

**In search of lost sounds,
...possible futures**

01 May

[...] We will focus on listening and sound making as a way in to a greater awareness of our acoustic ecologies and the acoustic commons, by opening our ears to our surroundings and the sonic tapestries of our individual environments, and bringing into focus our listening as a kind of activism, a process of self-discovery and sonic self-care.¹

30 April

clap clap clap clap whoo hoooooclap clap yer bong bong ooooh whoooo hooo yer yer
bong bong clap clap whoooooop yer clap clap clap honkkkk wooo wooo yer yer yerrrrr
honk honk clap clap clap bong bong

[a dog yaps in reply]

29 April

waking from a nightmare of breath // contours and texture
rippling beyond movements // billows and escapees // bruise-
like colours // panting and jolted rasping // dogs can smell
disease² // what must the earth smell like to them right now?

28 April

Unions, the Royal College of Nursing and the Royal College of Midwives have called on the UK to observe a minute of silence to pay tribute to health, social care and other key workers who have died after contracting Covid-19.

[youtube.com/watch?v=e5WgiDjIhpg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e5WgiDjIhpg)

27 April

One-minute of sound
(a Whatsapp group)

12:54 - Slick courtyard, as the morning rain falls in drops of different sizes. A few cars drive by with a sizzle as they glide on water. A woman in a red jumper walks by, her head down under a large golf umbrella. The birds hunker under rooves and in trees.

13:07 - Sitting in the back garden in Islington, It's a sunny day. Birds are sing, bees and insects buzz, a dog barks and a neighbour is in the kitchen with the door open.

14:26 – neighbours . gossip.

16:38 - Bathroom fan / kitchen sounds.

19: 42 - Rain recorded under hornbeam. Lordship Rec, wild area.

25 April

today's governmental sanctioned walk brought my ears into contact with leather shoes on concrete. psitherism in apple trees. the scrupulous absence of children and women. many exhausts. a distant and mellifluous whistle.

23 April

I wait up for the dawn chorus to begin as I can't resist recording it.

[pause] It's much quieter than it's ever been before.³

23 April

It's nice it's quiet.

But is anyone else finding the lack of traffic noise outside means the sounds inside are greatly increased?

Someone going into the kitchen to make a cup of tea sounds like 3 minutes of banging a cup against a saucepan, what used to be the gentle murmur of chatting on the phone in the next room now sounds like a monologue being shouted through the keyhole, the neighbours going upstairs to bed (a noise I never used to hear at all) sounds like they are being chased by a herd of buffalo all wearing tap shoes.⁴

21 April

With the world in lockdown, a growing number of artists, researchers and field recordists have released albums capturing the sounds of nature, most of them intended to soothe increasingly isolated, anxious listeners unable to experience the mood-lifting arrival of spring and its jubilant birdsong, among many other things.

In March, Leipzig-based musician Carina Pesch launched a series on her Facebook profile called The Ears May Travel, in which she shares binaural recordings from exotic locales in the Pyrenees, Greece and Indonesia. "Binaural is not stereo," she explains, "so you don't only have left and right. You have up and down and front and back. It really takes you into the place."

For Pesch, The Ears May Travel is more than just a holiday for the senses, though. In a time of geographic and social upheaval, the series is "a very friendly reminder that travelling and freedom of movement are a basic human need and right."⁵

20 April

"If you had a situation which they had in northern Italy," Harrington says, "where you had villages which were isolated from the rest of the country for a long period of time, then they would actually start to show signs of developing their own accent."⁶

20 April

Lafcadio Hearn, describing what we would now call a key worker, whose sounds and street cries announced their presence during the cholera epidemic in Japan, c.1895: "The bereaved, so soon as the law allows, remove their pathetic belongings and disappear; and the ordinary life of the street goes on, by day and by night exactly as if nothing had happened. Itinerant

venders, with their bamboo poles and baskets or buckets or boxes, pass the empty houses, and utter their accustomed cries; religious processions go by, chanting fragments of sutras; the blind shampooer blows his melancholy whistle; the private watchman makes his heavy staff boom upon the gutter-flags; the boy who sells confectionery still taps his drum and sings a love song with a plaintive sweet voice, like a girl's."⁷

17 April

deep silence
the shrill of cicadas
seeps into rocks
—Matsuo Bashō
(1644–94)

13 April

[...] I'm having trouble with creativity. It's manic outside and I need calm (not necessarily quiet). I'm realising how much of a quiet person I am. Walks in local parks and deserted cemeteries, early in the morning or after sunset, seem to be my salvation. There I realise how much communication can happen in ways beyond words. The hoverflies are the best.

[...] I like the sound of that so much. It inspires me to find my own walking paths here. And I would like to make a habit of that. I meditate twice a day and do focused listening of music/sound sometimes.

