

# The Listening Academy

NOVEMBER 11 - 12, 2022

TITANIK GALLERY

TURKU, FINLAND

[WWW.LISTENINGBIENNIAL.NET](http://WWW.LISTENINGBIENNIAL.NET)

# Welcome

Amidst the thickening atmospheres of social suffocation (Górska 2021), we feel an urgent need to generate more possibilities of care-ful more-than-human togetherness, to gather, imagine, practice and dream of ways to listen towards a more liveable world. We are critically curious about ways to listen toward disturbances and critical interventions that (should) remain unnoticed by dominant structures which brew unliveability of today's social and worldly currents. In what ways can listening be mobilized as a form of critical intervention, one that can impact onto scenes of personal and political struggle? How might listening be queered? How might listening queer imaginaries of subversion? How might quietness, opacities, echoes, whispers and other liminal sonorous phenomena be figured amidst situations of contestation? How might listening be utilized and offered within experiences of unbreathability? And how may listening and breathing intertwine, enrich or challenge each other's political capacities to endure the worldly condition and situatedly subvert it?

Furthermore, The Listening Academy remains devoted to listening to(ward) multispecies relationalities, to listen locatedly and situatedly. This November it listens with Titanik and Turku that respectively dwell by the two bodies of water – Aura River and the Baltic Sea. In attunement to these locations and agencies, we are interested in listening as a way of transformative ecological – aqueous and elemental – storytelling. What sonorous epistemologies might listening with these waters – their waves, tides, algae – suggest? How do these waters connect to other bodies of water, other ecologies? How might wider elemental ecologies of a space nuance current economies of individual and communal attention and encourage listening toward a more liveable world?

# Participants

Camille Auer

Yvonne Billimore

Katarina Blomqvist

Taru Elfving

Anouk Mirte Hoogendoorn

Riikka Juntunen

Anastasia (A) Khodyreva

Katve-Kaisa Kontturi

Meri Kytö

Brandon LaBelle

Tina Mariane Krogh Madsen

Sini Mononen

Ben Muñoz

Carmelo Pampillonio

Kati Roover

Milla Tiainen

## BIOGRAPHIES:

**CAMILLE AUER** is a trans-disciplinary artist and writer, living between Helsinki and Turku. Her art practice has always been theory driven, but instead of illustrating existing theories, she uses forms ranging from sound, moving image, performance and text-based installations to contribute to theoretical discourse as modes of thinking in their own right. Her rich body of work is diverse in form and content, but a common theme is the othering of trans and nonhuman bodies, such as herself or queer birds. Her work has been shown in The Finnish Museum of Photography, Wäinö Aaltonen Museum and Titanik gallery, among many others. Her work is currently supported by the Finnish Cultural Foundation.

**YVONNE BILLIMORE** is an artist-curator based between Helsinki and Scotland. They are the associate curator of Rehearsing Hospitalities, Frame Contemporary Art Finland's public programme 2019-2023. Yvonne was the co-artistic director of ATLAS Arts on the Isle of Skye from 2021-22 and Programme Manager at Scottish Sculpture Workshop in rural Aberdeenshire 2015-2018. Her work facilitates situations for collective learning, exchange and experiences with particular attention given to feminist and ecological matters.

**KATARINA BLOMQVIST** is an artist-researcher and a doctoral candidate at Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture in the Department of Film. After studying philosophy (MA) she has been working in the field of documentary audio art. Besides academic philosophy she has also completed a two-year education in philosophical practice. She has presented her artistic research for instance in SAR International Conference on Artistic Research, Performance Philosophy Biennial, Nordic Conference on Philosophical Practice and Nordic Congress of Gerontology. She is currently working in a research project called Approaching Social Death: Challenges in End-of-Life Care of Older Adults with Dementia. The multidisciplinary research project is part of the Centre of Excellence for Research on Ageing and Care chosen by Academy of Finland.

**TARU ELFVING** is a curator and writer focused on nurturing interdisciplinary and site-sensitive enquiries at the intersections of ecological, feminist and decolonial practices. As artistic director of CAA Contemporary

Art Archipelago, since 2017 Elfving has been working in collaboration with contemporary artists and environmental scientists on a research project *Spectres in Change* at the Archipelago Research Institute, Turku University on the island of Seili in the middle of an archipelago off the South-West coast of Finland in the Baltic Sea.

