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# UNDERTONES

In the world of sound, a distinction is made between hearing and listening. When hearing the sound of a car starting, we form an instant picture: the type of car, its location, and the direction it's traveling in. If the car is moving towards us, we immediately gauge the road's width; we estimate its speed and whether to take avoiding action.

We can picture all of this, but rarely do we listen to the sound of the car itself; does it stutter or roar, does it have a deep hum or a rhythm?

John Cage was one of the first composers who invited the audience to listen to everyday sounds. In his 4'33", the musicians remain silent for 4 minutes and 33 seconds. Each performance produces a new piece of music that may include the sounds of crackling candy wrappers, the hubbub of the seated audience, whispers or the traffic outside. Other composers followed suit. George Brecht even wrote a symphony for small cars, *Motor Vehicle Sundown* (1960). Preferably performed on a large square or open space, it consisted of a rhythmic succession of slamming doors, klaxons, and roaring engines.

The car has its fair share of today's urban acoustic environment, but there's a lot of other traffic too: rattling bikes and revving scooters, and other noises such as shop

doorbells, voices, church bells, ringtones, and songbirds. We are not used to listening to these sounds, we even have a limited vocabulary to describe them, but we certainly hear them.

For *Undertones*, Marres has invited artists to contribute to a route of sound works through Maastricht. The route introduces you to spectacular underground spaces: caves, prehistoric quarries, historic cellars, and the corridors of fortifications. These natural and often dark sound chambers sharpen the hearing and provide a unique acoustic layer to the artworks. Inspired by local sounds, both old and new, the artworks reveal fragments of Limburg's identity. Combined, they provide a sound map of the region and an underground acoustic mirror of the area.

# I MARRES

Lyndsey Housden UK 1980  
Everything About  
You 2013

Situated in the reverberant space of the first room at Marres, Housden's architectural installation attempts to tune the visitors in to the act of listening. Housden creates installations and scenography that build bridges between the static space and the transient body.

# Sarah van Sonsbeeck NL 1976 Acoustic Paintings 2010 – 2012 Letter to My Neighbours 2006

The work of Sarah van Sonsbeeck explores space and silence. Particularly the personal space that we need for ourselves, that is usually defined in visual terms. Van Sonsbeeck mainly sees space as an area that is defined by sound. With the *Acoustic Paintings*, she researches how you can adorn the walls and at the same time reduce noise. In *Letter to My Neighbours*, she highlights that when others take possession of her space, in this case with sound, they also have to pay.

# Paul Devens NL 1965 Dot Pitch 2 2011 – 2013

In *Dot Pitch 2*, Paul Devens exhibits an interest that goes beyond the mere sonic qualities of sound objects. Fourteen Walkman ear buds appear, reproducing pre-recorded synthesized sounds, pulsating at the same rhythm; however, each sound differs in tone and colour. Four hands with microphones follow individual paths from ear bud to ear bud and thus conveys the visualized act of registration to sound, surrounding the audience.

# Nishiko JP 1981 Lights flickering – as a Documentation of Pause, Featuring Mei-yi Lee 2014

In her work, artist Nishiko investigates the transition of an ordinary event into something special, using diverse media. *Pause* is a light installation of fluorescent lights that flicker randomly and endlessly. The first version of this work was presented in 2010, and it is the starting point of the work for *Undertones*. Here, Nishiko re-enacts the light installation using recorded sound instead of actual tube lights. Nishiko requests the audience to be patient. Listen to the sound for a while and imagine that there are fluorescent lights on the empty ceiling and that they are all flickering as if they are dying.



Espen Sommer Eide, language meaning music I, photo: Thor Brodreskift



Espen Sommer Eide, 396 Hz at 2000 frames 88 BPM at 1000 frames, 2013

Espen Sommer Eide, audible, photo: Espen Sommer Eide



Anri Sala AL 1974

## Air Cushioned Ride 2006

Anri Sala has an extensive body of largely video work that is characterised by the poetic and sometimes humorous treatment of social situations. In his recent works, sound takes an increasingly important role. *Air Cushioned Ride* came about during one of his trips. While driving on a rest area for trucks in Arizona, the radio waves from an unknown station playing country music started to interfere with the baroque music he was listening to. Such an incident is called cross modulation or a spurious emission. The trucks acted like a wall, at times redirecting one music while blocking the other, several times, punctually, in the same places. The baroque music re-emerged each time the car passed the truck where it read AIR CUSHIONED RIDE.

