

Ofn a Sain // Fear and Sound

The initial concept of the show comes from the experience of hearing while feeling fear. Do you remember lying in bed as a child, listening to every crack in the house? Or listening to every noise while walking through an underpass at night? Hearing seems much sharper and even the smallest sound makes an impact on the entire body and mind when we experience fear. But of course, fear manifests itself through sound in a range of ways, as you will see in this show.

Western art, our galleries, and our entire culture has taught us to rely on our intellectual properties as we live our lives, and experiencing the arts: dissect, analyse, rationalise, and you will understand the content of any work. Sound has become an under-looked aspect of our lives—we watch everything, we need to see everything with our eyes—sound played a significantly more important role in our lives before screens, printing presses, and writing arrived. Sound represents something primal, something deeply connected with the animal part of ourselves, rather than the intellectual. Eventually, our hearing has developed from a sense we depended on for survival into a purely communicative and aesthetic sense. But what if we would let go, and let our under-utilised senses fully appreciate what sound does to us instead of experiencing it in a manner we are so used to?

In this show I would like to take you through an array of emotions and feelings caused by sound in its dark, sometimes unpleasant and disturbing qualities by immersing you into a primal experience of sound through a curated collection of sound and video art made by 9 artists from 6 countries. The artists were invited to submit work based on the connection between fear and sound, and the resulting in a diverse show that plays with a range of themes explored within fear and sound, from mystery and darkness, to depression and conflict.

– Dimitri Rastoropov

The artists:

Julia Krivozubova – 'Presence', 2013

Statement:

Technically, 'Presence' is a piece of two low-quality videos of women figures on both, but with slight differences and a separate sound track that includes noises of steps, knocks, white noise. All is repeating and out of sync. Substantively, the work is based on the impression and idea of space turning into sense, disturbing and frightening feeling.

Biography:

Julia Krivozubova was born in 1996 in Moscow and is a graduate of the V. Surikov Moscow State Academy Art Institute. She has been resident of Aidan Salakhova open studio (2013-2014) and has shown her work in numerous exhibitions in 'Vinzavod', 'Random Gallery' and other galleries in Moscow.

Georgina James – Untitled, 2015

Statement

I have a particular interest in decay, having explored the decay of relationships, nature and the human mind. An exploration of dementia takes central importance within my current practice.

I have experimented with creating sound pieces that manage to provoke fear and confusion. My inspiration for creating a particular style of sound was the fear surrounding ageing and the probability of losing a lifetime's memories, combined with the confusion present in understanding dementia and the sufferer.

Biography:

Georgina James is currently in her last year of her BA, studying Fine Art at Plymouth College of Art. An exploration of dementia takes central importance within her current practice, and she uses a mixture of photography, drawing, digital and sound mediums to portray these themes.

Laurie Bell – 'The Fear Machine', 2015

Statement:

Our ability to hear and be heard is one of the reasons humanity has become the dominant species on the planet. In prehistoric times, listening to our surroundings hearing helped us evade predators and associate the sounds that they made with danger. Fear, and our ability to react to it, therefore, is absolutely fundamental to our survival. Although modernity has reduced the need for such ancient fears, we are still bound to them through millions of years of evolution and conditioning. This why I choose to work with the medium of sound – it speaks to us on a primal level. Anthony Storr (1992) stated that if we see a particularly disturbing image then all we have to do is shut our eyes if we wish to avoid it. The same cannot be said about our hearing.

The Fear Machine attempts to merge the real, known world, with the imagined unseen, allowing the listener to sculpt their own narrative as they hear each sound and link it to their individual memory associations. Inspired by my continued research of depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and existentialism, this piece encourages discussion and reflection.

Biography:

Laurie Bell was born in Preston, England in 1985. He works predominantly in the medium of sound, but regularly experiments with video, paint and sculpture. Bell completed an MFA in Art & Humanities at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design at the University of Dundee in 2014. He is a graduate of Abertay University, where he gained a Degree in Creative Sound Production. He regularly exhibits in Dundee, both in solo and in group exhibitions.

Since 2010, Bell has worked as an associate lecturer at Abertay University, Dundee, where he teaches modules related to audio for multimedia and ethics. His research interests merge various aspects of psychology, philosophy and sonic art to further understand depression.

He lives in Bo'ness, Scotland.

Felix Leffrank – 'Dancers gonna dance', 2014

Statement:

The situation which we expose ourselves in this work, reproduces an eternal dispute between me and the performer Josefine Mhle. She dances and I hate dancing. Two energy sources. Josefine Mhle dances in front of the camera while I express my dislikes about dancing by screaming through the microphone.

I see power relations in this work. As a serious critic my shouting is completely inadequate. What matters is the energy that emanates from the language. Josefine takes this energy and converts it to her dancing. But of course she can not completely ignore what I say. Again and again there are little situations where she responds to the content of my words.

The power that an aggressor can use in interpersonal relationships, is based on the fact that people are intimidated by aggressive behaviour, because they mix up the energy of words and their intrinsic value. The aggression must be considered as an energy source that must be answered adequately.

To me there exists a harmony between what is said and the dance, though the two components contradict. The audience, however, is also involved in a power structure. Whom do you give attention? The shouting or the dance? Can the dance still be enjoyed?

Biography:

"I emerged from a bourgeois woman in 1987 in Wertheim, a little protestant town in south of Germany. There was pressure in the less-violent method my parents chose to raise me, my brother and my sister. Financial, moral and pessimist pressure I still have to fight every time my mother calls. This pressure made my childhood hell, like every childhood is hell. With 24 years my hormone system turned me into an adult and therefore into a human. Today I live in Leipzig, Germany and I try to avoid doing the same mistakes my parents did. Therefore I decided to stay single."