**ANOUK HOOGENDOORN AND BEN MUÑOZ** met at *Senselab/Three Ecologies* a couple of years ago and have since continued their collaboration in several ways. They have been busy with *fruit.es* (a collective and website for sharing artistic practices in non-normative ways), *RollingUnrolling* (a set of techniques around the question of carrying excesses of an event into the next), *Nearby Lullabies* (a platform for gestures to accompany someone in a shift), *Recording Club* (a facilitation for recording with neurodiverse perspectives), and *Tiny Sounds* (an exploration through radio in sounds that do not register in typical accounts). [www.anoukhoogendoorn.com](http://www.anoukhoogendoorn.com) [benjaminmunoz.ca](http://benjaminmunoz.ca)

**RIIKKA JUNTUNEN** is a doctoral researcher in musicology at the University of Turku. Their PhD project concerns formations of fat and disabled corporeality in singing performance. Their research interests include voice, corporeality, popular music performance, intersectionality, affect, and material feminism. In addition to research, she works as a music pedagogue and choir director. In her teaching work, the focus is on experientiality, pleasure, and connectivity with the self and others.

**ANASTASIA (A) KHODYREVA** is a researcher and writer based in Turku, Finland, where they strive to know by breathing, walking, sensing, and attuning. Infused by feminist new materialisms, feminist studies of embodiment and affect studies, they work with methods of communal reading, haptic encounters, sound walks and multisensorial writing. In their doctoral research, they develop interstitial theory, a non-binary theory of being subversive of dominant Western politics of normativity and humanity. A heads towards more liveable interstices for marginalised – human and non-human – bodies. Currently, they co-facilitate *Aquatic Encounters: Arts and Hydrofeminisms*, a research project and reading space that dream of aqueous companionships and just multispecies futures. Their individual research allies with bodies of ice to query the dominant Western gender binary.

**KATVE-KAISA KONTTURI** is Senior Lecturer in Art History and Associate Professor of Contemporary Art Studies (docent) at the University of Turku, where she co-directs a trans-disciplinary project on ‘New Economies of Artistic Labour’ (2020–2024). She holds an honorary fellowship in the Victorian College of the Arts, The University of Melbourne, and is a SenseLab affiliate at Concordia University, Montreal. Her research focuses on relational materialities of art and the body, as well as on subtle aesthetic activism. She has published extensively on new materialisms and the arts, including the monograph *Ways of Following: Art, Materiality, Collaboration* (Open Humanities Press, 2018).

**MERI KYTÖ** is a university teacher in musicology at the University of Turku and an associate professor (dosentti, in Finnish) in auditory culture studies at the University of Eastern Finland. Her research and publications have tackled tactics for background music in public space (during Christmas, among service sector employees), sensory attention, distraction and media technology in urban environments, cochlear implants as soundscape arrangers, ecocriticism in soundscape composition, representations of the national in soundscape radio programs, sonic domestication and sense of acoustic privacy, and soundscapes of political protest, busking, football fans, public libraries and outer space. She’s also a soundscape enthusiast, mainly writing about how people listen, doing field recordings and at times artwork from those recordings. Her research interests are in auditory cultures, soundscape studies, science and technology studies, ethnomusicology, sensory ethnography, film sound and sound art. Publications list at: <https://merikyto.net/publications/>

**BRANDON LABELLE** is an artist, writer and theorist. His work focuses on questions of agency, community, pirate culture, and poetics, resulting in a range of collaborative initiatives, including: The Listening Biennial & Academy (2021-), Communities in Movement (2019-), The Living School (with South London Gallery, 2014-16), Oficina de Autonomia (2017), The Imaginary Republic (2014-19), Dirty Ear Forum (2013-), Beyond Music Sound Festival (1998-2002). In 1995 he founded Errant Bodies Press, an independent publishing project supporting work in sound art and studies, performance and poetics, artistic research and political thought. His publications include: *The Other Citizen* (2020), *Sonic Agency* (2018), *Lexicon of the Mouth* (2014), *Acoustic Territories* (2010, 2019), and *Background Noise* (2006, 2015). His latest book, *Acoustic Justice* (2021), argues for an acoustic model by which to engage questions of social equality.

