

FLEETING VOICES.

OCTOBER 1-3
2025



PRESERVING
ACOUSTIC
HERITAGE

IN THE
ARCHIVES
AND THE ARTS

Andrea Gunnlaugsdóttir
Barbora Benetková
Carmen Rodríguez Godino
Carolin Bohlmann
Christoph Freidhöfer
Claire Palzer
Claudia Lomoschitz
Clemens Apprich
Cristina Sá Valentim
Crystal Wall
Dirk Rupnow
Dominik Ivancic
Elena Gómez Sánchez
Eva Kapeller-Hallama
Fayrouz Kaddal
Ferenc János Szabó
Friederike Waentig
Gabriele Jutz
Heidi Fial
Hippocrates Cheng
Isabel Frey
Isabel Kranz
INA-Saphir
Jacqueline Saki Aslan
Jean-Baptiste Masson
Jean-Étienne Noire
Jean-Hugues Chenot
Jens Schröter
Johann Hinterstoisser
Julia Lajta-Novak
Julia Sawitzki
Katrín Abromeit
Kerstin Klenke
Kristina Pia Hofer
Laetitia Kozlova
Laura Bohnenblust
Lauren Walker
Lina Ounissi
Luc Marraffa
MADEYOULOOK
Martina Griesser-Stermscheg
Nadia Al-Bagdadi
Naima Hassan
Natascha Muhic
Noémie Étienne
Rachel Bolle-Debessay
Ricarda Denzer
Rodrigo Chocano
Rozina Pátkai
Senta Hirscheider
Shefali Banerji
Simon Kunz
Stephan Puille
Thomas Macho
Thomas Y. Levin
VINYLOGRAPH
William Carruthers

FLEETING VOICES

PRESERVING ACOUSTIC
HERITAGE IN THE
ARCHIVES AND THE ARTS

UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED
ARTS VIENNA – EXPOSITUR
RUSTENSCHACHERALLEE

EXPERIMENTAL CONFERENCE

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Speaking, singing and using one's voice for communication is one of the oldest cultural techniques. And hearing is one of the earliest human senses, which we actively pursue and exercise already as a foetus. Since the invention of storing and reproducing voices on sound carriers, the ephemeral level of the acoustic has taken on a materiality outside the human body. This has made it possible to keep the voice for individual and cultural memories. These techniques of saving and remembering are connected to the desire to hold on to the voice as a coveted object and to preserve it for the future – for the family, the 'home', for collecting and 'scientific purposes'. Simultaneously, they reveal the paradox of the material fixation of the ephemeral. Every time we replay a sound recording, we are dependent on listening and the fleeting nature of sound as its fundamental character, which raises the question: What does it mean to capture a voice on a sound carrier? What does this mean culturally, epistemologically, technically and politically both in terms of tangible and intangible cultural heritage?

Fleeting Voices discusses voices and their sound carriers as a subject of heritage studies, materials science, media theory, art and cultural history. It explores the specifics of acoustic heritage, the agency of (various – also human) sound carriers in archives or artworks and the voice as a medium. It focuses on the voice and the acoustic sphere as an inherently ephemeral and intangible object of cultural heritage research. At the same time, it addresses recorded voices as highly material objects and still underestimated subjects of heritage science or art history.

12:30 **Registration & Coffee**13:00 **Welcome***Clemens Apprich*

Head of the Department of Media Theory and the
Peter Weibel Research Institute for Digital Cultures at the
University of Applied Arts Vienna

Noémie Étienne

Full professor of cultural heritage and art history at the
University of Vienna

Kerstin Klenke

Head of Phonogrammarchiv at the
Austrian Academy of Sciences

*Katrin Abromeit, Laura Bohnenblust & Eva Kapeller-Hallama*13:30 *MADEYOULOOK***ON REVERB AND RETURN: VOICE AS WORLDMAKING***Chair: Laura Bohnenblust*14:30 **Coffee Break**

14:45

PANEL 1**Politics of Listening***Chair & discussant: Isabel Frey**Senta Hirscheider***HUMBLE LISTENING TO THE FREQUENCIES OF EMPIRE***Cristina Sá Valentim***ENGAGING WITH SOUND THROUGH ALTERNATIVE
MODES OF LISTENING: A DECOLONIAL APPROACH
TO AN ANGOLAN FOLK SONG RECORDED IN THE
50S DURING PORTUGUESE COLONIAL RULE***Hippocrates Cheng***A CURATED LISTENING SESSION - ECHOES
OF DISPLACEMENT: REVOICING CHINESE
DIASPORIC SPEECH AND SONG IN THE UNITED
STATES AND AMERICAN ARCHIVES**

16:15

Coffee Break

16:30

*Thomas Levin***VOCAMAT, VOICE RECORDS, REGISTON: ALEXANDER
LISSIANSKY AND THE PRE-HISTORY OF THE
VOICE-O-GRAPH AUTOMATIC RECORDING BOOTH***Chair: Eva Kapeller-Hallama*

17:30

Coffee Break

18:00

PANEL 2**Present Voices – Absent Histories in Colonial Archives***Chair & discussant: Noémie Étienne**William Carruthers & Fayrouz Kaddal***INTERMITTENT PRESENCES: TRACING
NUBIA'S SOUNDS AND VOICES***Lina Ounissi***ECHOES OF COEXISTENCE: MALOUF, MEMORY AND THE
POLITICS OF VOICE IN COLONIAL CONSTANTINE**

19:00

Bread & Wine

9:00 **Coffee & Bread**

9:30 **PANEL 3
Recorded Voices – Preserved Voices**

Chair & discussant: *Carolin Bohlmann*

Katrin Abromeit & Johann Hinterstoisser
**STABLE, COMPROMISED, UNSTABLE –
DIVERSITY OF AUDIO CARRIERS AND THEIR
CONDITIONS IN THE SONIME PROJECT**

Carmen Rodríguez Godino
**ERNEST BERK SOUND ARCHIVE:
RESTORE, PRESERVE, ENGAGE**

Barbora Benetková
**WHITE BLOOM – UNDERSTANDING THE DEGRADATION
OF BROWN-WAX PHONOGRAPH CYLINDERS**

11:00 **Coffee Break**

11:15 *Friederike Waentig, Elena Gómez Sánchez,
Simon Kunz & Katrin Abromeit*
**CONSERVATION TALK: CELLULOSE NITRATE
LACQUERS IN DIRECT CUT DISCS**
Chair: *Martina Griesser-Stermscheg*

12:15 **Lunch Break**

13:45

**PANEL 4
Sending Voices**

Chair & discussant: *Kristina Pia Hofer*

Eva Kapeller-Hallama
**‘THIS IS MY TAPE!!! YOU HEAR!’ LISTENING
TO AUDIO LETTERS IN THE SONIME PROJECT**

Luc Marraffa
**LISTENING TO LIENEKE’S ‘AETHER LETTERS’:
DOMESTICITY AND COLONIAL SILENCES**

Ferenc János Szabó
**THE IDEA AND REALISATION OF THE ‘VOICE
MESSAGE’ IN THE HISTORY OF HUNGARIAN
PRIVATE RECORDINGS ON GRAMOPHONE RECORDS**

15:15

Coffee Break

15:45

**PANEL 5
The Voice between Documentation and Intimacy**

Chair & discussant: *Stephan Puille*

Lauren Walker
**CORRESPONDENCE ETCHED IN BLUE: AUDIOGRAPH
DISCS OF ERLE STANLEY GARDNER**

Jean-Baptiste Masson
**TAPES AS SONIC LOG BOOKS: THE CASE OF
PAUL-EMILE VICTOR DURING HIS POLAR EXPEDITIONS**

Heidi Fial
**REFLECTING THE CONVERGENCE OF AMATEUR
FILM AND SOUND RECORDINGS**

17:15

Coffee Break

17:45

Thomas Macho
FREMDE STIMMEN
Chair: *Isabel Kranz*

DAY 3
OCTOBER

9:00

Coffee & Bread

9:30

*Andrea Gunnlaugsdóttir, Claudia Lomoschitz & Crystal Wall***UNEARTHING GROUNDS – DIGGING DEEP**

10:00

PANEL 6
Voices in Artistic PracticeChair & discussant: *Ricarda Denzer**Julia Lajta-Novak, Claire Palzer, Shefali Banerji & Rachel Bolle-Debessay***LISTENING TO POETRY: RETHINKING
SOUND IN LITERARY CRITICISM***Laetitia Kozlova***EXHIBITING THE SOUND OF THE INTIMATE**

11:00

Coffee Break

11:15

*Naima Hassan***NOTES ON A DISTRIBUTED PERSON: ON XIRSI,
AND OTHER INCANTATIONS FOR MOHAMED NUR**Chair & discussant: *Jacqueline Saki Aslan*

12:00

Coffee Break

12:30

*Gabriele Jutz, Rodrigo Chocano, Julia Sawitzki & Jens Schröter***ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION: FLEETING
VOICES. RESONANCES AND REFLECTIONS**Chair: *Laura Bohnenblust*

14:00

End of Conference**CONFERENCE - LONG
INSTALLATIONS***Jean-Hugues Chenot & Jean-Étienne Noiré***BRING YOUR OWN VOICE RECORD 2025!****INA SAPHIR STATION FOR DIGITISING
YOUR PRIVATE DIRECT CUT DISCS**

Foyer

*Rozina Pátkai***SONIC TRACES**

ÆSR Mobile Lab

*Natascha Muhic & Christoph Freidhöfer***VINYLOGRAPH – AN AUTOMATIC VOICE RECORDER**

Foyer

For the experimental conference *Fleeting Voices*, we propose excerpts of the audio piece *Unearthing Grounds – Digging Deep*, a feminist sonic-performance by artists and researchers Andrea Gunnlaugsdóttir, Claudia Lomoschitz and Crystal Wall.

Together they reflect on the relation and history of the soil beneath us. The artists intertwine storytelling, eco-poetry, song and imaginations as well as polyphonic and canonic singing to open up sensorial realms and feminist thoughts and methods of relating to the environment. We would like to present and share stories and songs and try out canonic singing with the conference audience (it is also possible to share some excerpts of our audio file, yet unmastered).

