

SO! Thursday Stream Year in Re-Hear

Neil Verma

Blog post published November 20, 2014 in *Sounding Out!*

<https://doi.org/10.59350/vqch6-4bq36>

Abstract

The offer was, I confess, music to my ears. It was the around this time last year that Editor-in-Chief Jennifer Stoeve and the SO! collective generously offered me the chance to come on board to help them draw in sound-minded editors and authors from the American Studies Association and Society for Cinema &

Keywords

Music (Subfield), Sound Studies, Alejandra Bronfman, Anna Friz, Benjamin Wright, Carolina Guerrero



Recommended citation

Verma, N. (2014, November 20). SO! Thursday Stream Year in Re-Hear. *Sounding Out!*. <https://doi.org/10.59350/vqch6-4bq36>

Copyright

Copyright © Neil Verma 2014. Distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

The offer was, I confess, music to my ears. It was the around this time last year that Editor-in-Chief **Jennifer Stoever** and the **SO!** collective generously offered me the chance to come on board to help them draw in sound-minded editors and authors from the [American Studies Association](#) and [Society for Cinema & Media Studies](#), and other academic associations, opening up a new space two or three Thursdays each month. The truth is I never even considered turning them down. Working together, we recruited talented folks to work as Guest Editors, crafting a number of special series posts that dig deep into mediated sonic worlds of music, radio, film, art and science.

The result has been a group of articles that I couldn't be prouder of for their richness. Among the most widely-read articles I've worked on this year you'll find **Mike D'Errico's** controversial piece on [gender and brostep](#), but also **Margaret Schedel's** groundbreaking article on [sonifying nanoparticles](#). Go ahead, try to find another sound studies venue – online or anyplace – with range like that. No luck? As I suspected. Welcome back.

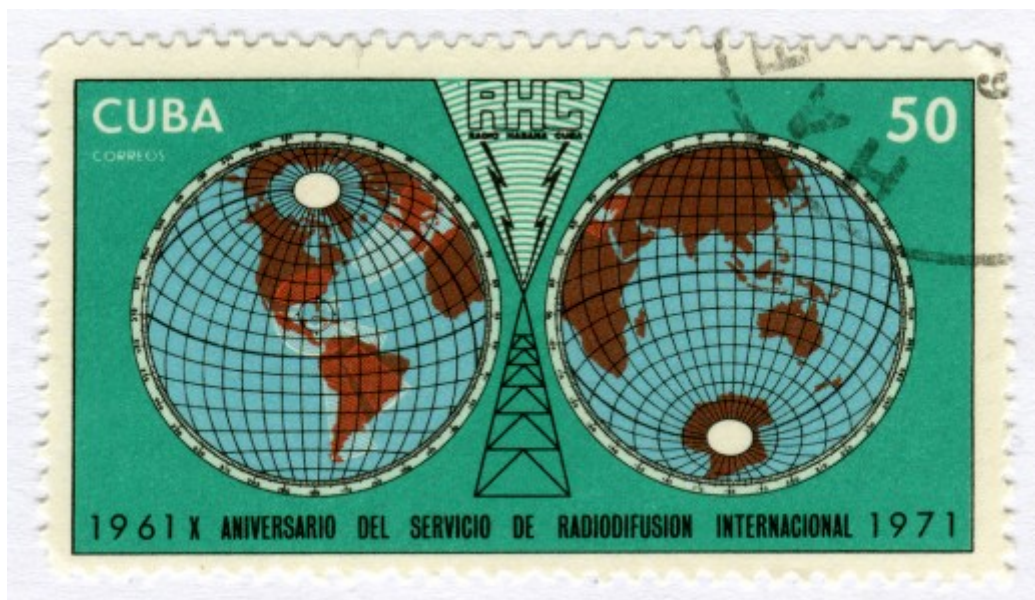
Not only has working on **SO!** been an honor, it has also opened up new horizons for me, forged odd alliances and prompted strange harmonies – hallmarks of what exciting sound studies ought to be about. I learned something and relearned more every week. In that spirit, this “Year Re-hear” post celebrates the Thursday stream by listening back –not once, but three times – to where we've been.



“A Tribe Called Red – Hall 4 (1)” by Flickr user Trans Musicales, CC BY-NC 2.0

First, the straight story.

