proper name be complete. As a sound, a proper name, is not fully a proper name, instead becomes an open figure, an open space to change as against to the untouchable, to the dead, to the untranslatable. However sound does not guarantee a full translation either. Rather it promises an oscillation between translation and “detranslation” in Laplanche’s terms, addressing the multiplicity via other possible translations. Sarah is neither found nor pronounced as a proper name, neither the untouchable nor the “dead”, but instead lost and imaginary. Sarah is a title, through which Sarah becomes ‘sarah’, which indicates a word, a figure, a sound, an open space to remaking, which is not simply definable, not easily categorised and formulated as a woman, who repeats male gaze within and through the domestic sphere, yet unfinished and multiple, between voice and sound.

Irigaray conveys that no woman can be easily found. By that, Irigaray presents a different reading rather than a simple ‘phallus and vagina’ relation, which only reproduces the male gaze. As she argues, the castration indicates the negation of the other, which leads to taking language and its “blanks” for granted, and which duplicates the male gaze and what is silent. Instead of this, she expresses the impossible generalization for a woman:

Woman is neither open nor closed. She is indefinite, in-finite, form is never complete in her. She is not infinite but neither is she a unit(y), such as letter, number, figure in a series, proper noun, unique object (in a) world of the senses, simple ideality in an intelligible whole, entity of a foundation, etc. This incompleteness in her form, her morphology, allows her continually to become something else, though this is not to say that she is ever univocally nothing. No metaphor completes her. But she is becoming that expansion that she neither is nor will be at any moment as definable universe....⁵

A/The woman is multiple, promising a becoming instead of a complete being according to Irigaray. Irigaray’s suggestion might carry the reader to female voice, which becomes incomplete, plural, multiple and latent for ‘other voices’, and other sounds.

The flow of action, of ‘verbs’ is carried through voice, becoming sound, and Sarah, becoming sarah. The interplay between Sarah and sarah, voice and sound, might promote an obey-order relationship. Andrew Benjamin refers to Levinas, while discussing obey-order relation:

⁵ Irigaray, Luce, trans., Gillian C. Gill, “Volume-Fluidity”, *Speculum of the Other Woman*, (New York: Cornell University Press, 1985) 229.

Obey the order that you have received in another connection! One can thus distinguish two orders here: a first order, which carries the instruction about the act to be performed (Close the door!), and a second order (Obey!), which recalls that the first order is executive... One can always reject the expression Obey!⁶

Order is not completely understood, but just received, via voice. Voice tells what to do: she opens the window, and sound obeys: we hear the opening of the window. However the interplay between the two can encourage the reverse. Order and obey, Sarah and sarah, voice and sound, do not simply introduce a split, but instead an oscillation, a conciliation, addressing that one is not fully bound to the other, yet two jointly bring a whole, which is not a full whole. Conciliation suggests coexistence, yet does not guarantee a finished and consistent whole. In that respect sarah and Sarah, sound and voice do not entirely reconcile, but rather share a game of approval and disapproval, compromise and contradiction, rejecting a totalization, yet promising spatiality, positionality and multiplicity.

Sarah's Panorama suggests a voice, which cannot be fully distinguished either from 'sarah' or from Sarah, from 'sarah's panorama' or from Sarah's Panorama. Voice incorporates with and extends to the other, which cannot be fully understood and translated due to the otherness of the other. The oscillation between other and otherness, voice and sound prevents closure in one single formulation, definition and description. Instead this reveals the incomplete project, bringing the third spaces, reminding 'Sarah becoming sarah'. As Irigaray puts it:

For (the) woman neither is able to give herself some meaning by speech nor means to be able to speak in such a way that she is assigned to some concept or that some fixed notion is assigned to her. Woman is not to be related to any simple designatable being, subject or entity. Nor is the whole group (called) women. One woman + one woman + one woman will never add up to some generic entity: woman (The /a) woman refers to what can not be defined, enumerated, formulated or formalized. (Irigaray, 1985, 229-30)

Sarah's Panorama is already unsatisfactory to tell all, yet tempting enough to imagine more via the flow of action, the metamorphoses and plasticity of both Sarah and sarah, of many spaces, of many images, of many sounds and voices.

⁶Levinas quoted in Benjamin, Andrew, "Obey", *The Lyotard Reader*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989) 305.

CHAPTER III

Laurie Anderson: The Record of The Time

.... and I wrote the first faint line,
faint, without substance, pure
nonsense,
pure wisdom
of someone who knows nothing,
and suddenly I saw
the heavens
unfastened
and open,
planets,
palpitating plantations,
shadow perforated,
riddled
with arrows, fire and flowers,
the winding night, the universe.

Pablo Neruda, from *Poetry*

“An angel is nothing but a shark well governed”
Laurie Anderson

Laurie Anderson is a storyteller, who has told a lot, asked a lot, while widening and lengthening the road she takes, via which her positions, works and stories present a pleasurable game, inviting her spectator/listener/reader to play, to drift in the many. “The Record of The Time”, one of Anderson’s current exhibitions, involved within “Biennale Musiques en Scene 2002”, shows Anderson’s works and stories, since early 70s.¹

Anderson stands for the avant-gardist attitude, advocating the modern and progressive, yet also criticizes the modern, by implying progress and future as “virus”, by designating language as a virus, as a foreign disease latent to the body. Anderson’s works are intellectual and experimental, do not seem to aim at the mass, but rather seem to be distant and almost ‘elitist’, in contrast to the popular. While searching for new modes of expressions and attempting to lead the others, the avant-garde tradition has failed to communicate with the dynamics of the everyday, tending to stick to the essentialist position. The pioneers advocated intellectual and critical

¹ Anderson Laurie, *The Record of The Time*, Musée d’art contemporaine de Lyon, 6th March- 18th May 2002

thinking, yet disregarded the point of departure and the feeling of the audience. Avant-garde has articulated the process, but not its incompleteness, as it has not spoken through the process, but, rather spoken from its outside.

Laurie Anderson has participated within the avant-garde tradition, yet preserving her distance, not simply and fully become an avant-gardist. Rather she oscillates between many positions, which lack certain names and direct definitions. John Walker argues for the “cross-over” and “mass avant-gardism” for Laurie Anderson.² Walker argues for the interaction between fine arts and music by the term “cross-over” and the integration with the mass market, without loss of artistic integrity by mass avant-gardism.(Walker, 1994, 119) In that respect Anderson does not simply travel around different positions, but also achieves a bridge from fine arts to music, music to fine arts, and avant-garde to the mass, the mass to avant-garde. Walker explains Anderson’s achievement:

In part Anderson’s achievement was due to the fact that a relatively closer relationship existed between experimental music, performance art and pop music than existed between the visual arts and the visual mass media. Pop music was enjoyed by a much larger and wider public than pop art; it was a bigger industry; it had a more direct emotional and physiological impact. (Walker, 1994, 119)

Anderson says that she has spent more than half of her life on the road.³ On the road, Anderson, like a nomad travelled a lot, perhaps searching for new worlds, new phantasmatic, imaginary worlds:

The first time I realized that I could work outside of the avant-garde circuit was 1978. I was scheduled to do a performance in Houston, and since the museum wasn’t really set up for this sort of thing-no stage, no chairs, no sound system- the performance was booked into a local country-and-western bar. The advertisements suggested some kind of country fiddling, so a lot of the regulars came. They arrived early and sat along the bar, so when the art crowd showed up-dressed in black and fashionably late-there was nowhere to sit. It was a strange-looking crowd. About halfway through the concert, I realized that the regulars were really getting it. What I was doing-telling stories and playing the violin-didn’t seem bizarre to them. I remember that I felt great relief. The art world was after all quite tiny and I’d been doing concerts for the same hundred people. This was a whole new world. (Laurie Anderson quoted in Goldberg, 2000, 154)

Anderson’s sound works, involving music, seem easy to consume, yet demand careful listening to understand. The works investigates the intellectually stimulating.

² Walker, John, “Art and Mass Media in the 1980s”, *Art in the age of mass media*, (London: Pluto Press, 1994) 119.

³ Goldberg, Roselee, *Laurie Anderson*, (New York: Harry N.Abrams, 2000) 167.

