

Global Music Bachelor Project 2021

THE HELSINKI SOUND PROMENADE PROJECT by *Colectivo Azul*

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Abstract

The Helsinki Sound Promenade is an artistic research project that intends to analyse and explore the relation between the soundscape, the musicians and the audience on a live performance setting. The live installation performed by *Colectivo Azul* uses the urban environment of Helsinki as inspiration and stage for an happening where the audience is invited to walk and listen to the soundscape and musical interventions during the path. Musicians and audience are exposed to pre-recorded sound and landscape of the city, interpreting its sonic complexity and exploring the dialog between the three parties. The composition is based on a theoretical framework around improvisation over the soundscape of the urban environment as well as exploring the interaction between the audience and the musical performance itself, giving the musicians the possibility to create a sound narrative that could, or not, compliment that soundscape. There will be three moments of composed music created by the author of this research, all directly inspired by three specific spaces. These melodies and harmonic progressions are the reflex of field work doing deep listening and sound walk exercises. While raising the awareness to the soundscape of the city, this performance intends also to reduce the emotional distance between the performers and the audience, trying to dissolve the elitist stereotypes of contemporary performative arts by embedding the performance into the soundscape. On the other hand, the musician's part to this adventure with the idea that the auditorium is part of the soundscape itself. The result of this research project is a 45 to 50 minutes live performance defined by a chart/script of composed and improvised music, soundscape and video.

Abstract

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The idea of performing with soundscapes has fascinated me since I first heard John Cage's 4.33' many years ago. At that moment I understood how much the performances are influenced by the audience and vice versa. The physical space (architecture, environment, ...) also affects the way we perceive the music and the art. This subject is further investigated in the chapter 2 and 3 of this research. Lately I came across with the sound art and sound aesthetics world where I faced many questions about how sound and music can be perceived considering different approaches. Being a global musician and being constantly bombarded by cultural diversity questions and community engagement activities is also a big part of the research work. In different parts of the world very different cultures and traditions are taking part of the everyday life of their people. All of this variety is definitely connected with the geographical and sociological heritages; how people interpret music, how people live it, where does it come from, what is it used for and when. It's also a voice of protest against the hierarchisation of music as we know it today. By bringing the music outside of the concert hall or transforming the space where the performance could happen, I intend to give to the audience the freedom to listen the performance the way they feel like listening to it, being standing, seating on the ground, walking around it or even interacting with the musicians. If you feel like interpreting it like this, sound is all the time around us, and specific sounds reflect the identity, not just of the place itself, but also of all the people that live in the space and being able to play and improvise with that acoustic environment feels like playing with the people themselves, not just for the people.

Why? To raise awareness of the soundscape of Helsinki by interpreting soundscape, music and sound art and explore the relation between the space and the music by using landscape and soundscape as inspiration to composition and improvisation. Discover and analyse the relation between performer/listener/soundscape. Explore the performers sensitivity to landscape and soundscape and how does that translate into playing.

How? The listeners and the performers follow a script that will serve as a guide/music chart. Performers play composed and improvised music in specific places and moments of the timeline. The duration of the performance is approx. 50 minutes and the performance can happen two different ways:

- a) Site specific (Happening): The script defines on the map where and when the performance happens (city of Helsinki). The listeners are invited to follow the timeline on a specific trail. Audience and performers are exposed to the environment elements (wind, rain, sun, noise, transients, etc.).
- b) Controlled environment/black box: The promenade is recreated in a performance hall. The soundscape qualities (reverb, size, noise, etc.) of the specific sites are replicated creating a 3D feeling of soundscape with a multi-speaker system. A video projection of the walk is displayed, and the audience is invited to walk around the room. Audience and performers are exposed to soundscape and images.

Due to practical circumstances the performance happens as described above in the group b).