Daniel Wechsler – 'Remains' & 'Unknown Path', 2015

Statement:

Whilst experimenting with new techniques to manipulate video, an attempt was made with the intention to exhaust different video filters and the on board graphics card. The end result was a new technique consisting of malfunctions, allowing a new way to present of the moving and still image.

From that point on, it only seemed natural to combine one fatal error with a few minor ones .

Biography:

Daniel Wechsler is a video artist & audio engineer currently based in Tel-Aviv. He started as a musician and an audio engineer, graduating from the School of Audio Engineering in London. After a couple of years of working in Audio for Post and FOH (both London and Tel-Aviv) he began to edit video. For the past 7 years he has been filming, editing and creating video art..

Focusing on the creation of new video techniques, Wechsler uses computer errors and malfunctions to create visual 'bugs'. These faults and errors are then assembled to become new methods enabling us to reflect on our own faults. His work deals with personal and collective trauma, seeking new ways to touch old wounds.

Maria Colina Perez – 'You were fed by buzz and it was fed by you. But the buzz was insatiable', 2015

Statement:

This video loop represents post media reality where images and noises are so aggressive and depressively spinning, that the only natural human reaction is fear and anxiety.

I see the buzz as a pervasive substance that is everywhere and makes humans feel like they are forever drowning. And if you throw away your TV and switch off all the gadgets, you will still hear these disturbing media noises from pieces of conversations of strangers or from advertising.

Biography:

Maria Colina Perez lives and works in Moscow, she a young artist working with different kinds of media, interested in post-digital capitalism studies.

Davide Palmentiero – 'Tunnel of Interference', 2015

Statement:

Listening is the only guide.

Biography:

Davide Palmentiero has studied guitar in the Ludwig van Beethoven Academy in Bellizzi, and Electronic Music at San Pietro a Majella's Conservatory in Naples directed by Elio Martusciello. During his studies he became interested in compositional and improvisational practices and prepared guitar building.

In the conservatory he has also formed a radical electroacoustic improvisation trio with Giuseppe Pisano and Massimo Varchione that plays on various festivals.

In 2014 he becomes the art director of the association for social promotion O.D.I.S.S.E.A., and begins his collaboration with l'Asilo—community workers in entertainment and art—taking part in Tavolo Infrasuoni, a weekly meeting of musical planning of the organisation.

Palmentiero's work stems from the guitar, on which research and experimentation are also reflected in performative happenings taking it out its ordinary context, but the total target of his research is the mastery of the frequencies through textures and gestures.

Julian Scordato – 'Atropos', 2009

Statement:

This work wants to evoke images of an apparently dystopian environment. Electronic sounds are generated by a stochastic process that takes its cue from genetics (frameshift mutations, base substitution, sequence inversion) and its implementation is semi-improvised thanks to random generated variables (sequence, pitch, duration, dynamics): in its unpredictability, the result can be only routed within a range of values. The formal structure is made of molecules designed as containers, part of an out-of-time category.

Biography:

Julian Scordato (Italy/USA) studied Composition (BA) and Electronic Music (MA) at the Venice Conservatory of Music.

His electroacoustic and audiovisual works have been selected in international competitions and performed in prestigious festivals in Europe, Asia and America. Among these are Biennale di Venezia, Festival 5 Giornate (Milan), Electronic Arts and Music Festival (Miami), EMUfest (Rome), Re-New Digital Arts Festival (Copenhagen), Gaudeamus Music Week (Utrecht), Siren Festival (Gothenburg), Deep Wireless Festival (Montreal), Festival Internacional de Música Electroacústica Punto de Encuentro (Valencia, Granada and Canaries), Sonorities Festival (Belfast), Seoul International Computer Music Festival, Art & Science Days (Tours, Bourges and Orleans), and others.

As an author/speaker, Scordato participated in conferences including the Colloquium on Music Informatics, Sound and Music Computing Conference, European Sound Studies Association Conference and Invisible Places Sounding Cities, presenting interactive performance systems and projects related to acoustic ecology and design.

His music has been broadcast in Italy and abroad (RAI Radio3, NAISA Webcast, RadioCemat, Radio Papesse, Radio UNAM and RadioCona). Ars Publica and Taukay Edizioni Musicali have published his scores.

Vadim Kolosov – 'Russia Time Map', 2015

Statement:

In this project I was interested in connecting composition and the analysis and sound-processing of the current social circumstances in Russia. As a base for this structure I chose the time interval from Moscow Olympic games in 1980 to represent time, calculating a time-corresponding grid, where every second of the composition corresponded to a real period of time; in the process the composition started to resemble the timescale of the critical points in this interval history of Russia, such as USSR collapse, Putin's seizure of the government, financial crisis and so on. I started to gather my sound material using radio and TV archives, doing field-recordings, trying to connect them to this «time map». At some point I found that archival sounds of Kremlin bell also contained some correlation with this time stamps in its spectral analysis, so I used it as my composition grid, putting more and more corresponding sounds on it. I used a range of processing techniques to produce sounds of exact tonality, duration and texture. On the one hand, this work is purely an algorithmic reflection on what has happened, yet it gives me an opportunity to use it to say what would happen next. For me, this piece represents the growing feeling of fear, that is spreading far across Russia today.

Biography:

Vadim Kolosov. is an artist from Moscow. Since being a child he has spent a lot of time exploring sound, starting with lo-fi experiments with double tapedeck recordings, dictaphones, hacking toys, but then I found out world of digital sound with ACID software back in the end of 90s - making field records and noises.

He studied photography and fine art in the British School of Art in Moscow, and worked with documentary indie crews on movie shootings. Currently, he is studying in the Moscow Art School of Rodchenko, and the Electroacoustic Department in the Moscow Conservatory.