Haroon Mirza UK 1977

## Adam, Eve, Others and a UFO 2013

British artist Haroon Mirza works with sound, which he activates in spatial installations. He composes soundscapes based on the immediate area. In *Undertones* he presents *Adam, Eve, Others and a UFO*: a musical composition in the form of a sculpture. It contains a UFO-shaped LED circuit, which powers a circle of eight speakers. A thick, black microphone cable connects the speakers in a rhythmic and symmetrical formation. The electricity that drives the LED lights is amplified to generate the sound, which can be heard through the speakers. The LED lights are programmed to turn off and on in a sequence, creating a looping composition akin to techno music. Each speaker's sound is varied because, as referenced in the title, they are made by different manufacturers.

Espen Sommer

Eide NO 1972

## 396 Hz at 2000 frames/s – 88 BPM at 1000 frames/s 2013 Language meaning music I 2013

Musician and artist Espen Sommer Eide creates his own musical instruments, which he calls 'philosophical instruments'. This work presents two slow-motion videos that investigate the two fundamental properties of sound — the movements of pitch and time. The third video, *Language meaning music I*, explores the connections between language and music. Its starting point is a short clip from a Bollywood comedy about language confusion. By tuning the vowels through various tuning systems of instruments and music from along the Silk Road, travelling from the east to the west, and quantifying the consonants into rhythms, meaning dissolves and musical aspects of language emerge.

## Joseph Beuys DE 1921 – 1986 Ja Ja Ja Ne Ne Ne 1968

Joseph Beuys is considered one of the twentieth century's most influential artists. He was a committed teacher and activist, who believed that art is not so much a profession, but a way of being in the world. In his broad conception of art, every man was an artist and every act a work of art. This understanding of art underlies all of Beuys' works: installations, drawings, sculptures, discussions, and political statements. The work presented here came from a visit to a wake in the Lower Rhine (DE). At a coffee table, old ladies ritually murmured the same apparently meaningless words, which Beuys represents in this collage with *Ja Ja Ja Ne Ne Ne*.

## Chaim van Luit NL 1985 and Fabian de Kloe NL 1982 Voyage Souterrain 2014

With their installation *Voyage Souterrain*, visual artist Chaim van Luit and historian Fabian de Kloe offer a glimpse of an on-going exploration of the underground systems in the south of Limburg and in Belgium. The title is inspired by the book *Voyage Souterrain, ou Description du Plateau de Saint-Pierre de Maestricht* (1821), a study of Sint Pietersberg by the French naturalist Jean Baptiste Bory de Saint-Vincent (1778–1846). From end 2013 until beginning 2014, van Luit and de Kloe conducted their own exploration of the Sint Pietersberg as well as other sites of natural history. The resulting installation presents a material and audio-visual impression of navigating, crawling, digging, and breaking through these geological and historical layers.

## Ryan Gander UK 1976 Escape Hatch to Culturefield 2012

In *Escape Hatch to Culturefield*, a locked trapdoor secluded in the Marres garden emanates music by Charles Mingus. The escape hatch leads to Gander's imaginary creation 'Culturefield'. The place feels secret, but Gander doesn't like that term. He sees it as a place where creativity is experienced without any intellectual or conceptual boundaries: a starting point for other people's imagination. "Sound is like a tool or a material, but as the works I make are all very different with no real visible stylistic signature between them it pops its head up in my practice only when necessary, when a concept demands its use."

## Rutger Zuydervelt NL 1978 Ice Age 2014

Rutger Zuydervelt is a sound artist, musician and composer, who often works with found sounds. Since 2004 he has been working under the alias 'Machinefabriek'. Inspired by Alvin Lucier's experiments with sound, space and memory, Rutger Zuydervelt fills the icehouse of Marres with an immersive soundscape. The low rumble of distant traffic blends with the sounds of bass clarinetist Gareth Davis. The irregular ticks of melting ice, accentuated by percussionist Enrico Malatesta, identify the former function of the cellar. *IJstijd* (Ice Age) makes the notion of time and space disappear, and transports the visitor to a place where the present and the past share a parallel existence.



Casemates. Photo: courtesy of VVV Maastricht

Graindelavoix, photo: Koen Broos





Rutger Zuydervelt, Ice Age, 2014

## II INTRO IN SITU

Thomas Rutgers NL 1983

and Jitske Blom NL 1983

The Beaters 2013

Thomas Rutgers graduated as a music technologist at the HKU, and completed his Masters in applied composition in 2006. He gives cinematic concerts and designs 21st century musical instruments. Jitske Blom graduated from the Design Academy in Eindhoven in 2008. She makes installations and designs that make us use the space around us and show a new way of looking and listening. Together they made *The Beaters*, a sound installation commissioned by Intro in situ, for *Resonance, European Network for sound art*. Nothing in this choreography is what it seems: materiality is concealed, motion is manipulated, and gravity defied!