1.2 Personal background

Born in Porto, Portugal, I started my musical studies at the age of eight in Conservatório de Música do Porto. In 2008 I studied Architecture at the Porto Lusíada University where I continued my studies until 2010, year I was accepted in Escola Superior de Música de Lisboa. There I studied orchestral and contemporary percussion as main subject and I was also trained in chamber music, orchestra, early music as well as jazz drum set. During this period, I developed a versatile language as an improviser and performer, having cooperated with professional orchestras as well as folk music groups, jazz ensembles and musical theatre plays. As a pedagogue, I taught percussion, percussion ensemble and orchestral percussion in the internationally known social orchestra project El Sistema, which is part of the national system of children and youth orchestras created in Venezuela.

1.3 Research question

The main purpose of this research is to raise awareness of the soundscape of Helsinki by inviting the audience to listen to the soundscape and music as (live performance) sound art. Explore the relation between the space and the music and use landscape and soundscape as inspiration to composition and improvisation. Discover and analyse the relation between performer/listener/soundscape and explore the performers sensitivity to landscape/soundscape and how does that translate into playing. The investigation question can therefore be formulated as such:

“How to increase awareness (of sound) through the musicalization of the soundscape and what is the potential of these methods to be effective?”. The discussion could be completed with other question presented as: “What are the roles and relationships between audience/performers/environment?”

The question above presents itself as the core of this exposition where I intend to unveil tools and processes for a better understanding of the acoustic environment in order to increase knowledge about the space and sound of the locations where the performance happens.

1.4 Artistic research

This written material intends to support the theoretical framework around improvisation and composition over the soundscape of the urban environment as well as exploring the interaction between the audience and the musical performance. It is structured essentially as an ethnographic presentation where there is a development of the speech starting from my own musical background, describing the evolution of the artistic process and culminating on the final project. Both theoretical and practical elements are based on a case study presented in form of an artistic performance in Black Box Musiikkitalo (Helsinki, Finland), on 24th of May 2021. Within the exposition, the qualitative results of the research are supported by informal interviews with the members of Colectivo Azul, documentation of sound and images of the urban environment of Helsinki, a sketching journal used as main tool for organizing ideas and developing a visual element that could support the investigation and field recording practices.

2. Listening to the Soundscape

The Helsinki Sound Promenade Project was primarily idealized over the idea of exploring and taking the soundscape as part of a musical performance. According to the concept of listening to a concert in a traditional context, one just simply focusses on the composition and the execution itself, often in spaces created to most benefit the acoustic qualities of the instruments and/or voices, frequently absorbing or annulling the *noise* produced by the soundscape. In other hand, other styles of music accept and even celebrate the acoustic environment that is not controlled by the performers. In my perspective, the soundscape is not just a source of sounds but is also a live representation of the people's quotidian who co-habit the space itself. Urban sounds like the cosmopolitan daily activities, the traffic, the industries, the constructions and demolitions, the dynamics between rush hours and less busy moments in a specific place and the occasional wildlife, become symbols of cultural and sociological aspects, and these sounds are able to provide information on how the community relates with the environment and with itself. In my vision of this project, one would explore the acoustic taking advantage of its variety and its unpredictability, unpacking an infinite box of possible dialogs that would enrich the performance itself.

2.1 Soundscape

"The word soundscape is defined as the "acoustic environment as perceived or experienced and/or understood by a person or people, in context". That is, if acoustic environment is all the sounds which are produced in an environment, soundscape is the perceived sonic environment. It is the aural equivalent of a landscape. A landscape is what we are able to perceive of a land. Similarly, a soundscape is our own limited perception of an acoustic environment." Psimikakis-Chalkokondylis, L. (2016). Rewilding Music: Improvisation, wilderness, and the global musician. Helsinki: University of the Arts.

Although *"the idea of music as ambience can be traced back to 1917, when the French composer Erik Satie coined the term "furniture music" (musique d'ameublement)"*, (Brett, T. 2016), it's in the 1970s, by the hands of R. Murray Schafer, that the word *soundscape* develops its meaning in the artistic context. His book *The Tuning of the World* (1977) becomes the first theoretical and practical guide for listening to everyday sounds of urban and rural environments.

