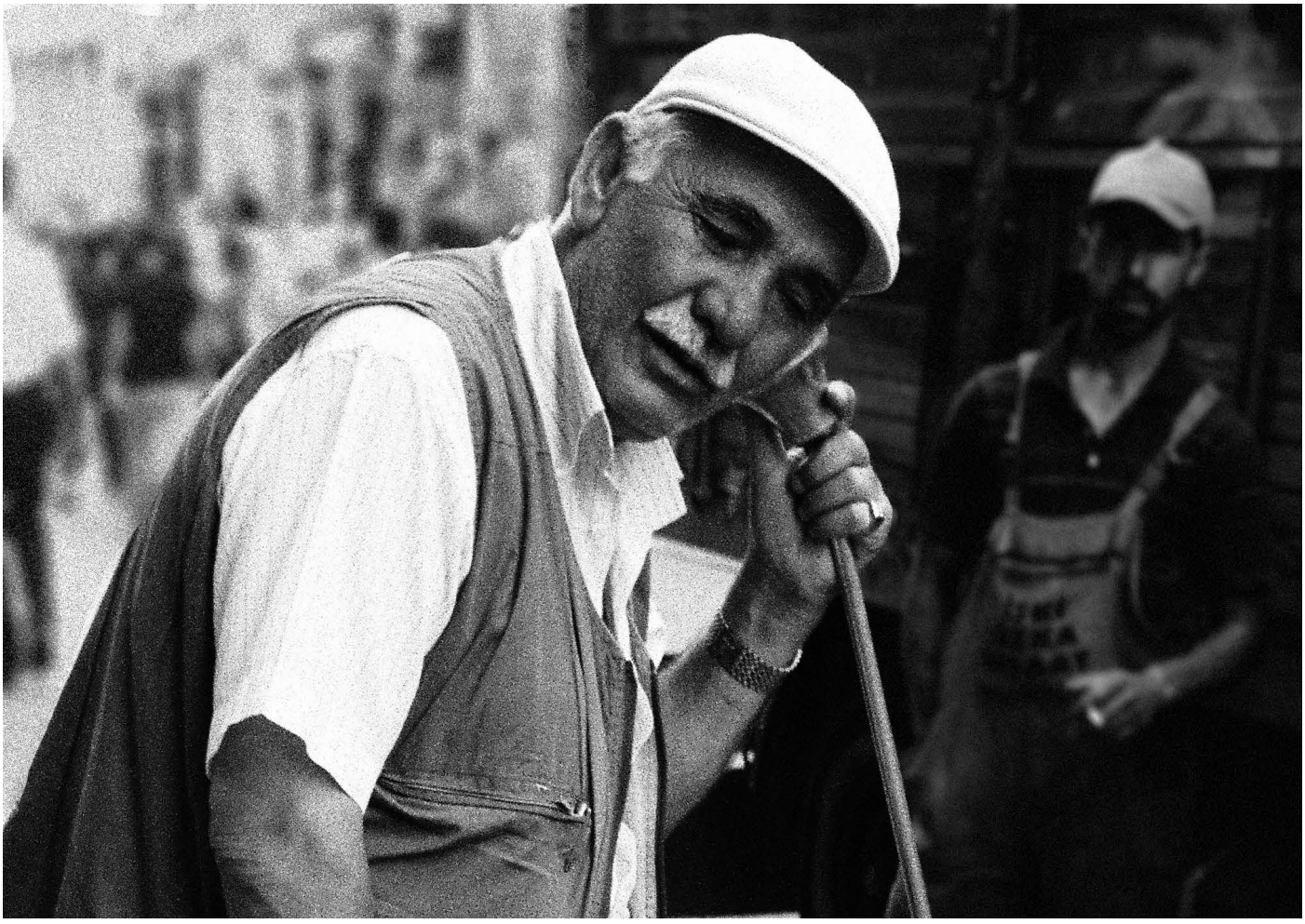
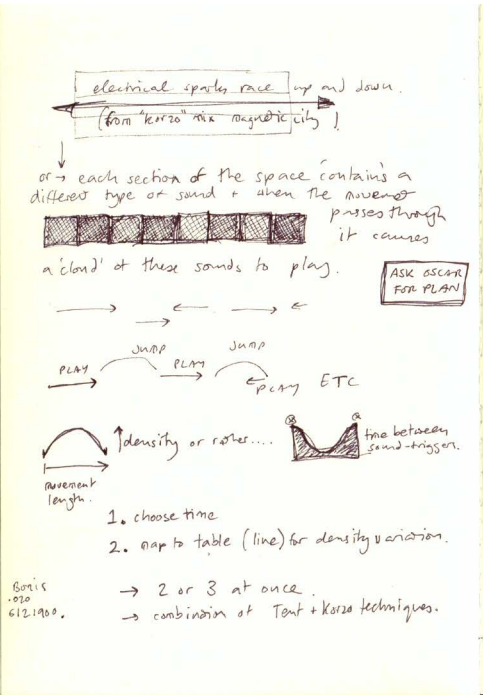
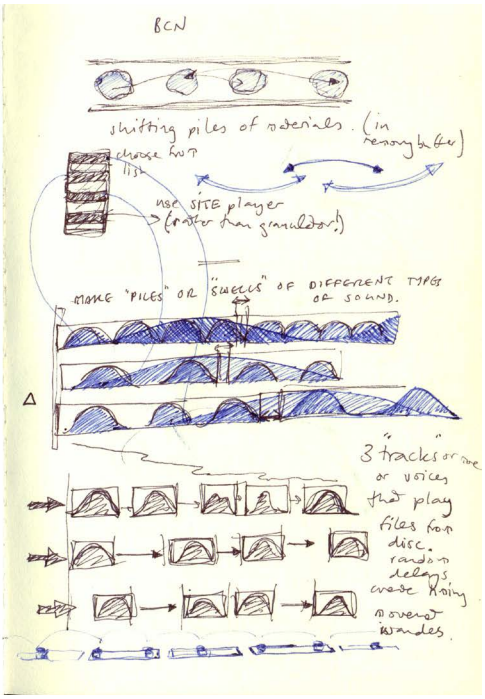
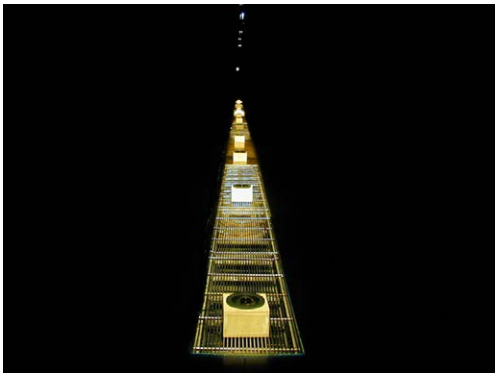


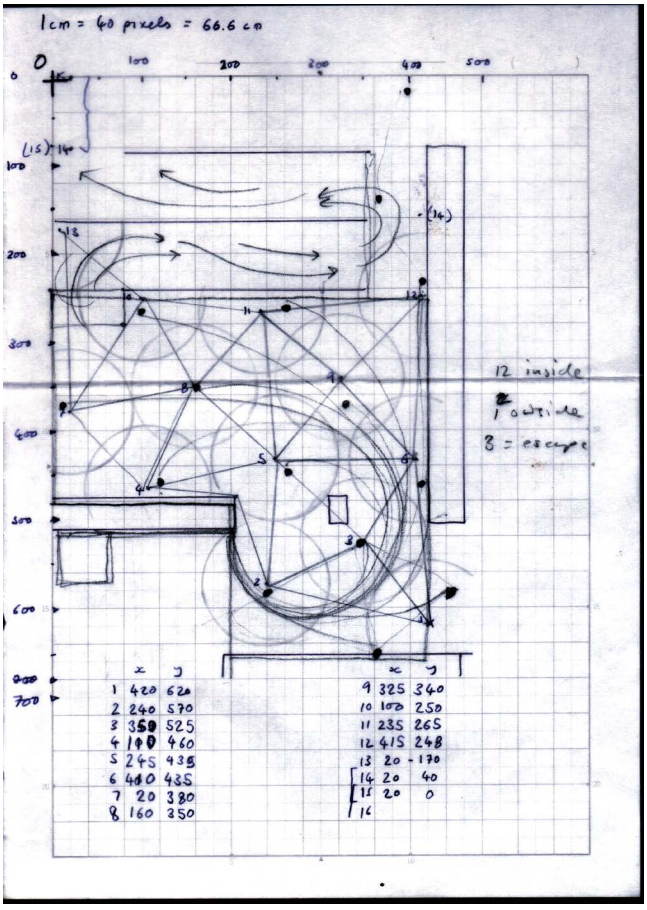
Selected Works 2000 - 2015

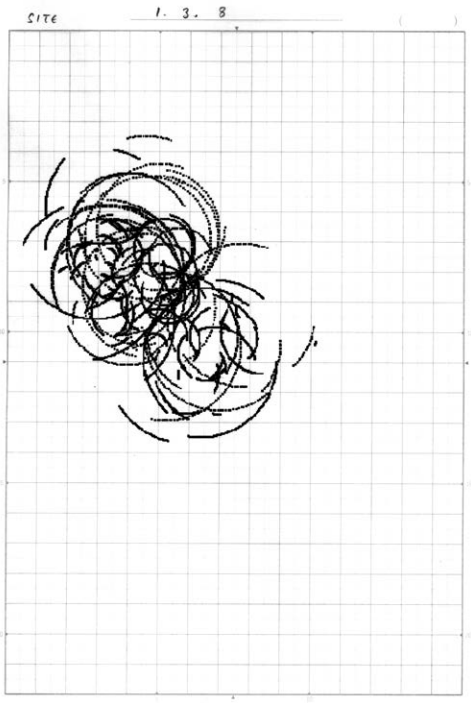
Justin Bennett.

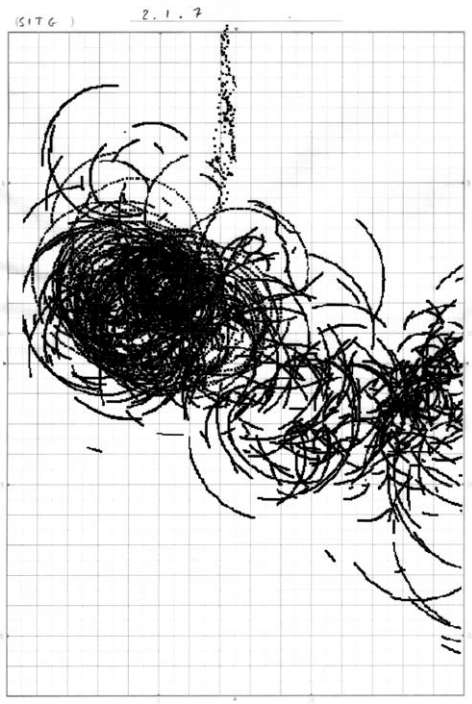

electrical sparks race up and down.
(from "Korzo" mix magnetic city)
or → each section of the space contains a different type of sound + when the movement passes through it causes a 'cloud' of these sounds to play.
ASK OSCAR FOR PLAN
PLAY
JUMP
PLAY
JUMP
PLAY
ETC
density or rather....
time between sound-triggers.
movement length.
1. choose time
2. map to table (line) for density variation.
→ 2 or 3 at once.
→ combination of Tent + Korzo techniques.
Boris .020 6121900.

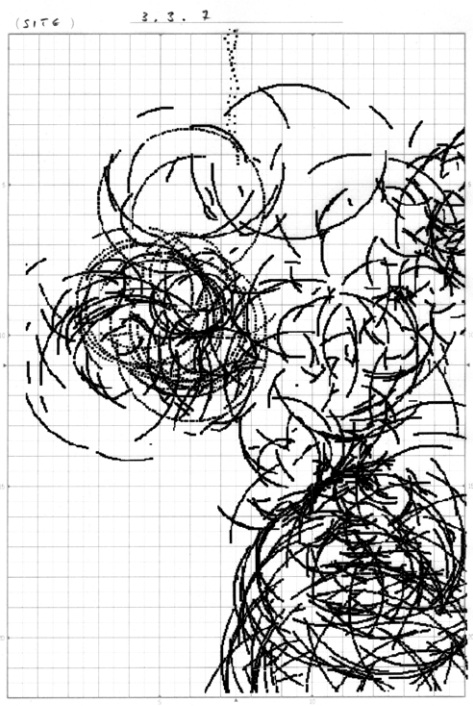

BCN
shifting piles of materials. (in memory buffer)
choose from list
use SITE player (rather than granulator!)
MAKE "PILES" OR "SWELLS" OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF SOUND.
3 "tracks" or more or voices that play files from disc. random delays create timing movement wandles.




1cm = 40 pixels = 66.6 cm
0
100
200
300
400
500
600
700
(15)
(14)
12 inside
1 outside
3 = escape
x y
1 420 620
2 240 570
3 350 525
4 110 460
5 245 435
6 410 435
7 20 380
8 160 350
x y
9 325 340
10 100 250
11 235 265
12 415 248
13 20 -170
14 20 40
15 20 0
16



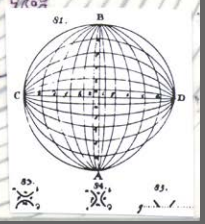




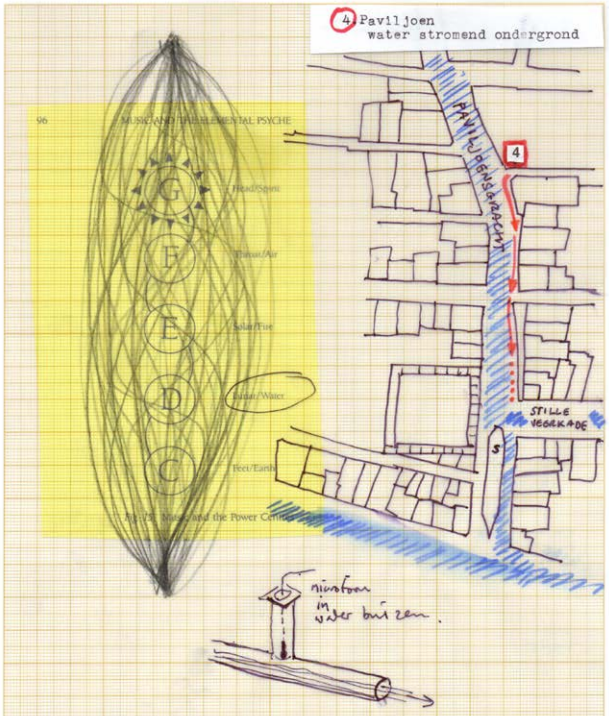
Site. 2000-2001 A series of multi-channel sound installations made for Zeppelin Festival CCCB Barcelona, TENT Rotterdam, De Verschijning Tilburg, Korzo Theater Den Haag. Tiny fragments of sound recorded in one particular location are used by a computer programme to "draw" lines, shapes and movements through the spaces. The programme also produces a series of drawings. Supported by Fonds BKVB and Materiaalfonds, Amsterdam

Den Haag. rumours/resonances
demonstrated in geometrical order

zoektocht naar het verborgen
geluid v.d. Stad.



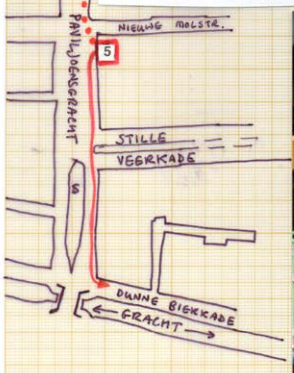
4 Paviljoen
water stromend ondergrond



Spi. II/30
About the duration of our body we can have but a very inadequate knowledge.

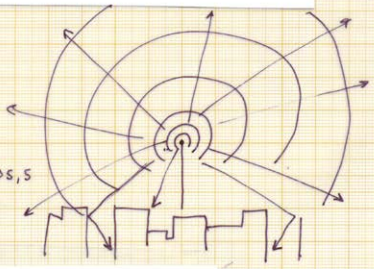
the city is fullmof colour

5. Les 3. stralingsbronnen
(Mijd Stralingsbronnen)



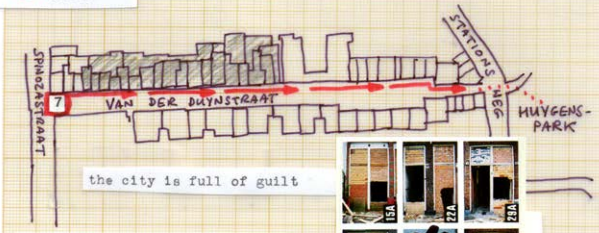
ik heb 8 jr. lang naast een kerncentrale gwoond.
hij lekte niet, er waren alleen maar onvoorzien
lozingen. desalniettemin mensen ernstig ziek.
pas op met magnetron, mobiel, antennes, babyfoon,
draadloos kopte. en d. de Staat weet ervan maar
doet niks. U kunt bijv. een jas van kopergaas
dragen. Leren zolen of op blotevoetenlopen helt ook.

- babyfoon 0.4
- mobile 0.7 - 2.0
- regulation 1.23
- mobile relay station 27,5
- radio zender 62,0 - 105,5



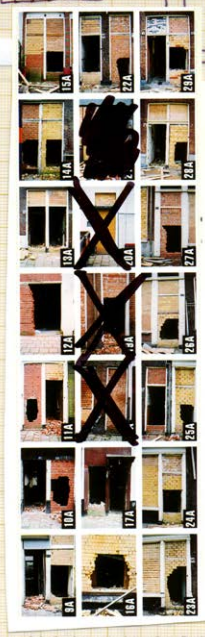
the city is full of disease

7. v.d.Duyn
sloop



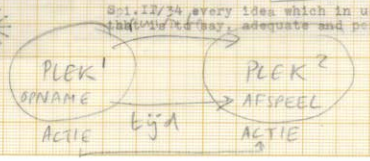
the city is full of guilt

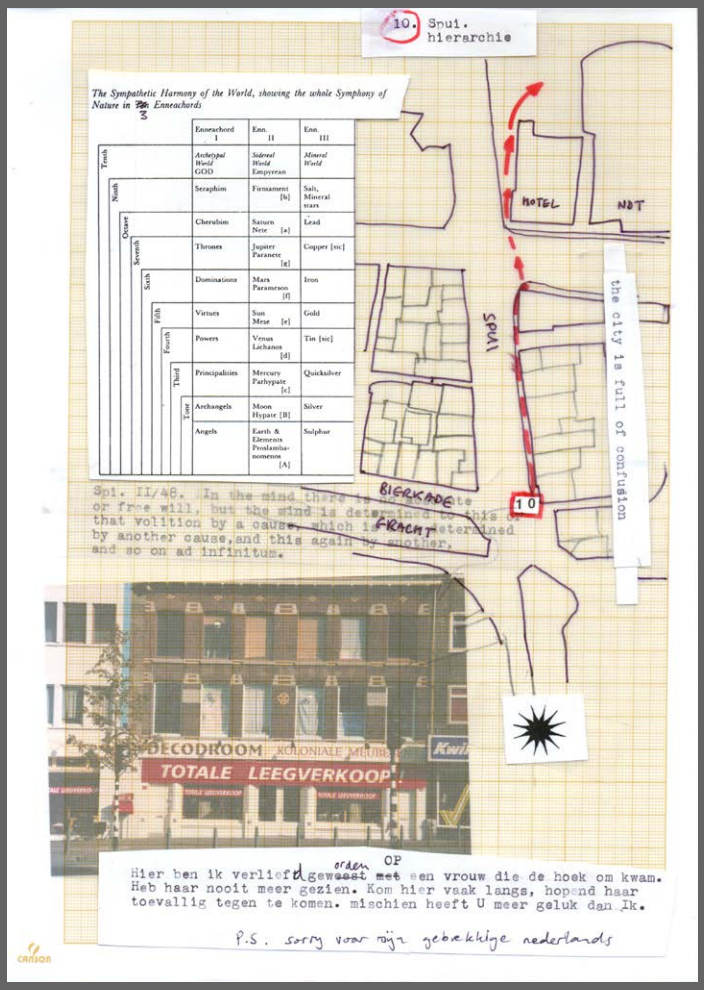
- familie
- familie
- 1 vrouw. 1 stud.
- 3 antikraak (kunstjen.?)
- 2 families
- fam.
- 8-10 illegalen (tuinbouw)
- fietsenmaker (zwart)
- gekraakt
- ook?
- familie
- bordeel
- stel
- familie
- fam.
- dakbedrijf
- familie
- timmerman (tevens pooier)
- stel (bakker)
- 2 stellen
- oude mvr.
- 2 oude mannen
- familie

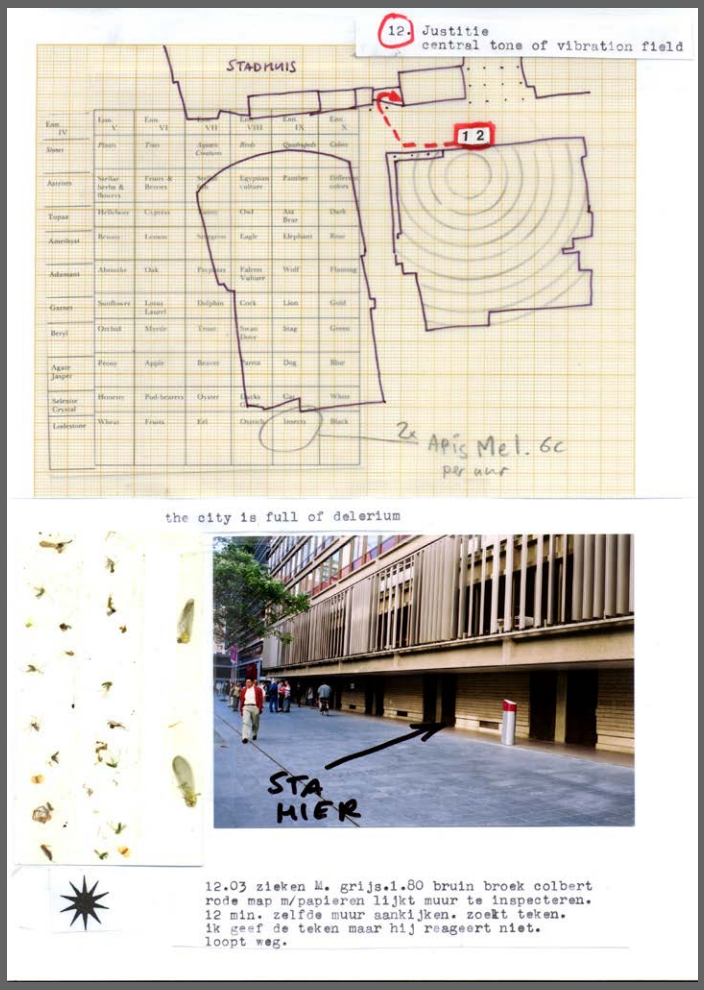


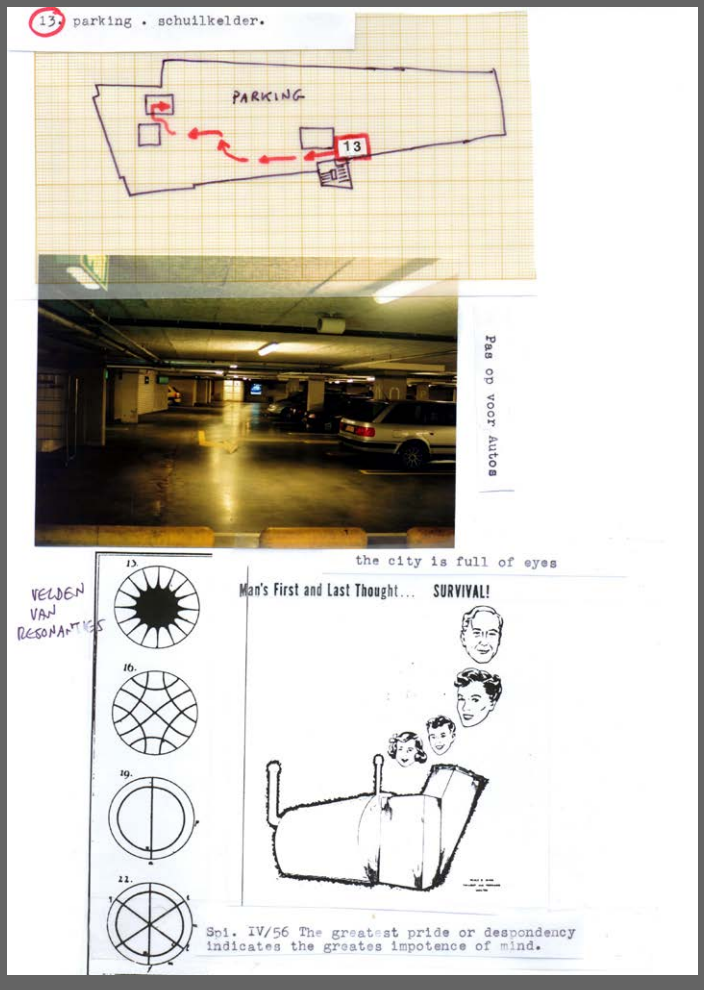
Everything I say is being recorded and will be used against me in a court of law.

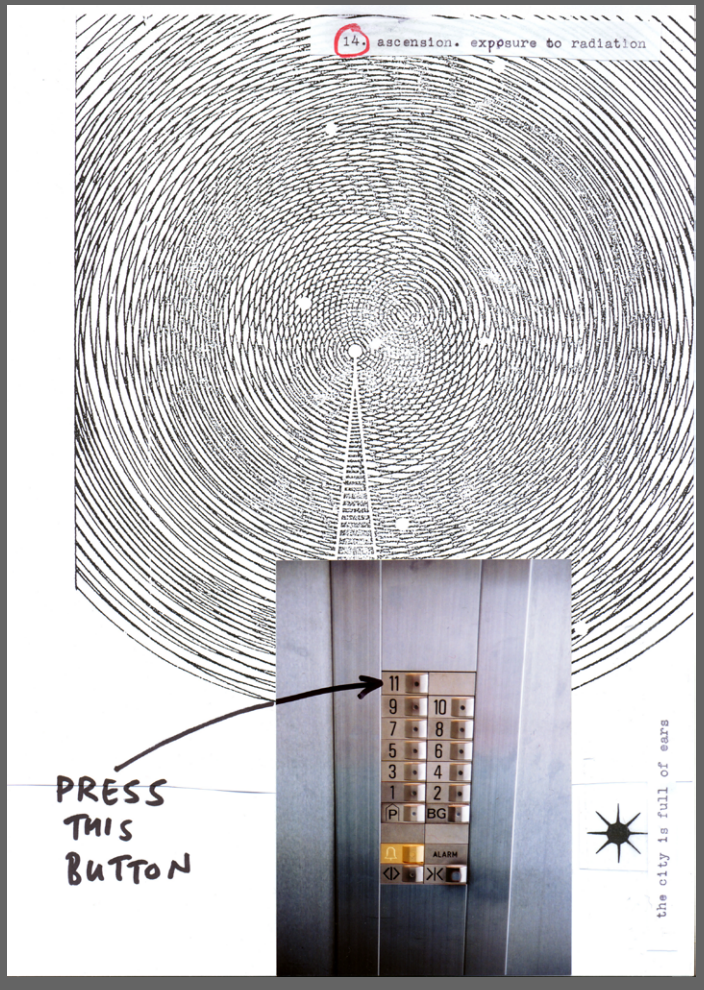
Spi.II/34 every idea which in us is absolute, that is to say, adequate and perfect, is true.





