

OOO Sound Art and Technology as Speculative Realism

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Abstract

This article presents a conceptual elaboration that was created from an interview with the philosopher Graham Harman. It makes linkages between art, technology, communication and philosophy while focusing on object-oriented ontology philosophy applied to sound art. The argument involves aesthetics and social contextual ideas such as post-digital, techno-cultural, and post-techno aesthetics. Examining how technology, as a technical, symbolic and contextual dominant object of material and symbolic meaning, affects society and the arts and impacts perception, by pointing out the analytical and philosophical differences between events as spectral, immanent forces with performative qualities and technological things as materials with atomic vibrations. The aim is to promote perspectives on hybrid-materialism and event with conceptual linkage in hybrid creative art forms focused on sound as the virtual nominator in both the analog and digital environments of an expanded reality. The analysis focuses on sound studies and digital media art, supporting those artistic mediums that employ hybrid materialism to varied degrees, as shown by the artistic examples that build specific conceptual reformulations of space, score and performativeness art research by creating metapolitical distinctions and extrapolations that are able to inspire notions about time, event and place that are crucial for time-based artists that rely on technology and computational infrastructures for performativity and theoretical exploration about time, sound, image and place.

Keywords: Aesthetics, Post-digital, Technology, Object-Oriented Ontology, Sound.

Contextualizing the Fiction

This interview was granted on December 23 of 2018 and is titled "Sound Art and Technology in Speculative Realism/Object-Oriented Ontology," and is part of my P.h.D thesis titled *Imanências espectrais: reflexão sobre o pós-digital nas artes sonoras* in 2022.

In fiction, setting the scene

Graham Harman's study focuses on what he calls *Object-Oriented Ontology*, which is, in my opinion, an exciting philosophical paradigm for examining the idea of a sonic event as counterargument to a more object centered argumentation with bounds, potentials and limitations in time base media-art, as sound studies. This is made in order to discover theoretical

areas of instability and perceptive difficulty that can enable an insightful discussion about contemporary art as a bridge to further conceptual developments in the domains of speculative thinking, imagination and inspirational artistic approaches, to the domains of aesthetics, technology, time-based media arts and the digital, where reality and fiction collide along curved paths to describe the world, things and events with more or less realistic, feelings and ideas of sensuous experiences, events, objects and performative aspects.

Putting the author in context

Graham Harman, was born in 1968, is a well-known professor of philosophy at the Southern California Institute of Architecture and holds a degree from the American University in Cairo. He is also a member of the faculty at the European Graduate School (EGS) in Saas-Fee, Switzerland. Graham adheres to a school of philosophy known as speculative realism and has become widely recognized in the field. As well as Grant Harman's colleagues Quentin Meillassoux, Ray Brassier, and Iain Hamilton, who are members of the same research and study group. I want to draw attention to a handful of Harman's various publications: *Towards Speculative Realism: Essays and Lectures* (2010), *Circus Philosophicus* (2010), *The Quadruple Object* (2011), *Quentin Meillassoux: Philosophy in the Making* (2011), *Tool-Being: Heidegger and the Metaphysics of Objects* (2002), *Guerrilla Metaphysics: Phenomenology and the Carpentry of Things* (2005), *Heidegger Explained: From Phenomenon to Thing* (2007), *Prince of Networks: Bruno Latour* (2013). He also serves as editor of the Speculative Realism series published by Edinburgh University Press, the *New Metaphysics Series* published by Open Humanities Press, and he was just named editor-in-chief of the brand-new journal *Open Philosophy*. Additionally, he wrote numerous philosophical exercises related to the topics of speculative realism and object-oriented ontology.

Problem and fictional paradoxes

- How does the event relate to object-oriented ontology?
- What further new formulation about, technology or culture is produced by object-oriented ontology?
- How is the concept of hybrid expressed in connection to meaning in art, culture, and technology?
- What perspectives on an object-oriented ontology, understanding, and application of an immaterialist perspective to sound as an event are reasonable?
- How to Implement creative Based Methodologies with Object-Oriented Ontologies?

Contextualizing the tremendous blunder in the object-oriented ontology

HP: Hugo Paquete

GH: Graham Harman

HP: In the last few years you have been developing a philosophical approach with the designation “Object-oriented ontology” in which you seek to assign autonomy to objects, providing a perspective on a new materialism. May you present us the main concepts of your philosophy concerning the object?

GH: Sure. But first, I want to distance myself from all forms of materialism. People do often mention me in the same breath as the New Materialists, but I have little in common with most of them, for reasons to be explained shortly. But perhaps no further proof is needed than several of my article titles on this topic: “Realism without Materialism,” “Materialism is Not the Solution,” and “I Am Also of the Opinion that Materialism Must Be Destroyed: not to mention my recent book *Immaterialism*. In fact, materialism is a great enemy for me, whether in its old or new forms. The old materialism held (and still holds) that what is most real are the tiniest underlying elements of the universe. The history of this standpoint in the West goes back to the pre-Socratics, and continues today in what James Ladyman and Don Ross lamentably term the “Primacy of Physics Constraint.” They view reality as made up of a mathematical structure rather than tiny physical entities, but the basic materialist principle is still present. I call this strategy *undermining*. It fails by assuming that the most physically basic is also the most real, as if quarks and electrons were more truly real than the Atlantic Ocean or FC Barcelona. Object-Oriented Ontology rejects this brand of materialism, because it takes quarks and electrons to be no more or less objects than the Atlantic Ocean or FC Barcelona. We can certainly investigate the differences between these rather different kinds of entities, but only after beginning with a “flat ontology” that recognizes all of them as objects. The sorts of materialisms that you called new materialism, which are becoming quite popular in the humanities and social sciences today, obviously do not reduce everything to some basic layer of tiniest physical stuff. Instead of reducing objects downward, they reduce them *upward*, in a strategy I call “overmining. It is a wonder that they even bother to call it materialism. Levi Bryant puts it best: “materialism has become a *terme d’art* which has little to do with anything material. Materialism has come to mean simply that something is historical, socially constructed, involves cultural practices, and is contingent... We wonder where the materialism in materialism is.” (*Onto-Cartography*, 2014:02) Most likely the new materialists say “materialism” because they are still attached to the political prestige of this term as established during the Enlightenment period and beyond. But they are not really talking about material in any useful sense of the term. The same goes for Slavoj Žižek, who is really a full-blown idealist who simply wants to be known as a materialist

