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Szewska 36
room 208 and 107

THE URBAN SOUNDSCAPE OF 1945

international conference

1th Session

Sabine Sanio (University of the Arts, Berlin)

An Audio Designer Listening to the Soundscape of the NS Period. Some Remarks about Marcel Beyer's "Karnau Papers"

The Sound engineer named Hermann Karnau is in 1940 not only responsible for the amplification of speeches at Nazi rallies in great areas such as stadiums, his main research is the mapping of every nuance of the human voice. That leads him in different situations all very characteristic for the NS period, beginning with medical experiments on human beings over visits in concentration camps and finally a long stay in the Führerbunker during Hitler's last days at the end of the war. Not only Karnau's interpretation of the voice and what it means to record it but especially the ruthlessness and rigor in his research makes evident that this kind of science Karnau represents and is responsible for stands in strong relation to the NS ideology of that time. So connected with Karnau's mapping project Marcel Beyer acquaints us with a very special soundscape of the year 1945 in Berlin, Germany.

Uta C. Schmidt (University of Duisburg-Essen)

Roaring War and Silent Peace? Some Considerations to the Soundscape Ruhr Between Area Bombing and Reconstruction

I will focus on sounds in the Ruhr area between the "Battle of the Ruhr" and the "Währungsreform", touching both objective and subjective dimensions of sounds, its physical and cultural amplitudes. From mid October 1944 the British Bomber Command and the US Air Force

revisited the Ruhr to cover the region with final carpet bombing. People learned to listen closely, assessing the risks and listening to the sounds of the German Flak [German anti-aircraft-guns] in difference to the battlesounds of the allies. They learned to differentiate sounds between safety and danger in the extreme and hostile situation of the bombardments.

In Dortmund the war ended on April 13, 1945 at 4:30 pm. This was described in terms of silence. But how does a rubble space sounds, a landscape of ruins? How to reconstruct acoustic interrelations of environment and mood, when the atmosphere of a grown city did evaporate, when private and public spaces didn't exist any longer?

People, holding their memories at the end of life, recall sounds of danger and warning. The bunker-population was joint by the fear of death, in the stories this is especially expressed by sonic metaphors. The soundscapes of the bombing-nights in the West created an "imagined community", which, Robert Moeller pointed out for the war in the East, emphasised the stunning evidence of crimes committed not by the German again others, but by others against Germany. The indigenous survivors also remembered familiar sounds of the industries in reconstruction. In the collective memory of the Ruhr these sounds indicated "We are on the way back!" The significance of the soundscape of industrial reconstruction linked with soundscape of the victims brilliantly supports the German national master narrative of the "Wirtschaftswunder" – the economic miracle. In fact - the rhythm of the endless ruhrian coal wagons became the sound track of the economic miracle, a master narrative, that particularly determined the identity of the Ruhr up to the present. Up to this time the nationalist, chauvinist and racist ideology of the Nazis held its prisoners. But all who wanted to leave behind the soldierly maleness and patriarchal order, met on the outskirts to dance and listened to hot Jazz. Should Germany be at last on the right way to coolness, laxness and democratic habitus?

Karolina Jara (University of Wrocław)

The Soundscape of Public Space in Breslau during National Socialism

At the turn of July and August 1937, Breslau echoed the voices of tens of thousands of singers. Choirs, instrumentalists and dance groups from all over the German Reich participated in the 12th German Singing League Festival (*12. Deutsches Sängerbundesfest*). The music festival took place not only in concert halls, but also in public space and its culmination was a solemn procession of singing and marching participants. The spectacular parade was repeated on the larger scale almost exactly one year later, during the sports festival. The echo of these two events returned in the most

dramatic moment of the defence of the city in 1945, when the explosions and gunshots dominated the city acoustics. The purpose of this paper is to shed light on the sonic aspect of architecture and urban planning in Breslau in 1933–1945. The first part of my presentation deals with the temporal omnipresence of sound during the Festival of the German Choral Association in Breslau. It was the most important local musical event in the Nazi era, which also enabled the authorities to learn about the sonic features of the city. This section examines the means of sonic appropriation of the public space by National Socialists.

In the second part of the paper I will investigate the projects of reshaping the public space in Breslau, focusing on the designed soundscape. A close examination of the archival sources leads to many interesting observations, starting from the direct, so to say, audial elements, ending up with more elaborated forms of creating the sound environment. What interests me the most is in what way and to what extent sound can be considered an important factor in the process of redesigning the entire downtown in the late 1930s. Had the existing urban soundscape influenced new plans? What can we say about designing the city acoustics in the Third Reich, based on the case study of Breslau? Therefore, my paper seeks to broaden the understanding of the sound experience of the Nazi city, as well as its role in the urban planning.

