

**zone 2 source**

platform for art, nature & technology

**EXHIBITION**

6 October – 3 December 2023

het Glazen Huis

# Polyphonic Landscapes

and ecology

Ongoing research on sound

Amstelpark,  
Amsterdam

FINISSAGE

Sunday 3 December

15:00 – 17:00

Budhaditya Chattopadhyay,  
Lia Mazzari, Yolande Harris,  
Teemu Lehmusruus

# Polyphonic Landscapes

Ongoing research on sound and ecology

6 October – 3 December, 2023  
Zone2Source, het Glazen Huis

## ARTISTS

Budhaditya Chattopadhyay, Lia Mazzari,  
Yolande Harris, Teemu Lehmusruuu

*Polyphonic Landscapes* shows the results of a yearlong artistic research programme on sound and ecology organised in collaboration with Professorship Theory in the Arts of ArtEZ University of the Arts.

## Landscaping

In our current predicament in which we seek new relations to the world around us, the concept of landscape begs for new meanings. Where landscape historically has been thought of as a picturesque vista or passive backdrop for human protagonists, contemporary artists and theorists conceptualise landscape not so much as a noun but as a verb, a continuous flux of becoming in which both human and more-than-human agencies are entangled in a polyphony of world making, i.e. 'landscaping'

## Listening as research

The artistic research project *Polyphonic Landscapes* explores how sound and the act of listening can contribute to a more active understanding of landscapes. How can our sense of hearing foster a more embodied, inclusive, relational, and reciprocal connectivity to our environment, in which different life forms, materials, energy flows and temporalities are involved?

## Tuning into Polyphonic Landscapes

Four international sound artists have been invited to explore these questions over the course of one year. During residencies in and around the Amstelpark where Zone2Source is located, each artist delved into a different meaning of what we conceive of as landscape. While Budhaditya Chattopadhyay interrogates the dominance of visual landscape representation through the more intimate sense of sound which flows over the edges of his canvases, Lia Mazzari questions the extractive nature of field recordings by exploring live streams which enhance the act of listening with the landscape. During a time in which we are urged to relate to distant landscapes, Yolande Harris connects experiences of landscapes far and near through video and sound. Teemu Lehmusruuu expands our definition of landscape by including the processes within the soil, which he translates into sound in order to connect us to this underground life.

These year-long artistic explorations into landscape and sound are shared during three public research seminars in the beginning, middle and end of the research period. The last seminar will take place in spring 2024 on the occasion of a *Polyphonic Landscapes* publication for the online journal APRIA, ArtEZ Platform for Research Interventions of the Arts, for which the artists will expand on the texts written by each of them for this booklet.

## National Research Agenda (NWA)

*Polyphonic Landscapes* is part of the Art Route NWA project *Bit by Bit or not at all*, within the 'Small Projects' scheme funded by the Dutch Research Council (NWO). This project addresses various cluster questions posed in the National Research Agenda. For example: "What is quality of life?" and "What does art mean to people?". *Polyphonic Landscapes* seeks new perspectives on these questions through artistic research that explores the relationship between nature and culture, and the position of the human and non-human in particular. It endorses the NWA Art Route's vision that, in light of global climate breakdown, art can be an alternative mode of knowledge production that circumvents the dichotomies between subject and object, knowing and experiencing, human and non-human.