because it sounds politically revolutionary. You will find no robust conception of the material world in his philosophy. When he talks about science it is always about quantum theory, meaning that he can use the Copenhagen Interpretation of that theory to bring the human subject back into the middle of everything. In any case, if these are the two forms of materialism, then Object-Oriented Ontology can be seen as the anti-materialist philosophy par excellence. We are not interested in reducing the object either upward or downward, but in staying focused on the object itself. This means that we need to find ways of cognizing the object other than knowledge, given that undermining and overmining exhaust all the forms of knowledge there are. Luckily, the arts already give us objects without any sort of mining, and Socratic *philosophia* always distinguished itself from any form of knowing. Those who view philosophy as co-extensive with the sciences are making a tremendous blunder.

Putting materialism, technology, and perception through context in the unacknowledged idealism

HP: Can we consider that a return to materialism is a symptom of the loss of a material connection in life by the expansion of simulated realities, visual and sonic objects, generated by technology, art or other cultural objects?

GH: There may be something to it. There is an interview with J.G. Ballard somewhere that I think is important. In it Ballard claims that the role of the creative artist has changed in our time. Previously, the artist was the creator of fictions. But now we are surrounded by fictions, and thus the role of the artist is to create some *reality* amidst these fictions that compels belief. That would fit very well with what you just said. I also *wish* the return to materialism was a reaction against what I regard as the unacknowledged idealism at the basis of postmodern theory. But alas, that does not seem to be what is happening: the new materialists seem to see themselves as extensions of the postmodernist era rather than as refutations of it, and they are all strangely allergic to the word “realism,” which is what needs to be emphasized if we want to escape the Derridean/Foucauldian presuppositions that still dominate –and stifle– academia.

Considering obsolescence

HP: Given the actual social context of technoculture in which we are immersed –the technological objects and apparatus that are increasingly becoming intangible and spectral in their functional processes and interactions– how does an object-oriented philosophy approach these intangible objects or events and their interactions?

GH: You are right that our lives are increasingly dominated by the intangible background conditions of technologies and their slow or sudden shifts. Here we still have much to learn from Marshall McLuhan, who is still not taken seriously enough. When McLuhan

said “the medium is the message,” he was speaking of the same thing you are talking about here. Modern rationalism is based on the idea that science and mathematics should be able to make everything clear, meaning that everything should be capable of being paraphrased in discursive propositional statements. McLuhan called this manner of thinking “dialectic,” and he contrasted it sharply with what he called “rhetoric.” His sense of dialectic is not that of Hegel. For McLuhan, dialectic refers to the priority of the visible figure over its hidden ground. By contrast, rhetoric reverses this priority and focuses on the unstated ground within which all explicit content of thought and language appears. Rhetoric has had a bad name in the modern period: it has become “mere rhetoric,” meaning manipulation and sophistry in order to attain selfish irrational ends. There is already a strong taste of this disdain for rhetoric in Plato—though of course he is one of the greatest rhetoricians of all time— but Aristotle had a much greater respect for rhetoric, and is said to have taught it to his students for half of each day. He recognized that rhetoric does not just mean sophistry. What it really means is the “enthymeme”: that which is understood without being explicitly stated, and without even the *capacity* to be explicitly stated. As McLuhan would put it, a medium becomes directly present to us only once it is obsolete, reduced to a cliché that needs real work if it is to be revived later. We can also think of the famous discussion in Heidegger of how the tool is generally invisible until it breaks.

Virtual technologies and the pervasiveness of computers unknown knowns

HP: Many of today's experiences are mediated by technology that generates new visibility regimes, where the object is simulation and reproduction by impact of the virtual technologies and the possibilities of file conversion and its ubiquity. How does an object-oriented ontology deals with the loss of uniqueness of objects and its multiplication in the computational environment? Is this a problem regarding the object's understanding?

GH: The loss of uniqueness of objects can actually be a net plus, and here I disagree with the mourning of the *aura* found in Walter Benjamin. The fact that consumer products can be multiplied into identical millions of samples is for me not a sad erosion of concrete objects, but the raising of the *background conditions* of objects into objects themselves. Think of how Immanuel Kant drew our attention to the basic background features of all human experience: space, time, and the twelve categories of the understanding. Žizek is only half-joking when he calls these the “unknown knowns,” by contrast with Donald Rumsfeld's “unknown unknowns.” The unknown knowns are the background *rhetorical* features presupposed by any specific experience. Does it not seem that consumer products do the same, by embodying certain uniform features of *any* experience of Coca-Cola or McDonald's? There is a sense in which this gives us a heightened awareness of our own environment. This is

why I have never been as hostile as many philosophers are towards consumer goods, branding, marketing, and related phenomena. Nor am I as hostile as most continentally trained philosophers to the tendency of analytic philosophy to sum up philosophical positions with brand-type phrases. For example, if memory serves, Mark Okrent calls Heidegger a “non-metalist verificationist anti-realist.” I think this is actually a misreading, but I see nothing wrong with using terminology of this sort.