To sonically dig deep is a form of confronting capitalist demands, uncovering hidden truths, as well as personal and feminist histories. Earth as a living substance inhabited by microorganisms, mycelium, roots, rodents. Beneath our feet there is a world of life and animals, worms and ants, mice and moles, a communicating network of roots that

spans across kilometres. How can these voices be unearthed and how to find the sensibility to listen to them? Cities are growing and capitalist extractivism takes a toll on all living organisms, the climate is irreversibly changing and within the Anthropocene the earth is perceived as a resource. *Unearthing Grounds – Digging Deep* also honours eco-activist movements and highlights stories of protest that have protected the natural environment, like the Green Belt Movement in Kenya, the Chipko movement in India or the ZAD movement in France. What does our relation to earth uncover about ourselves?

Sowing seeding soil soul
Sowing seeding soil soul
Sowing seeding soil soul

Spoiling spilling seal soil
Spoiling spilling seal soil
Spoiling spilling selling oil

Spoiling spilling selling soul
Spoiling spilling selling soul
Spoiling spilling selling oil

Excerpt of the song

Andrea Gunnlaugsdóttir,
 Claudia Lomoschitz &
 Crystal Wall

UNEARTHING GROUNDS – DIGGING DEEP

SHE/HER

Andrea Gunnlaugsdóttir (Iceland/Austria) is a dancer, choreographer and performer. Her works are situated between dance, performance and visual arts, seeking out formats beyond the stage. Andrea studied at the Salzburg Experimental Academy of Dance where she graduated with a major in choreography in 2014. Her recent work *Slowly Immanent* (2024) was performed in KEX Kunsthalle Exnergasse. Her collaborative work *CUMULUS* together with Claudia Lomoschitz toured in Austria and abroad since its premiere at brut 2022. She collaborated as a performer in the works of Sara Lanner, *Weaving Infrastructures* (2024) and Sofie Thorsen for the film *A Number of Small Screens*, premiere 2025. Andrea received the Stipendium für Tanz und Performance in 2023.

PARTICIPATIVE PERFORMANCE

Date 3rd Oct.
 9:30

→ Continued on the following page



www.andreagunnlaugsdottir.com

SHE/HER

Claudia Lomoschitz is a choreographer and visual artist born in Vienna, who works collaborative and research based on counter-hegemonic reproductive fantasies. She graduated Performance Studies at the University of Hamburg in collaboration with Kampnagel Hamburg and studied at the Royal Danish Academy of Copenhagen and the Academy of fine Arts Vienna, where she currently teaches. Her works have been shown at brut Vienna (Vibrant Void, 2024), Metropolis Copenhagen (Cumulus, 2024), Ice Hot Oslo (Cumulus, 2024), Kunsthalle Vienna (Lactans, 2023), Art Hub Copenhagen (Lunch Lecture, 2023), Kunstraum Niederösterreich (PARTUS Gyno Bitch Tits, 2021), Tanzquartier Vienna (G.E.L., 2021), brut Vienna (Soft Skills, 2020), Belvedere 21 (Amazon, 2019).



www.claudialomoschitz.com

THEY/THEM, SHE/HER

Crystal Wall touches on the space between performance and singing, poetry and ritual, folk culture and queerness. Crystal relates (alpine) folk customs to queerness and infuses them with a pleasurable process of transformation until new performative rituals emerge. Their sonorous explorations cultivate an emphasis on wicked pitches and multi-modulated voices, and soft frilled screams. Through embodied polyphony and collective storytellings her/their work unravels aqueous poetic soundings and luring chants. Since 2019 in deep collaboration with the artist Andreea Vladut they are engaging in performative research on mourning rituals and narrations of loss and vulnerability.

Phonograph cylinders awake curiosity in scientists from various disciplines. For many years, these early audio carriers were considered to be relatively stable. The degradation found was attributed either to microbiological growth resulting from inadequate storage conditions or to mechanical damage caused by improper handling.

During recent years, several technological studies of phonograph cylinders were made to better understand the matrix and degradation alike. Microbiological screening and microscopic investigation confirmed that the white degradation patterns on brown-wax cylinders' surfaces are not caused by an active microbiological growth, but rather are symptoms of physicochemical processes occurring within the matrix.

This shift in understanding suggests that current approach and standard storage conditions may not be sufficient to prevent further degradation. Since up to this point the precise mechanism of material degradation remains unknown, further research is needed to protect this oldest audio medium for future generations.

The presentation is based on the following article, which was developed jointly: Barbora Benetková, Petra Korandová, Kristýna Boumová, Hana Sýkorová, Jana Kadavá, Michal Studničný, Radka Šefců, Martin Mejzr, Filip Šír: *Degradation marks of phonograph cylinders*, in: *Koroze a ochrana materiálu* 66 (1), 150-159.

*Ghosts of voices fade,
white bloom veils forgotten songs—
time erodes the past.*

WHITE BLOOM – UNDERSTANDING THE DEGRADATION OF BROWN-WAX PHONOGRAPH CYLINDERS

LECTURE

Date 2nd Oct.
9:30

Barbora Benetková is a conservation technologist, currently working as a postdoc at the Institute of Chemistry of Renewable Resources at BOKU Vienna, focusing mainly on applied analytics. Between 2021 and 2023, she worked at the Sound Laboratory of the National Museum in Prague as a material technologist. During this time, she focused on the elucidation of brown-wax phonograph cylinders' degradation together with the National Gallery and the University of Chemistry and Technology in Prague.

The 'Ernest Berk Sound Archive' is a three-year initiative aimed at preserving the history of electronic music. Since late 2023, researchers from the Department of Electronics at the University of Huddersfield, in collaboration with the Historical Archive with the Rheinisches Bildarchiv in Cologne, have been working on the complex task of restoring and digitising 700 magnetic tapes from the estate of the visionary choreographer and composer Ernest Berk. As a pioneer of electronic music in modern dance, Berk left behind a remarkable and largely unexplored sound archive.

Particularly challenging are the conservation problems caused by the natural ageing of the tapes, adhesive residues, and the damage resulting from the collapse of the Historical Archive of the City of Cologne in 2009. Many tapes are severely deteriorated and require elaborate restoration techniques. In parallel, the project is developing a sustainable, third-party funded packaging concept to ensure their long-term preservation.

The restoration measures themselves – along with the many questions that have emerged throughout the process regarding the nature and context of the works – will be at the core of this presentation. This reflection on the material, technical, and curatorial challenges highlights the importance of the project in documenting and reactivating a unique artistic legacy.

ERNEST BERK SOUND ARCHIVE: RESTORE, PRESERVE, ENGAGE

LECTURE

Date 2nd Oct.
9:30

Carmen Rodríguez Godino is a conservator specialising in analogue and digital audiovisual media. She earned a degree in Fine Arts from the University of Seville, with a focus on the restoration and conservation of paintings and polychrome objects. She then completed a Master's programme in 'Conservation of New Media and Digital Information' at the State Academy of Fine Arts Stuttgart, where she specialised in audiovisual media conservation. Since 2017, she has been working at Historisches Archiv mit Rheinischem Bildarchiv in Cologne, responsible for the conservation and restoration of analogue and digital audiovisual media. Her main focus is the restoration, digitisation, and proper storage of collections affected by the 2009 archive collapse. Her work also includes preventive conservation and management of new audiovisual archive acquisitions from both municipal and private provenance.

PANEL 3: RECORDED VOICES – PRESERVED VOICES

Date 2nd Oct.
9:30

CHAIR & DISCUSSANT

Carol in Bohlmann is professor for Conservation-Restoration of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Her research focuses on interdisciplinary collaboration between cultural studies, conservation-restoration and art technology, materiality in modern and contemporary art and media and preservation of contemporary and ephemeral art in collections. Various conservation-exhibition projects on conservation of contemporary art at Hamburger Bahnhof – Nationalgalerie der Gegenwart; Fellowship at International Research Institute for Cultural Technique and Media Philosophy (IKKM) with a research project on questioning material and immateriality and concepts of handling. Currently, she is involved in a project that thematises interdisciplinary approaches to the process of reproducing, copying, and repeating in contemporary art, in form of an ongoing lecture series entitled BEST AVAILABLE COPY.

Sound recordings are still not fully recognised as historical documents on a par with texts, photographs or film. Drawing on an interdisciplinary approach from anthropology, ethnomusicology, history, sound studies and postcolonial theory, this presentation discusses the decolonial potential of using sound recordings and acoustic memories as an alternative research methodology for understanding violent pasts. Drawing on my ongoing research project 'Archives of Lived Songs', I will present a Cokwe song recorded in the 1950s in north-eastern Angola. This song exemplifies the uniqueness of sound recordings. They offer ways of revealing voices and their meanings that are not fully accessible through historical written and visual sources alone. The research combines archival sources with multi-sited, collaborative ethnographic fieldwork with communities of origin and diaspora in both Angola and Portugal. This presentation explores the importance of using other senses, such as hearing, rather than just the visual, to discuss and reveal untold meanings of colonial power dynamics – colonial

domination and African resistance and agency – that remain hidden within these colonial archives. In doing so, this approach contributes to the decolonisation of sound archives produced during the late Portuguese colonial period in Angola. Furthermore, the digitisation of these sound archives is crucial, not only to ensure their preservation, but also to enable the source communities to reinterpret and reclaim their acoustic heritage.

ENGAGING WITH SOUND THROUGH ALTERNATIVE MODES OF LISTENING: A DECOLONIAL APPROACH TO AN ANGOLAN FOLK SONG RECORDED IN THE 50S DURING PORTUGUESE COLONIAL RULE

LECTURE

Date 1st Oct.
14:45

Cristina Sá Valentim is a socio-cultural anthropologist. She is a researcher at the Institute of Social Sciences at the University of Lisbon and a visiting professor at the University of Coimbra, Portugal. Her research combines social ecology, anthropology, postcolonial theory, ethnomusicology and sound studies. She is currently coordinating the research project 'Archives of Lived Songs: History, Memories, and Legacies of Angolan Colonial Folk Music (1950–2020)', which explores the relationship between sound archives, colonial power, and African agency and resistance in rural Angolan territories. In 2022 she published *Sons do Império, Vozes do Cipale: Canções Cokwe e Memórias do Trabalho Forçado nas Lundas, Angola*. This publication is based on her prize-winning PhD thesis, which was awarded the Agostinho Neto International Historical Research Prize, organised by the Dr. António Agostinho Neto Foundation (FAAN) in Angola, the Afro-Brazilian Institute of Higher Education (IABES) in Brazil and UNESCO.