**TINA MARIANE KROGH MADSEN** is an artist and researcher, who works in the intersection between performance art, sound, open technology, and matter. Madsen is currently a doctoral candidate at Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture (FI), researching in environmental, ethico-aesthetic performance art and affective relations in the context of climate change. Madsen has performed internationally in many formats and contexts and is the founder and curator of performance protocols, a nomadic platform for instruction-based art and collaborative processes. Madsen is further a certified facilitator of Deep Listening workshops from the Center for Deep Listening, Rensselaer Polytech Institute (US). <http://tmkm.dk/>

**DR. SINI MONONEN** is a musicologist and an art critic based in Helsinki, Finland. Mononen completed her PhD at the University of Turku in 2018 on the music of stalker films. Currently she works as a post-doctoral researcher in a project “Music researchers in society: Advancing social justice through activist music research” (PI Juha Torvinen, University of Helsinki, funded by Kone Foundation). She has written on music and sound in film, television, and media art as well as on activist music research. Mononen is a co-founder of the Research Association Suoni and served as its chair from 2017 to 2022. In addition to her work as a scholar, Mononen is an art critic contributing regularly to Helsingin Sanomat newspaper.

**CARMELO PAMPILLONIO** is a sound artist and researcher. His work investigates sonic materiality, ecology, and vibrational interrelations between human and non-human forces. His recent practices have focused on developing novel engagements with planetary-scale communication and sensing infrastructures, with an interest in granting technologies reprieve from their usual regimes of deployment. Through a variety of media, his work proposes new possibilities of engaging with technological and earth systems which span nested spatiotemporal dimensions. This research has brought Pampillonio into collaboration with experts in the fields of infrasound, seismology, radio astronomy, meteorology, acoustics, and conspiracy theories, and has culminated in a variety of residencies and ongoing interdisciplinary projects. Pampillonio is currently on the Science Advisory Committee of the Pisgah Astronomical Research Institute (PARI).

**KATI ROOVER** is a multidisciplinary artist based in Helsinki. In her practice,

which spans across the mediums of moving image, sound, photography, text and installations, draws upon and addresses a broad range of topics – from human-non-human interactions, decoloniality, mythical storytelling, feminist new materialisms and maternalisms, to the natural sciences and ecology.

**MILLA TIAINEN** is a Senior Lecturer in Musicology at the University of Turku and Associate Professor (Docent) of Musicology at the University of Helsinki. Tiainen does research and has published widely in the areas of music performance studies, voice studies, music and gender studies, and new materialist and posthumanist study of the arts. Her latest book project is a co-edited volume on new materialist research approaches in interdisciplinary voice studies (under contract with Routledge). Tiainen is co-PI of the interdisciplinary project, *New Economies of Artistic Labour* (funded by Kone Foundation 2020–2024), and the chair of the Finnish Musicological Society.

## **ABSTRACTS:**

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11**

### **ANOUK HOOGENDOORN AND BEN MUÑOZ**

This activity consists of two organized moments with time for moving and listening in between. During the first moment, on Friday morning, Anouk and Ben, will introduce the question: When to start recording? This question gathers a proposition for proliferating perspectives, moving away from recording as the arrest and capture of movements, and reorienting it to what can't quite be heard right now, but might be heard tomorrow. To start recording is viewed as being in touch with what is about to come, a collective caring for what will have happened.

During the second moment, on Saturday morning, the sounds will gather as an inventory and will be listened to collectively. Carrying the tiny sounds across the night and listening to them activates a return to the shares and excesses of a collective event. The question of 'When to start recording?' is in this sense foregrounded in the first day of the Listening Academy and lingers during the second, inflecting future-past temporalities and ways of noticing at once. Folding yesterday into today, the proposed activity is a practice for thinking with pluriform ways of participation, composing around and across.

A limited number of recorders will be provided. Participants are encouraged to bring their own recording techniques (in any shape and form).

### **KATVE-KAISA KONTTURI**

#### **Listening, Colouring: Creating feminist collectivities**

This presentation studies how affective intimacies and new collectivities that bring together people from multiple cultural, ethnic and gender backgrounds can emerge through a social art practice called the 'feminist colour-in'. The practice developed by Katve-Kaisa Kontturi and Kim Donaldson since 2016, consists of creation of black and white designs, and colouring them while listening to presentations that address complex gendered social issues. Following the Canadian philosopher of affect, movement and relation, Erin Manning (2016), we claim that colouring-in can work as a 'minor' technique that facilitates affective connections and also, potentially, social and political transformations by opening up the bound-

aries of bodies to be more intimate to each other, to be affectively open to the experiences and thoughts of others.

