

EL CONTAGIO FEMINISTA

1. Notes about the context: Green Buenos Aires

I have worked in Buenos Aires on three occasions over the last two years and experienced its street feminisms each time. The word « feminism » is written in capital and lower case letters on city walls and magazines. The word seems to infiltrate daily conversations from coffee shops to taxis, from supermarkets to elevators. One day, while walking down the street, I saw a public works notice about women safety: the workers won't whistle nor harass women in the street, the notice said. I found myself speaking with young feminist activists who were fighting with and for the rights of the indigenous women local communities, or with male friends trying to deconstruct their masculinity. I learned that beyond « nosotras » or « nosotros », the feminine and masculine version of « us », there exists a third inclusive way « nosotres » which is now becoming popular in common discourses across universities, newspapers, and daily conversations. For the first time I thought of feminism as a form of social contagion.

This contagion could be called « Marea Verde » (Green Tide), in reference to the feminist claims for legal abortion voiced by the massive demonstrations taking place in Argentina today. Since the start of the campaign in 2017, the feminist movement has adopted a distinctive symbol: a green handkerchief. Beyond the demonstrations, it is today worn as a token of our own feminism, as a call to solidarity.

This plural feminism permeates the streets, conversations, dreams, hopes, and political agendas, compelling us to confront sexist violence in all of its forms. It is an ongoing process of deep cultural and social transformation, but Argentina still has not legalized abortion yet and according to 2019 police and judicial reports, a woman dies of femicide every 36 hours.

The Argentinian feminist movement has a long history going back to organizations like the Asociación Civil Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo); a human rights organization that still advocates for the finding of children stolen and illegally adopted during the Argentine dictatorship of 1977. There is the Encuentro, an annual feminist gathering in Argentina. 2019 marked the 34th edition of the Encuentro in the city of la Plata, with more than 180 thousands participants attending.

Today, the wave of the feminist movement in Argentina is called Ni una menos (Not one less). It emerged in its current form in 2015 and soon spread across several Latin American countries and internationally. Regular demonstrations are held to protest against acts of femicide and promote debates on topics such as gender roles, sexual harassment, gender pay gap, sexual objectification, legality of abortion, sex workers' rights, and transgender rights. Since then, Ni Una Menos has grown into a powerful international women's movement that describes itself as « a collective cry against gender violence »¹.

2. Listening opens up the chance that something else will happen.²

The movement *Ni una menos* generates a time-space in which to listen and generate listening. To me, this active form of listening has turned feminism into a medium for public contagion. The feminist production of listening in Buenos Aires promotes the identification of common claims without sacrificing the value of multiplicity and possible dissent — it claims the right to « agree to disagree »³. It generates many possibilities and questions, « involving the openness of being this or that, beyond the cognitive security »⁴. It became an epistemological storm, a transgression which has made visible and audible the limits of the patriarchal's limits⁵. «If tradition has generated objectivity and the right to not listen what it contradicts or fails », the feminist movement provides a « syntax of reciprocity beyond the articulation of power »⁶. Where anyone belongs.

3. *El contagio feminista*: a possible way to think feminisms via radiophonic listening

Now, if this contagion has the color of a green tide, I wonder if we can focus on its sonic dimension and possibly activate a meta-listening of the radical transformation, embodied by the plurality of feminisms in Buenos Aires. To this end, I have invited a group of Argentinian sound artists to interpret the idea of feminism as a social contagion. I believe radio is the most appropriate medium to stimulate this process because it is itself a tool for contamination. What you will listen to may act like a virus working on your body, mind, possibly on your soul. And I am secretly wonder: how would you react to this contagion?

In Cecilia Castro's work, « Vocal technologies: the viral nature of the Green Wave », we hear a virtual voice combining different theoretical and activists feminist texts, chosen by the sound artist and composer. The following quote « Patriarchy is not just a relation among people; it is also a relation among sounds »⁷ invites the listener to experience the piece as a sonic voyage, both ironic and serious, which ends with instructions on how to reproduce the *Zaghareet*.

