Sound_and_Experiment_X_Lenbachhaus_Kunstbau
December 2–7, 2025
Lenbachhaus Munich

For the first week of December, Flavin's *untitled (for Ksenija)* at the Kunstbau will make way for sound-based works by students from the *Sound and Experiment* program led by Florian Hecker (Bayerisches Spitzenprofessurenprogramm—Academy of Fine Arts Munich). Temporary experiential spaces, opening up new dimensions of perception through multi-layered resonances.

Featuring works by: Sofian Biazzi, focus baby, Daniel Gianfranceschi, Bruno Younes Haas, Jahy Hwang, Caroline Kretschmer, Bradley Leonard, Léa Manoussakis di-Bona, Maria Margolina, Camilla Metelka, and Vasilii Vikhliaev.

Curated by Johannes Michael Stanislaus

A collaboration with the program *Sound and Experiment* by Florian Hecker (Bayerisches Spitzenprofessurenprogramm—Academy of Fine Arts Munich).

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Artist Statements

Sofian Biazzi – 214 voices for Ala – 41:11 min

The work *214 voices for Ala* is a ten-channel sound-work that engages with the Kunstbau's spatial characteristics by treating the concept of anger as a durational and process-based material. The title refers to the 214 distinct voices generated through a custom-built granular synthesis instrument, with each voice embodying a variation of tone and intensity. By juxtaposing human expressions of anger with emotion-conditioned text-to-speech models, the piece explores how digital systems simulate, contain, and redistribute affect.

Grounded in an ongoing theoretical research into emotional speech synthesis and the dynamics of emotional contagion, the work examines how synthetic voices and affective algorithms influence perception, communication, and how emotions are transmitted, mirrored, and modulated across human–machine exchanges. Anger today is no longer only felt; it is circulated, optimized, and predicted. As digital infrastructures amplify outrage and filter emotional response, anger becomes both commodified and abstracted. Within this feedback loop, emotion is expressed, performed, and managed by systems of communication and control.

Using methods from affective computing and voice synthesis models developed by major **text-to-speech** research platforms such as OpenAI, Biazzi investigates how anger is quantified and redefined as a machinic parameter, stripped of context and consequence. At the same time, the work reflects on mechanisms of anger management, how humans are conditioned to down-

regulate and suppress emotion, while machines are designed to over-regulate it, layering synthetic affect onto an otherwise neutral voice within structures that value control over expression. Through spatial and temporal composition, the piece explores how the infrastructures that claim to reproduce emotion also determine its audibility. Voices, resonances, and machine-like modulations unfold across the space, allowing listeners to perceive how technological infrastructures reshape not only the sound of dissent but also the space of emotional release.

focus baby – put the amp in the closet and give it some juice – 45:00 min

"Turn up the amp. It's the only way. […] Put the amp in a closet and give it some juice. Avoid putting the mic dead-center on the speaker. Somewhere between the center and the edge are usually the best spots." January 2017

– a forum entry by a member nicknamed "ratedepth" on thegearpage.net (https://www.thegearpage.net/board/index.php?threads/tips-for-recordingguitar-amp-with-/sm57.2444328)

put the amp in a closet and give it some juice is a ten-channel composition for electric guitar specifically written for the two line-array stacks present in the exhibition at Kunstbau. Derived from the geometry of the institution, distinct modes of constructive sound interference were calculated to establish a fundamental, if not critical tuning for this piece. This tuning, or rather the reoccurring deviances from this tuning, results in voluminous subharmonic beats. Strumming the electric guitar naturally causes detune, as the neck, the strings and the body of the instrument are deformed by the body of the human who is playing. This physical relationship between the human and the instrument is projected into the exhibition space, letting an invisible, dynamic architecture of contrasted densities unfold and transform while the visitor navigates through this projection.

In a vertically spatialized manner, multiple long-durational recordings of the repeatedly strummed electric guitar are overdubbed to the extent of an additive instrumental synthesis, while minute variations and superposed microtonal shifts generate a series of low-frequency rhythmic patterns. The artist attempts to exercise a multidirectional transgression between the spatial and the temporal domain through a sound phenomenon that is familiar to trained and untrained ears alike.

