

Mapping Berlin, Geography of Sound

Winter Semester 2021/22: 18 October 2021 - 19 February 2022

CATEGORY

Urban Culture

COURSE STRUCTURE

2 contact hours à 45 min per week (winter semester: 16 weeks)

This course will be held in a hybrid format with some sessions taking place online, with synchronous meetings in Zoom and Moodle exercises, others face-to-face in room 0323-26 at Hausvogteiplatz 5-7. Excursions might take place, depending on the circumstances and regulations - replaced with online guest talks. It is mandatory that students are located in Berlin during the semester.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Time

Wednesday 10-12 c.t. (10.15 am - 11.45 am)

Hybrid format

***Please check on Moodle which classes will take place in-person, which ones online**

Place

Hausvogteiplatz 5-7, 10117 Berlin
Room 0323-26

Online sessions

Zoom-Meetings, link on Moodle

COURSE LANGUAGE

This course is taught in English, including the readings. For the understanding of the texts and the discussions in class, language-level B1 is required. Basic knowledge of German is welcome but not a must.

Language requirements (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages)
English **B1**

TARGET GROUP

The course is structured for all international exchange students for all disciplines and for all domestic students interested in participating in a trans- and cross-disciplinary exchange on academic research exploring and mapping Berlin through sound. The course, structured in both theory and practice, offered a syllabus focusing on mapping and listening to acoustic territories in Berlin. Exploring the site-specificity embedded in Berlin sonic spaces, it focuses on the critical act of navigating and mapping through acoustic cartographies, diagrams and apps while focusing on urban sounds. The course requires active participation in each session during the semester. It will approach different fields of research such as geography, musicology, architecture, acoustic ecology and media arts. Previous knowledge in the mentioned disciplines or audio technology is not required. The course will take place in a hybrid format (online and face-to-face classes), for that reason it is mandatory that the student will be in Berlin during the semester to attend face-to-face classes and excursions.

*This course is prepared for all international exchange students of all subjects with a strong interest in the course topic. Berlin Perspectives courses are designed for undergraduate students. Master students may participate if their home university agrees. Regular degree-seeking students can select the course within the elective part of their study program (überfachlicher Wahlpflichtbereich üWP).

CREDITS = 5 ECTS

The Berlin Perspectives courses are offered by the Career Center as part of the elective program üWP. Registration takes place via Agnes.

All courses are accredited according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Registration on Moodle (HU's e-learning platform)

in case of online classes

- Fully functional device (laptop, tablet, PC)
- Stable internet connection
- Software: Zoom (video/audio)
- *Recommended* hardware: external headset for better sound quality

EXPECTATIONS & POLICIES

Preparation for lively discussions: be on time, have at least the required readings completed, and points in mind for discussion or clarification.

Assignments: complete all assignments according to the specified requirements on the schedule including handing them over to the lecturer.

Commitment: pay particular attention to the lecturer and respect differences of opinions (classmates', lecturers).

Academic guidelines: Comply with academic integrity policies (such as no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical) especially the academic honor code and the student code of conduct.

Attendance policy: Students must contact their class teachers to catch up on missed work – to excuse absence please contact the lecturer.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course focuses on mapping and listening to acoustic territories in Berlin. It allows academic research for exploring and understanding the city by sensing aural environments. Structured in theory and practice, the central questions of the course are: which sonic elements can we encounter in navigating historical and contemporary maps? Which methods of research and practices exist in the act of mapping with sound? How can we generate sound maps? From a transdisciplinary approach, the course reflects the city's cultural, social, and political dimensions through analyzing and creating maps by listening. It aims to allow students to explore auditory territories, gain strength, and develop knowledge and individual perspective on cultural studies and urban studies. The mapping methods are practice-based on field recordings, soundwalk, and sound diagramming exercises. The academic readings and discussions will introduce the student to the field of sound studies.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

This BA- and MA-level course aims to develop a critical position in understanding auditory territories and sound maps, taking Berlin as a case study. Students fulfill with an overview of the sound-related cultural projects of the city. The course will enable its participants to sense the city through hearing and listening to a central discussion about the idea of urban cultural projects and critically reflect on the question: how sound and listening can have an actual impact on their disciplines.