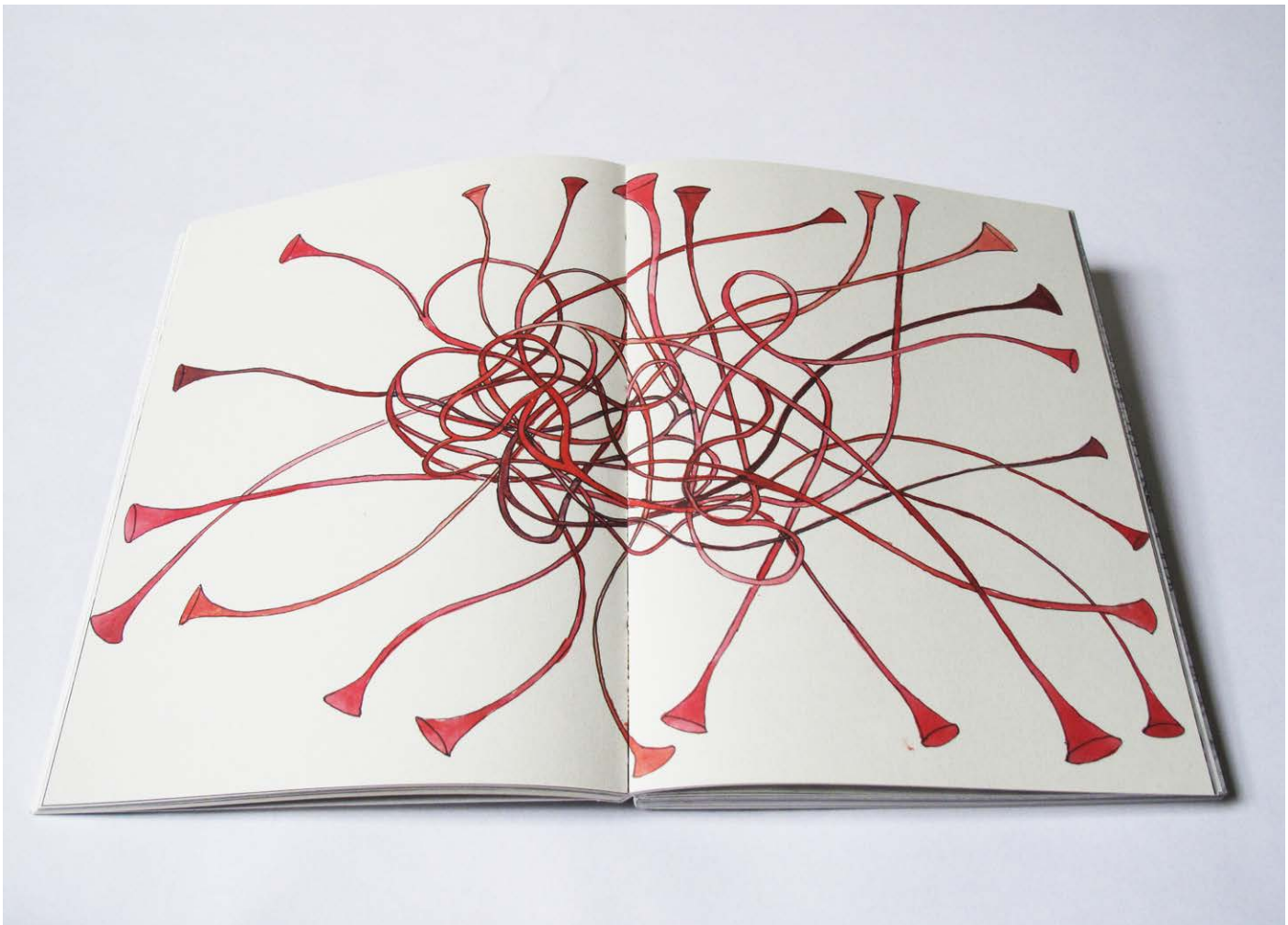


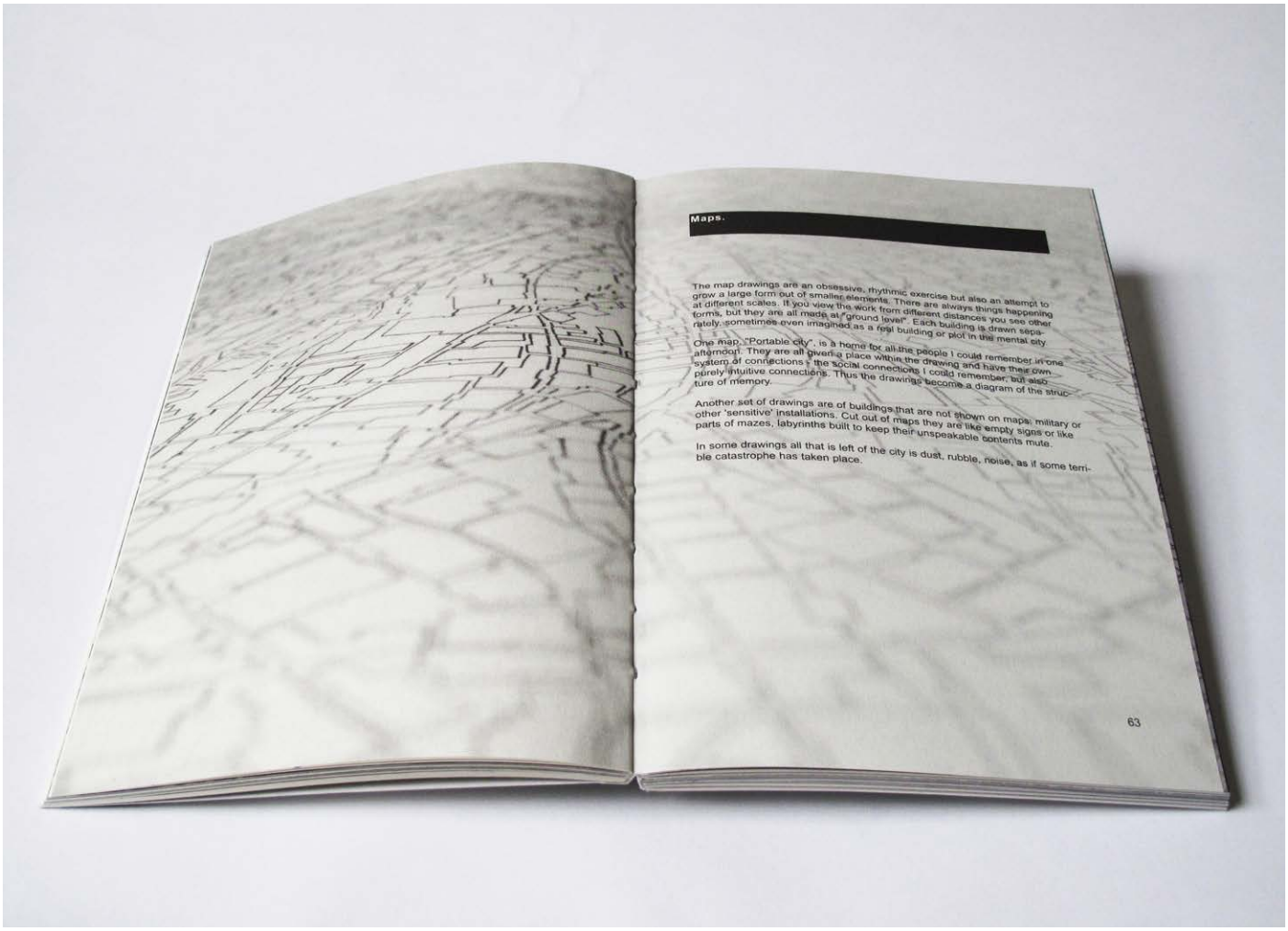


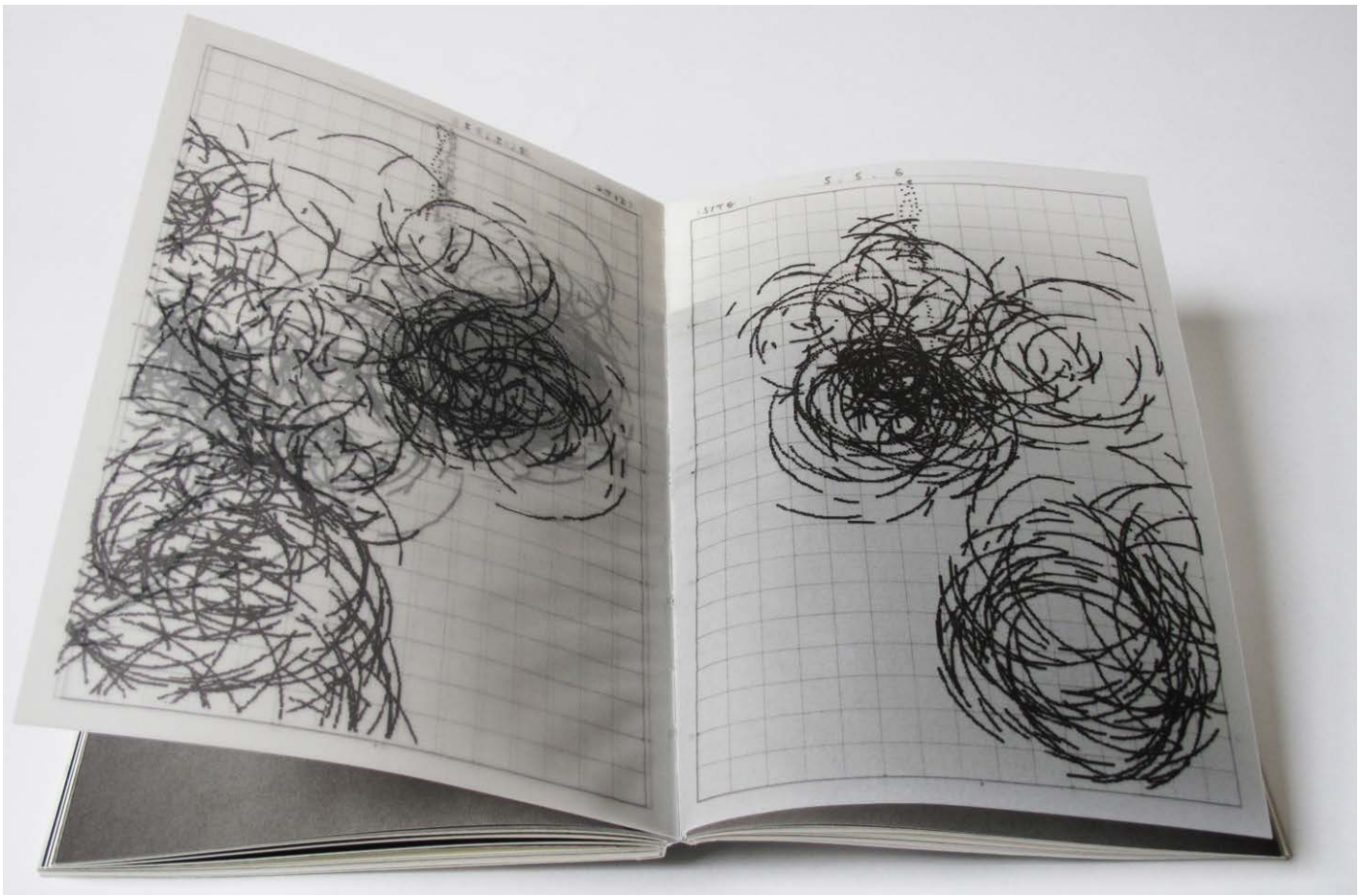


Rumours / Resonances. A one hour soundwalk for Den Haag. Audio CD and book.
commissioned by Stroom Den Haag, 2001.

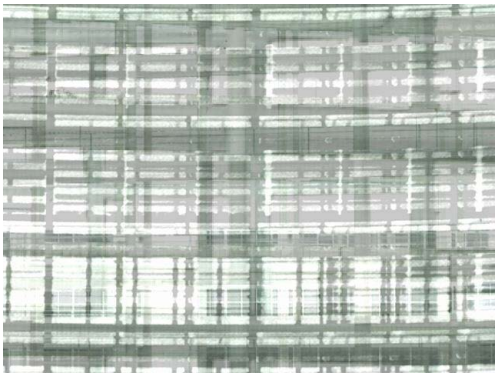
noise map
justin bennett

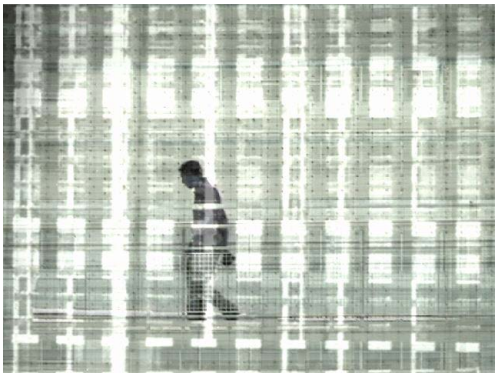


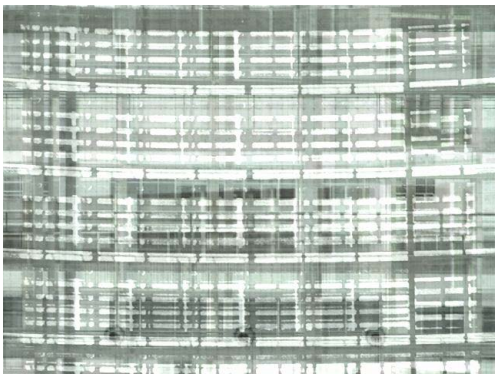


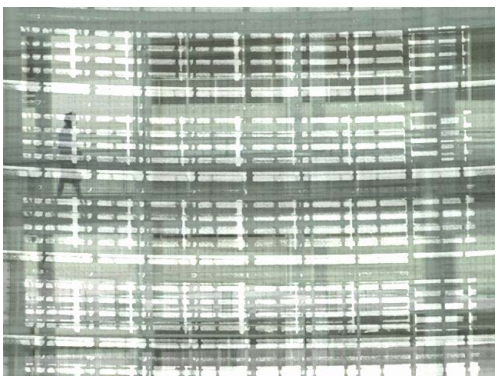


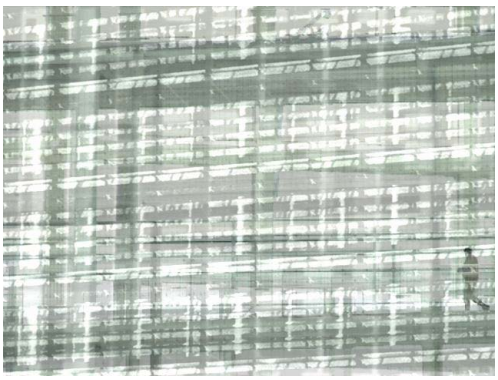
Noise Map. Artists book 2003. 156 pages. Edition of 500. Drawings, photographs and texts. Published by Spore Records in collaboration with meinebank, Berlin and Stroom Den Haag.





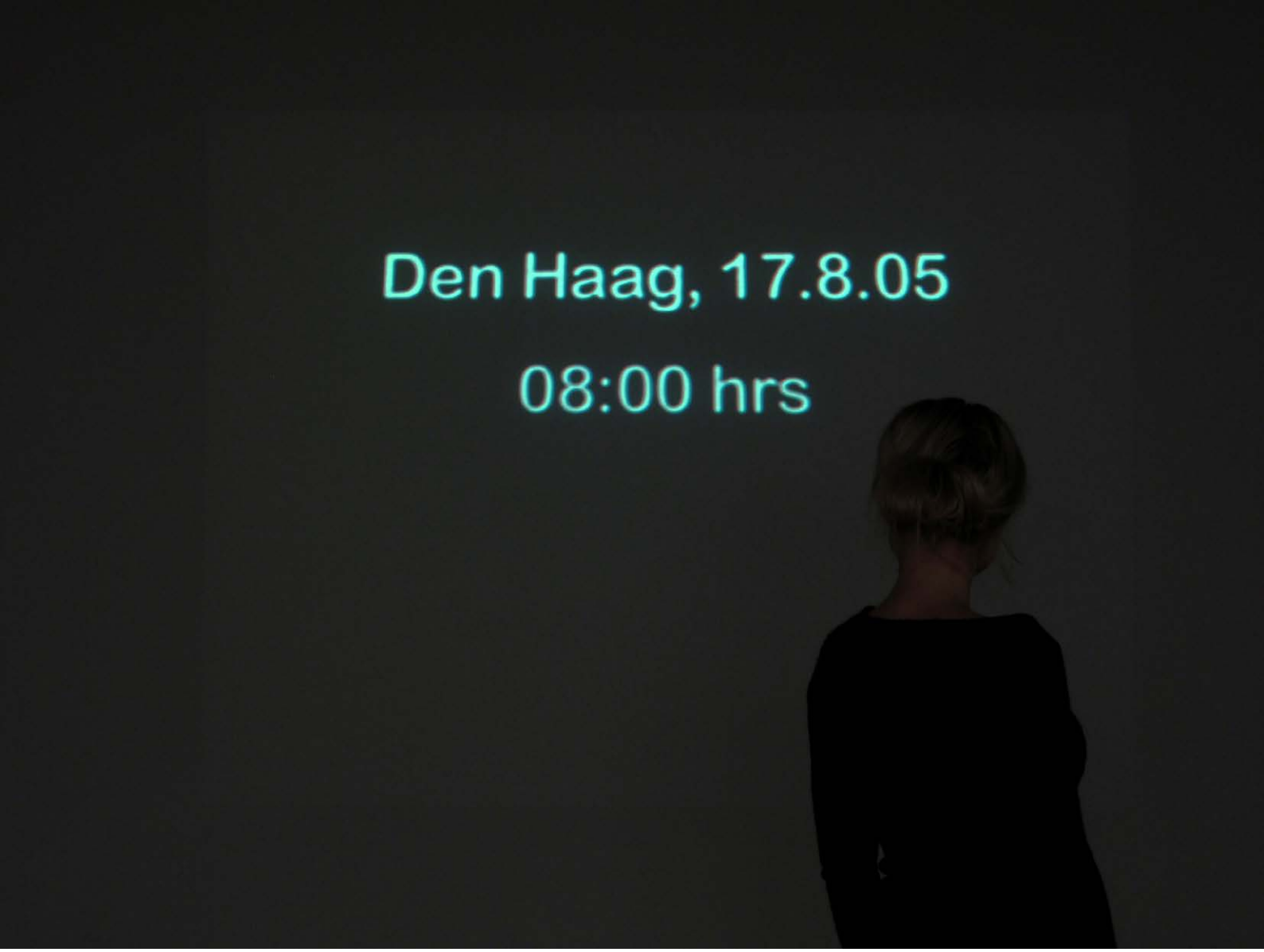






Berlaymont Dreaming. Video, 5 channel sound on DVD. commissioned by ARGOS festival 2004, Brussels.

Sundial. recording locations:
Rome, Guangzhou, Vienna.



Sundial. 4 channel sound on DVD with titles. 2005 - present.
Sundial is a recording of an urban soundscape recorded in one location for a period of 24 hours compressed into a ten-minute piece. The projected titles show the location and the changing time of recording. Versions of *Sundial* have been made and exhibited in Barcelona, Den Haag, Paris, Rome, Vienna, Guangzhou, Istanbul, Amsterdam and Brussels.

Noise Map. A solo exhibition at GEM Museum of contemporary art, Den Haag, 2005. First presentation of *Sundial* together with earlier videos, drawings and sculptural pieces.

JUSTIN BENNETT

The Hague
GEM (Museum of Art Today)

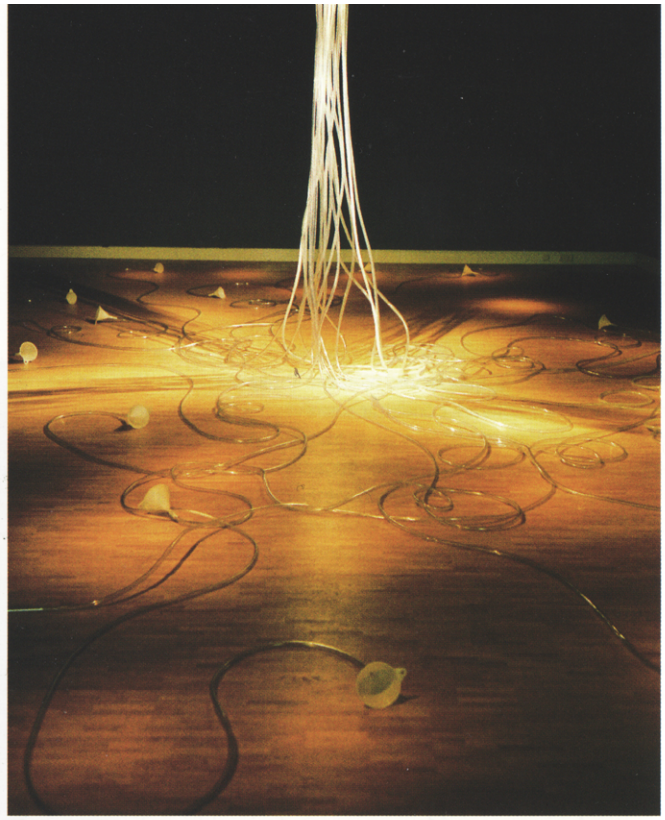
Noise Maps: On Voices, Clamours, Echoes and Technologies

VICENTE CARRETÓN CANO

"Hello hello? Can you still hear me?" whispers a voice though a plastic funnel attached to a PVC pipe. "In order to hear me you have to breathe" someone seems to answer after an interval of gasping, water dripping, an radio signals from another funnel scattered on the floor. This is the audio installation *Soundhouse* (1998), by **Justin Bennett** (1964), an Englishman resident in the Netherlands. He is a multimedia artist and is well-known for his work in sound performances by the BMB collective. This is his first individual museum show with a selection of works of the past fifteen years. Bennet found inspiration in the *House of Sound* described by the philosopher Francis Bacon in his utopian *New Atlantis,* a work in which he postulated the creation of scientific academies, to speak of communication and surveillance, of stereophonic intimacy between the genders, and of dialogue technologies such as the telephone, and of the slipping between the interior and the exterior del of the subject caused by the voice.

In Bennett's sonic philosophy the sound even is three-dimensional in the moment it is recorded because of the reverberations and resonances, the murmurs and the clamours between the operations of the biomass, architecture, natural phenomena, and technologies (everything vibrates together). But it is also multidimensional in its reception because of series of cultural, psychological, emotional, social and gender levels that accompany the listener (sound is always in the ear of the beholder). An interferential approached that has brought fame to his urban soundscapes in collective shows over a whole decade. Now Bennett present two new ones: *Beirut Story* (2004) –a domestic portrait along the lines of **Janet Cardiff**'s virtual film, an architectural view of the city that was the pearl of the Mediterranean and a postcolonial fright in the video art of **Walid G. Ra'ad**– reinvented with fragmentary sounds of steps, doors slamming, voices, and local radio stations; and *Sundial* (2005), the recent portrait of dawn to dusk made In the vivid circumstance of his studio in the multicultural neighbourhood of Schilderswijk in the Hague, compressed and reduced Into a 12-minute soundscape featuring the racket and agitation of an asphalt jungle and the calm of residential life.

His concern with the relations between space and sound make Bennet an heir of the U.S., composer **Alvin Lucier**, though he owes his methodology more to **Brian Eno**'s obsessive sound samplings. Outdoor takes or field recordings with strings of microphones, which



Sound house, 1998

he uses like real "musical objects, tied to his narrative honesty and emotional connotations (as in the 2004 work *Crystal Radio*, which transmits a recording of the sound atmosphere of Beirut into the showrooms of the museum), but edited with digital techniques which, as much in drawing (here represented by the 1994 *Cityscape* series), enable him to map and navigate through the ocean of sounds stored in his data bases, whether virtual in his imagination of possible in the cacophonies of the world.

The worldwide embrace of sound art by art institutions is another indication of the ongoing structural coupling of sonic regimes, accelerated since the surpassing of twelve-tone music and minimalism, thanks to multimedia integration, the revolutionary emergence of telematic transmissions, or the new artistic status of the DJ. It is much harder today to know what the modes of sonic experience are –who and what to listen to, and how to listen–and we depend much less on the pyramid industrial structure of a handful of record companies. Some people continue to move their skeletons, and others attune their ears to the harmonies, while Bennett addresses his work to the most demanding eardrums and neurons, his own ears fixed on the *crescendo* of an infinite chaos.

Crickets chirp on a summer evening even in The Hague. They sound loud and clear from six loudspeakers set up in a circle in Justin Bennett's studio. The British artist recorded the sounds a week ago on one of the few warm days in August. On the roof of the old school building in the Schilderswijk where he lives and works, Bennett set up a special microphone that recorded the surrounding sounds for a day and a night. When he listened back to the recordings the next day, he discovered the chirping crickets buried in the noise of the city.

Now we listen to a compilation of those 24 hours. In about twelve minutes we hear first the birds and then the city itself waking up. In the distance, the sound of a tram, someone toots a horn, a train rushes by, a drill bores its way through asphalt. The sound of an ambulance is familiar – clearly a Dutch siren. A car-alarm goes off, but is overpowered by the deafening sound of an aeroplane. "That's a bit too heavy", remarks Bennett. "Maybe I'll have to turn the 'plane down a bit".

Bennett made the recording for his solo exhibition *Noise Map* that opens next week in the GEM Museum for contemporary art in The Hague, which surveys work from the last 15 years. Soon the public will be able to admire the many-sided sound spectrum of The Hague, listening to everyday sounds that are so well known that nobody notices but now, in compressed form suddenly become conspicuous. "Maybe I'll make a new version in the next few days", says Bennett. "Last week it was still holiday and very quiet on the street. When the schools go back, there's more noise. Then a recording like this will have a completely different rhythm.

"Soundscapes" is a word often used for Bennett's work, landscapes of sound. Observers become listeners, lead around familiar and unknown places with headphones. Surrounded by loudspeakers they are transported through fairytale worlds. Or they walk through exhibition spaces while speakers at their feet reproduce the sound of breaking twigs or falling stones.

The 24-hour recording will be repeated in Rome, Paris and maybe the Chinese Guangzhou, where he has been invited to take part in the triennial. "Every city has its own sound," says Bennett, "I have recorded in Arabian cities – that sounds more exotic." He puts another CD, entitled *Beirut Story* in the player. Suddenly we are walking through a house in the Lebanese capital. It sounds hollow. Doors open and slam shut; in the distance we hear music. The wind blows rags of street noise inside; the traffic sounds many times more chaotic than in The Hague. A man starts to talk, but his voice is distorted. Bennett: "he's talking Arabic, but even if you spoke Arabic, you couldn't understand."

"I recorded the piece by walking through the house with a radio in one hand and a microphone in the other." explains Bennett. "The voice on the radio leads you around. In this case I prepared a lot before I began recording. The tape was recorded in one take – there's no editing – so everything had to be right. You have to watch out for the distances, decide where to point the microphone. It's a bit like making a film. But chance still plays a role. You have no control over the sound that comes in from outside – you could call that the documentary aspect.

The installation is combined with a slide projection of a window that gives a view on a modern skyline. Bennett: "In this way I try to bring the public to a different place for a while. By putting on the headphones you immerse yourself in another world."

Besides *Beirut Story*, the work *Crystal Radio* (2004) that Bennett recorded in the same period is also to be seen and heard. For this work he placed two microphones under bowl-shaped glass lampshades on the roof of the house in Beirut. The resonance in the glass bowls distorted the sounds of the surroundings. In the exhibition space Bennett reproduces the city sounds by placing loudspeakers in similar glass lampshades. "It's a reconstruction, but in reverse. The microphones have become loudspeakers. You take something from one place and build another place with it."

The car horns and the singing from the mosque sound unreal, as if the signals have been captured on a distant planet, and not in an earthly metropolis. The tones are spatial and shrill. And when the tulip-formed lamps begin to whistle and squeal, the sound becomes almost unbearable.

Despite having lived in The Netherlands since the late eighties, the exhibition in the GEM is Justin Bennett's first solo show in a museum. Until now he showed his work mostly in the alternative circuit, in artist-run spaces and at specialised festivals. He published works in small editions on vinyl and CD, which found their way to collectors over the whole world. "Sound art is a small sector, separate from the visual art world", explains Bennett. "Although the *scene* is getting less obscure, recently there have been a few large exhibitions of sound art. Like *Sons & Lumières* (2004) in the Pompidou Centre and *Sonic Boom* (2000) at the Hayward Gallery in London." Bennett's interest for sound began at art school in Sheffield, where he studied sculpture. "I built sculptures that you could play, invented metal percussion instruments. But I played music too with

Paris Sundial
Audio installation
2005

Crystal radio
Stéréo audio, haut-parleurs dans des objets en verre
2004–2005

a few different bands. I played violin, drums, and of course synthesiser – it was the eighties. During art school I discovered Alvin Lucier, an American composer who made very minimal music, concerned with sound and space. But you could never find recordings of his work anywhere. And actually that was part of the charm, that you only found a vague photo in an old catalogue from the sixties. That made it even more intriguing."

After art school Bennett wanted to learn more about computers, and decided to follow the Sonology course in the Conservatory in Den Haag. "I immersed myself in electronic music for two years, then I began to miss visual art. I taught at the conservatory for seven years before I dared to try to live from my work." In the meantime Bennett has built up an archive of sound from places spread all over the world. In his studio, that seems more like a sound studio thanks to the mixing desks, computers, drum kit and piano,

Soundhouse
Pipes en PVC, entonnoirs, stereo audio
1998-2005

Beirut Story
Audio stereo sur casque et images photographiques projetées / caisson lumineux. Dimensions variables
1998-2005

is an archive cabinet with hundreds of tapes. According to the artist the collection is like a photo album. “When I listen back to sounds that I have recorded, I always have very strong memories – of people, places, events. Recently I made a piece in the new town Leidsche Rijn with the theatre-maker Renate Zentschnig about the auditive experience of the inhabitants. We asked for instance what sounds they could remember from their youth. There was someone who longed for the sounds of the harbour in Rotterdam, and another who remembered sound from Morocco – things I could find in my archive.”

Bennett almost always records urban sounds. “Sometimes I wish for the sounds of nature, maybe because I grew up near the Lake District. But I always end up in cities. Because I like the noise, and being in the crowd.”

The preference for cities also is visible in another aspect of Bennett’s work: his drawings. Sometimes they are small sketches, elaborations of thoughts or machines. But usually the loose lines on the paper grow into complicated abstract-seeming patterns. In the GEM the English artist shows his sound installations in combination with dizzying drawings that make you think of city plans. Each building is drawn in fine black ink. Streets snake towards the centre, suburbs fan out towards the edges of the paper. Only these are not existing towns but metropoli from the fantasy of the artist.

“It is something obsessive”, says Bennett. “ I begin somewhere and it grows from there. During the drawing I get into a kind of trance. Sometime I invent rules, or games. I once drew houses for a whole day for all the people I could remember. Their initials are worked into the drawing. Suddenly I realised how many people I knew – thinking of one led to another. Some of the people I hadn’t thought about for more than twenty years.”

Drawing for Bennett is a form of cartography: the mapping of places, thoughts, sounds. “When I was a kid I drew mazes. To be honest I’d forgotten all about that until my mother asked me: are you still drawing those mazes? I love maps. When I arrive in a new city the first thing I do is to buy a map. A map shows you how a city has grown – if it has been planned or gradually spread out that way.”

In the exhibition catalogue Bennett writes that “the drawings arise from an urge to make a line and then follow it”. Some of the drawings look like walks. In the book are some examples which look like tortuous paths but which turn out to be details of borders. Bennett travelled along some of the borders of Europe. He recorded the sound on leftover pieces of no-mans-land and in the depressing border villages – the whistling of the wind through the fences, a truck starting up from a parking-place.

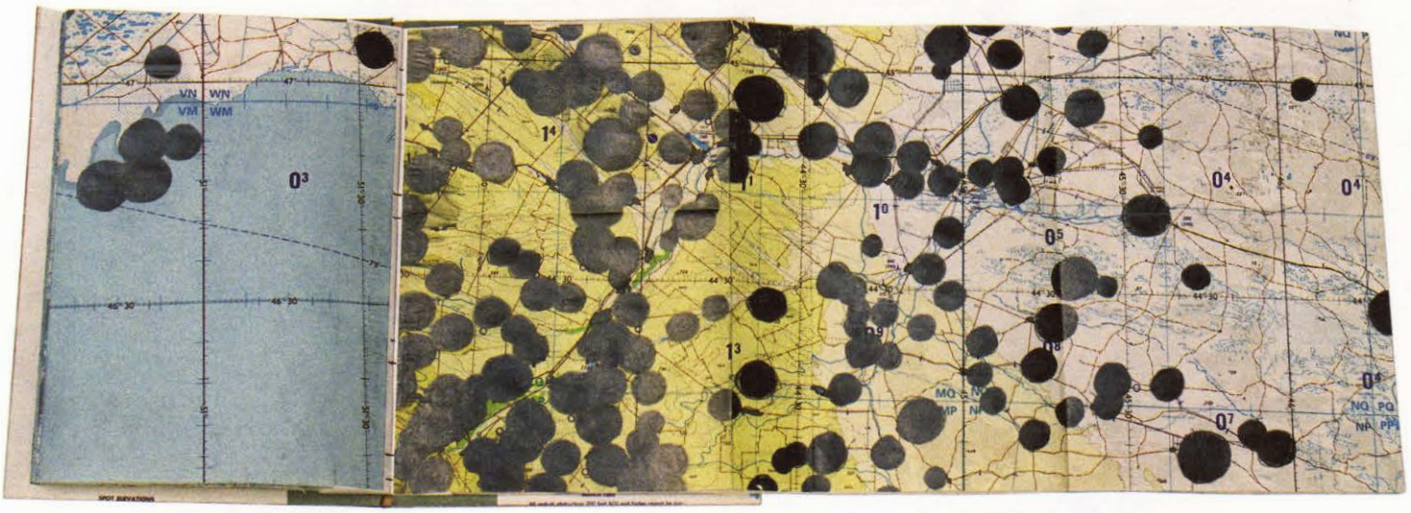
Bennett points out one of his border-drawings. “I used it as a score for a soundwork. The computer works out the combination of the sounds depending on the position on the line. It’s as if you are walking along the border. It’s a way of bringing some order into the chaos. Sometimes compositional decisions seem arbitrary – I then tend to use a system like this. That magnified borderline gave me the possibility of composing without making having to make every decision myself.”