Daniel Gianfranceschi – Decacophony – 49:00 min

Decacophony is a ten-channel work for electric guitar that tackles themes of duration, endurance, repetition and apparent stasis. The electric-guitar composition features a sustained drone of the A string achieved by an e-bow, augmented by the occasional natural reverb of a metal ball being dropped on the guitar's pick-guard. In a digital audio workstation, this recording is copied, inverted and added, on a new track, to the original recording. Numerous other sustained A-notes are then added as to, sequentially, feature slight changes in octave, filters and delay timings, morphing the original tone of the fundamental note and its various overtones. At Kunstbau, the available channels are split into two groups of five, with one stack playing the original composition and four other renditions of the work, varying in pitch and

modulation, while the set of loudspeakers positioned on the opposite side of the room will play a mirrored version of the work, thus starting from the octave that concludes the original version of the composition and ending up at the one that starts it. The work's volume is reflected through the use of diametrically opposed panning: one loudspeaker array will ebb from silent to a designated volume peak while the opposing version of the same composition will start out at maximum volume and fade out slowly. Referencing notions of minimalism and composers like Alvin Lucier, William Basinski and Phill Niblock, the composition *Decacophony*, technically only featuring one note throughout its duration, supposes listening as an active experience. When prolonged, microtonal changes are perceived as layered psychoacoustic phenomena that alter perceptions of time, auditory localization, and frequency masking; through the work's cyclical structure, they also impart a hypnotic, meditative quality.

Bruno Younes Haas – running out of breath – 45:00 min

running out of breath is a ten-channel composition that samples fragments of the vocal tracks of various songs, focusing on the intakes of breath preceding speech and stretching them until they transform into complex sonic textures. Breath emerges as an engine of expression, a negative space that shapes language wherein that which is, usually, on the verge of even being noticed is examined.

Over the duration of forty-five minutes, the material oscillates between the act of near-obliteration and reassembly. Sounds stretch beyond intelligibility, then gradually gather themselves back into the contours of their original form. The cyclical scrubbing through the audio, traces a rhythm reminiscent of breathing itself: expansion and contraction, tension and release. In this shifting field, time behaves less as a linear progression and more as a malleable substance; something that can be folded, repeated, or held in place.

Detached from their original source, each breath carries an eerie intimacy, yet remains elusive and foreign. In these in-between-states, breath becomes rhythm, shifting focus to what lies under every act of vocal inflection: the quiet insistence of air, perpetually returning, time and time again. The work is not only shaped by the transmutations inherent in the production method, but also by the particular spatial conditions of the Kunstbau, where sound is inevitably distributed throughout the long, resonant architecture. The material is further refracted by the building's natural reverberation and by the shifting vantage points of listeners as they navigate the space.

Jahy Hwang – Voices – 40:19 min

Voices is a ten-channel sound-piece that examines the material and technological conditions that shaped the colonial sound archive produced in the twentieth century. The work centers on recordings made by the Royal Prussian Phonographic Commission (Königlich Preußische Phonographische Kommission) during the First World War, later incorporated into the Lautarchiv in Berlin. Created as part of an ethnological and colonial project that turned prisoners of war into material for linguistic and racial study, these recordings systematically documented the languages, songs, and voices of those held captive in German camps, transforming the vocal expressions of displaced individuals into data for linguistic and racial classification. Among the prisoners were Koreans who had migrated to the Russian far-east

(Koryo-saram) and were detained as soldiers of the Russian Imperial Army. Their diasporic histories were shaped by colonial expansion, coerced mobility, and imperial conflict.

Within this context, *Voices* focuses on two different recordings of one Korean song. These recordings are similar but show subtle distinctions. There are variations in the lyrics, shifting noise patterns of the phonograph mechanism, traces of the recording environment, and the standardized 435-hertz tuning pitch used to calibrate the apparatus. The differences also reflect the singers' interpretive choices, which carry cultural memory and introduce elements that exceed the archive's classificatory aims. By placing these recordings in relation to one another, *Voices* focuses on the instability of the archive. It appears coherent but is shaped by material contingencies and intertwined voices.

The work uses spectrogram analysis to distinguish human voice from the noise. However, noise and voice always interrupt each other, showing that there is no clear boundary between the two. This work reveals the infrastructure of the audio database and criticizes the ideological frameworks that shaped what could be heard, recorded, and ultimately preserved. The archive was shaped by different voices, including the ones it never intended to preserve. By listening to these unintended traces, *Voices* critiques the suggested knowledge structure and its claim to objectivity.

Caroline Kretschmer – -lous correlation – 40:00 min

-lous correlation is a 10-channel composition that draws on reduction, modulation, and resonance. The work translates a state of in-between which does not merely refer to the Kunstbau's location as an architectural transitional space, but sonically and visually morphs this state into its own experiential dimension. The architecture itself becomes a resonator, with the space acting as an integral part of the composition.