Nevertheless Laurie Anderson wants her audience to experience immediacy as well. In a way her works' destination is feeling, and, in her own terms, "the already-in":

Ideas have a direct line to the brain; but art sneaks in through the senses. It drifts in. So there isn't time to analyze it. As in: You hear a song and it's the most beautiful song you ever heard. But you can't quite understand the words. So you listen to it 50 times and finally you hear the words. And they are horrible words, you disagree with everything they stand for. But it's too late, the song's already inside you! (Laurie Anderson quoted in Goldberg, 2000, 89)

It is as if she alters Descartes's motto "I think therefore I am" into "I fool therefore I am". This is the seductive conflict within her works, and also in her career. Anderson does not attempt to be didactic or intend to reach the many in quantity and quality maybe. But an exposed work already seems to have the implicit promise to be universal, to reach the many in quantity and quality. This is not to say that the universal brings the same and common. Rather this is to emphasize the different many, which can be achieved through an indirect and "obtuse" whisper. What does Anderson whisper? How does the "already in" emerge? And what does it encourage?

Laurie Anderson tells stories, using "I", which can be read as an indirect way of voicing the other. Why does one tell stories? Samuel Weber considers storytelling as a "narrative construction", and suggests its functions:

The future is thus rendered compatible with the narcissistic "expectation" of a self that wants to see itself as intact, whole and autonomous. The second function of the narrative construction is related to the first: it suggests that, qua storyteller, the ego can assume a position sufficiently separated from the events it is recounting so as to remain impervious to them. The "I" that tells itself this story thereby strives to secure its position as mere "observer", situated at an ostensibly safe remove from the disturbing possibilities it seeks merely to describe or retell. (Weber, 2000, 5, 6)

As Weber argues, a storyteller, a narrator, is both a participant and an observer, whereby his or her act of telling becomes a performance, a scene, which is not independent from what is told, and which makes the audience, the addressee of the story, both an observer and a participant of the story, as well. The already-in seems to emerge through those stories, those 'intimate', 'open' and 'multiple' stories, using 'I', but not simply addressing 'I', instead, indicating a possibility of 'our' stories. Feeling might be the destination, not as a simple explosion point, yet as a hint of a particular story, of a particular experience, of a particular atmosphere, which is an open resource, never remains same, never seems to be finished. Anderson encourages this open resource, by deconstructing and reconstructing, by stressing metamorphoses and incompleteness. More specifically, Anderson deconstructs and reconstructs violin and

female voice, whereby both become in process. In that respect she searches in the infinite, but how again? Anderson says that she amplifies and changes things through technology and electronics. For her electronics is modern fire:

“For me, electronics have always been connected to storytelling. Maybe because storytelling began when people used to sit around fires. For me fire is magic, compelling, and dangerous. We are transfixed by its light and by its destructive power. Electronics are modern fires”. (Goldberg,2000, 105)

Electronics helps Anderson to narrate her stories, indicating the stories of others, interrupted by the otherness, via which becoming something else and someone else in each story is possible. Therefore Anderson turns out to be incomplete, just like her voice and violin. Irigaray argues for the woman in terms of fantasy, who is in-finite:

Woman is neither open nor closed. She is indefinite, in-finite, form is never complete in her.... No metaphor completes her. Never is she this, then that, this and that. (Irigaray, 1985, 229)

Woman indicates an incomplete project, which is hopeful for change, for diffusion, for becoming something else, that cannot strictly be guaranteed in advance. Anderson fragments female voice, and approaches sound, which sometimes becomes noise.

Noise is the threshold where simultaneity, conflict and compromise emerge.

Douglas Kahn reminds the reader of noise, where everything is mutable and possible:

Noise is the forest of everything. The existence of noise implies a mutable world through an unruly intrusion of an other, an other that attracts difference, heterogeneity, and productive confusion; moreover, it implies a genesis of mutability itself. Noise is a world where anything can happen, including and especially itself. (Kahn, 1999, 20)

Within noise, within many voices, and within many sounds, it is not easy to find one language, and one particular voice. Voice is itself much more associated with discourse as Silverman puts it. (Silverman, 1988, 196) What's the difference between discourse and story? Voice is not fully independent from the subject positions. It is socially constructed, and in process. Yet sound is not natural either.

Discourse produces and is produced by the subject positions and voice, its tones and vocalizations. Stories are more indirect and veiled, working in common sense and everyday language. Stories are sometimes latent to be turned into discourses, becoming a space of performing. And discourses are sometimes made and re-made through stories. Discourse controls and approves stories. Yet due to the implicit and the indirect within the story, which is neither translatable nor

untranslatable, story cannot easily be found, imprisoned and controlled. Thereupon story becomes subversive and tends to collapse the discourse with its own means, to bring a new one, and another, altering it into the multiple and plural. The/a story spreads and turns to stories, as the/a voice spreads, becomes fragmented, loses its ideology and approaches sound, and becomes neither sound in itself, nor voice as position of the subject, but, rather in-finite something else.

Somewhere ambiguously between sound and voice, Laurie Anderson is simultaneously sincere and strategic. This may not seem to be radical and active, yet poetic, vivid, stimulating and seductive enough to travel in time and space. As Roland Barthes says in one of his interviews: “when a work is successful, it asks its questions with ambiguity, and in that way it becomes poetic”.⁴ Laurie Anderson invites the audience to become a traveller through her nomadic works.

The Record of The Time

As an exhibition and as a catalogue/cd, “The Record of The Time” is a journey, trying to be “already-in” for its audience. Within the museum, the audience travels different spaces, via the works by Anderson since the 70s. The audio CD does not fully represent the journey in the museum, rather it introduces the tracks of 5 works, which are in a different duration in the CD. *Tape Bow Trio (Say Yes)*, *The Parrot*, *Self-Playing Violin*, *Excerpt for “Raft”*, and *Sh* encourage different sonic experiences, hearing different spaces. It is possible to listen to all those 5 tracks as an intertwined whole. Those 5 tracks may motivate new sounds of violin, which can be made again, deconstructed and reconstructed, in fantasy and thus incomplete in Laurie Anderson’s story. 5 different tracks may bring new sounds of voice, which are travelling, turning, extending, expanding and thus incomplete again. The audio cd penetrates into the lives of the audience, whereby it may transform the private and public spaces, as a new memory and as a new narrative, which are in process, indicating in-finite experiences. The cd is itself unfinished and unbroken within the verticality, width and depth of sound.

⁴ Barthes, Roland, *The Grain of Voice: interviews 1962-1980/Roland Barthes*, trans. Linda Coverdale, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991) 10.

Tape Bow Trio(Say Yes)

Tape Bow Trio is a part of an audio installation, *Jukebox*, installed in the corner of a museum room, including Laurie Anderson's 16 songs, and papers hang on the wall with the hand written lyrics of the songs. The spectator/listener chooses a song from the jukebox, puts on the headphone, sits on a chair, and listens to it. While listening, s/he can read the lyrics on the wall. The jukebox, though not fully, suggests an isolated and private space, as imagining in a 'room of one's own'. The audio cd of "The Record of The Time" may be considered as the listener's travelling and portable jukebox, starting with *Tape Bow Trio*.

Though it is the first track, *Tape Bow Trio* is not a beginning and does not indicate so. In this piece, Anderson uses violin, cello, and "tape bow violin". As well as the other violins, such as "the viophonograph",⁵ "the neon violin",⁶ and "the digital violin",⁷ the tape bow violin⁸ is introduced as one of Anderson's violins: a revox audiotape playback head is mounted on the violin where the bridge would be. On the bow, instead of horsehair there is a strip of prerecorded audiotape so that as the bow is moved across the playback head sound is produced. (Anderson, 2002, 32) In *Tape Bow Trio*, as well as strings, Anderson uses her voice, and says "say what you mean". The words go back and forth, carried by a manipulated voice. Anderson's techniques consist of analog and digital recording and processing. Mostly she uses the former technique, whereby she changes her voice with a microphone and a mixer. Through certain techniques, she discovers new sounds and new modes of singing. In *Tape Bow Trio*, Anderson uses analogue recording and processing, changes her voice, and reverses the words by means of a microphone and mixer. By this, Anderson encourages an oscillation between words and sounds, which brings an indirect way of "saying what you mean". The sounds and words are, on the one hand, easily found, and, on the other hand, easily lost. The confusion is already involved in the work, within the process, yet the locus of the work is not to bring confusion as an end point. On the contrary, in her own words, Laurie Anderson's concern and aim is to communicate with people through her works, for which she seems to be successful, via the oscillation she generates between the direct and indirect.