2th Session

The 1945 Soundscape of Wrocław in the Accounts of its Postwar Inhabitants

Renata Tańczuk (University of Wrocław)

The story of the changes of Wrocław and its soundscape in 1945 was written down by a number of earwitnesses. The analysis of sound representations of the city and its distinctive sounds contained in autobiographical accounts, memoirs and diaries, and also in film and radio productions, allows us not only to observe how the identity of the city is constructed, but also to track the process of identification with a place through the ephemeral, embodied auditory experience of a place.

Sławomir Wieczorek (University of Wrocław)

In my paper I would like to ask about the musical dimension of the Breslau and Wrocław soundscapes. I am interested in music which was heard and performed in places where it is usually

absent – in the trenches, barricades, bunkers, streets or the demolished opera house. My attention will focus on Wrocław following the war, although I will begin with two examples from Breslau. Special attention will be given to tensions between two aspects of music-making in the city, the propagandist and the private.

Zoriana Rybczyńska (Ukrainian Catholic University, Lviv)

The Voices of the Liberated/Occupied City: Lviv Soundscape of 1944–1946 in Prof. Gansiniec's Journal

Daily notes by Prof. Ryszard Gansiniec of 1944–1946 are unique statements of the Polish citizen of the city, who lived through Soviet Power and experienced daily changes of the urban landscape. Ryszard Gansiniec was the professor of Classical Philology of the University of Jan Kazymyr in Lviv (1919–1939, 1944–1946). He stayed in Lviv During World War II, but he was forced into expatriation by the Soviet regime and had to leave Lviv in 1946. His notes contain detailed descriptions of the changes of the city and hostile comments addressed to the new regime. He believed that Lviv would remain a Polish city. In fact, Polish nationalism ideology, classical philology education, and personal qualities such as uncompromising, became those filters which had an impact on the image of the city in his journal. These descriptions of the city give us an opportunity to reconstruct the audiosphere of the city and analyse how the sensitivity to sounds has changed in the new culture.

3th Session

Katarzyna Naliwajek-Mazurek (University of Warsaw)

Sounds of Warsaw 1945 in Witnesses' Testimonies

Recent interviews with survivors of Warsaw and its region at the turn of 1945, seem to demonstrate that among different sensory observations, sonic memory of bombings and shootings (including the most direct and most traumatic experience of being shot at) seems to be less prevalent in their descriptions than remembrance of sight experiences and of other situational awareness components. Nevertheless, certain sounds linked with intense emotions such as imminent danger are remembered and described by some witnesses in a vivid way. The paper juxtaposes sound memories of the time of the Nazi occupation and of the transitional moment by the end of war with their recollections of post-war sound environment.

Jadwiga Zimpel (Adam Mickiewicz University)

In Search of Lost Sounds. Literature as Aural Memory of the Post-war City

According to the testimonies of the earwitnesses as well as scholarly research on the historical soundscapes the main auditive quality of the post-war urban soundscape was silence (Szalewska 2015). In the scope of sound studies such silence might be analysed both as a lack of sound signals characteristic for the war period and as an absence of voices, material practices, daily routines and customs of pre-war urban communities. Post-war silence might be thus considered as a complex phenomenon which resists integration in the experience of the urban subject. The problematic nature of such silence makes it an object of a cultural reworking as in the case of literary practice. Creating the cultural space for the lost sounds literature becomes a aural memory of the post-war city. I would like to reflect on such function of literature discussing the work of Miron Białoszewski. Following the conception of Philipp Schwieghauser I will consider Białoszewski's texts as specific „sounding objects”, which do not only represent but also transform the post-war auditive experience. The selection of the case for the analysis reveals also a haunted nature of post-war soundscape which as relational phenomenon transcends a linear historical periodization, blending within itself the sonic experience of different time modes and urban realities.

4th Session

Carolyn Birdsall (University of Amsterdam)

Bordered Sounds: The Archival Traces of Radio in Silesia (keynote lecture)

This lecture will zoom in on the case of Silesian radio for the investigation of urban sounds before and after World War II. On the one hand, I will ask how national and regional histories have framed broadcasting in Silesia. How was the radio station in Wrocław positioned as a symbol of modernity, but also as an affirmation of state power and linguistic nationalism? On the other hand, I will explore the archival presence of Silesian radio and its layered histories in the present day. How have historical recordings been preserved and made accessible? And which traces of broadcasting can still be found in Wrocław's built environment today? Given the exclusions produced within broadcasting under National Socialist Germany, the lecture will critically evaluate the contribution

of radio for the study of wartime soundscapes, and draw attention to the archival conditions governing our access to sounds of the past.

