

Revelators, Akousmatikoi – sound in art, music, and ritual Scott Benzel, Fall 2023, Monday 4-6:50p
F200 California Institute of the Arts

Revelators, Akousmatikoi – sound in art, music, and ritual is an Art and Technology course focused on artists' use of sound in the creation of performance, recordings, and immersive environments. Additionally, the course examines the history and theory of sound in art, ritual, and popular/experimental music through lectures, listening sessions, and screenings. This studio/lecture hybrid splits class time between lectures and the demonstration/employment of AI, digital, and analog methods for producing, installing, and distributing sound across platforms. Participants will create single or multichannel sound works with an emphasis on experimental practice.

In 1930, Blind Willie Johnson recorded the gospel blues classic "*John the Revelator*" for Columbia Records. Its haunting call-and-response vocals signal its origins in the "field songs" of enslaved people and "spirituals" – syntheses of Ifá and Orisha religious rites, encoded messages of protest, and Christian religion – that informed modern gospel music. Its subject, John of Padmos, prophet of the Book of Revelation, vividly described the "loosing of the seven seals" that would unleash the Apocalypse. Such "Revelators" have existed throughout human history speaking, writing, illustrating, and sometimes ranting their visions and prophecies, prefiguring the work of many contemporary visual, sound, and performance artists.

Millenia earlier, at the birth of music as "organized sound", the Pythagorean cult splintered into Mathematikoi, forebears of positivist science, and Akousmatikoi (listeners), forebears of the arts— especially the sonic arts— who approached the Apeiron (infinite) by way of sound, art, and ritual.

Grades will be based on class participation, a midterm presentation or project and a final project. *All readings are optional.* Due to time considerations, many screenings and listening will be excerpts.

1. Sept. 11 *Invading Present Time* "*record your boss and co-workers analyse their associational patterns learn to imitate their voices...record their body sounds from concealed mikes the rhythm of breathing the movements of after-lunch intestines the beating of hearts now impose your own body sounds and become the breathing word and the beating heart of the organization the invisible brothers are invading present time the more people we can get working with tape recorders the more useful experiments and extensions will turn up ...*" –William S. Burroughs

Introductions and Overview

Speedrunning Calarts Sound Alison Knowles, Allan Kaprow, John Baldessari sings Sol Lewitt, Cold Blue/West Coast Minimalism, Laurie Anderson, Carl Stone, William Leavitt, LAFMS, Doodoettes, Destroy All Monsters, The Poetics, Mike Kelley, Suburban Lawns, Mission of Burma, Black Flag, Stephen Prina, Three Day Weekend, Exist Dance, Dub Club, Ariel Pink, Liars, John Wiese, Kenyatta A.C. Hinkle, Kelman Duran, Charles Gaines' *Manifestos*, et al.

Screening: John Baldessari sings Sol Lewitt
Suburban Lawns, *Janitor*
Laurie Anderson, *O Superman*
Tony Oursler/Sonic Youth, *Tunic*
William Wegman/New Order, *Blue Monday*
Ariel Pink, *Put Your Number in my Phone*

Charles Gaines, *Manifestos*

Lab: team up and make some field recordings, etc.

2. Sept. 18 *The Art of Noise* Luigi Russolo, *Intonarumori*, *The Art of Noise*, Erik Satie, *Sonatine Bureaucratique* and *Parade*, Marcel Duchamp, *Erratum Musical*, George Antheil, *Ballet Mechanique*, George Antheil and Hedi Lamarr's *Spread Spectrum Technology*; Johanna M. Beyer, Pierre Schaffer, Pierre Henry, *Musique Concrete*, Karlheinz Stockhausen, *Electronic Music*, *Microphonie I*, Harry Bertoia, *Sonambient*, Cathy Berberian, *Sequenza III, per voce femminile* and *Stripsody*

Memesis: Realism in Messaien *Birdsong*, *Hendrix's Machine Gun*, et al. Olivier Messiaen, *Oiseaux Exotiques*, Jimi Hendrix, *Machine Gun*, etc.

Permanent Creation—sound installation: Max Neuhaus, *Times Square*, Iannis Xenakis, Le Corbusier, and Edgar Varese, *The Phillips Pavillion*, Robert Filliou, *The Eternal Network*, Maryanne Amacher, *City Links*, Rodney Graham, Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller, Terry Allen, Christine Sun Kim, Pope L.