Why this sound? If we could speak about a sonic mark that embodies Buenos Aires' feminist contagion, this would certainly be one of them. The *Zaghareet* is a long, high-pitched sound that resembles an unmistakable howl. It is a wow, a unique, distinctive scream one can modulate with repetitive, quick movements of the tongue or hand. Originally from Magreb and the Middle East, it is used to celebrate women gathering and for spreading good luck.

A similar sound exists in the indigenous local communities of Argentina to indicate imminent danger. This sound was heard by video maker and director Daniela Seggiaro during a conversation between an indigenous woman from the wichi community and a young feminist from Buenos Aires. A conversation that led her to realize that, in spite of the different contexts, this howl could also be interpreted as a rallying call for women around the world to unite and fight together. In « Verde 11' » Daniela Seggiaro creates poetic flows based on soundscapes recorded in the *Comunidades del Gran Chaco* in the North of the country, one of the places where the Argentina variant of the *Zaghareet* may have originated from. In this work, we can hear the voices of women from the indigenous wichi community shaping their own *audillo*, creating their own sound.

In the case of Constanza Castagnet, « c;c~ », the artist relies on her voice to express the not yet by abdicating the use of the normative, patriarchal, language. By decomposing it in minimal unities, she creates her own language and suggests a new way to perceive it.

In Sebastian Rey's work we find what Severo Sarguy would define as a form of « abstract radio »⁸. The artist generates an hypnotic rhythm where languages and voices disintegrate into a semantic *derive*. In « Yo el hijo » (Me the son), the artist repeats these words « *Auguri e figli maschi* » like a mantra. By playing with the

musicality of the words, he lays bare the rawness of this sentence, which in Italian means: « Best wishes and lots of male children ».

The two drummers and sound artists Florencia Curci and Tatiana Heuman decided to start from time, rhythms, temporalities by asking if there is a feminist way to conceive them. In « Neither God, nor Master or Husband », they create an eclectic patchwork of texts to reflect on the way their own feminism is inspired by other women's by embodying other voices. As such, their polyphonic compositions remind us that we are always the echoes of other women.

Finally, the sound artist collective Zago, composed of Leonello Zambón and Eugenia González, is inspired by the following question: « Considering the differences between the voice's frequencies between men and women, at what frequency does the social body resonates today? ». They produced field recordings in public spaces across Buenos Aires, then deconstructed and re-composed them using the Audiostellar software. Audiostellar enabled the artists to explore field recordings, using machine intelligence to reveal latent structures in the input sound files. This post-human work aims to emulate how the machine itself could listen to humans, defragmenting the original recordings and leaving solely the rhythms and tones of the recorded voices.

4. Impossible to conclude: more listening and feminist sounds yet to come

Sonic feminisms are always plural

they are trans-geographic, even if they are made in the same place

they are trans-linguistic, even if they have been conceived in one language they are trans

they love women

They are celebrations

emergencies

dissidences

they are invasive

they are viruses

they are contagious

difficult to see

because they can be anywhere

taking different forms

but they sound

Each sound is unique

each combination is unique

different volumes

sometimes becoming noise

some assonances, among dissonances

They are around you

How would you deal with them?

- 1 <http://niunamenos.org.ar/category/manifiestos/>
- 2 Bickford, Susan, 1966, *Listening, conflict, and Citizenship. The dissonance of democracy*, New York: Cornell University, p.4
- 3 Bickford, Susan, 1966, *Listening, conflict, and Citizenship. The dissonance of democracy*, New York: Cornell University
- 4 Corradi Fiumara, Gemma, 1996, *The other side of language. A philosophy of language*, New York: Routledge, pp 32-33
- 5 Foucault, Michel, 1977, *Language, counter-memory, practice. Selected essays and interviews by Michel Foucault*, edited by Donald F. Bouchard, New York: Cornell University press
- 6 Corradi Fiumara, Gemma, 1996, *The other side of language. A philosophy of language*, New York: Routledge, p. 21
- 7 Power, Nina, 2009, *Noise & Capitalism - Woman Machines: the Future of Female Noise*, in: *Mattin Iles & Anthony Iles, ed., Noise & Capitalism*, Donostia-S. Sebastián: Arteleku Audiolab, pp.97-103
- 8 Pérez, Rolando, 2011, *Severo Sarduy and the Neo-baroque Image of Thought in the Visual Arts*, Indiana: Purdue University Press

Where do I come and listen from?