-Knowledge

- Analyze the urban space and sound environment.
- Interpret and contextualize the aural territories.
- Identify the social and political interactions in terms of urban development.
- Examine the city as a sonic environment through navigating maps.
- Use listening as a tool for analyzing the social space contained in maps.

-Academic/Analytical Skills

- Critically reflect on contemporary academic discussion.
- Analyze academic articles.
- Adopt and implement academic writing.
- Proceed and apply artistic research and practice-based projects.

-Achievement

- Understand and interpret cultural production by approaching historical documents like maps, diagrams, and cartographies, while enhancing academic writing and artistic research skills.
- Produce academic work, differentiate different writing and research styles.
- To be able to use different research methods.
- Analytical listening skills.
- Soundwalk as a method of analyzing acoustic spaces.
- Basic on audio technology edition, audio documentation and field recording.

Requirements and assessment:

This course offers students diverse options for understanding the urban space in Berlin. Therefore, I strongly encourage full participation. We are holding the course online, you must join the online discussion. Please be prepared to write about sonic environments and your interest in researching sound, maps, and cartographies. There will be reading material for each class. As we are working with sound, a smartphone or any recorder would be helpful. However, you don't need a professional recorder. You can also choose your method to record sounds in any media. i.e, photography, video, writing and drawing. There will be assignments, a Mid-term Project, and a Final Project. Each has a different percentage of your note. Please see the grading section below.

In Class Expectations

Open invitation to Diversity: The class is open to multiple cultures and choices. It is an inclusive space for exchange, collaboration, engagement and participation. There is also a place for discussion and disagreement. Therefore, please come with an open mind and never bring any shaming, racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, transphobia, or other hate.

Plagiarism: It is unacceptable to copy someone else's ideas or words without properly crediting the source. Be sure you are using citations. In other cases, you will be dismissed from this course.

READINGS

Blesser B. and Salter, L-R. 2009. *Spaces Speak, Are You Listening?. Experiencing Aural Architecture.* England: MIT Press.

Careri, Francesco. 2017. *Walkscapes. Walking as an Aesthetic Practice.* USA: Culicidae Architectural Press.

Farinati & Firth, Lucia & Claudia. 2017. *The Force of Listening.* Print. Le press du réel, 2017. Pp 23-39

Gandy, M. & Nilsen, B.J. (eds.) 2014. *The Acoustic City.* (Berlin: Jovis)

Goldsmith, Mike. 2015. *Sound - A Very Short Introduction.* United Kingdom: Oxford.

Jasper, Sandra. 2019. *Acoustic Ecologies: Architecture, Nature, and Modernist Experimentation in West Berlin, Annals of the American Association of Geographers,* DOI: 10.1080/24694452.2019.1673143

Jasper, Sandra. 2018. *Sonic refugia: nature, noise abatement and landscape design in West Berlin, The Journal of Architecture,* 23:6, 936-960, DOI: 10.1080/13602365.2018.1505773

Jasper, Sandra. 2020. *Acoustic botany: listening to nature in a former airfield.* In the book "The botanical City" by M. Gandy and S.Jasper

Kires, Mateo et al. 2018. *Night Fever. Designing Club Culture 1960-today.* Published by Vitra Design Museum.

- Kubisch, Christina** 2009. *Electrical Drawings*. Germany: Kehrer Verlag.
- LaBelle, Brandon**. 2010. *Acoustic Territories. Sound Culture and Everyday Life*. A&C Black.
 —. 2015. *Background Noise: Perspectives on Sound Art*. USA, Bloomsbury Academic.
 —. 2018. *Sonic Agency. Sound and Emergent Forms of Resistance*. England: MIT Press.
- Lane, Cathy & Carlyle, Angus**. 2013. *In the Field. The Art of Field Recording*. Uniformbooks. CRISAP. UK.
- Lessour, Théo** (2009). *Berlin sampler. From Cabaret to Techno: 1904-2012, a century of Berlin music*. (trans. Sean Kearney). Ollendorff Verlag Berlin.
- Pallasmaa, Juhani**. 2012. *The eyes of the skin : architecture and the senses*. Chichester, West Sussex, United Kingdom : Wiley.
- Schafer, R.Murray**, 1977. *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World*. Rochester, V.t. Destiny Books.
 —.1992. *A sound education. 100 Exercises in Listening and Sound Making*. Canada: Arcana Editions.
- Schulze, Holger**. 2021. *The Bloomsbury Handbook of the Anthropology of Sound*. USA & UK: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Voegelin, Salomé**. 2010. *Listening to Noise and Silence*. Towards a Philosophy of Sound Art. London, New York: Bloomsbury.
 —.2014. *Sonic Possible Worlds. Hearing the Continuum of Sound*. London, New York: Bloomsbury.
 —.2018. *The Political Possibility of Sound*. London, New York: Bloomsbury.

