

# VOLUME: Bed of Sound

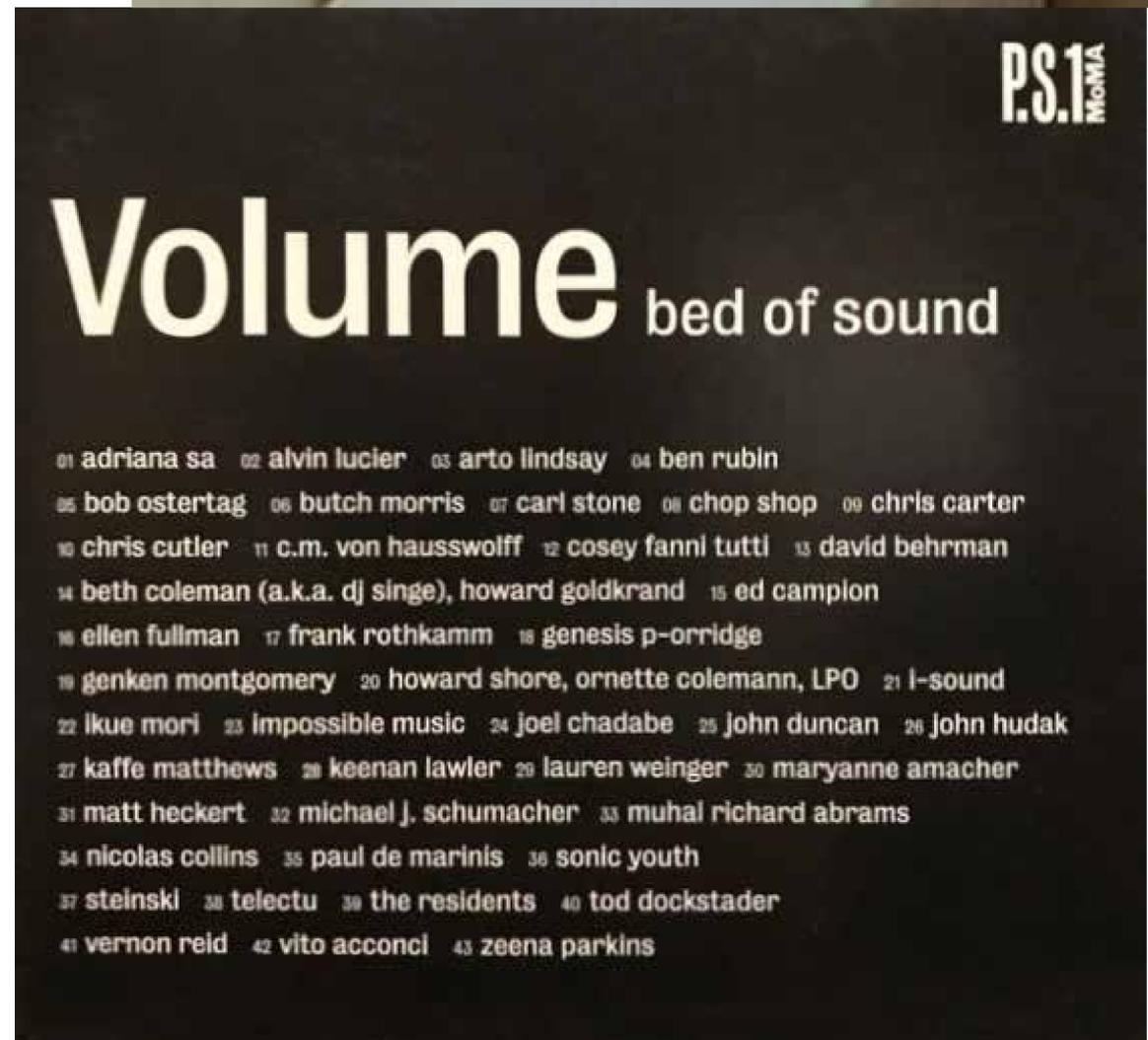
## MoMA PS1, New York (LIC), NY, 2000

Walker had a very unique experience designing and managing the operation of an exhibition of sound-based art. The exhibition was at MoMA PS1, and was done alongside PS1's annual Warm Up music series. It got major recognition for what at that time was a very innovative approach to public access to sound art.

*Designing the bed for Volume: Bed of Sound at PS1 came out of a conversation I had with Klaus Biesenbach, who was curating and coordinating the exhibition. We had a long talk about sound as art. Klaus wanted visitors to be able to float away with the sound and not be distracted by physical constraints. He wanted it to be comfortable to close one's eyes. I remember him saying what he really wanted was a bed! I took it literally and designed one— a room-size bed!*

*This was much more challenging than it would seem at first. One challenge was managing the various recordings and how to make them accessible—on our limited budget. Portable CD devices had been around for a few years, and prices were coming down from the early days. I worked out a way for each player to be installed inside the wooden structure I designed, creating listening stations with label and text and a set of headphones for each artist's work. Visitors could simply walk around the bed, read the text and put the headphones on. They could then either stand to listen, sit on the side of the bed structure, or lay down on the futon mattress that filled the interior of the enormous structure.*

*The complication was making this whole thing manageable for our limited personnel. I was able to find a device that had appropriate buttons, and that could be plugged in for continuous play. I then designed a very specific housing to hold each player—allowing needed ventilation, while positioning the device directly below a 1/4" birch plywood panel. I cut holes in the panel to allow access only to the buttons required for play, forward, and backward, and to see the screen, and positioned this alongside the text. I then secured the headphones's wires inside, with the headphone itself laying next to the small screen and text. Each player had an extension cord that took it to a hub for power which was tied into the few floor outlets that we had in that gallery. Needless to say, it was wire chaos inside. Outside, though, it was clean and clear and people loved it. I think it was 15 futons, side by side, in the end. Maintenance was challenging, of course, and steam turned out to be the best way to clean it daily.*



**Above:** A program listing the artist included with a number assigned. The listening stations that surrounded the bed were numbered sequentially.

**Left:** We needed an image for press, and Tom (Finkelpearl) called everyone to come pose. As with everything at PS1 in those days, we were all crazy busy with other stuff, but had fun with it anyway. The photo below at left was the winner. I love the way I'm laying back looking so relaxed when I know I had all sorts of chaos going on in my head at that moment. I also love that I'm with my now dear friend Nancy Huang, who was my boss my first day at PS1—then I became her boss! (WW)



[haberarts.com](http://haberarts.com)

[UnDo.net](http://UnDo.net)