Instituto de Ciências Sociais, Universidade de Lisboa, Portugal
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Spoken messages, voice and audio letters are hardly represented in archives and the collective memory, and have received little attention as sources of migration research, cultural and media history. But spoken letters have been recorded and listened to since the beginning of the 20th century, and the history of audio letters is closely linked to mobility, migration, and flight. My contribution aims to highlight the listening experiences that audio letters have evoked since the turn of the 20th century. I will ask how voice letters were a means of staying in touch especially in times of geographical distance. How did the voice but also clearing the throat, breathing, coughing and the sounds of everyday life create and transmit sonic memories of the absent world across distance and time?

A focus lies on aspects of listening and the question of how listening and the imagination of being listened to are able to create this connection. Using selected audio letters from the SONIME research project and interviews I will analyse ideas and practices of listening

to audio letters as part of communication practices via audio letters. I will also discuss and reflect on my own listening to audio letters of the SONIME collection. The aim of this collection is to preserve these private voices, recorded on analogue audio media, for future listeners.

'THIS IS MY TAPE!!! YOU HEAR!' LISTENING TO AUDIO LETTERS IN THE SONIME PROJECT

Eva Kapeller-Hallama studied history in Vienna and St. Petersburg. She worked as a researcher and curator. For her doctoral thesis on Nazi border delousing camps in occupied Eastern Europe, she received a scholarship of the Austrian Academy of Sciences and was Junior Fellow at the International Research Center for Cultural Studies in Vienna. Since 2021 she is principal investigator in the SONIME research project 'Sonic Memories. Audio Letters in Times of Migration and Mobility' at the Vienna Museum of Science and Technology and since May 2024 at the Department of Media Theory at the University of Applied Arts Vienna.

LECTURE

Date 2nd Oct.
13:45



Early sound recordings and their history became part of scientific research relatively late, and research on private sound recordings has only started in recent years. This is why, while we already have more or less information about the companies that produced commercial recordings in the twentieth century – including discographies in the case of several companies –, we often know nothing about the background of private recordings (except perhaps ethnomusicological and linguistic ones). This is particularly true of recordings from the first half of the twentieth century. However, this information would be essential for the understanding and interpretation of the surviving sound recordings.

In the interwar Hungary – in parallel with the spread of electric sound recording and broadcast radio – many sound engineers experimented with record cutting, and a few private studios also offered recording services on a wider scale. Many of the mostly unique sound documents were destroyed during the twentieth century, so it is regrettable

but still understandable that this has only become a topic of research in Hungarian musicology and historical media studies in the 2020s. In my presentation I intend to give an overview of the history of private record making in Hungary. The overview will focus on how the idea of 'voice message' appeared in the history of private recordings in Hungary, from a 1910 opinion piece through the advertisements of various businesses and the activities of the War Reporting Company during World War II to the famous Hungarian slogan 'Saját hangja, vigye haza!' (Your own voice, take it home!). I will present a few surviving voice messages to examine how circumstances influenced the speaker and the resulting sound recording. The examples will be from messages recorded during World War II by Hungarian radio companies, which gave soldiers at the front or in hospitals, or family members worried in the hinterland, the opportunity to send a voice message to their loved ones.

THE IDEA AND REALISATION OF THE 'VOICE MESSAGE' IN THE HISTORY OF HUNGARIAN PRIVATE RECORDINGS ON GRAMOPHONE RECORDS

LECTURE

Date 2nd Oct.
13:45

Ferenc János Szabó (1985, Pécs), pianist and musicologist. Studied piano at the Ferenc Liszt Music Academy (Budapest) and chamber music at Kunstuniversität Graz. He has doctor's degrees DLA as pianist (2012) and PhD in musicology (2019) (both summa cum laude). As a pianist, he won several prizes at international chamber music competitions. From 2013, he has been associate professor and vocal coach at the Voice Department of the Liszt Ferenc Music Academy. From September 2011, he has worked at the Institute for Musicology in Budapest. His research fields are the history of Hungarian sound recordings, discography, and performance practice. Besides several postdoctoral scholarships, he won the Edison Fellowship of the British Library, and the János Bolyai research grant from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (2022–2025).

Metallophon, Decelith L, Pyral, Presto and Voice-o-graph are direct-cut discs used for audio letters in the 1930s and 40s featuring information layers made from cellulose nitrate coatings. The SONIME project has identified these discs within the collections of its host institutions and donors. Due to its favourable cutting properties, cellulose nitrate was the preferred material for record master production in Europe until the mid-1970s. Although it is still being used for this purpose, its application has become less frequent and subject to stricter safety regulations. As a highly flammable material, particularly in advanced stages of decomposition, cellulose nitrate poses considerable preservation challenges in collections. Strict statutory regulations govern its storage and transport. The discussion explores the chemical nature of these cultural assets and invites reflection on whether these materials warrant a similar level of caution as film materials. It considers

conservation strategies and examines the implications for galleries, libraries, archives and museums (GLAM) professionals responsible for the care and management of cellulose nitrate direct-cut discs, aiming to inform collection handling and policy decisions.

Friederike Waentig, Elena Gómez Sánchez, Simon Kunz & Katrin Abromeit

CONSERVATION TALK: CELLULOSE NITRATE LACQUERS IN DIRECT CUT DISCS

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

Date 2nd Oct.
11:15

Friederike Waentig: Since 2003 Professor for the Conservation of Wooden Artefacts and Modern Materials at the University of Applied Sciences Cologne. Beside working as a freelance conservator she was previously: Senior Conservator at the Art and Exhibition Hall, Bonn; Conservator at the Conservation Centre Düsseldorf; Conservator at the Museum for Applied Art Cologne. She obtained her degree at the Otto-Friedrich-University of Bamberg majoring in Heritage Preservation, with minor studies in folklore and building history. Her PhD thesis was entitled 'Synthetic Materials in Art: research from the conservation point of view'. Her Master's thesis in Heritage Preservation, Otto-Friedrich-University Bamberg, was 'Technical and Industrial Monuments – Definition, History and Preservation' and her Master's degree from the University of Applied Sciences Cologne, was on Conservation specialising in Wooden Artefacts. She spent a practical semester in East-Berlin (former GDR) at the Museum for Applied Art Berlin. Her focus in research is on the preservation of modern materials in art, design and architecture, specialising in the history and conservation of plastics. She has been teaching and lecturing at several institutes and published on the conservation and history of plastics. Besides giving talks she is also consulting projects.

→ Continued on the following page

Katrin Abromeit is a conservator for audio media. She graduated from the University of Applied Sciences in Berlin (HTW); Her bachelor's thesis focused on mould-covered cellulose acetate audio tapes; her master's thesis examined the stickiness of audio tapes with a polyester-polyurethane coating. Since 2020, Katrin has been working on the conservation and digitisation of audio media at the Phonogrammarchiv Wien. She gained experience at the Rathgen Research Laboratory in Berlin, the ZKM Center for Art and Media in Karlsruhe, the Filmmuseum Potsdam, and as a freelance conservator-restorer. The project 'Sonic Memories. Audio Letters in Times of Migration and Mobility' (SONIME) that she is implementing in collaboration with the historian Eva Kapeller-Hallama, focuses on collecting, documenting, and preserving audio letters from 1890 to 1980. It will run through April 2026.

CHAIR

Martina Griesser-Stermscheg is a museologist, curator, and restorer. Since 2024, she has been head of the Institute for Conservation and Restoration at the University of Applied Arts Vienna and professor of conservation and restoration as well as cultural heritage conservation management. From 2021 to 2024, she established and headed the research institute at the Vienna Museum of Science and Technology (TMW). From 2013 to 2021, she was head of collections at the TMW. She is a member of the core team of schnittpunkt. exhibition theory & practice and the management team of /ecm – educating/curating/managing. Master's programme in exhibition theory and practice at the University of Applied Arts Vienna. Author of *Tabu Depot. Das Museumsdepot in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Vienna 2013, and *Sich mit Sammlungen anlegen. Gemeinsame Dinge und alternative Archive*, Berlin/Boston 2020 (edited with Nora Sternfeld and Luisa Ziaja).

Elena Gómez Sánchez is a Professor at the University of Applied Sciences Georg Agricola and deputy director of the Material and Heritage Science department at the Deutsches Bergbau-Museum Bochum, a Leibniz Research Museum. She holds a PhD in Organic Chemistry and an MSc in Polymer Chemistry. Her research focuses on the long-term degradation of polymeric materials in museum collections and their conservation challenges, as well as the development of practical, easy to implement solutions for preserving ageing plastics and rubbers.

Simon Kunz studied conservation, art technology, and conservation science at the Technical University of Munich, completing in 2011 with a diploma-thesis on cellulose acetate audio tapes. He worked at the Rathgen Research Laboratory in Berlin on plastic degradation and non-invasive analysis (KUR-ILKAR, DBU). In 2015, he held a six month 'Scholar in Residence' fellowship at the Deutsches Museum, investigating plastics with ATR FTIR. He then pursued a master's at the Georg Simon Ohm University of Applied Sciences on degradation in historic cellulose nitrate coatings. Since 2018, he has been with the Conservation Science Department at the German Mining Museum, Bochum, first as a student assistant, then research associate, and now on the EFRE project 'Just Scan It 3D.' Since 2023, he has taught in the master's programme 'Material Engineering and Industrial Heritage Conservation' at the Georg Agricola University of Applied Sciences. His research focuses on historic plastics and their aging behaviour, using advanced 2D correlation FTIR and (py)GCMS.

In this closing round table, participants offer concise insights into their own research or practice, responding to questions that have shaped the conference and resonate with their individual fields. Curatorial, artistic, and conservation-based perspectives enter into dialogue with media-theoretical and postcolonial approaches to critically engage with fleeting voices and the ways in which we listen to them today.

To what extent might listening to historical sound recordings offer a way of accessing the past or even of writing the history of the future? How do recorded and replayed voices intersect with questions of ownership and cultural representation? How do voices in art engage with themes such as memory, identity, or cultural heritage?

Rather than offering closure, this session invites multiple perspectives to resonate and overlap, creating space for new connections and critical openings beyond the frame of the conference.

