

Introduction

Words from the Co-founding Editors

This issue of *Resonance* features an invited contribution to the journal that frames different forms of listening as a cross- and transdisciplinary field that traverses the arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences. Jointly authored by Salomé Voegelin, Anna Barney, Mark Peter Wright, Phoebe Stubbs, Julian Weaver, and Timothy Smith, “Protocols of Listening: Reflections on the Development of an Interactive Digital Platform for Cross-Disciplinary Sound Research” is a new and valuable piece of scholarly research (and a networked platform) that proffers a novel methodology based on a series of protocols and vocabularies of listening. The large-scale research project was undertaken from 2018 to 2022, with the origins stemming from the principal investigator’s and co-investigator’s work on listening as it related to sound art and music, and Alzheimer’s/dementia and lung health, respectively. The project expanded into multiple phases in collaboration with the Centre for Speech Technology Research at the University of Edinburgh; Urbanidentity, Zurich; Sound Studies Lab at the University of Copenhagen; and Health Sciences at University of Southampton, as well the National Science and Media Museum in Bradford, UK. The final stages of the project will result in an exit study with CASE, the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion at LSE, the London School of Economics. In describing the early stages of the project, Voegelin notes:

The production of a shared vocabulary, which in its lexicality by default emphasizes the substantial, the metric and measurable, the referential and therefore quasi-visual aspect of the sonic, would mean reducing sound’s potential to see and hear the world differently: to see and hear the invisible and intangible possibilities of the world that hold its relationality and reveal the in-between. Therefore, a vocabulary potentially disables the very view onto the ephemeral and thus the unreliable, which, as we had noted in the network discussions, held such great potential to add new knowledge and novel knowledge methodologies to the way we currently examine the world.

Coauthor Anna Barney, a professor of biomedical acoustic engineering, helps characterize the definitions of a listening protocol as something that

helps to standardize the approach and interrogate a predefined menu of research questions. A listening protocol provides a “grammatical” framework to listening practice that may be considered analogous to the accepted visual grammar of graphical data representation. A protocol offers a way to achieve consensus about how to hear and

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where to focus attention, which supports the goal of reproducibility. It is, however, not mere prescription but can be defined broadly enough to support conditionality and exploration. It can define approach and emphasis without dictating outcome.

The article's team of authors have created a compellingly organized group of concepts that were designed as a way to represent a plurality of ideas to a plurality of readers. In addition to their study and the online platform they created, the team produced a 12-part series of podcasts that embellishes their scope with episodes on speech synthesis, sound urbanism, sound anthropology, and sound arts, among others. Voegelin and her colleagues' research interests align with those of *Resonance*, as we are dedicated to presenting models of pedagogy and practice that celebrate innovative forms of collaboration while working to expand our understanding of sound and culture.

In "Reflections on Sound Associations and Sonic Digital Environments," artists Sara Pinheiro and Jiří Rouš reconsider the thought experiment, If a tree falls in a forest and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound? They depart from the historical form of *Gedankenexperiment* as originated by Hans Christian Ørsted to engage readers in a piece that reflects on the VR media artwork *Digital Unrealities, Study II*. In their work, the artists and researchers consider the multiple conceptual angles, the falling tree itself, the tree of thought, and the sound of the fall and the tree itself in a digital environment. The authors migrate from Kockelman-Peircean considerations of semiotics and interweave concepts from the work of Donna Haraway, Peter Naur, and Jonathan Sterne to help frame the conceptual and philosophical aspects of the work. In describing the state of the digital environment, Pinheiro comments:

The first stance of the falling tree in a virtual environment presupposes that the game is fully developed but not being played yet. All the content is compressed into many hidden options—possibilities that temporize in the future and may or may not become actual experiences. It is their virtual state: The game world dwells on the computer's hard drive, often in an obfuscated binary state.

For Pinheiro and Rouš, the journey is one of shifting subjectivities—explored through multiple realities, dimensions, and digital environments—that challenge if there is a tree, if a tree fell, if indeed there is a forest, and if there is sound.

The practice and study of radio and transmission art has been a part of the ambit of *Resonance*, and we are pleased to present two contributions that appraise Wave Farm as the organization celebrates 25 years of creative innovation and artistry. In "Reflections from an Artist Researcher: A History of Wave Farm at 25," Andy Kelleher Stuhl presents a valuable history of the celebrated arts organization in the Hudson Valley in upstate New York that has steadily grown from its origins as a micro-broadcasting project in 1997 to the establishment of the full-power community radio station WGXC, the organization's Radio Artist Fellowship, and their Radio Art Archive. In addition, poet, curator, and educator Anais Duplan has authored "In the Wilds of Black Sound," an interview with Ricardo Iamuuri Robinson and Sadie Woods, 2021 Wave Farm artists-in-residence, and Johann Diedrick, a 2021 MAAF for Artists grantee and 2022 Wave Farm artist-in-residence. Read together, Stuhl's history and Duplan's series of interviews present

a stimulating summary of an arts organization that is deeply invested in curating, educating, and working to continually challenge and celebrate what is possible in radio and transmission arts. While framing new directions, Stuhl notes:

Today, as the ensuing platform monopolies earn new degrees of wariness and frustration, a fresh wave of artists and researchers looks to radio both for historical precedents and for autonomous media futures. Wave Farm's unique trajectory from experimental rooftop transmissions to long-term institutional archiving has made the organization a key entry point for these newcomers, whichever direction we might look and listen.