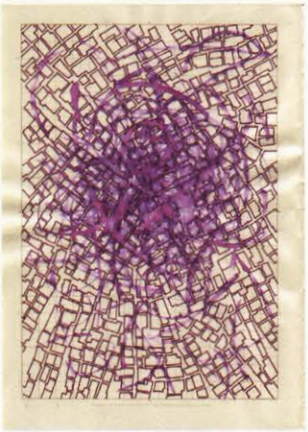
The development of digital techniques has enlarged the possibilities for sound artists. “Some things have become much easier”, says Bennett, “With a tiny recorder and a microphone you can make good recordings in the middle of nowhere. Before you would have had to carry loads of equipment with you, and it was much more expensive. You needed a real sound studio, whereas now everything fits into a computer. It’s more practical, but I don’t know if it’s better. If you use a computer for editing or mixing you can carry on forever. In studios you had 24 tracks of tape. When I’d used them all up, it was over.

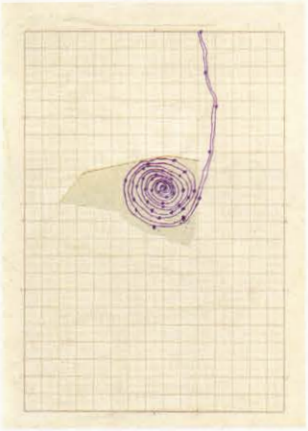
“I try to go against the technical revolution, by keeping new possibilities at a distance. When I’m travelling, I purposefully take as little equipment as possible. I constrain the possibilities, then I have to do the job with what I’ve got.”

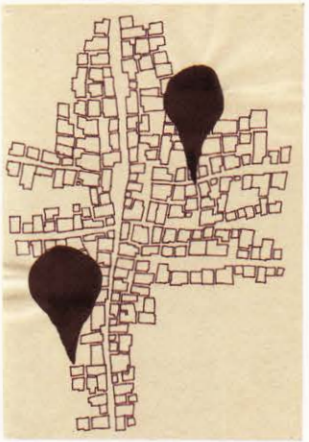
The installation *Soundhouse* (1998) shows how simple a good soundwork can be. The work is made from PVC pipes which snake all over the floor of the museum. Stuck to the ends of the pipes are everyday household funnels. The listener seems to hear fragments of a conversation. From some funnels sounds the voice of a man, from some that of a woman. If you hold two funnels to your ear, then you sit in the middle of the conversation. “Hello, hello?” whispers a voice through the tube, “are you still listening?”. Sounds of breathing and flowing water are transported though the system of pipes. “For you to hear me, I have to breathe” is the answer on the other side. The longer you listen, the stranger the words seem. The voices go out of sync, because one text is longer than the other. The same sentences pass by, but in a new order and with new meanings. You can keep listening endlessly, until you have the feeling that the words don’t come from outside any more, but out of your own head.

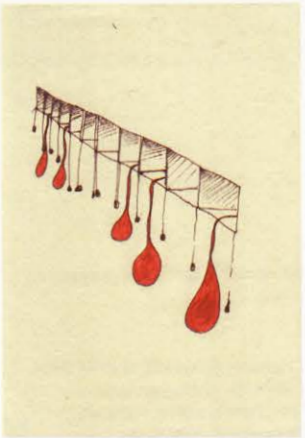
Article first published in NRC Handelsblad during the exhibition *Noise Map* in the GEM Museum for Contemporary Art in The Hague 2005. Translated and reprinted in the catalogue *Trans(ient) City* 2007 BOM / Actar

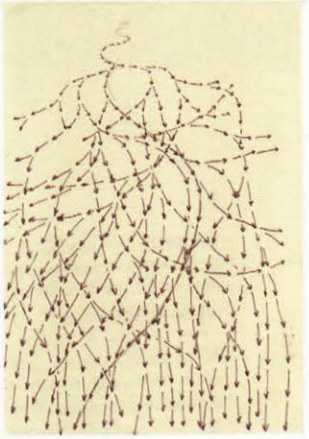












KAZAKHSTAN, 2006
Grafiet op landkaart/graphite on map, 36 x 25 cm.

ZONDER TITEL/UNTITLED, 2005
Inkt op papier/ink on paper, 18 x 25 cm

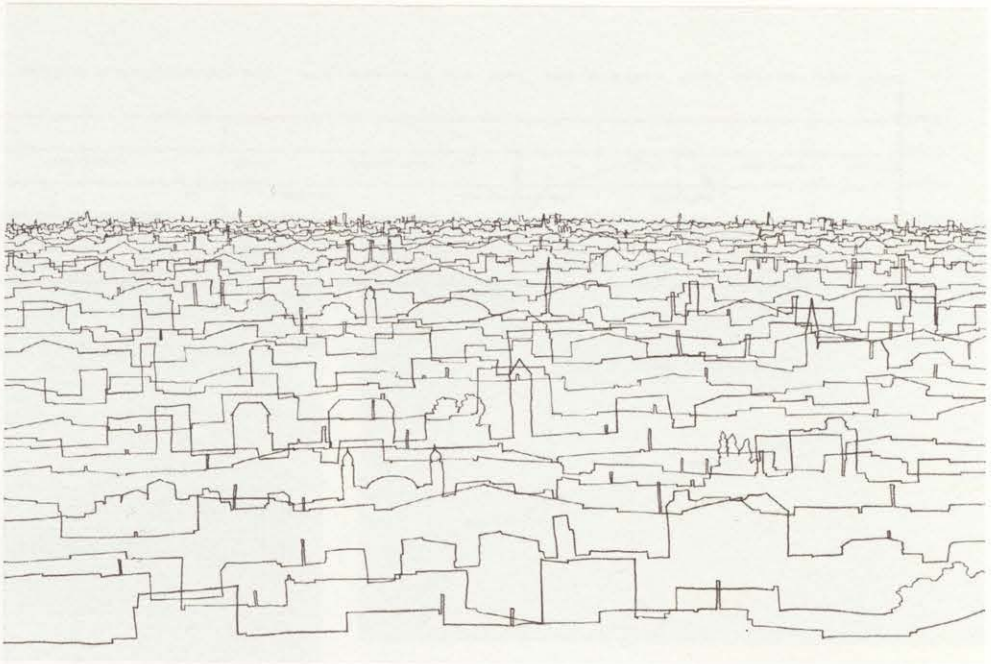
ZONDER TITEL/UNTITLED, 2005
Inkt en collage op papier/ink and collage on paper, 18 x 25 cm

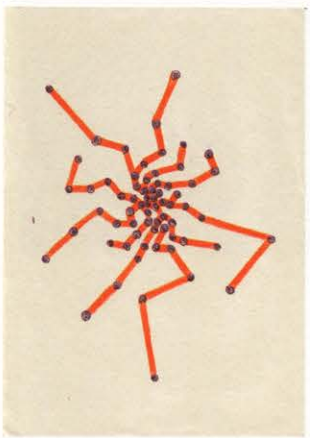
ZONDER TITEL/UNTITLED, 2003
Inkt op papier/ink on paper, 15 x 21 cm

BEIRUT, 2004
Inkt op papier/ink on paper, 16 x 23 cm

ZONDER TITEL/UNTITLED, 2003
Inkt op papier/ink on paper, 15 x 21 cm

Justin Bennett





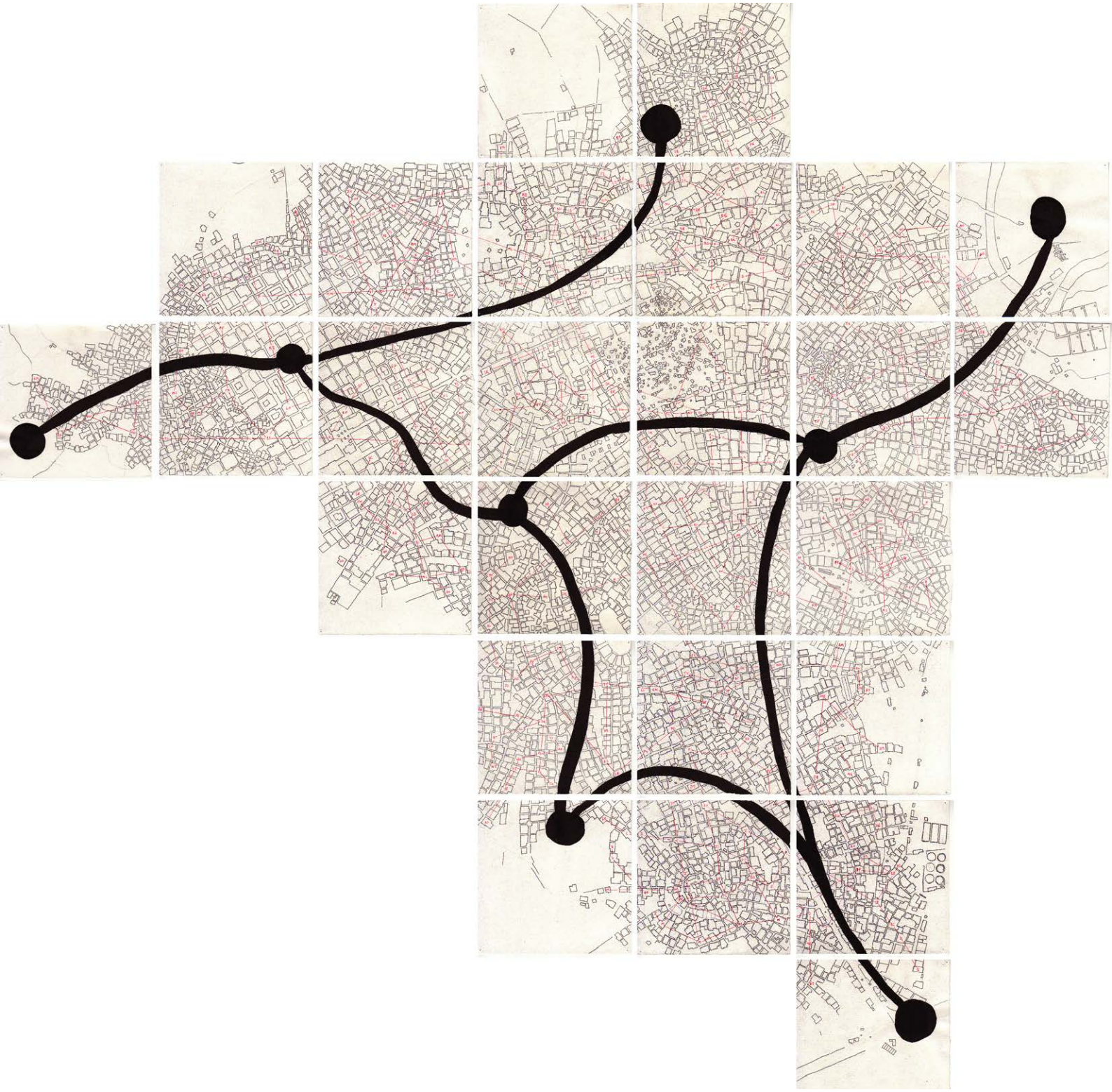
SKYLINE, 2007
Potlood op papier/pencil on paper, 48 x 32 cm

SHARP, 2001
Inkt en grafiet op papier/ink and graphite on paper, 15 x 21 cm

ZONDER TITEL/UNTITLED, 2000
Inkt op papier/ink on paper, 15 x 21 cm

ZONDER TITEL/UNTITLED, 2006
Inkt en kleurpotlood op papier/ink and coloured pencil on paper, 18 x 25 cm

from catalogue *Drawing Typologies* Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, 2007.

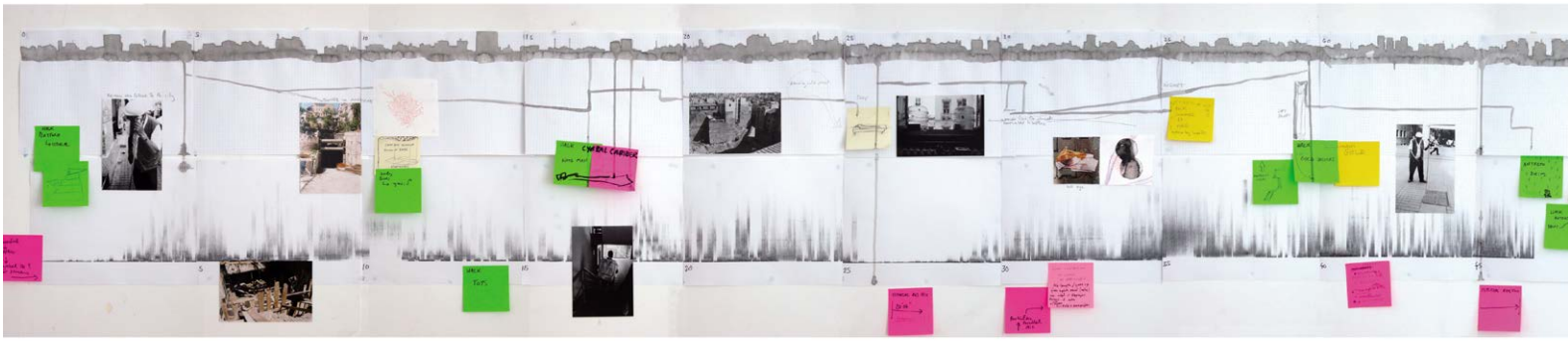


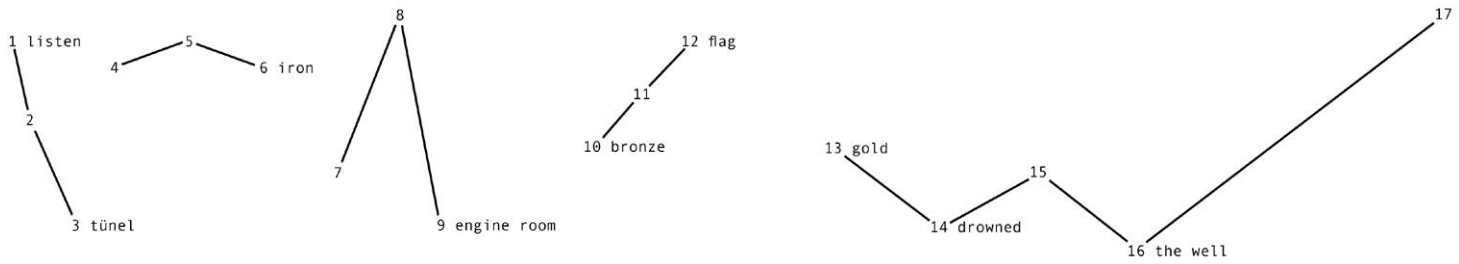
Portable City 2000 Pencil and ink on paper. on 26 sheets. 120 x 120 cm. shown at *Drawing Typologies* Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, 2007.

Installation shots *The Well* at 10th International Istanbul Biennial, 2007.

the well

Recorded in Istanbul for the 10th International Istanbul Biennial, 2007





listen on headphones in a quiet place.

total time 53 mins 11 secs

This CD was made during a residency at Platform Garanti, Istanbul,
funded by The Netherlands Foundation for Visual Arts, Design and Architecture.
spore records: http://spore.soundscaper.com

The Well Audio CD and sound installations 2007.
An imaginary tour around the city of Istanbul. Sounds from the streets mix with the bronze ring of cymbals and the guitars of the underground rock scene. Sections of the CD were presented at the Biennial exhibition to be listened to on specially designed furniture.

JUSTIN BENNETT

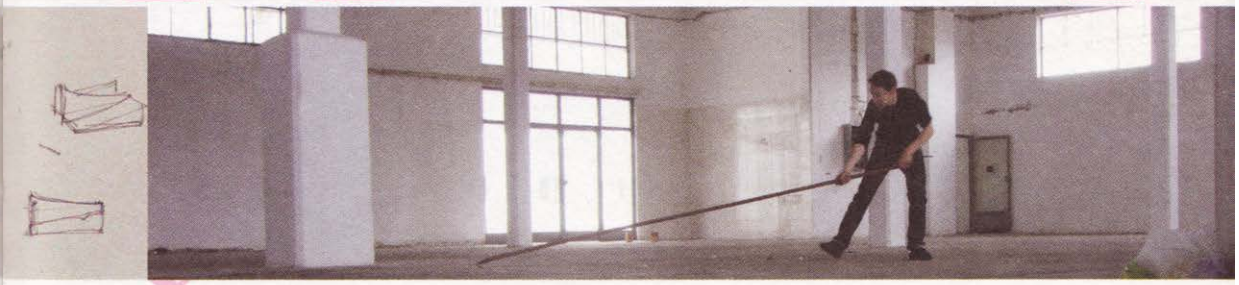
1964, Nuneaton, İngiltere; Lahey'de yaşıyor.
1964, Nuneaton, UK; lives in The Hague.

1, 2

Kuyu
Şehrin trafik gürültüsü, müzik ve hoparlörlerden yükselen seslerle dolu yüzeyinde, kulağımızı zemine dayıyor ve saklı bir şehrin derinliklerine iniyoruz. Dehlizler, borular, kuyular ve tünellerden olduğu kadar, tarih katmanları, gizli güç yapıları, gizli ekonomiler, zeminde fay hatları ve sakinlerinin rüya ve ümitlerinden oluşan bir şehir.
Malzemeler:
büyük bir bayrak,
'Konstantinopolis'te imal edilmiş' iki büyük antika zil,
tekrar sahnelenen dört rüya,
beş elektrogitar,
şehir içinde yedi yürüyüş,
borular, tüneller ve havalandırma boşluklarında yapılmış ses kayıtları,
bir sürü siyasi gösteri,
malını satan otuz satıcı,
çok sayıda sokak müzisyeni,
binlerce insan ve öteki hayvan,
sayısız cami.
İstanbul'da kaydedilmiş seslerden oluşmasına rağmen, çalışma tamamen sese dayalı değil. Hikâye, hafıza, ses ve müzik katmanları arasında kişisel bir yolculuk bu; şehrin yeraltı derinliklerindeki gizli kuyuyu ortaya çıkarma denemesi.
Ne duyabiliyoruz? Gözlerimiz kapalıyken ya da dalgın dalgın suya bakarken duyacağımız sesler. İnsanın sadece hayalinde duyacağı sesler. Alıp beraberimizde uzaklara götüreceğimiz sesler.

1., 2.
Kuyu | The Well
2007, Justin Bennett'ın 10. Uluslararası İstanbul Bienali için eskizleri | Justin Bennett's sketches for the 10th International Istanbul Biennial
3.
Justin Bennett Antrepo No.3'te çalışırken | Justin Bennett working in Antrepo No.3, 2007

1.–3.
Courtesy of the artist | Sanatçının izniyle



3

The Well

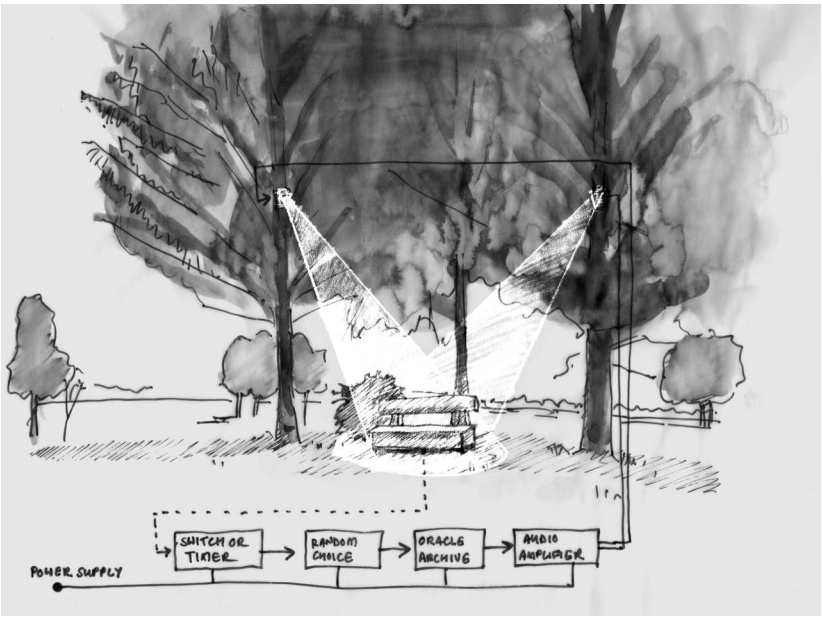
At the surface of the city with its noises of traffic, music and amplified voices, we put our ear to the ground and descend into the depths of a hidden city. A city of holes, pipes, wells and tunnels, but also layers of history, hidden power structures, clandestine economies, fault lines in the bedrock, the dreams and hopes of its inhabitants.

Materials:
a large flag,
two antique cymbals 'made in Constantinople',
four dreams re-enacted,
five electric guitars,
seven walks through the city,
recordings made inside pipes, tunnels and airshafts,
many political rallies,
thirty sellers selling,
a large number of street musicians,
thousands of people and other animals,
uncountable mosques.

Although constructed from sounds recorded in İstanbul, the work is not purely phonographic. It is a personal journey through layers of narrative, memory, sounds and music –an attempt to uncover the secret well that lies deep under the city.

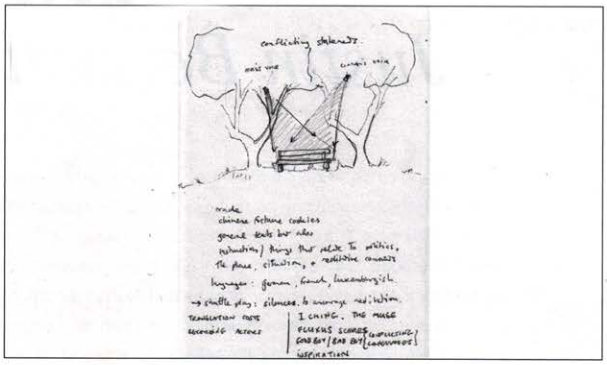
What can we hear? Sounds to be heard with our eyes closed, or while staring out over the water. Sounds to be heard only in one's imagination. Sounds to take far away with us.

from catalogue 10th International Istanbul Biennial, 2007.

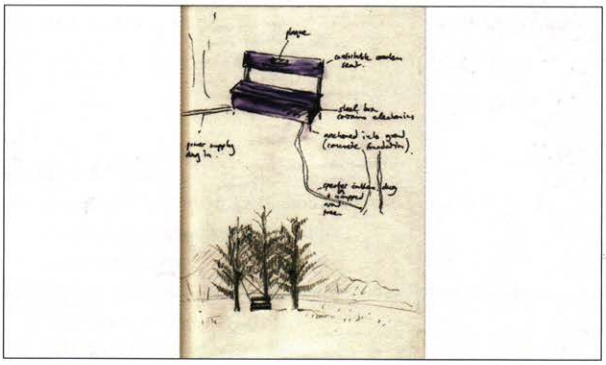


Oracle 2007. Spoken text played on loudspeaker mounted in a tree in a public park
Location shot and proposal sketch.

Proposal

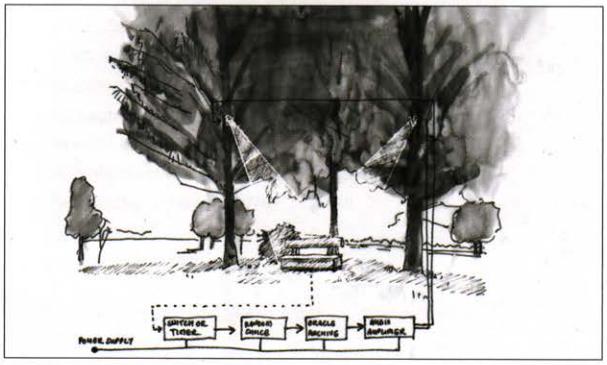


bench1_sml.jpg



bench2_sml.jpg

loc_sketch_final.jpg



loc_sketch_all_layers_final.jpg

Statement **A park bench provides the perfect place to rest, to enjoy the view over the city, and to consult the oracle. The oracle makes predictions, but it also pronounces wise statements, comments about the environment, personal advice, riddles, instructions for performative actions, or political observations. It attempts to answer all questions, especially those that the visitor didn't ask.**
An oracle is a person or agency considered to be a source of wise counsel or prophetic opinion; an infallible authority, usually spiritual in nature. The best known to us today are those preserved as books, like the I Ching, or those immortalised in myth, like the classical Greek Pythia of the temple of Apollo in Delphi.
Still, oracles continue to play an important part in religion and government in many cultures today, and some, like the Tarot, are used as techniques for individual fortune telling. "Life is Random" (Apple advertising slogan for iPod Shuffle). The use of randomness was an important technique for many artists of the 20th century, famously Marcel Duchamp and John Cage. "Random" choices are not without structure – for instance the yarrow-stalk oracle used for the I Ching favours certain outcomes over others, and is sensitive to natural and human intervention. The oracle of Luxembourg uses random processes to interfere with the thoughts and lives of the visitors.
They are the ones who take the texts with them into the world, who shall make the connections with their everyday lives, and with the other events and sights of the city.
The oracle speaks the languages Luxembourgish, French and German.

Justin Bennett

voices by Stephie Büttrich, Christophe Dumont, Sonja Neuman **texts by** Justin Bennett, Stéphanie Templier, Renate Zentschnig.
The texts were inspired by, among others: the Delphic utterances, I Ching, Nostradamus, Eno/Schmidt's "Oblique Strategies", Situationist International, "Kerndenkers" by André Garitte, Jean Luc Godard's "One plus one", George Brecht, Confucius.

Oracle 2007. Spoken text played on loudspeaker mounted in a tree in a public park
- from catalogue *Trans(ient) City*. Luxembourg 2007.

Listen, the person you have in mind is too young. Much too young.

Friend, the oracle cannot help you. You were born in the right place, but at the wrong time.

Stranger, It is wise to be cautious. Especially here.

Take our counsel: If you have to choose between two things, you should do both.

Remember: Sometimes the smaller country is the stronger.

Friend, beware the oracle of Sibiu. It is not to be trusted.

If they attack Persia, a mighty empire shall be destroyed.

Dear Friend, When the flag-wavers come, do not linger.

Friend, today you have seen much art. Perhaps too much. Rest awhile.

Be warned: when the ice-caps melt, it is better to be up here than down there.

Oracle 2007. Spoken text played on loudspeaker mounted in a tree in a public park
- from catalogue *Trans(ient) City*. Luxembourg 2007.

TPC H-2D
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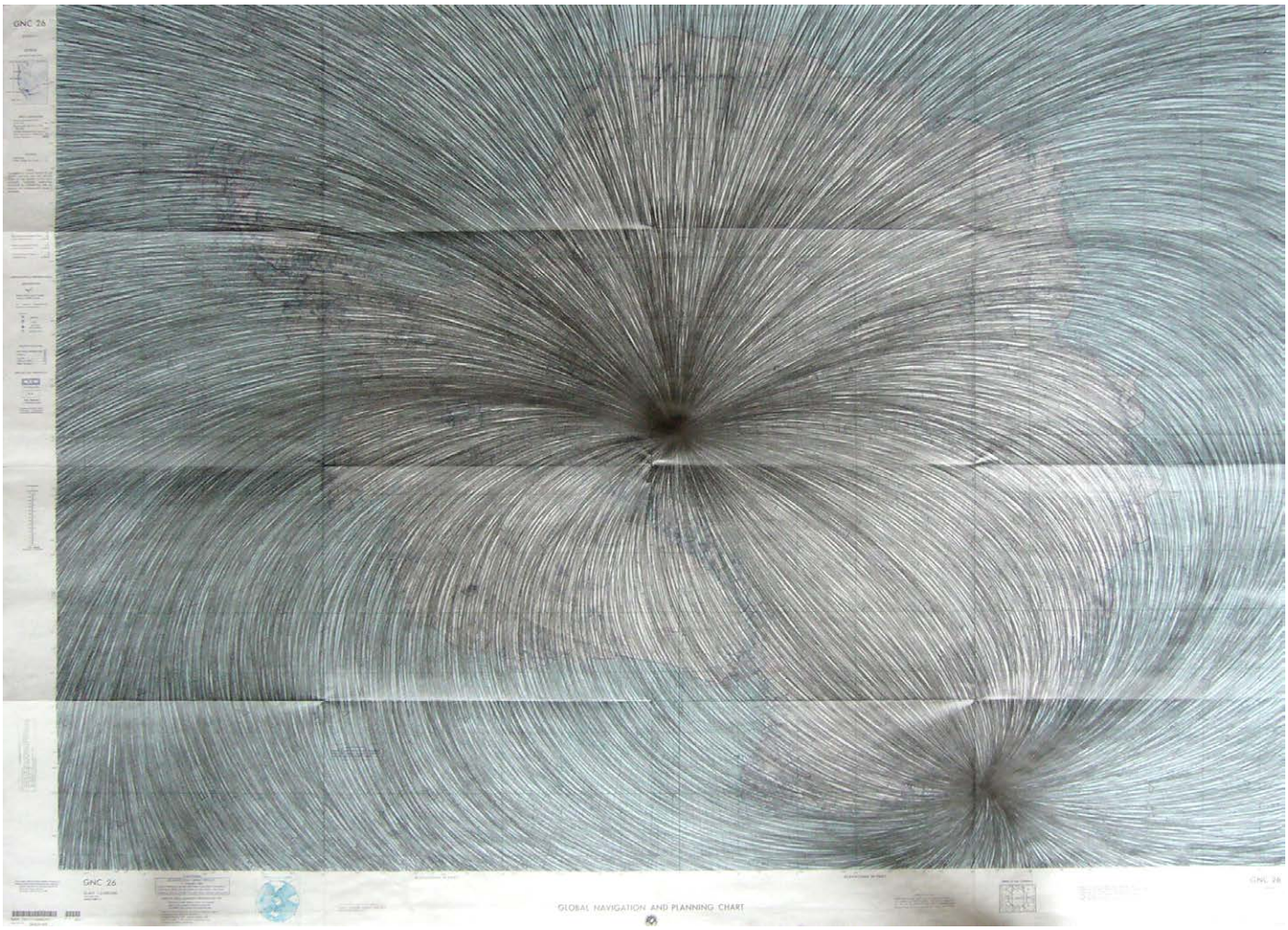
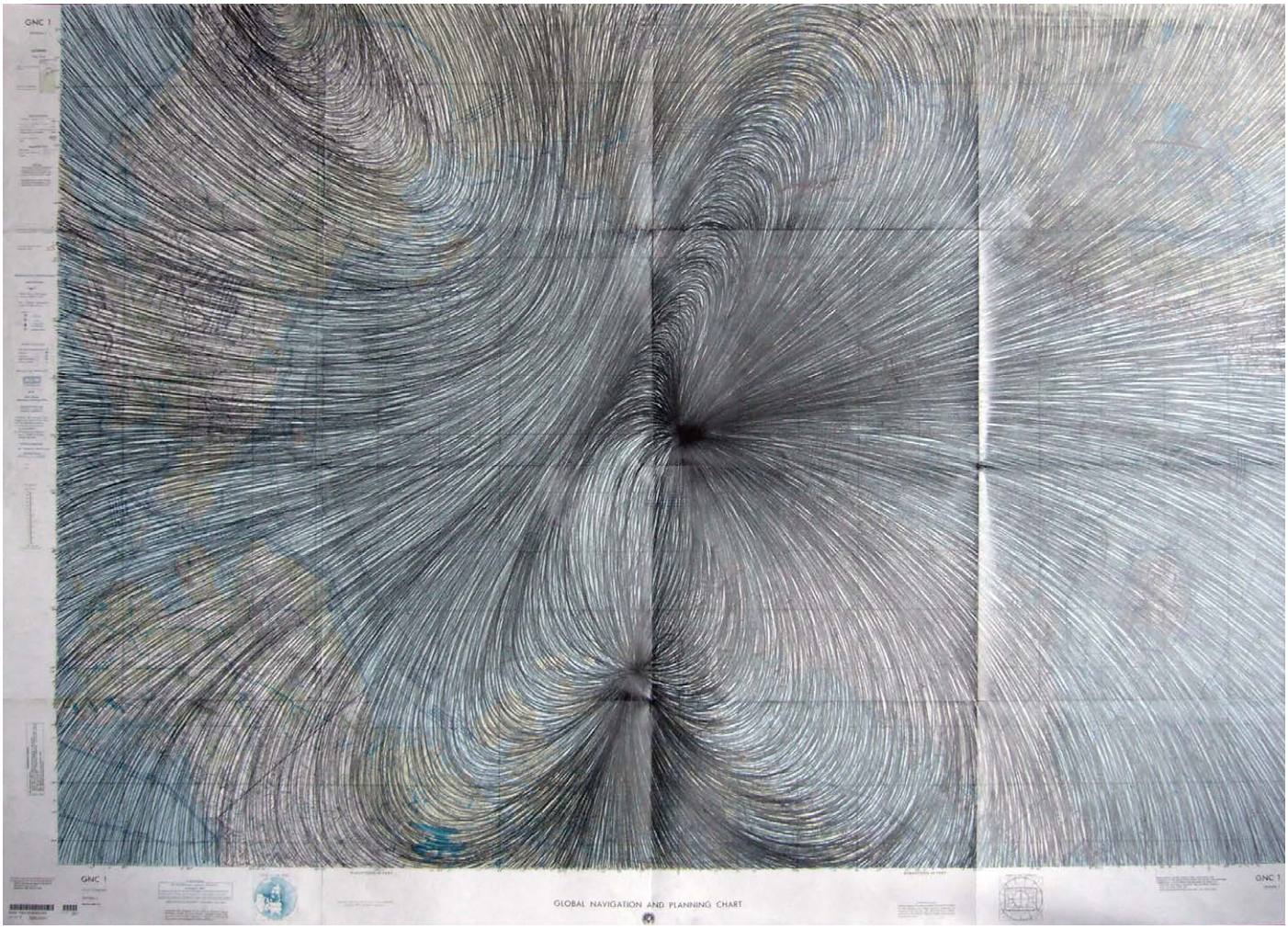
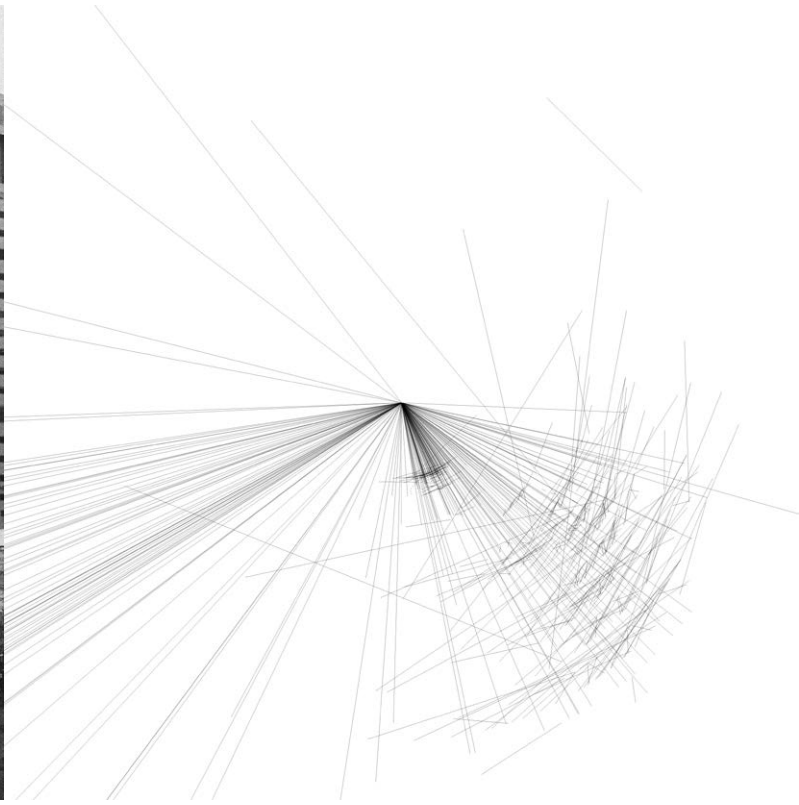