2.2 Sound walking and Deep Listening

It's in the 1970's among the members of the *World Soundscape Project*, that the expression *Sound Walking* started to emerge. Hildegard Westerkamp, one of the founders of the movement along with Murray Schafer and pioneer in using *sound walking* as an artistic and research practice, defines it as “... any excursion whose main purpose is listening to the environment.” Hildegard Westerkamp. *Soundwalking* (1974 revised 2001), originally published in *Sound Heritage, Volume III Number 4, Victoria, BC*. As a concept, “*Soundwalking is a creative and research practice that involves listening and some times recording while moving through a place at a walking pace.*” McCartney, A. (July 2014). Along the practices of sound walking its practically impossible to detach the concept of *Deep Listening*. This performative and research practice was firstly developed by the musician/composer Pauline Oliveros (1932-2016). In his own words “*Deep listening is listening in every possible way to everything possible – this means one hears all sounds, no matter what one is doing. Such intense listening includes having the sounds of daily life, of nature and of one's thoughts, as well as musical sounds.*” *Acoustic and Virtual Space as a Dynamic Element of Music Leonardo Music Journal* , 1995, Vol. 5 (1995), pp. 19-22.

The Helsinki Sound Promenade Project benefits both practically and theoretically from these practices. Although the concept of the concert is far from becoming a sound walking or a deep listening exercise, it's within these concepts of motion and focusing the attention to the sonic environment that I found inspiration in developing the artistic product. The action of walking through the urban environment and paying deep attention to the surrounding acoustic space became the central point of the whole performance. In its *Soundscape* (1947), Westerkamp further states that “*A soundwalk can be designed in many different ways. It can be done alone or with a friend (...) It can also be done in small groups (...) can furthermore cover a wide area or it can just center around one particular place. No matter what form the sound walk takes, it is always important not to be distracted in any way from the intense listening, for its main purpose is to rediscover and reactivate our sense of earing.*”

Although the practice of *sound walking* seems widely accepted, the way it is programmed or performed raises some political, sociological and ecological questions. Therefore, it is important to explore ways of being inclusive when planning these practices as Andra McCartney explains: *“Since the term soundwalking focuses on the act of walking, it could be understood to exclude those who are not able to walk and require wheelchairs or strollers. While some walks are planned to allow access to such conveyances, this is not always the case. Wilderness hiking trails are particularly exclusive in this respect. This is not the only exclusion fostered by a choice of such a location. When soundwalks are planned in remote locations that require participants to use individual transport to get there, such choices have political implications: as Alexander Wilson (1998) points out, access to wilderness parks is the privilege of the middle class who have cars. He notes that in some cases, roads to parks were designed with bridges that exclude public transport, a move that explicitly excluded those who do not have cars; while in many others there are no public buses or trains that will take people directly to parks.”* Andra McCartney (July 2014) *Soundwalking: Creating Moving Environmental Sound Narratives. The Oxford Handbook of Mobile Music Studies, Volume 2* Edited by Sumanth Gopinath and Jason Stanyek.

In order to make the artistic project accessible to the vast majority of the community, most of these concerns were taken in consideration in order to create a performance that's not just accessible to all, but also inclusive, paying special attention to ethical issues such as multicultural diversity, among others. The fact that the performance happens in the urban environment of Helsinki, considered a developed city in terms of accessibility, solves great part of this questions. The whole *Promenade* was thought to be accessible to all members of society and it starts right under the central railway station. Also, as it was presented before in the introduction of this exposition, the performance will happen at the music house black box (Musiikkitalo), a building that provides easy access to all audience, and although this choice presents some hierarchical and political questions, the Spring Fest (global music department spring festival) where the performance is included, is known to be welcoming, and intends to break some of these sociological barriers by inviting all individuals inside.

2.3 Soundscape vs Music

It is common to listen to expressions like “*music is everywhere*” or “*any noise can be interpreted as music*”. (As far as my knowledge goes), soundscape and music are two different concepts that at the same time rarely exist without one another; music can be part of soundscape and vice versa. The expression *musicalization of the soundscape*, presented as part of the research question, intends to bring these two elements together in one single art form, for better understanding of the auditorium and the project itself. This subject is developed further in this exposition (3.2) with theoretical examples. This exposition, within the framework of the final artistic project, is meant to be interpreted as *sound art*: a performance where soundscape and music (without losing their concept) are to be delivered as a performative *happening*, connecting sound and visual elements of various sources, with the intention of triggering the attention of the auditorium to the relation between them.