David Helbich DE 1973

Maastricht

Tracks since 2013

The Berlin-born, Brussels based composer David Helbich, produced a Maastricht version of his performative sound-walk, Tracks. Helbich composed a theatrical score for special places in the city, with detailed instructions on how you should listen to the tracks according to the location. With headphones on, the city becomes a theatre and a stage, with you as an actor. Headphones and an mp3 player are provided at Intro in situ or you can download the audio files to your own mobile devices via his blog: [davidhelbich.blogspot.nl](http://davidhelbich.blogspot.nl).

## III CRYPT OF SINT SERVAAS BASILICA

Graindelavoix /

Björn Schmelzer BE 2000

Maastricht

Cryptonomies 2014

The Graindelavoix music collective, formed by Björn Schmelzer in 2000, aims to give new interpretations to the West's musical past. For Maastricht Cryptonomies, Graindelavoix interprets the antiphons and responsoria of St. Servatius. The medieval legends tell how the saint's body repeatedly disappeared from the Basilica's crypt, only to appear elsewhere to perform a miracle. Graindelavoix sees parallels between the crypt and a sound box: a hollow chamber that exudes maximum resonance. Four singers and two improvising musicians shall work for a week on the sound installation and try to activate the original function of the crypt.

With: Marius Peterson (vocals), David Hernandez (vocals, choreography), Jean-Christophe Brizard (vocals), Margarida Garcia (electric double bass), Manuel Mota (electric guitar), Alex Fostier (sound installation), Björn Schmelzer (vocals, artistic direction). With the support of the Flemish Community.

## IV CELLS OF THE MINDER- BROEDERSBERG

Espen Sommer

Eide NO 1972

### The Distribution of the Audible 2014

When we think of demonstrations and protest manifestations, we usually think of screaming, sirens and megaphones. In his work for the Minderbroedersberg, artist Espen Sommer Eide addresses more subtle layers of sound transfer and the distribution of sound between government and individual. He made an installation that consists of a custom-made public address sound system constructed of discarded public speakers from various countries and organisations. For the old monastery and later prison cellars of the Minderbroeders, Espen Sommer Eide created a composition that projects the transformative intensity and power of the sound of mass protest into the tiny rooms and narrow corridors of the cellar complex.

## V CASEMATES, WALDECKBASTION

Mark Bain US 1966

### The Tuning 2014

The American artist Mark Bain is internationally renowned for playing with architecture and sound. For the Casemates, he has made a work referring to Andrei Tarkovsky's post-apocalyptic film *Stalker* (1979). In the film, a guide leads two men to the Zone, an area believed to have mysterious powers, and to the Room where wishes are fulfilled. As they travel, the three

men discuss their reasons to visit the Room. The Writer is concerned that he is losing his inspiration. The Professor gives little away, but after much pleading by the Writer, he eventually discloses he hopes to win a Nobel Prize. The Guide (*Stalker*) insists he has no motive beyond helping the desperate. Inside the dome of the Waldeckbastion, lies an enigmatic machine that resonates with the domed space and the surrounding network of tunnels. Designed like a large tuning fork, it endlessly vibrates the location's tonal signature, channelling the sound throughout the network.

## VI CAVES OF SINT PIETERSBERG

Kaffe Matthews UK 1961

### You Might Come Out Of The Water Every Time Singing 2012

Kaffe Matthews is an internationally recognised pioneer in the field of electronic improvisation and live composition. She has made six solo albums on the Annette Works label, directs research project *Music for Bodies* making vibrating sonic interfaces and is currently establishing the #sonicbike association, the Bicrophonic Research Institute (BRI). For the installation *You Might Come Out Of The Water Every Time Singing*, Matthews went diving off the Galapagos Islands to research hammerhead sharks. Sharks and the Sint Pietersberg may seem an unlikely combination until you consider that the marl caves are the residues of the pre-historic Krijtzee (Chalk Sea) in which sharks roamed millions of years ago.  
[www.kaffematthews.net/sharks](http://www.kaffematthews.net/sharks)

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*Kaffe Matthews, You Might Come Out Of The Water Every Time Singing*



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