Gabriele Jutz, Rodrigo Chocano, Julia Sawitzki & Jens Schröter

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION: FLEETING VOICES. RESONANCES AND REFLECTIONS

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

Date 3rd Oct.
12:30

Gabriele Jutz (University of Applied Arts Vienna) is the author of *Cinéma brut. An Alternative Genealogy of Avant-Garde Film* (Springer 2010, in German), *Animating Truth(s). The Films of Maria Lassnig and Their Context* (2019) and co-editor (along with Edgar Lissel and Nina Jukić) of *RESET THE APPARATUS! A Survey of the Photographic and the Filmic in Contemporary Art* (de Gruyter 2019). She has published articles in academic journals and edited volumes, including *Journal of Sonic Studies*, eds. Andy Birtwistle and Laura Redhead (2025), *Palgrave Handbook of Experimental Cinema*, eds. Kim Knowles and Jonathan Walley (2024), *Handbuch Filmanalyse*, eds. Malte Hagener and Volker Pantenburg (2020), *The Oxford Handbook of Sound and Image in Western Art*, ed. Yael Kaduri (2016), and *Kurt Kren: Structural Films*, eds. Nicky Hamlyn and Simon Payne (2016).

→ Continued on the following page



Most of her articles are available at
dieangewandte.academia.edu/GabrieleJutz

Jens Schröter, Prof. Dr., has held the Chair of Media Studies at the University of Bonn since 2015. From 2008 to 2015, he was Professor of 'Theory and Practice of Multimedia Systems' (W2) at the University of Siegen. From 2010 to 2014, he was head (together with Prof. Dr. Lorenz Engell, Weimar) of 'The Television Series as Projection and Reflection of Change' as part of the DFG-SPP 1505: 'Mediatized Worlds'. Head (together with Prof. Dr. Anna Echterhölder; PD Dr. Andreas Sudmann and Prof. Dr. Alexander Waibel) of the VW Main Grant 'How is Artificial Intelligence Changing Science?' (start: 1 August 2022, 4 years); Head (together with Dr. Felix Hüttemann) of the VW 'Aufbruch' project 'The Computerized Palate' (start 1 April 2025). Current publications: (together with Christoph Ernst): *UFOs. Mediale Sichtungen*, Stuttgart: Metzler 2025. (together with Christoph Ernst, Katerina Krtlova, and Andreas Sudmann, eds.), *Handbook of Media Theories of the 21st Century*, Springer, ongoing online and in print: 2026

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www.fanhsiu-kadesch.de

CHAIR

Laura Bohnenblust (she/her) is an art historian and university assistant at the Chair for Cultural Heritage Studies at the University of Vienna. Her work focuses on modern and contemporary art and exhibition history. Her research interests include intangible cultural heritage, songs in visual arts, and processes of (art) historiography. Laura studied art history in Bern and Buenos Aires, as well as German literature in Bern. She conducted research in Argentina as part of her dissertation project and completed her doctorate at the University of Bern on the global exhibition history of the 20th century.

Rodrigo Chocano is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie fellow at the Musicology Institute of the University of Vienna. He earned a PhD in Ethnomusicology from Indiana University. His research studies the intersection between music, racialisation, and heritage, with a focus on Afro-Latin-American communities. He authored two books and several articles in English and Spanish exploring the connections between music, cultural heritage, and race and ethnicity in Latin America. He held postdoctoral appointments at the Smithsonian Institution and the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. Prior to his doctoral training, he worked as a cultural heritage office at the UNESCO field office in Lima and the Peruvian Ministry of Culture. His experience in cultural heritage policy, as well as his decade-long engagement with Afro-Diasporic musicians and activists, inform his current research.

Julia Sawitzki received her Master's degree in restoration, conservation science and art technology at the Technical University Munich in 2018. From April to December 2018 she was a scholar of the Conservation Science Department at the Deutsches Museum in Munich. Julia has been working as assistant conservator at the Kunsthhaus Zürich from 2019 to 2021. Until the end of 2022, she was supporting the depot-moving project of the Museums of Regensburg, after which she was working as conservator at the Vienna Museum of Science and Technology until January 2025. Currently, Julia is concentrating on her work as a senior lecturer for the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and her freelance projects. Her work focuses on the conservation of modern and contemporary artworks and cultural objects as well as the conservation and research of plastics and their degradation phenomena.

Humankind has always wanted to leave traces, and thus has invented technologies and forms of expression throughout history. Two important inventions were sound recording and photographic image capture. Nearly simultaneously, they were introduced for private use and became popular mass phenomena; nonetheless, they are studied and considered separately. Heidi Fial attempted to compare and combine historical amateur films with private sound recordings from the same era.

Eva Kapeller-Hallama and Heidi Fial discuss in an open round what impact this experiment has and what questions it raises.

REFLECTING THE CONVERGENCE OF AMATEUR FILM AND SOUND RECORDINGS

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

Date 2nd Oct.
15:45

Heidi Fial is part of the technical department of the Filmarchiv Austria as a scanner operator and in the field of manual film restoration, with main interest on small film gauges and amateur film, as well as nitrate based films. Beside she is self-employed active as a music producer, composer and instrumentalist with special focus on live scoring and soundtracking silent films. Also founder of the music label 'Tonfliege'.



This experimental presentation reactivates historical voice recordings – both spoken and sung – of Chinese diasporic communities in the United States. Drawing from archival materials housed at the UC Berkeley Bancroft Library, the Him Mark Lai Digital Archive, the Library of Congress, Smithsonian Folkways, and the UCLA Ethnomusicology Archive, this session explores how the recorded human voice serves not only as a sonic trace of migration, but also as an active site of cultural memory and resistance.

The curated listening session features carefully selected excerpts: oral histories in Cantonese and Toisanese recounting exclusion-era immigration and community survival; Cantonese opera scenes performed in mid-century San Francisco; and folk songs recorded by Chinese American elders in New York and California. These fragile, often overlooked recordings – marked by breath, dialect, musical phrasing, and background noise – foreground the materiality of voice and its expressive power within displacement

narratives. Rather than treating these voices as fixed archival artefacts, the session invites listeners to experience them as affective encounters and temporal bridges. I will prepare English translations for materials that involve speech and lyrics to help the audience.

As a Hong Kong-born composer and ethnomusicologist with extensive fieldwork across East and Southeast Asia, my work engages the intersection of music theory, composition, ethnography and sound studies. I approach these recordings not simply as data, but as sonic companions – utterances that resonate across generations and geographies.

The session concludes with an audience discussion, inviting reflection on the ethics and poetics of listening to displaced voices. I will bring up these questions such as ‘What does it mean to archive a breath?’ ‘How might listening itself become an act of cultural solidarity, mourning, or revoicing?’ to facilitate the discussion.

A CURATED LISTENING SESSION – ECHOES OF DISPLACEMENT: REVOICING CHINESE DIASPORIC SPEECH AND SONG IN THE UNITED STATES AND AMERICAN ARCHIVES

LISTENING SESSION

Date 1st Oct.
14:45

Hippocrates Cheng is a composer, theorist, ethnomusicologist from Hong Kong. As a composer, he writes contemporary classical music, new music for Asian instruments, and Jazz. As a researcher, he researches the music of Hong Kong composer Doming Lam, East Asian music, piano rolls and player pianos in early Jazz history, Arnold Schoenberg as well as Braille music notation. In 2024, he completed his Doctor of Music Composition, with a minor in ethnomusicology, at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. He is currently an assistant professor of music theory and composition and an affiliated faculty of Asian and Asian American Studies at The State University of New York at Binghamton.



Affiliated Faculty at Asian and Asian American Studies
www.binghamton.edu/music/faculty/profile.html?id=ccheng15

PANEL 1: POLITICS OF LISTENING

Date 1st Oct.
14:45

CHAIR & DISCUSSANT

Isabel Frey is an ethnomusicologist, Yiddish singer and a post-doctoral researcher and Senior Artist at the Department of Folk Music Research and Ethnomusicology at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna (mdw). Her research explores Jewish music and diaspora, music and minorities, memory culture, music and protest, gender and queer studies, voice and sound studies and arts-based methodologies. She is currently working on her first monograph *Voicing Yidishkayt: Postvernacular Folksong, Archival Afterlives and Diasporic Belonging*, which is based on her PhD dissertation on contemporary transmission of Yiddish folksong and the political dimensions of the Yiddish voice. In 2023, she spent a semester as a Visiting Fellow at the Center for Jewish Studies at Harvard University. In addition to her academic work, Frey is an active performer, having released several albums of Yiddish music, and curates the KlezMORE Festival Vienna for Jewish music. She is co-editor of *Standing Together: Jewish and Palestinian Voices for a Just Peace in the Middle East* (I. Frey, N. Sayegh, eds., Vienna: Mandelbaum, 2025).



This presentation is a study of the magnetic tapes recorded by Paul-Emile Victor during expeditions in Greenland and Antarctica, in the end of the 1950s and during the 1960s. Instead of writing a log-book, Victor spoke to a microphone to record the activities of the day and his impressions. Radio communications with other settlements but also with the plane bringing supplies, were also recorded. Because the recordings were made in a shelter in harsh conditions, there is a lot of background noises: static from the radio transmissions, malfunctions of the tape recorder because of power disruptions, but also voices of other members of the expedition, and the sounds of daily life in the shelter. Besides the everyday operations, some tapes contain more tragic moments, as when one of the expedition members was attacked by a polar bear. In front of the microphone, Victor shares his doubts and concerns about his wounded man, but also about what should be revealed to Paris and to the press. In this talk, I will start by presenting the conditions under which these tapes were recorded. I will then focus

on the use and politics of sound recording in a remote place: the place of the still novel technology of the tape recorder in a polar expedition, the unique moments that were recorded and those that were not, what these tapes bring in comparison with a written log-book. A point will also be made on the aesthetics of these recordings, with an emphasis on how the noises and defaults bring a specific atmosphere.

TAPES AS SONIC LOG BOOKS: THE CASE OF PAUL-EMILE VICTOR DURING HIS POLAR EXPEDITIONS

LECTURE

Date 2nd Oct.
15:45

Jean-Baptiste Masson is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie / Bienvenüe fellow based at the Université Rennes 2 and a research fellow at the Cinémathèque de Bretagne, where he works on a manual for the restoration of the sound of amateur films. He was previously a fellow of the White Rose College of the Arts and Humanities at the University of York, where he worked on the history of the sonic practices of amateur sound recordists, in France and Britain. Besides his research, Jean-Baptiste is also a composer and improviser working with instruments, microphones, and machines.



Bring Your Own Voice Record! The conference participants are invited to bring their own voice or music disc records, in any condition, to be scanned and converted to audio files using INA-Saphir optical technology.

INA-Saphir can scan and extract the sound from nearly all analogue audio media mechanically recorded as a spiral on a flat medium. This includes audio letters, recorded postcards, dictaphone records, artistic performances and more generally recorded voices and music on lacquer and plain direct-cut discs.

