

Eavesdropping

The Indiscretions of The Ear

Acid Police | Anne Wellmer | BMB con.
Jeroen Uyttendaele | Lars Kynde | Michele Spanghero
Wen Chin Fu | curated by Matteo Marangoni
sunday october 30th, 2011 | Villakabila
Violenweg 2, Den Haag | opening hours
15:00-18:00 & 19:30-22:00 | thanks to
Stroom Den Haag & Gemeente Den Haag

Attempting to contain sound inside buildings is like trying to hold water in clasped hands. In terms of acoustic isolation, architectural barriers often fall short of their warrants. This is just more evident if we compare the indiscretion architecture allows the ear to the privacy it grants to the eye. Sound tends to spill out of charted borders, it ignores concepts of property, it is a perpetual trespasser. While propagating through materials of varying density, sound changes its morphology. Gradually becoming farther removed from its original source and less recognizable it eventually turns into background noise. Before fading into hum or silence, along its dissipative course it carries information across to places that were never intended to be reached, and is picked up by more or less attentive ears. The fear of being constantly watched, epitomized by George Orwell in 1984, has always been true in the acoustic domain. At any time, there might be someone listening behind a door, on the other side of a wall or across the hallway. *Eavesdropper* is a medieval English word referring to a person illicitly listening to a private conversation or activity that is not meant to be heard. This type of indiscretion, a “spying with the ears”, has been regulated for centuries by both moral and legal sanctions. But listening to others, whether allowed or not, is something we cannot avoid doing.

Reflecting on these ideas, a group of sound artists and composers has been invited to present a set of site-specific interventions in Villakabila, the former embassy of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in The Hague. The artists have been challenged with a particular task: to make a piece, in the form of an installation or a performance, that is to be heard only outside the room in which it takes place. Each room must be accessible to the audience, but when a visitor enters any given room, whatever activity is generating sound at that location must cease, as if the intruding visitor was interrupting a private affair. In this way approaching ears and eyes will be addressed separately. Failing to unite the two sensory modalities, visitors will be confronted with the ambiguity of their perceptions and forced to perform their own reconstruction of the unfolding events.

Participating Artists:

Acid Police Noise Ensemble

Acid Police Noise Ensemble is a collective of six composer/musicians residing in The Hague, The Netherlands. Their music stems from a mixture of composition and improvisation, an exploration of noise and is often political. They have been active since 2010 and perform their increasingly theatrical and ambitious projects throughout the Netherlands, including their 45 minute, "1-Act Aktionist Chamber Opera" *Potlatch*, which was first seen at an evening of Neoist art in Worm, Rotterdam. September 2011 sees them present an evening of pieces exploring the connections between Pasolini's *Salo*, Stockhausen and 9/11, coinciding with the release of their first record *Extraordinary Renditions* and the publication of the first issue of *Niet Zo Gezellig*, a magazine dedicated to radical aesthetics.

BMB con.

BMB con. was founded by Justin Bennett, Roelf Toxopeus and Wikke't Hooft in 1989. Since 2006 BMB con. consists of a core duo working together with a changing group of invited artists / performers.

BMB con. incorporate electronic and acoustic music, film, video and physical theatre in their performances and installations. As well as these fleeting, sometimes unique actions, BMB con. make and publish audio CD's, videos and photography.

Wen Chin Fu

Wen Chin Fu is a taiwanese artist currently living and working in The Hague. She graduated in The Royal Art Academy, Art and Science interfaculty, Den Haag. She has collaborated with, among others, the choreographer Kirstie Simpson, photographer Maria Rebecca Ballestra and theater groups in Holland. Her research is concentrated principally on the relationship between sound, music and physical movement.

Lars Kynde

Lars Kynde is a Danish composer and sound artist, educated at The Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen and the interfaculty ArtScience in the Hague. He performs and builds mechanical instruments and composition machines. These works focus on the interdependency of composition, instrument and notational system.

Jeroen Uyttendaele

Jeroen Uyttendaele (1981, Belgium) studied Radio at RITS in Brussels and Artscience at The royal Conservatory of The Hague. A central theme in his work is the tangibility and visualisation of primal technological principals within a musical framework. This translates itself through the development of audiovisual instruments, installations and sound compositions.

Michele Spanghero

Michele Spanghero (Gorizia, Italy 1979) is a sound and visual artist.

His research is focused on improvised and electronic music (as doublebass player and composer) and sound-art through electroacoustic sound installations. He has attended workshops in electronic music (Agon Ars Magnetica) and improvised music (William Parker, Tristan Honsinger and Naked Musician). He's conducting a research and visual experimentation with particular interest in the photographic medium.

He has exhibited and performed in different international contexts in Italy, France, Switzerland, Slovenia, Austria, Germany, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and USA.

Anne Wellmer

Anne Wellmer is a German composer, performer and sound artist based in The Hague in The Netherlands. Wellmer uses field recordings, live sound processing and electronically generated sound in her work, which shifts between tape music, improvisation, installation and performance. Feedback, electromagnetic disturbances and barely audible acoustic phenomena make out essential aspects of her work. In 2007 she received an honorary mention in digital music from the Prix Ars Electronica in Linz. In recent years Wellmer has been curating various events around composers of experimental and electronic music.

About Villakabila:

Villakabila is an Art collective and the base of a group of artists and musicians in Scheveningen, Den Haag. Since october 2010 the former embassy of Congo is used as living space, ateliers, music studio's and exhibition place. The space is managed by the foundation Stichting Centrum.

High-resolution images can be downloaded from this address:
www.humbug.me/press/eavesdropping_images.zip

For further information please contact:

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