I am Anna Raimondo, an artist born in Italy in 1981, based in Bruxelles since 2014, and feminist since 2008. I am devoted to practices related to listening. You can define me as a sound artist, radio artist, performer, feminist, feminist, feminist, and occasionally writer and curator. I give you the choice.

www.annaraimondo.com

Anna Raimondo completed the MA Sound Arts at the London College of Communication (UAL, London) and is currently running a practice based PhD between Arba (Royale Ecole des Beaux Arts) and ULB University in Brussels on the relationship between urban geography and gender listening. She has participated in several international exhibitions including: "Seremos serias de la manera más alegre" curated by Florencia Curci at CAso CNB (Buenos Aires, ARG); "New boundaries of the Wellness of Vaginal Ecosystem" curated at Ex Elettronica Gallery curated by Lucrezia Cippitelli (Rome IT); "New boundaries of the Wellness of Vaginal Ecosystem" curated by Juan Matos Capote at TEA Museum (Santa Cruz de Tenerife, ES); the 13th Dakar Biennial (SN) in the frame of the collective show "Invisible" curated par Alya Sebti; "Pavillon de l'Exile" curated by mounir fatmi and Marie Deparis-Yafil at French Institute (St.Louis, SN); "Loading...Casa" curated by Salma Lahlou in the frame of the Dubai Design Week; "Mi porti al mare?" curated by Nancy Casielles and Nancy Suárez at the MAAC (Brussels, BE); the collective show "Africa is not an island" at MACAAL's museum (Marrakech, MA); etc. Her radiophonic works have been broadcasted internationally. She has won the Palma Ars Acustica 2016 with her radio work "Me, my English and all the languages of my life" and the best soundscape prize for her piece "La vie en bleu" at the sound art competition PIARS. She won the city prize at Prix Mediatine in Belgium in 2018. As curator, she participated in « documenta 14 » for the radio program « Every Time A Ear di Soun » at SAVVY Gallery in Berlin (DE) in 2017 with the project « Saout Africa(s) »; the 4th Marrakech Biennial with the project « here.now.where? » (MA) in 2014; and the 16th edition of « Longueur d'ondes » organizing the « Focus Italie » in 2019; etc..

El contagio feminista #1 through the ears of Daniela Seggiaro and Cecilia Castro



Daniela Seggiaro (born in 1979 in Salta, she lives and works in Buenos Aires, ARG)

Daniela Seggiaro is a scriptwriter and filmmaker originally from the north of Argentina, her films and video works link ethnography, art and narrative experimentations. She presented her first film titled *Nosilataj Beauty* at the 2012 Berlinale.