⁵ See figure 2, page 89

⁶ See figure 3, page 90

⁷ See figure 4, page 91

For Anderson, violin indicates metamorphoses and an incomplete becoming. As she says, the violin is “the closest sound to the human voice, to the human female voice.” (Anderson, 2002, 24) And technology is the tool to “amplify and change” things, to actualize the metamorphoses of female voice and violin, expanding their possibilities, and making them both plural and multiple. This is not to say only ‘different and many’ but also to stress the ‘undecidable too many’, which may be understood as the “third meaning” as Roland Barthes conceptualises it. In particular, Barthes uses this phrase for a cinematic image, rather than for sound. However his discussion significantly addresses reading, an experience of reading, a process. In that respect it is worthwhile to argue the third meaning in relation to a sonic experience, through which possible readings may be generated.

I read, I receive (and probably even first and foremost) a third meaning (In the classical paradigm of the five senses, the third sense is hearing-first in importance in the Middle Ages- This is a happy coincidence, since what is here in question is indeed listening.) – evident, erratic (irregular, random), obstinate. I do not know what its signified is, at least I am unable to give it a name, but I can see clearly the traits, the signifying accidents of which this-consequently incomplete-sign is composed.... I am not sure if the reading of this third meaning is justified - if it can be generalized - but already it seems to me that its signifier (the traits to which I have tried to give words, if not to describe) possesses a theoretical individuality. On the one hand, it cannot be conflated with the simple existence of the scene, it exceeds the copy of the referential motif, it compels an interrogative reading; on the other, neither can it be conflated with the dramatic meaning of the episode: to say that these traits refer to a significant “attitude” of the courtiers, this one detached and bored, that one diligent, does not leave me fully satisfied; something in the two faces exceeds psychology, anecdote, function, exceeds meaning without, however coming down to the obstinacy in presence shown by any human body. By contrast with the first two levels, communication and signification, this third level - even if the reading of it is still hazardous - is that of significance, a word which has the advantage of referring to the field of the signifier. (Barthes, 1977, 53,54)

Tape Bow Trio suggests the third, the too many, through the oscillation between the words, “say what you mean”, “say yes” and their reverse “yas tahw uoy name”, “yas sey” via which the words become neither fully distinguishable nor fully indistinguishable. Thereby, introducing a synthesis, an intertwined composition of sounds, the oscillation becomes between words and sounds, which does not let the work become a whole work. In that respect *Tape Bow Trio* does not simply indicate a continuity, “does not simply leave one fully satisfied”, but rather interrupts, brings an ambiguity, somewhere ambiguously between emergence and loss, a fear of loss, and movement. Otherness is this interruption leading to the undecidable many. As Anderson expresses it, violin and the human voice operate as the “ perfect alter ego”

⁸ See figure 1, page 88

allowing her to represent others. Perhaps she does not only represent others but also interrupts, and is interrupted by them.

The Parrot

One of my jobs as an artist is to make contact with the audience, and it has to be immediate. They don't come back and later to look at the details in the background. (Goldberg, 2000, 87)

The parrot is “the speaking voice without the filters of politeness and logic” as Laurie Anderson puts it:

The voice of my electronic parrot is a standard computer voice. He speaks in free form association. I tried to represent the way thoughts drift through the mind without the filters of logic or politeness, but with the elements of the autistic, the automatic that sometimes occur when we talk to ourselves and get caught in mantralike loops. (Anderson, 2002, 87)

Within the museum, the work, *The Parrot* is a separate division, where a wooden figure, a sculpture of a parrot⁹ is put as an object, speaking to the audience not simply as a voice ‘itself’, but rather through Anderson’s voice. The audience is shown the writings of parrot’s “unfiltered” voice, the hand written sentences on the wall. In the CD/catalogue, *The Parrot* does not simply indicate a representation of a parrot, but rather its voice by means of a computer voice, speaking with an unchanged tone. A parrot seems to be direct and immediate, the “unfiltered”, as Anderson implies. Yet the immediate only seems to be immediate. The immediate is the climax, explosion or jump point. The immediate is found as a feeling.

The parrot seems to denote a repetition, a chorus, a “mantralike loop” in Anderson’s terms. Perhaps the parrot addresses the other in me, duplicated and repeated by me, duplicating and repeating me. Lacanian reading suggests that ‘I’ is already the function of the other, and what ‘I’ desire, the “objet petit a” is the object of other’s desire, which is neither fully in my body nor fully leaves my body. Thereby, the unfiltered may be “the function of the other” in Lacan’s terms, and the “waste-product”, the other thing in me, in Laplanche’s terms, implying the untranslated remainder, which neither fully leaves my body nor fully is something in my body. In that respect the unfiltered encourages an interruption. The parrot does not just repeat, but interrupts, leads me to repeat, to rediscover the lost, the other’s desire, which is already ambiguous. Žižek argues for other’s desire:

⁹ See figure 6, page 93

One should always bear in mind that the desire “realized” (staged) in fantasy is not the subject’s own, but the other’s desire. The original question of desire is not directly “What do I want?”, but “What do others want from me?” “What do they see in me?” “What am I to others?”¹⁰

The unfiltered parrot is already in me, involved within many voices, and the multiplicity of selves. ‘I’ indicates a unity, yet not a consistent unity, instead, it suggests a disunited, conflicting, changing whole, which never becomes a complete whole. Thereby the function of the other inside, outside, and beyond ‘I’ is not singular. The multiplicity of selves suggests coincidences and contradictions of different functions, roles and acts. In that sense, multiplicity of voices becomes arguable. And the voice of the unfiltered parrot seems to filter my many voices by hiding, and performing as my voice. Žižek makes an analogy between this multiplicity and the layers of an onion, while addressing the “multiple Selves externalized on the screen”. However through the layers of an onion, Žižek does not simply argue for the visible, for the external, but also for the internal, which is neither simply visible nor simply invisible.

The multiple Selves externalized on the screen are “what I want to be”, the way I would like to see myself, the representations of my ideal ego, they are like the layers of an onion: there is nothing in the middle, and the subject is this nothing itself. The “decentrement” is the decentrement of the void of the subject (the barred subject) with regard to its content. (Self, the bundle of imaginary and/or symbolic identifications); the splitting is the splitting between the void of the subject and the phantasmic “persona” as the “stuff of the I”. The subject’s division is not the division between one Self and another, between two contents, but the division between something (split between the layers of an onion and its middle/void) and nothing, between the feature of identification and the void. Decentrement thus first designates the ambiguity, the oscillation between symbolic and imaginary identification—the undecidability as to where my true point is, in my “real” Self or in my external mask, with the possible implication that my symbolic mask can be “more true” than what it conceals, the “true face” behind it. The very process of shifting among multiple identifications presupposes a kind of empty band which makes the leap from one identity to another possible, and this empty band is the subject itself. (Žižek, 1997, 141)

If the subject is itself the empty band, the questions would be as such: What is that nothing waiting to be covered, shaped or hidden, and masked? What does the notion of “more true” indicate? If there were void in the middle, then how would it be possible to articulate the layers around it? In short, if there is void in the middle, then what and how to frame? As Žižek mentions, the subject’s shift from one identity to another is possible via the “empty band”. The problem is that Žižek already articulates the essential as an “essential nothing or/and void”. He does not explicitly mention

what the multiplicity of the layers and of the masks refers to, and how they are intertwined. The layers do not introduce only the other, but also the otherness. The parrot might be one of the layers, though claiming to avoid disguise. It has a tone, which is not simply repetitive. What is interesting is not the split between me and the parrot, between the layers of Self and the void in Žižek's terms, but rather the "obtuse" in Roland Barthes's terms, implying the third meaning, the "obtuse" interruption of the parrot.

.... The third, the one "too many", the supplement that my intellection cannot succeed in absorbing, at once persistent and fleeting, smooth and elusive, I propose to call it the *obtuse* meaning. (Barthes, 1977, 54)

The third meaning is neither describable nor indescribable. It is not easily found and is almost lost, or implicit, vertically pulling me down to depth, and bringing a volume and a space. The third meaning drifts in this space, waiting to be found. Yet it is indistinct and incomplete. That is the place of fantasy, of a "hide and seek" game, of the coincidence of emergence and loss. And that is the place where I gradually enjoy and become captured. Žižek proposes that enjoyment itself is not an immediate spontaneous state, but is sustained by a superego imperative. (Žižek, 1997, 113,114) I enjoy through the other and the otherness. Žižek does not distinguish between who the other and what the otherness is. Thereby he misses the interruption, resistance, enigma brought by the otherness to the other. The aim is not to present a split between other and otherness, and the problem is not the other 'itself' either. Rather the problem is the interruption of the otherness, the enigma of the other, which is neither fully distinct nor fully internalized, indicating the multiplicity of onion layers, displacing us from one layer to another, making us present and absent, constructing us as an actor and as a prisoner. The parrot in me, the other in me through the other thing in me, indicates the otherness, since it does not simply approve what I say, but rather interrupts and leads to what I say, what I repeat.

