

Columbia University
Anthropology and American Studies
Spring 2007

SOUND

INSTRUCTOR: John Szwed

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Regular attendance and participation at the seminar
2. Two or three class presentations based on papers of approximately 5 pages
3. A term paper of approximately 15-20 pages due on April 24

REQUIRED READING

Christoph Cox and Daniel Warner, eds. *Audio Culture: Readings in Modern Music*. NY, 2004

Mark Katz, *Capturing Sound: How Technology Has Changed Music*. Berkeley, 2004
(with CD)

Michel Chion, *Audio Vision*

Packet of Readings (All of the required readings, other than the texts listed above, are in the packet)

WEEKLY TOPICS

Week 1: Introduction

Week 2: Noise/Silence vs. Music

Readings:

Rick Altman, "The Material Heterogeneity of Recorded Sound," in Rick Altman, *Sound Theory/Sound Practice*, 1992.

Murray Schafer, "The Music of the Environment," Cox/Warner, pp. 29-39

John Cage, "The Future of Music: Credo," Cox/Warner, pp. 25-9

Eric De Visscher, "'There's No Such Thing As Silence. . .': John Cage's Poetics of Silence," *Musicworks* 52 (Spring, 1992)

Mark Skoka, "Listening for Silence: Notes on the Aural Life," Cox/Warner, pp. 40-6

Theodore Gracyk, "Pump Up the Volume," from *Rhythm and Noise* (1996)

"Glossary" and "Chronology," Cox/Warner, pp. 409-418 and pp. 399-408

Week 3: Listening vs. Hearing

Readings:

Steven Connor, "What I Say Goes" [excerpt], in *Dumbstruck: A Cultural History of Ventriloquism*, 2000

Jacques Attali, "Listening" in *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, 1985 [1977]

Roland Barthes, "Listening" in *The Responsibility of Forms*, 1985.

Pierre Schaeffer, "Acousmatics," Cox/Warner, pp. 76-81

Ola Stockfelt, "Adequate Modes of Listening," Cox/Warner, pp. 88-93

Brian Eno, "Ambient Music," Cox/Warner, pp. 94-97

Jonathan Burston, "Theatre Space as Virtual Place: Audio Technology, the Reconfigured Singing Body, and the Megamusical," *Popular Music* 17, 1998

Recommended Reading:

Emily Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity: Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900-1933*.

Week 4: Music in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction

Readings:

Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," 1936

Walter Benjamin, "A Small History of Photography," 1931

Michael Taussig, "The Talking Machine" in *Mimesis and Alterity*, 1993

Theodor W. Adorno, "The Form of the Phonograph Record," [1934] in *October* 55, Winter, 1990

Recommended Reading:

Jeffrey Sconce, *Haunted Media: Electronic Presence from Telegraphy to Television*, 2000)

Lisa Gitelman, *Scripts, Grooves, and Writing Machines*, 1999

Allen S. Weiss, *Breathless: Sound Recording, Disembodiment, and the Transformation of Lyrical Nostalgia*, 2002

Theodor Adorno, "The Curve of the Needle" and "Opera and the Long-Playing Record" in *October 55*, winter, 1990)

John Alderman, *Sonic Boom: Napster, MP3, and the New Pioneers of Music*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus, 2001

Week 5: The Technology of Sound Recording

Readings:

Simon Frith, "Technology and Authority" in *Performing Rites: On the Value of Popular Music*, 1996

Glen Gould, "The Prospects of Recording," Cox/Warner, pp. 115-126

Brian Eno, "The Studio as Compositional Tool," Cox/Warner, pp. 127-130

Recommended Reading:

Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, 1999

Weeks 6 & 7: Music As Industrial/Artistic Product

Readings:

Mark Katz, *Capturing Sound: How Technology Has Changed Music*. 2004

Paul Théberge, "Toward a New Model of Musical Production and Consumption," *Any Sound You Can Imagine*, 1997

Sample the readings in Cox/Warner in the sections on "The Open Work," "Experimental Musics," "Improvised Musics," and "Minimalisms."

Recommended Reading:

Evan Eisenberg, "Phonography," in *The Recording Angel*, 1987

William Howland Kenney, *Recorded Music in American Life: The Phonograph and Popular Memory 1890-1945*, 1999

Geoffrey O'Brien, *Sonata For Jukebox: Pop Music, Memory, and the Imagined Life*.

