

H or the audience

10.06.2020 – 05.07.2020
Fri Art Kunsthalle

Those unmindful when they hear, for all they make of their intelligence, may be regarded as the walking deads. Heracliteus (ca. 500 BCE)

Acoustic, on tour, audio-visual, auto-tuned, streamed, vibrating, delayed or headphoned : the listening situations you are invited to explore in *H or the audience* emerged from the recent period of closing. From April to May, Fri Art Kunsthalle welcomed short term residencies of artists working locally with and around sound. These have slowly transformed into the installations you can discover in the exhibition. With other contributors, from a distance, conversations developed around the notion of listening. They will in turn materialize on site throughout the upcoming weeks.

The installations offer various listening situation. These are mostly open, subject to changes, incomplete without an active listener. They communicate a more circular approach towards creation, not limited by one direction, i.e. from the artist to the spectator. They have the potential to generate events that take place without too much announcement or stay undocumented. They are experimental, which means subject to failure.

Each material island is an invitation to think about one's position as an audience, to become an active listener : from the movement of one's body in space, through the feedback of the recorded voice, in the difference between what one sees and what one hears, in the oscillation between pleasure and control. Sound opens onto another place for culture, behind, or aside the domination of visual culture.

The definition of an audience is slippery. It comes from an ancient constellation of medias, of radio, or television. *H or the audience* calls for a reflection on the information that brought you here, on the way you consume it, or it consumes you. Which audience counts ? The one of your online stream, or the one that joins onsite ? Why should an audience be reduced to a number or designed by target keywords ? What separates the audience from the listener ?

With AMAK, Betâ, Costanza Candeloro, ENCOR studio, feldermelder, Renée Green, Ivory A Ivy, Martina Lussi and Tim Shaw, Melanie Meystre, Lucas Monème, Pain, Reymour, Fiona Rody, Axelle Stiefel aka The Operator, Bernhard Zitz.

Works descriptions

Room 1

H by Melanie Meystre

Entering the space, you become « H » or « the audience ». A costume hangs from the ceiling, most of the time, unworn. A performance starts when one says so, it is guided by this paradox : Always active even if absent.

Mirror vibrations by ENCOR studio

Entering the exhibition, the audience is called into focus. The trembling mirror by ENCOR studio vibrates to the rythm of online mood. The installation *#Hate* is connected to a bot that filters hate speech and abusive tweets. The sound makes the surface vibrate and alters the way you see your reflection.

Video archive by Renée Green

The second island presents three video works by the artist Renée Green distributed on two separate monitors. Renée Green was invited to exhibit in Fri Art Kunsthalle in 1996. The exhibition was titled *Flow*. These videos were on display, although presented in a different setup. During the period of closing, Fri Art dugged into its archive. From that research, a collection of VHS tapes resurfaced. In agreement with FAM (Free Agent Media), the distribution company of the artist, we decided to present them a second time.

The video *Out of my Life / Seinfeld* (60', 1994) tapes the popular Seinfeld TV serie, on which an insert parasites the purritan content of the episodes and blocks the pleasure of their ritualistic consumption. The work quite directly tackles the audience' dependency. Made thirty years from now, these rediscovered video work anticipates a critic of what we now call *bindge watching*.

Culture Tour (1994) and *Camino Road* (1994) are made up of carefully assembled raw moments: holiday memories, home movies, glimpses of a European tour, conversations in hotel rooms, vernissage, soundtracks of car rides, MTV, shop fronts... How far are we from these images? Their representation triggers a reflection on media archaeology, the transformation of cultures and the archive of the institution.

Playground by AMAK

Trap is a community-based evolving soundtrack, a way of making sound for an audience built through the prism of social networks. It fluidifies the passage between writing, speech, clothing, filming, graphics and naming. It confuses production and distribution in a highly staged performance.

A canceled concert leads to the invitation of a hip hop collective to use the Kunsthalle as a studio to produce trap music, with all the culture it involves. The collective in question, AMAK, answered this invitation positively with the proposal to create a new album and two videoclips. The wall used for graffiti during the residence has come to form a box around another box that was used to vocalize their lyrics. The microphone is now open for the audience with the famous autotune effect for you to train your slang.

AMAK's new album will be launched in Fri Art on July 3rd for the closing week end of H or the Audience.

Room 2

Central Sound Installation by Bernhard Zitz

For *H or the audience*, artist and polymath Bernhard Zitz installed a site-specifically callibrated and multichannel soundsystem in the main room of the Kunsthalle. It is for the audience a curiosity, a space to explore the physicality and narrative of sound, to exercise one's relation to hearing. The audio system is connected to a program that runs an algorithm dispatching sound in aleatory manner. The algorithym is nourished with inputs that forces him to imitate nature, or what it thinks it is. Who is mimicking who by listening ?

During the month of the exhibition, the central room will evolve and welcome a multiplicity of contributions, voices, experimental sessions and live activations.

12.06 : Activations by Bernhard Zitz and Sad Dj Team and the audience

19.06 : Activations by feldermelder, Marina Lussi and Tim Shaw and the audience

26.06 : Activations by Costanza Candeloro, Lucas Monème, Axelle Stiefel aka The Operator and the audience

03.07 : Activations by AMAK, Ivory A Ivy, Fiona Rody, H and the audience

Room 3

The Listener by Betâ

The Listener is an evolving installation that emerged as a collaboration between the musician Luc Bersier and the artist Alfatih. This listening situation is based on a simple audio-visual interaction. In contrast to the central room, where sound was coming from all directions, here it is distributed through headphones depending on your position in the dark room. One's movment affects the sound and highlights its potential for mood modulation, pleasure/pain trigger, stress or relaxation inducer, learning process, or game. Theis prototype version will evolve during the month of *H or the audience*.

With contributions by Alfatih, feldermelder, Michael Francey, Melanie Meystre