Readings: Luigi Russolo, *The Art of Noise*
Iqbal and Pendergrass, *Realism in Messaien Birdsong* (skim)
Brandon LaBelle, *Other: Maryanne Amacher*

Screening: Luigi Russolo's *Intonarumori* reconstruction
Cathy Berberian, *Stripsody*
Maryanne Amacher, *various*

Lab: show your work

3. Sept. 25 *Musique Telepathique* “It has always interested me to see how far an earlier artist’s innovations can be extended. In a crucial sense, the extensibility of a new move, its capacity to keep on ramifying, is the measure of its value. This distinguishes the truly generative idea from the mere fad.” – Allan Kaprow

John Cage, *Water Walk*, *Sonatas and Interludes for Prepared Piano*, *Silent Prayer into 4'33*; David Tudor, *Rainforest IV*; *Fluxus et al*: Alison Knowles, Allan Kaprow, Nam June Paik, Charlotte Moorman, Ben Patterson, Yoko Ono; Yves Klein, *Monotone Symphony*, Alvin Lucier, Max Neuhaus, Annea Lockwood, Dennis Oppenheim, Group Ongaku, Lamonte Young and Marian Zazeela, *Theatre of Eternal Music*, Robert Filliou, *Musique Telepathique*

Revelators Hildegard von Bingen, Ifá and Orisha rites, Tibetan rites, Leroi Jones/Amiri Baraka, *Blues People*; Blind Willie Johnson, *John the Revelator*; Robert Johnson, *Hellhound on my Trail*; Katherine Dunham, Maya Deren, *Divine Horsemen* and *Voudon*; Harry Smith’s *Anthology of American Folk Music* and *Heaven and Earth Magic*, and *Dead History*; Giacinto Scelsi, Phillip Glass, Robert Ashley, Meredith Monk; Kenneth Anger’s soundtracks

Readings: John Cage, *Notations* (skim)
LaMonte Young and Jackson Mac Low, *An Anthology of Chance Operations* (skim)
Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Saint Paul*, *Lawrence and John of Patmos*
Leroi Jones/Amiri Baraka, from *Blues People*

Screening: John Cage, *Water Walk*, 4'33
Alison Knowles, *Newspaper Music*
Yves Klein, *Monotone Symphony*
Yoko Ono, *Selected Works*
Bruce Nauman, *Violin Tuned D.E.A.D.*
Alvin Lucier, *Music for Solo Performer*
Peter Greenaway, *from Four American Composers: Meredith Monk, Robert Ashley*

Lab: team up and present a simple multichannel soundwork, performance, etc. 5-10 mins.

4. Oct. 2 *No Pussyfooting: Systems Music, Tape Music, Electronic Music* Systems: Elgar, *The Enigma Variations*, Erik Satie, *Vexations*, *Serialism*, Gyorgy Ligeti, Milton Babbitt, Colon Nancarrow, Steve Reich, *Pendulum Music*; Stockhausen's systems, Anthony Braxton's systems, Charles Gaines' *Manifestos*; *Tape Music, Electronic Music*: Otto Luening, Vladimir Ussachevsky, *Tape Recorder Music*, John Cage, *Fontana Mix*, Pierre Schaffer, Eliane Radigue, and *Musique concrète*; Lois and Bebe Barron, *Forbidden Planet*, Daphne Oram, Delia Derbyshire, Terry Riley, *You're No Good*, Steve Reich, *It's Gonna Rain* and *Come Out*, Pauline Oliveros, Morton Subotnick, *SF Tape Music Center*; *New Music for Electronic and Recorded Media*, Megan Roberts, Ruth Anderson; Wendy Carlos; Robert Fripp and Brian Eno, *No Pussyfooting*

Culturecide Plunderphonics, copyleft, and sampling; Culturecide, *Tacky Souvenirs of Pre-Revolutionary America*, Ciccone Youth, *Into the Groovey*, Pussy Galore, *Rocks Off*, Laibach, *Across the Universe*, Negativland, *The Letter U and the Number 2*, The KLF, *Chill Out*, Eco Virtual, *Clear Skies*, Nmesh, *Face without Eyes*; De la Soul, sampling, and copyright *Deconstruction/Dub*: King Tubby, Lee 'Scratch' Perry, Scientist, Christof Migone, Philip Jeck, William Basinski, Oval

Readings: Milton Babbitt, *Who Cares if you Listen?*
Liner Notes: New Music for Electronic and Recorded Media: Women In Electronic Music

Screening: John Cale, et al, *Vexations*
Gyorgy Ligeti, *Poeme Symphonique for 100 metronomes*
Steve Reich, *Pendulum Music*
Delia Derbyshire *documentary*

Lab: visit the studio, multichannel recording studio overview; *Logic*, *Ableton* overview

Oct. 9 INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S DAY–NO CLASS

5. Oct. 16 *Akousmatikoi* Pythagorus, the Mathematikoi/Akousmatikoi split; *The Coltrane Church*, John Coltrane, Alice Coltrane; *Theatre of Eternal Music*, Lamonte Young, Marion Zazeela, Pandit Pran Nath, Terry Riley, Angus Maclise, Tony Conrad, John Cale; *Brian Jones presents the Master Musicians of Jajouka*, Iannis Xenakis, *Persepolis*, Karlheinz Stockhausen, *Stimmung* in the Jeita Caves, Robert Wilson, *Ka Mountain*

