

The past decade has seen a growing number of studies of sound design and acoustic technologies. These attempts to engage with the acoustic aspects of culture have brought forth questions concerning noise and silence, communication and resonance, and insulation and transmission, making these into key terms in the investigation of knowledge production. Yet the role of sound in the production of the built environment, and the function of architecture and design in shaping acoustic modalities, remain largely uncharted territory.

Addressing this large gap, the project “Sound Modernities: Architecture, Media, and Design” investigates the ways in which architects have addressed the aural environment in their practice and discourse, with a focus on the relationship between design practices and the technologies of modern acoustics and communication.

SPACE

architecture

design

Discussion of sample chapters for “Sound Modernities? Architecture, Media, and Design”

10:00–10:15 **Welcome Coffee**

10:15–10:30
Welcome Remarks

Viktoria Tkaczyk (MPIWG / HU)

Introduction

Sabine von Fischer (EPF Lausanne)
Olga Touloumi (Bard College)

10:30–12:30
Discussion of sample chapters

Gretta Tritch Roman (Bard College)

Shundana Yusuf (University of Utah)

12:30–13:30 **Lunch**

Themes and Methods for an Architectural History of Sound

13:30–14:00

Introduction

Olga Touloumi (Bard College)

14:00–15:30 **Mapping**

Sabine von Fischer (EPF Lausanne)
Listening and the League of Nations:
Acoustics Are the Argument

Carlotta Daro (ENSAP)
Lines for Listening

Infrastructure

David Theodore (McGill University)
Sound Medicine: The Acoustic Environment of the Modern Hospital

Sandra Jasper (University of Cambridge)
Sonic Refugia: Nature, Noise-Abatement, and Landscape Design in West Berlin

Respondents

Viktoria Tkaczyk (MPIWG / HU)
Hansjakob Ziemer (MPIWG)

15:30–16:00 **Coffee Break**

16:00–17:30 **Communication**

Olga Touloumi (Bard College)
Archiving the Voice: Alvar Aalto’s Poetry Room and the Modern Library

Shundana Yusuf (University of Utah)
The Porous Shells of Radiophony

Listening

Raviv Ganchrow (Institute of Sonology, The Hague)
Padded Sounds: The Latent Aurality of Anechoic Chambers

Peter McMurray (Harvard University)
The Sonic Lives of Courtyard Mosques and Mosque Courtyards in Berlin

Respondents

Daniel Barber (UPenn / RCC)
Roland Wittje (IIT Madras)

17:30–17:45

Joeri Bruyninckx (MPIWG)
Sound & Science: Digital Histories - A Database on the Epistemes of Acoustics

17:45–18:00

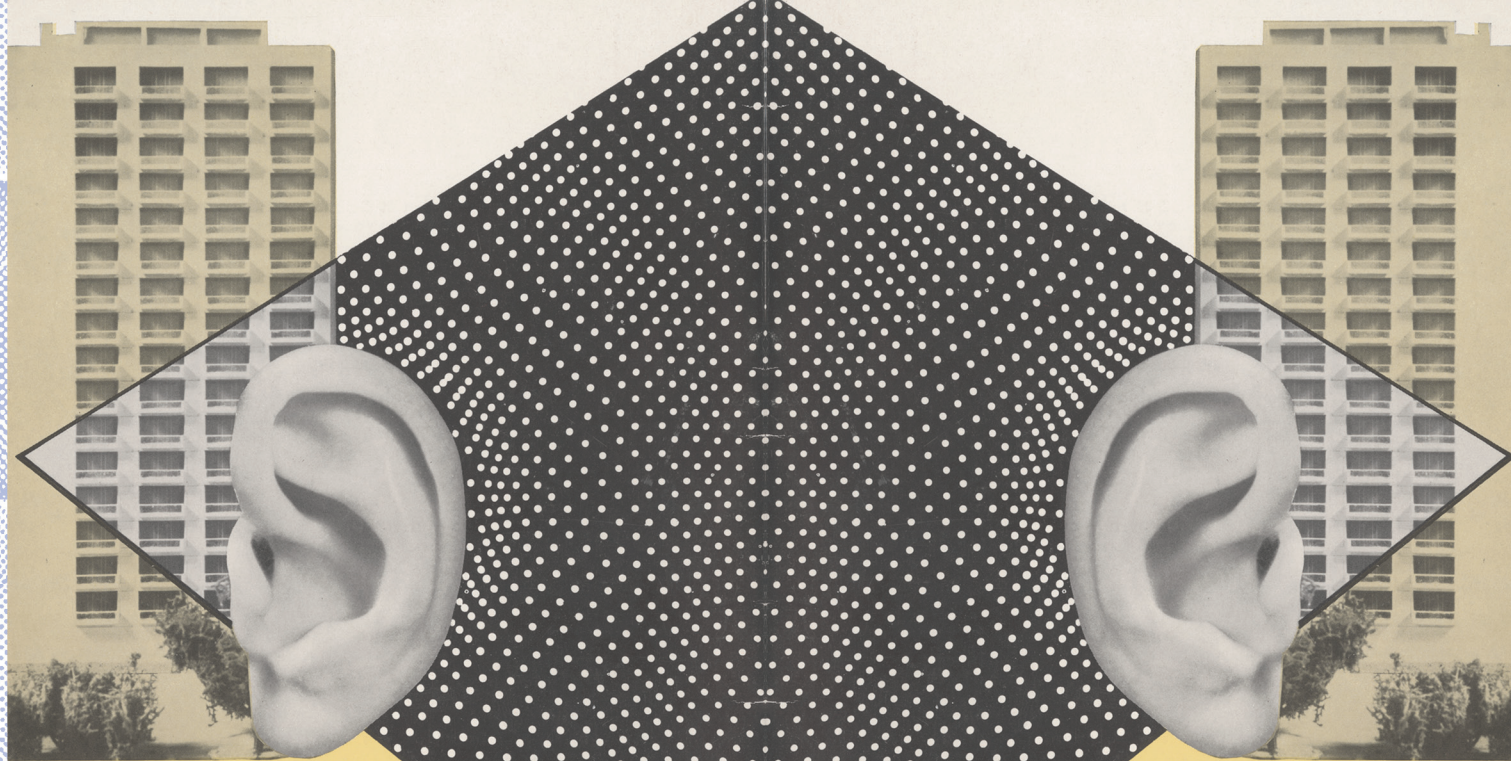
Closing Remarks

Sabine von Fischer (EPF Lausanne)

sound modernities

During the twentieth century, modern architectural acoustics, in tandem with sound technologies such as the radio and telecommunication networks, gave rise to notions of endless and unproblematic connectivity. Telecommunication networks connected the urban fabric by circulating information, and seemed capable of collapsing geographical, political, and social differences. These new infrastructures and technologies challenged previous theorizations of the public sphere and promised new models of participatory democracy and media transparency. In this context, architects and designers made sound a central field of inquiry, a material to build with and a concept to think with. They recognized that sound actively shaped modern built environments. Approaching architecture as a medium that not only absorbs and reflects other social and political forces, but also produces them, “Sound Modernities” launches a critical discussion on the aural history of space and the spatial history of aurality.

Front image: Title page of a leaflet for architects, issued by the German Department of Housing, 1957.



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VENUE

Max Planck Institute for the History of Science
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Seminar Room

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If possible, please register before June 2, 2016.

SOUND MODERNITIES?

HISTORIES OF ARCHITECTURE, DESIGN, AND SPACE

WORKSHOP

June 15, 2016