GNC 26
GNC 26
GLOBAL NAVIGATION AND PLANNING CHART
GNC 26

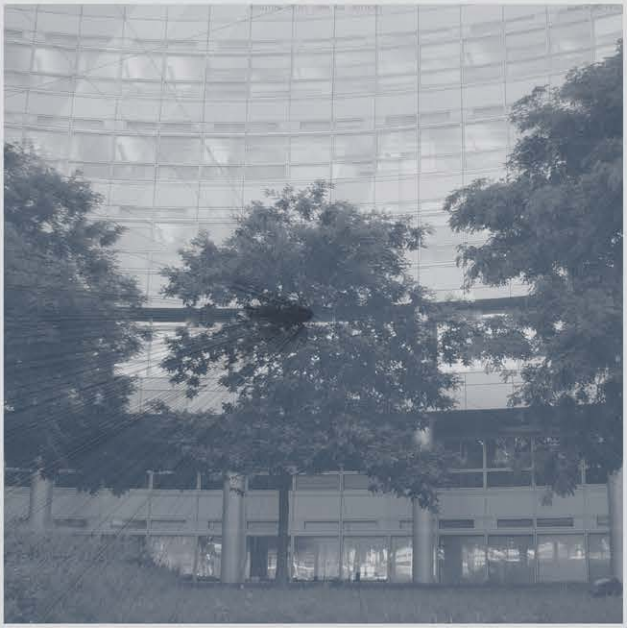


Sahel, Antarctic, Arctic. 2007-2008. Graphite on aeronautical charts 118 x 146 cm

Shotgun Architecture P40 2008.



Shotgun Architecture 2008-9. This project, begun during a residency at the Virtual Museum Zuidas in Amsterdam, has taken a number of forms. The starting point was an unpublicised performance shooting a starting pistol in a number of public spaces in the Zuidas business district. The recordings were used to create a sound piece which was published on 10″ vinyl record. Also the gunshot sounds were analysed and used to produce a series of computer drawings which trace the acoustic contours of the spaces. These are published as a series of prints (see above). An installation for FILTER in Hamburg was developed using gunshots and sound-to-light converters (see opposite), and another version made at the Arnolfini, Bristol formed part of the soundtrack to *The Good Life,* a film by Heiermans and Vermeer.



The Shootist

Justin Bennett: Shotgun Architecture

If your idea of what constitutes the 'acoustic reality of an urban space' is dominated by a personal playlist that shuffles according to changes in mood, then your soundscape can be somewhat limited. The work of Justin Bennett is much more inclusive and combines the qualities of sound, video and performance to reveal 'new architectures' in sonic exploration.

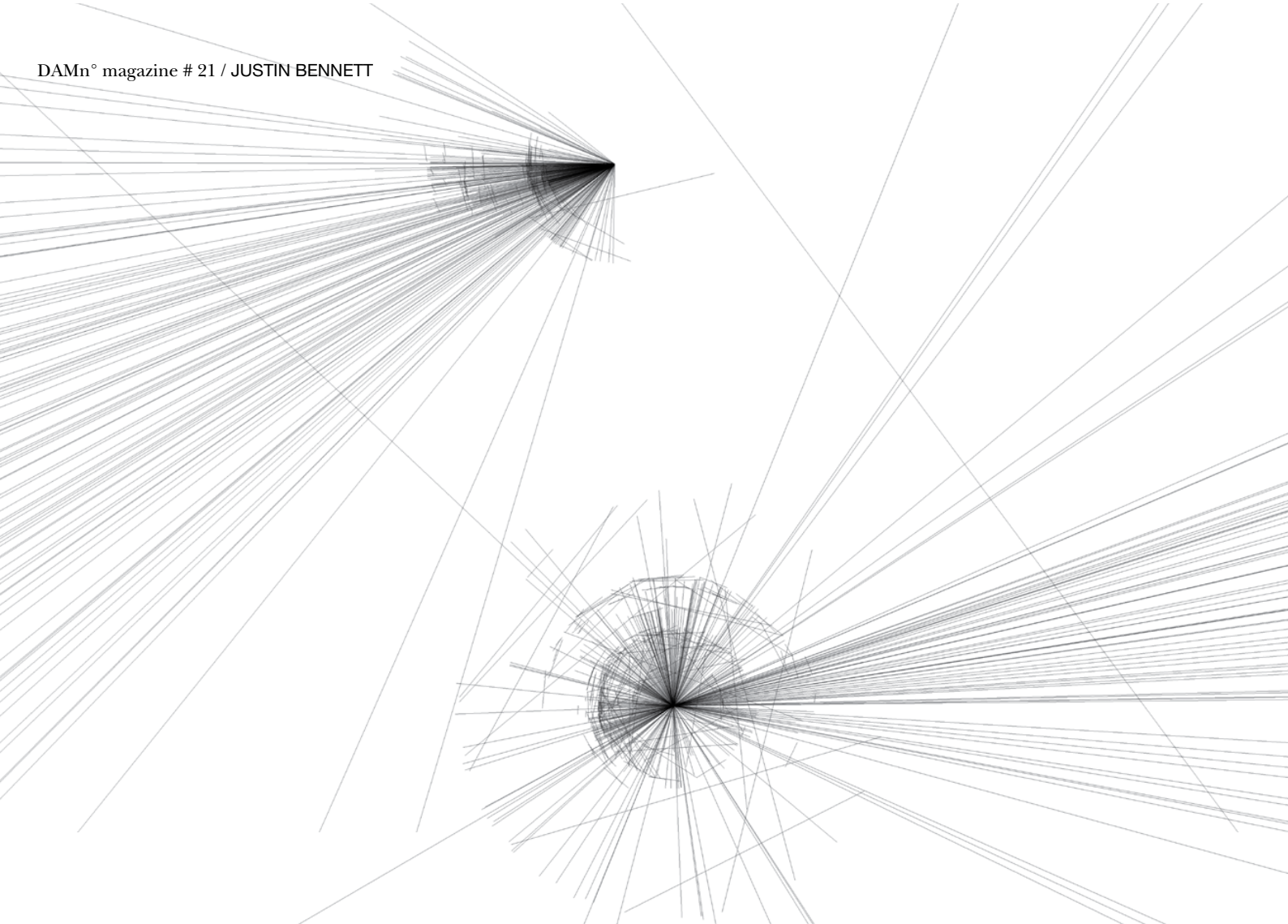
text DAISY LEE-ADAMS
images COURTESY JUSTIN BENNETT

In the summer of 2008, Justin Bennett was taking part in a residency at the Virtual Museum Zuidas in Amsterdam. The location was key. The Zuidas is a new business district initiated by a number of financial institutions, which according to the developers, has the ambition to become a 'dynamic, creative zone' within the city. And so it was that this time and place saw the beginnings of Bennett's ongoing project, Shotgun Architecture – 'sounds in space' that resound with the architectural landscape.

Sonar Map

In production, the project is as it says on the label: 'Shotgun Architecture plays with concepts of subjective measurement, translations between sound and image, the balance between destructive and creative forces in and outside art and the idea of the publicness of public space. I recorded the sound of a pistol shot in a number of semi-public open spaces in the Zuidas area, thus collecting acoustic signatures - the "impulse responses" of each space.' Bennett then used these recording in two different ways. Firstly to create a sound composition that 'explores the resonances of the chosen places. Through a process of acoustic feedback, the gunshot reveals progressively more and more reflections, reverberations and resonances of the space itself – it begins as a series of recognisable gunshots and ends as an "almost-music", which sounds like it could have been made in an electronic music studio back in the 1950's.' Then there is the sonar strand, wherein a computer programme plots the spatial and spectral characteristics of the sounds to create a visual map of the acoustic space. For Bennett, these resemble the actual spaces themselves only in terms of scale: a larger, open space results in a wider pattern of lines. 'Because of the complexity of the acoustic reality of an urban space, the link between the physical plan of the space and the corresponding "sonar map" is tenuous. However, these maps still reveal something about the space. The experience of perceiving an urban soundscape is difficult to describe, in words or in notation. These maps suggest a way to describe the openness or closedness of spaces, the density of reflections and reverberation, the presence of strong resonances or mechanical drones. For me these sonar-maps suggest new architectures, strange complex pavilions which contrast greatly with the utilitarian controlled spaces which they originated from.'

Poster, 2008
images: Justin Bennett
design: Remco van Bladel



Onomatopee, an Eindhoven and Amsterdam-based publishing label for art publications and presentations, specialising in poetry, typography, sound art and dedicated to site specific & contextual projects has released the Zuidas sound composition on 10" vinyl, with a foldout poster of photographs and sonar-maps of the recording locations.

Sound in Space

When Bennett was interviewed last December by Kerstin Niemann of Filter, he revealed aspects of his artistic evolution: 'my percussion teacher would talk about how playing is like getting the sound out of something. So it is not just about playing the notes but about understanding the material and how it feels. It is a really physical thing. About what something is made out of, how it is tightened up and how you hit it and what you hit it with. There was a clear link for me to working with sculpture. It's about materials, vibration in materials and forms and space as well. Because I think that is the thing that really stopped me becoming a composer in a way. I found that working with sound in space is more interesting to me than working with time. That is something that I have always been fascinated with.'

Filter is a platform for international contemporary art based in Hamburg. Appropriately for Bennett, it is not bound to one specific location, but is a flexible entity, able to navigate and move around within other locations and institutions in and outside of the German city. Filter concentrates on interdisciplinary work structures in collaborations with artists and cultural activists, and at the invitation of guest curators Onomatopee, Bennett was asked to expand the concept of Shotgun Architecture into a site-specific piece for Filter at P40, a former mortuary of the Eilebek hospital in Hamburg that is being transformed to be reused as a place for cultural activities in relation to the neighbourhood. At P40, he recorded gunshots in three interconnecting spaces of the mortuary and then intensified their resonances. These three sound tracks are replayed into the rooms while also controlling the lighting. The piece starts in darkness, with lights flashing along with the gunshots. As the piece progresses, the sounds get longer, more reverberant and the lights stay on for longer. Towards the end, when the loudspeakers are reproducing almost continuous tones, the lights stay on for most of the time. Thus the architecture of the space, and the differing characters of the rooms are revealed gradually through the nine minutes of the looped piece. In this context the piece becomes both dramatic and intimate, encouraging the exploration of the parallel visual and sonic spaces.

Sonic Exploration

Bennett's fascination with the tension between sight and sound also came to the fore in his conversation with Niemann: 'sometimes they are identical. You hear some-

thing and you see something and you understand what the source of the sound is, immediately. Like if you have a bell and you see the bell move and it rings, then it is like, oh yeah, the sound comes from there. But on the other hand sound always fills the space in different ways. Sound also creates a space which is separate from the source. It comes out of the source and it fills the space in a particular way. And that really works in this kind of installation [Filter at P40]. Because in the beginning it is clear where the sound is coming from but after two minutes this gets so blurred. Even if you can see the loudspeaker, you can't really hear that it is coming from that point because of the resonances and things.'*

A third incarnation of the project is its inclusion in the film The Good Life – A guided tour in which the Belgian artists Ronny Heiremans and Katleen Vermeir propose to turn the Arnolfini arts centre in the UK city of Bristol into luxury residential units and sell them off. The Good Life references the disturbance caused by gentrification and problematises the concept of 'the creative city'. The 'shotgun' process of sonically exploring the gallery spaces is integrated into the narrative of the film as well as forming part of its soundtrack.

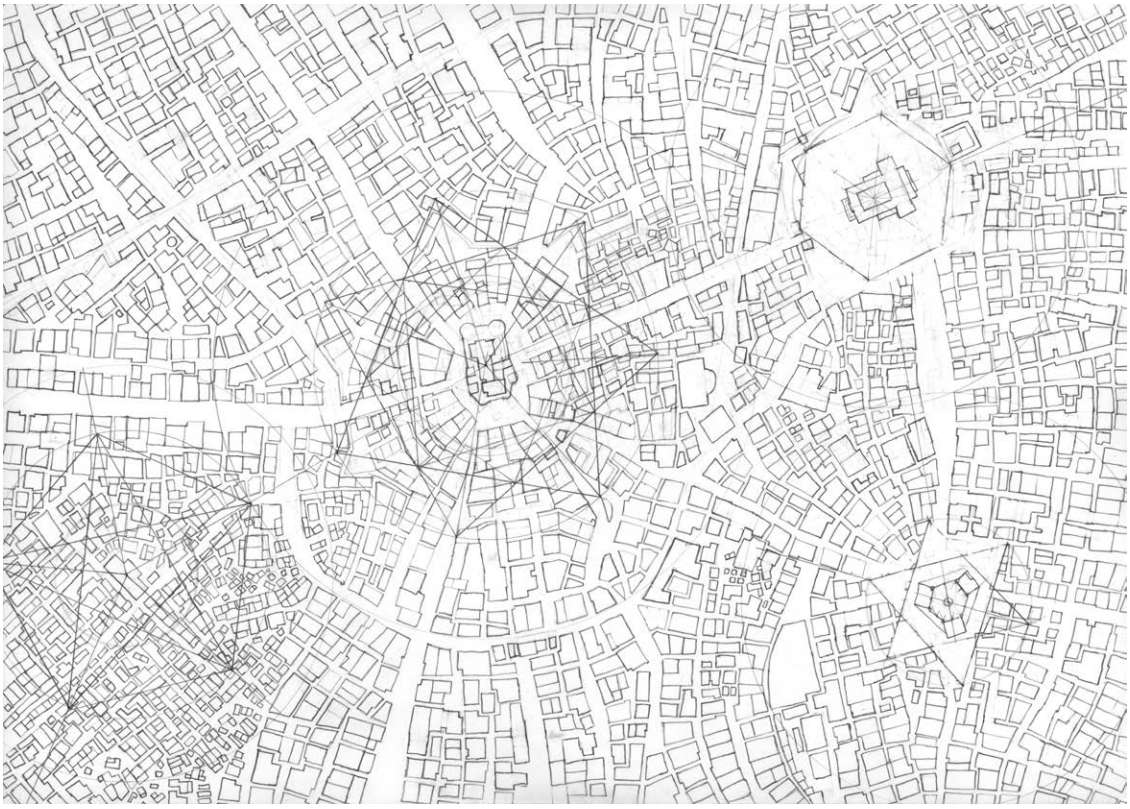
Intentional Moments

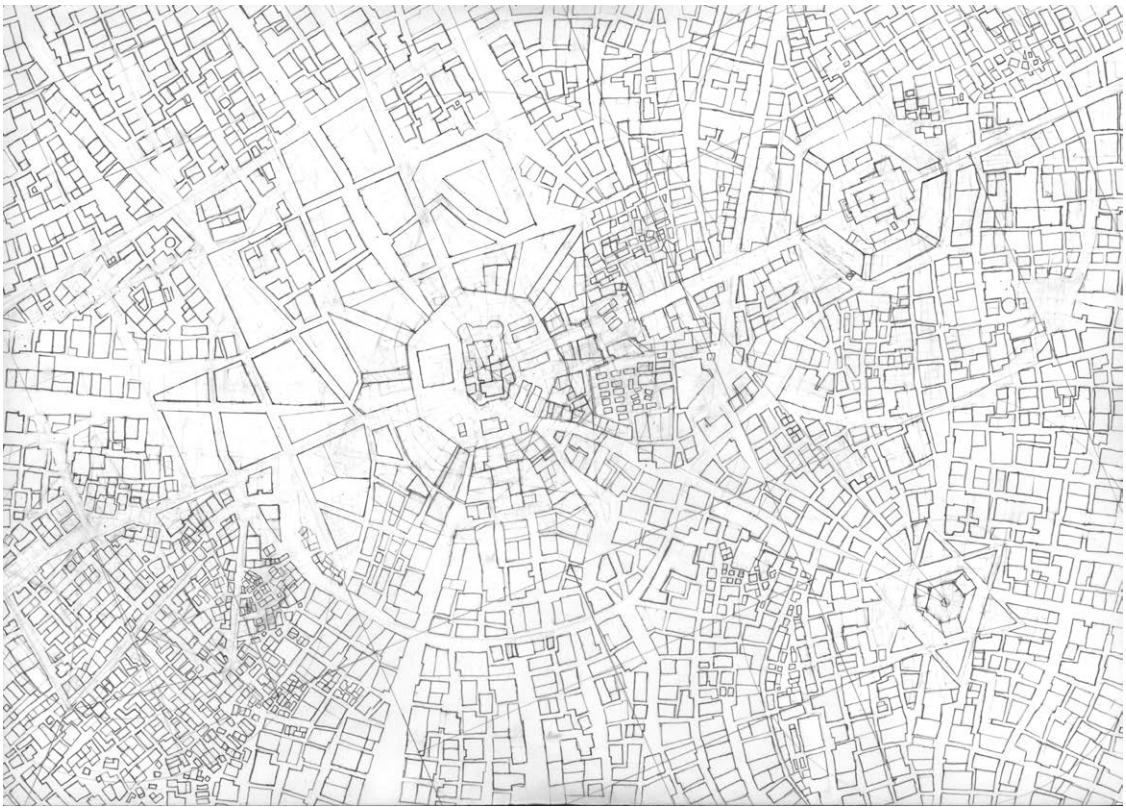
'Most of my work has been made by recording real, recognisable sounds and then doing things with them. And sometimes that's all it is. I record sounds for all sorts of reasons. The moment of recording itself is always the most important moment. It is a bit like filming, kind of like cinema. I don't often record sounds by chance; I usually plan to record them. I do go out and hang around and wait for something to happen, but then it is a decision to do it. It is very like manipulating a lens or using a little camera that people don't notice. There are many decisions you can make and it is the same with sound recordings. It is almost like a performance doing that. I often see it like that. Especially if I am walking, 'cause a lot of the sound recordings are walks. Taking a walk through the city is already putting a structure into the sound. It is not recording one sound in one place, but I am actually moving from one place to another and creating a composition in the moment itself.'*

http://this.is/justin, www.onomatopee.net, www.virtueel-museum.nl, www.filter-hamburg.com, www.thegoodlife-collection.com, www.arnolfini.org.uk

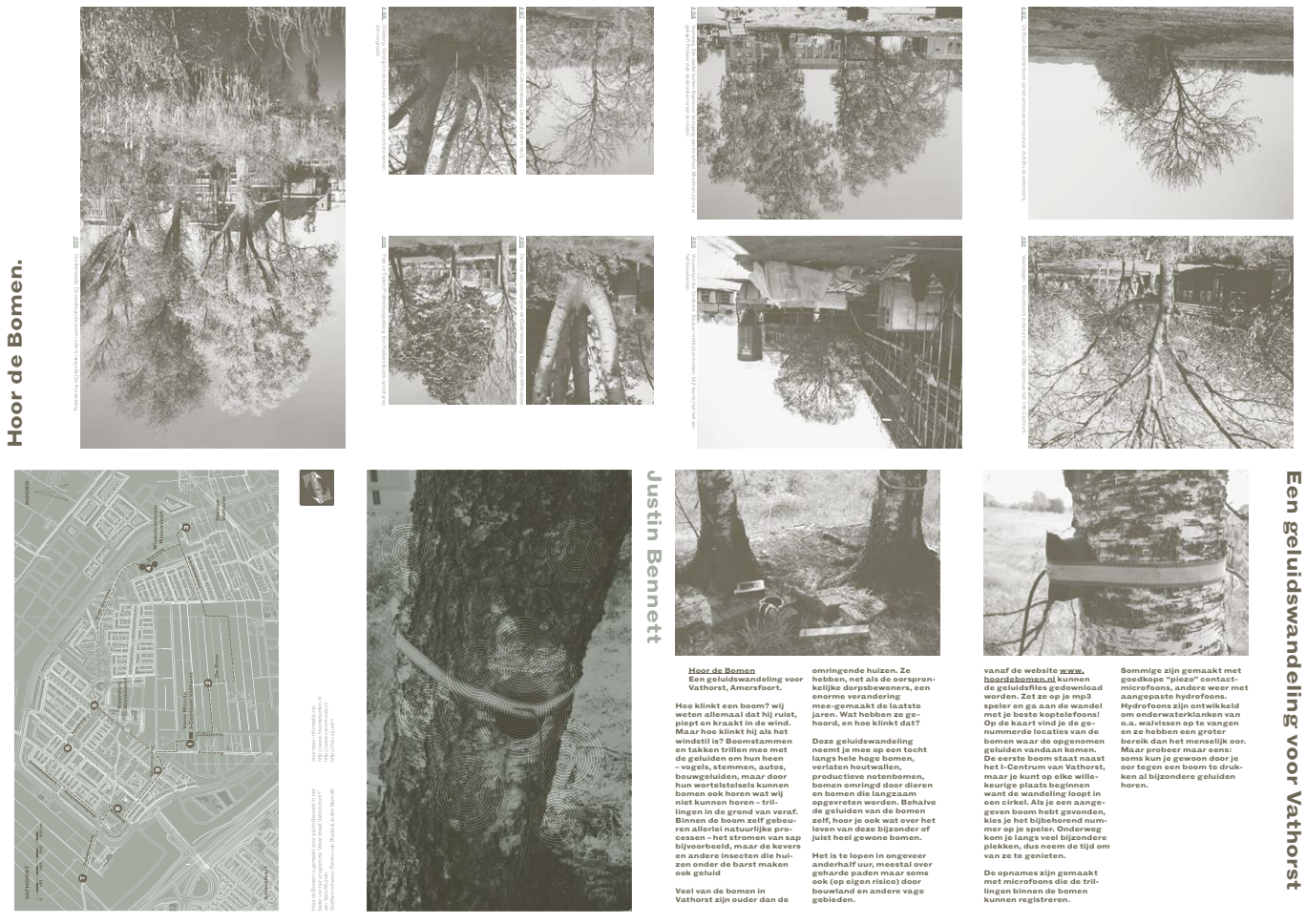
The Good Life - Exhibition, 10 April - 7 June, Arnolfini, Bristol, UK

*Quotes taken from interview with Justin Bennett by Kerstin Niermann (FILTER) in Dec. 08 about the Shotgun Architecture installation at p40.





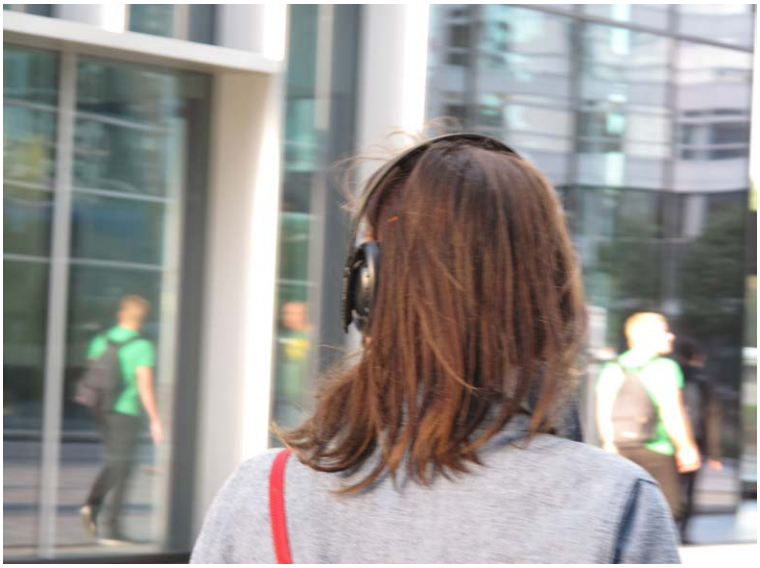
City of Progress 2008. Drawn animation, 11 minutes.
Made during a residency at the Virtual Museum Zuidas in Amsterdam. A city grows from a dot on the paper while the draughtsman muses over urban development, destruction and the role of the artist

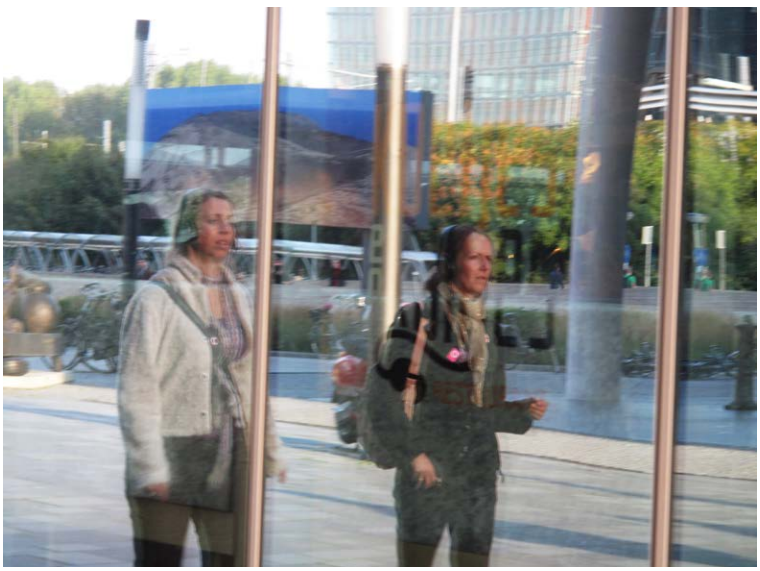


Hoor de Bomen (Listen to the Trees). 2009. Soundwalk in Vathorst, The Netherlands, that mixes sounds recorded at specific trees on the route with texts dealing with new urban developments and their relationship with nature.

JVC

The City Amplified. Installation shots of solo exhibition Gemeentemuseum, Den Haag 2009.
Opposite solo works, this page works in collaboration with BMB con.