Duplan's important point of entry and fascinating departure for the interviews with the Wave Farm artists is Dylan Robinson's 2020 book *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies*. In his introduction to the interviews, Duplan describes:

Hungry listening, as I came to understand it through talking with Diedrick, Woods, and Robinson, is a phenomenon that the Black sound artist is uniquely familiar with and must, at all times, be working against. Where is the line, though, between listening as dominance and listening as tender witness?

This issue's research section blends with the journal's commentary essay as Carter Mathes and his partner, photographer Shannon Lee Mathes, assemble a personal, critical, and artistic bridge to contributor Rachel Fernandes's writings on Mildred Loving, the woman of color whose interracial marriage to Richard, a white man, was declared illegal in the state of Virginia in 1958. In her contribution, "Listening to Loving: Mildred Loving and the Case for Quiet Activism," Fernandes outlines Mildred's form of quiet resistance as documented by *Life* magazine photographer Grey Villet and examines themes of quiet, loudness, and noise that have been associated with Blackness and Black activism through the scholarship of Clare Corbould, Fred Moten, Kevin Quashie, and Tina Campt. Fernandes frames the discourse within sound studies, outlining how examining quiet forms of resistance may be a useful tool when considering aspects of agency:

African American sound studies is particularly interested in sound as a powerful tool of resistance and celebration of Black life, but theorists of sound studies also take up issues of quietness as a valid alternative to louder acts of protest or resistance. A study of quiet subjects requires attuning oneself to these lower frequencies. Looking and listening more closely to Mildred Loving promotes an understanding of her use of quiet as a means of disrupting dominant forms of activism and of maintaining interiority and agency throughout invasive and public legal proceedings.

Whereas the Villet images of the Lovings were made in the early '60s, Shannon Lee Mathes's images are from her recent visits to the Lovings' former neighborhood to document their home, the jail where the couple was incarcerated, and the surrounding landscape of Caroline County, Virginia. Her images resonate within a historical penumbra, presenting a dualism in which one view of the image presents as a photographic artifact of the past and another view of the same image appears to have been made in the present. In his commentary, Carter Mathes describes:

The synergy of this critical-sonic-visual convergence moves and unfolds in various directions, encouraging us to ask and ponder a range of layered questions regarding not only content and critique, but also method. How might we bring together different modes of critical and creative inquiry to further explore the phenomenological dimensions of spatial and political histories?

This layered view challenges our senses to assign a specific chronology to these images. Through the blending of cultural chronologies, both Carter and Shannon Mathes create a matrixial condition for viewers, forming an ingress to the scholarly work of Fernandes as an opportunity to listen into the image for cues that invite us to reckon with our past and present in the same tense.

Brian Christopher Gregory's research presents new insights into the development of educational radio from previously unexamined archival materials, radio schools of the air in Ohio and Wisconsin, and an oral history of Dorothy Gordon, the progressive host of the *Youth Forum* program on *New York Times*-owned WQXR-AM. "Developing Critical Listening': Educational Radio and Early Media Literacy, 1933-1949" is a welcome addition to the scholarship pertaining to the origins of public media and the history of media literacy. Gregory's detailed scholarship documents the work of broadcasters, educators, and researchers who were working to create a democratic, noncommercial space for radio. In his summary, Gregory notes:

Since the early days of radio, idealistic rhetoric and "ahistorical 'amnesia'" about the democratic potential of technologies coupled with the reduction of education to market forces have overshadowed discourses and grassroots involvement about intrinsic public goods. Radio was itself an educational technology in American classrooms that was commonly circumscribed with ideological notions about its communicative affordances and progressive practices that sought to harness its unique qualities. Educators and educational broadcasters lacked clear research methodologies and curricular strategies that they could share through radio exchange networks. Hence, the radio became yet another instructional technology co-opted by commercial interests, practices, and misinformation while teachers and broadcasters continued to try to row against the tide toward idealized visions of individualized instruction, programming, and participatory civic engagement with students live on air and in classrooms across the country.

Gregory's research reveals both the dynamic and nuanced power imbalances between those in education and commercial broadcasting that were largely brought about through the adoption of the 1934 Communications Act, providing a critical perspective on the role of listening and democratic engagement.

We would like to thank the authors and reviewers and are proud to share their valued research here in this third issue of our third volume. We would also like to thank our associate editors, Anna Friz, Carter Mathes, and Josh Shepperd, for their wisdom and dedication. Additionally, we want to thank the following people for their support, hard work, and guidance in the development of this journal: David Famiano, Cheryl Owen,

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CALL FOR PAPERS

Resonance: The Journal of Sound and Culture is an interdisciplinary, international peer-reviewed journal that features research and writing of scholars and artists working in fields typically considered to be the domain of sound art and sound studies. These fields may include traditional and new forms of radio, music, performance, installation, sound technologies, immersive realities, and studies-based disciplines such as musicology, philosophy, and cultural studies. The scope extends to other disciplines such as ethnography, cultural geography, ecologies, media archaeology, digital humanities, audiology, communications, and architecture. This journal's purview investigates the research, theory, and praxis of sound from diverse cultural perspectives in the arts and sciences and encourages consideration of ethnicity, race, and gender within theoretical and/or artistic frameworks as they relate to sound. *Resonance* also welcomes research and approaches that explore cultural boundaries and expand upon the concept of sound as a living, cultural force whose territories and impacts are still emerging.

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