Unlike *The Parrot* in the museum, *The Parrot*, as a CD track, does not represent a parrot. Instead, Anderson's voice represents, performs a parrot's voice, suggesting a male voice, which is, in her own terms, Anderson's alter ego. Thereby, not simply parrot, but rather Anderson's voice is speaking, which is neither pure nor alone in *The Parrot*. *The Parrot* includes computer voice and keyboards. Technically,

¹⁰ Žižek, Slavoj, *The Plague of Fantasies*, (London, New York: Verso, 1997) 8-9.

Anderson shifts her voice by digital processing by means of which voice becomes an open, available and discrete resource of sound. Anderson's voice becomes not simply her voice, but rather involves a mechanic tone, moving away from a human voice, whereby the audience may hear the voice as sound. When voice becomes such an open space, a resource to be generated and remade, the particular tone and accent of voice turn out to be distorted, the ideology in it is distorted, and voice approaches sound, yet does not fully become sound. Here again the oscillation between sound and voice alters into an ambiguous show, where the spectator/listener searches for a third meaning.

“Oh yes oh yes...
.... Can't remember much...
I keep telling my problems to the people I don't even know,
.... Zero dot counter zero dot counter...
.... My heart my heart was broken” (From lyrics of *The Parrot*)

The Parrot, as a CD track, may be considered as a song by its composition, by its chorus, within which computer voice, keyboards, and words are instruments, though not entirely, promising both sound and musical sound. Lyrics suggest a story, a scene, a spatiality, through which the listener is encouraged to be a spectator and a reader, involved in an enigmatic route, an ‘ambiguous show between voice and sound’ via which s/he may imagine other scenes and other scenarios. Other scenarios do not simply come into existence, instead, they oscillate between voice and sound, between the first and the third, not fully heard, not fully listened to, indicating otherness through which, within one voice, other voices are subtle and indirect. As argued above, the voice is neither simply nor fully a human voice in *The Parrot*. But rather it oscillates between voice and sound, becoming both implicit and explicit to the voice of the parrot. The already in is not simply ‘in’, but instead, uncannily involved within this becoming, this oscillation, the multiplicity of spaces, and of selves in Zizek's terms. The multiple spaces and selves of *The Parrot* blur the particular, the personal, by involving and suggesting the others, and the others' interruption via the otherness, which does not remain the same, and which does not end.

The audience can be emotionally attached to the words “Oh yes oh yes, can't remember much now, zero dot counter zero dot counter”, because of an indication of a forgetting, of an uncanny journey, which is imagined and fantasized, in which the audience believes, through the parrot's voice, through the other, as Zizek argues:

Belief is symbolic and knowledge is real. A belief in the belief of the other... I can believe through the other, but I cannot know through the other. Belief is reflective. I can't disappoint who believe in me.... In an uncanny way, belief always seems to function in the guise of a "belief at a distance": in order for the belief to function, there has to be some ultimate guarantor of it, yet this guarantor is always deferred, displaced, never present in persona. (Zizek, 1997, 107-108)

According to Zizek, art is incomplete and fragmented, since it depends on the distance towards fantasy, which is ideology. (Zizek, 1997, 19) In this framework art produces and sustains the belief from a distance where the spectator/listener loses his/her critical eye. Instead, the encounter with the work drifts in the senses. The belief *The Parrot* involves dissatisfaction, an inadequacy, and a potential for desiring more via both voice and sound, which cannot remember much, cannot say enough, and cannot fully translate what is thought, felt and intended. This does not suggest a limit, but rather suggests incompleteness, a possibility of movement.

Voice is deepened, extended and thus "amplifying or changing" its limits, whereby it moves on, becomes incomplete, approaches sound. Just like feeling, sound is lost, never fully found in the first place. In that respect it is imaginary.

Zizek argues that imaginary is not independent from the symbolic. Then what is the difference and significance of sound as imaginary? Sound indicates more or less than something via words. Sound may operate as a sign, yet the imaginary is not simply symbolic as the symbolic is not simply imaginary. In that respect sound might be heard as more or less than the words. Sound is not always framed by words, and sometimes emerges from words. It encourages the third meaning, belonging to the fantasy, which is enigmatic and hard to describe, where the affect of the emotional or belief emerge as a potential threat to the easily found or easily describable meaning. Sound in that way challenges the words, the layers of Self, and brings anxiety and uncertainty. It may be an incomplete construction through a particular experience, within a particular work, like *The Parrot*, which never becomes a full work, due to the parrot's sound of voice, which interrupts by "repeating without recognizing" in Weber's terms, promising plurality and in-finite combinations, calling for otherness. As Zizek asks:

What if it is fantasy itself, which in so far as it fills in the void of the Other's desire, sustains the (false) opening- the notion that there is some radical Otherness which makes our universe incomplete? (Zizek, 1997, 31)

Self-Playing Violin

Self-Playing Violin is a violin with a speaker inside. (Anderson, 2002, p.25) For the viewer/listener, it seems to be a self-sufficient violin, as, by definition, it is playing itself. However within the museum, it is a violin, hung on the wall near a corner, not performing, but just standing as an object, unless the audience comes near to it, and listens to the music inside.¹¹ Within the CD, *Self-Playing Violin* is the third track, the shortest track, which does not have lyrics, and thus which becomes more obtuse and indirect. Yet it has a melody, which functions as a text that can be extracted, separately followed and easily recalled. Each melody or text includes a particularity, yet not a particular whole. Rather both propose an open space for production, as Barthes argues:

The text is not a vectorial object, it is neither active nor passive; it is neither an object of consumption, pre-supposing a passive subject, nor a technique of action, presupposing an agent; it is a production, whose irretrievable subject circulates perpetually. (Barthes, 1991, 173)

An open space for production already encourages the others, the others' texts and melodies, involved within the melody of the *Self-Playing Violin*, as the source of enjoyment, making the melody multiple for the listener.

Self-Playing Violin addresses an interplay between object and subject in which the positioning of participating is fluid. Neither subject nor object fully vanishes or appears. In this process the 'violin as object' tends to become 'violin as subject', by playing itself, by indicating a presence of an imaginary subject, which sings the melody. Barthes mentions that voice is an absent object, much more absent than the body. (Barthes, 1991, 183) With respect to that *Self-Playing Violin* involves and addresses the duplication of absence that is an absence of voice/presence of an imaginary voice, and an absence of an already absent object. *Self-Playing Violin* is the violin with an imaginary voice inside, representing a subject, performing for the audience.

Inter-subjectivity, here again, gains significance to articulate the subject-object dialogue, based on social and political dynamics, involving on the one hand compromise, and, on the other hand, conflict. There is no object or subject in the first place. Both are socially constructed and in process. In this context an object cannot

¹¹ See figure 5, page 92

completely be subjectified and a subject cannot completely be objectified either. Thereby the dialogue between the object and subject reveals the inevitable other and otherness, its interruption, enigma, and multiplicity, suggesting the too many. The subject/object is made through the “too many” discourses. As Lacan puts it, the presence and absence of the subject is confirmed by words, which produces and presents the Truth, rather than reality itself:

It is not a question of reality, but of Truth, because the effect of a full Word is to reorder the past contingent events by conferring on them the sense of necessities to come, just as they are constituted by the little liberty through which the subject makes them present.... The Word confers a meaning on the functions of the individual; its domain is that of the concrete discourse, insofar as history constitutes the emergence of Truth in the Real.¹²

Words are not fully absent, but, rather, lost in the *Self Playing Violin*. The first two tracks involve the ambiguity and sometimes loss of language, yet the words are used, as a sonic component, as uncertain and undecidable sonic codes, provoking the discussion of “voice and sound” in the first place. Here, in the third track, an imaginary voice speaking the melody, an imaginary self, and sound involved within the melody are arguable. An imaginary presence of voice already blurs the boundaries of sound and voice. What refers to sound and what refers to voice become enigmatic within *Self-Playing Violin*. It is perhaps for this reason, more tempting to investigate the relation between voice and sound within *The Self-Playing Violin*.