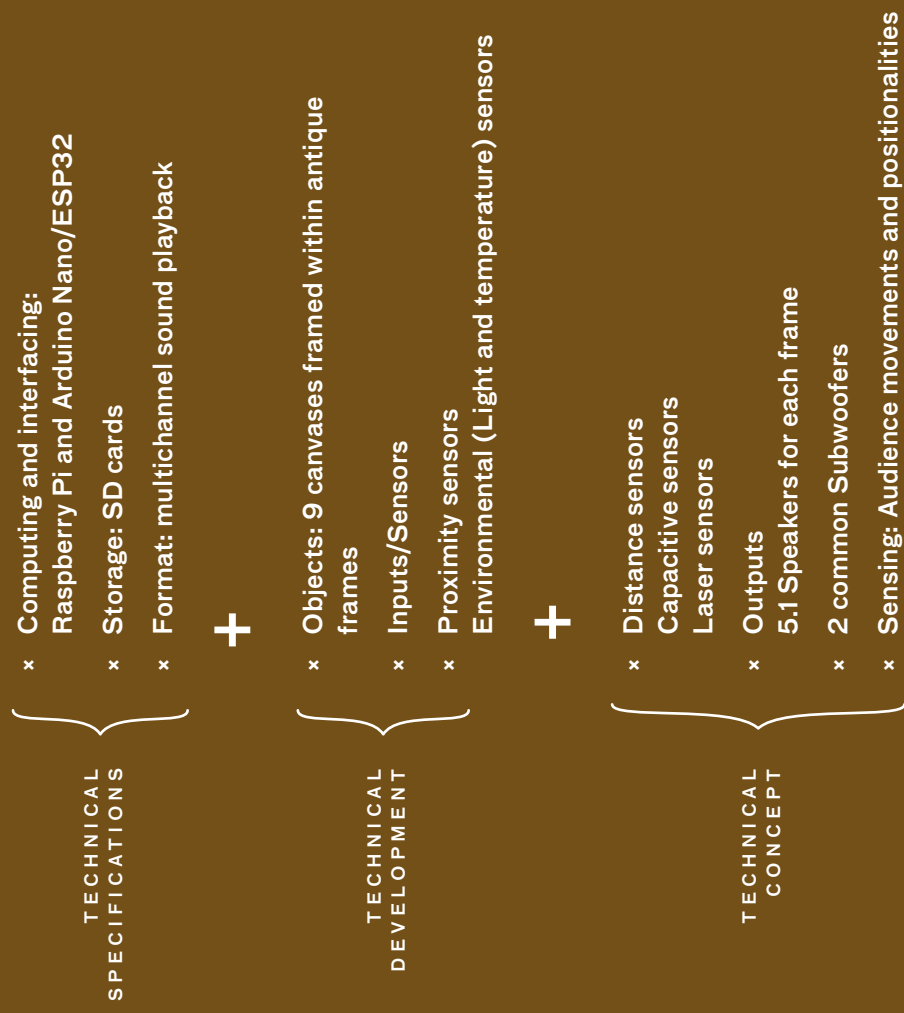
# Co-sounding: Towards a Sonorous Land

Budhadiya Chattopadhyay

In October 2022, I visited the state museum in Berlin (Staatliche Museen zu Berlin), which holds one of the largest collections of Dutch and Flemish paintings. My intention was to study closely the Romantic era landscape paintings as research for my contribution to *Polyphonic Landscapes*. I was accompanied by my mother, who visited me in the autumn from Kolkata, India. My mother drew my attention to some of the paintings, stating that the setting, such as a land or an indoor situation they portrayed, felt odd. One of the paintings depicted a black servant as part of the composition set indoors. Clearly, the shadow on the black body was painted in stark contrast with the bright presence of the colonial masters. Looking particularly at the lush and rich Dutch or Flemish landscape paintings hanging on the silent walls of the rich museums today, I agreed with my mother that they were painted from a hierarchical position of power, not only over the colonized body, but also over the colonized land. Their aesthetically gorgeous exteriors framed a sense of hollow contentment and complacency, which disturbed both me and my mother, coming from former European colonies and going through a bloody struggle for independence to overthrow colonial rule. The oddness of these paintings emerged from being seen with today's empowered decolonial perspective.

Later, I came across several landscape paintings in other museums, such as the Rijksmuseums in Amsterdam and Enschede. I noted that they do not reflect the colonial acts of violence over people and land but conceal these realities in their aesthetic use of color, light, shade, and gorgeous tones. The silencing of the colonial realities in these paintings urged me to uncover the layers that are not heard. As a sound practitioner, I am aware of the sonic agency to complicate an existing structure by transgressing it. It is the very power of sound that attracted me to sonic practices in the first place. I was contemplating how to sonify an inert landscape painting by listening in between the shades and making it speak out the hidden realities and truths. How to rethink the acts of radical listening and co-sounding as gestures of decolonial intervention and collective revelatory action? How to consider sound as a transgressive force that reveals layers of silenced realities: colonial extraction and plunder of land, displacing and dispossessing human and non-human life forms ingrained in the land? Perhaps, in the act of listening with and through the paintings is embedded a radical departure that helps reread them in the contemporary time of decoloniality.