Sound as a ghost

HP: The concept of sound object is quite pertinent in the context of music and sound arts. Often, we listen to artists referring to sound as an object. In my argument, sound is an event of immanence that appears and disappears and it's only inscribed in our memory. How does the object-oriented ontology deals with this phenomenon in a materialistic approach?

GH: It is interesting that you are probably the third or fourth person to write to me to ask about the status of sound as an object. Obviously there is a debate going on in your field that Object-Oriented Ontology somehow address, though without my being well-informed enough to take sides in the debate! I think I follow your argument, though I never use the term “immanent” myself. I am not sure whether you think sound is something *uniquely* tied to memory, or if you subscribe to a wider ontological position in which memory saturates absolutely everything. If you mean the latter, then I would probably be willing to agree that all *experience* involves memory, but not that all *reality* involves memory. That would be too close to the Bergsonian-Deleuzean position for my tastes, since after all I am a realist who thinks the world is already pre-carved into individual objects prior to any experience.

Things have a fundamental inertia that is frequently disturbed

HP: An object has its atomic vibrational autonomy in the multiplication of all its constituents and establishes relations with other vibrating objects, human and nonhuman. Your theory presents a fantastic alternative solution to “overmining” or “undermining” analyses of objects. Taking in consideration the sound as an event or object that is out of the materialistic dimension of the world and passes from a process of relations to be reproduced for the manifestation of its content: how can object-oriented ontology analyze an object that is in a constant state of immanence and decay and needs to be in a chain of events or circuit of reproductions to be perceived?

GH: As for the first part, I would not agree that the autonomy of the object is vibrational. This sounds more like the position of Jane Bennett in her wonderful book *Vibrant Matter*. There is a lot of hostility these days to notions such as stasis, substance, durability, essence, and so forth. Some of the complaints people make about these concepts are perfectly justified. But

I think we have gone too far and been too prone to emphasizing becoming as the default state of things. Actually, becoming takes *work*, and cannot just be assumed as the basic condition of things. Many of the events that occur change nothing at all. Rather than all the present-day theories of becoming, which are rampant, maybe it is time for some new theories of stability. If everything is really in vibration, then why do so many things stay the same for a good long period of time? Is this really just an illusion stemming from the coarse-grained character of human perception? That is not how I see it. I hold that there is a basic inertia in things, one that is very frequently disrupted, but this is something that needs to be explained: how does the innate inertia of things break down in the face of *certain* relations but not others? As for whether the sound object is really in a state of constant immanence and decay, it is quite possible that you are right. I simply have not attempted so far to develop an ontology of sound objects. There may be special decay features in this case that belong to the unique properties of sound. Here I will defer to your expertise until I am maybe someday in a position to have my own theory of sound.

Immanent reality's ambiguities and contextual restrictions between sensual objects

HP: Do you believe in the existence of a certain obscure level that connects objects and their reality? And what about a level of communication between objects and things that underlie meanings based on an obscure pre-consciousness of affections? Is not this obscure level a connection in a network that tries to generate meaning?

GH: For me there are no direct connections between real objects, or between sensual objects. Two objects of the same type communicate only via a third object of a different type. The analogy I use is magnets: two north poles or two south poles will always repel. Another good analogy would be sexual reproduction, at least until technology changes things once and for all. You need a male and a female animal in order for genetic information to be transmitted. If I perceive an object such as the sun, it is inherently impossible for the real me and the real sun to make direct contact, for reasons explained in my ontology. The sensual sun is the mediator between us. In that sense, I suppose you could call it an obscure level, but actually it is the objects themselves that are obscure and the mediator that is visible. If Deleuze spoke of the sterility of surface effects, I do it the opposite way and hold that only the surface is fertile. And yes, pre-conscious affections may play a role. There has been too much emphasis in the modern period on clear stated discursive concepts and prose propositions. At best, some philosophers try to claim that practical activity is prior to theory and serves as the basis for theory. But as I have argued with respect to Heidegger, praxis is really no better than theory: it, too, is a relation to things that reduces the things to sensual caricatures of themselves. A table is deeper than what we see of

it, but also deeper than how we use it. The table itself is something best accessed pre-conceptually, yes, but also pre-practically.

Tools might malfunction due to unforeseen forces

HP: We are in a position of not being able to understand the whole, there is always something... How can we continue to believe in some kind of obscure force acting in the real world in a society that tends to be more and more connected to rationalization, operability of behaviors, mental operations and activities generated by the technological imposition?

GH: Consider Heidegger for a moment. Although he tends to speak of technology as a rational and totalizing network, that is not really what his analyses show. Tools can break, and so can technologies, and this means that they are already obscure forces never fully captured by the rational uses to which society ostensibly puts them. And then there is McLuhan, who as I mentioned earlier, does not identify technological media with rational enframings as Heidegger thinks, but as obscure background conditions that condition human experience regardless of what we think we know. We spend our time arguing about what should be on the curriculum in public schools, when what is really important for McLuhan is that public schools exist at all. And the same for all media. However well-planned media may seem in the service of power, they have a latent subversive force that often works against their inventors. We are too ready to feel manipulated by technologies, though in fact they are engines of unpredictability.

Technology overheat

HP: What do you think about the impact of technology in art, if we take into consideration that technological devices are made with a functional objective and are limited in their possible operations and combinations? If we think that a musical instrument, a synthesizer, has a limit of combinations for the sound that it generates, then the artistic result needs to emerge in this political imposition made by the manufacturer. What do you think about these political limits imposed by technology in the production of sound objects?