At that point, it is worthwhile to remind the reader of how Laurie Anderson bridges the human voice to the violin:

For me the closest sound to the human voice, the human female voice, is the violin. Sometimes I use it as a surrogate self, a ventriloquist dummy. I do the talking and the violin does the crying, the wailing and some of the singing. (Anderson, 2002, 24)

The violin and the human female voice both address a critical source for Anderson. Not just the sound of violin, but also its body, bring particular experiences. Anderson uses the violin as the “surrogate self”, indicating another, working as another; and as a ventriloquist dummy,¹³ implying the ‘ridiculous’, ‘absurd’ and again the ‘unfiltered’, the other thing in me, encouraging the openness for production and movement. In that respect, the violin is an incomplete and plastic way of touching the many, an

¹² Lacan, Jacques, *The Language of the Self*, trans. Anthony Wilden, (Baltimore & London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1981) 18-19.

¹³ See figure 7, page 94

incomplete space and body involving many voices. Yet the violin's voice is not simply a voice, and thus it does not simply travel between the illusionary and the imaginary. The violin's voice is already sound, already imaginary, and already decentered. And its words are already hidden, not fully heard. Thus the sound of violin calls for words, stories, and acts, which neither fully appears nor fully disappears through sound, fading in and fading out, suggesting a particular, but indistinct sonic experience, touching many particularities. Thereby the violin becomes neither a full object nor a full subject, but rather participates in the play between the two, via which the violin tends to propose another, another's fantasy, the other thing in me. Voice at that point gets close to the violin. Voice is not a full presence, rather it represents, performs a presence, performs the words between subject and object, between voice and sound. Neither voice nor violin is complete, but instead, both are fluid, mutable and multiple. In particular female voice is in-finite for Anderson, reminding the reader of Irigaray's indication of woman, as an in-finite becoming or project.

Self-Playing Violin, a violin with a speaker inside, an imaginary voice inside, a melody inside, can never be complete and remain same. The acoustical motivates the loss, the undecidable many of the visible. The imaginary, the fantasized is suggested by this loss, provoking and provoked by the question 'what does it look like?'. Reminding the reader of Weber and The Sandman, the many appearances, scenes and scenarios of The Sandman, which neither finish nor remain same, are provoked by a figure of speech, a sound. The violin suggests a voice in a body, in a visible space. However the voice in it remains imaginary, fantasized, since it never fulfills one particular appearance. Instead, through its imaginary voice, *Self-Playing Violin* invites many appearances, imaginary spaces, a performance which can never be absolute and self-sufficient. Philip Auslander refers to Michael Fried and his notion of theatricality in relation to minimal sculptures.¹⁴ As Auslander argues, Fried considers theatricality as a notion, which indicates two things. First what is theatrical is an audience-needed issue, which is neither self-sufficient nor self-referential. Second, what is theatrical is preoccupied with time, with the duration of the experience. (Auslander, 1997, 50-1) In this context, *Self-Playing Violin* may suggest theatricality. First it is not a violin 'itself'. It is neither self-sufficient nor self-referential, though it seems to be the "self-

¹⁴ Auslander, Philip, "Presence and theatricality in the discourse of performance and the visual arts", *From Acting to Performance*, (London & N.Y.: Routledge, 1997) 49-57.

playing” violin. Second, and, in relation to first, it invites another’s presence within a duration, encouraging a becoming, which is multiple, yet not fully continuous, addressing neither fully attached nor fully detached experience. Rather, the sound of the melody oscillates between emergence and loss, appearance and disappearance, pleasure and anxiety. This brings not simply a representation of a scenario, but instead, a production of another scenario, introducing an imaginary space, setting, spatiality, rather than illusionary. Within those scenarios, the imaginary voice is not easily found as voice, since sound does not simply let voice fully be voice. Thereby sound presents various possibilities, rather than one melody or/and one single voice, becoming an entrance to hear other melodies and voices.

As Barthes emphasizes, the third meaning promises more than the “pure, upright, secant, legal perpendicular of the narrative, it seems to open the field of meaning totally, that is infinitely.” (Barthes, 1991, 55) Other melodies and other spaces are infinitely open, involved within and encouraged via the third, yet “obtuse” in Barthes’s terms, neither describable nor indescribable, becoming the uncanny, addressing a case of knowing without knowing, and repeating without recognizing, in Weber’s terms.

Sound unveils and provokes the third. Through the third, sound rescues voice from its boring categories, makes it “playable” and pleasurable, and transforms it into many voices and fragments. This is again the place, brought by and bringing the otherness. And this is again the right place to remember the journey through the object, the violin, the sound and voice of the violin, *Self-Playing Violin* and its *feeling*:

The object appears without the halo of meanings, and that is what gives birth to anxiety, which is a profound, and metaphysical, feeling. (Barthes, 1991, 10)

Excerpt for “Raft”

Raft is a sound installation that uses granular synthesis to create a sense of a particular space with sound. The sounds’ sources include short wave radio signals recorded in the Sinai Desert. (Anderson, 2002, 108) In the museum, *Raft* is installed as a separate room without a door, which is almost entirely dark. The visitor steps on a bridge, starting from the entrance to the middle of the room, and listens to the *Raft*. The room is not fully isolated, as it does not have a door. The sounds operate as a sign

to tell a particular content, indicating somewhere, called Sinai Desert. However, at the same time, this somewhere is lost through sounds whereby the sounds are not simply heard as sounds, yet become sound spaces, spaced sounds, where a particular content turns out to be fragmented, diffused. Like *“The Self-Playing Violin”, Excerpt for “Raft”* does not have words as a sonic component. This situation promises reaching for the many, or bringing a much more universal code through a particularity, which is not directly found, but rather heard as an enigmatic and subtle difference within the piece, waiting to be extracted. This particularity does not address an origin; it is not the beginning, but a veiled transmitter or bridge, on which the visitor steps on and moves to a sound space, through which the reader discovers a sonic experience.

The simultaneity of a particular and cultural sonic quotation ‘*ezan*’¹⁵ and the musical sound may be arguable in terms of the simultaneity of the particular and the universal within *Excerpt for “Raft”*. Žižek mentions that so as to be present, one has to be confined with a particularity, and so as to become universal, one has to detach his/her presence from his/her particularity. Within that picture, one cannot be universal, but can only become universal. The particular does not always mean and address the original. However it can be considered as a focused center. The universal operates to stretch and reposition this center. In that respect it simultaneously decentralizes the center, bringing a more general and a totalizing circle, which is a center again. Therefore it can be said that there is, on the one hand, the loss of the center and of the first place, and, on the other hand, the loss of the decentralized positions, which become filtered and almost invisible, subordinated within the big whole. The universal neither promises nor guarantees the common shared by all. And the particular does not always assure the universal, despite its hidden promise and potential to be spread. The question of what universal or particular simply is does not bring us anywhere. Instead how the two cooperate and correlate with each other is arguable. The bridge at that point gains significance again, and *“Excerpt for “Raft”*”, as a sound work, may address this bridge to demonstrate the coexistence of the particular and the universal, of the center and of the decentred/re-centred, introducing an incomplete project.

Psychoanalysis is “the essence of the Copernican revolution begun by Freud; the decentering”, as Laplanche argues. (Laplanche, 1999, 71) This statement

¹⁵ Ezan is Muslims’ religious musical call, sung from the “minaret” of a mosque or recorded and ‘projected’.

addresses the double reality, the ‘self-centering’ in which the alter ego, the other is involved. Decentering, the other, and the unconscious propose the uncomfortable and perverting deviation and slipping. The trouble of change is designated as “foreign” in Freud’s reading, according to Laplanche:

‘Man feels himself to be supreme within his own mind’-a first statement; but in reality psychoanalytic observation reveals that ‘the ego is not master in its own house’. And here the word ‘alien’ or ‘foreign’ (Ger. *fremd*) recurs with insistence. (Laplanche, 1999, 68)

Laplanche argues that Freudian understanding suggests the ego as a “depth” within the self, waiting to be looked at to know your self. It is perhaps for this reason the primary and the original are hierarchically understood. That is to say, the primary is the foundation that can be found by digging in. Technically speaking, according to Freud this is where the unconscious is. At that point Laplanche interprets the primary not as a full presence, but rather as a becoming:

If the primary is the unconscious, and the unconscious is the repressed, then this primary has “*become* primary”, so to speak. It is neither prior nor primitive, but a sort of ‘reduced state’, caused by something else. (Laplanche, 1999, 69)

This something else provokes us to think the external or/and the alien, the decentering, which is carried through and carries the enigma, and particularly the enigmatic presence of other and otherness, which is unfinished, in process. In that respect Laplanche conveys the alien’s becoming, and the “discovery of the decentering revolution” as such:

Internal alien-ness maintained, held in place by external alien-ness; external alien-ness, in turn held in place by the enigmatic relation of the other to his own internal alien-such would be my conclusion concerning the decentering revolution I have proposed here in continuation of the Freudian discovery. It remains for us to show in what respect it is *unfinished* and what is the nature-contingent or ineluctable-of that unfinishedness. (Laplanche, 1999, 80)

Within this work, *ezan* is present in a subtle way, not fully present, rather in process. In particular the sound and the melody of *ezan* are neither fully internal nor fully external to the whole. *Ezan* seems to remain alien, as the unfamiliar, the particular, bringing *ezan* and the rest. Unlike *ezan*, the rest is not that distinguishable.

