

2024 THIRD Annual Forum Report: Paula Montecino Olivia's Sonic Feminist Fabulations

By Amelia Groom

Today we fabulate with knowledge and play the full.

The zero in tarot.

Today we listen to the zero, the number that hosts other numbers,

Today we listen back and forward because time is not straightforward.

Today we invite you to activate imagination and fabulate with vibration.

To re(de)compose the linear and colonial order of senses.

To explore knowing based on practices of attunement and sensory perception to make walls porous, enter new rooms.

Today we listen from membranes to bones... transductions of lost memories.

Where in your body does listening occur?

How might an anticolonial democracy feel, move, and sound?

What type of tuning is needed to speak with invisible listeners?

How can the sonic shape our senses and ways of knowing?

What insights arise from interactions with the electromagnetic field and from collaborative in-situ and remote encounters?

At the THIRD Annual Forum 2024, choreographer and sound artist Paula Montecinos Oliva presented *Re(de)composing Relational Paradigms and Timelines through Body & Sound ~ Sonic Feminist Fabulations (SFF)*, a performative radio broadcast and collaborative research framework.

Visitors were invited into a “sonic playground” space where they could listen to and participate in an immersive environment of improvisational soundings, low-frequency oscillations, and electromagnetic listenings.

The sonic playground was created as a space to experiment with new forms of transmission and reception, for both in-situ and remote listening. An array of sonic forms – including voice, electronic music, archival recordings, conversations, live performances and experimental instruments – were brought together. Sounds were repeated, echoed, layered-up, felt, built upon, and sent through wires and radio waves and bodies.

There were pillows on the floor and an assemblage of instruments for making and transmitting and sensing sound – including simple handmade clay instruments, and a series of Priezor antennae; open-source passive magnetic antennae for ambient electromagnetic listening. The playground also featured DIY coil speakers with copper foil spirals on membranes. Participants

were invited to interact with the transmissions by moving hand-held magnets over the coils, to locate and draw out the sounds, and to feel them as physical vibrations.

Tocar y tocar. To touch and to play are the same word in Spanish. To play an instrument, you touch an instrument. Touching playfully. Listening as feeling; sounding as a play of touches.

The event was accompanied by a publication, which offered further prompts for experiments in the haptics of listening, inspired by the queer feminist composer Pauline Oliveros's scores and deep listening practices: "How many sounds can you hear all at once? Explore how you can reinforce a sound that is sounding. You can reinforce that sound in your mind, with voice, or with an instrument. Explore how you can create a contrast for that sound. You can contrast that sound in your mind, with voice, or with an instrument. What sound makes you speculative? What sound changes your breathing?"

The dedication in the publication reads: "We would like to dedicate this episode to Palestinian, Lebanese, Syrian, Yemenis and to all anticolonial struggles over the globe. To all people resisting imperial war machines. Wallmapu free – Palestine free."

Segments of the sonic playground were transmitted as a radio broadcast: Episode # 0 of *Sonic Feminist Fabulations*. The broadcast featured an experimental conversation between Oliva and her co-host Megan Hoetger, working with "the potential of speaking – quoting, paraphrasing, conversing, improvising – as a topography of sonic textures, uttered between their delays, repetitions, and the noise that binds them."

The sonic playground space also featured a library study corner with some of the books that have informed Oliva's research during the THIRD fellowship, including:

- *An Epistemology of Noise* by Cecile Malaspina
- *A Field Guide to Getting Lost* by Rebecca Solnit
- *Discourse on Colonialism* by Aime Cesaire
- *Sensing Sound* by Nina Sun Eidsheim
- *Stereophonia: Sound and Space in Science, Technology and the Arts* by Gascia Ouzounian
- *On Practices and Discourses of Decolonization* by Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui
- *Doing Justice* by Pablo Oyatzun
- *Zong!* by M. Nourbese Philip
- *Walter Benjamin's Antifascist Education: from riddles to radio* by Tyson E. Lewis
- *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy and Civic Courage* by Paulo Freire
- *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the practice of Freedom* by bell hooks
- *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies* by Dylan Robinson