

Sound Studies and Sonic Arts

Summer Semester 2023

Phase Focus

Module Theory, Practice

Course Title Listening at the end of (this) world | Seminar

Course Times and Location Fridays | 10:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m. | LIE 314

Instructors Dr. Pedro Oliveira

Email pedro@oliveira.work

Office Hours and Location upon request

Possible Credit Points Theory 2CP (G/NG), Theory 4CP (G), Practice 4CP (G), Free Focus 2CP/4CP (NG)

Course

*"There, in the parade, I left my black skin, my voice
My point of view, my discourse, my home, my solitude
Woman at the End of the World, I am
I go on, singing till the end"
– Elza Soares, "A Mulher do Fim do Mundo"*

This Seminar is a collective, speculative exercise in thinking and listening with and beyond the end of the world as we know it. What forms of collective knowing are made possible by such an exercise, and more importantly, what is the role of artistic, poetic, and sonic thinking in dismantling the current world and creating new worlds and sense-makings? To find out possible points of entry and return, we will read and discuss texts and artworks from those for whom the world has already ended many times, i.e. queer, black, and indigenous thinkers, in particular (but not exclusively) from Latin America and the Caribbean. While these thinkers are not always necessarily relating to sound, their work speaks to modes of theory-as-praxis as embodied, poetic gestures that include, but are never limited to, "the sonic." By engaging with radical propositions that understand the artistic and the poetic as modes of being and creating worlds, this Seminar proposes listening as generative and part of a multitude of praxes for all forms of life beyond the notion of "making things known," and beyond the "human" as a category of and for existence.

Our discussions will be cut across by listening sessions so as to complement the task of making sense, letting the discussions "sink in" as we go along. For every meeting one (or more) students will be asked to introduce the readings to the class. This is NOT meant to be a presentation, but instead a contextualization from our own, situated understanding of the texts, their gaps, questions, and propositions. The aim is to ignite a productive, open-ended discussion rather to demonstrate a full understanding beforehand. We will create a space for "productive unknowing," where the limits what we know and what we may not know shall be constantly re-negotiated, collectively.

This Seminar is aimed at anyone interested in anticolonial, queer, black, and indigenous thinking beyond the "canon" of Sound Studies, as well as students interested in working and experimenting with the limits of theory and its intersections (and conflicts) with artistic practice. By the end of the seminar you should be (a) familiar with theories and methodologies from the Global South; (b) acquire and develop a critical engagement with these theories and methodologies within and beyond sound studies, while (c) being able to apply the ideas and concepts we will explore in class to your own artistic research and practice.

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This Seminar is limited to **15 students**, with up to 2 extra guest listeners possible.

Exam / Credit Points

2CP (graded: Theory, not graded: Theory, Free Focus):

Attendance, preparation and meaningful engagement in in-class discussion;

Introducing **at least** one of the readings and/or curating a listening/watching session and discussion;

At the end: short methodological statement (poetic-theoretical or theory-based – details tbd).

Consecutive assignment leading to 4CP (optional, graded: Theory, grading: mean of both grades; not graded: Free Focus):

Term paper (ca. 5-8000 words) **or** Audio Paper (20 minutes) + 2500 words paper, both due 1 Nov 2023.

OR

Consecutive assignment leading to 4 CP (optional, graded: Practice, grading: mean of both grades; not graded: Free Focus): Performance or Performance-lecture (no longer than 20 minutes, delivery date: tba) + documentation (no longer than 1500 words), due 1 Oct. 2023.

Other mixed arrangements also possible and TBD individually.

Schedule

Class Intros: the world as we know it

Krenak, A., 2020. "The Humanity We Think We Are", In: Ideas to postpone the end of the world. Anansi International, Toronto.

Anzaldúa, G., 2012. "Movimientos de rebeldía y las culturas que traicionan", In: Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza, Fourth Edition. ed. Aunt Lute Books, San Francisco.

Session 2: the end of (this) world

Yusoff, K., 2018. "Insurgent Geology: A Billion Black Anthropocenes Now", In: A billion black Anthropocenes or none. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

Ferreira da Silva, D., 2016. "On Difference Without Separability", in: Incerteza Viva (Living Uncertainty): Catálogo Da 32a São Paulo Art Biennial. São Paulo, SP, Brasil.

Session 3: listening to other worlds

Ochoa Gautier, A.M., 2014. "On Howls and Pitches", In: Aurality: Listening and Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Colombia. Duke University Press, Durham.

Anzaldúa, G., 2015. "Flights of the Imagination", In: Light in the Dark/Luz En Lo Oscuro: Rewriting Identity, Spirituality, Reality. Duke Univ Pr, Durham, North Carolina.

Session 4: where many worlds fit

Oliveros, P. Quantum Listening.

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Kopenawa, D. and Albert, B. 2013. Excerpts from the book, In: *The Falling Sky: Words of a Yanomami Shaman*.

Session 5: poetics after the end I

Anzaldúa, G., 2015. „Putting Coyolxauhqui Together“, In: *Light in the Dark/Luz En Lo Oscuro: Rewriting Identity, Spirituality, Reality*. Duke Univ Pr, Durham, North Carolina.

Ferreira da Silva, D., 2018. "In the Raw". e-flux.

Session 6: poetics after the end II

Ferreira da Silva, D., 2017. "1 (life) ÷ 0 (blackness) = ∞ – ∞ or ∞ / ∞: On Matter Beyond the Equation of Value". e-flux.

Pauline Gumbs, A. 2020. Excerpts from the book, In: *Dub: Finding Ceremony*. Duke University Press.

Session 7: against conclusion

Brief 4CPs + Tutoring

Supporting Media

Anzaldúa, G., 2015. *Light in the Dark/Luz En Lo Oscuro: Rewriting Identity, Spirituality, Reality*. Duke Univ Pr, Durham, North Carolina.

Anzaldúa, G., 2012. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, Fourth Edition. ed. Aunt Lute Books, San Francisco.

Campt, T., 2017. *Listening to images*. Duke University Press, Durham.

Crampton, E., 2020. *ORCORARA 2010*. PAN Records.

Ferreira da Silva, D., 2022. *Unpayable debt, On the antipolitical*. Sternberg Press, London.

Glissant, E., 1997. *Poetics of Relation*. Univ of Michigan Pr, Ann Arbor.

Krenak, A., 2020. *Ideas to postpone the end of the world*. Anansi International, Toronto.

McKittrick, K., 2021. *Dear science and other stories, Errantries*. Duke University Press, Durham.

Mombaça, J., 2021. *Não vão nos matar agora, Encruzilhada*. Cobogó, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brasil.

Ochoa Gautier, A.M., 2014. *Aurality: Listening and Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Colombia*. Duke University Press, Durham.

Robinson, D., 2020. *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

Soares, E., 2016. *A Mulher do Fim do Mundo. Mais um Discos*.

Yusoff, K., 2018. *A billion black Anthropocenes or none, Forerunners: ideas first from the University of Minnesota Press*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

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TBA