ASSIGNMENT INFO

Workload and assignments

To be granted 5 ECTS, participants will be asked to

- actively attend all sessions (a minimum of 75% attendance is required for classroom and online sessions)
- hand **exercises** and **final project**.

We will have several exercises using virtual tools (Moodle and Zoom.) Depending on the circumstances and regulations, the activities as virtual tours can differ from online to on-site excursions. That will be announced at the beginning of the semester.

EXERCISES

Presentations, summaries and discussions about the required readings

There are different mandatory readings for each week. Each participant should lead the discussion of one of the readings during the semester. The short presentation should include a summary, opinion, questions and keywords of the reading to initiate a group discussion. As well, two short summaries about the different readings will be asked during the course (each 1000 characters long). Deadlines about presentations and summaries will be informed at the beginning of the semester.

First assignment (Field recordings)

During the course, it will be asked to bring different field recordings of different acoustic territories of Berlin. The recording will be max. 2 minutes and should be presented in class. Any kind of audio recorder is accepted, for example a handy phone, ipad or computer. If the student does not have technical equipment, there will be shared possibilities to get rental equipment free of charge.

FINAL PROJECTS

- **Option 1** - Sound mapping. In the form of a portfolio of several multimodal work performances (e.g., audio or video material, internet pages, online maps) (without a precise definition of the length). Explanatory text approx. 2500 with references and bibliography.
- **Option 2** - A written paper of approx. 25,000 characters, including spaces (bibliography not included for characters account.)

Both options will be presented within a 15 minutes presentation in the last session. The final project can be written in English or German. For option 1, the student should develop a "sound map" using the methodologies explained in class, which includes soundwalk, field recording,

audiowalk and audio collage. The aim is to generate sonic diagrams or digital maps in a hybrid format during the act of mapping (option 1). Theoretical research in the form of an academic paper is also allowed (option 2).

For option 1, the student is welcome to use any kind of media in the process of mapping. It is their imagination and creativity. It is required to write an explanatory text about the relation between the selected area and argue with a historical, political and social analysis approach. Suppose it is an academic essay, option 2, the written requirements are 25,000 characters, including spaces. In that case, the students must reflect on the research question, research methodologies, objectives, aims, etc., till styling, citing, paraphrasing, referencing, etc.

Please be aware that the course is theory and practice-oriented. The student should engage with discussion in classes, attend excursions in the city, do small presentations during the first two blocks of the seminar, and be actively working and presenting the ongoing work of the final project during block 3. We will be working in different steps to proceed and prepare the final project during the course. At the halftime of the course (after Christmas break), we will discuss how to proceed and prepare this final project. The last six classes of the course will be dedicated to combining theory, talks and visits with corrections of the final projects. The project could be performed individually or in groups. These sections will cover the research question, objectives, aims, research methodologies, etc.s

Assessment Components

The final grade will be composed of the above-mentioned assignments and exercises.

Contributions and summaries about the required readings 30%

First assignment 20%

Final project 50%

Failure to fulfill one of the mentioned components fails the class.

Teaching tools

MOODLE

All readings will be available via the Moodle page. The course key (password) for self-enrollment will be sent to registered students before the beginning of the semester. If you have trouble finding the course or cannot get the password on time, please write an e-mail to **samuel.pereadiaz@hu-berlin.de** and I will provide you with the password.

ZOOM

We will meet every week in Zoom on the day and at the time of the course.

YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Samuel Perea-Díaz is a researcher, artist and designer living in Berlin. Along with architecture and spatial design, Samuel´s practice incorporates exhibition scenography, curating, and sound. Samuel holds a degree in Architecture from the University of Seville.

