

UC Irvine: Art 95 Sonic arts Winter 2023

Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30am-11:50am (we begin class promptly at 9:30 am)

Instructor Brian Bowman bbowman1@uci.edu

Office Hours by Appointment I encourage you to email me to set up an appointment! We can talk about art, sound, Media, Philosophy, your school and professional goals, etc.

I am generally available for in-person meetings on campus on Tuesdays between 12-3 pm

Introduction

Hello, and welcome to Sonic Arts. The gist of this class is that we will discuss, create and showcase works that revolve around sound as a material in creating works of art. We will explore questions like what is sound? What are the politics surrounding this medium? We'll talk a little bit about audiovisual aspects and the history of sound art. Our topics might be informed a bit by knowledge gained from the fields of philosophy and sculpture, but a big distinction will be made on what the difference is between Sound as a material for art making and musicality, which is not to say there is some crossover. We'll also draw from guest speakers and learn from people who work with this material as a focus of their practice.

Sound, sculpture, and installation shares a history with contemporary visual arts, linking Futurism, Dada, Fluxus, Bauhaus, Post-Modern, and relational art. Students will acquire knowledge of the conceptual and historical background through short lectures and readings of related research topics such as sound art, installation art, experimental music, phonography, audio-visual art, and acoustics.

Because sound is a different modality than vision, we will learn ways to heighten this sense and gain a greater awareness for listening to the world around us. We will make creative work that explores these topics. Your grade is based on 1. Attendance (being on time is key to a great grade), 2. Participation in class discussions and critiques and 3. Your creative projects which involves two this quarter, which you will be working on iteratively throughout the quarter and can be of any form if sound is your primary source. The first one is a soundscape and the second one is the final project that involves creating a work based on sonic structure.

This class is meant to be a small creative community where we can support each other. Throughout history artists, writers, and thinkers have gathered regularly to explore pressing issues of their time. They have supported and held each other accountable for making sincere work that is responsive to the time in which they live. I see this class as a way of participating in that lineage but also, we regard the critique as the highest form of learning for this environment and that is why it is important that we understand that

thoughtfulness and honesty are required for this to work. Part of your grade is warranted on how much you participate in the critique as well as the discussions.

Grades

Your grade is based 50% on class participation (discussion and Critique), and 25% on your Soundscape project and 25% on your final, which is where your creative project is shared. Please submit your projects on time. You lose a point per day that you are late.

You are all allowed one excused absence this quarter. It is helpful if you send me an email if you need to miss a class. If you take more than one class off, unless you have written me with a very urgent reason, I will need to deduct points from your grade. If you miss three classes your grade automatically drops one letter grade.

Creative Projects

Due Tuesday 4/26 Project One "Soundscape"

Due Tuesday 5/31 Final Project "Sonic Art"

Class content will be updated on an ongoing basis during the quarter.

All readings that are posted the previous week will be discussed in the following Tuesday's class. I will provide these and post them every week so you may have a full week to absorb the material. Please take notes as you read and come prepared to class with questions and thoughts for that week's discussion.

WEEK 1: Listening

Tuesday, January 10 Introductions, Expectations, and setup of the class Discussion topics:

- Listening to the world around you
- Methodologies for reading text and discussing as a class.

Videos:

"12 Sound Artists changing your perception of Art"

Your first creative project is to make a soundscape and your final which can be in the form of making any sonic artwork. Possible projects include sound sculptures, kinetic sculptures, experimental radio works, site-specific sound installation, sound walks, instrument making, graphic scores, sound poetry, video art, and acoustic ecology.

