Theorizing Sound Writing

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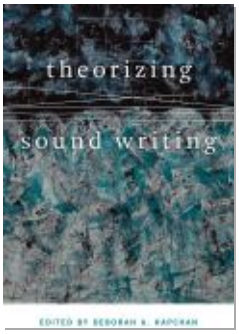

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The Splash of Icarus

Theorizing Sound Writing / Writing Sound Theory

The zendo is on the eleventh floor of a loft on south Broadway, in a long rectangular room fitted with black meditation pads and cushions on polished wood floors. Gongs, metallic bowls, and wooden blocks sound periodically as we sit, listening. The back windows look over the lower East Side of Manhattan. In May they are open to the sounds of New York: trucks accelerating, car horns, sirens, objects being lifted and released onto loading docks—the clangs and reverberations of mechanical urban life. And with them, birds sing, perched precariously on roof garden trees on their way back north.

Sitting here, I taste my body the way a baby tastes itself, before it is encumbered with awareness of its skin ego and its image. I swallow the saliva as it gathers in my mouth. I hear the sound of the muscles in my throat, in my jaw and ears, as the saliva passes from my head, down my trachea to my stomach. I hear through myself, through bone and liquid being.

This taste, this sound, moves in and out of my lungs, as oxygen and water mix, releasing recessive thoughts, images, and desires into the present moment, where they only ever live.

But what hears? Not just my ears. For sounds touch and resonate throughout my body. And why "my" body, "my" ears? Bone and liquid claim no ownership. Yet the site where sound touches flesh—the body—becomes a magnet for memories, an assembly of cells, of selves imagining themselves a unity, an author, a faithful student of sound knowledge.[1]

Sound knowledge—a nondiscursive form of affective transmission resulting from acts of listening.

Sound writing—a performance in word-sound of such knowledge. Not a representation. Not just an intersemiotic translation. Sound writing is a gong resonating through bodies, sentient and non.

WRITING SOUND THEORY

The essays in this volume respond to one simple but essential question: how theorize sound writing? In order to answer that question, we review basic definitions—of theory, method, listening, and genre—returning ultimately to the technology of writing sound as a method that employs "sound knowledge" in speculative inquiry. Sound knowledge—defined here as a nondiscursive form of affective transmission resulting from acts of listening—is a subtext in this volume. What promise does sound knowledge hold for cultural analysis? How might we not only write sound but sound theory differently?

Jacques Attali set the stage for these questions in 1977, when he presciently noted that "no theorizing accomplished through language or mathematics can suffice any longer; it is incapable of accounting for what is essential in time—the qualitative and the fluid, threats and violence. . . . It is thus necessary to imagine radically new theoretical forms, in order to speak to new realities." Almost thirty years later, social theorist Lauren Berlant reiterates this call, attending to the persistent need "to invent new genres for the kind of speculative work we call 'theory'" (2006, 21).

"Speculative" comes from the Latin root, *speculatio,* meaning "observation, contemplation," and like the word "theory" itself (from the Greek, *theria,* to see),[2] is rooted in a visual and thus objectifying relation of self to world, subject to object.[3] The call for new theoretical forms arises from the knowledge that subject and object can no longer be held apart, even conceptually. The myth of the detached analyst, in both the sciences and the humanities, is untenable not only because it assumes a hierarchy from which objective ("true") observations can be made "from outside," but also because a theory rooted only in the intellective is of necessity incomplete. At any given moment we know the world in a myriad of ways—through the sounds we hear, through the odors we smell, through the weight and temperature of the air on our skins, through the density of our body in the space that surrounds it. As soon as we reflect on these forms of knowledge, however—tactile, fragrant, pulsing—we remove them from the

flow of time, the "ever-present now" of their becoming to render them objects of memory. On the other hand, to raise these nonintellective modes of sensory knowledge to consciousness (as when the hand feels itself touching) is to employ intuition.[4] And intuition is inseparable from the speculative—what is predictive because prescient, known through the senses.

In this volume we turn the "speculative work" of theory in a sonorous direction, recognizing that turns are movements and that sound is experienced in the touch—of sound wave to eardrum, of vibration to emotion. We gesture toward the creation of new genres of theorizing by pushing into what is usually withdrawn but always present in theory: namely, method. Indeed, just as ways of knowing and ways of being are inseparable, so theory and method are likewise entangled (Barad 2007).