Christian von Borries (The Academy of Fine Arts, Nuremberg)

A Technical Condition – Film Sound as Memory

The soundscape of 1945 was captured in films of that time, which was mostly documentary and fictional at the same time, and, interestingly, their sound as well. Sound recording technology for film was invented in Germany, it existed only since 15 years, and this had a decisive impact on the way sound was done. This lecture tries to grasp the meaning of images through their sound, and by doing so, to focus on the relationship between sound and image. Today, do we grasp the audiovisual as witness, or do we rather experience technology of that time? By referring to Friedrich Kittler's "Grammophon Film Typewriter", this lecture will draw our attention to the relationship between technology and topic. This seems especially vital in a world that is dominated by a prosumer visual culture, equipped with a video camera and a field recorder at all times. Examples from the following films will be used, especially focusing on Roberto Rossellini's. Neorealismo: Roberto Rossellini: Roma Citta aperta (1945) Roberto Rossellini: Allemagne Annee Zero (1948) Veit Harlan: Kolberg (1945) the last Deutsche Wochenschau April 1945 ("...Breslau") Yuli Raizman, Yelizaveta Svilova: Fall of Berlin – 1945 (1945) Paul Rotha: A City Speaks (1946)

Magdalena Saryusz-Wolska (University of Łódź, German Historical Institute Warsaw)

Silent defeat? Documentary Films about German Cities in 1945

The end of the second world war in German cities was loud. Bombs exploded, machine guns shot, civilians screamed, Hitler and other Nazis shouted on the radio. And what happened after Germany's surrender? Common sounds of a big city were lacking. The industry was desolated. Most of the public transportation network was not in operation, people walked or cycled (if they had a bike). Many gramophones and LPs got lost in the bombed houses. The Germans had to retune their radio sets from low to high frequency and it took more than six months until the American radio station RIAS broadcasted their first program. However, all this does not necessarily mean that the early post-war period was silent. The paper focuses on documentary films from Berlin, Dresden and Munich, which were made in 1945, and seeks to answer the following questions: How did the

filmmakers deal with the cities' soundscape? What kind of images did they juxtapose with the new sounds? What was the sound's ideological role in those films?

5th Session

Heta Kaisto (Aalto University)

Sound and Affect: A way to Approach the Impossible Narrative of Disaster Following the Method of Fragmentary Writing of Maurice Blanchot

“Disaster beyond experience, that which withdraws from all possibility of experience — writing at the limit. It bears repeating: disaster de-scribes. Which does not mean that disaster, as a force of writing, excludes itself, is beyond writing, outside text”. Maurice Blanchot: *The Writing of the Disaster*

My artistic research *Beyond Writing: Fragmentary and the Vision of Poetics* by Maurice Blanchot examines the paradoxical non-experience of disaster and the ways to present it as text, sound and image. In the heart of my research is the philosophical text *The Writing of the Disaster (L'Écriture du désastre, 1980)* about Shoah written by Maurice Blanchot, and the method of fragmentary he developed in his late writings. In this presentation I will introduce shortly the unique position Blanchot's fragmentary writing in the context of postwar thinking, discuss the affect in language and sound, and finally debate on the position of sound in the philosophy of disaster and war. The year 1945 was a turning point for Maurice Blanchot. The war had been an “utter-burn where all history took fire”, one impossible to name, alien to all names. This experience brought about the development of Blanchot's seemingly strange method of writing philosophy — something previously unheard of in philosophy. *The Writing of the Disaster* is a notoriously difficult book to read — one Jacques Derrida calls to be “stamped with a black diamond like a musical note”. Derrida's description of reading the fragments is an apt one: very much like in musical notation, the textual weave is constantly leaking sensation rather than meaning. Fragmentary also goes beyond its seemingly aesthetic approach: it contests the ontological structures of the real often presupposed behind narrative, even the non-narrative, arguments of language, history, world and the way we create knowledge out of them. There are strong tendencies of artistic practice in Blanchot's philosophy. For this reason I find it necessary to choose artistic research as a way to explore the fragmentary. In my artistic work, I take cue from the method of fragmentary — or writing at the

limit. I am currently co-writing and directing a 3D radio play about the Finnish civil war in 1918. In this radio play we use archive audio material (interviews, testimonies) gathered by Finnish Literature Society during 1960's and 70's. I am also working on a set of songs called Vanishing Songs.