*Co-sounding: Towards a Sonorous Land*, emerged from this strand of artistic research. The work aims to destabilize and reconfigure canonical Dutch landscape paintings from such romantic painters as Willem Roelofs, Barend Cornelis Koekkoek and others. As a method, I traced back some of the land sites that inspired them in these paintings. I used field recordings made on these sites as a methodology to reveal in-between spaces in the paintings, and the unheard realities, animating or underscoring untold narratives. The installation consists of a series of framed canvases which are equipped with sensors, code and field recordings, performing landscape paintings through our more intimate senses of listening. The audience is actively included through movements and interaction with environmental sensors installed in the canvases, thus participating in the sounds spilling over the frames into a shared space.

Budhaditya Chattopadhyay (IN/NL) is an artist, researcher, and writer. He produces works for large scale installations and live performance, addressing issues of environment, ecology, migration, race, and decoloniality. Chattopadhyay has an expansive body of scholarly publications in artistic research, media theory and aesthetics, and is the author of 5 books. He is currently a visiting professor at the Critical Media Lab, FHNW, Basel.



# hydroFiles

Lia Mazzari

*hydroFiles* is a multimedia research project and network of 8 live audio streams continuously broadcasting from various sites above and below the waterways of Amsterdam. In 'live audio streaming', microphones are embedded in places semi-permanently and transmit sound continuously from one location to many possible listeners over the internet in real-time. Giving the Amstel waters a voice and highlighting the aqueous nature of the 8 protagonists, we refer to the live audio streams as 'the hydrophilic 1-8' [a hydrophile or hydrophilic is a molecular entity that is attracted to water]. The hydrophilic 1-8 are stereo microphones and hydrophones across surface, drinking and sewage waters. They are hidden inside bascule bridges and historic water pumping stations, they dangle off temporary cycling bridges, dip into the busy Amstel canals and broadcast via solar power from the sand dunes.

What are the differences between listening to a field recording, a predetermined audio file, and listening to a live audio stream, a format that is always in a process of becoming? For *hydroFiles*, I explore how live audio streaming engenders different modalities of being and 'listening with' our environments, making the urban and rural waterways of Amsterdam the site of investigation.

Amsterdam has an incredibly long history in water management and a deep going relationship with water. One third of The Netherlands is below sea level and most of its land is built on sand. River dikes prevent flooding from water flowing into the country by the major rivers Rhine and Meuse, while a complicated system of drainage ditches, canals, and pumping stations (historically: windmills) keep the low-lying parts dry for habitation and agriculture. Since December 2022, I have an ongoing conversation with hydrological scientist Maarten Ouboter about 'giving the water a voice'. Together we located and researched important acoustic landmarks and nodes that reflect the diverse ecologies of the water networks in and around Amsterdam. Through 'listening with' the hydrophilic 1-8 (map with QR codes) it is possible to tune-in to remote and hard to reach locations in real-time; it helps us to untangle the ubiquity of the water flows and the city's deep going relationship to water, furthering an ethical reorientation to more-than-human life in a shared city. *hydroFiles* is research-in-progress looking into the affordances and limitations of live audio streaming and making contributions to creative discourses on environmental sound. I have learned and tested how to build, install and maintain live audio streamer boxes in a variety of open access spaces.



