

Editors' Closing Statement

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A Sound Was Heard!

And We Can Feel It! This is the expression with which we close the fifth edition of the *Solitude Journal*. The act of creating or experiencing sound, whether it be through music, noise, tone, rhythm, word, lyric, or melody, affects both our body and senses. Sound moves and resonates within us, and the movements we feel can encourage both physical and emotional effects. Sound is also a phenomenon that resonates across spatial, temporal, affective, and political dimensions – impacting both inner and outer worlds, alongside the temporalities of different species. Through sound, we are able to sense similarities and dissonances, as well as the dis/harmonies, relations, and ruptures that exist between them. Sound validates the slippery, roguish nature of coexistence. The sonic becomes obvious in the discordant buzzing and choppy hissings of traffic while waiting at a crowded intersection, or the rhythm of one's own or another person's breathing. They emerge when rehearsing with a choir or setting up a make-shift karaoke session, recording the sound of a seed's growth as a bio-acoustic enthusiast, joining others on the dance floor, or attending a listening session in a concert hall, parking lot, or swamp. They echo when digging through albums in a record store, making an instrument, or collecting sound clips from video snippets circulating online.

The idea to create a journal that explores sonic environments came from working on the nineteenth Web Residency, *Algorithmic Poetry*. With the invited residents, we explored the harmonic dissonance that binds sonic and poetic traditions to contemporary sound practices, with a special focus on the use of machine learning interventions to create sound as a poetic device. *Solitude Journal 5* expands on these resonant threads, inviting readers to join an exploration of the sonic space's polyphonic web while understanding this space as a phenomenological, as much as an embodied physiological/psychological, one. The sonic is represented in concrete form through socio-cultural, geopolitical, mechanical, material, biological, and other palpable registers. Bringing together voices of current and former fellows to examine these dimensions, the *Journal* would like to offer a strong sense of the sonic evocations that go beyond aesthetic, audible, or linguistic signals, understanding the sonic realm for its affecting, materialized, and intimate dimensions. These reverberations allow for communion and assemblage with compassion, profundity, enlivenment, and remembrance.

How does sound affect, and resonate with, bodies? How does sound travel through space-time configurations and thus allow for differentiated spatial and temporal perception? One way to trace it is through what Western astronomy has claimed as the first sound waves that originated from a nascent universe. Prior to the formation of stars, planets, or galaxies, the universe existed as a dense, plasma-like fluid that resonated sound. NASA's description conjures images of a primordial state that is so intensely hot that particles couldn't bind together upon collision, and instead bounced off one another. This environment alternated between gravitational attraction and repulsion, generating waves of pressure – and sound propagated through the plasma. As the universe gradually cooled off, these sound waves became »frozen« within the Cosmic Microwave Background (CMB) radiation. That radiant energy inspires the

collective imagination: But what if the atmosphere becomes so thick again that we humans can't hear the sound waves repelling anymore?

Solitude Journal 5 begins with a short science-fiction essay that imagines a future in which sound has been swept away: In its absence the atmosphere makes it difficult to breathe. Our last article, which addresses a similar scenario of an inaudible present, contemplates innovations upheld by some of today's tech positivists, who imagine futures of listening and communication experiences in which it may soon be possible to stream music directly to our brains. Between those contributions, this issue of *Solitude Journal* explores themes related to an abundance of aural experiences, and tells of a sound, or soundings, that act as carriers and conveyers. Certain historical progressions and technologies are illustrated throughout these pages, chronicling how sound is perceived as both medial and vibrational correspondence. The influence of sound and its transmissions takes various forms in this journal as retellings, recital, rehearsal, fiction, provocation, theory, or other frequencies. Some contributions detail and expand upon experiences of virtuosic failure and utopian imagination, the diminishing centrality of human agency, or amplify the certain sonorous circumstances set against class, geopolitical, heteronormative, patriarchal, and capitalistic structures. Other pieces featured in this publication should not be seen as definitive storylines but rather permeate through deep time as a continual sonic clash and necessary reevaluation of listening regimes.

The notion of a sound to suggest that some form of sound was detected or perceived by someone or something subsequently evolved into coming together for this *Journal*. There are sonic residues of a voice, recorded live in performance by an experimentalist, remembered as a rebellious musical ensemble, shaped by way of exchange between artists, music makers, poets, and philosophers, or between species and entities – all of which intertwine, in this publication, our individual and relational encounters with a sound. The heard sound gestures to the metaphor of sound as repository, a sort of dataset for such noisy happenings. A sound that was heard, even in silence, reverberates in the connective tissue within collective presence. *And we feel its impact!*

We, the editors, would like to express our utmost gratitude to all the writers and artists and Akademie Schloss Solitude's staff members who have trusted us with the task of compiling their contributions to this collection of sonic encounters. We are grateful to Neo Muyanga for reviewing the initial call for participations, to Kimberly Bradley for her invaluable oversight and editing the works, biographies, and descriptions anthologized in this issue; Beton.studio for handling the design; and to Kenneth Constance Loe for the last phase of proofreading, ensuring its resonance extends beyond these pages.

We hope you enjoyed listening to and reading this issue.
Denise Helene Sumi and Jazmina Figueroa

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