3. Creative Process

“... 4':33”, a composition of silence devised by the American experimental composer John Cage in 1951. It offers listeners an opportunity to attend closely to any and all incidental environmental sounds that might occur during a performance of a piece.” Brett, T. (2016) *The Oxford Handbook of Music and Virtuality*.

When I started drawing the first ideas of the performance there were some concepts and aesthetics I would mainly like to explore. The first one was the relation between the space and the performance and how would the concert be influenced if some traditional concepts were explored in a different way. From the beginning I had a strong vision of the performance itself and it should, to the limit possible, break the aural barriers between the performers and the audience. I imagined that by deconstructing the physical concert set, traditionally thought as stage/public, I could very practically and efficiently reduce that distance. This has some historical and political implications which I also intended to explore. It was an important premise from the beginning that social hierarchization in the context of a music concert would be broken. The creative process started as a sketching exercise and as a former architecture student I had many natural instincts on how this process would happen. I started drawing possible scenarios and I could notice that very often the shape of a circle would represent a lot of what was trying to look

for. These ideas took me into further research about circus stages and coliseum type of performative venues. The idea and the feeling of being a performer involved by audience is, in my perspective, a meaningful experience. Also, this new position “on stage” would facilitate another very important aspect of the performance where the musicians could be facing each other, augmenting the possibilities of visual connection and in consequence, at least in theory, elevate the aural connection into a higher level during the performance.

The second concept happened very naturally as the idea of the performance was developing; the relationship between the audience and the performers. At this moment I had a stage set to be explored by the performers and I could now start the compositional process, but this process was constantly interrupted by questions like “how could I make the audience part of the performance?”. As a consequence of this process, I’ve started to research about soundscape and ways of integrating the acoustic environment in my musical creations. At this stage of the creative process, it starts to become very clear that the roles that both audience and performers starts to blend into one common action, where the performers have to listen carefully to the environment and the audience, by being part of the environment themselves, become now active members of the performance.

The name of the project, as illustrated in the beginning of this exposition, was inspired by Modest Mussorgsky’s composition *Pictures at an Exhibition* (1874). In this suit (originally written for piano and latter arranged for symphonic orchestra by Maurice Ravel, 1922), Mussorgsky presents a series of ten pieces representatives of ten pictures exhibited in a gallery. Occasionally between these pieces, as if walking through the gallery, the composer introduces a theme which he called *Promenades*. *The Helsinki Sound Promenade Project* becomes, like in Mussorgsky’s composition, a *suit* to be discovered by walking through the city of Helsinki.

During the whole process there were walks taken in order to record and document the soundscape of viable paths or *promenades*. This process helped me understanding the sonic environment I was dealing with and it brought many surprises, as some of the first recordings were made during wintertime when snow was very abundant, and the sea water was mostly frozen.” *In many soundwalk recordings, it is possible to hear sounds of the recordist, traces of*

breath, gait, touch, and presence that are more often effaced in still recordings. This emphasis on slowness, human movement and a focus on particular places brings attention to the presence of the soundwalkers and their ways of interaction in that place.” Andra McCartney (July 2014).

As result of this recording process a video/audio of the walk will be displayed throughout the whole performance trying to bring indoors the outdoors environment, as accurate as possible, and as perceived by the recordist. This replicates to some extent the experience of walking through the city in a controlled environment and provides both audience and performers the land and soundscape material to play/listen to/with.

3.1 Deep mapping

” Traditional maps tell stories. The stories they tell are often limited in what they show. Maps are not a ‘true’ representation of the world. (...) Deep Maps propose a perspective from below, which puts the ‘needs and desires’ of, for example, the earth, poor people, devastated landscapes, in a relationship where they are given equal or greater consideration than the narratives of a dominant culture.” Bloom, B. and Sacramento, N. (2017). Deep Mapping.

” Deep Mapping is a process of reading and reshaping the landscape that embraces political, social, economic, infrastructural and environmental concerns, challenging accepted knowledge and imposed belief systems.” Bloom, B. and Sacramento, N. (2017). Deep Mapping.