In everyday life, all sounds may not be musical. What we generally hear is noise. Brian Ferneyhough refers to Tristan Murail, who is one of the composers that investigate the integration of spectral analysis and compositional writing:

Murail insists that there are no insuperable boundaries separating sound from noise, and that the same is true of other conventional distinctions such as those of frequency and rhythm or harmony and timbre... For him, the natural structure of sound, rather than those aspects of sound most amenable to notational and procedural categorizations, lies at the core of musical experience. (Ferneyhough, 2000, 169)

Murail argues that there are no insuperable boundaries separating sound from noise, yet one is not simply the other. Noise is not distinguishable 'itself', whereas sound is a discrete unit of noise. It is separable, but by itself transitory and fluid, as well. More concretely, the digital editing rendered separating sound as a discrete unit and reshaping the sonic environment possible. (Ferneyhough, 2000, 168) As mentioned earlier, Anderson uses both analog and digital recording, editing and processing.

The 'rest' are the sounds, generated by the keyboards and short wave radio signals. The rest is a particular and fluid "musical experience" in Murail's terms, which is made imaginable through technology, between sound and noise. *Ezan* is both internal and external to the rest. In that respect, the 'rest' does not fully become a subtext. *Ezan* does not fully become an 'alien', introducing an oscillation between familiar and unfamiliar, providing a bridge to move on, to listen to *Excerpt for "Raft"*, as an open-ended journey. This incompleteness brings the undecidable hearing of sound, and space, whereby many spaces and sounds can be heard. As Ferneyhough puts it, what we hear becomes what we are taught, led to expect to hear, addressing a structural hierarchy:

What we hear is, in large measure, dictated by what we are led to expect to hear. In the space available I will not be in a position to offer a generalized proposal concerning how and under what circumstances music might be a language. For my own part-that is, with respect to my own creative practice-it suffices to accept that musical discourse is somewhat amenable to being treated as if it were language; that is to say, exhibits at least potentially, a sufficient number of structural analogies to the sort of hierarchic orderings typically encountered in verbal utterance to permit further procedural extrapolation. (Ferneyhough, 2000, 151)

Sound and musical experience do not always guarantee music as language. On the contrary, they sometimes challenge to "music as language", implying a resistance to certain structural encodings. Thereby, sound and a particular sonic experience, just like *Excerpt for "Raft"*, carries the listener to different positions that are fantasized, open to remaking, changing and unfulfilled, becoming incomplete and then in-finite through which the listener interrupts the sound and space suggested by a particular work. The listener becomes a spectator, a reader and a performer of different sound spaces by imagining different scenarios with different positions that never remain

same and finished. This may indicate the possibility of plurality. Barthes argues that the reading is plural, as there are many reading-s. As he puts it, the plural is tempting, desired and fearful, belonging to fantasy. In that sense, reading is erotic.

The decentering sounds and in-finite readings in and through *Excerpt for "Raft"*, make the melody and the text of the work erotic, provoking one's fantasy. The melody of 'ezan' is sung through a particular voice of a particular space. However the particular voice turns into a plural sound within *Excerpt for "Raft"*, whereby the particular is not fully the particular any more, but instead, interrupted and turns out to be lost. When the particular melody, voice and text become lost, the work becomes open to a drift, a becoming, which indicates neither limitlessness nor a limit, but rather an extension, an expansion and a transcendence of limits. The primary loses its significance, since the first thing, the first place and the first person miss its proximity. The distance in and between support the loss, and bring ambiguity. Thereupon the drift, the becoming, blurs the boundaries, which are present but 'undecidable too many', liquid, decentering, and obtuse, in Barthes's terms.

In "Excerpt for "Raft"", a particular voice, a particular space, is interrupted, decentralized and pluralized by sound, presenting an experience of sound, a spatiality, involving the other thing, which is neither fully familiar nor fully unfamiliar, suggesting the otherness through which becoming becomes possible.

Sh

There is not just one soundtrack, but at least three groups, words, noises and music. It is clear that these different elements can enter into a rivalry, fight each other, supplement each other, overlap, and transform each other... The voice is not separable from noises, from the sounds which on occasion make it inaudible. (Deleuze, 1989, 234)

A soundtrack is like a new vocabulary through which a new way of story telling is performed. In that respect a soundtrack might be a peculiar experience for its audience, addressing the synthesis of the many. A new vocabulary may indicate a new word, a new code or/and a new translation. A 'new' vocabulary cannot be new, but can become new. And a new vocabulary communicates with its audience in a special way. Laurie Anderson perhaps proposes a soundtrack, a unique experience of a synthesis, a new vocabulary, and a new way of storytelling through *Sh*.

Sh is one of the songs, among 16 songs, involved in the *Jukebox*, synthesised with voice, the sound of thunder, and piano. In the museum, *Jukebox* is installed in

the corner of a separate division, in which Anderson's other works are exhibited. Two chairs and two headphones are put in front of a table on which the jukebox is put. As mentioned in *Tape Bow Trio*, while listening to songs, the audience can read the papers hang on the wall with the hand-written lyrics of the songs. Anderson's voice, and hand writing, putting on the headphones as an isolated act of listening, and sitting in the corner, as in imagining in 'a room of one's own', may isolate the audience, though not fully. This provides a mental departure, a particular setting through which a particular sonic experience is motivated. *Sh* is a particular song of the *Jukebox*, yet not fully isolated from the others within the *Jukebox* that the audience reads and listens to in the museum. The CD may work as a jukebox, involving 5 tracks. However, as a CD track, *Sh* brings a different sonic experience, not presenting a particular setting, but instead, producing many settings, bringing many particularities with the space it is listened to, through sound and Anderson's voice, which may imply a hand writing, on imaginary papers. *Sh* is the last track, indicating an end, yet not fully finished, as a sound.

'Sh' is a voiceless consonant, whose acoustic parameter of speech is semi-random noise.¹⁶ However when it is vocalized, it might remind the listener of the sound of water, a flux, an instruction to be quiet or silent. 'Sh' does not completely indicate a complete end. Rather it is just like a breath, a beginning of an end, a process or a period before sound. 'Sh' perhaps for this reason demands silence. However it is already sound by itself and within a whole.

Within *Sh*, Anderson's vocal goes hand in hand with the smooth and continuous piano partition and the sound of thunder. 'Sh' does not indicate a full word, and more crucially, does not let the words, articulated by Anderson within the piece, such as English or Danish, be a full word either. Barthes's "hide and seek" game is within *Sh*, alerting the listener. As Lukas Foss argues, the idea of creating a game produces "a music that would happen by itself". (Chadabe, 1997, 72) Foss indicates a process, a musical experience through which both the producer and consumer are involved. Electronics makes this game thinkable and workable. It helps to hide, extend, deepen, amplify and change sound and voice, bringing and reshaping the sonic environment. Anderson changes her stories via a changing tone and a voice, approaching sound by electronics. Opera artist, Joan la Barbara, suggests the same:

¹⁶ Ladefoged, Peter, "The Sounds of Speech", *Sound*, eds. Patricia Kruth & Henry Stobart, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 126.

Without the electronics, I had only my voice, and the sound I could make depended upon what I could physically do-but with electronics, I could extend this... (Joan la Barbara quoted in Chadabe, 1997, 248)

A “hide and seek” game may refer to the mode of presence and absence. Electronics encourages and provides a space to play between absence and presence. Literally, as Lacan puts it, the word is already a presence made of absence:

Through the word-already a presence made of absence- from the pair of sounds modulated on presence and absence-there is born a particular language’s universe of sense in which the universe of things will come into line. (Lacan, 1981, 39)

Lacan goes on by saying “it is the world of words which creates the world of things” (Lacan, 1981, 39). A particular word brings a particular thing. ‘Sh’ is not a full word, yet it has the potential to become a word, and thus to produce a particular thing, volume, spatiality and temporality. Thereby ‘sh’ gives a possibility to an oscillation between the imaginary and symbolic, between ‘sh’ and ‘English’, bringing Engli-sh. ‘Sh’ is both internal and external to English, addressing a word play.