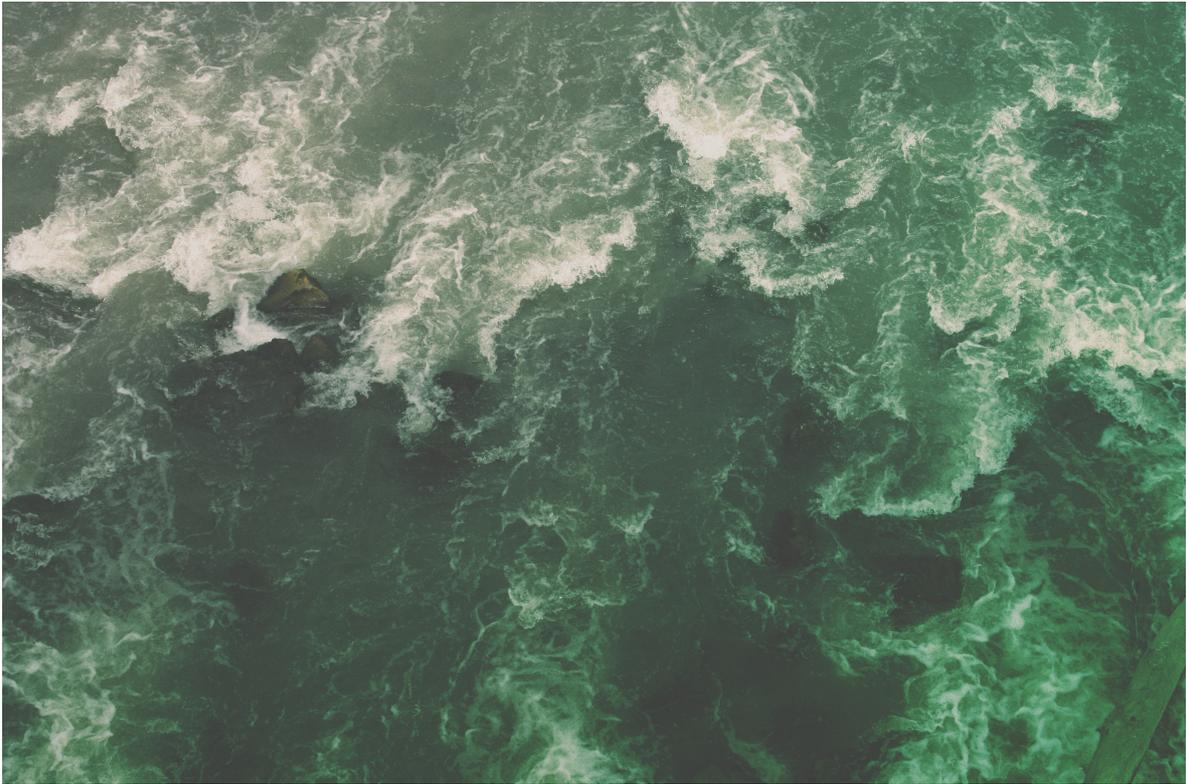
Verde 11', 11'

Realisation: Daniela Seggiaro

Voices: María Palma de Misión Chaqueña; Susana y Soledad Moreno de La Curvita; Whisky - Sound mix: Rufino Basavilbaso

During the last indigenous protest, many tribal women traveled from the jungle to the city of Salta. A feminist girl greeted them enthusiastically by making loud, uniquely distinctive vocal sounds, using her hands to modulate the pitch.

Indigenous men and women were amazed by what they heard. One tribal woman approached the girl and said the sound reminded her of an ancient tribal scream her elders would yell out to warn others of imminent danger in the jungle. I have myself made this cry several times during the feminist manifestations, like many others in the crowd. The sound piece « Verde Monte » emerges as a poetic and abstract evocation of the reactions and reflections I had when listening to their conversation. We are in danger and this cry is a call to action in the face of an emergency.



Cecilia Castro (born in Córdoba in 1980, she lives and works in Buenos Aires, ARG)

