

## **LOCUS SONUS**

### **Audio in Art Research Group**

#### **Who are we?**

Locus Sonus is a research group specialized in audio art, as such it is officially recognized and receives funding from the french ministry for culture. It is organized as a post graduate course by the Art Schools of Aix-en-Provence (Ecole Superieure d'Art d'Aix-en-Provence) and Nice (Ecole Nationale Superieure d'Art Villa Arson Nice), France.

Locus Sonus is co-coordinated by Jerome Joy (professor at ENSA Villa Arson) and Peter Sinclair (professor at ESAA) and accepts a small number of fellows on a yearly basis. This years fellows are: Nicolas Bralet, Esther Salmona and Lydwine Van der Hulst. The personnel of Locus Sonus is completed by a scientific council, several who's members are active in the group and other professors from both schools.

#### **What are our aims?**

Over recent years we have seen significant developments in the use of audio, not only in emerging art forms in the digital domain, but also within areas traditionally related to visual arts: installation, gallery and museum exhibits. Considering the innovative and transdisciplinary nature of audio art forms and the resulting difficulties encountered by institutions in accommodating them, it seemed appropriate to propose a research program to experiment and evaluate these forms in a lab-type context. We are also concerned with in the communal, collective or multi-user aspects inherent to many emerging audio practices and which necessitate working as a group. Two main thematics define this research - audio in it's relation to space and networked audio systems.

#### **What are our methods?**

The enrolled fellows are chosen for their personal background and interest in the research themes. Aside from developing their personal project during their time with Locus Sonus the "Lab" proposes a process combining practical artistic experimentation and critical evaluation in a group context. We aim to accomodate artistic proposals from individual members of the group within a global project offering insight into the above mentioned themes. One of our principal concerns is to render public as much of this process as possible through: artistic events, symposiums, conferences and publications.



## **Project 2006**

The Locus Sonus Lab is currently focusing on a process which revolves around the use of multiple audio streams. The streams which are basically open microphones, "audio web-cams" continually upload chosen soundscapes or sound environments, as playable material. We like to consider this networked audio as an emblematic resource, symbolizing our concern with relational esthetiques and a modified personal and geographical space.

We are paying great attention to the locating of our sound sources, in terms of their acoustic characteristics and with regard to the political or sociological nature of the chosen site. The way in which we work with other people to set up and maintain the streams is part of the methodology, indeed the technology provides the basis to construct a human network. Another important aspect is the orchestration of the streams, choosing their locations to provide us with abundant artistic and compositional possibilities.

We are working towards a series of events planned to take place during July and August. Our current scheme involves considering these separate events as one journey during which we will set up our streams as we progress. This method will allow us to generate a performative journal which we permanently update. We will make collective onsite decisions as to where the microphones should be placed as our journey progresses. As artists and musicians we propose to present physical manifestations which embody the underlying networks through installation and performance.

As part of this process the public presentation will also evolve to incorporate each new stream, taking into account the local environment, the people in it and the situation in which the event takes place.

Beyond the permanent streams, we are also considering bringing with us mobile or wireless streams (in development) which could be used on site, perhaps attached to a person, a vehicle, an animal...

As we travel those interested in the process will be able to continue to participate via various collaborative publications. cf our wiki: <http://audiolib4.free.fr/wikils/> our podcast: <http://nujus.net/~villapod/locusonuspod.xml>

Potential forms for these presentations include (directions which we are currently investigating) :

- **Laptop Orchestra**, as a group of 5 musicians we play together using our audio streams as a common source.
- **Meta-Instrument**, The design and fabrication of instrument interfaces to interpret the streamed sound.
- **Mise en scene/performance**, which involve the manipulation of sound sources and the related gestures in a physical space.
- **Installation/architecture**, sound space.

In the period following these public events we will be publishing a Book/DVDrom with essays by artists and researchers who have participated in locus sonus during the year, video documentation of events and hyperlinks to our online database.



- **Excerpt from Esther's journal.** (Ester Salmona is one of this years locus sonus fellows)

"I'm wondering how environmental sound can create deep modifications in our mind and our body.

How the sound waves, with their vibes, transform the way we live, think, act, create, feel?

The vibrations whether we perceive or not create micro-movements -- unconscious, psychological and mechanical.

Sound influences our life concretely, via the shape space takes.

How can sound participate in creating a new environment, with less limits?

The stream is a medium for the expression of sound and from there of place.

How can sound through the stream create a peculiar sort of ubiquity?

It's a perfect bypass to come back into the territory, on the ground with our body.

The trips, between two or more dimensions (sensitive, intellectual, physical, social, real, virtual dimensions) create the thin spaces "in between" that I want to explore.

I want to experient the 1/1 scale and the act of presence."

### Locus Sonus Directors

- Jean-Paul Ponthot - ESAA
- Jean-Marc Réol - ENSAN

### Locus sonus scientific Council:

- **Samuel Bordreuil** (LAMES-CNRS MSH Univ Aix-en-Provence/Marseille).
- **Jean-Pierre Dalbéra** (Musée National de Civilisations de l'Europe et de la Méditerranée, Marseille).
- **Christophe Dessaux** (MRT, Ministère de la Culture).
- **Philippe Franck** (Musiques Nouvelles / TransCultures / Mons Belgique).
- **Bastien Gallet** (Musica Falsa / France Culture / Festival Archipel Genève).
- **Christophe Kihm** (Art Press / Le Fresnoy).
- **Sally Jane Norman** (University of Newcastle - Culture Lab).
- **Jean-Claude Risset** / Daniel Arfib (CNRS-LMA Marseille).
- **Bernard Stiegler** (IRCAM Paris/ Directeur des activités culturelles Centre Georges Pompidou).
- **Raphael de Vivo** (GMEM Marseille), Michel Waisvisz (Steim, Amsterdam).

### Locus Sonus Sponsors

- **DAP** (French ministry for culture Fine arts - research funds).
- **Art School of Aix en Provence** (ESAA).
- **Art School of Nice** (ENSAN La Villa Arson).
- **GMEM** (Marseilles experimentale music group).
- **Radio Grenouille** (Marseilles independant radio station).
- **LAMES-CNRS MSH Univ.** Aix-en-Provence/Marseille.
- **Musiques Nouvelles** (Belgium).
- **TransCultures** (Belgium).
- **STEIM**, Amsterdam.
- **FACE** fondation (Washington).
- **SAIC** School of Art Institut of Chicago.
- **AVATAR** Quebec.
- **Region PACA.**
- **DVAA** (Narrowsburg NY).



## **Planned Events for summer 2006**

- 10/14 july:

La Villa Arson

Nice

<http://www.villa-arson.org/>

- 22/23 july:

CITYSONICS Mons Belgium

<http://www.citysonics.be/>

- 7/10 august:

SAIC Chicago

<http://www.artic.edu/saic/>

- 11 august

Tangent gallery Detroit

<http://www.thedetroiter.com/MAR03/Mitch.html>

- 12/18 august:

EYEBEAM New-York

<http://www.eyebeam.org/>

- 19/26 august:

DIGIT Festival Woodstock

Roebing Bridge Environmental Arts

<http://www.artalliancesite.org/>

- 1/8 sept

AVATAR Quebec

<http://www.lenomdelachose.org/>

- 15 sept

GMEM Marseille:

<http://www.gmem.org/>