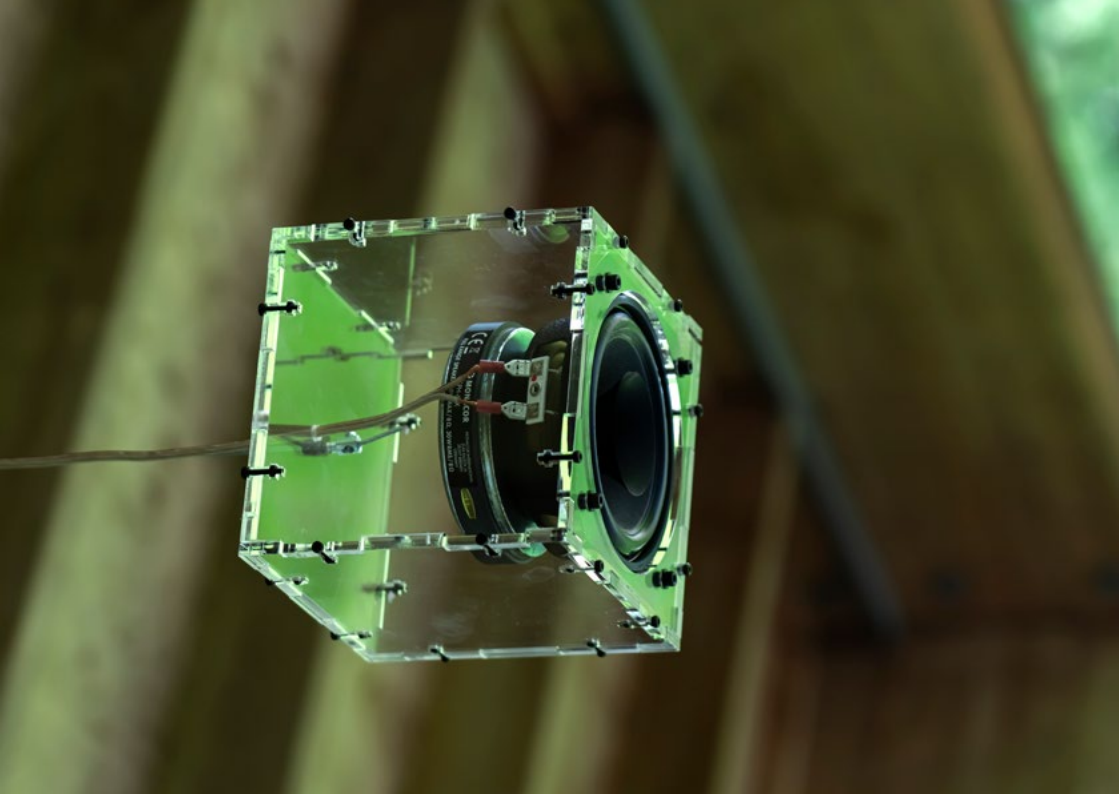


Through the slow and durational monitoring of the digital air waves hosted via the LocuStream Soundmap streaming platform, the project engages with the emancipatory potential of technology in music and sound art. My aim is to prototype immersive and sustainable strategies for composing new sound works with live audio streams, to understand their value for new audiences and to generate affective and political experiences of environments at the forefront of the climate crisis.

How do we compose for live audio streams that transcend geographical borders and how do these compositional strategies might function in critical arts-based contexts, exhibition and performance spaces?

Using the QR codes (on gallery front and posters) I invite the audience to 'listen with' the live audio streams and make them their own. This can be by playing back streams through your headphones and loudspeaker systems. The streams can be mixed and broadcast with other sound sources and musical material and used by performers in a variety of live settings.

Lia Mazzari engages new audiences through encounters with art in non-conventional spaces using performance, composition, installation and intervention. This relationship to sound and listening often engages collaborators, environmental recording, instrumentation (cello), voices, whip cracking, and most recently transmission technologies and live audio streaming methods. She is currently a PHD researcher at the Department of Geography at Royal Holloway University, London (UK).

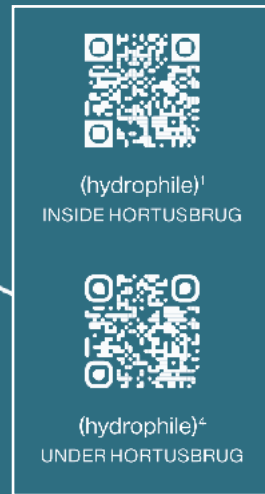




(hydrophile)<sup>7</sup>  
MARINETERRAIN



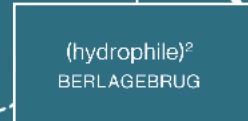
(hydrophile)<sup>6</sup>  
WASTEWATER TREATMENT  
PLANT WEST



(hydrophile)<sup>1</sup>  
INSIDE HORTUSBRUG



(hydrophile)<sup>4</sup>  
UNDER HORTUSBRUG



(hydrophile)<sup>2</sup>  
BERLAGEBRUG



(hydrophile)<sup>3</sup>  
GEMAAL STADTWIJCK



(hydrophile)<sup>8</sup>  
SOLAR-POWERED  
WATERLEIDINGDUINEN

# (hydro)Files

*hydroFiles* can be experienced in the exhibition through a real-time sound-installation, an interactive map with QR codes, a solar-powered floating prototype and a visual field diary documenting the locations we are listening with.