Week 8: Audio Ethnography: Early field recording, Works Progress Administration, Commercial Recordings of Ethnic Music, World Music; Surveillance and Domestic Espionage, Audio Imperialism, Terrorism and Revolution

Readings:

Erika Brady, "Collectors and the Phonograph" in *A Spiral Way: How the Phonograph Changed Ethnography*, 1999

Andrew Goodwin and Joe Gore, "World Beat and the Cultural Imperialism Debate," *Socialist Review*, No. 3, 1990

Paul Fleischman, "Swat Radio," *The New Yorker*, December, 1997

Recommended Reading:

John Tomlinson, *Cultural Imperialism*, 1991

Erika Brady, *A Spiral Way: How the Phonograph Changed Ethnography*, 1999

Peter D. Goldsmith, *Making People's Music: Moe Asch and Folkways Records*, 1998

William Howland Kenney, *Recorded Music in American Life: The Phonograph and Popular Memory 1890-1945*, 1999

Stephen Paul Miller, *The Seventies Now: Culture as Surveillance*, 1999 - see "tape" in the index for its use by Nixon and Warhol

Andy Warhol, *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol*, 1975; *A: A Novel by Andy Warhol*, 1968

Weeks 9 & 10: Originality, Plagiarism, and Copyright: Covers, Answer Backs, Bootlegging & Piracy, Sampling, Multi-tracking, Synthesizers, Drum Machines, DJ-ing

Readings:

David Sanjek, "'Don't Have to DJ No More': Sampling and the 'Autonomous' Creator," *Cardozo Arts & Entertainment Law Journal*, 10 (1992), 607-624

Thomas G. Schumacher, "'This is a Sampling Sport': Digital Sampling, Rap Music and the Law in Cultural Production," *Media, Culture & Society* 17 (1995), 253-273

Colin Hinz, "Plagiarism: A Collective Vision. A Few Thoughts on Sampling, Originality, and Ownership," *Gray Areas*, Fall, 1993

Joost Smiers, "Copyright is Wrong," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, September, 2001

John Oswald, "Battered By the Borrower," Cox/Warner, pp. 131-137

Chris Cutler, "Plunderphonia," Cox/Warner, 138-156

Kodwo Eshun, "Operating System for the Redesign of Sonic Reality," Cox/Warner, pp. 157-59

Recommended Reading:

Jeremy J. Beadle, *Will Pop Eat Itself? Pop Music in the Soundbite Era*, 1993

Jane Gaines, "'These Boots Are Made For Walkin': Nancy Sinatra and the Goodyear Tire Sound-Alike," in *Contested Culture*, 1991

Weeks 11 & 12: The Art of Noise

Readings:

Luigi Russolo, "The Art of Noises: Futurist Manifesto," Cox/Warner, pp. 10-4

Mary Russo & Daniel Warner, "Rough Music, Futurism, and Postpunk Industrial Noise Bands," Cox/Warner, pp. 47-54

Simon Reynolds, "Noise," in Cox/Warner, pp. 55-8

"The Beauty of Noise: An Interview With Masami Akita of Merzbow," Cox/Warner, pp. 59-61

Douglas Kahn, "Histories of Sound Once Removed" in Douglas Kahn and Gregory Whitehead, eds., *Wireless Imagination: Sound, Radio and the Avant-Garde*, 1992

Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, "Production-Reproduction: Potentialities of the Phonograph," Cox/Warner, pp. 331-33

William S. Burroughs, "The Invisible Generation," Cox/Warner, pp. 334-40

Christian Marclay & Yasunao Tone, "Record, DC, Analog, Digital," Cox/Warner, pp. 341-47

Paul D. Miller, "Algorithms: Erasures and the Art of Memory," Cox/Warner, pp. 348-53

David Toop, "Replicant: On Dub," Cox/Warner, pp. 355-57

Simon Reynolds, "Post-Rock" Cox/Warner, pp. 358-61

Karlheinz Stockhausen, "Electronic and Instrumental Music," Cox/Warner, pp. 370-80

Karlheinz Stockhausen, "Stockhausen vs the "Technocrats," Cox/Warner, pp. 381-385

Screening: excerpts from *Modulations*, *Scratch*, and *Ohm*

Recommended Reading:

Ulf Poschardt, *DJ Culture*, 1995

Week 13: Sound and Vision: The Relation of Sound to Image (soundtracks & voice-overs, soundies, music videos, internet, CD-Rom, etc.)

Reading:

Michel Chion, *Audio Vision*

Recommended Reading:

Jeff Smith, *The Sounds of Commerce: Marketing Popular Film Music*

Robert Hershon, "They're Playing Your Song: The Role of the Music Supervisor," *Cineaste*, Summer, 2001, pp. 24-26, 55

Michael Ondaatje, *The Conversations: Walter Murch and the Art of Editing* (2002)

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