Sounding a Speculative Method

Historically, method has been the ox pulling the shiny carriage of theory, rarely acknowledged, a means toward an end. Yet more than fifty years ago, Sartre noted the inextricable relation of method and theory in his work *Search for a Method* (1960):

> The only theory of knowledge which can be valid today is one which is founded on that truth of microphysics: the experimenter is a part of the experimental system. This is the only position which allows us to get rid of all idealist illusion, the only one which shows the real man in the midst of the real world [*sic*]. But this realism necessarily implies a reflective point of departure; that is, the *revelation* of a situation is effected in and through the *praxis* which changes it. We do not hold that this first act of becoming conscious of the situation is the originating source of an action; we see in it a necessary moment of the action itself—the action, *in the course of its accomplishment,* provides its own clarification.[5]

For Sartre, theory and method give rise to one another, like consciousness and practice, in intra-action.[6]

Think of the word *method* as a synaesthete might, as a word with a particular taste; imagine it like a piece of bread—consistent, hearty, with a bit of sweetness lingering on the tongue after it is swallowed, though with just enough salt that the salt is an imperceptible presence.

Method is usually equated with a system for doing, steps in a procedure, a

plan. This kind of method belongs in a scientific lab. It is about numbers, facts. In this usage it has a more metallic and much saltier taste. It is a "how-to" mode, decidedly unyeasty. But there is another use of method, and that is method as a mode of practice. There are musical methods—ways of moving, breathing, reading, listening—that take us along the path not only to playing an instrument, but to becoming one with that instrument. Here method *involves* practice. And there is yet another way to think about method, and that is as a technique of the body. As in method acting, the actors draw on their own memories and affective experiences in order to enter into another character. Here method *is* practice, one that skews subject and object, much like spirit possession does (Kapchan 2007).

Listening is also a method that skews subject and object. This is why ethnographies of listening (ethnographies that employ ways of listening to understand not only how others listen but also the political import of social listening writ large) are difficult yet imperative to enact: the ethnographer is necessarily confounded in the paradox of being with and being apart from the social field of listening. Such paradoxes require that we release our hold on intellective knowledge (with its drives to categorize, objectify, and subjugate) in order to activate intuition—conscious sentience.[7] Listening itself is a speculative method.

How listen to our own listening with others? How practice the translation of listening, as well as listening-as-translation? And how write sound knowledge into being?

LISTENING ACTS

There are acoustic limits to what humans can hear, yet much of our sound environment remains mute to our ears simply because we have not been trained to listen to more than a limited range of sonorous events. Music appreciation is learned, of course, and enlarges our sonic sensibility. Listening attentively to sonic environments, while no different, is nonetheless a skill rarely cultivated since its relevance is not always immediately evident. There are no practical and capitalist reasons to use this kind of listening. Rather, the cosmopolitan subject is entrained in what Kassabian calls "ubiquitous listening," a kind of diffuse and unintentional hearing that nonetheless structures the acoustic unconscious much like Muzak, the genre of music played in shopping malls and thought to encourage consumption (Kassabian 2013). Yet just as sensing one's hand relies on the interactions of the hand with its instruments (opening a door, cutting a tomato,

caressing a child), so the limits of our hearing depend on the instrumentality of acts of listening: *what we hear depends on how we listen and what we listen for.*

Genres of Listening

While listening is usually oriented toward an object (listening to music, listening for the cry of a baby waking from sleep, listening for an approaching car), methods of aural attention—the "how" of listening—usually remain outside the purview of consciousness. There is, however, a growing literature on listening in which scholars have provided a veritable taxonomy of listening practices to consider. Film music scholar and composer Michel Chion defines three: *semantic listening* (listening for meaning), *causal listening* (listening for the source of a sound), and *reduced listening* (listening to sound qua sound) (Chion 1994). The concept of "Deep Listening," coined by composer Pauline Oliveros (2005), delineates listening that leads to trance and states of profound absorption and transformation across cultures (Oliveros 2005; cf. Becker 2004).[8] To these add:

(1) Transitive versus intransitive listening[9] (listening in relation to an object vs. nonrelational or "ubiquitous listening")[10]
(2) Empathic listening (the *techné* of auditory empathy)
(3) Layered listening (Daughtry, this volume)
(4) Tactical listening—listening to effect pedagogical and political change (Cusick, this volume; Kapchan, this volume; Wong, this volume)[11]
(5) Listening as witness (Kapchan, this volume; Wong, this volume)

