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Understanding Sound: an introduction to listening for visual artists (and everyone else)

Today we're surrounded by sound (often unwanted), but we still live in a vision-dominated society. Music might be an essential part of our emotional experience (or just something to fill the void) but we often fail to understand what we hear - and often love. What's the difference between space-based and time-based arts? Why some sounds seem familiar? What is so attractive in repetition? How has recording changed our relationship with sound and music? What does music do to our sense of time? How come that sound seems to reach our emotions much more efficiently than vision? Why don't ears have lids?

Through lectures and listening experiences, the class is taken on a journey through the history of recorded sound and exposed to many different types of recordings (field, ethno-musicological, linguistic, radiophonic, etc.). Through recording exercises and simple software training, participants are introduced to basic sound manipulation and encouraged to reflect on their own relationship with the sonic experience.

lecturer: **Sergio Messina** (+ one assistant)

(course, one semester or 3 x 10 hours of lecture + listening sessions; available in english and italian.)

History: The original nucleus was devised for a summer seminar, *Sound for visual artists*, circa 1993. It also incorporates elements from the *Introduction to listening* class I have with Walter Prati at **IED** Sound Design school in Milano (1st year), as well as substantial parts of *Tracking sound and images*, the **Topics Class** developed for the **School of the Art Institute of Chicago** in 2009.



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