

# ART F CITY



## The Sound of Art

OCTOBER 1, 2010

For the past five years I've been looking at art and [writing](#) about what I see. But I've also been listening. Does art have a distinctive sound? Sometimes I think I could be in a remote cabin in Maine, and still instantly recognize the sound of an art video or a performance piece. Yet the things I hear in galleries and performance spaces don't seem to share any formal qualities – they run the gamut from noise to melody, recitation to wordless grunts.

For the Sound of Art, I wanted to produce an album full of the sounds art makes in order to document and investigate this range, but I also wanted to take such sounds and set them free in the world, to be remixed and reused – sampled, mashed up, Auto-tuned, chopped and screwed. More people than ever are engaged in this kind of cultural recycling, though they rarely draw their sources from the field of fine art. Frankly, the art world doesn't make it easy – it's a profession invested in its own scarcity.

More than anything, I wanted to make a record of the Sound of Art because I wanted to see what people will do with it. It's a project guided by Jasper Johns' description of the art-making process: "Do something, do something to that, and then do something to that."

### WHAT IS IT?

The Sound of Art is a limited edition vinyl LP composed of sounds heard in New York galleries, museums, and project spaces over the last five years. Inspired by classic DJ battle records, it features forty tracks of diverse sounds culled from art video, performance footage, and kinetic

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sculptures. This is not an easy listening record. It's an audio document and a tool to create new sounds and new work.

## WHAT'S ON IT?

Work by artists well-known and not-so-well-known. Difficult electronics. Sounds of stampeding animals, Hebrew prayer, a transformer fire, a children's carousel. One hundred carpenters pounding 10,000 nails. Field recordings of recordings by guitar genius [John Fahey](#), and archival sound pieces by the pioneering conceptualist [Lawrence Weiner](#). An iPod drum circle and thoughts on nostalgia. Also, yes, a toy monkey with cymbals.

Sounds have been donated by a large spectrum of artists and venues throughout New York City – everywhere from big fancy museums to odd little project spaces. We've also introduced Internet artists, as "wild cards" on this album.

## WHO'S INVOLVED?

This is a collaborative project, with dozens of people donating their work and their services. Project Manager [Michelle Halabura](#) worked her butt off all spring gathering samples to make this a reality.

Fundraising Consultant [Sarah Landreth](#) and BAM visual art curator [David Harper](#) donated their time and skills advising on the campaign.

[Matt Madly Azzarto](#) at [Think Tank Studio](#) produced the record.

[Phillip Niemeyer](#) of [Double Triple](#) designed the album cover, and offered a limited edition offset lithograph to 10 lucky funders at the \$200 level. Edition of 60, see the print [HERE](#).

Celebrated performance and video artist [Michael Smith](#) created a limited edition screen print of 50 in response to the sounds on the album, available to funders at the \$250 level. See his bio [HERE](#).

Artist [Ben Coonley](#) of [Valentine for Perfect Stranger](#) and [NYUFF Dr. Zizmor Traylor](#) fame produced our promotional videos.

## COMPLETE LIST OF ARTISTS

### MANHATTAN

Andre Avelas (Abrons Art Center), Petra Cortright (Internet), Jennie C. Jones, (Sikemma Jenkins) Moyra Davey, (Orchard47) Elias Hansen (Maccarone), Ted Riederer (Marianne Boesky), Cliff Evans (Luxe Gallery), LoVid, (LMCC), Marcin Ramocki (MOMA), Shannon Plumb (Sarah Melzer Gallery), Janet Cardiff & George Bures Miller, (Luhring Augustine), John Fahey (AVA), Miriam Stern (Yeshivah University), Jennifer Schmidt (Elizabeth Foundation Project Space), Carolina A. Miranda (Armory show), Tyler Jacobsen and Chris Anderson (Canada), Tom Thayer (White Columns), Luke Murphy (Canada), Joel Holmberg (New Museum), Lawrence Weiner (Whitney Museum), Laura Parnes, (Participant Inc), Brainstormers (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Center).

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## BROOKLYN

Aron Namenwirth (artMovingProjects), Damien Catera (Hogar Collection), Andy Graydon (LMAK Projects), Sonny Smith (Cinders Gallery), Paul Slocum (artMovingProjects), Heidi Neubauer-Winterburn (Louis V. E.S.P.), Eric Laska (Diapason), Elena Wen (AIR Gallery), Joe McKay (Vertexlist), Heather Dewey-Hagborg (Issue Project Room), Peter Dobill (English Kills), Douglas Henderson (Pierogi), Robert McNeill (MonkeyTown), Erick Zuenskes (Real Fine Arts), Wayne Hodge (Fivemyles), Ranjit Bhatnagar and Nick Yulman (Coney Island Museum), Lara Kohl (PS.1), Mike Koller and MTAA (McCarren Park).

## SAMPLES USED IN THE VIDEO ABOVE

**Petra Cortright**, "Sparkling I & II", webcam video, 2010, (Internet)

**Marcin Ramocki (with Justin Strawhand)**, "8-bit", 2006, a documentary film examining the influence of video games on contemporary art. Excerpted sound form Nullsleep, (MoMA)

**Tom Thayer**, "Old Smelly Haircut", 2008, Construction paper, tape, string, electronics, altered record player, LP of sound art, dimensions variable, (Looking Back: The White Columns Annual, selected by Jay Sanders, White Columns)

**Joel Holmberg**, "Earthlink Telemarketer", 2006, MP3, duration: 03:26 (Free, The New Museum, 2010)

**Andy Graydon**, "Monster Manual", 2006, video and sound installation (Monster Manual, LMAK Projects)

**Lara Kohl**, "Once Upon A Time, Yesterday", 2005-2006, sculpture, comprised of a chest freezer housing an ice replica of Sleeping Beauty's Castle with an accompanying soundtrack. The excerpted track, "I'm Taking Notes" made in collaboration with Hide The Knives Brian Sowers, Johnny North, Matthew Lusk, David Harrison Horton, (Greater New York, PS.1)

**Erik Zuenskes**, "The systematic colonization of herbaceous plants, 2010, CD-R, (From Lettuce Slaughter in the Woods, Real Fine Arts)

**Peter Dobill w/ Katrina Kruszewski**, "AUTOBEATACTION Soundtrack", 2010, Soundtrack to the live auction/installation and single channel video documentation of Autobeataction, Mini DVD, (Three Year Anniversary Exhibition, English Kills Art Gallery)

**Miriam Stern**, "Ezrat Nashim (Women's Section)", 2007-2008, Ten silhouettes of women made of di-bond with bases of steel. Front: photographic images on di-bond. Reverse: oil on di-bond. Sound: CD, (Ezrat Nashim, Yeshiva University Gallery)

**Elias Hansen**, "I've made a lot of love from this one", 2010, Glass, steel, silicone, vinyl, water, water pump, resin, teflon, hot plate, (This is the Last Place I Could Hide, Maccarone)

**Joe McKay**, "The Cellphone Piano", 2008, cellphones, (Loss of Signal, Vertexlist)

**LoVid**, "Trichrome Navigation", 2010, Live outdoor performance with wire, dancers, and electronics, (Sitelines and River to River Festival, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council)

**Christian Boltanski/Carolina A. Miranda**, "Miranda's heartbeat for Christian Boltanski" 2010, MP3 file, (The Armory Show, NY)

**Heidi Neubauer-Winterburn & Yohan Kerr**, "We Interrogate the Detainees", 2010, styrofoam cups, video, (Mirror Mirror, Louis V.

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