This presentation will focus on a colouring event that took place at a feminist art residency in Melbourne in 2018, where 15 feminist artists living in Australia ranging from established leading figures to midcareer artists and fresh graduates had been invited to discuss their ‘feminist lives’ (following Sarah Ahmed, and Kate Sfetikidis). While listening to and colouring-in with socio-cultural issues including aging parents, gender inequalities of schooling, and politics of gender pronouns, tears of sympathy, fury, and joy were shed and shared. After the event, many of the participants referred to intimate feelings of compassion and understanding across generations and social hierarchies. Later Kim Donaldson interviewed several participants regarding their experiences of the event. This presentation will offer the first, tentative reading of the interviews, and open our initial analysis for collective discussion. To get the sense of the practice, the audience will receive booklets to be coloured-in while listening to this presentation and following ones at the event.

#### **MILLA TIAINEN AND DR. SINI MONONEN**

##### **Performing with the forest and to the forest:**

##### **Exploring Tree Opera as a more-than-human performance collective**

This presentation concerns our joint research on the Finnish-Latvian Tree Opera (2019). This site-specific opera performance project premiered in August 2019 in Hyrynsalmi (Northern Finland), next to the protected old-growth forest that surrounds the residency building of the Mustarinda Association, a collective of artists and scientists who commissioned the opera. Composed by Latvian Anna Kirse, Tree Opera is inspired by Peter Wohlleben’s book *The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate – Discoveries from a Secret World* (2015), in which Wohlleben explores trees as social, mutually communicating beings.

We argue that the forest enveloping Tree Opera acts as the project’s integral milieu and instigator, such that the forest’s species and ecology are allowed to systematically affect, or co-construct, the project’s musical and other performative, aesthetic features and the attendant audience experience. Relatedly, we explore Tree Opera as an interspecies performance that aspires to an ecocritical, non-anthropocentric way of making (Western) opera (on interspecies performance, see e.g. Knowles 2013; Kokkonen 2014).

We discuss how the project’s libretto, staging, musical textures and vocal expressions co-compose a more-than-human performance collective which questions and goes some way in dispersing the hierarchy between the human (or its Eurocentric and androcentric definitions) and the more-than-human. Tree Opera, we will argue, is performed with the forest and to the forest.

Based on Sini Mononen’s onsite experience of Tree Opera and on our close-listening and multisensing of the audiovisual documentation of the opera’s performances in Hyrynsalmi (dir. Mārtiņš Grauds), we zoom in on Tree Opera’s more-than-human performance collective with the help of two specific concepts: sonic technoeology (Tiainen 2017) and aesthetic activism (Kontturi & Tiainen, forthcoming). Sonic technoeology refers to co-constitutive relations between sound, technology and human and more-than-human forms of being that harbor potential for deconstructing the anthropocentric hierarchy between these terms. Aesthetic activism refers, in turn, to how the materialities of art pertaining to listening and other sense modalities may be politically transformative – not by conveying a predefined political message so much as by changing art’s participants’ ways of feeling, thinking about the world and existing via first modifying their bodily, sensorial state and perceptions.

#### **RIIKKA JUNTUNEN**

##### **Resonating with Aesthetically Marginalised Singers**

The presentation is an exploration of connections that emerge between singers and their audiences through corporeal resonances and kin-aesthetic empathy. I am interested in how a performer’s voice and their movement together engage the bodies of the audience members. Analysing fat and/or disabled singers’ performances, I map out dynamics of vibration, spatiality, texture, and control/release: how do these phenomena build connection and relatability; how and why is a performer’s corporeality embraced or rejected? I examine how body norms and cultural understandings of marginalised corporealities can be reinforced, deconstructed, and rejected through singing performances, and how these performances may provide audiences with new ways of experiencing their own corporeality. I especially focus on the pleasurable potential of fat and/or disabled performers’ work and how it can promote anti-normative thinking on both personal and societal levels.

## **TINA MARIANE KROGH MADSEN**

### **Affective-geological-listening**

When sounding and performing with geological matter, each movement contains a difference where new becomings emerge. Through our relation to nonhuman agency we thus multiply, and embrace different speeds and durations present in that moment of the affective encounter. In a dynamic process of collaboration, the marking of who initiates the input and who responds to it gets blurred or even invisible. In this framework, I wish to open up for a space of potential through listening, as a mode of facilitation where it is crucial to attune to, and be aware of, environmental vibrations across the binary.

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12**

## **ANOUK HOOGENDOORN AND BEN MUÑOZ**

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## **CAMILLE AUER**

### **Air Passing Through Feathers, Drawing a Sense of Space Around Us**

*Air Passing Through Feathers, Drawing a Sense of Space Around Us* is a concrete sound composition by artist Camille Auer. It examines how the sounds of birds contribute to our sense of place and time. It is a part of Auer's ongoing artistic research about the phenomenology of birdwatching and the role of norms in the way knowledge about nature is produced.