While these genres of listening overlap (as all genres do), they also distinguish themselves by orienting the listener in particular *affective* directions. They thus perform different aesthetic and political work.[12] Like musical genres, genres of listening have their own tempos and temporalities. (Just as Mahler is not hip-hop, concerted listening is not ubiquitous listening.) Listening genres are embodied tuning systems, vibrating at their own frequencies, interacting and transforming the sounds they transduce. Indeed, just as there are styles, registers, and ways of speaking (Hymes 1974), we may think about listening in similarly elaborate ways. J. L. Austin's "illocutionary speech acts" find equivalency in "listening acts" insofar as both are performative. Listening acts do not simply re-present sound, as waves reach the ears and are relayed to the brain, but they *transduce* these sound waves, changing them in the process. Employing the mechanical metaphor of *transduction* insists on the process whereby one kind of energy (water)

meets another (generator) to transform into a third thing (energy) (Silverstein 2003, 83–84; cf. Helmreich 2015). Likewise a listening body interacts with sound, conducting but also transforming it in the process.[13]

Such listening-as-transduction resonates with what Roman Jakobson called intersemiotic translation, wherein a sound (like a text) is defracted—passed through the prism of the ear and transformed with new colors and meanings that extend and "transmute" it in another medium, such as writing (Jakobson 1959).[14] As with intersemiotic translation, listening changes one form of affective materiality into another. Pais (this volume) details the way an audience listening attentively qualitatively changes the materiality of an actor's performance. And indeed, we can apply the notion of translation as transmutation to other forms of semiosis as well: the translation of wind by trees, for example, or the thickly patterned sounds of a rainforest translated into the synthesized compositions of David Monacchi.[15] "There is . . . only a series of mediations, each of them translating a more complicated reality into something whose forces can more easily be passed down the line," notes philosopher Graham Harman in his discussion of the work of Bruno Latour. Just as "truth is nothing but a chain of translation without resemblance from one actor to the next,"[16] so listening is a method whereby these transformations and translations take place. Birds, waterfalls, ancestors, songs—all are involved in the translation of sensation, vibration, and the refrains of memory.[17]

Writing of the late South African jazz singer Sathima Bea Benjamin, Carol Muller (this volume) notes, " 'Sathima' translates as the one who listens, and it is the name that was given to then 'Bea Benjamin' by her compatriot bass player Johnny Dyani while both were in exile, traveling between Europe and the United States in the 1970s. The name pays tribute to the woman's compassion, care, and willingness to listen to the struggles of the young Dyani, but it also speaks of the manner in which Sathima engaged with popular song, and ultimately moved into the improvisational language of jazz. Listening to the sounds around her, remembering and transforming them have long been the means by which Benjamin incorporated remembered sounds from home as personal inscription once she left South Africa." Sathima Bea Benjamin listened to remember, she listened to improvise, she listened to *translate* an African American genre into a South African one—and to create a new genre thereby. Indeed, translation is always a new creation that begins in listening. How "translate into words the experience of learning through hearing?" (Rasmussen, this volume). How translate and transmit sound knowledge?

Such intersemiotic translations often rely on metaphor. And indeed, the most enduring aspects of theory are also its metaphors, particularly its synecdoches: Foucault's analysis of the *panopticon* (Jeremy Bentham's circular architecture wherein inmates of an institution may be surveyed at any time, but never know if and when they are being seen) expresses more about how modern hegemonic power is inculcated and embodied than any abstract philosophy. Merleau-Ponty evokes the *phantom limb* (the sense an amputee has of the missing limb) to talk about the habit body–how perception and memory arise from an embodied engagement with the world (such that the hand continues to exist as a "phantom" even after it has been amputated). In discussing globalization and violence, Appadurai relates the nation to a vertebrate society, one that is defenseless when conflict occurs on the cellular level (Appadurai 2005). Deleuze's rhizome, as the root that proliferates in all directions, constantly connecting and morphing according to its environment, provides not only a model for culture, but also aptly captures the cosmopolitan subject (as well as musical form).[18] And what Morton calls the hyperobject—"things that are massively distributed in time and space relative to humans" (Morton 2013, 1)—is a metaphor that inaugurates a nonanthropocentric paradigm in the true afterward of modernity.

If metaphors are the keys of theory (salty, metallic, like blood, molecular, magnetic), it is not surprising that the terms *vibration,*[19] *resonance,*[20] *rhythm*,[21] as well as *affect* and *energy,*[22] are at the fore of theoretical thought (words that would have been eschewed a few decades ago for their esotericism). Indeed, these concepts have one thing in common: they all mediate material and immaterial worlds and problematize the difference between them, often forcing an encounter with paradox in the process: visible and invisible, harmonious and cacophonous, together and separate.[23] Music (and sound more broadly) has a particular status in this regard. Music colonizes, creating place through the channeling of vibration and the appropriation of space. But music also blows place apart, dissipating energy, unraveling lines of tension and force, and traveling faster than any other medium.[24]