GH: Again, I think it is more difficult than the political Left thinks for manufacturers to make political impositions by means of their design decisions. In the short term, users may be hamstrung by the deliberately engineered conditions of media to enable surveillance and control. But in the long run, I see technologies as rather destabilizing. McLuhan is relevant here too: media tend to "overheat," and as a result they flip into their opposites. As for the effect on the arts, I think artists should always consider embracing whatever new media are available. But it can take some time to grasp the inherent possibilities of a new medium rather than simply using them as a more efficient way of processing and depicting old content. Lots of video art is crap, and the same is true of internet art. But the

same was already true of painting and sculpture. You cannot let your medium do the work for you, because it will not.

Below the surface, time flows

HP: The analysis of an object implies time. Maybe time is a vast succession of events, or a rhythm that connects everything and can be a political imposition and fundamental to the analysis of the objects. How does your theory approach time in an ontological object-oriented perspective?

GH: Here we have different ontologies of time. For me, real objects do exist outside time: not because they are eternal, but because the passage of time itself does nothing to real objects. Only certain moment, certain events, have any impact on objects at all. Object-oriented ontology reads time as the tension between *sensual* objects and their *sensual* qualities. By definition, this does not affect the real object at all, though occasionally things happen on the sensual level that retroactively change or destroy the real object lying beneath the surface. But I would certainly not agree that time connects everything, since some objects (including some people) can endure in the same state for many years, even for many geological epochs. Sharks are in time, but the basic form of the shark has not changed for millions of years.

Effects of sound

HP: Listening to a sound always happens at a different time, because the sound is not found again in space. It is always an event or "object" heard on other occasions, it can even be the same sound, but it is always a new experience in a different time frame. How does the object-oriented ontology deals with aspects of the object and experience?

GH: As mentioned, I have never worked out a specific ontology of sound, but here already we may have a disagreement. We can take the case of a musical sample: say, a saxophone riff by John Coltrane, imported by numerous dj's into different techno dance tracks. Though it appears in different contexts in all of these cases, the riff is the same sound, and recognizable as such. This remains the case even if it is transposed into a different key, muffled, sped up, or slowed down. There is something about that sound that makes it the same even when the context has changed completely.

Disembodied sound and the unknown knows

HP: Objects do not depend on the observer to ground their modes of existence. They are there. And they are of various natural and artificial orders of existence. How can we analyze an object in a way not only descriptive of its qualities and without making relations? How does this apply to the sonic event as a specter or a ghost?

GH: We do this by *alluding* to a thing rather than speaking about it directly. There is a famous passage in Plato's *Meno* in which the title character repeats the sophists' argument that we cannot search for something if we already have it, and cannot search for it if we *do not* have it, since we would not be able to recognize it once we find it. The response Socrates gives is that we search for things because we both have *and* do not have them. This is what *philosophia* means: to search for something we already have, to relate to it without relating to it, to touch it without touching it. Along with philosophy, aesthetics is another way of showing us a thing without showing it. Against this, modern rationalism assumes that we must either speak *clearly* of something or not speak of it at all (recall the famous formula of Wittgenstein). I'm not sure that this is *truer* of sonic events than of anything else, except that there is always something wonderfully disembodied about sound that tends to create a rift between the sound object and its qualities. Whereas empiricist philosophy liked to think that there is no difference at all between an object and its qualities, Object-Oriented Ontology proceeds by driving a wedge between them.

Mediation conducted remotely

HP: We currently have contact with distant objects through hyper-optic and hyper-sonic technology that allow us to see planets and stars, among other objects and events present in reality, including electromagnetism, nano-dimensional objects and radiation. Is there any difference in the method of analysis in object-oriented ontology between analyzing objects in a direct contact or mediated by technology?

GH: Not so much, since to look at something through sunglasses or contact lenses is already a sort of technological mediation. And indeed, even our own eyeballs are mediating instruments. Which is to take nothing away from the absolute engineering marvels of the sort you describe.

Autonomous hybrid art pieces

HP: In the contemporary art of the third millennium we have artistic practices and theoretical approaches that are hybrid and interdisciplinary in their traditions, like the connection between art and science. Without a thought of correlation or assembly, how do we manage to deal with the complexity of these theoretical and artistic composite objects without a heterogeneous dialogue?

GH: I am all in favor of such hybrid and interdisciplinary work. We must leave behind the *purism* of the high modernist art critics, which followed Kant too closely in fearing any mutual contamination between humans and artworks, as in Michael Fried's horror of theatricality. That said, the key aspect of aesthetic *formalism* still must be maintained: the autonomy of the artwork from its various relational contexts. A work always exists in a situation, yes. But this does not mean it rampantly includes *all* aspects of that situation. At most, an artwork always includes

some aspects of its context while rigorously excluding others. Where Fried is right is in his complaint that an artwork must be more than a literal entity defined solely by its place in a relational context. All objects are autonomous from their contexts to some degree, but in the case of an artwork this is especially so.

The context shifting and reshaping while everything appears to remain the same

HP: Imagine an interactive musical work that functions as an object that has to be activated by a user in order to generate transformation in a set of relations and interactions between device and man. These transformations are stochastic. In this way, must the object be understood as the final result? Or the sum of a stochastic element that give rise to the main output?

GH: As with the previous question, there is nothing wrong with the listener being an essential component of a work (this is where I disagree with the high modernists in art criticism). But the artwork cannot just consist in a set of indiscriminate relationships with everything that surrounds it. Instead, the artwork is an autonomous unit that can have roughly the same effect in numerous different contexts, as when Shakespeare is effectively performed in twenty-first century Malaysia rather than sixteenth century London. This is where I start to become suspicious of any conception of the artwork (or anything else) as an event rather than an object. To be an object is to be that object, not just to be that object under the current relational circumstances with all its specific details. The childhood of Achilles would be the same childhood even if various hairs had fallen from his head a few milliseconds sooner or later than they actually did.