## **KATI ROOVER**

"Everything flows, objects are springs.

Fluunt fluviis, undis aequoris, flunter, fluendi.

Waves and fluxes of fragrance, of voices flying in the wind, of heat and cold, spume and bitterness. The perceptual space is dense with waves. All things are transmitters, without interruption and in every direction our senses ceaselessly receive. We are plunged into the space of communication. We bathe in an interlacing of channels."

- Michel Serres: *The Birth Of Physics*, 2000

In my contribution I will share my ongoing artistic research Waters as Portals. Through this project my aim is to seek out knowledge located in between linear and circular thinking, and to bring those stories into my work. In the center of my research is to think water as a flowing portal - a gateway to the interconnectedness of all.

I will share my recent work *The Scent of the Changing Sea*, a video installation that weaves together multisensory experiential knowledge and scientific observations in a poetic reflection on the possible futures of the Baltic Sea. For this project I have been filming and recording in the Finnish Archipelago, including on the island of Seili in collaboration with CAA, the Archipelago Research Institute of Turku University and Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE).

## **TARU ELFVING**

Taru's contribution draws on years of intimate listening to the island of Seili. It will include the notes on listening with the island, the Archipelago Sea, geological time, ghosts ... The New Pangaia plant recordings by Band of Weeds will be weaved into the notes. Participants will be invited to do an exercise in listening with the river Aura, to stretch their senses towards the estuarine waters.



## **MERI KYTÖ**

### **Aural Diversity**

For discussing at the Listening Academy I would propose the topic of *aural diversity* (please see the fresh-out-of-press book of the same name, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003183624>), and how that would have an effect on how we as researchers approach the shared element of a listening experience, often taken implicitly as the starting point in many sound(scape) approaches. Aural diversity lends its conceptual framing from neurodiversity, stating that “we all hear differently”, be it age- or situation-related, sensorineural disabilities, technologically mediated perception or differences in our auditory system that render the auditory experience atypical in the frame of “normal” listening abilities. How should this effect research and the questions we ask from ourselves and others about the communality of listening, of its functions and aesthetics? What kind of methodological challenges does it bring along?

## **KATARINA BLOMQVIST**

### **Attuning to the fragile present: Documentary encounter and memory loss**

In my presentation I will share an introduction to my doctoral research as a whole and then concentrate on those aspects in it which have a special relation to listening. My research context is documentary encounter with older adults in longterm care. Most of the residents are affected by memory loss and cognitive impairment. How to interview a person with memory loss? What does it reveal from the convention of interviewing? It is said that we are living in an interview society but do we also live in an listening society? I will also address shared attention, testimonies and temporality.

## **CARMELO PAMPILLONIO**

Tracing both his site-specific work in Turku as well as his broader research trajectories, Carmelo will speak on how both vibrational ecologies and our technological mediations between them offer unique affordances for understanding ourselves as complexly situated planetary subjects. Working outward from vibration-based practices and interfaces, the discussion will aim to show how the conceptual framework of aesthetics—as well as a speculative and critical picture of the planet—can be enriched by infusing the external into human consciousness.

## **YVONNE BILLIMORE**

Yvonne will be talking about FEELING WOR(L)DS.

It is a project that emerges in the correspondence between Camille Auer, Ashanti Harris, Katharine Mcfarlane and Astrida Neimanis (2022). It makes public fragments of writing, drawings, correspondence, and poems exchanged and developed through *Feeling wor(l)ds*. It wonders how might we attend to the intimacies of place through being in correspondence with others.

Composed as a “*feel* guide” – a place for *feeling out* our relations with the world through words. We invite you to contribute and use these pages to guide your own feelings and thoughts. Amongst the contributor’s words, there are blank pages and templates for you to add your own stories, poems, glossary definitions, and drawings.

## **THE LISTENING ACADEMY**

November 11 - 12, 2022

Titanik Gallery

Turku, Finland

Organized and convened by Anastasia (A) Khodyreva and Brandon LaBelle / Support from the Norwegian Artistic Research Programme, Errant Bodies and Oficina de Autonomia - and from all participating guests, friends and colleagues.

Design: fliegende Teilchen, Berlin

[www.listeningbiennial.net](http://www.listeningbiennial.net)