Metaphor is not just good to think, however; it actually performs affective and aesthetic understanding, transmitting sound knowledge. As Kisliuk notes, "When we ourselves engage in metaphoric communication, we are both conceptualizing emotion and constituting aspects of our experience in the process—piecing together little metaphor dwellings in which to tuck and shape affective experi-

ences that would otherwise remain abstract" (Kisliuk, this volume). Building on the work of Ramachandran as well as Lakoff and Johnson, Kisliuk reminds us of what anthropologists Steven Feld as well as James Fernandez and Michael Jackson elaborated quite some time ago: metaphor is not just descriptive, but performative.[25] It creates cognitive abodes in which humans dwell, both singularly and together, but it also is a *method* by which that cognitive construction takes place. Metaphor is basic to human development at early stages of life, creating semantic domains that humans continue to inhabit, but it is also a way of transforming the habitus through aesthetic, cognitive, and emotional means throughout the life cycle.[26]

The metaphors in this volume demonstrate the intimate relation between listening, sound, and inscription. "If we translate 'sound writing' into Greek," notes Waterman (this volume), "we render *phonography.* Phonography [*phōnē* 'sound, voice' and *graphē* 'writing'] . . . first brings to mind the *phonograph*—the mechanical instrument that could both record (*inscribe)* and playback (*re-sound*). The phonograph is an instrumental model and metaphor for how sound writing might be both an *inscriptive/prescriptive* and a *descriptive/resonant* practice." Waterman's use of the metaphor of phonography insists upon the inseparability of theory and method.

Daughtry (this volume) uses the metaphor of the *palimpsest* to understand what he calls "layered listening" (a kind of listening through the "scrim" of ambient sounds to the sound object). He tells the story of how underground musical recordings in the postwar Soviet Union were printed on used and discarded X-rays. The "palimpsest metaphor," he notes, "draws our attention to the ways in which playing and listening to music always involves a type of inscription, a writing-over of other sounds that seldom perfectly erases them" (Daughtry, this volume; cf. Eidsheim, Muller 2011). Daughtry's piece also insists on the continuity of sound across different densities of materiality. "In the end," Daughtry notes, "how could those who made or purchased these records not take delight in the fact that the music of the nascent Soviet 'underground' was written on images of the human skeleton, denizens of the *literal* Soviet underground? How could they not smile at the notion that the songs of artists who were actively censored in the Soviet Union were circulating upon official images of Soviet bodies?" In Daughtry's example, the metaphor of the palimpsest resounds through multisensorial worlds that bear the mark of sound encounters.

Such events are, in the words of Michelle Kisliuk (this volume) "moments that crystallize . . . aesthetic and interpersonal sentiment fused with cultural and

existential affect." These "magnified musicking moments," as Kisliuk calls them, are rarely the subject of ethnographic inquiry, perhaps because they are by definition intersensorial and ephemeral, always in excess of their description in words.

Yet "despite our passion for experience, we continue to transmit textual supremacy as a means of measuring academic merit," Hahn reminds us (this volume). There is a hierarchy of genres that is very difficult to unsettle, a hierarchy of styles that demands our submission. Unless of course we imagine and propose an alternative such as sound writing:[27]

> Like a great blue heron facing you in stillness, the lush expanse of experience appears narrowed, flattened in text, virtually disappearing into typographic symbols. But when she flies, how extraordinary!
>
> *Hahn, this volume*

THEORIZING SOUND WRITING

"Why would we wish to theorize and experiment with the print medium in the digital age? Why write, rather than do something else?" asks Henderson (this volume).

Writing about sound has historically fallen into just a few categories: music criticism (including journalism) and music scholarship (concerning both Western and non-Western music in history and the present). Yet another strand of writing about sound is found in the history of ethnopoetics—the school of poetry whose focus on orality attempts not just to describe and analyze poetry, but to decidedly evoke its SOUND on the page. These histories have been charted (Hymes 1975; Tedlock 1983; Rothenberg 1983; see Henderson, this volume; Jackson, this volume). Since the advent of sound studies as an interdisciplinary field, however, writings on sound have further proliferated in the direction of soundscapes, sound ecologies, sound art criticism, and what Feld presciently defined as "acoustemology," ways of knowing through sound and sounding (Feld 2015, 1996; cf. Feld 1994; Feld and Brenneis 2004; Sterne 2003; Schafer 1977).

Why then open up the (theoretical) possibilities of writing (and) sound anew? The answer lies in the potential of both listening and writing to transform experiences of temporality.

Before literacy was widespread, writing was a sacrosanct and embodied activity. Scribes spent their days laboring over calligraphic inscriptions of sacred texts. And even when the texts were not sacred, the act of writing *was,* insofar

as it was set apart. Today as I write these words, I momentarily close my eyes. I gather my thoughts, summoning them up from the core of my belly, pulling them down from a place behind my temples, through my arms and down into my fingers. As if by magic, I see them materialize on the screen. Writing is an act of keystroke speed in which the labor value all but disappears. Yet there is a materiality to the writing act that often gets lost, a part of *listening* as inaudible yet essential as the breath of a violinist playing a concerto.