Our year started with **The Wobble Continuum**, a series on race, gender and dubstep, edited by **Justin D. Burton** (Rider University) with posts by **Mike D'Errico** (UCLA), **Christina Giacona** (U of Oklahoma), and **Burton**. These articles brought new perspective on the “maximalist aesthetic” of electronic dance music and explored resistance to sonic racism, while examining sonic experience everywhere from a baseball stadium to a bus stop.



Then, beginning in February, we heard from Latin America through **Radio de Acción** a series on radio and the idea of region. Edited by **Tom McEnaney** (Cornell), with posts by **Alejandra Bronfman** (UBC), **Karl Swinehart** (Uchicago) and **Carolina Guerrero** (Radio Ambulante), RdA brought us fascinating stories of student activists taking over radio stations to oppose Fulgencio Batista in the 1950's and of the founding of *Radio Ambulante*, at the forefront of Spanish-language creative narrative radio today.

When Spring came (remember Spring? sigh.) I edited **Start a Band**, reflecting on the legacy and music of the late Lou Reed, with posts by **Jacob Smith** (Northwestern) and **Tim Anderson** (Old Dominion). Tim and Jake offered penetrating accounts of how reissues of Velvet Underground records helped a generation learn to listen, and how their music quite literally gets under your skin, and sometimes even deeper.



Sculpting the Film Soundtrack, was our next series, an ambitious take on new directions in film sound design edited by **Katherine Spring** (Wilfrid Laurier), with posts by **Randolph Jordan** (Simon Fraser), **Danijela Kulezic-Wilson** (University College, Cork) and **Benjamin Wright** (University of Southern California). This series had extraordinary range, examining works by such figures as Hans

Zimmer and Shane Carruth that break down old assumptions about soundtracks, while unsettling the act of listening itself.



From radio and film, we turned to art and science. First with [Hearing the Unheard](#),

a series edited by **Seth Horowitz** (NeuroPop) with posts by the sound artist **China Blue** (The Engine Institute), **Milton A. Garcés** (University of Hawaii at Manoa) and **Margaret A. Schedel** (Stonybrook). This series took us inside the ears of dogs, out into the vacuum of space billions of years ago, and deep inside the sound of underground lava. Then came our current series, **Radio Art Reflections**, edited by Magz Hall, which promises to undertake a trans-national history of radio art — check out [the first post](#) by artist **Anna Friz** (Canada) on radio art and acoustic ecology.

Where will this stream go next? In part, that's up to you. If you have a concept for a special series, and a sense of some exciting authors for it, have a look at our [Call for Guest Editors](#), we'll extend the deadline a few days.



Remix!

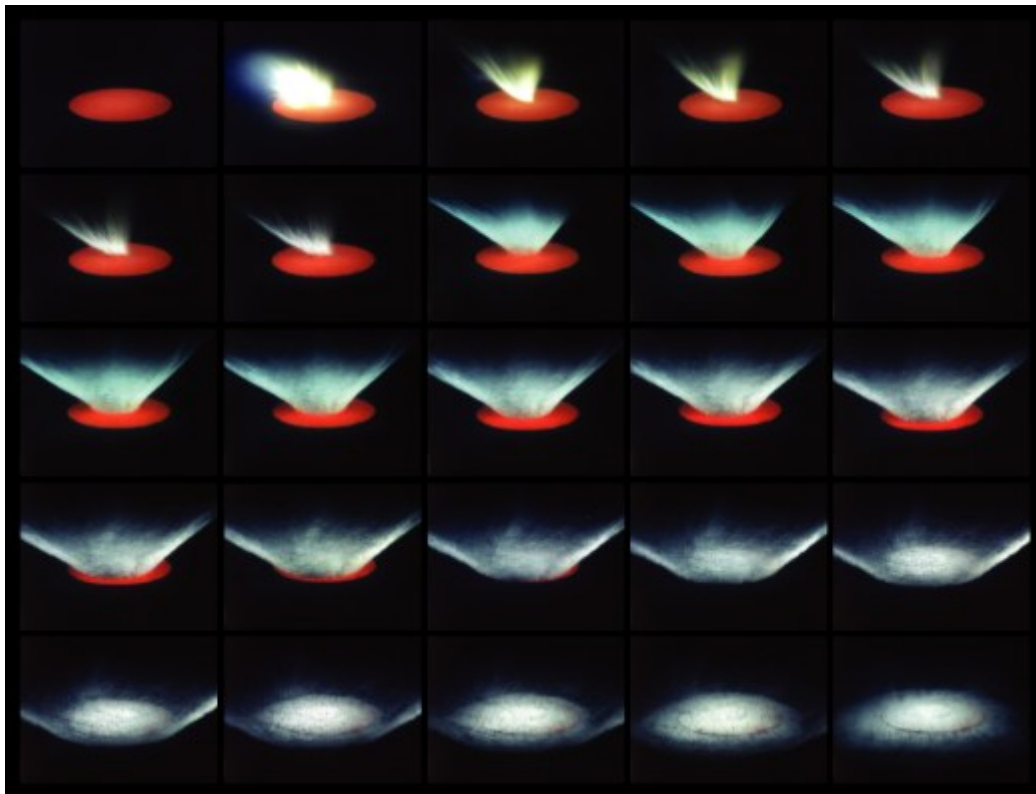
In reviewing these posts, I was struck by how they form their own connections in ways we didn't plan and probably couldn't foresee a year ago. The Thursday stream echoes back on itself. Here,

