'Invisible Architecture'
Highlighting acoustic phenomena hidden in a space.

A sound research project by Chris Galarreta and Janneke van der Putten in collaboration with organisations that invite the artists to make artist-in-residencies, audiovisual recordings, educational activities, exhibitions and performances.

‘Invisible Architecture’ was presented at among others: Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Lima (Peru, 2016); XII Festival Ecuatoriano de Música Contemporánea, Quito (Ecuador, 2016); nxnwestival, Cologne (Germany, 2015); Festival Asimtria, Arequipa (Peru, 2015); TENT, Rotterdam (Netherlands, 2015); Ausland, Berlin (Germany, 2015); Errant Bodies gallery, Berlin (Germany, 2015); Extrapool, Nijmegen (Netherlands, 2014); VolksPaleis, The Hague (Netherlands, 2014); DATA, Marseille (France, 2014); Centre International d’Art et du Paysage, Île de Vassivière (France, 2014); and Tsonami Festival, Valparaíso (Chili, 2014).

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Different formats
‘Invisible Architecture’ was realized in different formats, using various spaces, landscapes, and architectures as acoustic instruments:
- Amplified voice, amplified electromagnetic fields of computer remains, loudspeakers with sub-woofers
- Amplified voice, feedback, mobile loudspeakers
- Acoustic voice, cardboard sheet, sine wave generator, loudspeakers
- Two amplified voices in stereo, two sheets of black paper with the poetic text from the publication ‘Invisible Architecture’ (first version) in silkscreen print with black ink, two loudspeakers
- Acoustic voice, percussion instruments
- Acoustic voice, wire used as inter-communicator between the singer and the composer

Live set concerts
The concerts of ‘Invisible Architecture’ are immersive and physical sound experiences that highlight subtle harmonies and other acoustic qualities in the spaces where the concerts take place. These variations are depending on the characteristics of the spaces’s structures, the emitted sounds, as well as the position and movement of the listeners and performers through the space. To get an impression of the dynamics of the live set concerts, you can visit these following links: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dGCsErIb9AI and https://youtu.be/7z1EBBkEN50?t=33m26s.
Performances and site-specific researches

Until now, the site-specific performances took place in a light-tower, art galleries, wastelands, churches, living rooms, and tunnels. Each site required a new investigation, where the sound sources and the way in which the performance was developed, were chosen in relation to the acoustic response of the site.

In a tower

In the first version of ‘Invisible Architecture’, subtle acoustic phenomena of a light-tower were explored through its surrounding sounds and the acoustic reflections of the human voice. This project was developed during an artist-in-residency at the Castle, Centre international d’art et du paysage, Île de Vassivière (France, 2013). Some works resulting from this experience have been published on vinyl and cassette. The compositions included in these publications can be listened to through this link: http://chrsgalarretaprojects.bandcamp.com/album/invisible-architecture-3.

In a church

A site-specific experience similar to the work realized in the tower in France was done in the Sankt Gertrud church, Cologne (Germany, 2015) during an artist-in-residency at Raumklänge – Ortsbezogene Musik. The results of this investigation are in process of post-production. One sample of this work was published under the title ‘Acoustic reflections of one voice in a church (live recording)’ and was included in the compilation ‘Audio-DH: Sonic Manifestations from 250 artist from Den Haag’. This compilation was presented in the TodaysArt Festival in The Hague (Netherlands, 2016). You can listen to the track through this link: https://soundcloud.com/annekevanderguten/acoustic-reflections-of-one-voice-in-a-church-live-recording-invisible-architecture.