Despite the very embodied act of writing, however, it has been equated with an archive that has suppressed the oral, the feminine, and the queer (Phelan 1993; cf. Taylor 2003). In his exploration of reggae sound systems in Jamaica, for example, Henriques refers to writing as a prison to which technology has provided the key: "Having been imprisoned in writing for the past two and a half millennia," he notes, "in little over a hundred years of phonographic recording, sound and music are being liberated from music's transcription and sound's circumstances of embodied production" (Henriques 2011, xvi). While Henriques rightly celebrates the acceleration that (new) technology has afforded human experience, it is important to note that in the *longue durée,* writing (whether words or music) is a rather recent technology, and mass literacy *much* more recent than that. And while writing has been instrumental in Enlightenment philosophies that split mind work from bodywork as well as imagination from sensation, it is also true that this alliance is not the only one imaginable, nor the only one enacted. It is not writing that is a prison house per se, but our modes of perception, of listening and translation, that must be broken through.

As a tool that extends the faculties of the human being in other and immanently human directions, writing is a technology that can be instrumentalized in various ways. It is not necessarily a cognitive evolutionary shift as Ong thought, but a technique of the body that employs a tool of human invention to create a vibration, a territory, a story that exceeds the merely human. What's more, writing is what Foucault called a "technology of the self," an act whereby individuals "effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality."[28] For Foucault a technology of the self is always allied with other technologies—of production, signification, and power. Nonetheless, such a technology rewires the circuits so that energy flows in unexpected ways, creating new connections. As Jackson notes (this volume), "Sound writing echoes the events, encounters and conversations that make up

our everyday life in another society, bringing them back to life on the printed page while at the same time offering our reflections on them." Such ways of knowing through feeling require not just new theories, but new *methods*—ways of holding intuition and consciousness in dynamic tension.

In writing themselves and others into being have humans exhausted the technology of writing? In his article in this volume, Henderson questions the meaning of a format (to paraphrase Sterne 2012) and how different genres of inscription/transmission orient us differently in time and space. Sound writing itself is a kind of format, a method of data arrangement, "an attempt to engrave the sound itself into the page, the effort to make the page vibrate with the acoustic presence of the sounding body" (Henderson, this volume).

Of course, there are many ways of inscribing. For Emerson writing in 1850, inscription was ubiquitous and not only a human endeavor. "All things are engaged in writing their history," he noted.

> The planet, the pebble, goes attended by its shadow. The rolling rock leaves its scratches on the mountain; the river its channel in the soil; the animal its bones in the stratum; the fern and leaf their modest epitaph in the coal. The falling drop makes its sculpture in the sand or the stone. Not a foot steps into the snow or along the ground, but prints, in characters more or less lasting, a map of its march. Every act of the man inscribes itself in the memories of his fellows and in his own manners and face. The air is full of sounds; the sky, of tokens; the round is all memoranda and signatures, and every object covered over with hints which speak to the intelligent. (Emerson 1850)[29]

For Emerson, the sounds in the air were themselves inscriptions of other phenomena.

In this volume we advance sound writing as a genre in which sound is not (just) an object of analysis but a vibration that infuses the word with its own materiality to produce a third thing. As such, *sound writing is the inscriptive dimension of listening.* Much like the river leaving behind its channel in the soil, listening as well as sound writing are acts of translation with the potential to "vibrate our very skin and bones" (Cusick, this volume).

The authors in *Theorizing Sound Writing* make an intervention into the ethics of academic knowledge, one in which *listening* is the first step not only in translating sound into words, but in compassionate scholarship (Kapchan, this volume; Wong, this volume). As a method of inquiry, both listening and sound writing expand not only what is known but also how we come to know (and

be) as public intellectuals and artisans of the sounded world. Taking our cues from politics (Cusick; Wong), popular culture (Daughtry; Henderson), ritual performances (Hagedorn; Kapchan; Rasmussen), as well as memoir and autobiography (Kisliuk; Muller; Waterman), the sound writing on these pages examines the relation of (1) theory to method, (2) listening to translation, and (3) sound to inscription. In the process, we attend to the power of metaphor to perform knowledge often analyzed in academic writing but seldom consciously instructed (Kisliuk, this volume).

Writing *about* sound and writing *sound* are two different processes. The first maintains the positivist position of subject (writer) and object (sound). The second breaks out of duality to inhabit a multidimensional position as translator between worlds—the writer listening to and translating sound through embodied experience, the body translating the encounter between word and sound, sound translating and transforming both word and author. This is sound writing. When she flies, how extraordinary!