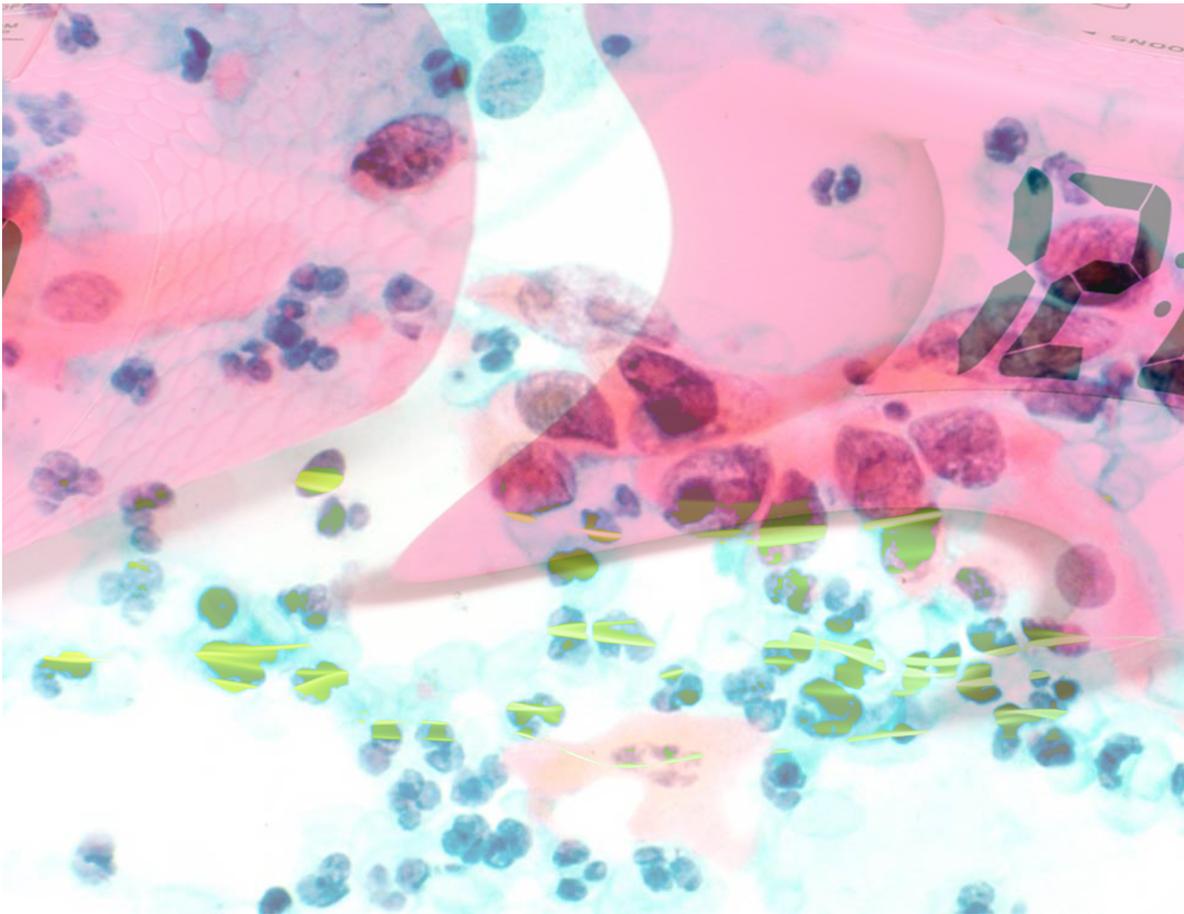
<https://www.ceciliacastro.net/>

Cecilia Castro is a composer and sound artist based in Buenos Aires. She received her bachelor degree in Electroacoustic Media and Composition from the National University of Quilmes. She has won awards for her work from the National Art Fund, the Telefónica Foundation, and the Modern Art Museum in Buenos Aires. The sound she creates for her pieces combine minimalist instrumental music, dark electronica, and noise. In her recent works, she broadened her artistic curiosity and social conscience, exploring concepts like frontiers & territories, sonic ruins, and visual & sonic culture, to create sound and art installations that combine video, stage art and sonic activism. She is a professor at the Tres de Febrero National University in the Electronics Art department and at the Film School (FUC).

Vocal technologies: the viral nature of the Green Wave, 40'04"

This work intends to be a theoretical, noisy and testimonial journey using sonic tools as viral devices for the latest feminist demonstrations in Argentina. Her work provides a soundscape that combines riot sounds, protest songs, testimonial voices, and theoretical texts; all connected by noises and spread through echoes.

El contagio feminista #2 through the ears of Florencia Curci and Tatiana Heuman and Zago



Florencia Curci (born in Buenos Aires in 1986, she lives and works in Buenos Aires, ARG)

www.florenciacurci.com

Florencia Curci is a drummer, sound artist, and curator based in Buenos Aires. Her work focuses on noise and rhythm as relative concepts that can reconfigure perception and communication. In 2017, she became the Director and main Curator of the Sound Art Center (CASo) in Buenos Aires.