Those artefacts usually being the unique source of the message, they deserve to be preserved, both as a physical artefact, but also as the audio content. To avoid damaging the carrier by repetitively playing it, it is desirable to generate and preserve an audio file from the carrier. The easiest tool to obtain such an audio file is often a compatible playback system such as a turntable. But the condition of the record, the specifics of the medium, or the recording condition may make

a conventional turntable unpractical or hazardous for the record.

After more than 20 years of development within INA's research department, the optical INA-Saphir process presents a reliable and safe way for recovering the audio contents from most of those records. Beyond its main target – cracked, delaminated or broken 78 rpm discs – the system has a wide range of other applications, such as recorded postcards, spoken letters, grooved dictaphone discs, slot machines records..., even damaged or in pieces. Known exceptions are cylinders, belts, magnetic discs, and digital media.

We intend to demonstrate INA-Saphir's capacities by inviting the conference participants to bring their own records – however damaged. At no cost, we will scan them, play the content and deliver the audio files to the owner.

BRING YOUR OWN VOICE RECORD 2025! INA-SAPHIR STATION FOR DIGITISING YOUR DIRECT CUT DISCS

PERFORMANCE

Location Foyer,
conference-long

Jean-Hugues Chenot received Engineering degrees from French Ecole Polytechnique and Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Télécommunications. He joined INA in 1988 where he first developed software for 3D scanning and modeling and virtual studios projects. He was for 25 years manager of the INA audio and video processing and restoration research team, and was involved in a number of European research projects, related to audio and video digitisation, preservation, digital restoration, and large-scale fingerprinting and content tracking. He is the project manager of the INA-Saphir project for optical playback of analogue audio disc records.

Jean-Étienne Noiré joined INA research department in 1992. He was involved in virtual studios, animation, restoration and digitisation research projects. He is currently the main software developer of INA-Saphir.



This presentation examines the role of sound in poetry performance studies, drawing on insights from the research project *PoP*. We will explore how attention to the sonic dimensions of poetry raises new methodological and theoretical questions, reshaping approaches to literary history and criticism.

By examining different facets of voice – the recorded voice as a primary text, voice as a historical archive, and voice as a poetic element – we emphasise its multidimensional nature and argue for more rigorous scholarly engagement.

Poetry is often made public as sound rather than text, yet literary heritage institutions continue to privilege the written word. While systematic mechanisms exist for archiving printed poetry, no equivalent structures ensure the preservation of spoken word performances. This has resulted in a fragmented archival landscape, where institutional collections and personal recordings fail to comprehensively document the history of performed poetry. Such gaps are particularly significant for ethnicities prominent on performance circuits but whose work is under-represented in print.

Being overlooked by traditional literary criticism, their work may disappear entirely if no recordings exist.

Rather than viewing performance as a derivative mode of poetic production, we argue that it actively shapes literary culture, influencing publication, audience engagement, and artistic trajectories in ways often neglected by literary criticism. By considering these dimensions, we highlight the urgent need to rethink the politics of working with sound in poetry performance studies.

Interviews with poets provide another crucial avenue for reevaluating scholarly engagement. Recording poets' voices in interviews documents artistic intentions and lived experiences, contributing to a collaborative historiography. This process raises ethical and methodological challenges: How should these voices be preserved and accessed? What responsibilities do researchers and institutions bear in this context?

The presentation will conclude with a close listening that demonstrates how poets shape sound in the performance to engage with themes of identity and cultural heritage.

Julia Lajta-Novak, Claire Palzer, Shefali Banerji & Rachel Bolle-Debessay

LISTENING TO POETRY: RETHINKING SOUND IN LITERARY CRITICISM

LECTURE

Date 3rd Oct.
10:00

Julia Lajta-Novak is an Associate Professor of Anglophone Literature and Media. Her current research projects focus on British poetry performance and contemporary biographical novels about historical women. 'Poetry Off the Page' is a five-year project, directed by Dr. Julia Lajta-Novak (University of Vienna), in collaboration with the British poetry organisation Apples and Snakes, the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, Goldsmiths University of London, Queen Mary University of London, University College Dublin, and the National Library of Ireland. It is supported by an ERC Consolidator Grant and the START-Prize of the Austrian Science Fund (FWF). The project investigates the significance of poetry performance to recent British and Irish literary history, taking account of the aesthetic and political potential of oral performance in conjunction with the alternative institutional structures, publication channels, career pathways, presentational formats, styles, and poetic genres that have emerged from its dynamic performance scenes.

Claire Palzer is a PhD researcher studying Irish spoken-word poetry.

Shefali Banerji is a PhD researcher exploring the intersection of poetry performance and theatre.

Rachel Bolle-Debessay is a postdoctoral researcher examining the poetics of the Black Atlantic at the crossroads of music, poetry, and performance.

The audio media collected and examined in the project 'Sonic Memories. Audio Letters in Times of Migration and Mobility' (SONIME) provide a cross-section of the history of direct-recording audio media between 1890 and 1980. Technical developments are reflected in a variety of manufacturers, products and material combinations. In addition to wax cylinders, audio tapes and cassettes, this diversity is particularly evident in direct-cut discs.

The conditions of the examined direct-cut formats vary considerably. The reasons for this can be divided into factors inherent to the materials and to external influences. Especially the interaction of different materials in the same object is crucial for ongoing degradation mechanisms, which can be observed particularly with lacquer layers on different substrates. Environmental factors also have a significant influence on ageing behaviour as well as light and manual handling.

Preventive conservation measures are undertaken throughout the project to provide the best possible storage

environment for the audio media. Parallel documentation of the current preservation condition is a focus of the SONIME project. In addition to photographing the objects, analysing the materials using ATR-FTIR and recording accompanying information, linking this information and providing it for scholarly use is of central importance. As the available database systems were unable to meet audio media, research and conservation requirements, an RDF-based (Resource Description Framework), object-oriented database platform was fitted to the project needs. That way, the project links the object information with the recordings, their actors and the conservation information.

The project is a co-operation between the Phonogrammarchiv of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW), the University of Applied Arts Vienna and the archive partner Österreichische Mediathek.

STABLE, COMPROMISED, UNSTABLE – DIVERSITY OF AUDIO CARRIERS AND THEIR CONDITIONS IN THE SONIME PROJECT

LECTURE

Date 2nd Oct.
9:30

Katrin Abromeit is a conservator for audio media. She graduated from the University of Applied Sciences in Berlin (HTW); Her bachelor's thesis focused on mould-covered cellulose acetate audio tapes; her master's thesis examined the stickiness of audio tapes with a polyester-polyurethane coating. Since 2020, Katrin has been working on the conservation and digitisation of audio media at the Phonogrammarchiv Wien. She gained experience at the Rathgen Research Laboratory in Berlin, the ZKM Center for Art and Media in Karlsruhe, the Filmmuseum Potsdam, and as a freelance conservator-restorer. The project 'Sonic Memories. Audio Letters in Times of Migration and Mobility' (SONIME) that she is implementing in collaboration with the historian Eva Kapeller-Hallama, focuses on collecting, documenting, and preserving audio letters from 1890 to 1980. It will run through April 2026.

Johann Hinterstoisser is a student of conservation and restoration with a focus on wooden objects at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Since 2022, he is a member of staff at Phonogrammarchiv Wien responsible for material analyses, object photography and documentation in the project 'Sonic Memories. Audio Letters in Times of Migration and Mobility' (SONIME). In 2021, he completed the evening college at HBLVA Rosensteingasse for chemical industry with a focus on environmental analysis and environmental protection management. Professional stations have been at Additives for Paper Industry GmbH, Vienna Museum of Science and Technology, University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences Vienna, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, as well as with self-employed restorers.



PANEL 4: SENDING VOICES

CHAIR & DISCUSSANT

Kristina Pia Hofer is postdoc senior lecturer at the Department of Media Theory, University of Applied Arts Vienna, Austria, where she teaches courses on Methodology for the Humanities, Auditory Cultures, and Film Studies. Between 2020 and spring 2025, Kristina has led the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) funded project 'Situating Cinesonics' (Grant-DOI: 10.55776/V770), and is currently working on a publication of the same title.

Date 2nd Oct.
13:45

My proposal is based on the sound installation that I created for the MUṬIKKAPPAṬĀTA exhibition (Nov. 2024–Jan. 2025) at RAW Material Company, centre for art, knowledge and society, as part of the Dakar Biennale. The exhibition is a journey into the intimate, multiple and colonisation-marked territories of Nathalie Vairac (*1972). The Senegal-based performer with an international career was born in France to an Indian mother and a Guadeloupean father. Back in her homelands, she feels the ancestral pain, she questions the visible and invisible legacies, and seeks how to re-fertilise the places still gaping from her ferments. She writes and records.

Nathalie Vairac entrusted me with her recorded voice. I heard in it her breath of life to transcend violence, and her desire to be. Based on this gesture, I sought to find a way to give form to the act of listening to these sounds, defying the technical, acoustic and curatorial conditions of the exhibition space, while allowing for freedom of listening and interpretation.

I will share the reflective and creative process that led to the proposal of four listening spaces/times. This includes a discussion on what it means to capture sound, on the conditions of our listening, non-linear and operating in the ‘tactile sphere’ (Deshays, 2023, p. 139), on sharing in space, in dialogue with the rest of the visual and sensory narratives. I will insist on the delicacy required to handle this living, sonic space, and listening as the main method.

My contribution will take the form of a spoken, embodied performance in a subdued atmosphere to emphasise the movements of the sound of the voice, without being encumbered by vision. Situated at the intersection of Sound Studies and Cultural Heritage Studies, it addresses the central question of identity and the transmission of intimate trajectories in relation to history.

EXHIBITING THE SOUND OF THE INTIMATE

SPOKEN PERFORMANCE

Date 3rd Oct.
10:00

Laetitia Kozlova is the founder of Sound Memories (MÉMOIRES SONORES), a production structure which defends the writing of sound, and poses the voice as a living, sensitive, collective memory. MÉMOIRES SONORES defends listening as an engagement. MÉMOIRES SONORES creates listening situations inside and outside the museum. Laetitia Kozlova is a doctoral candidate in Universidade Católica Portuguesa, School of Arts, Research Center for Science and Technology of the Arts. She is interested in new listening practices of recorded spoken voice, at the intersection of Sound Studies, Performing Arts and Cultural Heritage Sciences. Her research project is supported by the Portuguese national agency FCT (Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia). It unfolds on two continents, Europe and Africa.



memoires-sonores.com

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American author and lawyer Erle Stanley Gardner (1889–1970) had a very distinct voice. The booming baritone with a bit of grumpy grit was an avid user of audio recording media, especially for dictating his correspondence, and drafts of his detective stories. His archive at the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin, contains hundreds of Audograph dictation discs. Using the Gray Audograph recording device, transparent blue flexible discs could be directly recorded by simply engaging the microphone. The disc is driven by a surface-mounted wheel, so when played back on a standard record player, the pitch of the recorded audio is higher at the center and gradually decreases toward the edge of the disc.