THE SPLASH OF ICARUS

In one of William Carlos Williams's poems, he describes the landscape of a Breughal painting, *The Fall of Icarus,* to make a sound intervention:

LANDSCAPE WITH THE FALL OF ICARUS
William Carlos Williams

According to Breughel
when Icarus fell
it was spring

a farmer was ploughing
his field
the whole pageantry

of the year was
awake tingling
near

the edge of the sea
concerned
with itself

sweating in the sun
that melted
the wings' wax

unsignificantly
off the coast
there was

a splash quite unnoticed
this was
Icarus drowning

Williams is translating the visual medium of the painting (already a translation of the verbal medium of the myth) into the written medium of the poem. But it is also a commentary on human inattention to listening. The farmer plows. He uses the tools at hand. The whole "pageantry of the world"—the public spectacle[30]—is "concerned with [only] itself" and not with the boy falling from the sky. No one hears the splash. And while the farmer continues to plow, a boy drowns. The farmer remains unaware of his suffering, unaware of the gods, and unaware of how his own universe will shift because of this event (the waters that soak his fields polluted with death, the disposition of the heavens transformed in grief). An opportunity for empathy has been lost because the world did not listen.

What might be done so that we hear the splash of Icarus?

Theoretical speculations have rarely been "predictive." Weber's disenchanted secular world did not come to pass, rationality has not been a defense against violence, socialism did not fulfill its promise, and Foucault was wrong about the Iranian revolution. Yet perhaps we can do more than simply follow in the wake of experience that runs ever before us in order to know where we have been (Stewart 1988). Attending to sound knowledge—the transmission of affect through listening—while employing the technology of sound writing (a conscious application of intuition in poiesis, or meaning making) may poise us toward the future in ways that make the splash of Icarus not only visible, but audible.

Describing the performance of a spirit, Katherine Hagedorn (this volume) says, "This is how Cuban folkloric dancer Jesús Ortíz portrays Babalú Ayé, *oricha* of smallpox and healing . . . as a diseased body dancing toward death":

> The helpless imposition of the body's angles: bent knees, sharp elbow, hunched shoulders, jutting chin. Eyes bulging and head rolling, the figure lurches from side to side, just about to topple: he is the picture of disease. Oddly, he is also smiling.

Without knowing it, or perhaps knowing but not saying it, Katherine Hagedorn was writing sound as she herself was dancing toward death. Her contribution here as well as her life work in general is a kind of sound writing—one that evokes sound and spiritual worlds without reducing them to analytical categories. Her chapter in this volume is unfinished, like her life work when she passed. And yet sound writing is never quite finished. It continues to resound. Oddly, we are all smiling . . .

NOTES

1. Speaking of A. N. Whitehead's process philosophy, Harmon notes, "Not only is there no personal immortality after death, there is not even personal endurance before death, since every actual entity perishes immediately after its birth. The unusual ethical conclusion Whitehead draws from this is that the egoistic basis of morality is a falsehood. The Other is Other, certainly, but the I of five minutes ago is also the Other, since it was not at all the same entity as the I of right now. What is primary is eros: the love of self is only a special case of a general enthusiasm for all of the objects surrounding us" (Harman 2010, 41).

2. From the Latin word *theria,* it means "a looking at, viewing, contemplation, speculation . . . also a sight, a spectacle." [*Oxford English Dictionary:* abstr. n. f. (:*) spectator, looker on, f. stem—of to look on, view, contemplate. In mod. use prob. from med. L. transl. of Aristotle. Cf. It. *teoria* (Florio 1598 *theoría*), F. *théorie* (15. in Godef. *Compl.*). 1. A sight, a spectacle. *Obs. rare.*]

3. There is an irony in the very notion of theorizing sound, having to do with the etymology of the word *theory* itself. Implicit in the history of the word, that is, is a relation to the senses that privileges sight over audition—a classic formation in the historical construction of modern sensibilities. Indeed, the "lower" senses of olfaction, tactility, and taste are often neglected and explicitly disparaged in relation to it (Howes 2003). Audition, while

not defining modernity like sight, does have an intimate relation to it insofar as the sonic can be reproduced, circulated, and if not controlled, then manipulated to control (Erlmann 2004; Hirschkind 2006). Discussing the relation of audition to modernity, Erlmann notes, "If the auditory is deeply caught up in the modern project—rather than standing apart from it—and if therefore the ear joins the eye in consolidating the fragile modern self, we must nevertheless ask the reverse question: How are these modern identities constantly being sonically haunted and—perhaps confirming McLuhan's greatest fear—troubled by a return of the repressed? What do we really know about vocal knowledges that are being forced underground, silenced, or ridiculed as superstitious?" (Erlmann 2004, 5).