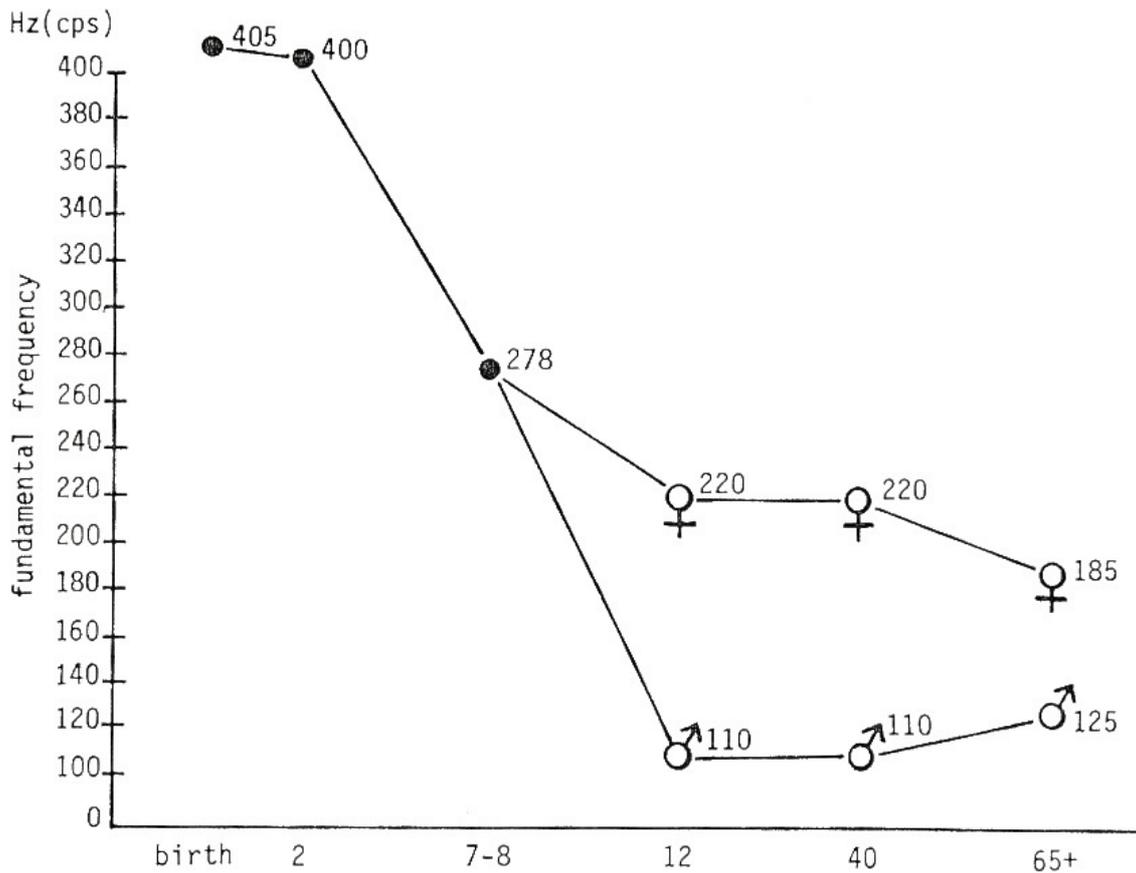
Tatiana Heuman(born in Buenos Aires in 1991, she lives and works in Cologne, DE)

www.tatianaheuman.com

Tatiana Heuman began her musical career in 2009 by playing trumpet and drums with the band Ricarda Cometa. In 2014, she started her solo left field pop project QEEI. The use of samples and field recordings are central elements of her work, which she uses to produce new soundscapes and rhythms through the deconstruction of spoken words and pop culture.