From 1960–1966, Gardner corresponded with his publisher Thayer Hobson via airmailed Audograph discs. Gardner approached these recordings with the formality of written letters; beginning with his name, the date, his location, then a flow of content, and signing off with regards and well wishes. These dispatched dialogues are rather

personal, with Gardner sharing his plans, his health, describing travels, thoughts on his creative process, relations with friends and women, and opinions of his readers and business ventures. There is a directness to his utterance, indicating his trust, respect, and friendship toward Hobson, his listener. These recordings give insight to the curation of a creative identity; they embody the narrative behind a narrator.

This presentation will share details of this format of sound carrier, such as the audio recording process, playback, digitisation, and physical aspects of the mailed object. From an archivist's perspective, I will discuss challenges of the preservation, access, and research of these materials. I will show images and play recordings from the Gardner-Hobson correspondence to ground the presentation in listening.

CORRESPONDENCE ETCHED IN BLUE: AUDIOGRAPH DISCS OF ERLE STANLEY GARDNER

LECTURE

Date 2nd Oct.
15:45

Lauren Walker is an artist and archivist living in Austin, Texas. She has a BFA and MSIS with specialisation in audiovisual archiving. She has worked as a digitisation technician for analogue audio preservation, performed condition surveys of archival audio collections, led projects in archival film winding and rehousing, and led database migration projects for audio and moving image data. As the Head of Digital Projects at the Harry Ransom Center, she currently manages audiovisual digitisation projects that require outsourcing to a vendor, projects that make archival materials accessible online, and digital preservation of digitised archival materials. She enjoys working with researchers and artists, providing reference support and access to collection materials for scholarly and creative projects. Her creative work includes drawing, printmaking, and collage, and she plays experimental improvisational music in multiple bands. Her research concerns audiovisual material history and sound studies.

This lecture analyses *malouf* – a refined musical tradition rooted in Arabo-Andalusian heritage – as a bridge of collective memory between Jewish and Muslim communities in Constantine, Algeria, during the final decades of French colonial rule (1940–1962). Based on archival recordings, oral accounts, and artistic statements, this research analyses how voice, both medium and message, carried hopes of coexistence and later, narratives of rupture in the Algerian War of Independence.

In the middle of this study is the paradox of the recorded voice: intimate yet distant, preserved yet transitory. Singers such as Cheikh Raymond and Hajj Mohamed Tahar Fergani embodied this paradox – once celebrated by all, their singing voices became markers of political allegiance, the objects of the aggressive tides of colonial repression and anti-colonial resistance. Their recordings and performances are not just cultural artefacts but contested acoustic documents of a lost future.

This presentation will marry scholarly interpretation with selected listening extracts from historical *malouf* recordings and personal archives, presenting them as both artworks and political records. Through tracing the recording, circulation, and remembrance – and erasure – of these voices, it asks questions about the politics of hearing, the violence of forgetting, and the vulnerable materiality of acoustic heritage.

At last, this presentation argues that *malouf*'s survival as a sound form is not only evidence of the persistence of a musical tradition, but of a different account of history – one in which voice precedes and resists writing. When we re-play these voices today, what do we actually hear?

ECHOES OF COEXISTENCE: *MALOUF*, MEMORY AND THE POLITICS OF VOICE IN COLONIAL CONSTANTINE

LECTURE WITH EMBEDDED LISTENING SESSION

Date 1st Oct.
18:00

Lina Ounissi is a PhD candidate at the Department of Middle Eastern Studies, University of Basel, and research assistant in the research project 'Futures Interrupted: Social Pluralism and Political Projects Beyond Coloniality and the Nation-State', led by Prof. Dr. Falestin Naili. Her current research maps the *malouf* of Constantine as a means of intercommunal cohabitation and cultural resistance in colonial Algeria, and she investigates how voice and sound enact memory, identity, and political imagination. Her interdisciplinarity brings together ethnomusicology, archival research, and cultural history with particular emphasis on sound heritage, Jewish-Muslim relations in North Africa, and colonial and postcolonial politics of listening. She has a Master of Middle Eastern Studies from Sciences Po Grenoble, where her Master's thesis challenged the role of Arabic in French-Kuwaiti economic diplomacy. Prior to pursuing her doctoral research, Lina worked as a geostrategic analyst specialising in the MENA region for four years.



Of the aethereal conversation between Jan Soldaat (John Soldier) and Lieneke van Schaardenburg (1949), only five recordings remain. Lieneke's letters were broadcast via shortwave radio for the Dutch Armed Forces, Jan being soldier fighting in the Indonesian War for Independence. She opens her weekly radio message like a letter – 'Amsterdam, Wednesday 29 June' – and signs off accordingly: 'Warm greetings to you all from us here in the Netherlands, especially from your Lieneke.'

As my contribution to *Fleeting Voices*, I propose a listening session featuring segments of this radio conversation – of which only Lieneke's voice remains, archived at the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision. Notably absent from their conversation is any mention of the enemy or the war's colonial context. This omission is political, and it reverberates in the one-sided narratives found in the colonial radio archive. I ask how the sonic qualities of these 'aether letters' further this erasure.

Echoing epistolary conversations between soldiers and their fiancées or wives, this recorded dialogue invites listeners into an intimacy typically reserved for private correspondence. By sonifying this conversation and airing it publicly, these broadcasts cultivated a supposedly relatable domesticity. Though Lieneke presents herself an emancipated woman with an office job, her letters focus on mundane, domestic affairs – dinner plans, conversations with friends, holiday plans... She is portrayed as bound to the house, to domestic matters. Her femininity is instrumentalised to conjure a sense of home for soldiers on the field. I argue that she becomes the voice of a collective imagination, which pictures the Netherlands as peaceful and awaiting the return of its soldiers. Jan, her silent interlocutor, stands in for all soldiers. This mode of address delineates a restricted public: it excludes non-Dutch listeners, for whom a return to the Netherlands is not a shared or desired political horizon.

LISTENING TO LIENEKE'S 'AETHER LETTERS': DOMESTICITY AND COLONIAL SILENCES

LISTENING SESSION

Date 2nd Oct.
13:45

Luc Marraffa is a PhD candidate at the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (University of Amsterdam). They research French and Dutch colonial radio archives and develop transcription methods that challenge colonial narratives. These methods are laid-out in an experimental article (Inward-Outward Symposium Publication, 2024) and further detailed in a research paper *Transcription as Curation* (upcoming, Amodern). Their current work interrogates the queerness of glitches and sound parasites. Previously they taught philosophy at CUNY and attended NYU as Fulbright bursar, after a philosophy MA at Paris VIII Vincennes/Saint-Denis. At the University of Amsterdam, they teach classes in sound studies and decolonial approaches to archiving.

This lecture performance explores voice as both echo and origin, how sound reverberates through time while enabling return to invisibilised knowledges and prefiguring futures yet imagined. Drawing from our artistic practice with South African oral histories – as sound, story, and song – we examine voice’s capacity to create new worlds through the radical potential of multi-vocality against singular meta-narratives.

When sight fails us, when conventional histories leave gaps, voice becomes a navigatory instrument toward knowledge. Like *mabarebare* – the practice of searching through collected fragments – oral histories teach us that knowledge emerges through dialogue, through the interplay of multiple voices rather than singular authority. But whose voice teaches? Whose stories fill the archival silences?

Our work reveals voice’s expansive potential to inhabit spaces of emptiness – not with the solid and fixed but with open exploratorion. In worlds of uncertainty, where we cannot

see our destination, voice becomes more radical precisely because it refuses the certainty of vision. It searches in the mist, creating pathways where none previously existed.

In conversation with South African oral traditions, we argue that voice’s radical potential lies also in its capacity to teach through relationship and to make knowledge collectively. Against the violence of singular historical accounts, multi-vocality is relational, created only in the coming together of people and the more-than-human.

Through sound clips from *Dinokana*, *Mafofofo* and the *non-monuments programme*, this lecture proposes voice as myth-making apparatus, carrying the weight of memory while also creating futures – it archives and dreams simultaneously.

ON REVERB AND RETURN: VOICE AS WORLDMAKING

LECTURE PERFORMANCE

Date 1st Oct.
13:30

MADEYOULOOK is a Johannesburg based interdisciplinary artist duo between Molemo Moiloa and Nare Mokgotho, operating since 2009. The works of MADEYOULOOK take as their point of departure everyday black practices that have either been historically overlooked or deemed inconsequential. These works encourage a re-observation of and de-familiarisation with the everyday of black South African life. MADEYOULOOK have exhibited, published, and hosted programmes in various forms. They were nominated for the Vera List Center Prize for Art and Politics at the New School, New York, in 2017, and the MTN New Contemporaries Award in 2012. They were Fellows of the DAAD Berlin artist programme 2022, documenta fifteen Lumbung Artists and sole artists of the South African pavilion at the 60th Venice Biennale.

CHAIR

Laura Bohnenblust (she/her) is an art historian and university assistant at the Chair for Cultural Heritage Studies at the University of Vienna. Her work focuses on modern and contemporary art and exhibition history. Her research interests include intangible cultural heritage, songs in visual arts, and processes of (art) historiography. Laura studied art history in Bern and Buenos Aires, as well as German literature in Bern. She conducted research in Argentina as part of her dissertation project and completed her doctorate at the University of Bern on the global exhibition history of the 20th century.

Notes on a Distributed Person is a trans-archival cassette tape that explores the fractured and itinerant biography of Mohamed Nur, a Somali Völkerschau performer, language assistant, and colonial subject, whose presence is dispersed across early 20th-century German archives. The work seeks to reframe Nur's social, intellectual, and political life, beginning with his internment at Ruhleben camp in 1917 after arriving in Germany with a Somali Völkerschau ensemble in 1910–11.