4. Bergson 2004.

5. Jean-Paul Sartre, "Search for a Method," part 1, "Introduction" to *Critique of Dialectical Reason,* in *Existentialism from Dostoyevsky to Sartre,* ed. Walter Kaufmann and trans. Hazel Barnes (New York: Vintage Books, 1960), accessed on April 17, 2012, http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/sartre/works/critic/sartre1.htm.

6. Of course, Sartre was not alone in his philosophical preoccupations. Neo-Marxists such as Bourdieu, Foucault, and De Certeau have been more cited in the academy and have all grappled with this. For Bourdieu, however, practice and theory were intertwined, but analytically and experientially separate. Indeed, a close reading of the *Logic of Practice* reveals that Bourdieu made a stinging critique of scholars who "went native," that is, those who embraced the practices of difference so much as to lose their objectivity. On "intraactivity," see Barad 2003.

7. This is what Morton, like others before him, has called "attunement" (Morton 2013; cf. Schafer 1977; Langer 1941).

8. "To hear a siren, a bird, or a drum is already each time to understand at least the rough outline of the situation, a context if not a text" (Nancy 2007, 6).

9. Transitive listening must take an object, so to speak (from Late Latin *transitivus* (Priscian) "transitive," literally "that may pass over (to another person)," from *transire* "go or cross over," accessed January 24, 2013, http://www.etymonline.com/index.php. Intransitive listening is like Chion's "reduced listening," with the nuance that the intransitive takes place in the phenomenological "eidetic moment"—that is, in a time and space free of associations and relationalities. It is a listening as if for the first time.

10. See Kassabian 2013.

11. De Certeau wants to know how subjects and collectivities use tactics in the everyday to create, and be creative in the midst of "nets" of discipline. Users (of culture) make "innumerable and infinitesimal transformations of and with the dominant culture economy to adapt it to their own interests and their own rules" (De Certeau 2011, xiv).

12. Bakhtin coined the term *chronotope* to draw attention to the time and space orientations in genre. He neglected to note, however, that orientations configure and transmit affect as well, whether wonder, competition, anger, boredom, or inspiration (cf. Ahmed

2006). Genres—sermons, lectures, fairytales, ethnography, gossip, playing the dozens, pillow talk—are affective orientations. This is clear in musical and dance genres as well: hip-hop draws on a different emotional vocabulary than Mahler; salsa inhabits the body differently than tango.

13. Thinking of listening with the mechanical metaphor of *transduction* insists on the process whereby one kind of energy (water) meets another (generator) to transform into a third thing (energy) (Silverstein 2003, 83–84; cf. Helmreich 2015). Likewise, a listening body interacts with sound, conducting but also transforming it in the process. Silverstein notes that: "One form of organized energy . . . is asymmetrically converted into another kind of energy at an energetic conduction site . . . , harnessing at least some of it across energetic frameworks. In this transducer, the two modes of mechanical energy are converted in a functionally regular way into another kind of energy altogether, . . . of course with some slippage between the two systems of energy organization" (Silverstein 2003, 83–84; see also Kapchan, this volume; cf. Austin 1960; Helmreich 2015; Szendy 2007).

14. Like Martha Graham's danced interpretations of Greek tragedies, intersemiotic translation is an "interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems" and is synonymous with "transmutation" (Jakobson 1959).

15. David Monacchi, "Fragments of Extinction," accessed on March 1, 2016, http://www.davidmonacchi.it.

16. Harman 2010, 76.

17. Latour 2005, 245; cf. Feld 1982. What's more, the listening body is not necessarily only human. Plants also receive and respond to sensory date in a measurable way, emitting their own sounds (inaudible to humans without technology). Indeed, "most of the genome may be involved with signal transduction of one sort or another," notes plant biologist Trewasvas (2002). Insofar as plants convert sounds into other forms of energy, they may be said to "listen." The cochlea even *produces* sound in response to acoustic stimulation. Called *evoked otoacoustic emissions,* EOAEs are detectable with sensitive microphones but are otherwise inaudible.

This is not to anthropomorphize the world, but only to recognize that, following process philosophers such as A. N. Whitehead, the entire environment is one of "prehensions," a place of minute and invisible interactions. "For modern philosophy, all the problems of translation occur at a single critical point where human meets the world. But for Latour, translation is ubiquitous: any relation is a mediation, never some pristine transmission of data across a noiseless vacuum" (Harman 2009, 77).