In the church and in the tower, resonant frequencies and reverberations were emphasized and prolonged with the interaction of the human voice and the echo, making recordings with unconventional microphone techniques. In the compositions and during the live performance, the intention was to make the acoustic reflections audible, more than the sound sources (the voice and surrounding sounds) that exited them. The tone modulations, breathing voice rhythm, and position and type of microphones used, were chosen in response to the qualities of the chosen site. From these variables drones, overtones and other acoustic phenomena appeared in the space.
In a wasteland
In this version of ‘Invisible Architecture’ Galarreta and Van der Putten guided the audience outside the building of the art space –DordtYart in Dordrecht (Netherlands, 2015), with the intention to realize a site-specific intervention. The artists demonstrated how buildings and the landscape around a wasteland can be used as acoustic instruments. This performative action had a duration of around 17 minutes, and took place between the ruins of a concrete dock, and a small building that had the shape of a cube. The artists used simple percussive tools, releasing subtle echoes in the landscape. The perception of the sound effects was determined by the position of the listeners and the sound sources, in relation to the buildings and the landscape.

In order to better perceive the different acoustics it was important that the listeners walked slowly around the performers and the buildings. In this way the audience could create their own composition. A similar experience was realized in an underpass at the Lohsepark in Cologne, during the artist-in-residence of the project ‘Invisible Architecture’ at Raumklänge – Ortsbezogene Musik (residency previously mentioned).
In a tunnel
This version of the project took place in the Maastunnel, Rotterdam (Netherlands, September 2015 – June 2016), investigating the acoustic qualities of this monumental tunnel. The Maastunnel is 500 meter long and is situated under the Maas river, connecting the North and the South of the city. Its architecture was explored through different experiences and ways of listening, such as: by doing sound-walks, performative interventions, and by recording sounds that are (in)audible to human ears – using a contact microphone, electromagnetic field sensors, ambient microphones, and hydrophones.

This research resulted in a workshop and an audiovisual presentation. A sound and video publication, entitled ‘I.A. Maastunnel’ is currently in the process of production.

Workshops
Review by Patricia Pinheiro de Sousa, 2015:
“As a frequent user of the Maastunnel I often wished having a sound recorder with me. Sometimes the staircases seem to ‘dj’ a strange combination of mechanical sounds, sometimes someone sings in the bicycle tunnel along with a faulty bicycle chain, sometimes, someone replies to someone’s ‘Ohh’. The Maastunnel invokes sound interaction.

The ‘Invisible Architecture’ workshop allowed me to enter this soundscape through various entrance points. As an active listener during the blindfold walk for instance, and as a direct interventient, producing sounds with objects and my own voice. Janneke and Chris guided us through this amazing experience in a very intelligent way, allowing us to enter and conquering the space of the Maastunnel gradually through sound. They were both very attentive and able to share their knowledge and experience, giving the participants enough space for self-expression and exploration within the framework of the different exercises.”

Exhibition
Showing documentation and installations based on the material of the project ‘Invisible Architecture’ (first version).

Documentation and interactive piece
Presentation of the project’s first publication in LP. It was displayed in two wooden frames, with the LP cover, the vinyl disc, and the inlay of the publication: a poetic text. Presentation of an interactive work with silkscreened artworks from the cover of the publication, printed on a paper and a transparent sheet, one pair of headphones, and the reproduction of the sound piece ‘Becoming-Siren’. Presented in the exhibition “Make the Audition: Meetings Between Art and Sound in Peru”, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo –MAC, Lima (Peru, February – April 2016). Supported by the Artist-in-Residency of Aloardi, Rotterdam City Council and Popunie Music Export Rotterdam.

Installation
Immersive space with a poetic text printed as black characters on black walls. A soft light was used in the dark room. The visitor had to move in order to read the text, in relation to the light reflections. Also this movement generated changes in the perception of the sound, that was reproduced in the room. The reproduced sound was the composition ‘Becoming-Siren’, from the publication ‘Invisible Architecture’ (2014). This installation was presented at exhibition ‘All Begins With A’, TENT, Rotterdam (Netherlands, July – September 2015).
Selection from the review written by 
Wilder Gonzales Agreda, Vanguardia Peruana, 2014:

“Becoming Siren” is like the title points out a bewitching siren-song, whereas Ulysses, in the Odyssey, has the idea to turn you into a brave soldier of poetry. But the music, takes you from the worldly-minded noise, shaking off the skin and filling your heart with transmundane messages full of beauty, dew and wild wisdom.