In a broaden perspective, deep mapping is a process of digging into the history of a specific place, in order to tell the story of the people or relevant happenings at some point in time and redesign a map that includes more information than just important geographical spots. As part of the creative process, was also my intention to create a chart that would include relevant information about the performance. A sketched representation of the geographical spots where the musical performances happen and also the path or promenade that the audience should follow. Like in a deep mapping exercise, I intent to invite the audience for a walk and be aware of the sounds of the urban space, having an experience of a live storytelling performance that develops along the promenade. The same “map” is used by the performers as a guide or musical chart. They are also invited on a journey along the city, but they are asked to

influence and shape the story itself with occasional composed excerpts of music. Melodic lines and chord progressions that are both examples of *sonification* of the landscape and conceptual interpretations of the spaces (tunnel, market square and natural environment).

3.2 Musicalization of the Soundscape

“Wherever we are, what we hear is mostly noise. When we ignore it, it disturbs us. When we listen to it, we find it fascinating. The sound of a truck fifty miles per hour. Static between the stations. Rain. We want to capture and control these sounds, to use them not as sound effects but as musical instruments.” Cage, J. (1937) The Future of Music: Credo

As written before in this exposition, I acknowledge soundscape and music as two different concepts. Nevertheless, it is in my interpretation of Cage’s ideas of *musicalization of soundscape* that I found the biggest inspiration for this artistic project. Without having any ambitions of changing the concept of soundscape, it’s in the form of a musical performance that I visualize the meaning of my artistic project. By conceptualizing the artistic performance in a form of a concert, I intend to bring the auditorium into a state of alert to all the sounds belonging to the sonic environment and interpret them, not as music but as components of a musical performance.

3.3 Improvisation

The etymological origin of the word improvisation comes from Latin *improviso* “unforeseen; not studied or prepared beforehand,” ablative of *improvisus* “not foreseen, unexpected” and it’s a term that has been dissected in many ways. Throughout the whole creative process, improvisation has been used as a tool in various shapes. As a composer improvising is a crucial way of creating new music. Very often, if not all the time, new musical ideas or motives are born from the action of playing freely over a pattern or just by improvising with someone. In this specific case all three compositions were created based in some improvised material recorded previously in various occasions. When creating material for *Colectivo Azul*, one can never detach themselves from a series of guidelines. The vision and the sonic idea of the material is somehow already framed by specific aspects like the

instrumentation (accordion, percussion and drum set and double bass), and, most important, the people that play these instruments. Also, in this case, the framework of the *walk* is in certain extent guiding the creative process. The material is then composed and brought back to the rehearsal room to be re-arranged and played by the whole band. There were also three recorded sessions, one with each musician, where we practiced improvising over a chosen soundscape that not related with the soundscape presented. These sessions were taken to explore and develop a common language between the members of the band, having myself has a common ground. The audio of the sessions can be found right here.

After all the process of creating the musical content and creating tight musical bonds we were able to explore improvising on the stage. Using improvisation as a conscious choice for a performance brings as many challenges as possibilities. In my perspective, leaving space in the concert for moments of improvisation is the ultimate form of expression of a musician. As artists and instrumentalists, we use our tools to communicate and express ourselves and giving the freedom to each musician to tell their own story at that specific moment is something one cannot replicate. Between the composed pieces there wasn't any specific guideline. Any of us could choose whatever to play at given time. That experience turned out to be very engaging, giving space to the elements of the band to expand their listening and communication skills.

4. The interpreters: *Colectivo Azul*

Colectivo Azul: Adriano Adewale (Percussion), João Luís (Percussion, drum set, electronics and composition), Nathan Riki-Thomson (Double bass) and Viivi Saarekylä (Accordion). The members of this collective are established musicians and technicians in Helsinki very much driven by improvised music, intercommunication between arts/people and community engagement.