Lepufology–*Artist's sound, Artist's music, Artist's bands*: “Ideas are intelligences/principalities” – Gavin Keeney, *Dossier Chris Marker*

Karel Appel, Dieter Roth, Jean Tinguely, Chris Marker, Bruce Nauman, Andy Warhol's *Tapes*, Laurie Anderson, *Early Works*, Joseph Beuys, Martin Kippenberger, Christian Marclay, Jean Michel Basquiat, TV Party, Gray, Menthol Wars, Steven Parrino and Jutta Koether *Electrophilia*, Anthony Burdin, Terry Adkins, Marina Rosenfeld, Tony Conrad, *Invented Acoustical Tools*, The Red Krayola and Art and Language

Readings: Roberta Brown, Iannis Xenakis, *Xenakis on Xenakis*
Boris Groys, *Self Design, or Productive Narcissism*

Screening: Stockhausen *in the Jeita Caves (Lebanon)*
Pandit Pran Nath, Lamonte Young, Marion Zazeela, Terry Riley, *Live in Rome*
Jean Tinguely, *Homage to New York*
Rodney Graham, *Lobbing Potatoes at a Gong*
Bruce Nauman, *Violin Tuned D-E-A-D*
Laurie Anderson, *Early Works*
Dennis Oppenheim, *Two Stage Transfer Drawing and Forming Sounds*
Joseph Beuys, *Sonne Staat Reagan*
Jean Michel Basquiat, *T.V. Party*
Christian Marclay, *Various Works*

Lab: creating synchronized multi-channel sound installations

6. Oct. 23 Field Trip: Los Angeles Contemporary Archive's Oral History Center, 709 N. Hill, 90012 meet at 5pm in courtyard with LACA Director Hailey Loman and LACA staff

7. Oct. 30 Clear: Afrofuturism, Detroit techno, Jungle/Drum and Bass W.E.B. Dubois, Sun Ra, Samuel R. Delany, Octavia Butler, Alondra Nelson, George Russell, Miles Davis, Parliament Funkadelic, Grandmaster Flash, Afrika Bambaataa, Rammellzee, the Electrifying Mojo, Cybotron, Jeff Mills, Hieroglyphic Being, Jungle/D&B, Two Fingas, *Junglist*

Rock my Religion Andy Warhol and the Velvet Underground, *The Exploding Plastic Inevitable*, White Noise, The Church of Anthrax, Can, Yoko Ono and John Lennon, Bruce Conner; Patti Smith, Dan Graham *Rock My Religion*; The Fall, Leigh Bowery, and Michael Clark *I am Curious Oranj*; *Wild in the Streets* the film to Dan Graham, Tony Oursler, et al. *Wild in the Streets*

Readings: Kodwo Eshun, from *More Brilliant than the Sun*
Sean Albiez, *Postsoul Futurama, African American cultural politics and early Detroit techno*
William S. Burroughs, *Rock Magic*

Screening: Sun Ra, *Space is the Place* trailer
Grandmaster Flash on the Wheels of Steel
Model 500, *No UFOs*
Jeff Mills, *Live*
Andy Warhol, *The Exploding Plastic Inevitable*
Bruce Conner, *Breakaway (with Toni Basil), America is Waiting*
Dan Graham, *Rock My Religion*
Michael Clark and the Fall, *I am Curious Oranj*

Lab: Preparation for Midterm Presentation

8. Nov. 6 **MIDTERM PRESENTATIONS**

9. Nov. 13 *Ghost Tantras, Brown Sound* Antonin Artaud, *The Theatre of Cruelty*, Michael McClure, *Ghost Tantras*, Vito Acconci, Chris Burden, Marina Abramovic, Roscoe Mitchell, *Non-ahh*, Lou Reed, *Metal Machine Music*, Throbbing Gristle, Cosi Fanni Tutti, *Industrial Records*, No Wave, Non, Whitehouse, Yasunao Tone, Keiji Haino, Merzbow, Martin Kersels *Brown Sound*, John Wiese

Readings: Lester Bangs, *The Greatest Album Ever Made: The Art Ensemble of Chicago*, *Rated G*
Steve Goodman, from *Sonic Warfare*

Screening:

Michael McClure, *Ghost Tantras*

John Coltrane, *at Monterey*

Vito Acconci, *Seedbed, Selected Works*

Marina Abramovic, *Selected Early Works*

Throbbing Gristle, *live*

Whitehouse, *live*

Sonic Warfare vehicles

Visitor: John Wiese

10. Nov. 20 *A Misuse of Military Equipment* *The Vocoder, Autotune; Infrasound and Ultrasound; Frank Bretschneider's Isolation; Konstantin Raudive, EVP, and Breakthrough; Psychotronics and AUDINT*

