

In the frame of The Listening Biennial, Errant Sound presents an evening with two lectures extending the series of Acousmatic Lectures by the artist Mario Asef. The singer and ethnomusicologist Deniza Popova (Berlin) and the philosopher Mladen Dolar (Ljubljana) will explore the medium of acousmatics in two lecture performances, placing two Eastern European perspectives on acousmatics in dialogue with each other.

26.07.2021 / 19:00 h – Deniza Popova
„Akusmatische Hörstrategien dörflicher Traditionen“
(auf Deutsch)

26.07.2021 / 20:30 h – Mladen Dolar
“What, If Anything, Is a Virus?”
(in English)

Additional program information is available online:
www.acousmaticlectures.wordpress.com

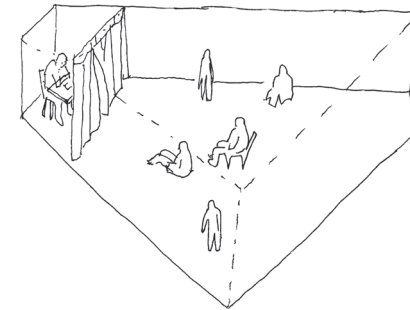
Venue:

Errant Sound^{E.S.}

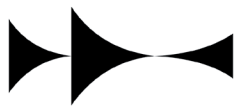
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Mario Asef



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THE L:STEN:NG BIENNIAL

Acousmatic Appearances

The Acousmatic Lectures are a laboratory for investigating phenomena that are directly related to acoustic information and its research-based, artistic, and social dimensions.

The Acousmatic Lectures are a series of discursive, acoustic undertakings that take the Pythagorean acousmatic model as a starting point for constituting a new type of interaction between speaker and listener. The conveying of information between speaker and audience as well as the surrounding context is stripped of all forms of supplementary visual aids; the situation is conducted through acoustic means alone—through speaking and listening. No microphones and/or amplifiers are used during the Acousmatic Lectures. In this way, the natural volume of the speaker's voice and its tonality are better able to convey his or her physical presence. Here, the voice is understood as an acoustic space that is definable in myriad ways, where physical and affective communicational idiosyncrasies can be transformed. Emphasis is placed on the dialectical investigation of abstract linguistic information and the voice's own sensory acoustic information and confronts the audience with the decision that is central to the idea behind the Acousmatic Lectures: that of listening.

A simple but rigorous setting requires participants to call on all of their possible

auditory abilities that help define both the physical presence of the other as well as the surrounding space. The lecture functions in part as a guiding element that describes the space acoustically, binding together the physical, spatial presence of participants. But the lecture is, of course, also the conveyor of cognitive information. As a result, the process of listening branches out in various directions, requiring one to constantly redefine and choose what to listen to.

The speakers are academics and scholars who talk about their specific areas of expertise. The intention is to observe what impacts the acousmatic settings have on participants, and specifically without the influence of any artistic or aesthetic sensory effects. In the Acousmatic Lectures held thus far, a performative character has been observed that condenses the classic academic lecture scenario into an acoustic experience that functions both informatively—on a linguistic level—as well as in an acoustically qualitative way—on the level of the voice as instrument—and is capable of transforming situations, content, and space. These aspects are made legible through the ways in which the acoustic characteristics of the voice interact with the surrounding space. As such, they might be experienced as a means for determining the interaction between and transfer of linguistic and affective sensory information.

Therefore the acousmatic setting highlights the performative aspects of the lecture through the removal of all secondary visual information.

Procedure and Conditions

It is the artist's intention—with an almost purist attitude from the initial idea to the realization of the Acousmatic Lecture—to preserve the clearly defined diagram of the setting.

To this end, a number of basic conditions have been defined for realizing the Acousmatic Lectures:

- The space selected for the Acousmatic Lecture is to be large enough to accommodate a minimum of twenty and a maximum of forty people. This allows the speaker to present his or her lecture without the use of a microphone and amplifier.
- A curtain will cordon off roughly a quarter of the overall space. Both areas are to have separate entrances to ensure that audience and speaker do not come into contact prior to the lecture.
- The curtain should be placed in the

room so that the curtain is perceived as an object.

- The lecture will not be introduced or moderated. The host will not present him or herself to the audience either before or after the lecture. The Acousmatic Lecture starts the moment the speaker begins and ends when the speaker stops. No one except the organizer and the speaker know the exact starting time of the lecture and how long it will last.

- There will be no applause or closing remarks. The silence following the lecture will slowly dissipate as the audience begins speaking and the situation gradually normalizes.

- The speaker must wait at least fifteen minutes following the end of his lecture to greet the audience.

- The lecture is recorded on audio and added to the Acousmatic Lecture online archive. The audio documentation is not a substitute for the Acousmatic Lecture itself.

* Akousmata
The term references a Pythagorean tradition according to which only Pythagoras's most devoted students were allowed to see and visually perceive him during his lectures. By contrast, newcomers were made to sit before a curtain concealing the master's physiognomy. Students were therefore left without any visual information and had to try to follow the lectures solely by attentive listening.

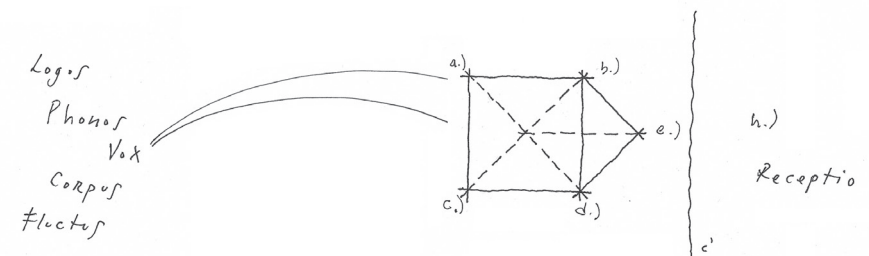


fig. 1. Acousmatic Prism: a) Word, b) Sound, c) Body, d) Wave, e) Voice, h) Reception, c') Curtain