4.1 Biographies

Adriano Adewale: Brazilian percussionist/composer Adriano Adewale is a versatile musician and performer, known for his unconventional and exploratory approach to music, and for his ability to create magical soundscapes from the seemingly banal. Born in Sao Paulo, Brazil, he was for

many years known as Adriano Pinto, a colonial name he received at birth. It was after his visit to Africa (Nigeria and Benin Republic) searching for his roots that he changed his name to Adriano Adewale Itauna, respectively from the Yoruba-Nigeria and Tupi Guarani- Brazil. Adewale means royal child who come back home and Itauna means black rock. Adriano took piano and percussion lessons, followed by a degree/BA in classical music- percussion at the University of Sao Paulo State. In April 2000, Adriano moved to the UK, quickly establishing himself as a respected percussionist, composer, educator and band-leader. In 2008 Adriano released his first solo album, the critically acclaimed *Sementes* (Segue records) produced by Gilad Atmouv. It featured the 'Adriano Adewale Group', an international line up of musicians, including Australian born double bass player Nathan Riki Thomson, Senegalese Kora player Kadially Kouyate and Brazilian flutist and saxophonist Marcelo Andrade. In 2012 he released *The Vortex Sessions*, a collaboration with the foremost Brazilian piano player Benjamin Taubkin. This was followed by *Raizes* (Caboclos records) in 2014, his second solo album with the 'Adriano Adewale Group', produced by the great Chris Kimsin (Rolling Stones, Jimmy Cliff). Adewale is also the mentor behind *Cataplu's Musical Journey*, a concert which introduces young audiences to Jazz, commissioned by the EFG London Jazz Festival. With one CD released *Cataplu's Musical Journey* has toured many parts of Europe including Norway, Sweden, France and Scotland. Adriano's distinctive sounds come from organic materials, connected to nature. They are made out of wood, clay, metal, skins and the philosophy behind it is the connection with the four classic elements: water, earth, air and fire. Playing percussion is about making music. Drums are very powerful, however they do not have to be loud. The idea of percussion has changed dramatically with the great late percussionist Nana Vasconcelos, who is Adriano's percussion master and inspiration. Adriano has many effect instruments, through which he creates mesmerising atmospheres and soundscapes; he paints with sounds, telling stories through music. As a composer, Adriano has been commissioned by Bath Music Festival to write a new music piece for the opening of 2011 and 2012's Bath festivals. He was also a composer/music director of dance-theatre piece *Ballroom of Joys and Sorrows*, a collaboration with Kate Flatt (original choreographer of *Les Miserables*). He has composed for dance companies, including Phoenix dance company 2016, with whom he wrote the score for 'Undivided lovers', a dance piece based

on and celebrating Shakespeare's 400 anniversary. In 2017 he collaborated with Horsham Symphony Orchestra writing his first orchestral piece "Suite Dialogues", premiered in July 2017. Currently, Adriano is a doctoral student at the University of the Arts, Helsinki, Sibelius Academy.

Nathan: Australian born Nathan Riki Thomson is a double bass player, composer and educator. He can also often be heard playing various western and non-western flutes, as well as Tanzanian ilimba and other varieties of African kalimbas. Nathan has collaborated and performed with musicians from many parts of the world, with a special interest in Africa where he lived and worked with traditional musicians for five years in Tanzania and Zambia.

During his time in Tanzania, Nathan established a series of arts-based community projects and was a student of master musician Dr. Hukwe Zawose. Nathan was born and raised in Australia where he completed undergraduate studies at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music, followed by postgraduate, master's and doctoral studies at Sibelius Academy in Helsinki and the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in London. He served as a core member of the acclaimed Antonio Forcione Quartet, touring extensively with the group internationally for 10 years. Nathan is currently a member of several bands, including Ilkka Heinonen Trio, Subsonic Trio, Electronic Chamber Music and Mari Kalkun and Runorun.

Nathan is featured on numerous album releases and his debut album 'Under Ubi's Tree' was released on the UK label NAIM records. He was a Lecturer at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in London for 10 years and works on community and education projects for many organizations. This has included designing numerous innovative projects for the British Council in Africa and The Philippines, with a focus on collaboration between musicians from different cultures. His most recent project involves artistic doctoral research under the title of *'Resonance: (Re)forming an Artistic Identity through Intercultural Dialogue and Collaboration'*.

Finland is his new home, where he is currently lecturer and head of the Global Music Department at Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts, Helsinki.