In fiction, setting the zone as hybrid space

I present an approach that opposes elevating audio events to the status of tangible objects as metapolitics² (Paquete, 2022) of sound that is developed in light of the fact that sound is a supremely virtual element; it is tied to event conditions, and because of that it can't be considered an object. These attempts use the ideas of sound installation and sound sculpture to find justifications for presenting acousmatic music as actual objects, such as curtains hanging in a room, in musical contexts, leading to varying arguments that neglect to take into account the ghostery of the sound in substitution for the objects when the sound is reproduced and presented on the location. However, this construction of knowledge does not treat any reality as absolute, but rather as a point of view that is supported by a way of being, and viewing the world events and objects in search of meaning to prevent us from building in a "schizophrenic condition in which electroacoustic music is simultaneously music and something other than music, such as sound art." (Demers, 2010:42). Here, as we examine these themes, the idea of what's virtual starts to take shape as expansive hybrid-reality. A "liquid world

of fantastically distorted perspective: the space of illusions as non-space. Virtuality offers a third zone of liquid vision between distorted reality and its fractal distillate." (Kroker, 1994: 48). This sedation of the new regimes of perception, brought forth by virtual reality, brings sounds to fictitious locations and movies closer to the sight. In light of these circumstances, simulation is a symptom that suggests changes to the modes of representation, which post-digital artists seem to have structurally appropriate as struggle and tech-resistance. Like concepts explored in the score³ by Hugo Paquete *Performative action for percussion with a rock* form 2012. Without the direct presence of an audience, a variety of performative music scores are interpreted in odd locations and captured on digital media as processes. We can think of this as a field of study into the sonic dimensions of intangible realities, investigated through the use of performance techniques through the use of an action-vibratory sound, or action-sound, addressed at the boundaries of language, hearing, cognition, and perception in an effort to reveal an inaudible active world at its widest scales. With the aid of technology, the world's senses and scales have expanded, leading to what is perceived as an austere realism, being it one of several components in an experiment that also investigates transitional space, noise, solitude, object-oriented composition, and experimental notation. The artwork is stored in digital formats for upcoming compositional sound project developments that will also encompass solitary investigations of cosmological forces, creative processes, and the ontological foundations of the evolution of the ontology action of the work of art. In this day of persistent artistic marketing and publicity, forms of resistance are crucial to the foundation of the meaning of an artwork.



Imagem 1: Hugo Paquete / *Performative action for percussion with a rock* / Sound action / At Sanatório Valongo, Portugal / Year: 2012

Beyond technical positivism, our generation, who grew up during the 1990s and continues to this day, is more sensitive to the impact of these remarks. The post-digital aesthetics have a conceptual energy that reflects our understanding of the impact of the digital and computer on our ways of being and how we think about our creations. Kroker accurately describes our current situation.

We no longer live in the time of technology, but in the empty space of virtuality; not in the age of instrumental signification (technology as an efficient calculation of mean), but in the great reverse arc of a dead power traced by crash virtuality. We are the first (electronic) inhabitants of the universe of pure symbolic media of exchange. (Kroker, 1994:51)

In light of the presented ideas, it remains true that, because to the mechanisms we invented, humanity has never before had such a sophisticated perceptual relationship with space in a performativeness aspect. The idea that everything is a place but not everything is an object is built up, and the place blurs in fragments into numerous places and virtual things as hybrid-space and the demand for a Meta-escuta⁴ (Paquete, 2015) and hybrid sensibility.



Imagem 2: Hugo Paquete / *Performative action for silence in and out with the air and gravitational forces of the universe* / Sound action in site / At Sanatório Valongo, Portugal / Year: 2012

As evidence of how the concepts of physical space and virtual space have changed in hybrid-materiality the proposed analysis by Frances Dyson approaches the concept as “mythical and cosmic space” (Dyson, 2009: 1), because the state of cognition today operates in new sonic and visual perceptual regimes due to the post-human condition of reality is re-framed in a - in and out - of tele-mediated experiences with pocket devices capable of generating a mixture of reality and fiction, as a filmic narrative in an interactive disjointed

performativeness hybrid-reality. Some of this activity considers the ideas of cosmic and mystical space in the score⁵ in order to relate to the work on a multi-level scale space and time frame. As example, there’s the *Performative action for silence in and out with the air and gravitational forces of the universe*, (Paquete, 2012). A special technological sound device was built to generate radio waves with a radio transmitter and a sound speaker, that transmits sound impulses to the space, was used in these performative acts to capture the impulse response of the space by introducing a hybrid relationship between transmission and reception points in the recorded action. This transformation of the virtual that deals with production context and living circumstances is crucial, because it highlights an ontological issue that is not just focused on technology but also on the conception of the virtual on a larger scale in the art work, with the virtual being associated with an expansive space were the material and immaterial collide with audio event, in the flow of binary code in an assemblage of times, places and connections.



Imagem 3: Hugo Paquete / *technological sound device was build for generates radio waves with a radio transmitter and a sound speaker that transmits sound impulses to the space* / Sound action in site / At Sanatório Valongo, Portugal / Year: 2012

Consequently, this condition of habitability, from which experiences are drawn, involves our bodies in performativeness as well as our interactions with the environment, technological and cultural ecosystem, in which we produce art, research and inspiration. The artist and user in this situation is having a whole experience rather than just passively seeing the virtual since, in the third millennium, the virtual has shaped perception norms and cultural ecology in the most profound levels of our brains. A kind of rhythmic

vision of the continuum of temporal perception where space, event, and cultural meanings enter into a game between what we have already apprehended and have as an expectation of apprehension in hybridization. According to Frances Dyson:

Uniting virtual with reality, cyber with space, artificial with life, and tele with presence opens both terms to reinterpretation-disturbing the once-solid meaning of the latter term while grounding the form in accepted phenomenal and existential concepts.” (Dyson, 2009: 2).