“Becoming Storm” on the other hand becomes more natural, cold and inhuman. More cosmic. One can breathe at every tempo the late afternoons, the deserts and some of the thousands of horizons that have been guilty of such a metamusical gem. Janneke's original voice is almost imperceivable between so many reverberations, echoes and remixes but undoubtedly that at the moment of the performance it should have been an unpronounceable event. Totally otherworldly.

Publications

Chrs Galarreta & Janneke van der Putten - Invisible Architecture
(Aloardi, 12” LP)
Edition of 300 vinyl records of 180 gram, published by Aloardi (Rotterdam, Netherlands, 2014). Artwork silkscreened by Koos Siep and designed by Galarreta & van der Putten. Photos edited by Koos Siep. Sound by Chrs Galarreta (composition, microphone techniques and mixing) and Janneke van der Putten (voice). Recorded and performed at the Centre international d’art et du paysage, Île de Vassivière (France, 2013). Supported by the Mondriaan Fund.

Review written by Frans de Waard, Vital Weekly, 2014:

“Whatever it may be, it sounds great. It sounds like a multi-layered voice piece, humming away and maybe it has an ethereal feeling to it, like some religious chant, but the more I heard this, the less I thought this was the case. It has a great, refined drone quality with a tranquil atmosphere, and that hoovers perhaps closely to the world of new age, but it’s not. It’s probably too dark for that. This is one of those records you should get two copies of and play them together, slowly altering the speed and make an even bigger choir.

Note mentioned in the cover of the publication by Galarreta and Van der Putten:

This publication is a live recording of a site-specific performance in a tower. Sometimes a ghost tone appears simultaneously with the voice, emerging from the acoustic reflections of the space. No electronic effects, overdubs or remixes were used in this release.

Review written by Frans de Waard, Vital Weekly #991, 2015:

“This release we could see as the follow-up to ‘Invisible Architecture I’, and follows a similar approach as the LP: Van der Putten is somewhere in this tower, wordless chanting and all over the place there are microphones to pick up this singing. This leads, without electronic effects, overdubs and remixes to something that is endlessly sustaining and these two sides have that same ethereal feeling that the LP had. The second side had some sort of highly obscured background sound (hiss? the sea? waves?) but it added to the mystique of the release. The same mystique we see on the silver on black cover: hard to read but if you hold this in the right angle everything is revealed. That is a bit like the music: it may just a voice in a large space, but once picked up and all the variations are melted together and offer this long sustaining sounds. Try this in combination with the LP and create your own architecture.”

The sublime and the uncertainty invade my actions. I hack the human perception of space-time as a form of civil disobedience and auto-reorganization.”

Galarreta is very active in South- and Central America since 1985. He presented his different projects in South America, Central America, Europe and Eurasia at among others: Luis Miroquesada Garland gallery, Lima; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo (MAC), Lima; Centro International d’Art et du Paysage, Île de Vassivière; DortYArt, Dordrecht; TENT, Rotterdam; Institute de Sonology – Royal Conservatoire, The Hague; NCCA, Kaliningrad; WOMR, Rotterdam; Qo2, Brussels; La Gaité lyrique, Paris; Interpenetration Festival, Graz; Poolloop Media Art Festival, Zurich; Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna; Festival de Arte Sonoro Radar (now ‘Aural’), Mexico D.F.; Audio Art Festival, Krakow; Festival de arte sonoro Tsonami, Valparaíso; ‘Residencias Artísticas de Iberoamerica –Centro Nacional de las Artes’ and Centro Cultural de España, Mexico-D.F., Centro Cultural Conde Duque, Madrid; La Friche de Mai, Marseille; Festival Ecuatoriano de Música Contemporánea, Quito; and Festival Asimtria, Arequipa.