11 April

Plants produce sound waves in the lower end of the audio range as well as an overabundance of ultrasonic sounds. By capturing the signals emitted by plants under different environmental conditions, I am exploring the ecological significance of these sounds to communication among plants and between plants and other organisms.⁸

08 April

Tonight's the full moon so I told a zen story about a thief, a sage and the moon, another zen story, the Haida story Raven Steals the Light, a Cree moon story, and then a Li Po poem about drinking with the full moon. Since I tend to get full show-and-tell with you all, I brought out the wooden raven who sits above my desk, but I wish I'd pulled some Russian dolls for the boxes inside boxes inside boxes business.⁹

07 April

The future will not, in crucial ways, be anything like the past [...] Our economy, our priorities, our perceptions will not be what they were at the outset of this year. The particulars are startling: companies such as GE and Ford retooling to make ventilators, the scramble for protective gear, once-bustling city streets becoming quiet and empty, the economy in freefall.¹⁰

04 April

Today I pray
I pray for quiet
I pray for a quiet housemate
I pray today
For a quiet housemate¹¹

02 April

*****NEW RELEASE*****OUT NOW*****

LOR136 - Various Artists >>>>Self Isolating Compilation<<<<<
85 Musicians, sound makers and artists isolated and creating.
Solo sound works all recorded at home.

linearobsessional.bandcamp.com/album/self-isolating-compilation

27 March

taking comfort in
the presence
- and touch - of
our non-human
kin

24 March

[...] we can deploy another kind of ‘social distancing’ during our walking; which is to walk at a distance from the ‘norms’ that operate perniciously in our societies. For once, many of us have time – a time we can set aside each day as we walk – to consider, in silent thinking or dialogue with others, how we can extricate ourselves from these ‘norms’. To get outside and become outsiders.

[...]

You need to become a choreographer of your own dance; but it’s not an empty stage. You need to blend your dance to the dance of the place and to its possibilities.¹²

23 March

[...] our first regular edition from inside the quarantine - this week we featured a handful of recordings from the aporee soundmaps documenting the unusual reality we are all now living in, from a sonic perspective. giuseppe gavazza has been documenting the soundscapes during the lockdown in a series of recordings made in turin in northern italy. here we listen to recordings from his terrace, in this usually busy city, at sunrise (at the top of the show) and sunset (at the bottom). also, the calm of one of brussels' usually busy tourist destinations by flavien gillié. we'll keep our eyes on the maps for more recordings of interest to our current situation, and continue featuring them in the show.

frameworkradio.net/2020/03/706-2020-03-22

20 March

on sound, the closest thing to (another's) touch right now.

my understanding of the senses is beginning to morph, adapt to this new virtual jostling, this physical distancing that has been my reality for the last seven days.

my world of sonic vibration is all the more a space of haptic exploration, mediated through sleight of finger, undulation of gut and the map of the skin.

surfaces are instruments to be activated. a finger drawn across bedclothes, the play of forks in the sink, the click of a computer keyboard, a clarinet fingered, yet the hand is dangerous. better sing those dust balls discovered under the bookshelf with an open window or door ajar.

en vivant conversations remain at a distance. the reproduced sounds emanating from dull radios or via telecommunication apps feels closer, nestling directly on the eardrum. concrete sounds, the faint world beyond my window all circumnavigate the body, pressing lightly; a sensation insubstantial yet exquisite. as morning breath on a frosted window.

our hands at a distance talking.
the world at a distance sounding.
our organs at a distance feeling.

17 March 2020

wind buffer.

humans in cars.

wind buffer.

humans in cars

15 March

A. sent me the Yo-Yo Ma video that's been making the rounds, that lovely gesture of sharing music in a time of anxiety, and said "I also need a playlist from you." So, this is for A., but I thought I'd share it with you all. Music in a time of quarantine: I hope to make more than one such playlist [...]¹³

13 March

Somebody coughed today at the supermarket
and it resonated like a gunshot¹⁴

Notes:

1. Blanc Sceol mailout; accessed: 01 May 12:29pm.
2. Article: Molenti, Megan, *The Science of the Sniff: Why Dogs Are Great Disease Detectors*: [wired.com/story/the-science-of-the-sniff-why-dogs-are-great-disease-detectors](https://www.wired.com/story/the-science-of-the-sniff-why-dogs-are-great-disease-detectors); accessed: 06 January 2019.
3. Anonymous, video conferencing.
4. Rowley, Liberty, social media (public post).
5. Article: Brown, Harley, *Croaks, squelches, waterfalls: the visionaries bringing the jungle to your headphones*: [theguardian.com/music/2020/apr/21/croaks-squelches-waterfalls-the-visionaries-bringing-the-jungle-to-your-headphones](https://www.theguardian.com/music/2020/apr/21/croaks-squelches-waterfalls-the-visionaries-bringing-the-jungle-to-your-headphones); accessed: 21 April 2020.
6. Article: Schultz, Isaac, *Prolongued Isolation Can Lead to the Creation of New Accents*: <https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/antarctica-accent-isolation>; accessed: 23 April 2020.
7. Toop, David, social media (public post).
8. Gagliano, Monica, *Plant Communication*: [monicagagliano.com](https://www.monicagagliano.com) [in Burnett, Elizabeth-Jane, *The Grassling*]; accessed: 11 April 2020.
9. Fairytales for Emergencies, storytelling (social media live stream): [facebook.com/Fairytales-for-Emergencies-107302237579391](https://www.facebook.com/Fairytales-for-Emergencies-107302237579391)
10. Article: Solnit, Rebecca, *The long read: The impossible has happened: what coronavirus can teach us about hope*: www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/07/what-coronavirus-can-teach-us-about-hope-rebecca-solnit; accessed: 07 April 2020.
 11. Anonymous, social media (post to friends).
 12. Smith, Phil, *Walking in a Time of Virus*, social media (public post).
 13. Cole, Teju, *songs without words*, social media (public post): open.spotify.com/playlist/4gwzBGEbLXqdTcDwyDIC3W
 14. Velez, David, social media (public post).