As a result, these mediations announce a new concept of being in place explored in the set of these scores and composition methodologies and a more inclusive and expansive hybrid space in both material and event forms. These concepts pick inspiration on Frances Dyson, which refers to:

It could be said that new media art - representing the pinnacle of digital media - seems not to aspire to the conditions of media, but rather, paraphrasing Schopenhauer, to the condition of sound. (Dyson, 2009; 3).

According to her, the phone and radio were the first devices that predated the information society, because they were the ones that first eliminated spatial distances and dematerialized the body. According to Frances Dyson, this aspect is crucial when analyzing the sound in *New Media Art*:

new media represents an accumulation of auditive technologies of the past: a realization of the telepresence first offered by the telephone, a computational form of the inscriptive techniques of the phonograph and tape recorder, an appropriation of the ethereal associations of radio, and an embrace of film sound's spatiality. (Dyson, 2009; 3)

The ability to enter the realms of the digital, the virtual, and interact with images and sounds of various kinds and origins, as well as the flexibility of the code that animates them are therefore crucial components subjugated all to the immateriality of the code. The multimodal performative body and the virtual objects acquire new subjective aspects as a result of this connection. In a Post-McLuhan cybernetic *Zeitgeist*, instead of a cross-disciplinary artistic vision, then hybrid art is characterized by connections. The media's widespread impact has made all art post-media art by default. The computer, the all-encompassing technology, also claims to be capable of reproducing all media types. Post-media art is therefore all art. *The Institute of Viral Sonology*⁶ (Paquete, 2014),

Additional understanding of hybrid place in post-digital sound practices

A computer where a sound or musical piece is reproduced is a place in several levels of fragmentation that may or may not be found in our consciousness.

The computer is the place where the sound is reproduced, coming from another place that is a server, where it is archived and passes through various places in the networks. The place proposes, then, a dissemination and a, thematic network between places that, by simplification, present themselves in the space of the computer as hybrid space with multi-levels of performativeness. Then we have the place produced by the code that structures places that form digital interfaces, forms that define the sound player and its characteristics. In this virtual space within the screen, the space allows interaction with the elements by means of physical interfaces, such as the mouse, touch screens or other intangible sensors, establishing the connection between the physical and the virtual world as performativeness. This process is dependent on another space which is that of circuits, transistors and capacitors, among others, that define the physicality of the object and its connection to the space of electrical energy that animates the whole body of physical and virtual devices, connected to the earth's magnetic field that allows the stability of the electrical current necessary for its operation. In this relationship between scales, we find multiple spaces that in the combination of elements between distinct places and temporalities produce and reproduce a sound event, projected by speakers, which are another space that vibrates by electromagnetic variation in the translation of the implicit code, in the file being reproduced, that refers to another space. Finally, the sound event in this multiplicity of spaces is heard, projecting itself as turbulence in the air with the secondary effect of all these processes and events, finding the space of the real, undulating as particles until it finds a receptor in the peripheral place of your ears and in the configuration of your neuronal network. These turbulent effects are translated into a phenomenon of aesthetic signification that happens in the place of consciousness. Place emerges in an unstable and hybrid way and in multiple scales, where many events take place without ever apprehending the whole. Roberto Diodato, in his search for an invisible sensible, his research takes him through strange paths where he tries to find an aesthetic ontology for the invisible, which is a relevant theme in face of art and technology and the modes of perception promoted by it and with special attention to the practices that deal with the sound and musical event. He states about the virtual, with recourse to Dufrenne's ideas:

understood in this way, the virtual belongs to the object, and if we think the imaginary as virtual, it must be said that the imaginary inhabits the real, is in it as a superabundance of being, a superabundance of sense (Diolato, cit. Dufrenne, 2015:28).

He also wonders “Is it perhaps the object that, in order to be itself and image, imagines?” (ibid). The conceptual relations where propose follow this argumentation where “subject/object” (ibid) are mediated by imagining what we believe happens around us when we are aware. In short, everything is

an actualization and turbulence between the real and the virtual in a fragmentary world, and the post-digital is a form of radical ecology that thinks technology in a material way and with awareness of the fragmentation of reality through its multiple scales mediated by objects, events in the real and virtual spaces using hyper-optical and hyper-sonic devices that reveal the unstable real. As well other levels where sound acts at the micro-sound⁷ level and in maximum sounds⁸, inside and outside the black boxes of technology. Following the presented concepts, the project *The object-place as performance: Industrial fuel-burning tower*⁹, (Paquete, 2017) funded by the *Festival DME as part of the initiative A paisagem sonora na qual vivemos*. This project was made in an industrial context, inside a deactivated tower, that was previously used to burn fuel. This tower is located in Rosario, Moita, Portugal. The composer Carlos Marecos in its composition *A Casa do Cravo*¹⁰ for piano and electronics, uses the recordings *Industrial fuel-burning tower* by Hugo Paquete. The composition was commissioned by the *Festival DME as part of the initiative A paisagem sonora na qual vivemos* and performed by the pianist Ana Telles.

Unknown knowns in the performativeness

The approach that I made to the place was mediated by some specific concepts, such as: object and field as instrument¹¹, *VLF*, percussion, geopositioning, tech-ethnomusicology¹² (Paquete, 2016) and hybrid performativeness territory. Using a mobile phone connection to the IP address 79.243.13.75 from the coordinates 51.8995, 7.64055, and running the program *gISDR v1.50 APK*, was one tactic used to explore hybrid-space in composition¹³. From the other location, it was transmitted to the tower sounds that articulate connections within the digital domains as "Digital Performance" (Dixon,2007:X), establishing a connection between the two places as hybrid-space where the acoustic properties of the venue and the noise were used to create percussion improvisations. This process claims that noise is the outcome of a systematic classification ordering the sounds, there are no extreme maximum noises, and no sound is extremely noisy outside of this particular categorization system into which it does not fit. Although sounds by themselves cannot be considered noise, they can if they happen in a location where they are not wanted. On the other hand, any sound that is made in a place where it belongs is by definition not noise. Noise is a name applied to sounds rather than a quality that sounds inherently possess.