Word play can be considered as an attempt to approach the symbolic via the imaginary or vice versa. In *Sh*, what is hidden is the full word, the symbolic. On the contrary, what is unveiled and provoked is the imaginary through ‘sh’, which is not a full word, yet a sound, including the echo of the symbolic, of voice and word. Sound is sustained and unfinished, whereupon volume pulls the listener down through this unfinished and sustained sound of ‘sh’. The volume or the depth of word threatens and destroys the singularity of the word itself, of the meaning, and of the voice. The voice and the word are divided and the listener is tempted to pursue the fragments of voice, and sounds, whereby s/he approaches other voices, other sounds, other settings.

The sound of voice might be thought as the “grain of voice” in Roland Barthes’s terms. Barthes assumes the grain as follows:

The ‘grain’ is that: the materiality of the body speaking its mother tongue; perhaps the letter, almost certainly significance. (Barthes, 1977, 182)

The grain indicates a particular voice, and its function. *Sh* challenges the particular functioning of a particular voice through its suggestion of an oscillation between the imaginary and the symbolic, its proposal of multiplicity and plurality, “from within language and in its very materiality”, in Barthes’s terms. *Sh* is not a song, simply representing bathos, “in the service of communication”, but it is a song encouraging a

volume, a depth, for the production of new sounds, new spaces, new settings, which are neither fully translatable nor fully untranslatable. Barthes distinguishes these two songs, as “pheno-song” and as “geno-song”:

The pheno-song: everything in the performance, which is in the service of communication, representation, expression, everything, which forms the tissue of cultural values. The geno-song is the volume of the singing and speaking voice, the space where significations germinate ‘from within language and in its very materiality’; it forms a signifying play having nothing to do with communication, representation (of feelings), expression; it is the apex (or that depth) of production where the melody really works at the language-not at what it says, but the voluptuousness of its sound signifiers, of its letters-where melody explores how the language works and identifies with that work. (Barthes, 1977, 182)

Sh is neither simply the “pheno-song” nor fully the “geno-song” due to the oscillation between sh and English, sh and Spanish, sh and Danish. It, on the one hand, communicates with the audience through English, Spanish, French, British, etc., and, on the other hand, stresses ‘sh’, as a couple of letters, its volume, space, and sound, “from within language and in its very materiality”. However, neither the “geno-song” nor the “pheno-song” is ‘itself’ complete. There is already interplay between the two, encouraging the listener to animate, to move to an enigmatic and uncanny space where pleasure becomes possible, which suggests fantasy and imagining, demands reading and writing, and becomes a setting, a scenario that is latent to other scenarios. As well as British, Spanish, English, etc, the text of *Sh* includes French, Deutsche and Dutch which do not end with ‘sh’, yet which become lost, or imaginarily present through sound, becoming Fren-sh, Deut-sh, Dut-sh, indicating a fantasy, addressing the other, the interruption of the otherness. A fantasy is neither easily nor continuously found. Instead, it is a daydream, uncannily between appearance and disappearance, changing, remaining incomplete, whereupon it promises to become plural and multiple, reaching the many. *Sh* suggests a journey between the symbolic and the imaginary, a daydream, between voice and sound. However, Anderson’s voice, though approaches sound, does not fully become sound. Engli-sh does not simply replace or substitute for English. In that sense the symbolic is not fully left, and the imaginary does not fully come in. Rather the oscillation between those dichotomies presents the possibilities of deconstruction and reconstruction. The deconstruction and reconstruction of Engli-sh encourage a silencing of the dominance of English, and fantasising another English as Engli-sh.

Sh addresses obscure destinations, due to the silent and fantasised, due to its unstable and hesitant daydream between presence and absence, where it becomes

poetic, short but suspended. *Sh* can be considered in relation to a sound poem. Douglas Kahn refers to Surrealist reading and writing, how the two approach the audible, sound and the sound poem:

Breton celebrated the way surrealist writers have already discovered the tonal value of words, not in their external auditive characteristics but at the point of their psychological generation where “the ‘inner word’ is absolutely inseparable from ‘inner music’ ” and where “inner thinking is free to tune itself to the ‘inner music’ *which never leaves it*”. Thus, he writes, “Great poets have been *auditives*, not visionaries”. (Kahn, 1999, 36)

The inner word, the inner tone and the inner sound of voice, the inner music, the inner space, indicate the transcendent, which is internal, external and beyond, whereby possible third meanings are elaborated. The transcendent may include and address the transindividual and the transcultural, through a synthesis, like *Sh*.

The idea of sound poem derives from the idea of noise and simultaneity. In that respect the sound poem is influenced by the simultaneous poem, which Dadaists first articulate. The locus of the simultaneous poem is the lack of locus in speech and language. The voices operate as sounds by a simultaneous speaking and singing activity. In this context voices and sounds create noise and noise songs, through which something more and less than the human voice emerges. This carries us to a point, a point of desire and anxiety, loss and imaginary. Douglas Kahn restates the simultaneous poem, (*poème simultan*) by Dadaists, as follows:

Huelsenbeck, Tzara, and Janco took the floor with a *poème simultan*. That is a contrapuntal recitative in which three or more voices speak, sing and whistle, etc., at the same time in such a way that the elegiac, humorous, or bizarre content of the piece is brought out by these combinations. Noises (an *rrrr* drawn for minutes, or crashes, or sirens, etc.) are superior to the human voice in energy. (Kahn, 1999, 49)

With reference to Ball, Douglas Kahn reiterates the simultaneous poem’s power, which on the one hand destroys, and, on the other hand, sets the language free:

“Touching lightly on a hundred ideas at the same time without naming them” (Kahn, 1999, 50)

Sh, in that respect, is not simply a sound poem. It does not fully include noise, a simultaneous act of singing, and speaking. Yet it suggests the inner word, the inner letter, the inner sound, which does not just and entirely inner but also the outer, and beyond. Thereby it promises an extension, expansion and openness for remaking, deconstruction and reconstruction again. *Sh* at that point becomes arguable to touch “a

hundred ideas at the same time without naming them”. A hundred ideas also imply the hundred particular ideas, found and lost within language, imprisoned and liberated by the other and otherness, situated in an intersubjective position. Laurie Anderson goes on her road by travelling through a hundred ideas surrounded by the “onion layers”; oscillating between the cogito and the fool, the discovery and the loss, the discourses and the stories, the other and the otherness, and the voice and the sound.

CONCLUSION

.... And I, infinitesimal being,
drunk with the great starry
void,
likeness, image of
mystery,
for myself a pure part of the abyss,
I wheeled with the stars,
my heart broke loose on the wind.
Pablo Neruda, from "Poetry"

This thesis has encouraged a journey, which is open-ended and in-finite. Just like "*poetry arrived in search of me*", the journey has arrived; yet not fully come in, and ended, instead, oscillated between emergence and loss. This thesis has attempted to intrigue minds by asking questions about sound works as contemporary art practice, and to drift in the senses, by stressing lower frequencies, the emotional, the spatial, the imaginary.

Sound works in contemporary art practices does not indicate a definitive field, but rather, suggests an open space, through which a sound work involves and is involved by a becoming, and through which its work is never done. Thereby a sound work encourages another work, another position, another space, another role and scene, which remains neither same nor finished, which brings multiplicity of sonic and spatial experiences, of daydreams. A daydream is neither fully present nor fully absent. Rather it is between appearance and disappearance. Thereby a daydream is not fully continuous, interrupting the actual through the imaginary, and being interrupted through the actual.

A sound work is not fully continuous, instead, can be interrupted, reframed, and reshaped, as open to change, to flow each time as 'something else'; and interrupts, suggests "narrative constructions" in Weber's terms, stories, both participants and observers, scenarios, daydreams, fantasies and oscillations. Through all, a sound work calls for a discussion of the other and I, of the external and the internal, and of the oscillation between these dichotomies. However it does not stick to the dichotomies, to the split between them, but instead, addresses the third, which suggests neither simply the other nor simply I, neither simply internal nor simply external, neither simply visible nor fully invisible, neither fully translatable nor fully

untranslatable, and neither completely familiar nor completely unfamiliar. The third indicates the otherness, undecidable too many between emergence and loss, appearance and disappearance, attachment and detachment. The third is interrupting, and already the imaginary, the fantasized, the uncanny, encouraging theatricality, performance and reading, whereby it becomes an open space for production.