Viivi: Viivi Maria Saarenkylä (born in 1993) is an award-winning Finnish accordion artist and composer. She was nominated as the "Accordion Artist of the Year" by the Finnish Accordion

Association in 2018, described as the young ambassador and active reformer of accordion music. Saarenkylä has competed internationally achieving numerous prizes from the most prestigious accordion competitions in the world such as PIF Castelfidardo, Coupe Mondiale and Trophée Mondial. The young accordion virtuoso has also toured extensively around the world performing in festivals, concerts, TV and Radio. Along with Saarenkylä's solo career she is the leader and composer of duo VILDÁ. The duo has attracted wide international attention with their debut album *Vildaluodda* (Bafe's Factory 2019), which was selected among the 10 best world music albums of 2019 by Songlines Magazine. In 2021 VILDÁ was awarded as a winner of *Music Moves Europe Talent Awards* - a European commission music prize for emerging artists. Saarenkylä has performed with duo VILDÁ in some of the world's leading world music events such as the WOMEX 2019 (opening night), Montréal Mundial 2019, Montréal First People's Festival and Celtic Connections 2020 among others. Saarenkylä's musical range as a performer and composer is wide and vivid. Her music travels from modern Nordic folk to popular music with influences of global sounds and styles from around the world. Besides her own artistic projects, Saarenkylä works as an active freelance musician taking part in numerous projects and bands based in Helsinki, Finland. She is currently pursuing masters degree studies of Global Music in the University of Arts Helsinki.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Final reflection

The Helsinki Sound Promenade Project (THSPP) with *Colectivo Azul* was put in motion with the primary intent of sharing a performative experience with the audience that could awake many different senses. My background as an architecture student brought me a very strong need of experiencing the space on a very profound level and by using both visual and audio content, I intended to create an atmosphere that could take the audience and the performers on a journey so deep that all of us could experience a state of flow that would have us forget the space and time during the performance. A performative act so softly profound that one feels

that they are the journey themselves, as if slowly the people would feel like they were being taken to another dimension within the space.

By asking the questions *“How to increase awareness (of sound) through the musicalization of the soundscape and what is the potential of these methods to be effective?”* and *“What are the roles and relationships between audience/performers/environment?”* I began to dig in various areas such as field recording, sound walking, deep listening and deep mapping, to understand better the sound environment that surrounds us every day. During this research process I learned technics and read an immense amount of literature that helped me guiding myself through lines of interpretation and analyses of the sonic world. Although the process has been very enlightening and rich in terms of knowledge it is also a fact that there are many new questions which remain without answers but create new paths for this project in the future.

This path would have been much harder without the help and constant support of very inspiring people that guided my ideas into a real performance.

To help me during the process of the field recordings I had the huge support of Mikko Happonen, that with his immense knowledge in the area taught me how to behave and act when planning and effectively record soundscapes. The discussions we had with Mikko helped shaping the performance of THSPP becoming more professional and secure in terms of structure. To create a project that would both interesting in terms of performance and research I could count with Ava Grayson that was from the very beginning a huge inspiration in many ways, especially in the area of the sound art and the sound aesthetics. The meetings and many conversations with Ava were fundamental to elaborate a proper research question and to compose and create a piece that would be artistically interesting and engaging. Throughout the whole process the rehearsals, meetings, and improvisation sessions with the members of *Colectivo Azul* were the key to the artistic process. The individual sessions and the conversations that proceeded the playing were fundamental in getting to know the *other* and to find a balance between the multicultural and background diversity existing within the group. The recorded sessions and interviews showed deep understanding between the participants both in musical and aural level.

The Helsinki Sound Promenade Project by *Colectivo Azul* is in constant mutation, changing with the environment and with the freedom that improvisation and performative arts naturally provide. For the future there are hopes of developing a performance where cross genre acts might be included, such as body and movement and manipulation of the visual content. A pedagogical structure based in *comprovisation* technics with soundscape is also one of the areas to develop. Finally, and most important, to keep developing musical tools to better express our own language as instrumentalists and continue researching the immense material still unexplored to develop more engaging performances and collaborative projects.

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