Ni dios, ni patrón, ni marido * 37' * The title is a quote from the libertarian feminist journal "the Woman's voice" 1896-1897

We propose a journey through time to suggest that the feminist contagion, which can be felt in the fabric of Buenos Aires, is the result of a complex polyrhythmic phenomenon. This work is an attempt to bring together these unique voices from different moments and social environments, which both summon and confuse us. In the last decade, the call for feminism has grown exponentially, thanks to the converging claims of previously divided social actors. Still, many forms of feminism coexist today, promoting different visions of the future. Are there feminist ways of dealing with time? Is there a feminist time or...perhaps rhythm?



Zago is a duo composed of Leonello Zambón (born in Quilmes, 1970, Zambon lives and works in Buenos Aires, ARG) and Eugenia González (born in 1983 in Montevideo, UR, she lives and works in Buenos Aires, ARG and Montevideo, UR).

They have been working as a collective since 2013. Some of their work has been shown at Residencia BASE (Valparaíso, 2019), Centro Cultural de España (Montevideo, 2017), Tsonami Sound Art Festival (Valparaíso, 2015), 12 Bienal de La Habana (2015), and The BP15 Performance Biennial (Casa Nacional del Bicentenario, Buenos Aires, 2015).

Sotto voce_buenos aires deconstructed movement 1, 14,28

- I. Input Mariano Boedo Square [-34.622283, -58.413084]
- ii. Deconstruction
- iii. Output _Oriana thanks - and we thank her - Muñiz Hospital [-34.638709, -58.393229]

The vocal tract of the human body-machine is an abduction-adduction device that modifies the air pressure, producing sounds in the 80Hz to 1200Hz range. The primary frequency, in which this bio device is capable of resonating, varies according to age and sex. From birth until age 8, both sexes produce a frequency in 400Hz range. Beginning with puberty, these frequencies begin to diverge and settle around 220Hz for women and 110Hz for men respectively, until they reach 40, at which point they again begin to converge in 150Hz frequencies. We therefore asked ourselves: At what frequency does the social body resonate today? To begin to answer this question, we made field recordings in public spaces across Buenos Aires, which we then deconstructed using Audiostellar software.



El contagio feminista #3 through the ears of Constanza Castagnet

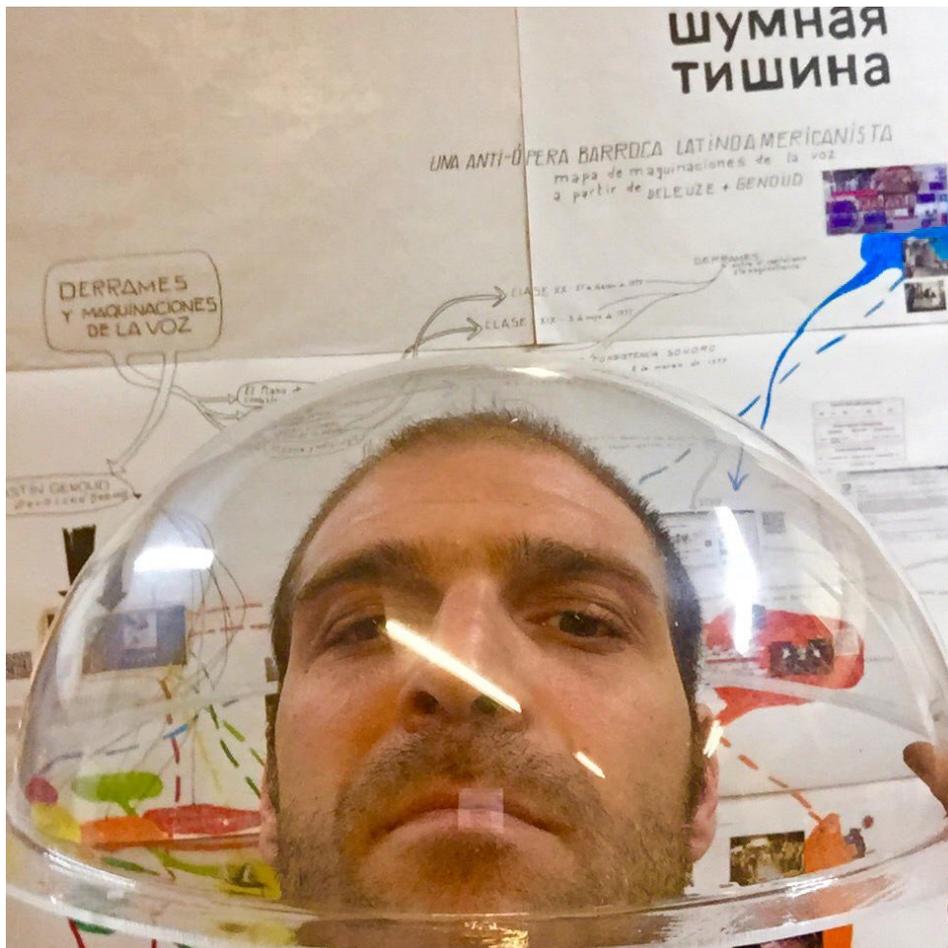
Constanza Castagnet (born in Buenos Aires in 1987, ARG; she lives in Amsterdam, NL)