All these movements are acts of translation—events that move through the world by touch, apprehending, transforming, and translating in the *always-mediated* encounter with other things or events (Latour 2005; cf. Whitehead 1929). "Hermeneutics is not a privilege of humans," Latour reminds us, "but . . . a property of the world itself" (Latour

2005, 245). For Latour, as well as for the purposes of this volume, "Translation is ubiquitous" (Harman 2009, 77).

How we listen determines what we hear. Indeed, we listen the way we read, "according to certain codes" (Barthes 1985, 245). Listening is both a socially overdetermined and generic act, as well as a deeply personal one (Kapchan, this volume).

18. "Music has always sent out lines of flight, like so many transformational multiplicities, even overturning the very codes that structure or arborify it, that is why musical form, right down to its ruptures and proliferations, is comparable to a weed, to a rhizome" (Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987); cited in Frances Dyson, *Sounding New Media* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 184).

19. Deleuze and Guattari 1987.

20. Nancy 2007; cf. Erlmann 2010.

21. Lefebvre 1992.

22. Brennan 2004.

23. Bennett 2010.

24. We find echoes of this affective "force" of music in speech act theory, which focuses not on the referential meaning of the utterance, but on its effects in the world.

25. Feld 1982, as well as Fernandez 1974; 1991.

26. Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Johnson 1987.

27. In Merleau-Ponty's 1960 meditation on "indirect language and the voices of silence," he notes that style is not separable from perception, but is in fact "an exigency that has issued *from* . . . perception" (Merleau-Ponty, 1964, 54, emphasis mine). For Merleau-Ponty, style is a method by which the artist breaks through accepted forms and meanings (genres) in order to express a particular relation to being and history. It is, he says, a "way of shaking the linguistic or narrative apparatus in order to tear a new sound from it" (Merleau-Ponty, 1964, 46). For Deuleuze and Guattari, this "shaking loose" helps create a new "territory," which they say also transpires through "style"—in motifs, rhythms, and counterpoints within territories (or genres) and across them (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, 318).

Scholars of music have long studied style as something that creates and performs identity and community, whether individual, local, or global. We have theories about the elements of style (participatory discrepancies, Keil 1995), the role of synesthesia and the parallelism between musical and other semiotic forms of style (Feld 1982, 1990), the way style creates identity and community (endotropic style, Erlmann 2003; iconicity, Feld 1990, 1996), to say nothing about theories for acquiring style (bimusicality, Hood 1960). We also have numerous ethnographies that document the emergence, improvisation, and performance of style in various cultural traditions. But while scholars have been scrupulous in their contextualization of musical style in the realms of class (Fox 2004), gender

(Muller 1999), race (Radano and Bohlman 2000; Monson 1996, 2004), and culture (Averill 1997; Wong 2001), we have been less than attentive to the ways that styles of writing create the very knowledge we portend to convey. What's more, we have not acknowledged that just as our senses determine our perceptions of the world (as humans we can only hear a certain range of sounds, for example), so our methods and tools of analysis determine our theoretical apparatuses, which in effect carve out particular affective territories. Stone, metal, lenses, laser: our tools determine our discoveries. Dialogic editing, writing performatively, writing against culture, listening to subjects listening, and ourselves remembering—these are all techniques as well as theories. Indeed, they are methods.

28. Says Foucault: "As a context, we must understand that there are four major types of these 'technologies,' each a matrix of practical reason: (1) technologies of production, which permit us to produce, transform, or manipulate things; (2) technologies of sign systems, which permit us to use signs, meanings, symbols, or signification; (3) technologies of power, which determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination, an objectivizing of the subject; (4) technologies of the self, which permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality.

These four types of technologies hardly ever function separately, although each one of them is associated with a certain type of domination. Each implies certain modes of training and modification of individuals, not only in the obvious sense of acquiring certain skills but also in the sense of acquiring certain attitudes. I wanted to show both their specific nature and their constant interaction. For instance, one sees the relation between manipulating things and domination in Karl Marx's *Capital,* where every technique of production requires modification of individual conduct—not only skills but also attitudes." Michel Foucault, "Technologies of the Self," accessed on March 1, 2016, http://cognitiveenhancement.weebly.com/uploads/1/8/5/1/18518906/technologies_of_self_michel_foucault.pdf.

29. Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Goethe; or, the Writer," Literature Network, accessed on September 5, 2015, http://www.online-literature.com/emerson/3774/. Thanks to Sam Wilson for bringing this quote to my attention.

30. From the Medieval Latin *pagina,* late fourteenth century, "play in a cycle of mystery plays," perhaps from Latin *pagina* ("page of a book"). "Pageant," Wictionary, accessed on June 25, 2014, http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/pageant.

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