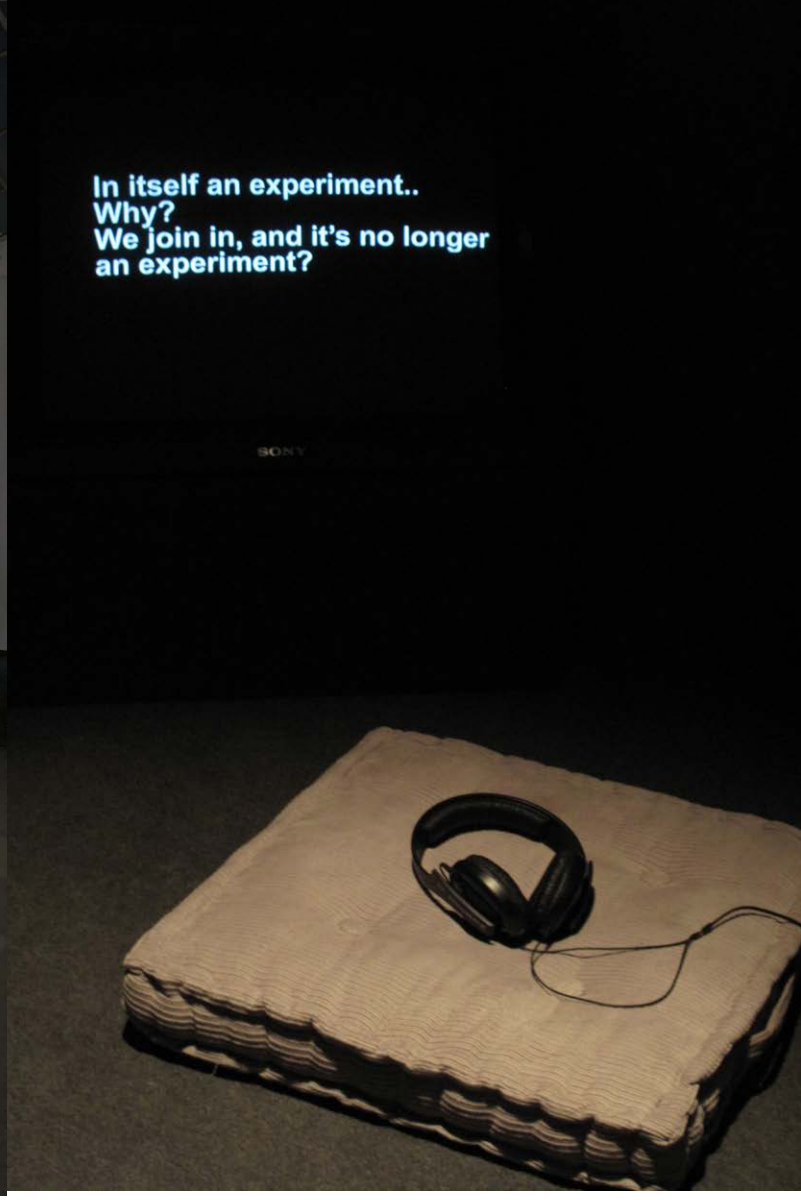


Zuidas Symphony soundwalk 2009. Commissioned by Soundtrackcities, this headphone-guided walk around the new business district of Amsterdam gives a critical view of the role of art in urban development projects.

Installation view at Netwerk, Aalst. 2010. *CHIPKA (overlay)* graphite on paper and *CHIPKA (undercurrent)* four photographic prints and 4 channel sound from DVD.

CHIPKA (overlay) 2010. (detail) Graphite on paper 65 x 250 cm on 5 sheets.

Canopy 2010. Wood, metal, loudspeakers, 6 channel sound on DVD-Audio. Installation shots from the exhibition "Shelter", de Vishal, Haarlem together with work from Annemarie Nibbering, Lisan Freijan and Keiko Sato.


In itself an experiment..
Why?
We join in, and it's no longer
an experiment?

Stimmung is based on an incident that took place during the Holland Festival in 1969 at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. During the performance of the musical piece 'Stimmung' by Karlheinz Stockhausen, consisiting of four singers seated in a circle, members of the audience began to disrupt the performance, First by singing along and making noises, then by applauding. After stopping the performance twice the audience takes to the stage to discuss the democratic right of audience participation. In the installation *Stimmung* the setting echoes the stage layout with four cushions around a pool of light. An edited version of the audience participation (from the Dutch world service archive) is heard over loudspeakers. The discussion is subtitled in English on a monitor. On the headphones the listener can hear the original piece as it should have been performed. Produced by Smart Project Space, Amsterdam for the exhibition "For The Birds".

Stimmung 2010. DVD with subtitles and audio played through loudspeakers, Music from CD on 4 headphones, cushions. Commissioned by Smart Project Space, Amsterdam for the exhibition *For the Birds*.

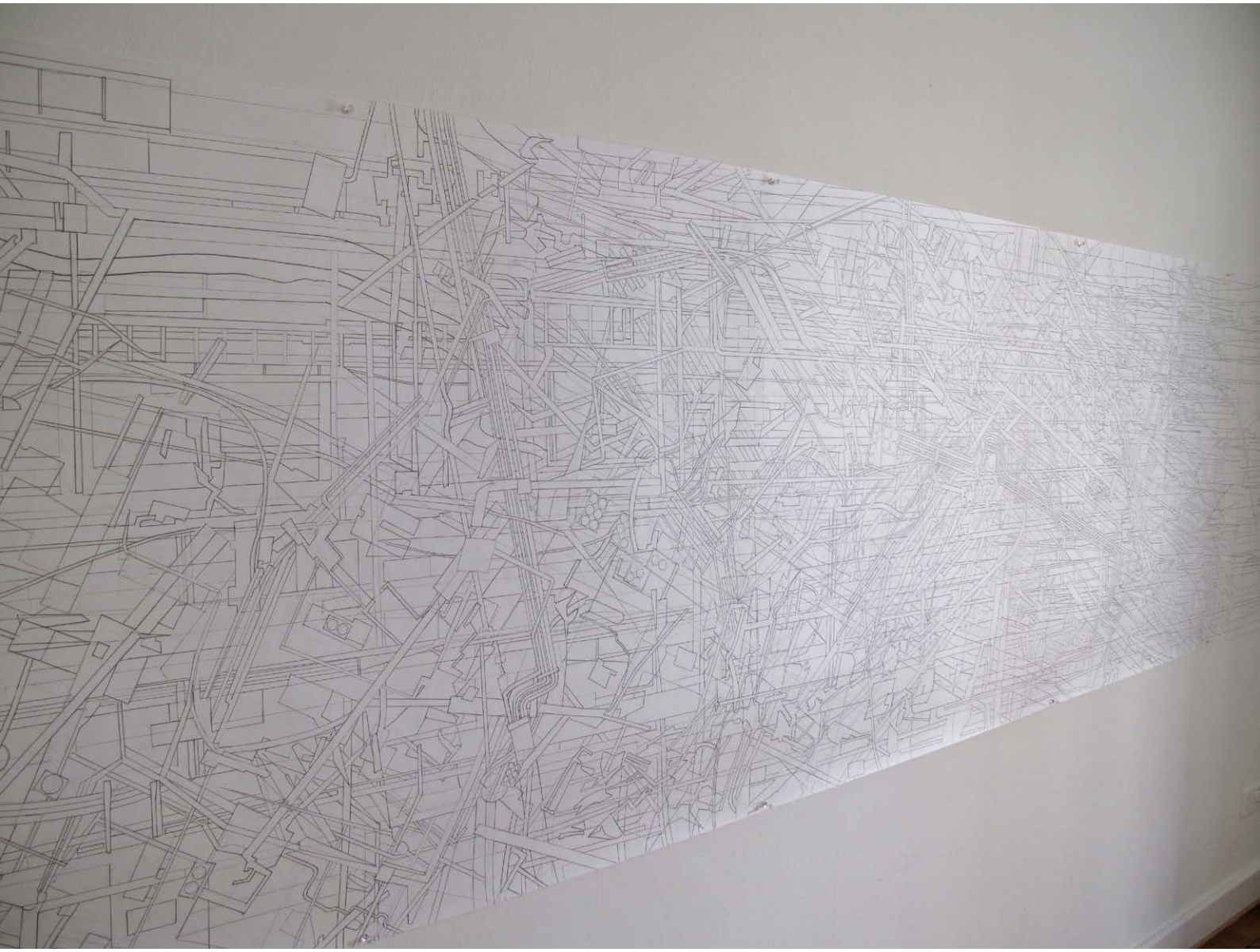
Exhibition view “Production Line” at Barbara Seiler Galerie, Zürich. Aug - Oct 2010.

Engine 2010. metal, loudspeakers, 2 channel audio. The loudspeakers project shapes of metallic noise into the space.

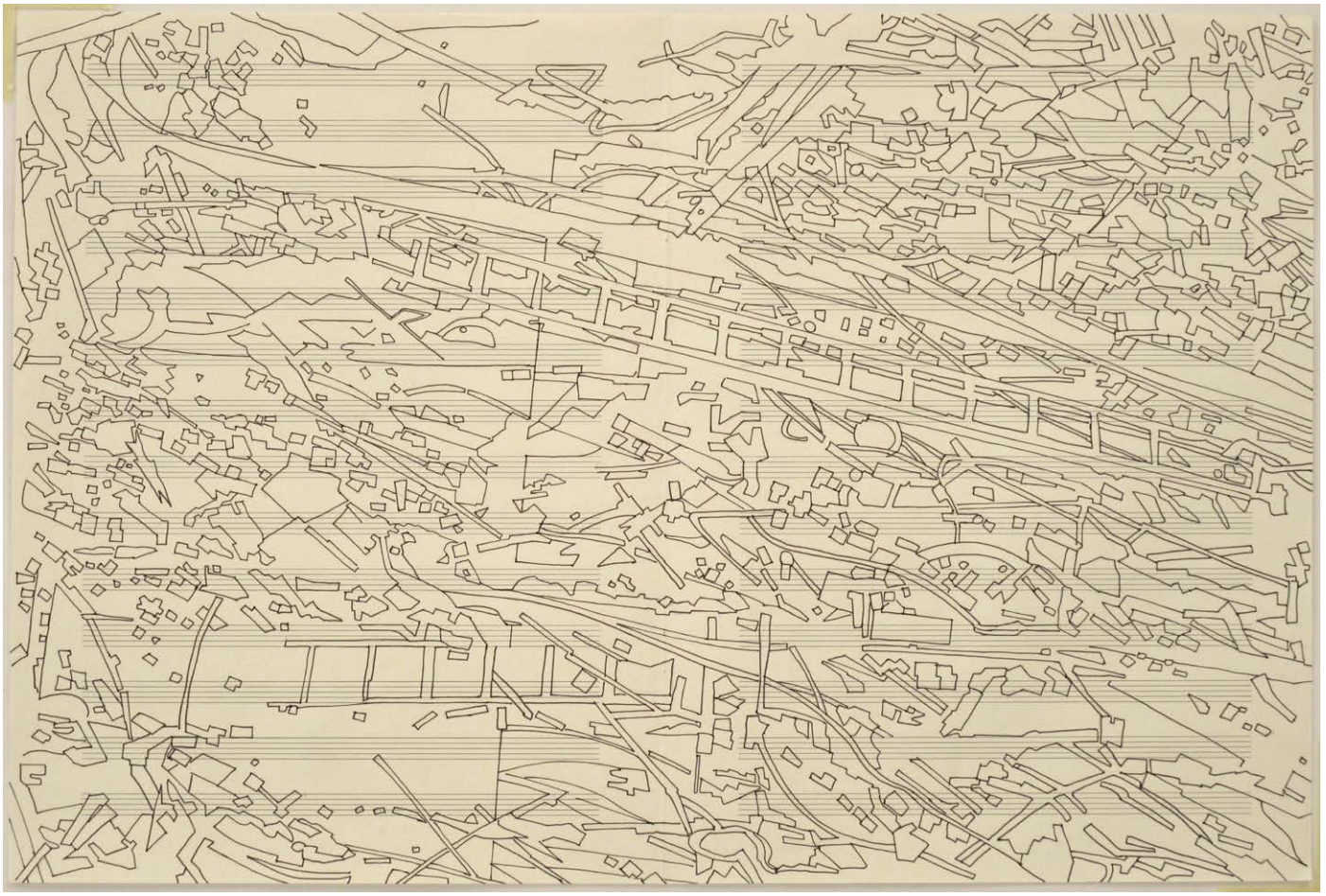
untitled (steam) 2010. 10 photographs, 20 x 30 cm. edition of 3

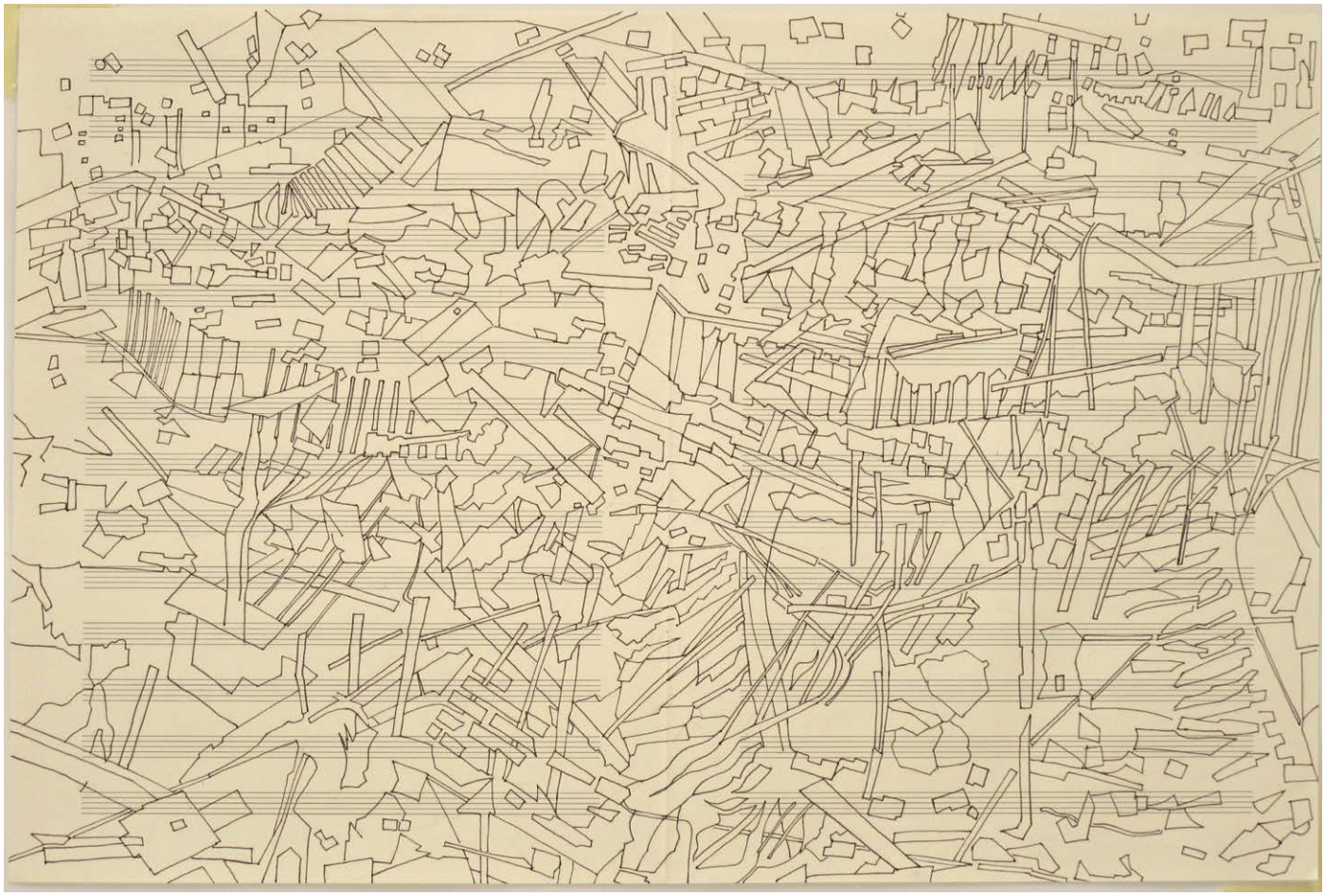
untitled (shelves) 2010. shelves, vibrating glasses. (installation shot, Barbara Seiler Galerie, Zürich)

Factory 2010. pencil on paper, 195 x 150 cm



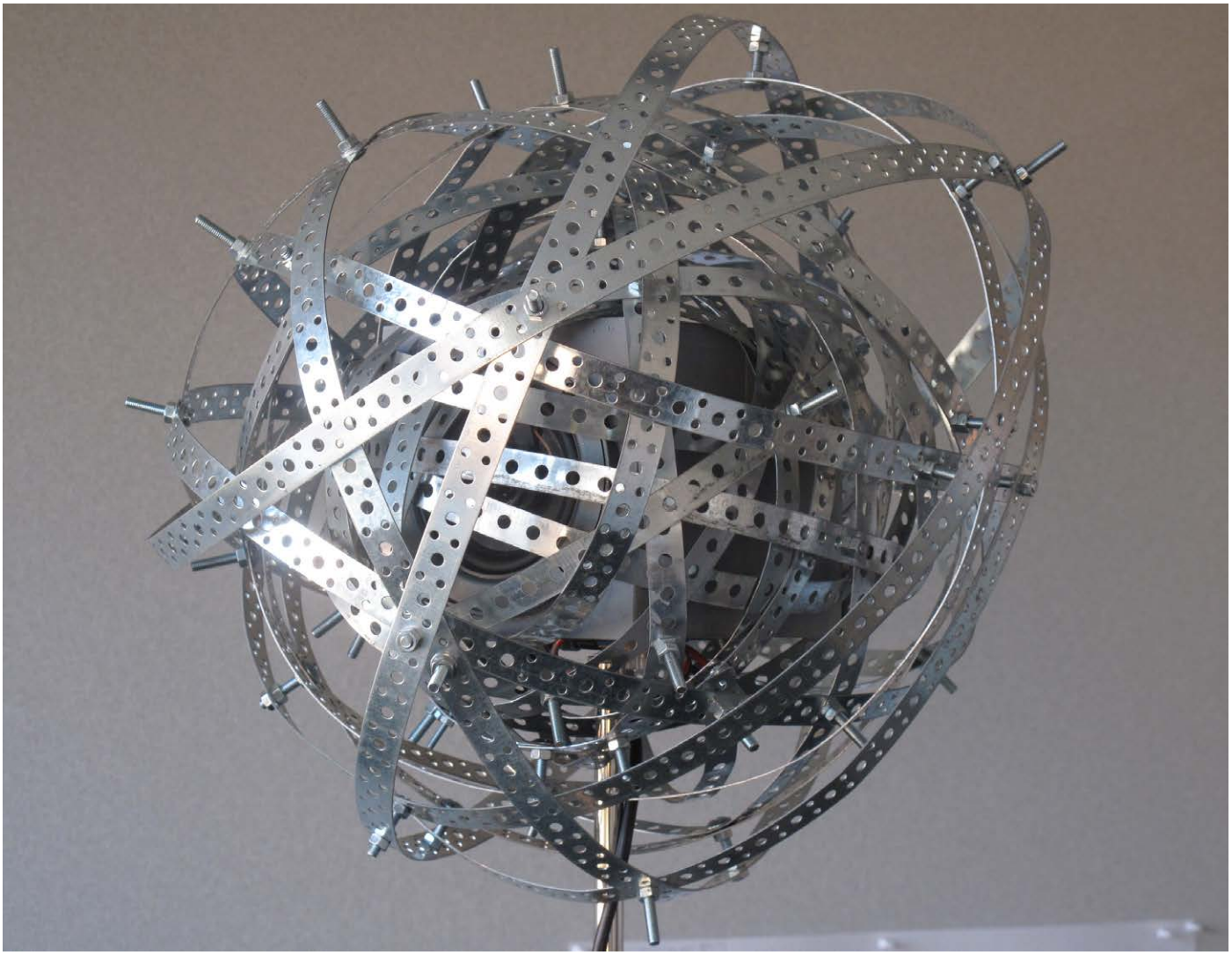
Production Line 2010. graphite on paper, 100 x 465 cm. installation shot, Barbara Seiler Galerie, Zürich.



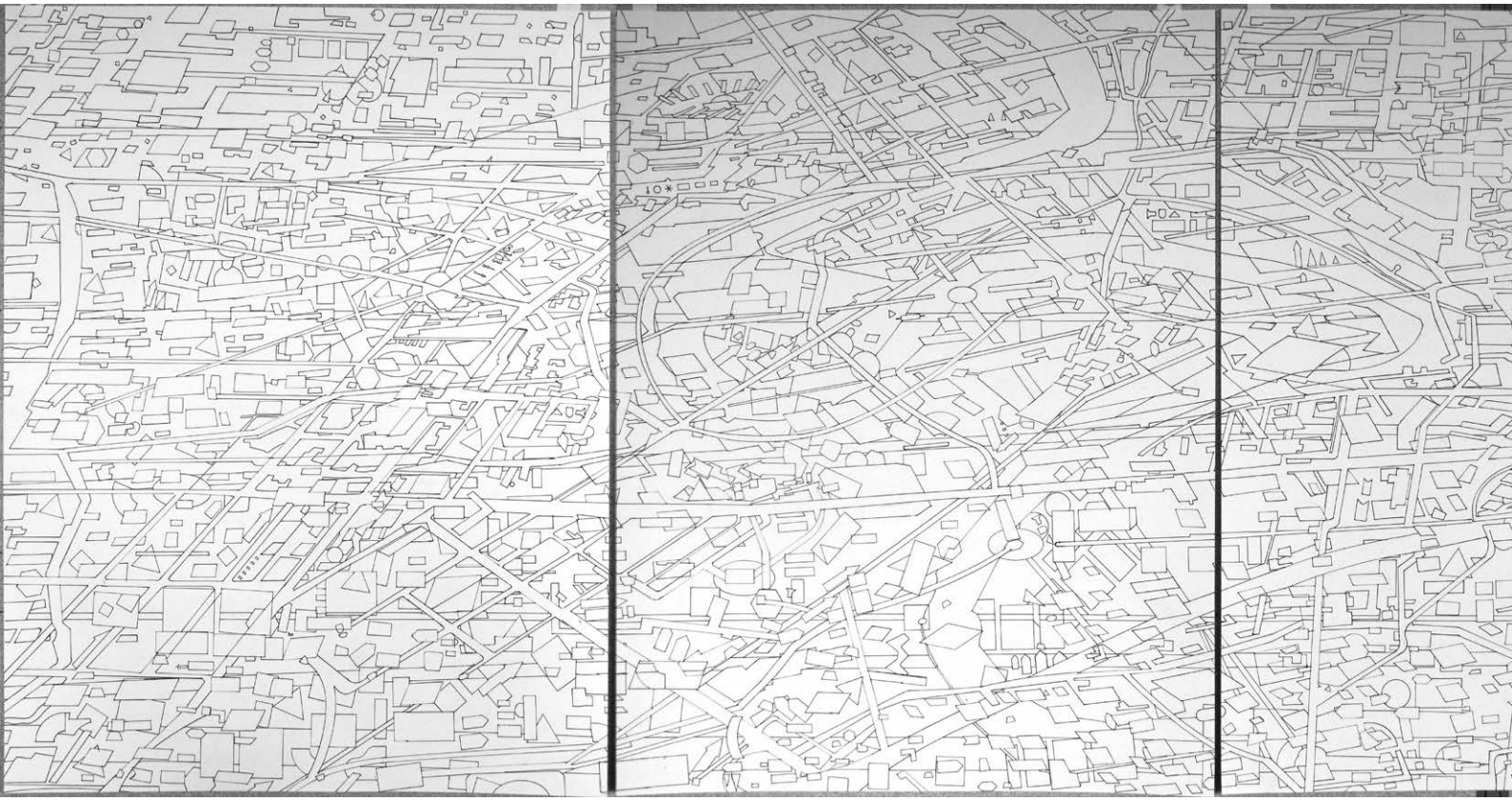


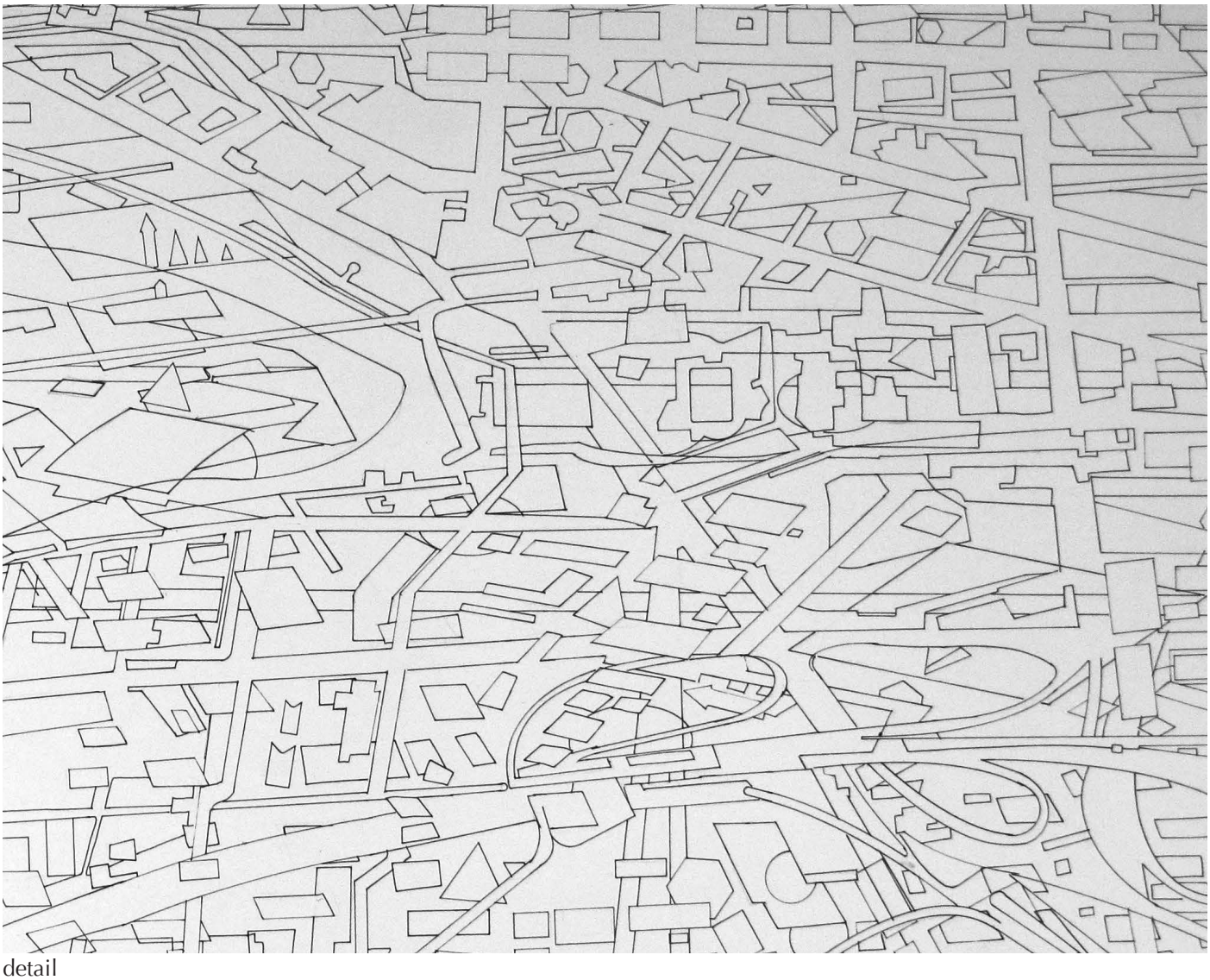
studies 2010. ink on music paper, 31 x 47 cm. no 1 and 5 from a series of 6.