*hydroFiles* is supported by Waterschap Amstel, Gooi en Vecht and by Waternet and could not have happened without the support of Maarten Ouboter.

artist research and concept:  
Lia Mazzari  
map: Maja Larsson, Maarten Ouboter, Frank van Schaik,  
code: Matthew Olden

Extended thank you to all hydrophiles involved: Claudia van den Akker, Davy Barkey, Marcel van der Blom, Jeroen Borst, Ed Cousin, Bram van Essen, Dennis Van der Horst, Tom de Jong, Aiko van der Laan, Maarten Ouboter, Ben Parry, Frank van Schaik, Gerard Scholten, Grant Smith, Joyce Sylvester

# Vertigo and the Sound Portal

Yolande Harris

The installation that emerged out of these experiments is a way of bringing the two places together at the same time, so that they can be experienced simultaneously. The 'sound portal' takes the form of sound and a semi-dome video projection overlaid directly on the curved wall and ceiling of the exhibition space. Bird calls from a pacific coast redwood canyon at dawn, a small plane creating a sound dome overhead, a swelling gong, a metro train in Amsterdam emerging and disappearing into the underground tunnel, someone practicing the piano in the Amstelpark. These sounds anchor the images of a foggy boat ride on the Pacific Ocean, walking through a burnt redwood forest recovering from fire, the green leaves of spring in the Amstelpark, building a structure from a fallen tree, wild turkey's foraging under redwood and bay trees, a drone floating up high up into the branches of a redwood forest. The sound portal combines these places into a simultaneous experience. Three sets of colourfully braided headphones hold a further listening experience within the sound portal. They hold musical sounds, one with harp, gong and waves titled *That Unseen Vibrance* (2021), the other an electro-acoustic improvisation on sound portals using sleep data created with a group of students in California. You can walk with these headphones out into the park and experience moving with them through the environment.

Our sense of vertigo slips us through a sonic portal. A presence displaced yet fully felt. A lift into a space outside of place. The sound portal may help us question the assumed solidity of the ground we stand on, opening us up to a more fluid, empathetic and relational experience of places far and near to us.

In the autumn of 2022, I was approached as one of four sound artists to take part in a year long artistic research project on sound and the environment, based specifically on site of the Amstelpark in Amsterdam. Living in Santa Cruz, California I have become interested in remote presence and connections to distant environments. I had recently written "the pandemic-induced 'anthropause' in human activity, when oceans and land became suddenly and significantly quieter, offered both a window into possible sonic futures and, importantly, an opportunity to reflect back and hear ourselves more clearly. Through this project I started by asking how we can experience remote environments, how we can understand and increase empathy and whether sound can be the vehicle for this.

So began the demanding work of deep introspection through sounds, in which I explored a sense of





groundlessness or 'vertigo', a sense of displacement and unease, an ongoing effort of attempting to reconcile multiple identities and places within one person. It led me to abstract concepts of domes of sounds, depth and lift, orientations, emigrations and belongings, all coming together under the title *Vertigo and the Sound Portal*.

Through my artistic research process I have explored techniques of spatial audio and drone video in redwood forests, chased fog along the coast, sculpted a sound portal from branches of a fallen tree, experimented in the studio with sound and video combinations, taken a whale watching trip in dense early morning fog (no whales), taken an electro-acoustic music ensemble on a mycelium sound walk through the forest, and explored installation projection techniques and surfaces.

Yolande Harris is an artist, musician and researcher exploring ideas of sonic consciousness. Through audio-visual installations, walks and performances she creates intimate visceral experiences that heighten awareness of our relationship to the environment. Her projects explore respect and advocacy for the environment and to other species, approached through a sonic sensibility.

one environment  
augmenting another



## Human Vertigo

A sense of being unbound to the earth of floating, of falling of walking a few inches above the ground at risk of tumbling around me through the cultures I don't know and am not from nothing to bond or anchor me to here

And so I float to the other side of the world to ground myself, imagining my feet on the earth, with others close sensing knowing a stable something an exchange

Can I get this grounding without going back experience it here to root in a place I don't belong with others who don't belong or perhaps we can belong?