Samuel Perea-Díaz has been teaching in Berlin Perspectives since SoSe 2019 the seminar "Berlin Sonic" together with Banu Çiçek Tülü. They lead independent research investigating and exploring cities and urban environments through sounds. For them, sound is not only a signal. It is a vibrational event that includes the social, the cultural and the political. Their work consists of practice-based projects that expand from workshops and site-specific interventions. They recently published the article "*Rhythmic Encounters: A Sonic Manifesto*" based on their sound practice together.

COURSE SCHEDULE

BLOCK 1

- Week 01 **Introduction** *"A Geography of Sound"*
Week 02 **Perspectives on Sound** *"What is an Anthropology of Sound?"*
Week 03 **Perspectives on Sonic Archives** *"Sound, Listening to the World"*
Week 04 **Perspectives on Maps** *"Navigating Berlin Maps"*
(Guest, berlin-based curator Lisa Gordon)

BLOCK 2

- Week 05 **Berlin Maps and Sounds** first assignment
Week 06 **Perspectives on Berlin Lands** *"Wasteland and Containers of Silences"*
Week 07 **Perspectives on Soundscapes** *"From Soundscape to Field Recordings"*
Week 08 **Perspectives on Acoustic Territories** *"Acoustic Arenas"*
Week 09 **Perspectives on Listening to Urban Sounds** *"Sidewalk, Soundwalk and Audiowalk"*

(HOLIDAYS BREAK)

BLOCK 3

- Session 10 **Mapping Berlin 01** *"Berlin Sonic Lands and Sonic Research"*
Session 11 **Mapping Berlin 02** *"Examples of soundwalks"*
Session 12 **Mapping Berlin 03** *"Workshop. Field recording"* (excursion)
Session 13 **Mapping Berlin 04** *"Examples on Sound Map"* (Guest, berlin-based artist Udo Noll, founder of radio aporee)
Session 14 **Mapping Berlin 05** *"Examples on Audiowalk"*
Session 15 **Mapping Berlin 06** *"Sound Mapping"*
Session 16 **Mapping Berlin Final Presentations**

BLOCK 1

>Week 1 (online - Zoom)

Introduction "A Geography of Sound"

In the first class, we will have an introduction session to explain the syllabus in detail, including the exercises, assignments and final project that students are responsible for throughout the semester—presentation of participants, their backgrounds, and motivations.

Assignment: Mandatory readings for week 2 with a half-page summary about the text. The student contribution should reflect on the main ideas of the author and their personal opinions.

>Week 2 (online - Zoom)

Perspectives on Sound "What is an anthropology of Sound?"

In this session, we will discuss the recently published text of Prof. Holger Schulze, "*What is an anthropology of Sound?*" The discussion will be followed by a contextualization to sound from an ethnographic, cultural, and anthropological point of view. The class will be followed by basic concepts of sound as a physical vibration, room acoustic, psychoacoustics, and modes of listening. As well, It will be reserved time for a short introduction for the new students that join in the second session.

Reading:

Schulze, Holger (2021) "**Introduction: What is an Anthropology of Sound.**" The Bloomsbury Handbook of the Anthropology of Sound, pp 1-19.
Wildner, Kathrin (2021) "**Soundmapping**". Booklet to the exhibition - "Mapping Along. Recording Margins of conflict", pp 47-48.

Maps:

"Mappa Mundi" (2011) - Matthias Rick - raumlaborberlin
online resource: https://raumlabor.net/mappa_mundi/
"The sound of the Earth" (2012) - Yuri Suzuki
online resource: <https://yurisuzuki.com/archive/works/the-sound-of-the-earth-2/>

Assignment:

Mandatory reading for week 3 and a short presentation about an object of the following mentioned exhibition. Each student should choose one object from the catalog of the exhibition "*Sound, Listening to the World*" and explain it during the next session. The idea is moderate group discussion, where each participant can contribute not only with their opinions as well as engaging, searching, and contextualizing the diversity of elements related to sound culture in the museum archive. This short exercise will allow students to exercise a short presentation,

and get a personal opinion about the presented material. At the same time, giving the choice to listen to each other and get to know them as a group.

