



ACTIVE LISTENING

BY LUKE MEAT

THE 2006 SIGNAL AND NOISE FESTIVAL

April 27-29

Every year, the Video In studio converts itself into a giant living wall of sound for the three-day Signal and Noise Festival. Circling the room are 8 speakers, placed to allow the listener to hear a combination of pre-recorded audio art installments and live performances with their full "diffused" aural effect. In pursuit of total audience immersion, the experience is sometimes accentuated by playing the works in complete darkness. Now in its sixth year, Signal and Noise has always been a fascinating event, not only for the avant-garde community but the music community as a whole—a coming together of local and international audio experimentalists in a celebration of audio art.

Audio art presupposes not only an artist, but an active listener as well. "I would like to believe that people have the capacity to just sit back and listen, not just hang out, talk with their friends, and get wasted," festival organizer Velveeta Krisp laughs. "But it's also not supposed to be like a snobby 'art' thing either. When the festival began, it was very hierarchical, and it was always the same performers year after year. I want to broaden the festival out to a new community of artists and audiences."

Through an amalgamation of audio art, electro-acoustic music, and noise audio, the Signal and Noise Festival has always posed the question, "What is sound?" Keeping in mind John Cage's "silent" composition 4'33" it may be easier to ask what *isn't* sound, but nonetheless a diverse assemblage of artists have stepped up to attempt to provide an answer year after year.

"The tag line we're using this year is 'A celebration of sonic and media inspirations,'" says Krisp. "It's an opportunity for local and international artists to present their audio ideas." The festival, which started primarily as a video event, has evolved into an audio event first and foremost. "We're only showing one film this year," says Krisp. "I think we're focusing more on the audio aspect because there are so many new audio artists cropping up all over this city, and all over the world."

THIS YEAR'S SIGNAL AND NOISE FESTIVAL RUNS APRIL 27-29TH AND CENTRES AROUND THREE THEMES: THE MACABRE, FLUIDS AND FUNCTIONS, AND STUNTS. IN ADDITION TO multimedia installations, pre-recorded pieces, and video screenings, live performances WILL INCLUDE:

Gunshae Collective (Vancouver)

MyBodyYourBodyWhoseBodyAnybody

This local collective's piece will work around the themes of the heart and blood and the bodily movement of all its elements. Using live heart recordings, the laptop will be situated as the heart which directs an oboe and a dancer as blood cells.

Paul Warren Bennett & Jesse Colin Scott (Vancouver)

Micro-Climate

A live audio/video performance utilizing human spittle and oral and nasal sounds as the textural aural pallet (includes live sound recording and sampling).

Dan Kibke, Ole Eldor, and Christine Carriere (Vancouver)

Turbulent Bodies: An Anesthetic Odyssey

The scene is an operation with a patient undergoing surgery. Sound is improvised using the related source materials generated by both the patient and surgical instruments.

Kele Fleming (Vancouver)

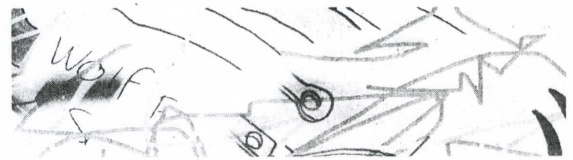
Manufacturing Beauty

A sound collage exploring the theme of beauty, the body, and the numerous internal and external forces that challenge and enhance our aesthetic judgments.

Stefan Smulovitz (Vancouver)

Aemth

This piece is defined by the use of the performer's body in her uniquely inspired movements, and the extreme sounds of her extended vocal technique as the audio source material.



Lee Hutzulak and Mirac Rosner (Vancouver)

Eternity and the Sentimental Fist

An improvised performance in which a dancer and musician on acoustic guitar interact in a space defined by the frame of the video camera suspended above them.

Charles Francis Henville (Vancouver)

Tachikoma

Live electronica with laptop, synthesizers, and performed vocals.

Jorge Ruiz-Isaac (Vancouver)

Fluency

This performance will map an audio landscape of the human body within the context of language and frequency modulations.

Michael Lloyd (Sweden)

Air Pressure

An exploration of the ideas of concentration and exhaustion involving two dancers and a trumpet player.

Thomas Beck (Germany)

Anti-System

A performer moves in response to a pre-recorded soundtrack, which upon playback through diffusion creates a very present bodily experience for its audience.

Justin Cooper, Benjamin Bellas & Reed Barrow (Chicago)

Several chairs, a table, maybe some magazines

"Several chairs" tests the internal as well as the external limits of speech, movement, memorization, and mental and physical processes, using drums and vocals.

Eva Sjuve (Sweden)

13 volts + 1 carrot

An improvised interactive performance using real-time sound processing and a gestural interface to express a surreal response to the cultural issues of the stranger and the community (live sound with body sensors).

Stefan Brunner (Austria)

Full Contact Concert

Two bodies, cabled, amplified for impact using a stethoscope mic. Breath and heartbeat. An intense, reactionary and sometimes choreographed display of violent action.

As always, Signal and Noise promises to be a unique and unusual event. For showtimes and full festival schedule, check the website at www.signalandnoise.ca



ILLUSTRATIONS BY ZOË ALEXANDER