Light appears as sonic material: a seemingly static yet highly complex drone that evolves almost imperceptibly. This approach builds on a long-standing practice that emerged from stage-based scenarios in which light functioned less as illumination and more as a generative, performative actor, a lineage that resonates with expanded concepts explored by artists such as David Tudor. From this shift, the sonification of light developed as an instrument in its own right.

Operating partly below the threshold of hearing, the material resists conventional distinctions between sound and space. Instead, it forms a subtle architectural condition that slowly influences how we navigate the space. The composition creates a field of tension between presence and withdrawal, where different modes of perception continuously overlap.

Through frequency splitting, the drone is distributed across the line-array system, while delay, reverb, and time-stretching processes continuously transform its condition. One array emphasizes low-frequency content, while the other projects more directly perceived audio material — both merging into a single, shifting sonic field within the Kunstbau. Psychoacoustic effects such as beating, masking, and audible spatial reflections function as conceptual tools and perceptual triggers, reconfiguring both listening behavior and the spatial experience. The work draws on traditions of drone and minimal music, as well as experimental approaches such ss those of Éliane Radigue and Phill Niblock.

Bradley Leonard – Intolerance 1963 – 46:19 min

Intolerance 1963 is a ten-channel sound-piece that reinterprets recorded excerpts from Luigi Nono's radical 1961 atonal opera *Intolleranza* (1960), a seminal work that confronted the political realities of fascism, militarism, and societal oppression. Rather than quoting the original directly, the piece engages with Nono's material as a site of dialogue, an encounter across generations, aesthetics, and political moments. Nono's commitment to artistic resistance becomes a point of departure, prompting reflection on how the urgencies of his time have persisted into the present.

The archival fragments are slowed down, stretched beyond their dramatic pacing into a suspended, atmospheric field. This temporal manipulation is not only a technical gesture but a political one: by elongating the source material, the work exposes submerged textures and questions how historic challenges endure across time. The slowing-down resists the demand for immediacy, instead creating a space where the lingering residue of necessity can be felt.

Conceptually and musically, the work extends Nono's atonality by challenging the Western tuning standard of 440Hz. It employs detuning ranging from subtle cents to a full tritone. Resonators and granular synthesizers then use these microtonal deviations as a generative basis for the synthesis itself. This detuning acts as a form of estrangement, an auditory dislocation that mirrors ideological dissonances and challenges inherited assumptions about musical and political norms.

Reworked from the version debuted early this year, for the spatial conditions of Kunstbau, the piece has been expanded into a multi-channel format employing distinct time-stretching algorithms across the array. The processing chain has also been deepened: the gradual detuning of the mid-range spectrum is now mapped to resonators, directly triggering the synthesis of additional sub-frequencies. This creates a dense, recursive texture where the disintegration of pitch generates the work's sonic foundation.

Léa Manoussakis di-Bona – Residual Syntax – 40:00 min

The work *Residual Syntax* is a six-channel sound composition developed specifically for the Kunstbau. It starts from a simple premise: what remains of language when its structure is preserved but its sentences are removed? Using a full set of punctuation marks extracted from Samuel Beckett's *Texts for Nothing* (1950–52), as published in *Stories and Texts for Nothing* (1967), each mark is mapped to a specific temporal behaviour, such as durational values, micro-pauses, shifts in density, or subtle redistributions across the six channels, forming a pseudo-notational system that structures the composition's unfolding. Vocal residues such as breaths, inhalation and fragmented utterances appear more as traces of reading rather than speech. The score unfolds along the Kunstbau's 110-meter axis, where events drift, repeat, or thin out as if following an internal breathing apparatus.

The Kunstbau's position beneath a historically charged surface introduces a spatial tension between above and below: the postwar structure sits within a layered urban site whose directional pull, linearity, and elongated flow shaped the approach to the composition itself. Within this setting, Beckett's rhythm of voice, appearing, withdrawing, returning, going on, offers a way of engaging with a space marked by discontinuity. The piece responds to this by

allowing sound to behave as residue rather than narration, tracing patterns that emerge, disperse and reassemble across the tunnel's length. Listening unfolds slowly, following the traces that architecture, perception and linguistic residue leave in one another.

Maria Margolina – Slowly, Regained – 43:07 min

Mise en Abyme, the second law of thermodynamics, RLHF, micro-and macrocosm, et sic in infinitum.