>Week 3 (online - Zoom)
Perspectives on Sonic Archives "Sound, Listening to the World"

We will start this class by introducing the work by German artist Ulrich Eller "Sound Storage" (2000), part of the "Klangkunst Forum" in Park Kolonnaden (Potsdamer Platz). Within this work the artist installed 213 speakers for an abstract acoustic reproduction of sound in the space of a museum. The scenography of this sound art installation has many similarities to the exhibition displacement of last year's exhibition about sound and cultures curated in the Humboldt-Box, "Sound. Listening to the World" (22.03.2018 to 16.09.2018.) The exhibition catalog and documentation will lead us to look and review in detail different examples of sound material from Berlin archives.

During this class, we will discuss methods and approaches of archiving, listening and exhibiting cultures through recording that relate the past to the present, and future sounds. Question as: who and where has been recorded? With which technology? In which context was recorded? Those questions will allow us to create a critical approach of interpreting and working with acoustic or audible material. It will introduce early recording methods, for example, used by the phonograph that was introduced at the end of the 20th century, to the most recent examples of collecting and researching music, languages and soundscape recordings worldwide.

Revisiting the exhibition we can negotiate not only within the context of Berlin institutions as the "Berlin Phonogramm-archiv", but also allow a critical overview to introduce sound to academic and curatorial research, and how to present critically those material to different audiences.

Reading:

Voegelin, Salomé (2018) "**Geographies of sound: Performing impossible territories.**" *The Political Possibility of Sound*. London, New York: Bloomsbury, 2018, pp 75-101.

Support Material. Exhibition Catalogue:

Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berlin Schloss (2018) "**[sound] Listening to the World.**"
Online resource: https://issuu.com/humboldtforum/docs/humboldt_forum_laut_begleitheft_en

Maps:

"Pfad für aufmerksames Hören (Path of Awareness)" (2018) - Katrinem
online resource:
https://www.katrinem.de/part44_schuhzugehoer_pathofawareness_humboldt_berlin/

Assignment:

Mandatory reading for week 4 and overview of the online material that contextualizes the work of the guest invited in the next session. In that way the student could be prepared and contextualize individual questions to engage with the invited guest.

>Week 4 (online - Zoom)
Navigating Berlin Maps. Guest - Berlin-based curator Lisa Gordon

In this session, we will talk about Berlin's urban history and analyze different urban transformations over the last centuries by looking at examples of Berlin maps and cartographies. The aim of this class is questioning how to navigate through maps: medium, legend, interpreting social, cultural and historical events.

The curator Lisa Gordon will be invited to our class (invitation already accepted) to share her previous work on searching and exhibiting cartographies from a private collection. Lisa Gordon curated the exhibition "Navigating Berlin: Perspectives on Cartography" during 30.11.2019-01.03-2020. A three-part exhibition series in collaboration with CLB Berlin. The exhibition series presents maps dating from the 18th Century to the present day of a private collection. The curatorial work of Gordon presents a challenge and understanding of the city via its cartographic representation.

Reading:

Farinati & Firth, Lucia & Claudia. **"Practice of Listening." The Force of Listening.** Print. Le press du réel, 2017. Pp 23-39

Support

Material:

Lisa Gordon shows in her curated exhibition a selection of Berlin city maps belonging to Michael Müller and contains examples dating from the 1700s to the present day.
<https://lisagordon.eu/exhibitions/>
<https://www.clb-berlin.de/en/events/navigating-berlin-perspectives-on-cartography/>

Assignment:

Mandatory readings and short exercises. Each student should bring a map and a sound of Berlin for the next class. It could be any medium or topic. For example, it could be from a Berlin BVG transport map to a mobile phone app. This exercise is a brainstorming presentation of individual approaches to map. The main idea of this exercise is to reflect on different approaches to history and medium (analog and digital). As well, each student should bring a field recording of a Berlin sound, the recording should be no longer than 2 minutes. It could be recorded with a mobile phone. In the case students do not have any possibility for doing a recording, it could be a written description of the sound.