Installation view, solo presentation Art Amsterdam 2011

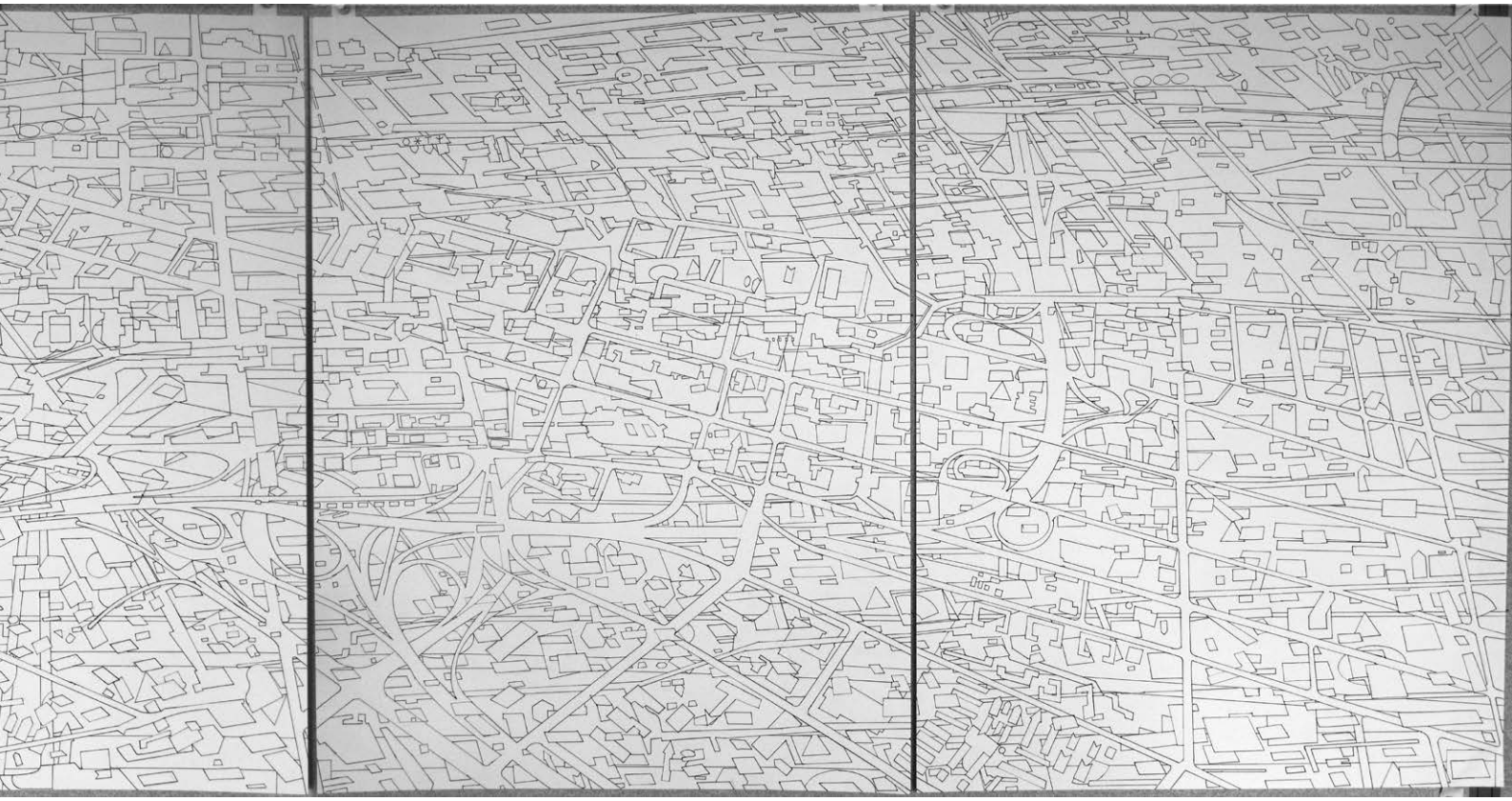


Engine 2 2011. metal, wood, loudspeakers, audio

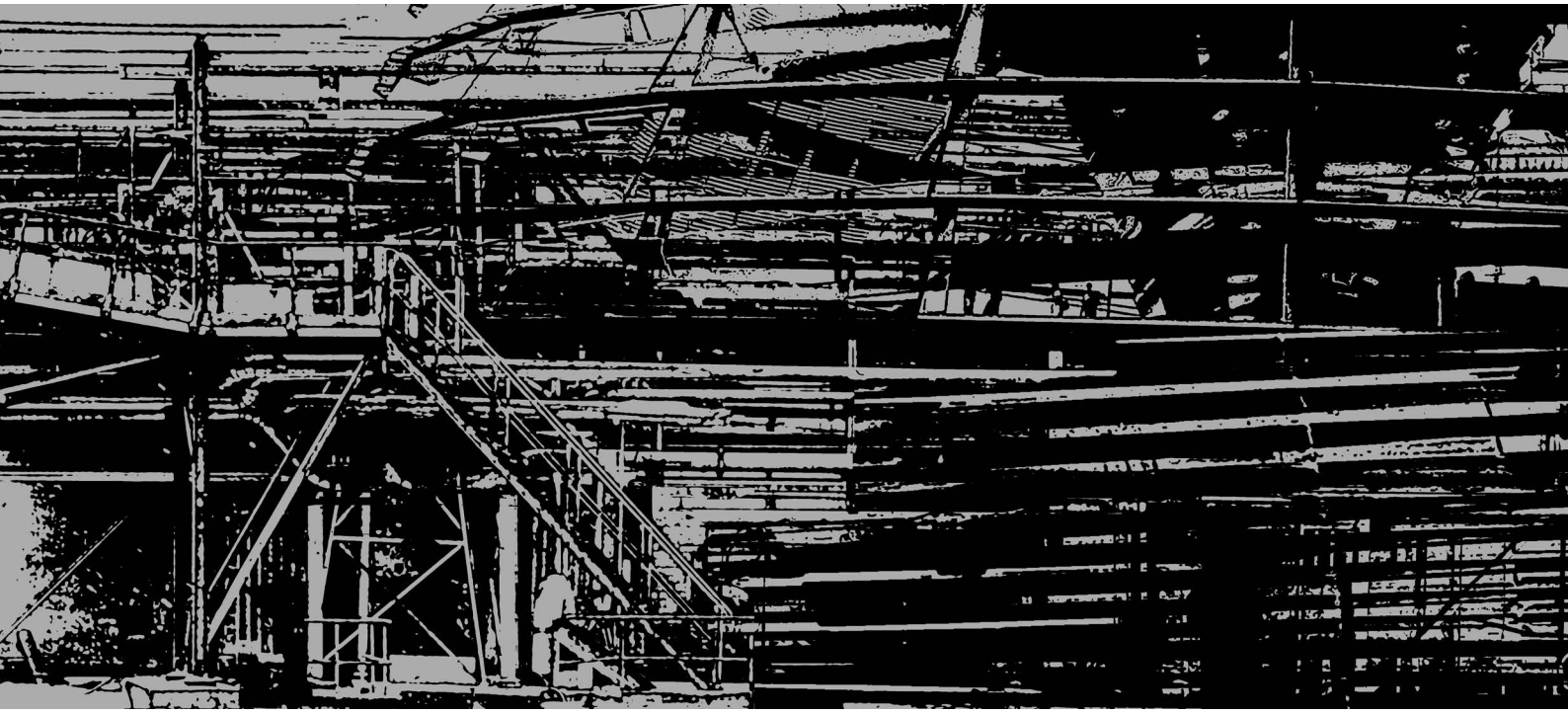


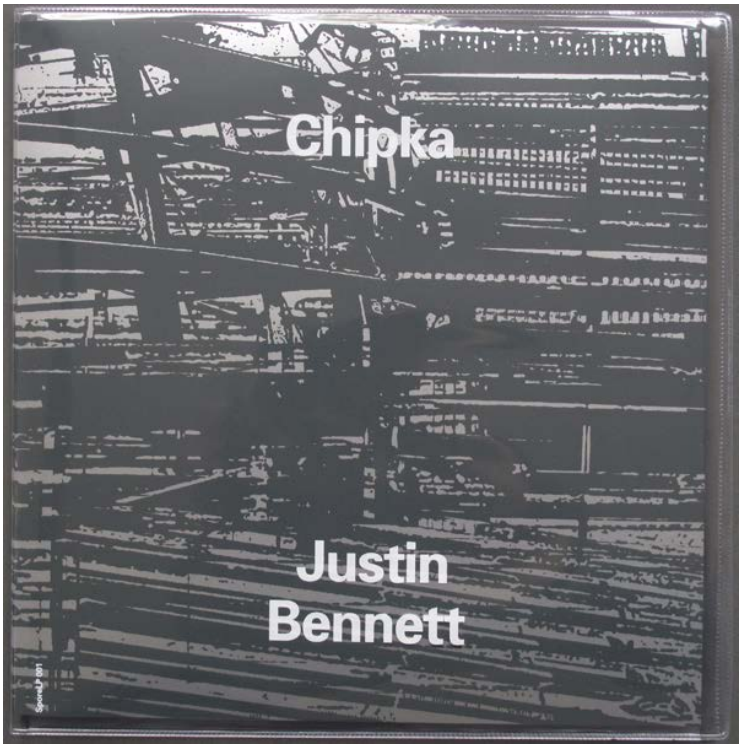


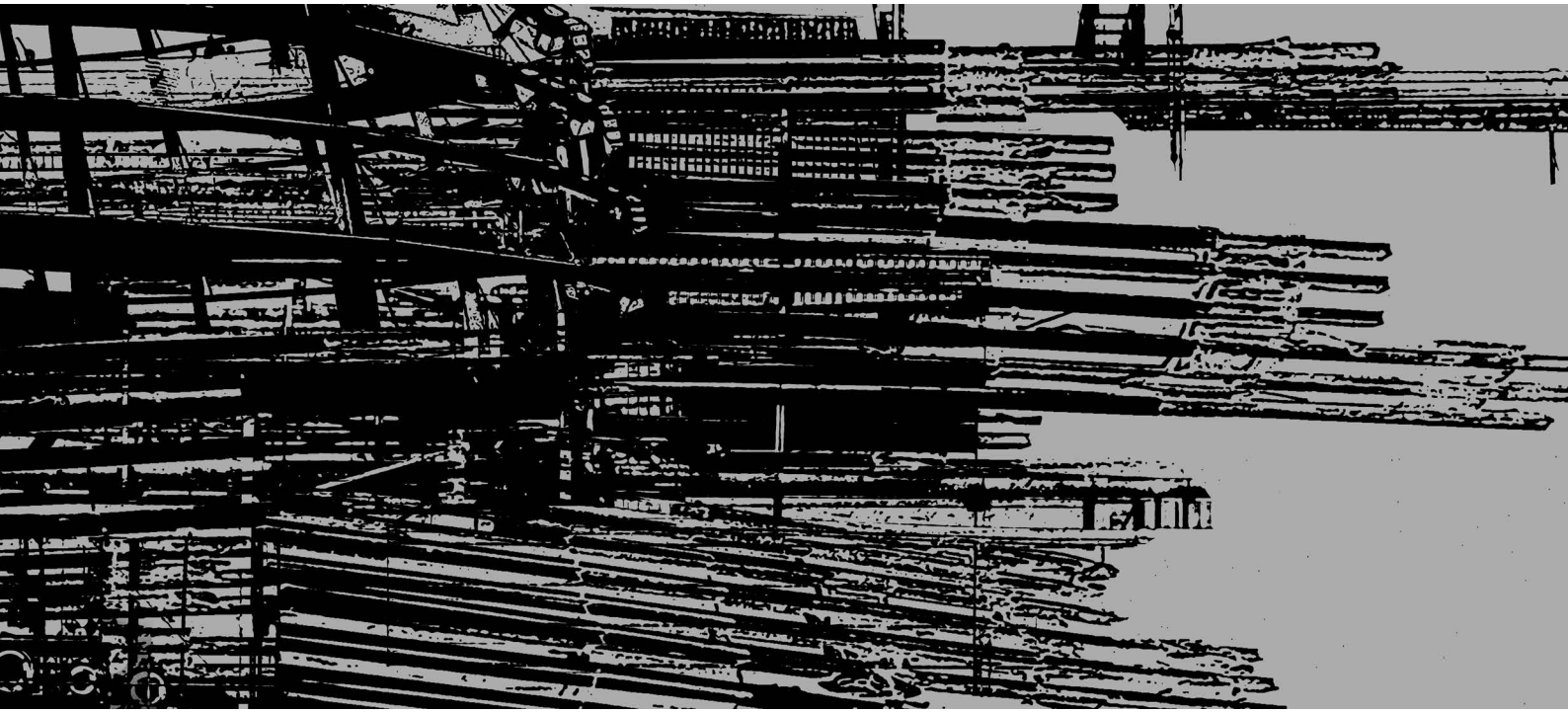
detail

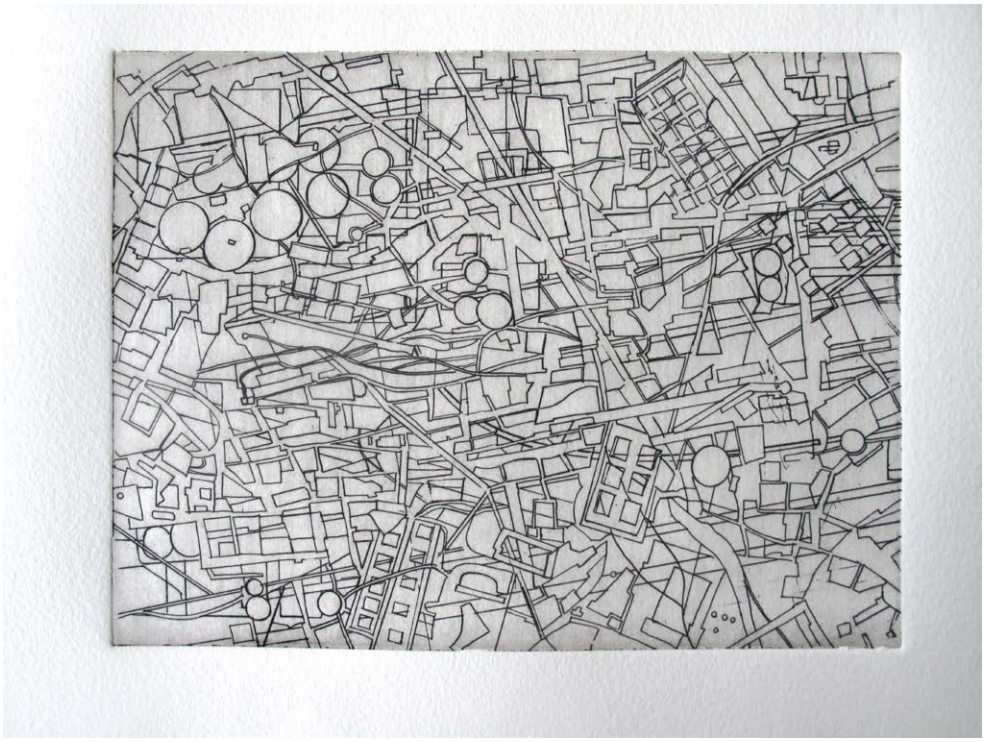


Untitled 2011. ink on paper 65 x 250 on 5 sheets

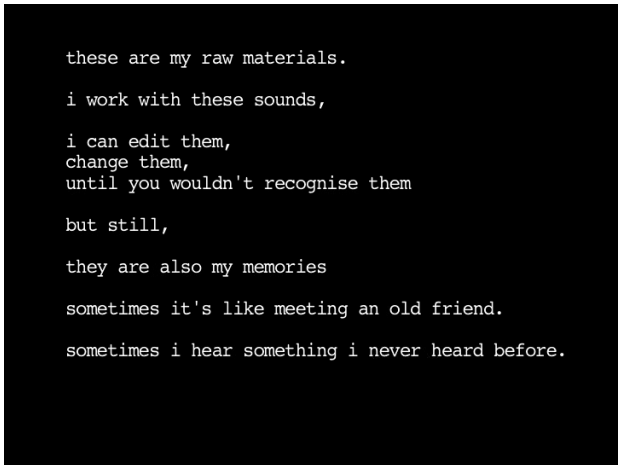



Chipka
Justin
Bennett

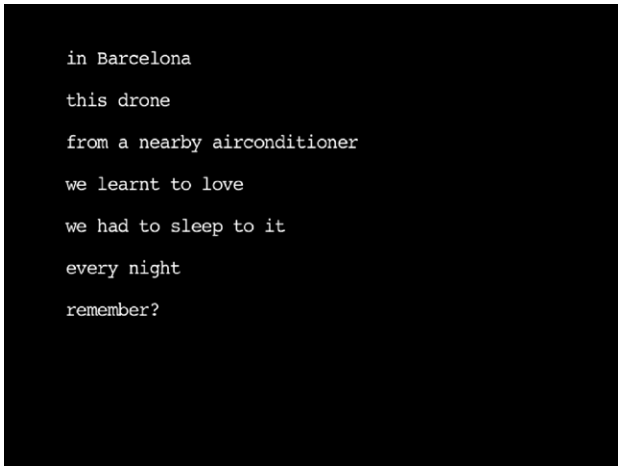


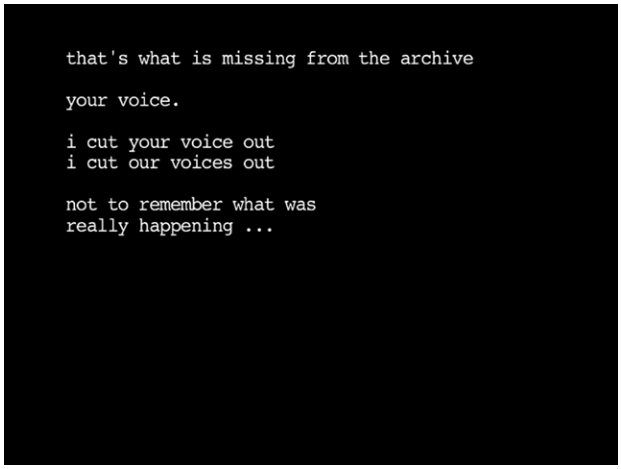


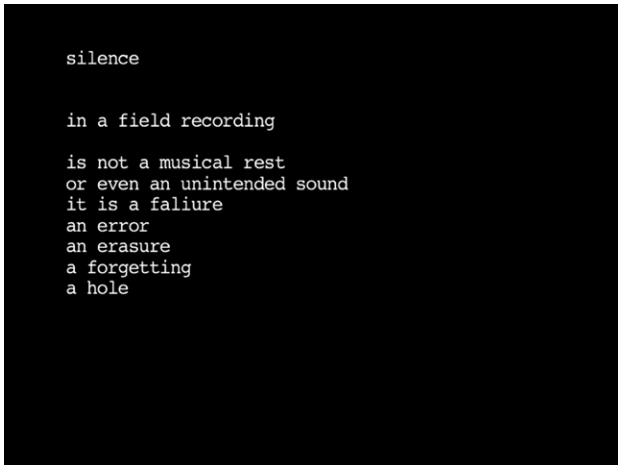
Chipka 2011. 12″ vinyl record with folding screenprint. Edition of 100. numbers 1 - 10 include etching.



Raw Materials asks what it is possible to hear in field recordings. Can we listen to a sound archive as a personal diary, as fiction or as legal evidence? Is the maker a listener, an actor or an author? And which tapes did he erase, and why?





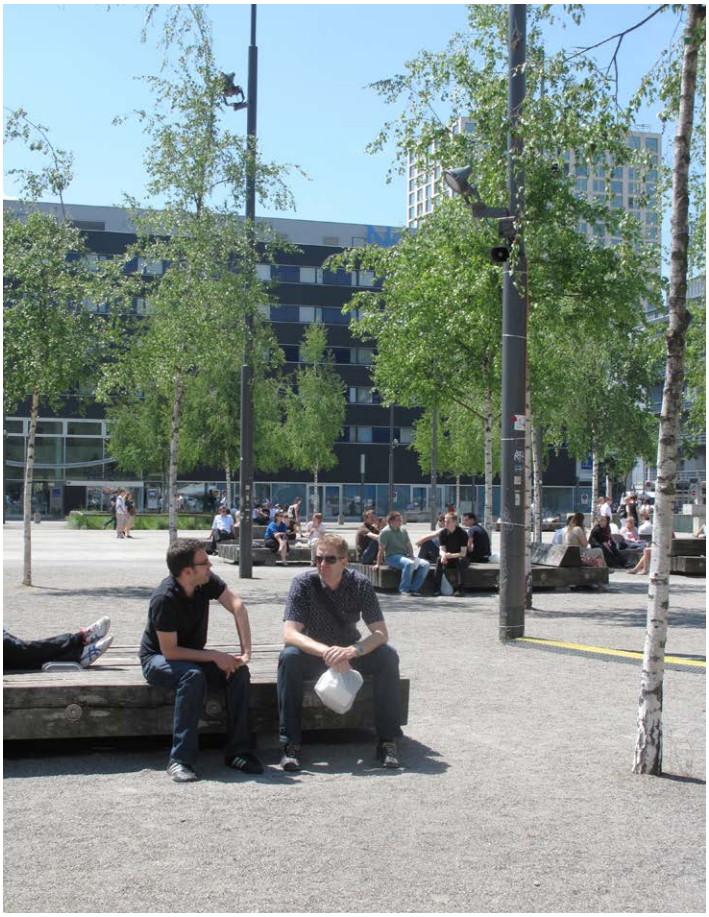


Raw Materials 2011. SD video, stereo sound, 23 minutes.

The Oracle of Zürich gives predictions, instructions, warnings and good advice to all. The visitor just needs to sit and wait.

The Oracle was installed at Turbinenplatz, Zürich for three months in the summer of 2011 as part of the Gasträume project.

The Oracle is a self-contained unit which only needs electricity to function.



Hören sie, Fremder: Sie sollten heute unbedingt ein Lotterielos kaufen.

Fremder, sie sollten jetzt hinunter zum Fluss gehen.
Es ist Zeit.

Ihre Taten werden die Welt verändern, Fremder.

Denken sie daran:
Manchmal ist das kleine Land das stärkere.

Glauben sie uns: Auch wenn alles gerade völlig chaotisch aussieht, ist alles in perfekter Harmonie.

Lieber Besucher: bitte warten sie auf die erste Person, die vorbei geht.

Willkommen, Fremder. Das Wasser wird steigen,
doch hier sind sie sicher.

Lieber Besucher:
Bitte machen sie hinter ihrem Hund sauber.

Fragen sie die Bäume, was sie über dies alles denken.

Bei einem Angriff auf Persien wird ein mächtiges Weltreich zerstört.

Der Streit wird nicht enden, bis Flaggen verboten sind.

Lieber Freund, sie träumen von einer Utopie.
Doch sie ist realisierbar.

Hier ist unser Auftrag für sie: Gehen sie nach rechts und warten sie, bis jemand anderes hier Platz nimmt. Kehren sie dann zurück und setzen sie sich dazu.

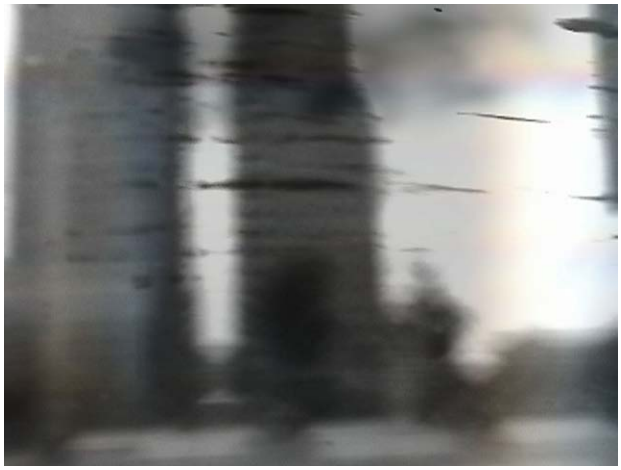
Solange das Öl fließt, ist Chinas Zukunft glorreich.

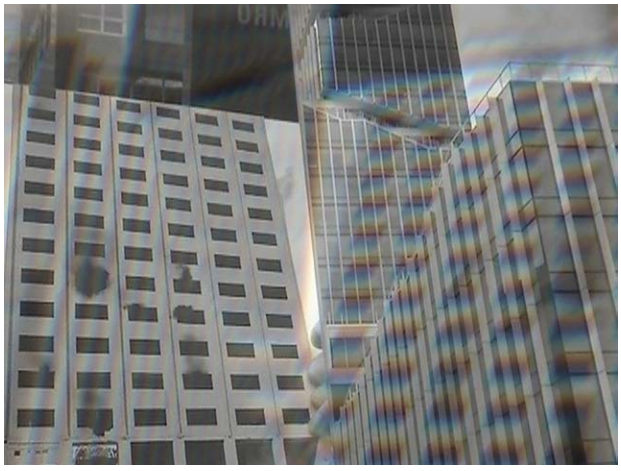
Seht hin: Ganz Zürich gehört euch.

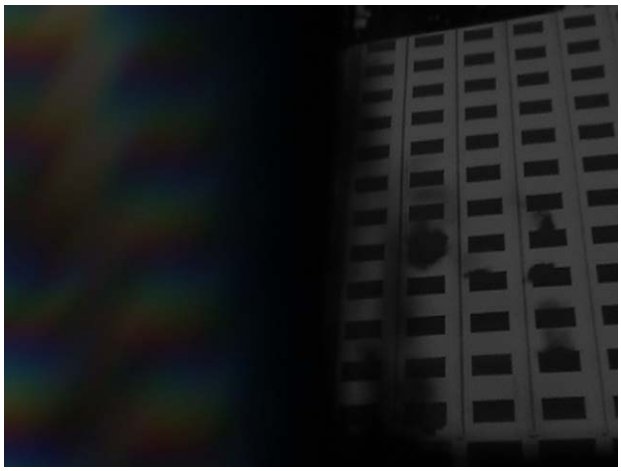
Wir werden diesen Platz erst verlassen,
wenn das Wasser uns bis zum Hals steht.

(examples from more than 600 possible predictions)

Das Orakel von Zürich 2011. Soundwork in public space.







"They say that art can be a mirror, but it can be a hammer too..."

In Brunelleschi's Mirror we sit in darkness, waiting for glimpses of the outside world.

"I trained to be an artist once - never really made it in the art world" the protagonist says, but at least he comes from an artistic family. However, it's a family with a strange curse. What's he doing in that vehicle, shut up in the dark, peering through a device made of mirrors?

Can we believe his story? can we believe our eyes?

Brunelleschi's Mirror 2011. SD video, stereo sound, 13 minutes.

the loudest place

the most beautiful sound

the safest place

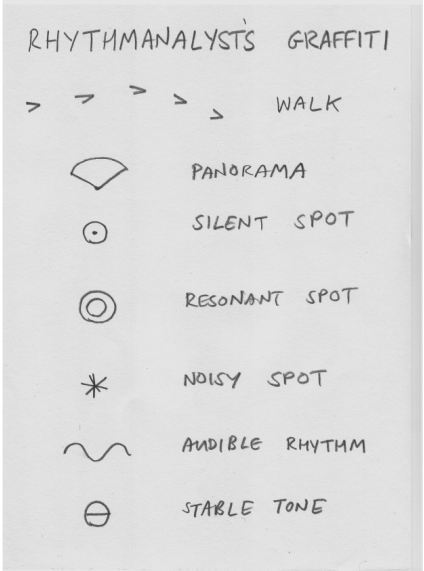
the quietest place

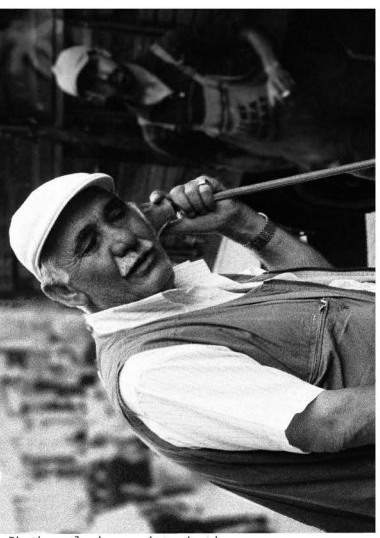
a ghost

the loudest music

an undergound stream

Lefebvre's book "Elements of Rhythmanalysis" published in 1992 brings together music, the commodity, measurement, media, politics and the city. He proposes "a science, a new field of knowledge: the analysis of rhythms; with practical consequences." But also his book exposes his love for the city, for walking and listening.
He talks of the Rhythmanalyst as a future profession but in fact by now it already exists, albeit in different guises.
I am thinking for instance of the books of Iain Sinclair which reveal stories and layers of meaning in the city through walking and mapping, of the "audio walks" of Janet Cardiff and many others, the transurbance of Stalker/On, the radio aporee internet sound maps, research done by the Cresson institute and the World Forum for Acoustic Ecology. All develop techniques and works which analyse, and guide us through the city using our ears and bodies.
But Lefebvre is not just interested in sound - All senses are engaged and used.
Still, I have to think of the man on the photograph on the cover of this folder: the Turkish "Sehr-i dinleyen" or "listener of the city". A man employed by the city council to listen for hidden leaks, construction problems and sounds from beneath the pavements of Istanbul.
He listens intently and gives instructions to the workmen around him. What can he hear? Bubbling or dripping water, hollow ground, electrical sparks, vibrating machinery, earth tremors, rumours, secret messages, ghosts, sonic signs in which he can read both the past and the future.





Rhythmanalysis: an introduction.
Invisible Architectures Newcastle 2011

further reading:

"Rhythmanalysis - space, time and everyday life"
Henri Lefebvre Continuum Books, London.

"Walkscapes - walking as an aesthetic practice"
Francesco Careri. Gustavo Gili, Barcelona

links:

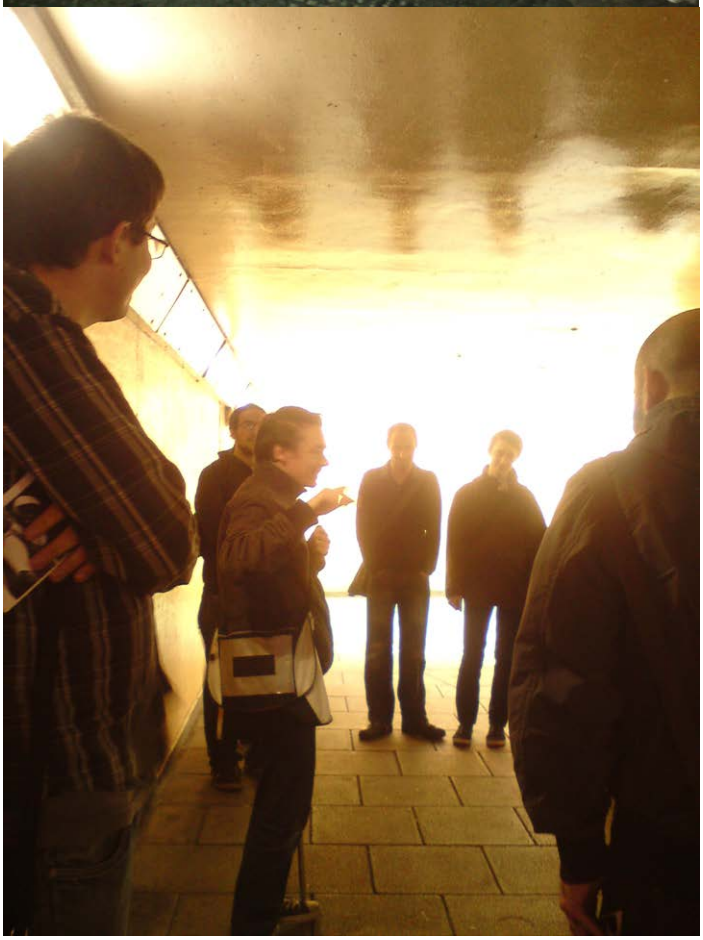
Stalker / Osservatorio Nomade:
http://www.stalkerlab.org

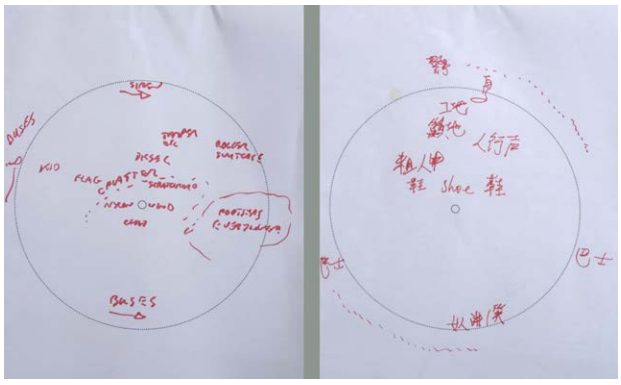
Centre for research on sonic space & urban environment:
http://www.cresson.archi.fr/

Soundwalks in Amsterdam:
http://www.soundtrackcity.nl

World Forum for Acoustic Ecology:
http://wfae.proscenia.net/

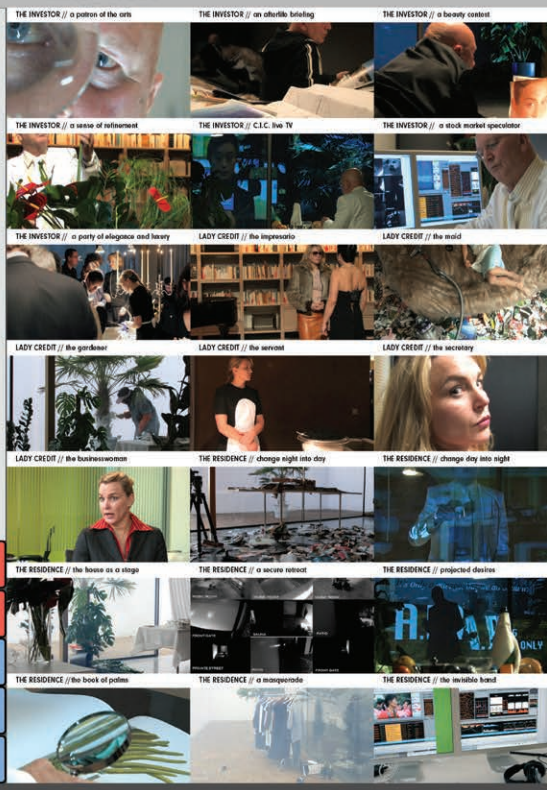
Justin Bennett
http://www.bmbcon.demon.nl/justin