When discussing feedback loops, this phenomena appears ubiquitously in our environment and life experiences, from physical principles and the analysis of social behaviors in societies to mechanical and electronic phenomena. However, "feedback" is not limited to the material realm. So, what exactly do we imply when we say, "That resonates with me"? The external world as a result from inner projection, while the inner self simultaneously draws nourishment from everything external. One listens to what the world communicates but also perceives beyond the acoustically perceptible. What does it mean to experience the world as a continuous process existing in the tension between resonance, consonance, and dissonance? Perhaps fundamentally, it means existing in constant interaction. Everything influences everything else – the paradox of the subject-object schema.

Starting from cybernetic and natural-scientific phenomena, Margolina's interest focuses on feedback and circular motion as systematic processes. This interest spans societal observation, questions of consciousness, and extends into artistic, musical, religious, and spiritual experience. Beginning with video synthesis, she continued working with diverse software and hardware on acoustic and musical experiments in this field. This exploration ultimately led to *Slowly, Regained* – a 43-minute, 10-channel piece built from a collection of recordings produced with a self-developed resonator-feedback system.

Camilla Metelka – An Unstaged Opera – 30:30 min

The work *An Unstaged Opera* is a ten-channel composition that presents itself as an endless rehearsal – an idea for an opera that will never be performed. Its acts unfold through shifting variations of choral singing, fragments of poetry, synthesizers, and piano, with each sonic element embodying its own presence within the space. Every rehearsal becomes a site-specific improvisation: architecture, audience, and multi-channel movement shape the sonic performance, while time and space act as materials that continuously redefine the work's staging.

The Kunstbau's distinctive architecture amplifies the piece, transforming the venue into a resonant body, where space itself functions as a projecting device. Two monolithic loudspeaker systems articulate the environment. Within this immersive setting, they evoke an atmosphere reflecting sacred architectures, where boundaries between electronic and human, ancient and contemporary, dissolve. The opera's sonic dramaturgy centers on the sustained resonance of the synthesizer – conceived as a contemporary bordun – accompanied by micro-variations, moments of distortion, and percussive textures that shape the work's acts. Drawing freely on modal qualities of medieval music, the electronic drone extends and deepens the choir's polyphony. The open tonalities of the modal modes mirror the structural openness of the poem *Towers*, which serves as the libretto for the opera. In abstract and sensorial terms, the

text explores bodily experiences of rupture, release, and fragile clarity, allowing language to unfold with a sense of timeless and spatial expansiveness. *An Unstaged Opera* inhabits the threshold between rehearsal and realization; an ephemeral stage experiment in which sound, space, time, and perception interact. The work is inspired by the composition *Tower of Meaning* (1983) by Arthur Russell.

Vasilii Vikhliaev – Aggressor's Tongues – 41:01 min

Aggressor's Tongues is a ten-channel sound work that explores machine listening as a form of deliberate non-hearing. Instead of directly confronting the rhetorical violence of contemporary Russian propaganda, the task of listening is delegated to computational systems: algorithms that register pressure, pitch and strain, all the while remaining indifferent to meaning.

The work draws on state-aligned Russian broadcast speeches recorded during the ongoing invasion of Ukraine: voices saturated with aggression, authority, and affect. These recordings are automatically segmented into the smallest units – vowels, fricatives, phonetic residues – and used as training data for small variational autoencoders: machine-learning models that learn to reproduce the sonic structure of the voices without accessing meaning. The resulting sound models are navigated by slow, deterministic drifts through vector spaces. A complex structure of irrational ratios guides the architecture of their movement, producing long periods of near-stasis, interrupted by sudden timbral shifts, like crossing hidden fault lines in an unknown topology. Emotional audio features extracted from the original speeches (intensity, spectral roughness, timbral density) periodically disrupt this drift, causing the system to deviate from its precise mathematical trajectory. Traces of the real, chaotic utterances intrude on the otherwise abstract motion before dissolving back into its structure.

In this process, comprehension is replaced by compression; affect becomes geometry. The machine listens without fatigue, fear, or reflection. Its inability to understand becomes the very substance of the work, transforming violent speech into a residue of articulation that operates at the level of breath, resonance, and vocal pressure. *Aggressor's Tongues* frames machine listening as an algorithmic ritual: a mode of attention that confronts violent speech not by interpreting it, but by subjecting it to its own pressure waves, eroding authority into phonetic debris — sound without narrative.