<https://constanzacastagnet.co/>

Her work relates to the research and practice of voice and sound and deals with the spoken word, language, and unexplored vocal techniques in combination with abstract sounds that usually take the form of installations, performances, texts, and compositions and/or videos. With a strong self-taught impulse, Castagnet trained in music theory and vocal techniques. She studied at Meredith Monk Foundation (NY, 2016), UNTREF (2017) and the Universidad Torcuato Di Tella (2019). In 2018, she was part of the Artists Program of the Torcuato Di Tella University and carried out the project "Coro de Hinchas", a research project for Proa21 coordinated by Acéfala Gallery in collaboration with the Vocal Ensemble of the UNTREF. Her work has been shown in Japan (2016 - Shibaura House Tokyo), South Korea (2017 - GCC Festival, Gyeonggi), and Peru (2018 - Buffet de Ruidos, Lima).

c;c~, 13' 34"

Luce Irigaray once wrote, "If we continue to speak the same language to each other, we will reproduce the same story. Telling the same stories all over again". This work is an attempt to elude the normative perspective and avoid sameness by traveling aimlessly through the thresholds of language using a voice that cannot be encoded. The voices and stories that emerge from the darkness in this work move away from linearity, the obvious and the quickly consumable. In return, they offer time, loneliness, weathering. Through repetitions and reverberations, the phonetic material creates an abstract sonority with only one voice. In a progressive sway, its language unfolds and multiplies, building a labyrinth whose transit and enjoyment becomes possible in the gloom.



El contagio feminista #4 through the ears of Sebastian Rey

Sebastian Rey (born in Buenos Aires in 1985, he lives and works in Buenos Aires, ARG)

www.sonidocinico.wordpress.com

Sebastian Rey is a Buenos Aires based artist. His work explores the act of listening as a collective practice. His recent collaborations include fSONIDOC!NICO, sonic activism labs, with Leonello Zambón; Guatemala 5000, a series of performances revolving around the notions of impermanence and gentrification in Buenos Aires and Seoul, with the South-korean artist Daham Yeo; and the radio- phonic piece "La Playa" with the Argentinean artist Julieta Fradkin, based on the work of the Cuban writer Severo Sarduy. He works as a music therapist and teacher, researching possible relations between sound, spaces of listening and health, in both community settings and clinical spaces.

Yo el hijo, 37'

Buenos Aires is experiencing a feminist revolution that is attempting to uproot existing patriarchal structures. This movement is forcing us to question the invisible structures that still organize our daily lives. In the work "Yo el hijo", I would love to make this tension and process of transformation audible. By choosing, as a starting point, my way of listening as a white man, I hope to reveal the challenges this social position implies. How does a revolution sound like? How do we listen to it and how do we let ourselves be transformed by it?