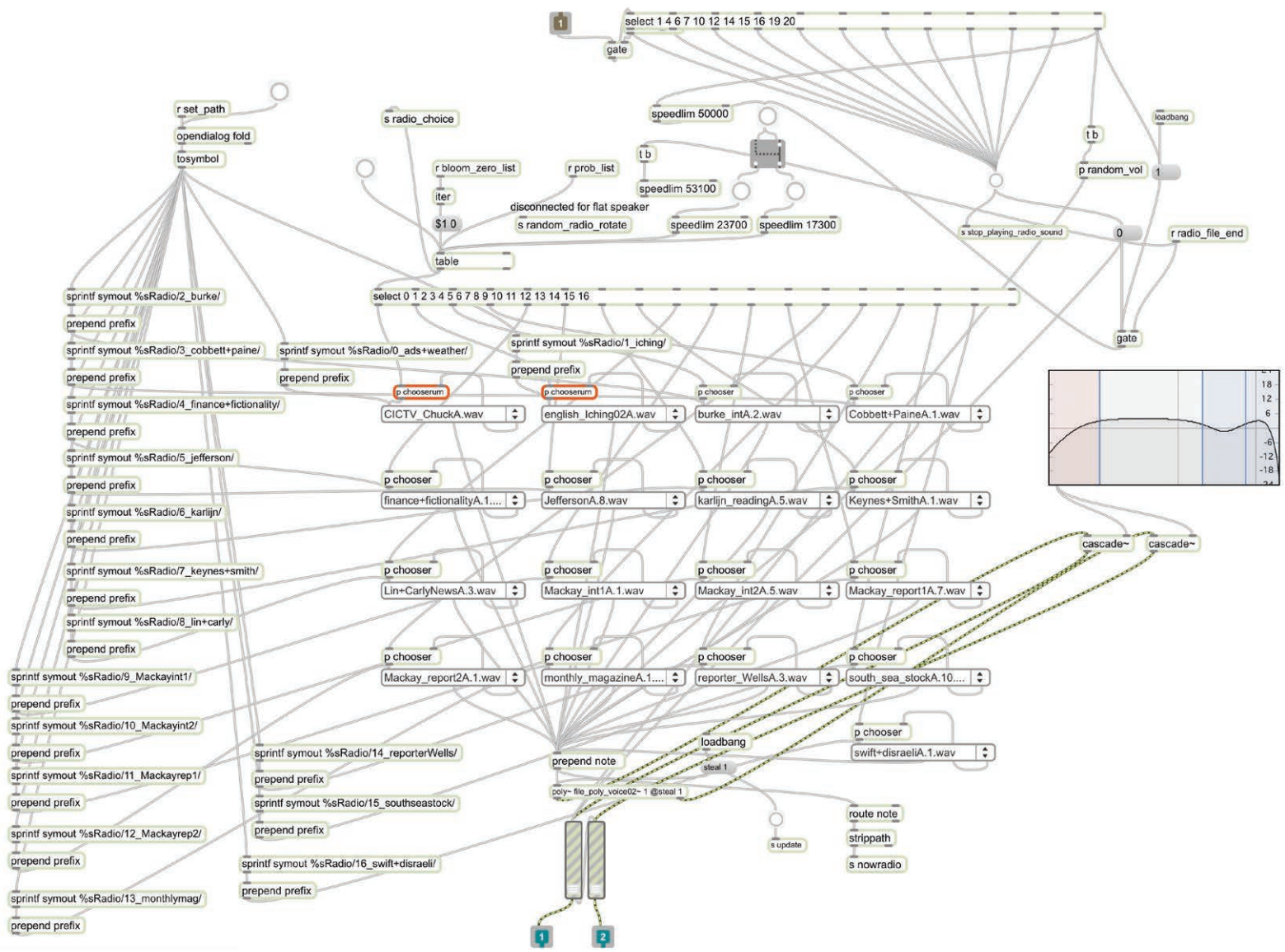


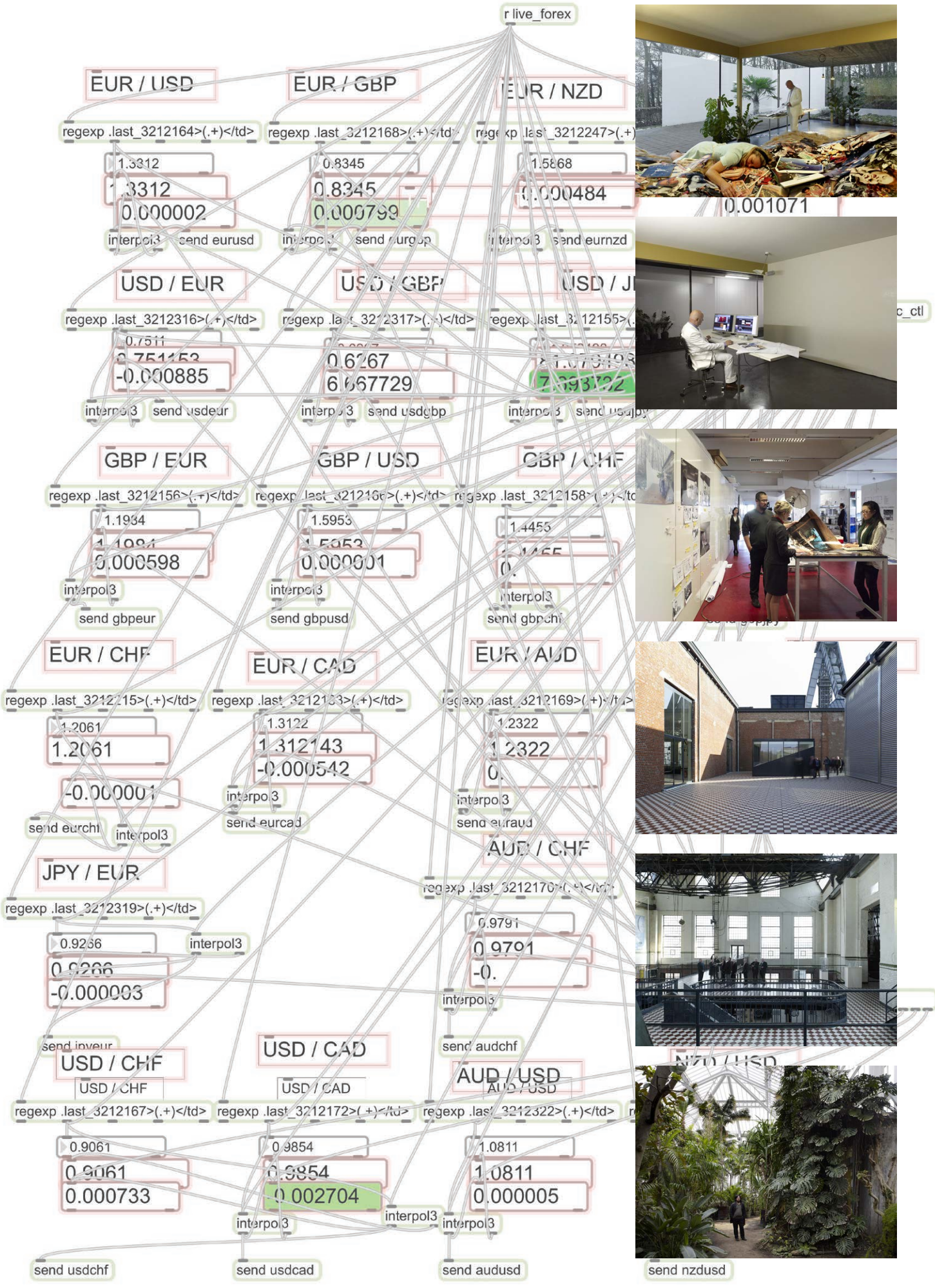


An introduction to Rhythmanalysis 2011. walking tour of Newcastle, UK. Made for the "Invisible Architectures" festival, this guided walk / performance explored the rhythms and acoustics of the city.
left: map and information folder. right: images from the tours, soundmaps made by participants.

CHARACTER	VIDEO SEQUENCE	CURRENCY	VALUE	RATING	PROBABLILITY	IMAGE BANK
THE INVESTOR	a patron of the arts	EUR / USD	1.331246	0.000576		
	an afterlife briefing	EUR / GBP	0.834527	0.000796		
	a beauty contest	EUR / NZD	0.	0.000485		
	a sense of refinement	EUR / JPY	107.928772	0.000962		
	C.I.C. live TV	USD / EUR	0.7512	-0.		
	a stock market speculator	USD / GBP	0.626873	-0.002128		
	a party of elegance and luxury	USD / JPY	81.060867	-0.00119		
LADY CREDIT	the impresario	GBP / EUR	1.1983	0.		
	the maid	GBP / USD	1.595243	0.001787		
	the gardener	GBP / CHF	1.445446	-0.00053		
	the servant	GBP / JPY	129.321686	-0.000355		
	the secretary	EUR / CHF	1.206138	-0.000639		
	the businesswoman	EUR / CAD	1.312429	0.000544		
THE RESIDENCE	change night into day	EUR / AUD	1.231946	-0.000621		
	change day into night	CHF / JPY	89.470497	-0.000561		
	the house as a stage	JPY / EUR	0.926415	0.001661		
	a secure retreat	AUD / CHF	0.979007	0.00068		
	projected desires	USD / CHF	0.90604	0.000737		
	the book of palms	USD / CAD	0.9858	-0.000679		
	a masquerade	AUD / USD	1.0805	0.000001		
	the invisible hand	NZD / USD	0.8389	0.000003		
TRANSACTION	full video sequence	USD / GBP			beauty contest 04.mov	
	split video sequence	spread 0.5%	56.045448%		party24.mov	
	radio sequence	USD / GBP				
	cricket orchestra	EUR / NZD				
	audio background					

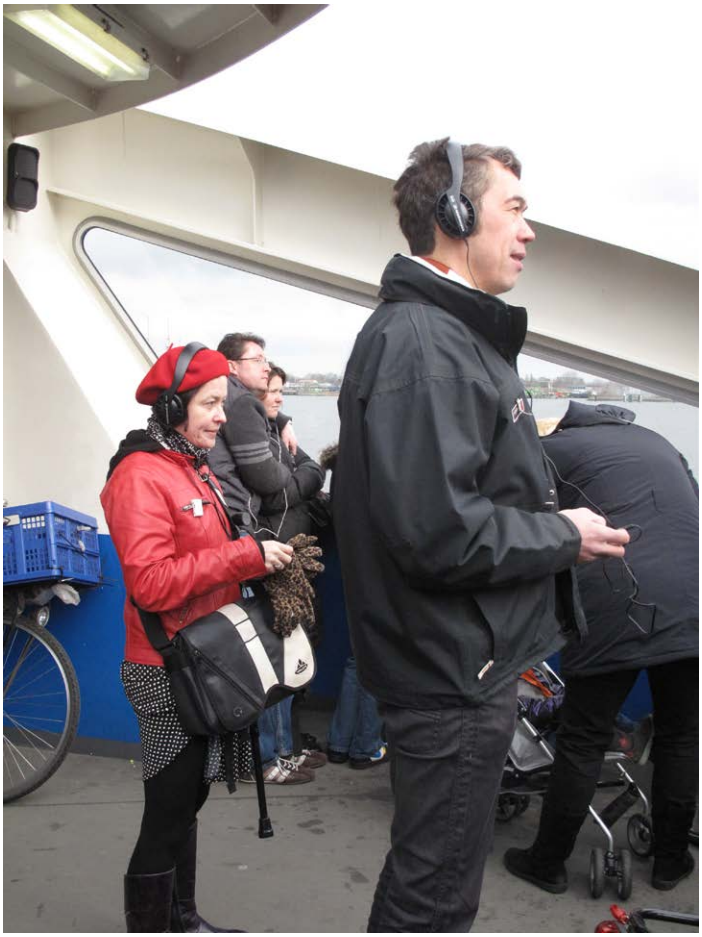




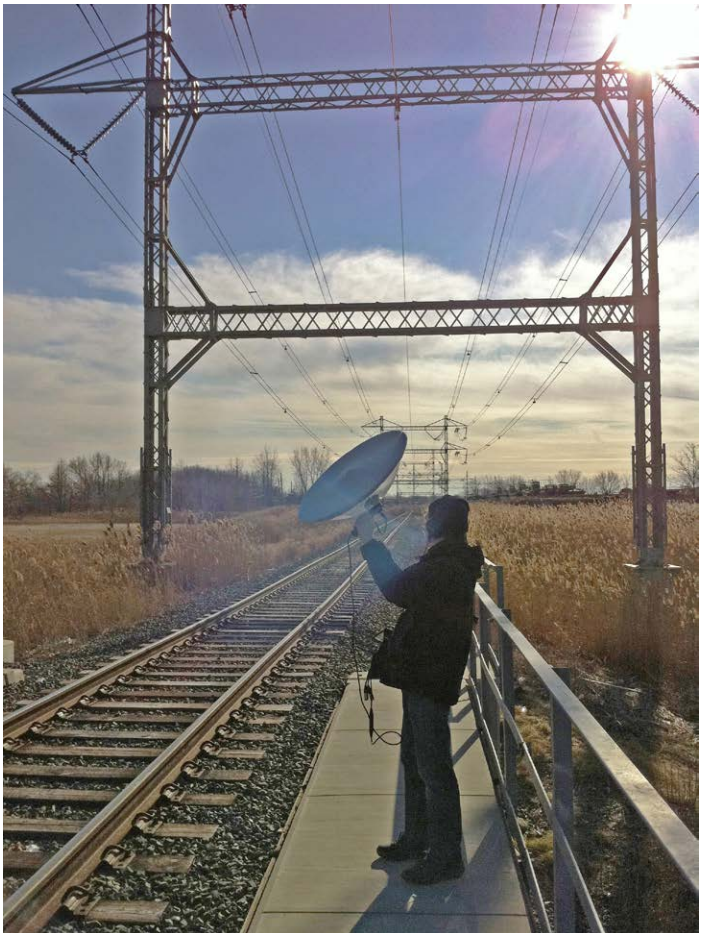


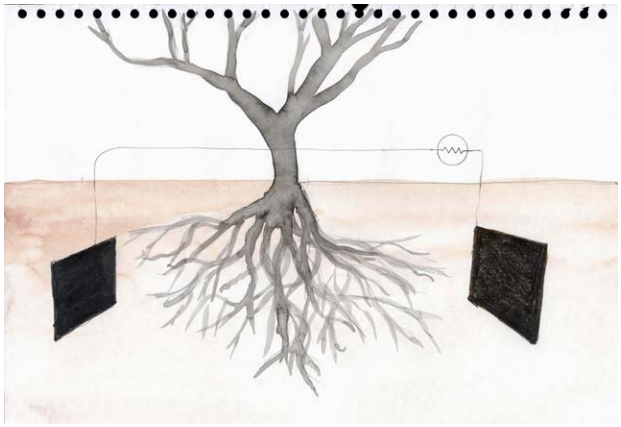
The Residence - a Wager for the Afterlife 2012. Soundtrack, sound design and algorithmic video installation for this project by Vermeir & Heiremans. Shown in Argos, Brussels, Shenzen Biennial, Manifesta 9.

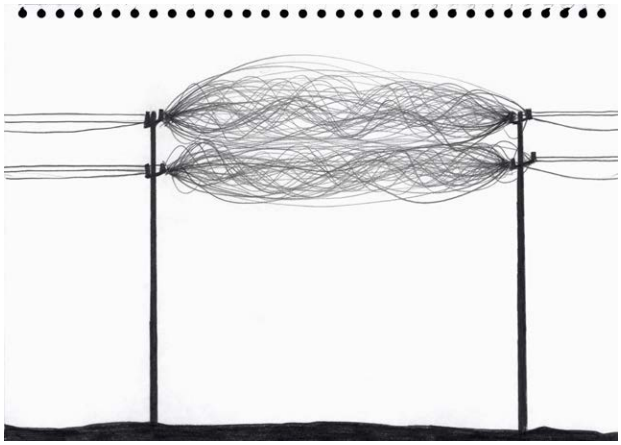
YURTTA SULH
CIHANDA SULH
K. Atatürk
VREDE IN HUIS
K. Atatürk

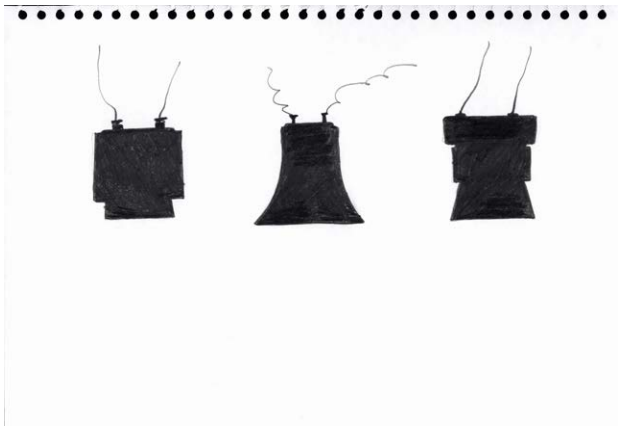


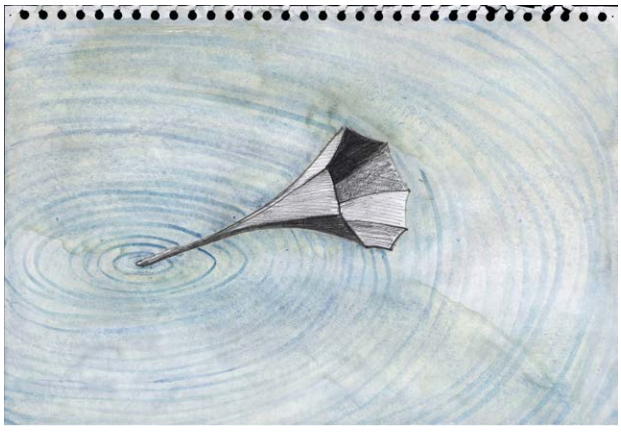
Ticket to Istanbul 2012. Audio tour, Amsterdam. Made in collaboration with Renate Zentschnig, *Ticket to Istanbul* is a journey walking and with ferry-boat from Amsterdam Noord to the centre. In parallel, an audio-journey is made from the Asian shore of Istanbul to Beyoglu on the European side. Binaural recordings made on location in Istanbul are mixed with stories and interviews told by regular passengers on the ferry. This piece is a mirror image of *Ticket to Amsterdam* from 2010 which is physically situated in Istanbul and makes the Amsterdam journey in sound. In Istanbul the tours are available from c-u-m-a and in Amsterdam from Soundtrackcity. Turkish, English and Dutch versions are available.





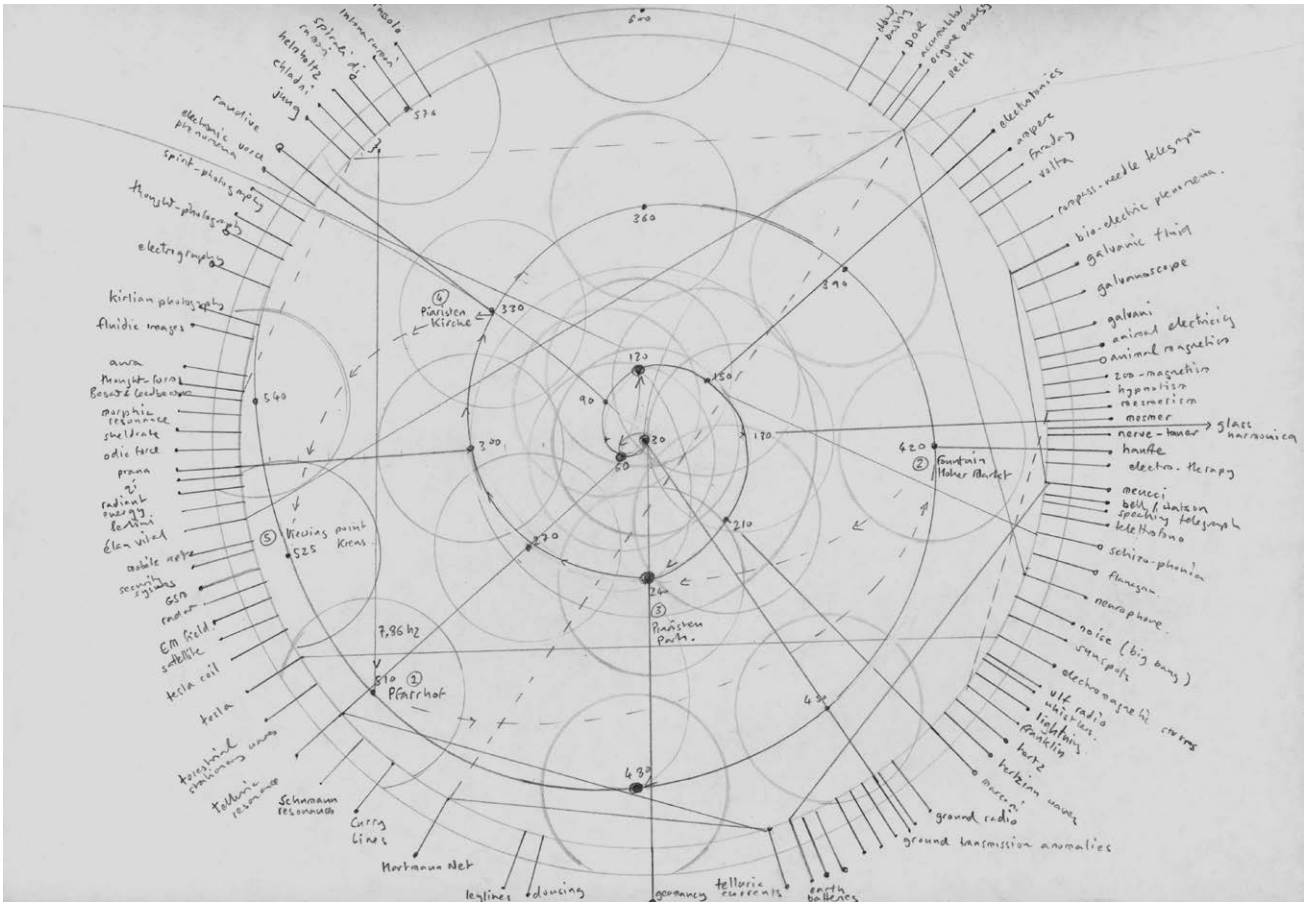


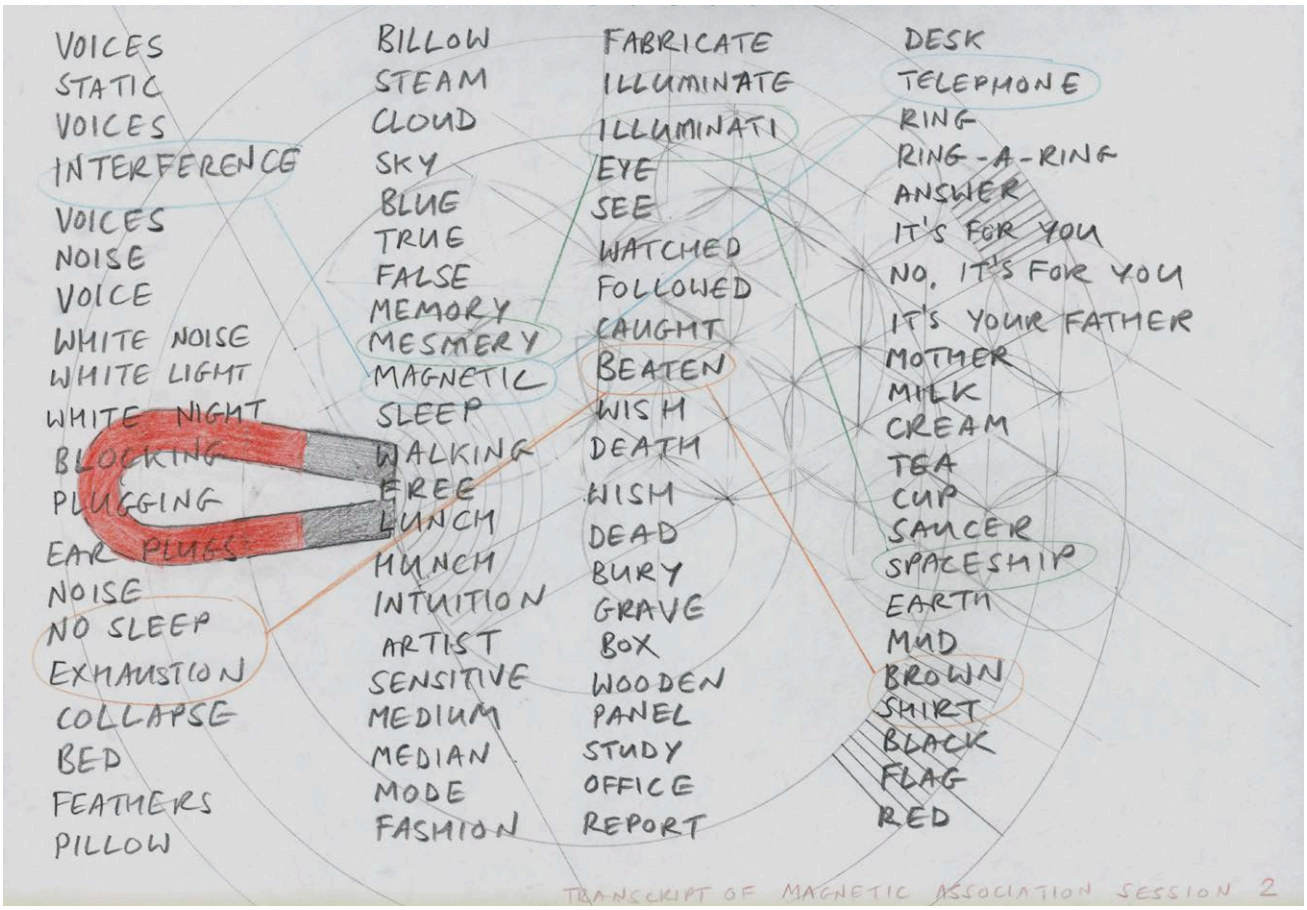




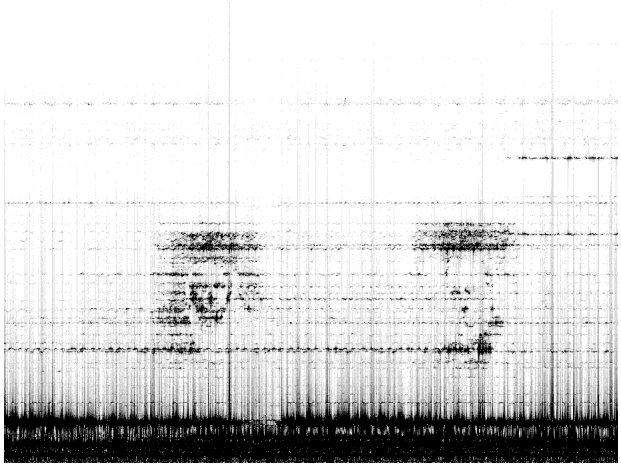
production photo and sketches - 2012

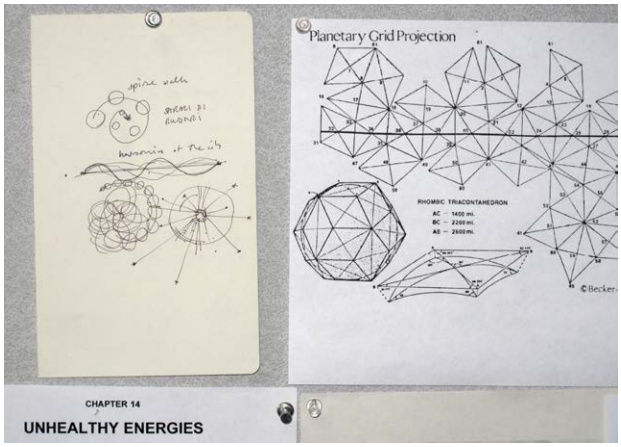
Telettrofono 2012. Audio tour, Staten Island, NYC. Made in collaboration with the poet Matthea Harvey.
Comissioned by the Guggenheim Museum, NYC for their "Stillspotting" project.
Telettrofono is a 90 minute walk that leads listeners around in search of the story of Antonio and Esterre Meucci. Antonio Meucci was the unacknowledged inventor of the first telephone (or telettrofono), conceived in 1849, when he accidentally discovered, while administering electrical shocks to a man suffering from rheumatism, that sound could travel along electrical wires. Many of his inventions—a marine telephone, a lactometer, flame-retardant paint and smokeless candles—went far beyond the imagination of his contemporaries. *Telettrofono* mixes fiction with fantasy, spoken word with invented musical instruments and industrial sites with gardens and baroque theatres.