Imagem 4: *The object-place as performance: Industrial fuel-burning tower / The place / Hugo Paquete / 2017*

According to this idea, the noise impairs cognition and is a continuous. Because of this, noise isn't regarded as a bad aspect or something that should be avoided in music, but rather as a crucial component connect production with the harshest and transient conditions in the world, its events. The importance of ontology as a means of accessing reality is expressed in the current ideas. That said, we need to understand these phenomena in a broader field of knowledge. As Debra Shaw states:

The arts that we produce not only provide us with enjoyment but also provide us with a focus for working through our responses to cultural change and can be read as representing the state of knowledge about the world in a given historical period or in any given culture" (Shaw, 2008:03).

Sound arts should integrate a more flexible notion of space, not conditioning the discourse to a purely connected relationship with installation and gallery space.

Conclusion

Graham Harman puts forth a provoking concept that is shown in the way we characterize particular interactions with reality, things, and experiences fundamental for the interaction in both analog and digital domains. Since it tends to develop a pattern between the object, the event, and its features, this model is helpful for both the auditory event and object centered analyses. He also points out that no particular ontology of sound was created. In this way, I promote the concept of meta-listening and some other ideas, because unlike objects like rocks, burning gas towers, scores and technological artifacts, sound cannot be re-encountered again in space. The circumstances surrounding the reproduction, immanence, and disappearance of the sound event

implies the understanding of its ghostery and hybrid qualities, which are dependent on time and memory to negotiate the acoustic event past, present, and future in a cultural level. This interview with Graham Harman served to expose thoughts strategies to connect and analyze reality, its events and relationships. In order to find areas of convergence in my sound and musical study and processes, I exposed linkages between hybrid reality in time and space, ontology and performativeness by using creative forms of frame theory, fiction, and creativity in the development of some sound projects, process and methodologies. Exposing the philosophical elements that have influenced my creative processes and the conceptualization of the art making. Developing ties between music textual and sound or music production.

Endnotes

¹ Hugo Paquete, P.h.D

² The idea of metapolitics is applied here as a distribution of meaning and significance in the realm of thought about society, the world, human nature, and one's ideological orientation, guiding one's governmental goals and practices built on discord as a methodology. Involves a variety of ideologies in which cultures and subcultures serve as means of producing meaning and managing crises in social organization, which are mediated by the conflict of the present and its complexity. Recognition of the instability in the current political landscape and the diversity of organizational goals and models are suggested by metapolitics. (Paquete, 2022)

³ Score:

Place a large rock in the middle of an oddly shaped area filled with dust and landt in a spacious chambers.

Place various small rock pieces, sand, or other granular materials all around the area.

Set up a field recording setup around the performance area, pointing varied distances from the action's focal point, and record the performance. Apply a center overhead hypercardioid microphone in a separate channel, preferably record in quadrophonic.

Stand close to the rock for 30 seconds.

Start circling the rock's center of gravity as you apply energy over a longer period of time to produce more forceful and dramatic movements.

1st directive: Over the course of 4 minutes, think in a progression from PPP to FFF while varying your speed and intensity.

2nd directive: Pass the rock across the sand as you move it around with no time limite.

3rd directive: Move in direction to the center of the performative space.

Start the 1 directive starting in FFF to PPP.

4th directive: Finish wen you wish.

⁴ The sound-event as immanence in cognition is at the same time event, vibration, experience, spectrum, and memory, crossing all states of consciousness. It comes from a process of Meta-Listening, because it is seen as a hypothetical event open to the multiplicity of physical, temporal and spectral scales of frequencies where it manifests itself, whether in reality external to the individual or resulting from his previous knowledge or imagination about the phenomena-events, interconnected with the consciousness that attributes meaning and value to it, whether as an image, vibration, electrical impulse, or mental, psychological or neuronal referent. It is atomistic because it is not characterized by a physical body, a crystallized object delimited by the outline of its form, but rather as a vibrational event of immanence, spectral and dynamic, interdependent on time that limits its state of permanence in our spectrum of perceptual frequencies until it moves on to another scale. It is an

event of immanence, because without the existence of the cause in the cause itself, we have no secondary qualities or unique events. Otherwise, we would be left exclusively with objects that are forms enclosed or articulated within themselves, suspended in space and time, but which do not generate causes when immobile, nor do they effect secondary results without dynamic interaction with other elements in space-time, from which come unique events that release energies and spectrums by their cause-generating interaction like the sound-event. The sound-event implies a level of energy released by its manifestation as immanence and spectrum. The sound-event is the vibrational-object, and it is impossible to analyze its characteristics starting from materiality and substances, because these properties only exist in the material, mechanism or device where the sound is inscribed, stored, emerges or reproduces. At the moment of its reproduction, it emanates from the material, mechanism or device through a set of analogical or digital relations and in a temporal fraction of immanence, energy and intangible instantaneity it fades away, not in the mechanisms that reproduce it, but in the space-time through which it propagates in the infinite void and in our mind as a constructor of consciousness, memory, image, and meaning, experienced in the tiniest temporal scale as turbulence. The sound-event is interdependent on memory and evocation, because the moment the sound-event is perceived it automatically becomes concrete temporal experience, memory and evocation, which supports it as a unique event of mental significance. I present the argument from evocation, because without the evocation of the similarity of the sound-event with other past experiences, such as revisited awareness, decoding, and signification, this single-event would become an experience in the realm of the unqualifiable. Thus, a reflexive approach to the sound-event and its intangibility and manipulative interdependence of cognitive interpretation, revisitation, and signification is needed, since if we observe our displacement in space-time and look back, the sound-event is no longer in that space-time where we became aware. It can only be accessed by revisiting the memory as signification of the experience of contact with a unique and spectral event that only takes place in our mind. In this way, it is outside the material boundaries and substances of the world. (Paquete, 2015)

⁵ Score:

Find a quiet area inside an empty structure.