<https://news.artnet.com/art-world/12-sound-artists-changing-perception-art-587054>

Readings:

R. Murray Shafer "The Soundscape" Sound, p110-111

Merleau Ponty-<https://soundstudiesblog.com/tag/maurice-merleau-ponty/>

Gallagher-<https://www.michaelgallagher.co.uk/archives/category/sonic-research-methods>

“Pedagogy of Sound” PDF

Thursday January 12, Workshop Demo

Collecting and working with sound. Logic Pro Demonstration Syllabus check-in and creative projects overview Homework: Start working on soundscape sketches

WEEK 2: Sound as Material

Discussion topics:

-Working with Sonic Material -Art Historical Context for Sound

Tuesday, January 17

Lecture on History of Sound Art Readings:

Sounds Matter PDF

Sound art the Unconscious Cox PDF

Thursday January 19, Workshop Demo

Field Recording

WEEK 3: Sound Objects

Discussion topics: -Sculpture and Sound -

Tuesday, January 24,

Lecture:

Readings:

“Materiality in Sound Art” PDF

Robert Morris: *Letter to John Cage, 1961* (from: Whitechapel)

“<https://www.blackmountaincollege.org/material-sound-at-home/>”

Thursday, January 26, Workshop Demo

Making a Piezo (contact Microphone)

WEEK 4: Politics of Sound

Discussion topics:

-How artist work with sound in a social practice

Tuesday, January 31

Lecture on Sonic Artists with a Social Aware Practice such as Abu Hamden and

Andrea Frasier. Readings:

Abu Hamdan, "The Political Implications of Sound and Silence"

<http://digicult.it/articles/lawrence-abu-hamdan-the-political-implications-of-sound-and-silence/>

"Unbridgeable Gap: Andrea Fraser Brings Sing Sing to the Whitney"

<https://artcritical.com/2016/04/16/nicole-kaack-on-andrea-fraser/>

Political Possibilities of Sound Pg. 108-117

Video:

"Down the River" by Andrea Fraser

https://m.facebook.com/yellowperilgallery/videos/948583928582991/?locale=de_DE&_rdr

Thursday, Feb 2

Workshop/ Finish up Soundscapes for Crit next week.

WEEK 5:**Crit Week:**

Tuesday, Feb 7 Crit

Thursday, Feb 9 Crit

WEEK 6: Data and Sound

Discussion topics:

- How systems work to produce results - Generative Process

Tuesday, Feb 14

Lecture: 'System s in Artistic Production

Reading:

"John Cage: *Some Rules for Students and Teachers*

.¹<https://bombmagazine.org/articles/jacob-kirkegaard-interviewed/>

Thursday, Feb 16

Workshop

Max/Jitter Demo

WEEK 7: Visualization of Sound

-Merging the two modalities of sight and hearing

Tuesday, Feb 21

Lecture

Readings:

Gynnes, Audiovisual in Art PDF

Thursday Feb 23

Workshop

More audio Reactive Stuff in Max

WEEK 8: Tuesday, March 7

Guest speaker Laura Solomon

Thursday, March 9

Workshop :

Final Project Workshop

WEEK 9: Artists in Music

Tuesday, May 14

Full Mantis Movie

Readings:

Christian Marclay and Kim Gordon "In Conversation" Sound, Whitechapel pg.157

Video:

Dan Graham "Rock and Roll is my Religion" <https://vimeo.com/5445916> Mike

Kelley "Grow Live Monsters" https://ubu.com/film/dam_grow.html

Corey Archangel "Insecticide" <http://www.eai.org/titles/insecticide>

Thursday, March 16

Workshop:

Finish Final projects

WEEK 10: Final Project

Tuesday, March 21:

Group one Final Crit

Thursday, March 23:

Group Two Final crit

Reader

1. "Sound" Documents on contemporary Art, Caleb Kelley
2. "Sonic Flux", Sound, Art and Metaphysics, Christopher Cox
3. "The Political Possibility of Sound", Salome Voeglin
4. "Listening to Noise and Silence", Salome Voeglin
5. "Noise Music" A History, Paul Hegerty
6. "Noise, Water, Meat", Douglas Kahn
7. "Phenomenology of Perception", Merleau-Ponty (A bit dense but lays the foundation)