BLOCK 2

>Week 5 (online - Zoom)

Berlin Maps and Sounds (First assignment)

In this session, we will have our first assignment. The assignment consists of each student bringing an example of a Berlin map, and as well a field recording of an acoustic territory of Berlin (max. 2 minutes). We will listen all together to the audio recordings with an explanation of the context of the sonic captures. The assignment will consist of a five-minute presentation of each student about their selected maps and sounds. Concepts already discussed in class should be addressed in the presentation. Any kind of Berlin map is valid, it could be from any historical Berlin map to any navigational Berlin diagram as a transport map, to any mobile phone app.

At the end of this session, we will discuss an approach to theoretical and academic research on different topics of the political dimension of the city as an interconnected red. We will look at the research by Pablo López (Bauhaus University), who recently published an article in the Berlin Magazine ARCH+. The article is published within a Berlin map produced by the author and reflects on the topic of techno music in Berlin and its locations. The second part of the class, it will discuss the topic of "Sound Ecology" and "Berlin Sonic Places". This will be an introduction to soundscape terminology that will be used within field recordings.

Reading:

Schafer, R. Murray (1977) The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World. Rochester, V.: Destiny Books, 1993 - pp 3-12 & 271-275.
Dixon, Max. **Towards a New Sonic Land Art. Berlin Sonic Places.** A Brief Guide. Berlin, wolke. pp 8-11.

Map

+

Article:

López, Pablo (2020) "Der Sound Des Mythos." Politik des Raums im Neuen Berlin. ARCH+ magazine n. 241. Online access: <https://archplus.net/download/artikel/5901/>

Assignment:

Mandatory reading for next week with a half-page summary of the text. The student contribution should reflect on the main ideas of the author and their personal opinions.

>Week 6 (online - Zoom)

Perspectives on Berlin Lands "Wastelands and Containers of Silences"

This class is about reviewing Berlin architectural and urban projects, as well art interventions with attention to the built sound environment. It will revisit the concept of "soundscape" and "sound ecology" discussed in the previous class. As well, I will present the topic of how to navigate through different urban scales in the city of Berlin by focusing on buildings where music is performed, architecture of sounds. Three different relevant architectural buildings related to

sound will be discussed in this class. These three buildings are the Berlin Philharmonic, The Funkhaus Berlin and Tresor. During this class it will introduce concepts of aural architectural and sonic urban environments, taking as a case study the Kulturforum Berlin Philharmonic. This area is mentioned in detail in the academic texts of Prof. Sandra Jasper.

Readings:

Jasper, Sandra. (2019) **"Acoustic ecology: Hans Scharoun and modernist experimentation in West Berlin"** in Gandy, M. & Nilsen, B.J. (eds.) *The acoustic city* (Berlin: Jovis), 2014 pp. 145–155. (PDF)

Aha, Laura. (2019) **"Devoted To Perfect Sound: The Life and Career of Gisela Herzog."** Published online: <https://daily.redbullmusicacademy.com/2019/04/gisela-herzog-funkhaus-feature>

Maps:

"Moritzplatz - Forms of Brutality" (2019) - Larissa Fassler
http://www.larissafassler.com/moritzplatz_brutality_1.html

"Schlossplatz" (2013) - Larissa Fassler
http://www.larissafassler.com/schlosszoom_1.html

Assignment:

Mandatory reading for next week.

>Week 7 (online - Zoom)

Perspectives on Soundscapes "From Soundscape to Field Recordings"

In this session, we will focus on concepts of soundscape and sound ecology. In particular, we will listen to the well-known British and berlin-based musician, Peter Cusack. His album, "Berlin Favorite Sound", the result of his DAAD fellowship, will introduce a critical and subjective way of archiving sounds of the contemporary city in a CD Album. This session will contain listening exercises to Cusack's work and reflect the concept of sonic art as an alternative of mapping Berlin.

This session will introduce basic knowledge of how to work with an open-source audio station. The main idea is that students can understand how to edit recorded sounds, which they did for example in session 4. This will help students to work with sound for their final projects.

Reading:

Cusack, Peter. (2017) **Berlin Sonic Places. A Brief Guide.** Berlin, wolke.

Map:

"Favorite Berlin Sounds" (2013) CD, album. Peter Cusack. ReR Megacorp.
<http://www.45worlds.com/cdalbum/cd/rerpc5>

Assignment:

Mandatory reading for next week.