Jarosław Jaworek (Adam Mickiewicz University)

Sonic History: Theory and Practice

Researching the possibility of listening to the past, inspired especially by *sensory* and *sound studies*, leads historians to revise the major theoretical and methodological assumptions of their discipline. The main concern is the new epistemological component – the senses, as well as finding proper sources that would allow to perceive historical soundscape. In my paper I will focus on the challenge that researchers of the past are facing when trying to revive the sound that has long since died away, yet the one we would still love to hear.

Dorian Lange (Aalto University)

Trans(ar)chiving. Artistic Research in a Media Art Practice for Coping with Trauma

Trans(ar)chiving (trans-archiving) is being introduced as a media art practice concept based on artistic research within an interdisciplinary field around cultural studies, performance studies, sound studies, and art therapy. Media and technology can be used to enable an active process of exploring one's own personal archive of memories together with the collective memory (e.g. digital public archives) of the context in which the traumatic experiences or its manifestations are being recognised. By handling these two pieces of the puzzle, one's own set of creative techniques is being developed in order to work with the material and perform it.

6th Session

Daniel Brożek (Wrocław, non-academic sound art researcher and practitioner)

The Soundtrack for *Blichtr* Art Installation – an Attempt to Reconstruction of Wrocław After-war Cinema Hall Soundscape

Blichtr (Glitter) is an installation that emerged as a result of cooperation between Daniel Brożek and Łukasz Paluch, inspired by a fragment of the book *Everyday Life in Wrocław 1945–1948*, which described the history of the first cinemas in Wrocław after the war and their repertoire. The cinemas, most of which do not exist anymore or have fallen into ruin, were in their heyday at that time. Although the repertoire was dominated by Soviet films, the rare American or English productions broke all records of popularity, letting the city dwellers forget about war trauma and experience the splendour of Western culture for a brief moment. In the war-ravaged Wrocław, dirty and swarming with criminals, it was the cinemas that were a semblance of luxury and prosperity. In front of the screening room prepared as part of the installation, we pass by the inscription Glitter. However, there are no moving pictures behind the black curtain, only an empty screen. The installation is mostly based on sound. Inside the room we hear sounds from films that the inhabitants of Wrocław might have watched in the 1940s, accompanied by Polish Film Chronicle newsreels. What emerges is a collage of sounds and words, a synthesis of the sounds of the post-war reality, an amalgam of Eastern and Western culture – sounds of a city that no longer exists.

Dorota Błaszczak (The Polish Radio Archives, The Fryderyk Chopin University of Music, Warsaw),
Waves of Remembrance. Wrocław and Sounds of Radio

Prepared historical radio receiver “broadcasts from the past” bygone recordings bringing the German and Polish history of Wrocław alive. By pushing the tabs and twisting the knobs, the users can re-tune the radio in time and search for archival recordings, while at the same time they can hear the actual broadcast of the Radio Wrocław. There are four thematic channels presenting digitized original radio recordings from the last nine decades: starting from the Weimar Republic and the national socialism („Reichssender Breslau“), through broadcasts from the post-war times and recordings by the independent „Radio Solidarność Wrocław” from 1981, till contemporary materials. There’s also a special channel mixing the recordings from the given historical period and the contemporary actual radio channel. The installation consists also of a screen presenting the face of the modified radio receiver with the time scale and titles of the audio clips, that enables the user to navigate through the waves of remembrance. The space arranged inside of the pavillon encourages the pedestrians to enter it and interact with the installation.

Pierre Jodlowski (Toulouse–Wrocław, composer, performer and multimedia artist)

***Passage and Soleil Blanc* – Aims, Compositional Structure and Interaction Issues (video presentation)**

The Passage is a sounding and lightening corridor dedicated to memories of historical music and sounds from Wroclaw. This city has a very rich cultural past, having belong to several countries through years and which has been always consider as a very important crossroad for cultural exchanges. The installation will be based on a collection of sounds which will refer to the past of the city area and that the public will be able to hear and interact with by crossing the tunnel. The process of compiling those sounds will involve an intense work with historians and people who could talk about past events which happened in Wroclaw as well as with some ancient music specialist who will be able to provide original manuscripts to be recorded by specific ensembles. This matrix of sounds will become accessible for the public towards an interactive experience. The tunnel will be installed in National Forum of Music and the public will be able to hear those very precious sounds and to interact with them. The tunnel itself is including some special sensors which are able to detect the movement of the person inside (direction, speed...). Those movements are controlling the way the sounds are performed on a very special sound system based on 8 channels. Each person will have thus a unique interactive experience to access to those sounds which are part of the history of the city.