

Voices ~ Glasovi, 2023



Sara Salamon, video still from the documentation of the workshop, *Voices ~ Glasovi* with selma banich, Lana Hosni, Sara Salamon, and Adam Semijalac. Pogon Jedinstvo, Zagreb, 2023. Courtesy the artist

selma banich

For *Solitude Journal 5*, artist, activist, and community organizer selma banich shares a transcript of the documentation of the experiential workshop series and video work *Voices*. Created in collaboration with Lana Hosni, Sara Salamon, and Adam Semijalac, the piece explores the voice as a medium and resource, and the body as a repository of our individual and collective experiences, states, and feelings. *Voices* offers to disclose individual and collective experiences of trauma, fragility as an experience of radical resistance, and healing as a tool for social change and liberation. »Working with the voice through breath, sound, and resonance, we seek answers to our inner questions and needs,« banich writes.



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[Voice 1]

One voice is continuously questioning what I am doing, if it is ok, if I did this or that ... if I am allowed to do this, if I should do that, if this is the best thing to do, if this is it. One voice is also constantly analyzing what I did, although those situations might have happened years ago. What I was like, what I did, how I reacted, if it was too much, if I did the right thing, or perhaps I should have done it differently, if I was a bore. If I hurt another person, if I triggered them, if I ...

[00:48 the shot on the left is interrupted; the shot on the right resumes. It shows a person with their eyes shut, holding their head, and making a long, loud sound. At 1:33 the sound is muffled, lasting until 1:53; at 1:50 it fades out]

[1:55 crackling starts, followed by high-frequency wailing]

[2:17 the sound of heartbeat, skipping a beat a few times, until 2:49]

[2:26 the left shot begins, the person is turned to one side. We see their neck, a part of their lower jaw, and their sweater, and hands that are resting on their clavicle, that is, on the chest]

[2:46 the person lowers the head toward the chest, the sound of buzzing starts, and at 2:52 heartbeat continues, with a more intense, lower sound]

[3:25 the shot moves from left to right, the same scene, a high-frequency wailing and howling begins/two persons are in the shot; the heartbeat fastens and slows down again, hand-to-hand contact until 4:11]

[Voice 2]

I usually have to be very loud, as my voice has to resonate with everybody else's in the room. On the other hand, it needs to be sufficiently precise, eloquent, and concise in order to transmit a message. And then again, it can be quite revealing, because, considering the intensity, especially when I get tired or overwhelmed, it may reveal every single detail, the color of my voice, the texture, the state I am in; certain sensations get out very easily, they are disclosed in some way. Therefore, it is also a state of close control, or an attempt of control.

[Voice 3]

When my voice is being recorded, it is a paralyzing feeling: I experience a cognitive dissonance where I exist simultaneously in all times, in all of them ... In the present time, the future, and that future reflects the past one. And I find it very difficult to find my own consciousness in that moment; it is sort of a state of panic. Something like that.

[5:57 vocalizing/humming begins]

[6:06 one person's head is placed on another person's lap; melodic humming until 7:05]

[7:07 on the left, a shot of a person's profile appears, their eyes are shut, and someone's hands are touching their head and face. They are making sounds h, h, h, h; at 7:12 the same shot, but from a different perspective, appears on the right side; the same action is repeated until 7:30]

[Voice 4]

I would say that these are the voices of, let's say, my ancestors, although it sounds quite dramatic, but still, my parents, grandfathers, grandmothers, which are all voices of critics. We could say their common denominator is a fierce critic; however, he might not have been that harsh in my past, but with time, it grew into a rather messed up thing.

[8:15 the person gets up, takes the camera, turns it away from themselves, and continues to speak at 8:32]

[Voice 4]

Well, I am aware of my weight, and I am aware that I do not have warmth like other beings, and that for decades I have been recording things in a completely strange way, things observed by other living beings, especially people. I simply absorb and convey it further and, in opposition to humans, my recordings are eternal. My recordings are many, and they are permanent. I am aware that it is quite odd that what enters my lens automatically appears on the screen, and this happens simultaneously and is, in fact, very bizarre. [laughter]

[Voice 1]

[9:43] I love being pressed, pressed randomly, whatever happens, just to be pressed by someone, without consequences, punishment, or a catastrophe. I love ... human touch. I love softness, and all layers of skin, fascia, and muscles. I love to feel bloodstream, heartbeat; I love sensing closeness, warmth ... [sigh] I love to sense breath, although I don't have it.

[Voice 3]

Despite being so fragile, I am quite a powerful means. And that realization gives me the feeling of courage and strength. I can see up close, if I find the right position, and I can see far away. And this view of mine is in fact a voice that is heard.

[11:52 no video, muffled sound of a wailing voice that changes from low to high frequency without interruption until 13:17]

[12:35 image on the left screen appears, a shot of a person until 12:58]

selma banich is an artist, activist, and community organizer from Zagreb, Croatia. Her artistic practice is grounded in explorative, processual, and activist work, and is politically inspired by anarchism and feminism.

If you are interested in doing an experiential workshop session with selma banich, please contact her via the form on her website: <https://selmabanich.org/contact>

To listen to the accompanying audio material, please access the online version of *Solitude Journal 5 – A Sound Was Heard!*



You will find the following material:
selma banich, *Voices ~ Glasovi*, 2023