Galarreta is founder and member of association Alcoadi—one of the first labels and independent platforms in South- and Central America since 1998, diffusing and producing experimental music, audiovisual art, sound interventions, internet radio broadcasts, acoustic research, festivals, lectures, workshops and concerts. Alcoadi celebrated their 10-years anniversary in 2008, organizing the third edition of the international festival of electronic and contemporary music CONTACTO, in the Cultural Centre of Spain –CCE, Lima.

He published more than 100 productions under different pseudonyms and has been collaborating with artists, collectives and labels around the world such as: Microbio Records, Sub Rosa, APO33, Platonia, Sonic Art Networks, Alcoadi, Urbanoid Records, Fougère Musique, Ruído Horrible, Noka Records, Andesground, Existenz, Felt Collective, Chipmusic, Biodata, Superspace Records, Worm Records, Unsonate, Zbig-niew Karkowski, Fabiola Vasquez, Jorge Castro (Comucopia), Sabrina Melenotte, N’alov, Leo Sabatto (Armenia), Pablo Reche, Anton Mobin, Gabriel Castillo, Dj Urine, David Kraapoola, Francisco Lopez, Dave Phillips, Muozik, Manuel Rocha Iturbide, Rogelio Sosa, Tsonami Arte Sonoro, Sebastian Ortiz, Galarreta and Ignacio Rus. In 2013 Galarreta developed his independent projects at the Institute of Sonology in the Royal Conservatoire and at Foundation Centrum – Villa K, in The Hague, the Netherlands.

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Janneke van der Putten

Janneke van der Putten (Amsterdam, 1985) is a visual artist and singer, raised in rural Brittany, France and currently based in Rotterdam, The Netherlands.

Her practice consists of working with experiences of listening, sound and moving image, music projects and creating different platforms for mutual cultural exchanges. Recently she initiated Foundation Idraola, and curated as part of Collective Alcoadi, the ‘Alcoadi Exchange Programme 2016’. Through voice-based performances, Jannke investigates various ways to interact with her environment, integrating with different landscapes and acoustic architectures. She works with the physicality of her voice in relation to specific sites, natural phenomenena such as the sunrise, and cycles and transitions of time. Her research-based projects involve different levels of collaborations that are presented to the public in the form of performances, documentations in video/audio/text, and workshops.

Her exhibitions, screenings and sound pieces have been included in TENT, Rotterdam; Ellen de Buijne Projects, Amsterdam; San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco; Boijmans van Beuningen Museum, Rotterdam; Oude Kerk, Amsterdam; Forum Freies Theater, Düsseldorf; São Paulo Art Biennial, São Paulo; Appel Arts Center, Amsterdam; Qo2, Brussels; Tsonami Festival Arte Sonoro, Valparaíso; Cosmoaoudicion Festival, Quito; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Lima; and Centre international d’art et du paysage, Île de Vassivière.

In her new solo project ‘Aurora’ Van der Putten explores hypnotic noise and remixes of songs. In 2013 Jannke did the vocals of Siavash Akhlaghi’s electro-acoustic work for Wave Field Synthesis at the Institute of Sonology, The Hague. She was part of ‘A Choir’ by Rory Pilgrim, and initiated the project ‘The Carrot Quintet’, a group of five-woman singing a capella with graphic notations made by Van der Putten (2009–2010). She also collaborated with Harrie Starreveld (shakuhachi player) and Lucie Vítková (accordion player and composer).

Between 2009 and 2015 Jannke received classes of Dhrupad singing (classical North-Indian tradition) with Marianne Svašek and Amelia Cuni. Van der Putten holds a master’s degree in Music and Artistic Research at Royal Conservatoire & Royal Academy of Art in The Hague (2013) and a Bachelor degree in Design and TXT (Textile) at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam (2009) with an Honor Certificate in ‘Art, Science, Practice’.

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