Set up a substantial rock capable to support you, but it should be unstable.

When the gravitational point changes, the sound-producing by the rock makes noise.

When standing on the top of the rock to establish balance, use a small sound player connected to a wifi loudspeaker fixed to your body to play sound. Record some sound frequencies, such as 65Hz, 130Hz, 300Hz, 785Hz, 1687Hz, 5888 Hz, and 12771Hz with the duration of 30 seconds and 5 gaps of 30 seconds with silence.

Shut your eyes. Change your center of gravity to make sound with the rock, creating brief periods of total silence in tandem and anticipating the recording's 30 second silence.

Install microphones to capture the action.

The duration of the activity is 15 to 20 minutes.

Enjoying the surroundings, your body, the minor aspects of the experience, and the auditory elements while listening to yourself

⁶ An Undercover curatorial aesthetic organization developed by Hugo Paquete that uses data, experimentation and research to investigate the audio medium in relation to other disciplines of study. Includes different editions produced by the Spanish modist label. This call focuses on investigating the computer's potential as an automatic device that can produce compositional material based on stochastic probability.

⁷ "In the literature of acoustics and signal processing, many terms refer to similar microsonic phenomena: acoustic quantum, sonal atom, grain, glisson, grainlet, trainlet, Gaussian elementary signal, Gaussian pulse, short-time segment, sliding window, microarc, voicel, Cofflet, symmetl, Gabor atom, Gabor wavelet, gaborette, wavelet, chirplet, Liénard atom, FOF, FOG, wave packet, Vosim pulse, time-frequency atom, pulsar,

waveset, impulse, tone burst, tone pip, acoustic pixel, and window function pulse are just a few. These phenomena, viewed in their mathematical dual space the frequency domain take on a deferent set of names: kernel, logon, and frame, for example." (Roads, 2004:21)

⁸ The concept of maximum sounds is used to analyze audio aesthetics that employ loudness and extreme amplification of sound in performance or installation contexts. (Paquete, 2022:14)

⁹ <https://paysagesonore.eu/o-lugar-objecto-como-performance-torre-industrial-de-queima-de-combustiveis-02/>

¹⁰ Caro Hugo Paquete,

Boa noite. O meu nome é Ana Telles. Sou pianista e musicóloga. Terminei recentemente a redacção de um ensaio sobre a obra A Casa do Cravo, para piano e electrónica, do compositor Carlos Marecos, encomendada pelo Festival DME no âmbito do projecto A paisagem sonora na qual vivemos. A obra em questão utiliza os fonogramas com os quais o Hugo contribuiu para o projecto em questão. Com vista ao meu trabalho de investigação, o compositor forneceu-me uma foto que não consta do site do projeto (ver anexo). Assim, venho pedir a sua autorização para utilizar essa foto (bem como a confirmação do respectivo autor), no âmbito de uma publicação a realizar proximamente pelo projecto PASEV - Patrimonialização da paisagem sonora eborense, financiado pela FCT e desenvolvido pela Universidade de Évora. Obrigada pela atenção e resposta. Com os melhores cumprimentos e votos de um excelente ano de 2023, Ana Telles". Email recebido em 26/12/2022. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RS-UJPPxOOMA>

¹¹ The idea of using a place or thing as an instrument is linked to a method of field recording that involves physical activity. A performative activation-based intervention is made in the space with the intention of transforming it into an instrument or object with acoustic and formal potential. This activation results from a collection of behaviors that have been formed in the location with the aim of producing a series of events and audio qualities. It establishes a separation from a language that is only concerned with hearing and recording the location's acoustic activities, scenery, and other factors.

¹² The present concept combines two fundamental ideas: the idea of etno-technology, which examines the impact of technology on ethnography, and the idea of tecnodemusicology, which examines the effects of technology on the study of etno-technological aspects of music as culture.

¹³ This creative practice explores how to approach the idea of territory and the evolving process of field recording. The industrial architectural metallic burning skyscraper serves as the backdrop as various components are examined as progression factors. Following an assessment of its attributes and the establishment of performative tactics at the location, investigation was done with the intention of actively learning the auditory components of the actions that emerged across the structure. The goal of this piece is to identify metallic materials, minute details, and percussion-developed parts in a performative environment mixing with static noise generated by the gISDR v1.50 APK increasing access to a wide range of additional areas of geo-location. As a result of the site's sound source incorporating an outside technical component, and we are connected to a different geolocation, encouraging hybrid space. The gISDR v1.50 APK component communicates with another geo-decentralized technology; their connections are special and imprecise in time and location, and they synchronize during the recording. It offers chances for conceptual studies, which are crucial for comprehending the area as a continuation of the digital realms, impossibilities in compositional and recording techniques, as well as deterministic approaches to musical and space-related topics. By bringing together these two remote locations, a rhythmic connection between the physical territory and the spectral hybrid site, additional time frames in geo-location and sound translation creates sonic immanences. The performative action of field recording serves as a bridge between an individual and the outside world, including its objects, conceptual frameworks and situations.

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