This Machine Kills Fascists Woody Guthrie, Bob Dylan, The Mothers of Invention, The Fugs, The Levitation of the Pentagon, Lou Reed, The Cockettes, The Last Poets, The Watts Prophets, James Brown, Parliament/Funkadelic, Grandmaster Flash, *The Message* Burning Spear, Cornelius Cardew and the Scratch Orchestra, Malcolm McLaren, The Sex Pistols, Crass, X Ray Spex, The Slits, Desperate Bicycles and D.I.Y., Tom Robinson Band, Gang of Four, Fela Kuti, Plastic People of the Universe and *The Velvet Revolution*, Nervous Gender, Riot Grrrl, Nation of Ulysses, Queercore, Adrian Piper *Funk Lessons*, Renee Green *Funk Import/Export Office*, Mike Kelley, *Cross-Gender, Cross-Genre*, Public Enemy, Killer Mike, Kendrick Lamar, *Alright*, Ultrared

Readings: Friedrich Kittler, *Rock Music: A Misuse of Military Equipment*

Adrian Piper, *Notes on Funk I*

Mike Kelley, *Cross-Gender, Cross-Genre*

Screening: Wild in the Streets trailer

The Cockettes, trailer

Lou Reed, *Interview, 1974*

X Ray Specs, *Oh Bondage Up Yours!*

Tom Robinson Band, *Glad to Be Gay*

Adrian Piper, *Funk Lessons*

Nervous Gender, *Live*

Kendrick Lamar, *Alright*

Lab: *Mastering, Distribution, Dissemination*

11. Nov. 27 Invocation for Judgment Against and Destruction of Rock Music Erik Satie, *Église Métropolitaine d'Art de Jésus Conducteur*, Karlheinz Stockhausen: *Sirius*, Hermann Nitsch, *Das Orgien Mysterien Theater*, Elizabeth Clare Prophet, *Invocation for Judgement Against and Destruction of Rock Music*, Deuter and The Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, *D to Kundalini Meditation Music*, The Source Family and YaHoWa 13; *The Process*: Marianne Faithfull to P-funk to Sabbath Assembly, Charles Manson, *Lie*, Thee Temple Ov Psychick Youth, Aum Shinrikyu, Rush and Solaris Blueraven

The Enlightening Beam of Axonda Harry Partch, Bobby Brown, *The Enlightening Beam of Axonda*, The Shaggs' *Philosophy of the World*

Oranur, Music by Contactees Howard Menger, Desmond Leslie, Pink Floyd, Constance Demby, Nina Hagen, Parliament, Schloss-Tegal, Klaatu, the Carpenters, et al.

Readings: Ben Johnston, *The Corporealism of Harry Partch*
Wes Penre, *Rock Group "Rush" Involved in MK ULTRA Project, Using Sophisticated Mind Control Techniques to Tag Colorado Clairvoyant*

Screening: Elizabeth Clare Prophet, *Invocation for Judgment Against and Destruction of Rock Music*
Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, *Fear is the Master*
Herman Nitsch: *Das Orgien Mysterien Theater*
A Message from Thee Temple Ov Psychick Youth
Aum Shinrikyu recruitment video

FINAL PRESENTATIONS

12. Dec. 4 Furniture Music Satie, *Furniture Music*, Eno, *Discreet Music to Ambient Series*, Bill Fontana, Walter Demaria, Bernhardt Leitner, Hildegard Westerkamp, World Soundscape Project, Akio Suzuki, Popol Vuh, Stan VanDerBeek, Laurie Spiegel, Ryoji Ikeda

Kursedfile: SHIVA.exe Chopped and Screwed, DJ Screw, Screwed Up Records and Tapes, Big Floyd, DJ Screw/Three 6 Mafia to *dvrkbvsedrituvls*, et al., SpaceGhostPurrp, BNB, 2 hexD 2 SIGILKORE Jewelxxet, Axxturel, 0zyyd, HERMES SELLA, C1vgvC, sellasouls, Zeroxxuit, islurwhenitalk ^,^

Reading: Martin Herbert, *Infinity's Border: Ryoji Ikeda*
Jameson Orvis, *A Guide to Soundcloud's Demonic Underworld*

Screening: Stan VanDerBeek and Ken Knowlton, *Poem Field #2, 1966*
Popol Vuh, *Improvisation 1971*
Laurie Spiegel, *Temporary Replacement*
Ryoji Ikeda, *Selected Works*

FINAL PRESENTATIONS

13. Dec. 11 FINAL PRESENTATIONS