

= Ocean of Sound =

Ocean of Sound is a compilation album compiled and produced by English musician and author David Toop . The two @-@ disc , cross @-@ licensed " various artists " compilation contains 32 tracks culled from a variety of musical sources , including dub , exotica , free jazz , and field recordings . Toop compiled the recordings to serve as both a historical survey of ambient music and an aural companion to his 1995 book Ocean of Sound : Aether Talk , Ambient Sound and Imaginary Worlds .

Ocean of Sound was released in January 1996 by Virgin Records . It was well received by music critics and finished fourth in the voting for The Village Voice 's annual Pazz & Jop poll . The album later went out of print .

= = Background = =

In 1995 , David Toop published his second book , Ocean of Sound : Aether Talk , Ambient Sound and Imaginary Worlds , which examined music as a medium for deep mental involvement . In the book , Toop said that ambient music can be defined as music listened for relaxation or music that " taps into the disturbing , chaotic undertow of the environment " . As an aural companion to the book , Toop curated the compilation album Ocean of Sound , which would also serve as a historical survey of ambient music . The album was released in January 1996 by Virgin Records . It later went out of print , which music journalist Michaelangelos Matos said was because such cross @-@ licensed compilation albums " seldom stay available for very long " .

= = Music = =

Ocean of Sound is a two @-@ disc , cross @-@ licensed " various artists " compilation that contains 32 tracks culled from a variety of musical sources , including dub , exotica , free jazz , and field recordings . According to AllMusic 's John Bush , all of the songs compiled for the album recapitulate the theme of the book ? " that Les Baxter , Aphex Twin , The Beach Boys , Herbie Hancock , King Tubby and My Bloody Valentine are all related by their effect on sound pioneering . " In an interview for Perfect Sound Forever , Toop explained why he included free jazz on an album of ambient music , which is commonly thought of as background music :

Toop programmed the recordings for the album so that they would segue into one another . Ocean of Sound begins with three songs by Jamaican dub producer King Tubby , American jazz keyboardist Herbie Hancock , and English electronic musician Aphex Twin , respectively , before transitioning to compositions by Claude Debussy , John Cage , the Beach Boys , and Peter Brötzmann , as well as an audio recording of Buddhist monks . Toop programmed the Velvet Underground 's 1968 song " I Heard Her Call My Name " so that its muted feedback would segue into an underwater recording of bearded seals barking .

= = Critical reception = =

In a contemporary review for The Wire , Peter Shapiro said he was impressed by how Ocean of Sound highlighted musical similarities among its disparate artists , calling it a manifestation of the book 's discussion and " a remarkable collection of great music " . The Independent wrote that " Toop navigates smoothly between the various strands that have contributed to the current techno / ' fourth @-@ world ' style of ambient @-@ pop " , because he used sources such as Oriental music , minimalism , and classical composers . Michaelangelo Matos from the Chicago Reader viewed it as an idyllic compilation whose songs segued fluently because of Toop 's aesthetic , while noting they could also stand alone as interesting , if not excellent , separate pieces : " Ocean of Sound is one of those records that have something to teach even the most jaded music fan about how to listen to music . " In a four @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half out of five @-@ star review , AllMusic 's John Bush recommended the album to any " wide @-@ ranging ambient fan " and said that it illustrates the

ideas in Toop 's book " beautifully " .

Ocean of Sound was voted the fourth best compilation of 1996 in the Pazz & Jop , an annual poll of American critics published by The Village Voice . Robert Christgau , the poll 's supervisor , named it the year 's best compilation in his own list for the Pazz & Jop . In a retrospective review , he gave the record an " A " grade and deemed it a " gorgeously segued 32 @-@ track tour of trad ambient " with recordings that were smaller representations of larger generational concerns such as disorder and anxiety : " For Toop , it answers a need that 's both postmodern and millennial , synthesizing insecurity and hope , ' bliss ' and ' non @-@ specific dread . ' " In a 2011 list for Spin , Chuck Eddy named Ocean of Sound the most essential album of ambient music , writing that its 32 tracks " flowed into each other like the seven seas " .

= = Track listing = =

= = Personnel = =

Credits for Ocean of Sound are adapted from AllMusic .