Works by Jody Elff, Susan Philipsz, Ann Lislegaard and Laurie Anderson have addressed this openness for production. They have invited the third and the imaginary; made their audience an observer/participant, and a spectator/listener/reader. All works have proposed an oscillation between emergence and loss, the other and the otherness, the first and the third by carrying the audience from voice to sound, sound to voice, one space to another, one vision to another, one scene to another, one time to another, from “here and now” to “there and then”. Each time, each oscillation, becomes a rediscovery of the lost, repeated without recognising, in Weber’s terms, yet never as an end point, never in the same way.

The conclusions repeat a cliché, join a chorus, in saying that this is not a real conclusion, but instead, a beginning. This conclusion repeats this cliché, chorus, by taking the reader to the beginning, which is neither the first and foremost nor the guarantee of the next, yet a promising entrance to a promising discovery, a sonic experience, spatiality, and to an imaginary journey to “imaginary landscapes”.

APPENDIX I

APPENDIX II

CD I [see inside back cover]

Please refer to:

Track 1: Portal, Jody Elff

Track 2: Ziggy Stardust, Susan Philipsz

Track 3: Tape Bow Violin, Laurie Anderson

Track 4: The Parrot, Laurie Anderson

Track 5: Self-Playing Violin, Laurie Anderson

Track 6: Excerpt for “Raft”, Laurie Anderson

Track 7: Sh, Laurie Anderson

APPENDIX III

CD 2 [see inside back cover]

Please refer to:

Sarah’s Panorama, Ann Lislegaard

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APPENDIX II

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APPENDIX III

CD 2 [see inside back cover]

Please refer to:

Sarah’s Panorama, Ann Lislegaard

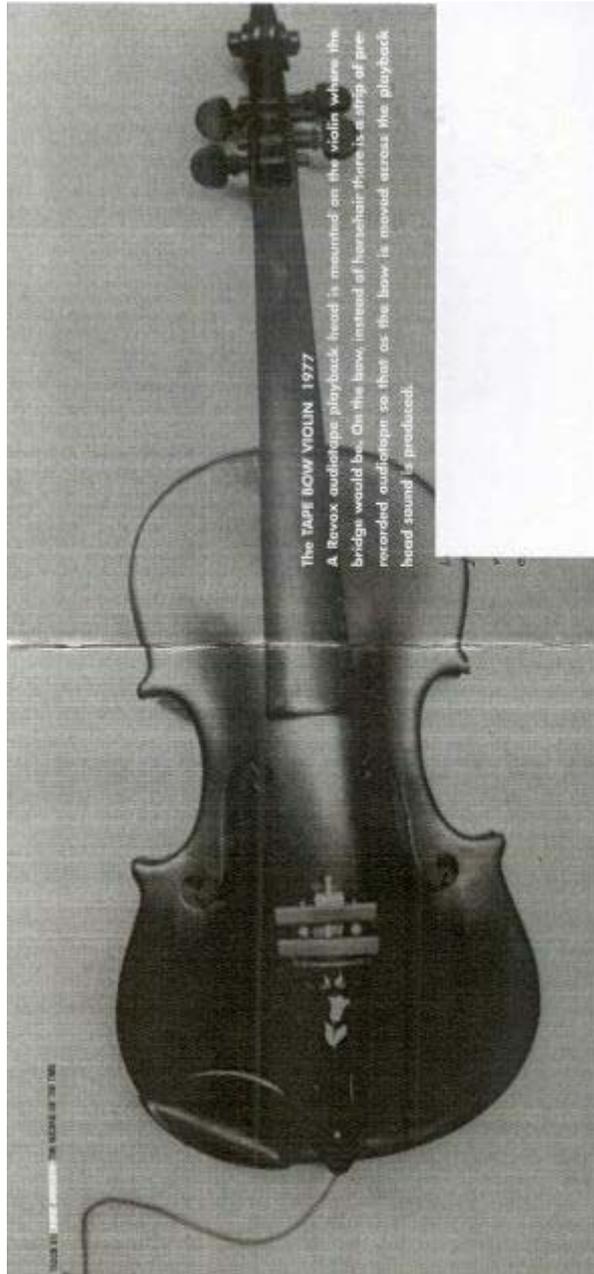


Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

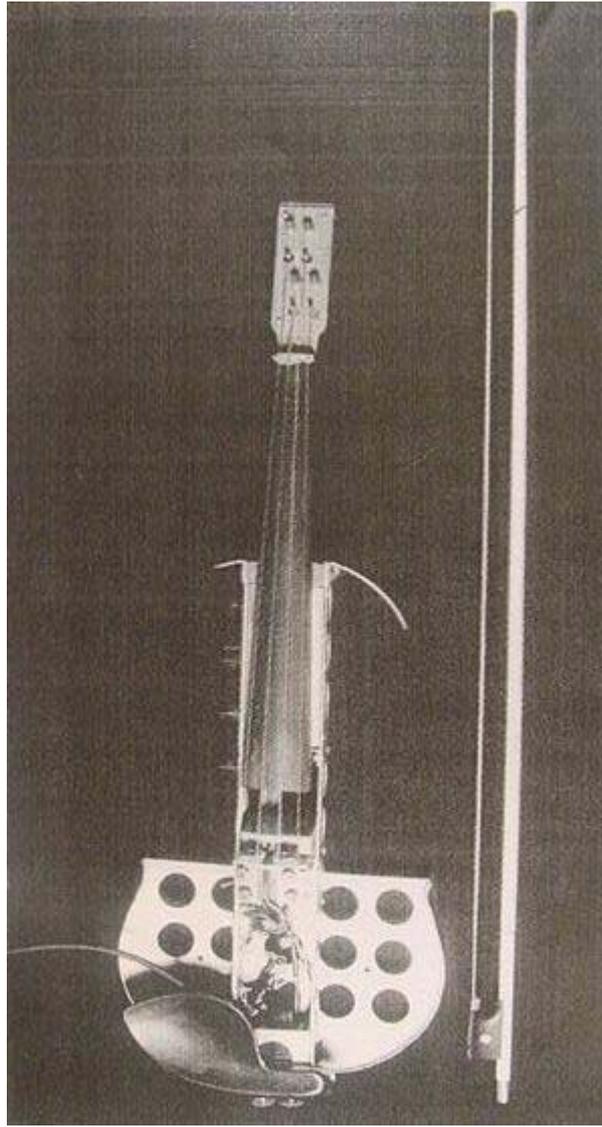


Figure 4

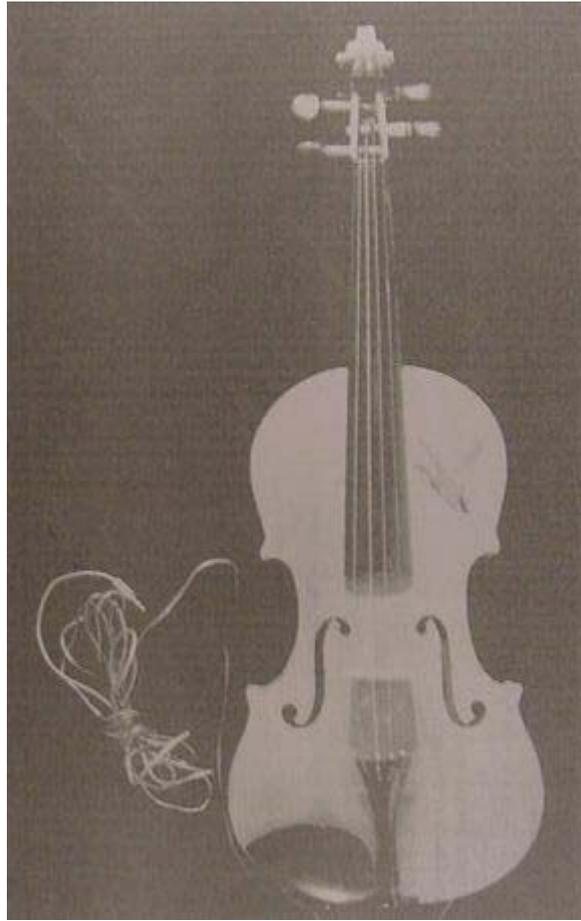


Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8

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