Drawing on colonial sound recordings and textual fragments, this sonic composition enacts a form of liberation through (re)assembly. Nur's oral poems, recorded in Berlin during his captivity, are layered with his traces at the University of Hamburg, his appearance in German impressionist paintings, and woven with Somali fractals and Sufi incantations. Through this assemblage, Nur re-emerges not simply as a subject of archival inquiry, but as a vessel of memory, and spiritual presence. The sonic work also opens a space for the variegated lives of African and other colonial

prisoners of war recorded during the *Königlich Preußische Phonographische Kommission* (1915–1918). Interspersed within the work is the lament of Sadok Berresid, a prisoner from Monastir, Tunisia, recorded at the 'Halfmoon Camp' in Wünsdorf. Various recorded laments, of Nur and Berresid, culminate in the hollow whistle of the phonogram, an uncanny marker of both technological capture and their bodily presence.

This work forms part of Hassan's ongoing research on Mohamed Nur. Past iterations have been presented in New York, Minneapolis, London, Florence, and Berlin.

NOTES ON A DISTRIBUTED PERSON: ON XIRSI, AND OTHER INCANTATIONS FOR MOHAMED NUR

EXPERIMENTAL PRESENTATION

Date 3rd Oct.
11:15

Naima Hassan is a researcher, curator, and archivist based between Berlin and London. She is the managing editor of *Annotations in Four Acts* (2025), a forthcoming publication emerging from her role as Associate Curator and Archivist at G.A.S. Foundation in Lagos. She is also a member of the Steering Board of TheMuseumsLab and part of Nieuwe Instituut's New Currents: Indian Ocean Futures Working Group, where her photographic research centres on Charles Gullian's Somali Coast daguerreotypes (1846–1948). Hassan co-founded the archive-focused platform SITAAD in 2022.

CHAIR & DISCUSSANT:

Jacqueline Saki Aslan is a performance artist, education and migration researcher, lecturer at the University of Cologne (Aesthetic Education, Department of Art & Music), and PhD candidate at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Her artistic practice combines performance, sound, text, and installation, engaging with themes such as classism, transgenerationality, and memory culture. Her works have been presented at festivals, theatres, museums, and art spaces. Internationally, she has worked in critical education and cultural mediation, including at the 11th Berlin Biennale. A recurring motif in her artistic research is the cassette recorder as a medium of memory and voice.

Vinylograph is a state-of-the-art record-cutting machine that allows you to record your voice or music onto vinyl in real-time. With a high-quality microphone and a precision cutting head, the Vinylograph captures the sound waves of your performance and etches them onto a vinyl disc. Each record produced by the Vinylograph is unique, capturing the essence and emotion of the moment.

The Vinylograph is inspired by the Voice-O-Graphs, also known as 'Record Booths', which were popular in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s. These booths were small, coin-operated recording studios where people could record their voices onto a disc. However, the production of these booths ceased worldwide by the end of the 1960s, and they disappeared from the streets.

Vinylograph aims to revive this lost opportunity for people to publicly record their voices onto vinyl and preserve their memories for years to come. The machine was developed by Natascha Muhic and Christoph Freidhöfer, who

founded Vinylograph OG in 2018. By combining the traditional charm of vinyl with cutting-edge technology, the Vinylograph is an innovative addition to the audio recording industry.

It has been showcased at renowned locations such as the Audiversum Museum in Innsbruck, Vienna Design Week, and galleries like RaumD at MQ Vienna. After a stint at the Technical Museum of Vienna, the Vinylograph has been on public display at Karlsplatz since 2024, where it first debuted during the 2022 Popfest at the Künstlerhaus.

VINYLOGRAPH – AN AUTOMATIC VOICE RECORDER

INTERACTIVE RECORDING INSTALLATION

Location Foyer,
conference-long



www.vinylograph.com

Natascha Muhic & Christoph Freidhöfer

Natascha Muhic a graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Her 2016 diploma project was the **Vinylograph**, which she conceived and implemented in collaboration with Christoph Freidhöfer. As the operator of the music off-space SSTR6, she focuses on the duplication of sound carriers. During the Vinylograph sessions, music is performed live and cut onto vinyl in real-time, allowing artists and audiences to directly participate in the production process in an intimate setting and fostering multidisciplinary collaborations. Since 2019, she has been developing sound-image postcards. These have been released in several editions with various artists and exhibited at venues such as the Charim Gallery, Künstlerhaus, and during the Wiener Festwochen. Additionally, in 2021, Muhic directed the documentary *Ein Fenster zum Fluss* about the Viennese Krandaubeln and co-produced the podcast series 'Die Beste Musik der Welt in Wien'. 'Das erste Wiener Krandaubel Opening' in 2023 marked another successful collaboration with Christoph Freidhöfer.

Christoph Freidhöfer, is also a graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, is a versatile artist, mechatronics engineer, and builder of objects and devices. His work includes interactive apparatuses, installations, and sound pieces. Since 2018, he has been co-operating Vinylograph OG with Natascha Muhic. In 2016, Freidhöfer completed the first **Vinylograph** – an interactive machine that cuts vinyl records in real-time. He is currently developing a new device specifically designed for producing small series and special editions on vinyl. In 2023, he and Natascha Muhic realised the 'Das erste Wiener Krandaubel Opening', a temporary art project in Vienna.

PANEL 2: PRESENT VOICES – ABSENT HISTORIES IN COLONIAL ARCHIVES

Date 1st Oct.
18:00

CHAIR & DISCUSSANT

Noémie Étienne is a full professor of cultural heritage and art history at the University of Vienna. In 2023, she received an ERC Consolidator Grant for her project 'Global Conservation. Histories and Theories (16th–21st Century)'. Previously, she was an SNF-Professor of art history at the University of Bern and a specialist in the fields of heritage and museum studies. She led a research project on the exotic in Europe between 1600 and 1800. Her most recent book is entitled: *The Art of the Anthropological Diorama* (De Gruyter, 2021). It was originally published in French and entitled *Les autres et les ancêtres. Les dioramas de Franz Boas et Arthur Parker à New York, 1900* (Les presses du réel, 2020). Her first book, *The Restoration of Paintings in Paris, 1750–1815* was published in 2012 (Presses Universitaires de Rennes) and subsequently translated into English and published by Getty Publications in 2017.

PANEL 6: VOICES IN ARTISTIC PRACTICE

CHAIR & DISCUSSANT

Ricarda Denzer is an artist and researcher. She has taught at the academies of fine arts in Prague and Vienna. From 2013 to 2018, she was co-director of the TransArts department and has been a senior lecturer in the KKP department at the University of Applied Arts Vienna since 2018. In addition to her exhibition activities, Denzer has realised numerous site-specific art projects, including 'Decoy' on the history of migration in Allentsteig (2005), 'restore', Site Santa Fe Biennial, New Mexico, USA (2007), 'About the House – Silence Turned into Objects', Kirchstetten (2013/14); and currently the winning project for the *Reichenau Memorial* in Innsbruck (with H. Bablick, H. Machat, B. Schlorhauser, H. Zschiegner, 2024). Denzer is co-editor of the publications *Perplexities* (2013), *ganz ohr / all ears* (2024), *Silence Turned into Objects – W.H. Auden in Kirchstetten* (2014), and *Art Education Research* 913, e-journal of the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHDK).. From 2019 to 2025, she is a board member of the Vienna Secession and a member of the Angewandte Performance Lab.

Date 3rd Oct.
10:00

Sonic Traces is an interactive sound installation by Rozina Pátkai that explores voice as both material and trace within artistic and archival practice. Visitors are invited to touch selected objects embedded in the installation, activating overlapping sound fragments sourced from audio letters, oral histories and archival voice recordings. These gestures, interwoven with atmospheric and ambient soundscapes, create a multi-layered sonic atmosphere where voices blend with subtle sonic textures, offering a non-linear experience of memory and presence. The installation investigates how fragmented acoustic histories are shaped and reinterpreted through technology and embodied audience interaction, foregrounding the ephemeral nature of voice and the notion of the body as a living archive. *Sonic Traces* resists a singular narrative, inviting the public into overlapping, disjunctive, and transformative acts of listening where boundaries of identity and heritage remain fluid.

SONIC TRACES

INTERACTIVE SOUND INSTALLATION

Location ÆSR
Mobile Lab,
conference-long

Rozina Pátkai is a Hungarian interdisciplinary artist based in Vienna, whose practice encompasses performance art, music, sound art, composition, education and activism. She creates experimental visual and new media works, frequently integrating film and cross-media strategies into her projects. As a university lecturer at the Hungarian University of Fine Arts, Pátkai teaches Sound and Performance, focusing her research on the intersection of fixed sonic forms and interactive environments. Her portfolio extends from experimental electronic live acts with poetic text interpretations to acoustic jazz performances of original compositions. In her work with live electronics and interactive installations, Pátkai reconfigures relationships between installation and audience, emphasising dynamic feedback between space, sound, and participation. Her practice fosters multisensory engagement and challenges conventional boundaries in contemporary sound art.

In the context of the 140th anniversary of the Berlin Conference, I visited the Lautarchiv and its extensive collection of shellac recordings at the Humboldt Forum in Berlin. These historical recordings, initiated by linguist Wilhelm Doegen, were made with prisoners of war during WWI, including individuals from colonised regions, and continued into the 1940s.

One element caught my attention: At the end of each recording, a reference tone – a tuning tone – is heard. This tone was used to calibrate playback speed, necessary due to the variability of recording equipment. Crucially, this tone (produced with a pitch pipe) was not added later but had to be recorded live at the end of each session, meaning that every speaker was subjected to this final sound.

This tone forms an acoustic link between all the recorded subjects. It speaks to the scientific logic behind the archive – standardisation, objectivity – but also exposes the fragility of that logic through its small variances in pitch, duration, and environmental

noise. For me, this tone holds potential: It is both a marker of violence and a possible path toward listening differently.

I am currently building a collection of these reference tones, preserving their connection to the individuals involved and exploring their acoustic differences. My presentation will take the form of a listening session with performative elements. It will propose a way of witnessing – through shared hearing – that acknowledges these histories without re-extracting the voices. The tone becomes both a connective trace and a site of reflection, allowing us to hear into the layers of power, loss, and presence embedded in these archival remains.