>Week 8 (online - Zoom)

Perspectives on Acoustic Territories "The social acoustic arena"

In this session, we will look at different chapters of berlin-based sound artist and academic researcher Brandon Labelle's book "Acoustic Territories." In this book, the author approaches the potential to research city layers through sounds. We will concentrate on the chapter "underground and echoes", by giving examples of Berlin underground sounds.

Readings:

LaBelle, Brandon (2019) **Acoustic Territories: Sound Culture and Everyday Life.** Bloomsbury Academic, 2019.

Maps:

"**Otodate**" (1996) - Akio Suzuki. Listening position in Berlin Mitte.

Sonambiente - Festival Für Hören Und Sehen, Internationale Klangkunst Im Rahmen Der 300-Jahrfeier Der Akademie Der Künste, Berlin, 9. August - 8. September 1996. 1996. Print. Pp 142-143

"**Achtundacht (für Irene) [EightandEight (for Irene)]**" Installation from Hans Peter Kuhn in the station Westkreuz.

<https://hanspeterkuhn.com/installations/achtundacht-fur-irene-eightandeight-irene/>

>Week 9 (online - Zoom)

Perspectives on Listening to Urban Sounds. "Sidewalk, Soundwalk, and Audio walks"

In this session, we will focus on walking and mapping by using different senses, which will include the history from the International Situationist to other contemporary practices, focusing on Berlin-based artists as Katrin Emler and Christina Kubisch.

Readings:

Careri, Francesco (2017) **Walkscapes. Walking as an Aesthetic Practice.** USA: Culicidae Architectural Press. Pp.24-32 and 67-81.

Lane, Cathy & Carlyle, Angus (2013) Interview C.Kubisch. In the Field. **The Art of Field Recording**. Uniform books. CRiSAP. UK.

Map:

Electrical Walks (since 2013) - http://www.christinakubisch.de/en/works/electrical_walks

Kubisch, Christina (2009) Electrical Drawings. Germany: Kehrer Verlag.

Assignment:

For the next class is required to do a small presentation of each student about an area of Berlin they found interesting to work. From this moment it is possible to work in groups of max 3 people or individually. After Christmas, each week is expected to be a short summary presentation of the ongoing mapping exercise from each group.

(BREAK-WINTER HOLIDAYS)

BLOCK

3

During this block, each week the students individually or in groups (max 3) should present the work in process of their final projects divided in different stages each week. We will start by approaching their mapping act in locations, reflect on sonic methods, sonic analysis of the sound environment, field recordings and summarizing a map as an interactive academic research tool as a final project.

>Week 10 (online - Zoom)

Mapping Berlin 01 "Berlin Sonic Lands and Sonic Research"

First group presentation. Kick-off, project ideas and locations for the final project.

For this class different areas of Berlin will be contextualized for further research. Each student should choose one research area and do further research in its historical, social, and cultural contexts. During the class, it will present relation with sound-related research topics as noise, silence and acoustic ecology. There are some examples from previous year students of sound maps of Berlin from the class "Berlin sonic" on the internet. The idea is to show students the potential of mapping by showing work from previous years that include academic papers, field recording and sonic diagrams and maps. We will take a look at those projects with the possibility of inviting some of the previous year students to do a small presentation of their exercises to the students of the new semester.

Research area 1: Berlin Spree
Research area 2: Berlin Tempelhof / Tiergarten
Research area 3: Berlin Underground
Research area 4: Berlin Museum Islands (Kulturforum & Mitte)

Map:

"Noise Map of West Berlin" (1966), Landesarchiv Berlin.
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13602365.2018.1505773>

"Noise Map of Berlin" (2018), Berlin Senatsverwaltung für Umwelt, Verkehr und Klimaschutz.
<https://interaktiv.morgenpost.de/laermkarte-berlin/>

Readings (optional):

Neimanis, Astrida. Bodies of Water - **Posthumanism Feminist Phenomenology**, 2017.
Stahl, Heiner (2013) **Preparing for Landing, Ready for Take-Off. Zoning Noise Pollution as Spatio-Temporal Practices at Berlin-Tegel and Berlin-Tempelhof Airport** (1965-1975). *Historical Social Research / Historische Sozialforschung* 38 (3 (145)): pp. 229–245.