for your consideration, are three alternative hypothetical groupings of the exact same posts you see above:

Sound and Indigenous Peoples Today: a series featuring an examination of the circulation of A Tribe Called Red's song "[Braves](#)", a study of indigenous peoples of Vancouver's Eastside [on film](#), and an introduction to Aymara-language radio [in Bolivia](#), with **Christina Giacona**, **Randolph Jordan** and **Karl Swinehart**.

The Microsonic: a series on itty bitty sounds, and how to get at them. Posts explore the sonic fragments in [Upstream Color](#), the sonification of data from [x-ray scatter](#), and the [tactile sounds of Lou Reed](#) with **Danijela Kulezic-Wilson**, **Margaret A. Schedel**, and **Jacob Smith**.

Sonic Breakdown: a series on the sound of breaking down and how sounds break things down, from the [big budget film soundtrack](#) to [volcanic rock formations](#), and national boundaries in [Caribbean radio history](#), with posts by **Benjamin Wright**, **Milton Garces** and **Alejandra Bronfman**.



Finally, why not let the sounds from these posts tell the story for a change?

Tickle your ears with some of the sounds we've featured in this stream over the last year, a little sound sandbox:

- Guest editor Seth Horowitz's office, as an elephant might hear it
- Tape of a student takeover of Radio Reloj in Cuba in 1957
- "Lady Godiva's Operation" by The Velvet Underground
- A tremor at Arenal, a volcano in Costa Rica

- electrosmog, a work of radio art by Kristen Roos for Radius in Chicago
- The sound of cartoons playing on a TV in a methadone clinic in Vancouver
- A sonifications of a variety of mappings of x-ray scattered particles by Meg Schedel

<https://soundstudiesblog.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/elephantoffice.wav>



https://youtu.be/4oe9nqR_oB8



<https://youtu.be/AxgvkzFVnNQ>

https://soundstudiesblog.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/arenal_tremor_100x_rev.mp3

<https://soundstudiesblog.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/rad0044.mp3>



<https://youtu.be/LU7QjTHLx2A>

https://soundstudiesblog.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/100nm_p3ht_a_th020_spot1_30sec_waxs.mp3

—

Thanks to **Jennifer, Aaron, Liana, Will** and everyone here at **SO!** for putting your faith in me this year. And thanks especially to all our writers and editors for being so enthusiastic, brilliant and patient.

The **SO!** family salutes you!

—

Featured Photo by Flickr user [Jenene Chesbrough](#), Creative Commons License.

—

Sounding Out! Special Editor **Neil Verma** is Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Radio/Television/Film at Northwestern University. Verma has published writing on sound in many areas, with a particular emphasis on the intersection of radio with other media. His book, [Theater of the Mind: Imagination, Aesthetics, and American Radio Drama](#) (University of Chicago Press) won the Best First Book Award from the Society for Cinema & Media Studies in 2013