

AUDIO DESCRIPTIONS

***Billions of Simultaneous Motions* by Nick Dourado**

Audio essay, 37 mins, 2022

Drawing from their vast interdisciplinary collection of research, Nick Dourado's audio piece *Billions of Simultaneous Motions* seeks to contextualize the intersections of space, vibration, sound and construction. Informed by their training as an engineer and geophysicist, this sonic exploration examines the role of sound and listening with regards to world building and the development of knowledge and social systems. While recorded sound is ubiquitous in our contemporary environment, the technical ability to preserve a sound is astonishingly new. Not only have recordings shifted the need for memorization to preserve songs, stories and ideas; innovations in recording technologies, including vacuum tubes, magnetic tape and transistors led ultimately to the development of telecommunications and computation. Before sound recordings, any sound we would hear came directly from motion in our environment. As such, the first uses of sound recordings were meant to simulate and manipulate our perception of reality. In *Billions of Simultaneous Motions*, the listener is invited to imagine the effect upon consciousness, society, time and space as they are ushered through the development of listening practices and sonorous technologies.

This piece was commissioned for *Another World That Sounds Like You*.

***Hazzeh* by Hong-Kai Wang**

Audio installation, 15 mins, 2019

Multi-channel piece

In *Hazzeh*, which means "quiver" as well as "earthquake" in Arabic, Wang deploys listening as a way of accessing the depths of sadness at the Jordan/Palestine border around Jericho, Ajloun, and the Dead Sea. In what Wang describes as an "open rehearsal," a group of Palestinian and Jordanian women performers gather along the geological fault lines at the border. Facing the hills and valley of Ajloun, they utter lyrics extracted from the book *Palestinian Mournings* by Hassan Atari. As they perform, they recall their grandmothers' ways of doing Nuwah, a ritual lament performed by women, long banned and barely documented.

***Swing Low, Sweet Chariot #1, 2 and 3* by JJJJerome Ellis**

Audio tracks, 18 mins, 2019

In *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot #1, 2, and 3*, JJJJerome Ellis performs the famous African-American "signal song." According to musician and educator Dr. Phyllis Wade, African Americans used signal songs to communicate about escape through the Underground Railroad. According to archivist Beth McDonald, "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" was sung to tell slaves in the South that they would be escaping soon. The lyrics encode this message: the sweet chariot (the Underground Railroad) would soon come south (swing low) to take slaves north (carry me home).

***Memorial to Lost Words* by Bani Abidi**

Audio installation, 12 mins, 2016

Multi-channel piece

In memory of more than a million Indian soldiers who served in the Great War (1914-1918) but are remembered – if ever – only for their valor and loyalty to the British crown. Abidi gleans from historical archives of letters that were censored and folk songs that stopped being sung, in trying to conjure up a complex world of longing, fear and displacement as was actually experienced by these young men. The song was conceived by Bani Abidi and is a combination of two texts. The first 'Na Wanj Na Wanj Dholan Yaar', an old Punjabi folk song. The second, a poem especially written for this arrangement by Amarjit Chandan based on censored letters written by the soldiers.

***Lovesong Revolution* by Urok Shirhan**

Musical essay, 46 mins, 2020

Can a sound start a revolution? The Portuguese Carnation Revolution of 1974 is known to have been triggered by a love song aired on the radio. Eighteen days prior, "E Depois do Adeus" was performed by Paulo de Carvalho as Portugal's submission for the Eurovision Song Contest. Departing from this love song, this sound essay traverses other, more recent instances of public speech, bodies in the street, political songs and sounds. While some of the sounds are explicitly political, expressing solidarity or speaking directly of struggle, other sounds are political only implicitly – or "accidentally" – politicized through their adaptation in contexts such as protests. This piece thinks about the amplification of sound through embodiment, all while keeping in mind the following: Where can dissonance and dissidence be located within our own lives? Is there a place in the public sphere for those unamplified voices inside our heads: the soft voices that speak of fear, doubt, powerlessness and precarity? Can the revolution include our heartbreak and exhaustion, as well as our courage and defiance?