>Week 11 (online - Zoom)

Mapping Berlin 02 "Examples on Soundwalks"

Second group presentation. Sonic methodologies, site-visit and soundwalk.

In this class, students should reflect on how they will develop artistic or academic research in the Berlin location selected in the class before. Methodologies already discussed in the first two blocks of the seminar should be implemented. Concepts of soundscape, acoustic ecology and acoustic space will be framed by students' field recordings or sound walks in those areas. The first draft of their mapping methods and analysis should be presented for a group discussion.

Map:

"Underground Board London" (2012) - Yuri Suzuki <https://laughingsquid.com/circuit-board-london-underground-map-by-yuri-suzuki/>

"Brussel Speakers" (2019) - Ulrich Eller
<https://www.ulricheller.com/en/brussels-speaker>

>Week 12 (excursion)

Mapping Berlin 03 "Workshop. Field Recordings"

This session is centered on an introduction to field recording. Within a workshop format, the idea is to learn how to archive sound through listening to acoustic spaces, performing soundwalks and field recordings at the same time. A site visit will be organized, due to possible extreme cold temperatures outdoors, a soundwalk could be challenging. For that reason, a

soundwalk could be performed indoors in a public museum. For example, in the indoor of the new built Humboldt Forum. If due to COVID-19 regulations is not possible an offline class will be organized where students can experience a site-specific audiowalk individually.

>Week 13 (online - Zoom)

Mapping Berlin 04 - "Examples on Sound Map" - Guest Udo Noll, founder of radio aporee

For this class, a berlin-based artist will be invited. The online talk will consist of an introduction of the artist, an artist talk of 35 minutes, and the rest of the class Q&A with the students. Since the mid-1990s Udo Noll has worked as an artist and media professional in numerous international projects and exhibitions. Udo Noll is the founder and active developer of radio aporee, a project platform for the artistic research of concepts and applications related to sound, space, and place, with a focus on field recording and corresponding practices.

Maps:

Soundmap	Radio	Aporee	(since	2006)
https://aporee.org/maps/				

Support Material:

Online Talk, "**Udo Noll: Radio Aporee: Surfing the Gray Line – Acoustic Topographics**" (2014) in ZKM.

<https://zkm.de/en/media/video/udo-noll-radio-aporee-surfing-the-gray-line-acoustic-topographics>

>Week 14 (online - Zoom - with artist talks or excursion)

Mapping Berlin 04 "Examples on Audiowalk"

Different examples of audio walks and soundwalks in Berlin will be presented as an alternative to mapping with listening and sound. This topic was already introduced in session 9. During this session, I will present two Berlin audiowalks. On one hand, the project by **fem_arc collective**, a group of female architects working on intersectional projects. The audiowalk is part of the exhibition: "*A feminist perspective for Berlin today! What could a non-sexist city look like?*". The audio walk can be heard and performed individually by the students on the side at any time (https://f-podcast.podigee.io/6-f_walk). On the other hand, it will be discussed the audio walk by berlin-based artist **Kirsten Reese** "*Berlin Rosenthaler Platz*", which expands the means of the audio walk with the participation of live elements to a portrait of this place - a social hot spot in the 19th century, the center of Jewish life in the 1920s - and also delves into its GDR and turning history. The audience not only receives information on routes and places to stay but also requests to take their own actions.

Corrections on the on-going mapping exercise for the final project.

Maps/listening:

“(im)permanence” (2019) **Luciana da Costa Amorim**. We will listen to the recordings of the live performance based on the sound recordings of building constructions in the city of Berlin. The sounds are based on field recordings of construction sites. The artist states that playing them altered sounds as a means of changing awareness of the process of gentrification.

>Week 15 (online - Zoom)

Mapping Berlin 05 “Sound Mapping”

In this class, we will discuss individual aspects and questions regarding finalizing their research and works. Individual discussion about finalizing working with the maps or academic research of each student, or group will take place.

>Week 16 (online - Zoom)

Mapping - Final Presentations

Final presentations.

The course and its syllabus are subject to change. Last update: 23 June 2021