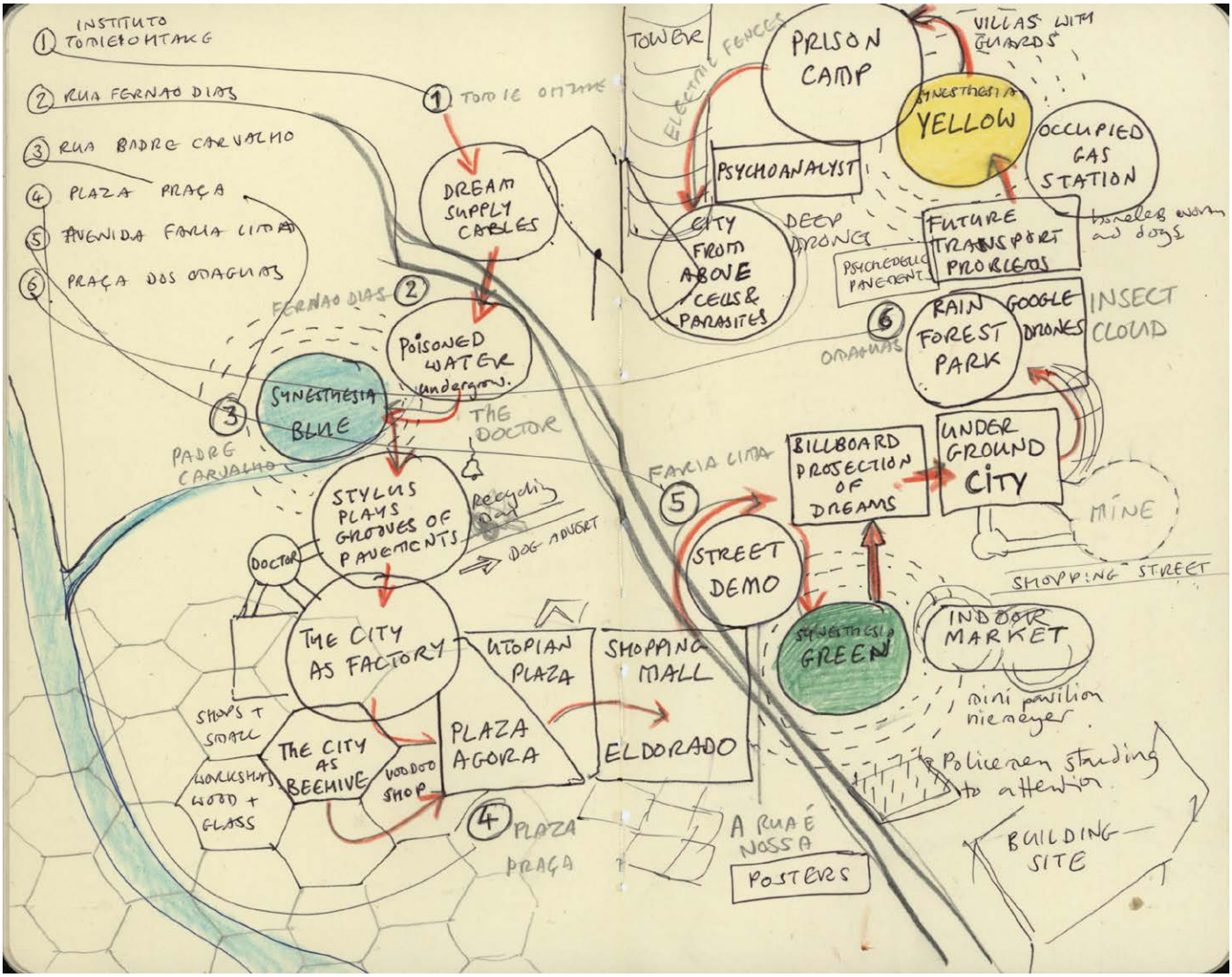
Drawings from Spectral Analysis 2012, 2013

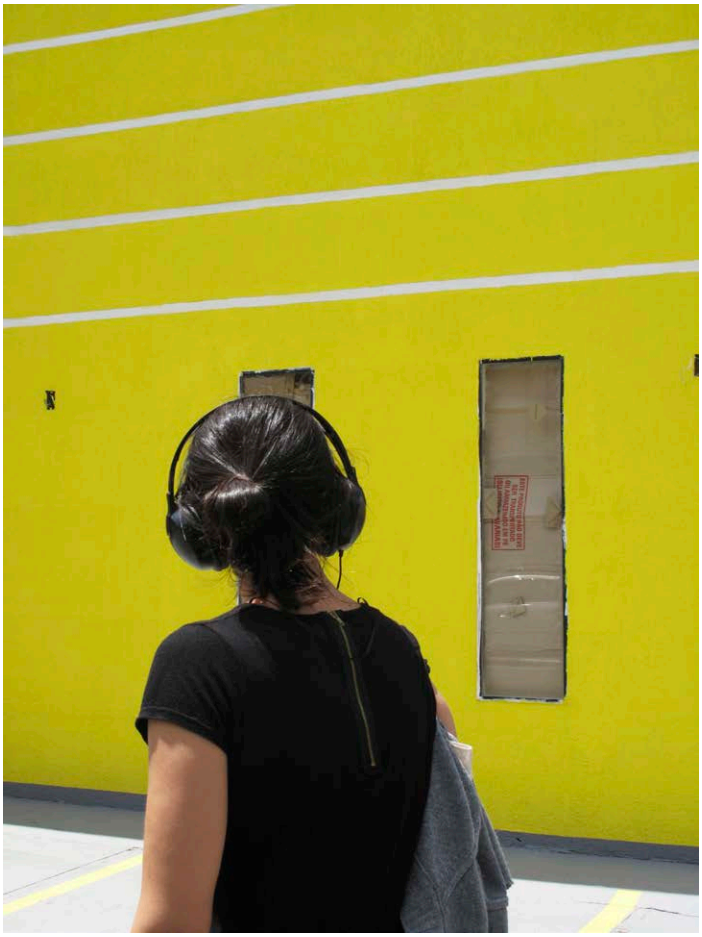


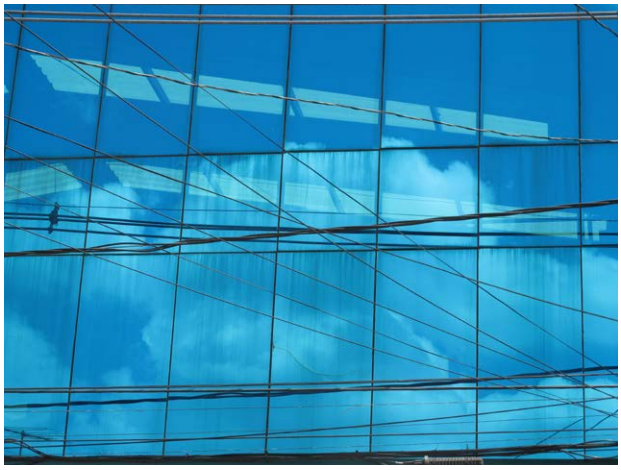


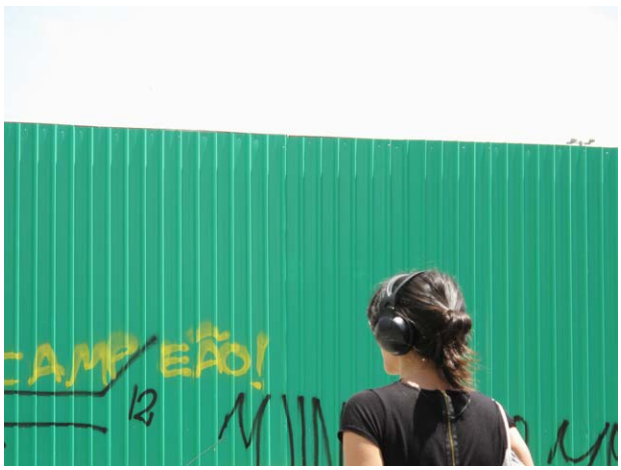
Spectral Analysis (Krems) and Spectral Analysis WG

The ongoing project *"Spectral Analysis"* attempts the analysis of both spectra and spectres. It manifests itself in sound-walks, audio-visual installations, drawings and multiples.
Spectral Analysis is concerned with the history of technology being used as a tool for exploring and revealing the invisible. The invisible or spectral domain can be though of as the unconscious, the afterlife or the electro-magnetic spectrum outside of our vision. "Acousmatic" audible presences without an obvious, visible source can also be thought of as belonging to this domain.
The background of this project is research into medical history: mesmerism, electro-therapy, phrenology, hypnotism, psychoanalysis, experimental psychiatry, psychoacoustics, music therapy.
Occult history (spiritualism, theosophy, conspiracy theory) and its relation to modernist art and radical social movements. The role of technology in these histories, particularly at the end of the 19th century and the transformation of these technologies with the coming of the digital age. And the role of the artist: the artist as experimenter, as inventor, as medium, as patient.
The audio tour *Spectral Analysis* was produced by Kontraste Festival Krems, 2012. *Spectral Analysis WG* by Sonic Acts, Amsterdam, 2013


INSTITUTO TOMIE OHTAKE
RUA FERNAO DIAS
RUA PADRE CARVALHO
PLAZA PRAÇA
AVENIDA FARIA LIMA
PRAÇA DOS ORAGUAS
TOMIE OHTAKE
DREAM SUPPLY CABLES
FERNAO DIAS
POISONED WATER undergrow.
SYNESTHESIA BLUE
PADRE CARVALHO
THE DOCTOR
STYLUS PLAYS GROOVES OF PAVEMENTS
Recycling Day
DOG ADOPT
DOCTOR
THE CITY AS FACTORY
SHOPS + STALL
WORKSHOP WOOD + GLASS
THE CITY AS BEEHIVE
VOODOO SHOP
UTOPIAN PLAZA
PLAZA AGORA
SHOPPING MALL
ELDORADO
PLAZA PRAÇA
A RUA É NOSSA
POSTERS
TOWER
ELECTRIC FENCE
PRISON CAMP
VILLAS WITH GUARDS
SYNESTHESIA YELLOW
OCCUPIED GAS STATION
PSYCHOANALYST
CITY FROM ABOVE CELLS & PARASITES
DEEP STRONG
PSYCHEDELIC PAVEMENT
FUTURE TRANSPORT PROJECTS
homeless women and dogs
ORAGUAS
RAIN FOREST PARK
GOOGLE DRONES
INSECT CLOUD
FARIA LIMA
BILLBOARD PROTECTION OF DREAMS
UNDER GROUND CITY
MINE
STREET DEMO
SHOPPING STREET
SYNESTHESIA GREEN
INDOOR MARKET
mini pavilion niemeyer
Policemen standing to attention
BUILDING SITE





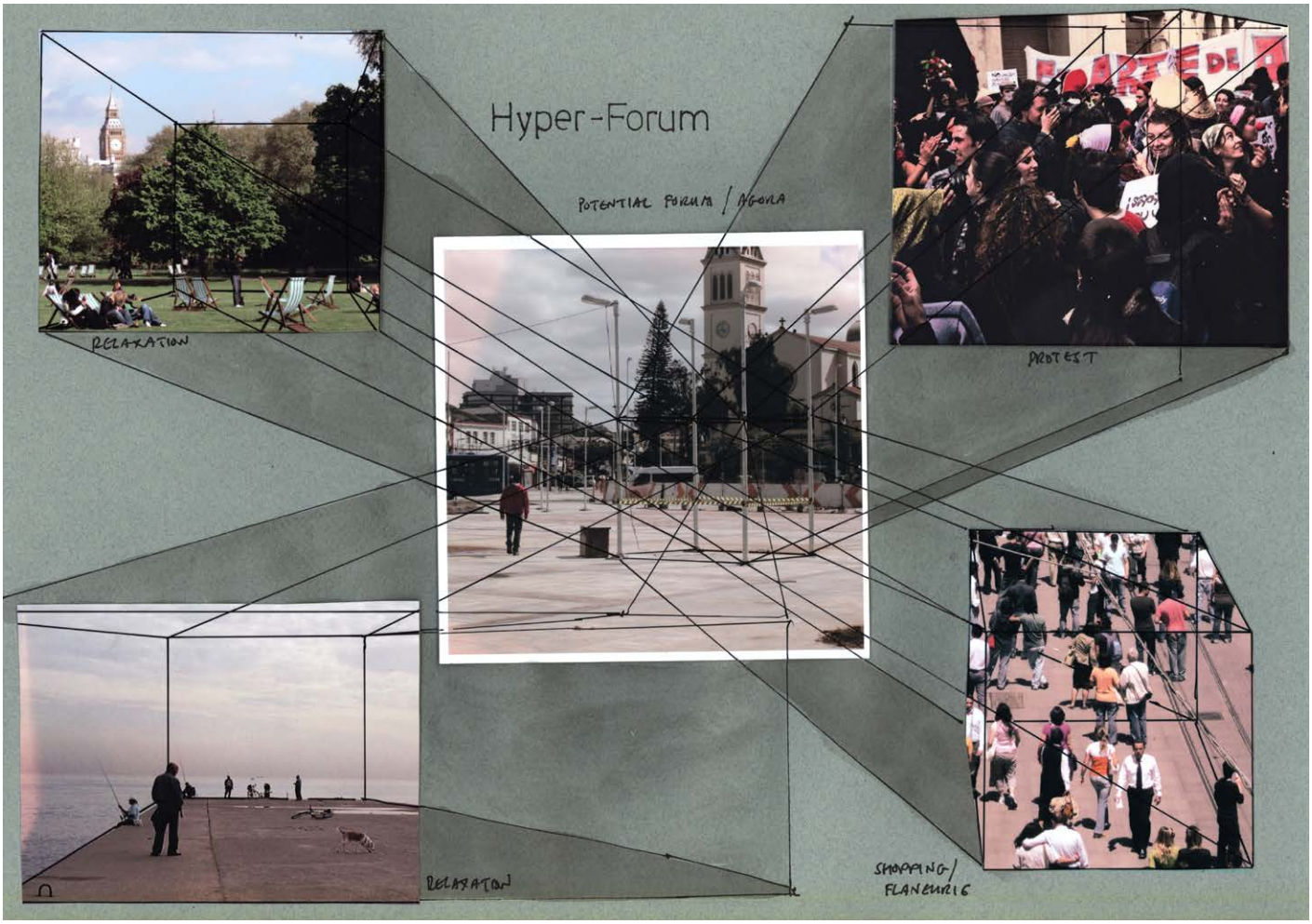


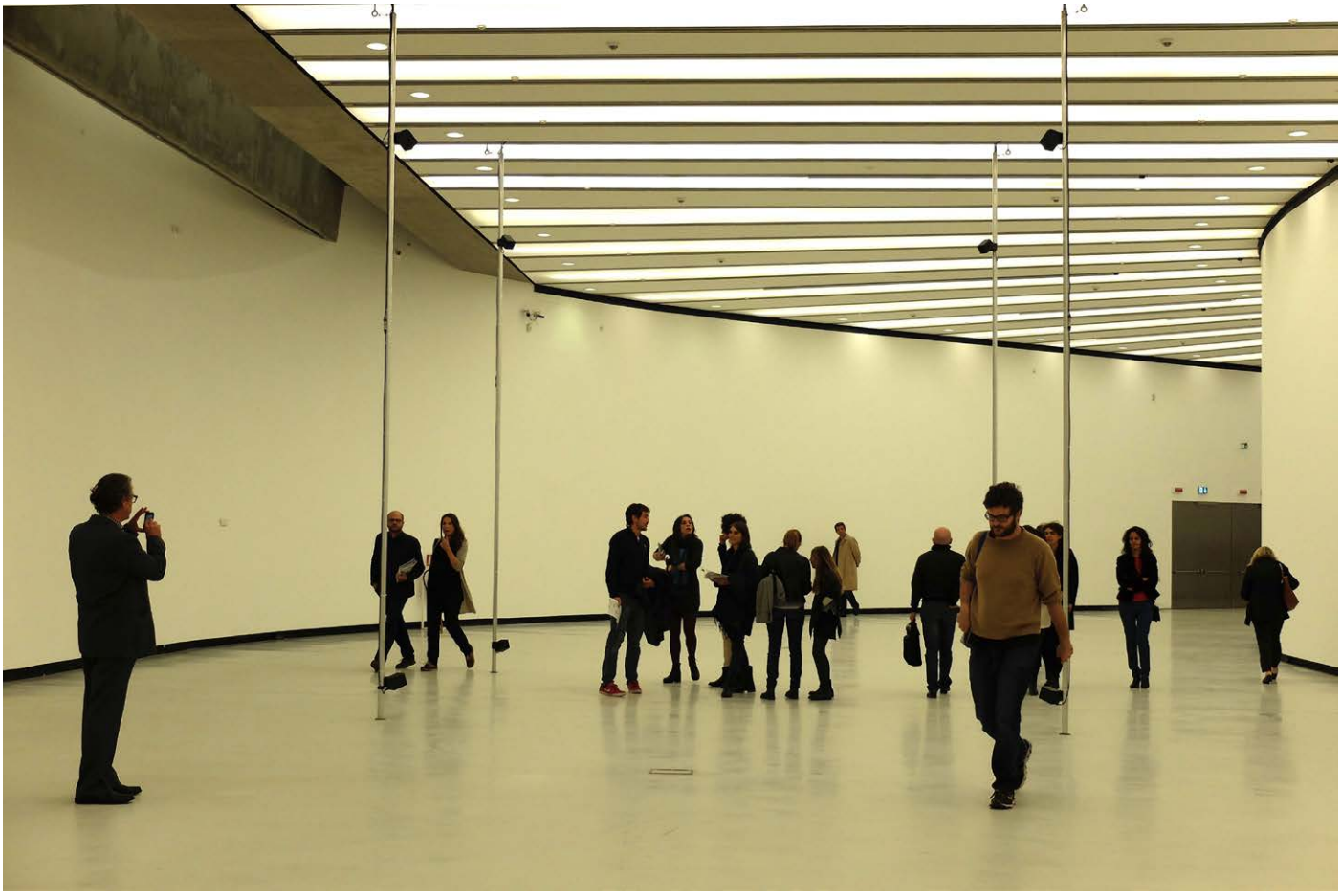
Dream Map, audio walk (55 minutes) and video (30 minutes)

"Ever since I arrived in the city, I have been troubled by dreams.
Each night it is as if I enter the city for the first time, and each night it's a different place.
Sometimes in the daylight, I recognize a place from my dream the night before. Slowly,
walking around the city itself, I am piecing together a map of these dreams."

Dream Map is an audio walk around a part of São Paolo commissioned for the 4th Mostre de Arte Digital, 2013 which uses field recordings, text and music to investigate utopian dream cities, the dreams of Paulistas and the reality of life on the street.
Although light-hearted, the work touches on urban myths, Brazilian art and music, gentrification, pollution, electronic surveillance and gated communities.

The audio walk is in Portuguese and English. For exhibition, a shorter video version (vertical HD with stereo or 5.1 surround) is available.


Hyper-Forum
POTENTIAL FORUM / AGORA
RELAXATION
PROTEST
RELAXATION
SHOPPING/
FLANEURIE

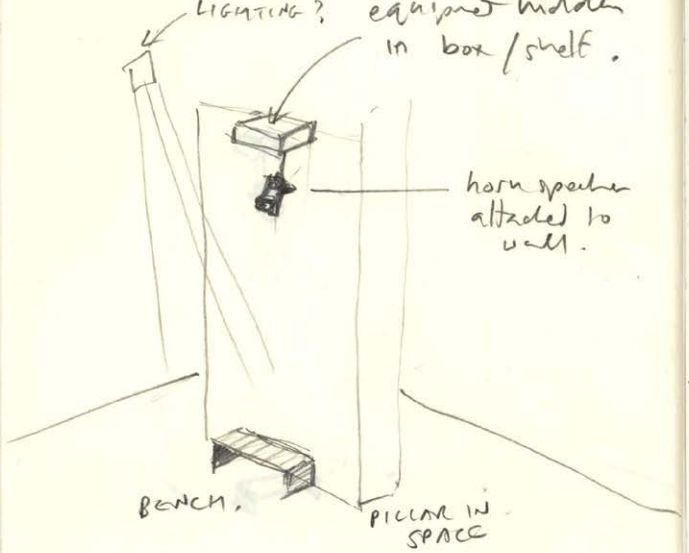


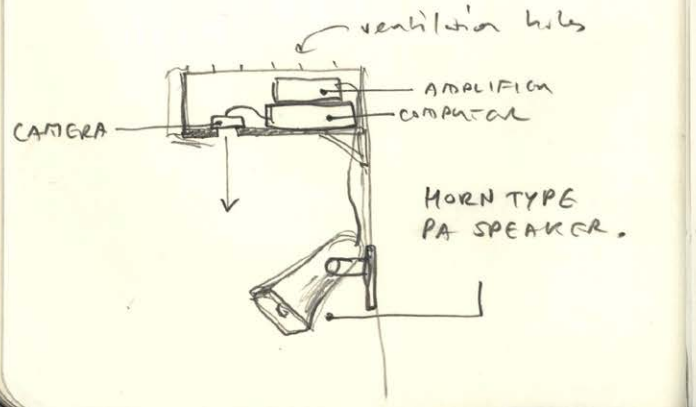
Hyper-forum(2014)

Hyper-forum is a three-dimensional cube of sound, composed from recordings made in contrasting public spaces. The piece is one of a series of works where public spaces are listened to in an analytical manner, as well as a musical manner.

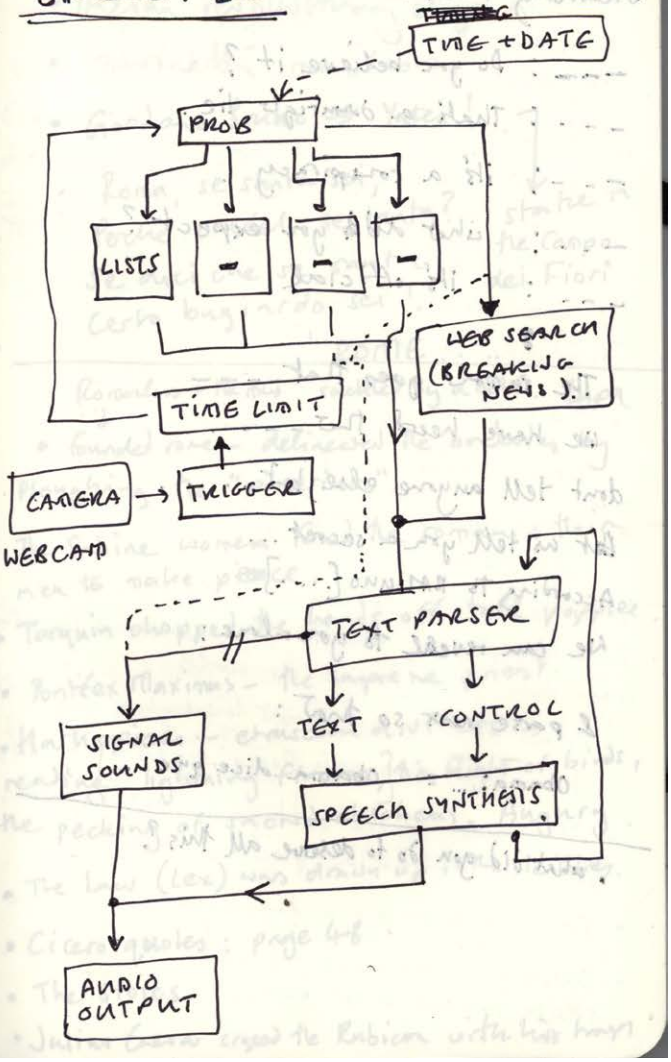
This version was realised in Rome for the show "Open Museum Open City" at Maxxi.

ORACLE 2.0 ROMA MAXXI





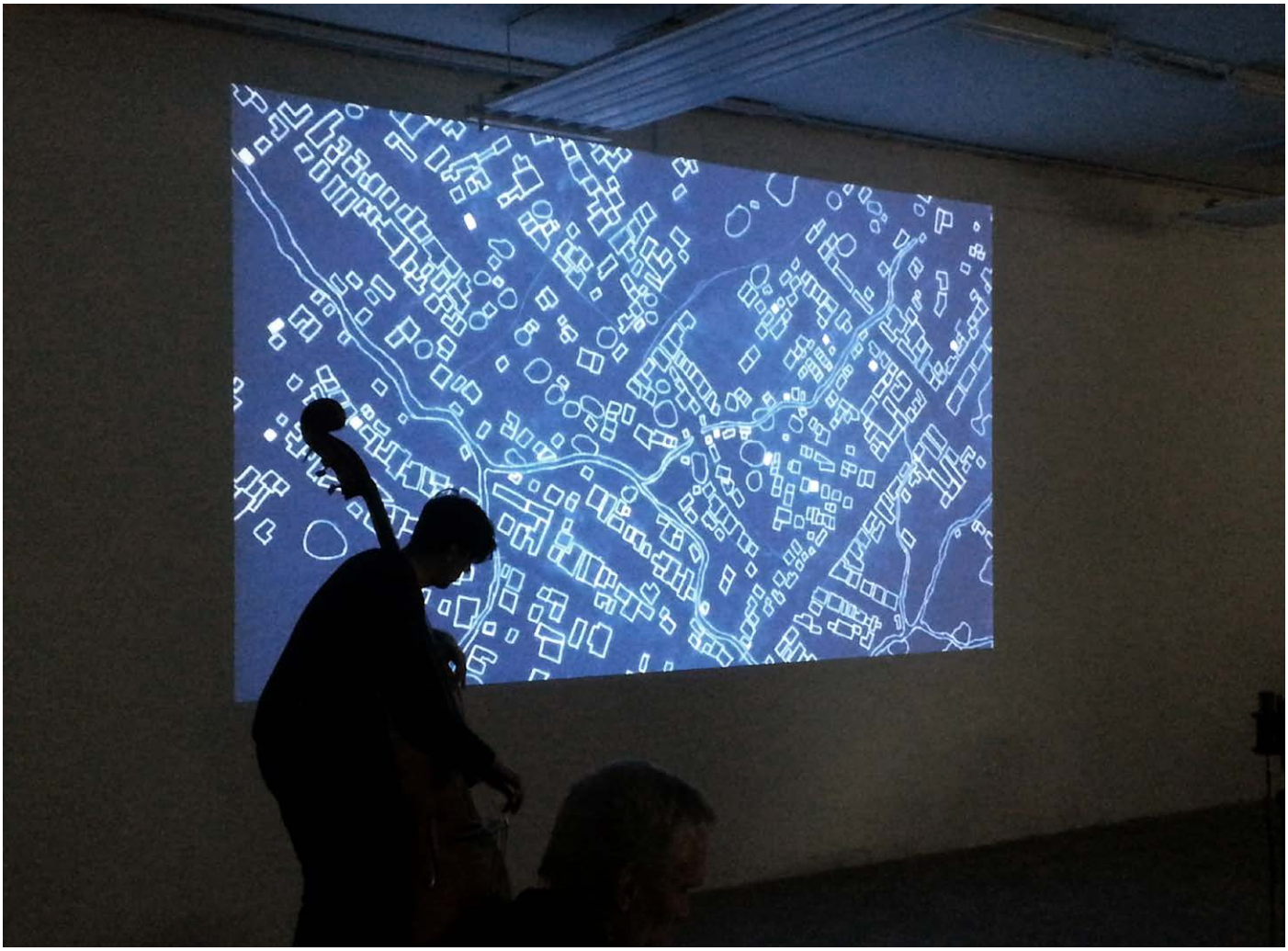
oracle. 2.0

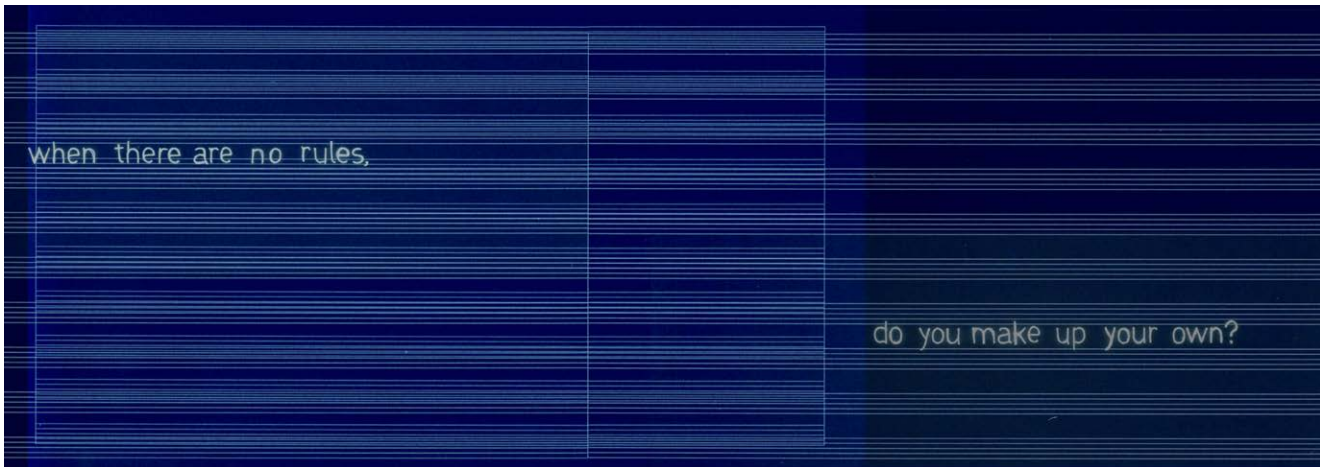


Oracle 2.0(2014)

In Oracle 2.0, if a visitor sits on the bench, predictions are spoken by a computer voice. The text sources and random procedures are encoded in a computer algorithm which also reacts live to political and financial news on the web.

This version, in Italian was realised in Rome for the show "Open Museum Open City" at Maxxi.



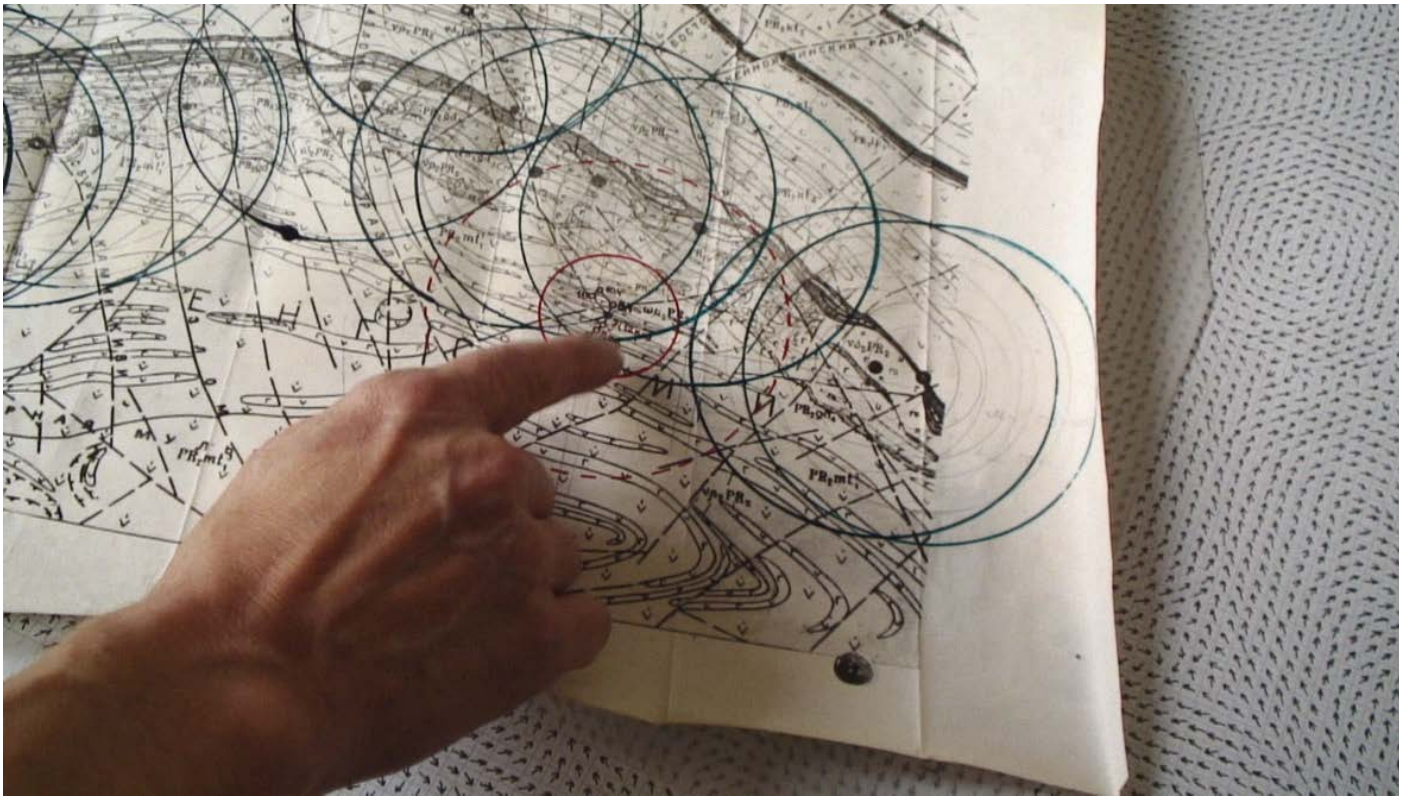


Blueprint (2015)

A silent animated film with live improvised music. 33 mins
Blueprint combines hand-drawn animated city-maps and stenciled texts with a live soundtrack.
Each time Blueprint is screened, it is interpreted anew by the musicians. They follow rules and suggestions developed in close collaboration with a number of improvisers, including the MAZE ensemble from Amsterdam and the group Atolón from Barcelona. There are no restrictions on instrumentation or genre.

During the film, texts are projected which ask questions of the musicians and the audience about freedom, structure and rules both in the music and in urban society. Improvised music such as free-jazz or noise can be seen as a temporary space for social interaction, a microcosm of processes that also exist outside the music, in society. The “Blueprint” of the film references utopian composition and design in relation to improvisation and organic growth.

The drawings are based on maps of real cities and diferent types of urban growth from around the world.
A series of related prints (cyanotypes) and drawings was made as part of this project.



Vilgiskoddeoayvinyarvi: Wolf Lake on the Mountains (2017)

In this three-part audio-visual installation we follow Viktor Koslovsky, a scientist still working at the otherwise abandoned Kola Superdeep Borehole, a geological research station "at the border of everything" in north-west Russia.
He tells of the history of this former cold-war project and of his current research which he describes as "listening to the past in order to hear the future".

The project includes audio and video recordings, drawings and charts.

Filmed and recorded on location during the production of an audio-walk for the 2016 Dark Ecology journey. Commissioned by Dark Ecology and Sonic Acts.