HUMBLE LISTENING TO THE FREQUENCIES OF EMPIRE

LISTENING SESSION WITH PERFORMATIVE ELEMENTS

Date 1st Oct.
14:45

Senta Hirscheider (*1988) is an artist, scenographer, radio producer, and legal scholar. The three central pillars of Hirscheider's work are visual poetry and spoken word, a distinct approach to site-specific practice, and a working method in which form and aesthetics emerge from an intensive conceptual process based on in-depth research. Her recent work focuses on themes of sound, memory, and the interplay between archival research and contemporary artistic practice. For her contribution to 'Antennae: Frequencies from the Archive' (ZKM, 2024), she explored the collaboration between Suzanne Ciani and Harald Bode. Hirscheider has been part of the curatorial team for 'man liest wieder rot' (ZKM, 2024). Currently, she is working on a project based on extensive research in the Lautarchiv at the Humboldt Forum in Berlin and the Phonogrammarchiv of the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna, which will be exhibited in November 2025 at savvy contemporary, Berlin.

PANEL 5: THE VOICE BETWEEN DOCUMENTATION AND INTIMACY

Date 2nd Oct.
15:45

CHAIR & DISCUSSANT

Stephan Puille from Berlin, Germany, a conservator of archaeological objects, is employed as a laboratory engineer at the HTW Berlin – University of Applied Sciences. His passion for many years has been researching and publishing the world-wide history of the phonographic industry from its beginnings to the introduction of electric recording. Stephan is also a collector of early sound carriers and talking machines. He became known to a wider audience in 2012 through his identification of Count Otto von Bismarck's voice on an Edison phonograph cylinder recorded in 1889, his co-authorship of the monumental *Das Bilderlexikon der deutschen Schellack-Schallplatten* (Illustrated Encyclopedia of German Shellac Records), published in 2019 and his nomination at the 64th Annual Grammy Awards for Best Album Notes in 2022 for *Etching the Voice: Emile Berliner and the First Commercial Gramophone Discs, 1889–1895*.

My presentation will be divided into three parts. In the first part, I will talk about hearing voices – beyond the still widespread pathologisation as a symptom of schizophrenia – with reference to recent research on the history and science of inner voices (e.g. Charles Fernyhough, Tanya M. Luhrmann, Ruvanee P. Vilhauer), but also to three novels that revolve around the hearing of voices by indigenous protagonists, namely ‘Pedro Páramo’ by Juan Rulfo (from 1955, the German translation by Dagmar Ploetz was published in 2008), ‘Eisejuaz’ by Sara Gallardo (from 1971, German translation by Peter Kultzen published in 2017), and ‘Menschentier’ by Indra Sinha (from 2007, German translation by Susann Urban published in 2011). Which voices, I will ask, do we hear in dreams, in the rhythm of walking, in crises and conflicts, but also when reading and writing? The second part of my lecture will then briefly outline the history of voice and speech synchronisation in film, starting with a Disney animated film about *Donald’s Dream Voice* (from 1948). I will also comment on a few examples from the

audio-collection *Liebesgrüße aus Hollywood* (Love Letters from Hollywood, from 1999 and 2002), in which German dubbing actors of famous US film stars recite German poetry. The third part will then focus on digital voices, for example with reference to some computer games that simulate hearing voices in virtual worlds for the players’ headphones.

The lecture will be held in German.
An English transcript will be available.

FREMDE STIMMEN

LECTURE

Language German
Date 2nd Oct.
15:45

Thomas Macho (born 1952) served from 1993 to 2016 as a full professor of cultural history at the Institute for Cultural Studies at Humboldt University in Berlin. In 1976, he received his PhD at the University of Vienna with a dissertation on the philosophy of music; in 1984, he qualified as a lecturer of philosophy at the University of Klagenfurt with a habilitation thesis on metaphors of death. From March 2016 to October 2023, he headed the International Research Center for Cultural Studies (ifk) at the University of Art and Design Linz in Vienna. In 2019, he was awarded the Sigmund Freud Prize for Scientific Prose by the German Academy for Language and Literature, and in 2020, he received the Austrian State Prize for Cultural Journalism. He is a member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts, and since 2023, a member of the German Academy for Language and Literature. His more recent monographs include: *Das Leben ist ungerecht*. St. Pölten/Salzburg 2010; *Vorbilder*. München 2011; *Schweine*. Ein Portrait. Berlin 2015; *Das Leben nehmen*. Suizid in der Moderne. Berlin 2017; *Warum wir Tiere essen*. Wien 2022; *Sehen ohne Augen*. Ottensheim 2022.

CHAIR

Isabel Kranz is Professor of Cultural Studies at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna. The author and co-founder of the Literary and Cultural Plant Studies Network received her doctorate in 2011 with a dissertation on Walter Benjamin’s *Arcades Project* and published the bibliophile, multi-translated book *Sprechende Blumen. Ein ABC der Pflanzensprache* (Talking Flowers: An ABC of Plant Language) in 2014. She researches the relationship between literature and botany and also publishes on topics such as media and historiography, and visions of the future. Her current publications include *Plant Poetics: Forms and Functions of the Vegetal* (ed. with Joela Jacobs and Solvejg Nitzke) and *Pflanzen: Ein kulturwissenschaftliches Handbuch* (forthcoming with Metzler in spring 2026).

Having spent the last decade working to document the global history of gramophone voice mail, a curiously ignored chapter of media history that one can now explore online through the Princeton Phono-Post Archive, I am frequently contacted by people wishing to donate voice mail records or tapes to my research collection. You can imagine my excitement, however, when I received an email a few years ago with the subject line: 'My father invented the Voice-o-Graph!' This eventually led to my gaining access to a personal archive documenting the European pre-history of what would become the most widely-used coin-operated voice-recording technology produced by the International Mutoscope Corp of Long Island City New York. Using previously completely unknown materials from this treasure trove – including correspondence, technical drawings, photographs, internal documents, publicity materials and one-of-a-kind recordings – this lecture will tell the story of the

two Jewish inventors Alexander Lissiansky (1904–1972) and Ernst Elster (1904–1942) and their role in the creation of the Registon automatic voice recording booth in Paris in the mid-1930s. This almost completely forgotten machine – only two are known to have survived – is a crucial link between various automatic public recording technologies developed in Europe and the USA around the same time for the recording of 'spoken letters' and the soon-to-be ubiquitous coin-op Voice-o-Graph booths that were first introduced at the Mutoscope Photomatic pavilion of the 1939 New York World's Fair. The story of the Registon affords us new insights into the pre-history of the technical infrastructure and design culture of the individual voice recording automats that were such an important but overlooked feature of the global audio landscape from the 1930s through the 1960s.



VOCAMAT, VOICE RECORDS, REGISTON: ALEXANDER LISSIAANSKY AND THE PRE-HISTORY OF THE VOICE-O-GRAPH AUTOMATIC RECORDING BOOTH

LECTURE

Date 1st Oct.
16:30

Thomas Y. Levin is a media theorist, curator, collector and professor at Princeton University. The translator and/or editor of three books on the work of the cultural critic and film theorist Siegfried Kracauer, Levin is also the co-editor of a volume of Walter Benjamin's media theoretical writings and of *CTRL [SPACE]*, *Rhetorics of Surveillance from Bentham to Big Brother* (MIT Press 2002), the catalogue of a 2001 exhibition that he curated at the ZKM (Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie) in Karlsruhe. Levin was also one of the co-curators of a series of 1989 exhibitions on the Situationist International at the Centre Pompidou, the ICA (London) and the ICA (Boston). He is currently directing a long-term research project on the media archaeology of voice mail in the context of which he has assembled the world's first large-scale research collection of audio letters: The Princeton Phono-Post Archive.

CHAIR:

Eva Kapeller-Hallama studied history in Vienna and St. Petersburg. She worked as a researcher and curator. For her doctoral thesis on Nazi border delousing camps in occupied Eastern Europe, she received a scholarship of the Austrian Academy of Sciences and was Junior Fellow at the International Research Center for Cultural Studies in Vienna. Since 2021 she has headed the SONIME research project 'Sonic Memories. Audio Letters in Times of Migration and Mobility' at the Vienna Museum of Science and Technology and since May 2024 at the Department of Media Theory at the University of Applied Arts Vienna.

The sounds of the submerged lands of Nubia – and the voices of the Nubians who lived there – sit somewhere today between presence and absence, audibility and silence. We are two scholars who, arriving through different research trajectories, are trying to make sense of these sonic traces and the places, worldwide, where they are gathered. We are also keen to understand what it means to listen to this heritage of a region doubly flooded: by the reservoir of Egypt's Aswan High Dam, and by the assumptions of archaeologists, anthropologists, and others. In this paper, we discuss the work the sonic archive might do to combat those floods, however intermittently.

When the Egyptian government built the High Dam in the 1960s, a global group of salvage anthropologists and archaeologists descended upon Nubia – split across Egypt and Sudan – to record the remains and people who existed there, backed by UNESCO and the Ford Foundation. Much of that recording took the form of notes, written on paper in

field sites, camps, and offices. Sound recordings, though, were also made, and like those notes, they were not always discernible or accessible to Nubians. Rather than recording and defining their heritage, Nubians instead found themselves the subject of state-led resettlement.

Our paper examines two of Nubia's sound archives: the Rex Keating collection at the British Library and Anna Hohenwart-Gerlachstein's collection at the Vienna Phonogrammarchiv. We share how we encountered these fragmentary sounds of Nubia, gathered through the practices of salvage anthropology and archaeology. We also share how absence and presence were part of this research journey, and perhaps still are. Even as these sound archives were meant to preserve and save Nubian heritage, they somehow silenced it, too. What sort of Nubian heritage might be recovered through listening to these archives, and why?

INTERMITTENT PRESENCES: TRACING NUBIA'S SOUNDS AND VOICES

LECTURE

Date 1st Oct.
18:00

William Carruthers is Lecturer in Heritage at the University of Essex. He holds a PhD in the History and Philosophy of Science (Cambridge, 2014), and is the author of *Flooded Pasts: UNESCO, Nubia, and the Recolonization of Archaeology* (Cornell University Press, 2022). Amongst other topics, he is currently working on the sonic history of archaeology.

Fayrouz Kaddal is a doctoral student in Cultural Anthropology at Duke University. Her project investigates the different potentialities of circulating Nubia's endangered sound archives collected under a salvage paradigm. She holds an MA in Sociology-Anthropology (2021) from the American University in Cairo. Her dissertation is currently under review for publication with Cairo Papers, AUC Press.

Concept

Eva Kapeller-Hallama
Katrin Abromeit
Laura Bohnenblust

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