
Introduction

Words from the Co-Founding Editors

Our second issue of *Resonance* is a distinct offering that principally features the research of women who have written on a compelling range of subjects related to the scope of our journal. In this issue we present an eco-critical view of an interdisciplinary arts residency at Roden Crater, a study in the emerging field of critical yoga studies that highlights the misappropriation of musical and cultural practices, original research on the lesser-known history of jazz singer and pianist Shirley Horn, and a paper on the labor power implied in the online work of female ASMR artists. Collectively, these invited and original contributions help to frame the importance and relevancy of sound practice and culture today by demonstrating that sound can aid in expanding our experience and awareness of remote environs, work to erase cultural tropes, allow for the rediscovering of seminal artists, and help in the understanding of how gender and sound are performed online.

INVITED ESSAYS

In her essay “Sound Is Round: A Waterfall of Falling Sounds That I Catch Dreaming,” sound artist Yolande Harris frames and recounts her experiences while she was a visiting artist at Arizona State University, taking part in the Roden Crater Field Seminars in 2019. Harris’s essay is a vivid personal exploration and meditation on her use of underwater ocean sounds in her art and a unique chronicle of her experience in a desert landscape. Harris regards the act of listening to underwater sound as a form of experiential salve that may lead us toward an oceanic consciousness, toward a broader respect for the environment. Of artist James Turrell’s Roden Crater, Harris asks:

I wonder how, through an artistic experience, ocean and desert can richly interact on the scale of human perception. I start mapping these relationships from the sculptural, material, and physiological experience of specific environments. What happens in our imaginations and sense of presence when we listen to ocean sounds while walking through a ruined settlement, or hear the voices of whales wind-blown on the rim of a crater high above the desert?

While pointing toward a revised naturalism in the aridity of the desert, Harris also notes the importance of how Pauline Oliveros’s *Pacific Tell* was incorporated into the residency as well as how Mette Bryld and Nina Lykke’s feminist cultural writings on technology and

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animals inform her practice of blending ocean and desert into a space of aesthetic reconsideration. Ultimately, the social interactions experienced during her residency—along with the collective listening experienced in the residency—fused into a newly imagined fluid space for Harris, a Möbius strip between desert and ocean that was filled with new perspectives and clarity.

Turning around, I notice the sound echoing off canyon walls, a dense mass solid with frequencies. But my ears hear the change of density as I spin, and I record as I rotate round and round in the muddy canyon drowned by the sound of falling water. Falling water, falling through air, falling down. I am taking in this enormous energy and it seems to create a shift in my being, as if I'm all smoothed out, centered, connected.

As the popularity of yoga escalates in the Western world, Roopa Singh's "Yoga's Entry Into American Popular Music Is Racialized (1941–67)" offers one of the first critical yoga studies analyses of race, othering, and belonging, providing examples of how yoga, in the midst of all its popularity, has devalued the very people from whom it originated. Singh traces the historical origins and racial tropes (both visual and sonic) present in three yoga-related American popular music songs in an effort to reveal many of the moral ambiguities and cultural appropriations that occurred as forms of yoga became more popularized in the United States.

Singh adopts the framework of *mobilities* to help identify how the specifics present in the Orientalized sounds and othering sights form an interwoven and nuanced message, rendering in the end a facsimile of its spiritual intention.

The songs strip yoga of any home and family. Yoga is cast as an orphan: It arrives uncared for, unkempt, and grasping when it penetrates the U.S. imagination through popular culture in the first half of the 20th century—nation-building and industrialization decades. These songs work to keep this dominant truth discourse moving. They sing of how Indian yogis are out of control, incapable of mind over matter, too mentally unfit to practice yoga.

This paper also outlines a path toward the establishment of critical yoga studies in order to dissolve hegemonic walls and pursue deep interdisciplinarity.

ORIGINAL RESEARCH

Jessica Boykin-Settles in "Two Heads Are Better Than One" examines the life, musical intelligence, and artistic capacity of American jazz vocalist and pianist Shirley Horn. While famously praised by jazz enthusiasts and her contemporaries, including Quincy Jones and lifetime friend and mentor Miles Davis, Horn's history has been largely underrepresented. Boykin-Settles, herself an accomplished jazz artist, presents new insights into Horn's music by providing comparisons and analysis of Horn's singing and virtuosic piano playing to the styles and various approaches in the techniques of such luminaries as Sergei Rachmaninoff, Art Tatum, and Oscar Peterson. The article also features intricate analyses of a number of Horn's recordings created throughout her

career. In her description of “Wild Is the Wind” on Horn’s album *Here’s to Life*, Boykin-Settles writes:

This performance opens with a rubato solo piano introduction in which Horn plays the melody, sometimes by itself as one line played with the right hand and accompanying chord voicings in the left; other times she harmonizes it with deliciously dissonant block chords. She discreetly signals her band when she is ready to dive into the head of the song. A couple of measures into the A section, she gives another discreet signal—this time to her drummer.

In her conclusion, Boykin-Settles proffers a powerful coda about race, music, and the need to increase the support and recognition of female African American jazz musicians.

In “Wages for Soundwork: ASMR as Reproductive Labor,” Joshua Hudelson evokes Marx in this fascinating critique of the reproduction of labor and power relations present in the performance of ASMR (Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response) that has emerged on YouTube and as it has been used in more traditional forms of advertising. Hudelson charts the popularity of the phenomenon, from the “whisper-quiet corners of the Internet to become a bullhorn of speculation on the human sensorium,” and the rise of the female ASMRtist, a new kind of sound stylist who performs acts (both visually and audibly) of domestic or “symbolic labor” (Bernardi).

Imagine it this way: after a long day of emails, phone calls, meetings, and spreadsheets, the ASMR fan soothes his frayed nerves with a video whose sounds transport him away from the realm of thought, language, and engagement. Encased in sounds that seem to touch him, he is eventually able to bypass his insomnia and fall into a sleep that will allow him to answer more emails and attend more meetings the following day.

Hudelson also presents a fascinating and unique connection between ASMR and Chantal Akerman’s 1975 film *Jeanne Dielman, 23 quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles*. The close read is saturated with historical insights from Leopoldina Fortunati, Silvia Federici, and Marsha Kinder, among others. The author concludes with a future forecast for ASMR, one that includes broad neuroscientific research as well as considerations of what sound artist Claire Tolan has

referred to as “kind of a new form of being close to somebody.”

BOOK REVIEWS

Lisa Brooten’s review of the recently released *Hearing Southeast Asia: Sounds of Hierarchy and Power in Context* provides a poignant and critical examination of the extensive edited collection by Nathan Porath. Brooten’s insights are many and her thorough review reveals important details about how sound, language, and power are negotiated today in Southeast Asia.

Namrata Rele Sathe examines *The Voice as Something More: Essays Toward Materiality*, edited by Martha Feldman and Judith T. Zeitlin. The book is a collection of essays that explore the concept of “voice” across several contexts from sound studies—physiological,

psychological, and sociopolitical—as well as exemplified in music, theater, cinema, and radio and more recently shaped through the influence of artificial intelligence.

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