## Whale Vertigo

And what about a whale? perhaps it is less vertigo than compression a pressing on all sides of a sound not their own a crowding in a canyon underwater a distortion of scale and place to something unrecognizable their connections at great distances derailed, a swim a swim like floating, like falling no ground of culture, destroyed from the roots

## Tree Vertigo

When a tree leaves and finds itself in another place half way around the world can they ground, root? or do they experience vertigo can they overcome the floating falling sensation how does the tree connect then? how do they return home or understand their culture do they just grow, reconnect, renew grow into something else?



# Pulse

Teemu Lehmusruus

*Pulse* is a resonant sonic sculpture in bronze and glass and a site-sensitive soil-human-probe that can be installed both in and outdoors. During my residency I installed the work and documented it on different types of topsoils around the Amstelpark, creating sites of attention and attuning with the overlooked underground ecosystem. During the exhibition at het Glazen Huis the sculpture is tapped into a resident plant of the neighbouring Orangerie. The sensorial sculpture transmits the soil's agencies as sinusoids into the resonant material. Aiming to reposition the human in the landscape, the work probes the soil circumstances – here the moisture and temperature conditions of the topsoil – by translating them into sound and inviting us to resonate with a vital underground system, a habitat consisting of for most of us still unknown and unprotected animals and microorganisms.

Each blown glass object is unique and sounds different. How much they gain volume in the process, how much human breath we put into them, and how gravity treats them dictates their resonance capacities. Attaching the excitors directly to the glass turns the chamber into a resonator – the material itself turns into a sonic happening. The mixed output of four pairs of sine wave generators drives the exciter. Each pair contains a fixed sine wave generator and

a variable one. Initially they begin in unison – that is, they share the same frequency – but as the level of moisture and temperature in the soil fluctuates, the variable sine wave generator, controlled by the sensors, slips out of unison with the fixed generator. This difference in frequency generates a beating, perceived as a periodic variation in volume. The dryer the soil, the faster the beating.

That means that in extreme drought the soothing drone like sounds turn into a stress signal, while in a completely flooded soil the beating becomes flat, like a vanishing heart rate.

*Pulse* can thus be thought of as a signalling device, offering a connection with the habitat conditions of the underground ecosystem, but rather than a numerical measuring device, it embraces the idea of a multisensory, micro tactile therapeutic device for the human body, born from the need to reform the relationship with the overlooked underground nature. Rather than staying in the realm of numeric information of the environmental data space, the work implies a sensorial connection through a material resonance with the agencies that are





not reachable to us with unaided perception. It continues inquiries into what I call questions of 'extended perception', creating a moment of pause. Extending the concept of landscape to include underground processes, the work is an homage to soil aesthetics.

*Pulse* is part of my ongoing artistic research into the philosophy and practice of soil regeneration that has been ongoing since 2018 under the project title *Trophic Verses*. The park, which is entirely human-made, offers an intriguing environment right in the middle of an urban area to explore the different modes we pay attention to and relate to the soil. The organic living soil is a very thin layer covering a rocky planet, and it has been referred to as the skin of the planet, its biggest organ. *Pulse* is an exploration in the earths ecosystems and stirs curiosity by diving into the overlooked and enigmatic life sustaining systems below our feet.

Teemu Lehmusnuusu is a Helsinki-based media and installation artist. Lehmusnuusu's current, long-term exploration is into the invisible life within the Earth's soil, that is in a constant state of flux, and endangered by the environmental crisis. He enables us to encounter it through sensors, sounds and computer generated images together with natural materials.



## Summer 2023

Artistic production comes from a need to create a speculative window or a portal through which one can, or possible could, connect with other dimensions of our everyday life and its perception. For me it is about enriching life but in a way that the things as they are, the obvious if you like, could be better reached by us humans. It is also about reminding about the anthropocentric premise that dominates our world-view. How often, amidst our daily commutes for example, are we thinking how the worms and other soil animals are doing for example?

## Autumn 2023

Putting together the parts of the sculpture. The bronze objects casted in sand, the glass chambers blown by human breath and sculpted with gravity and hands, the electronics that are a result of humans complex technological quest. There lies always a certain absurdity in our operations. This time, mixed with an ethos of regeneration. But the process doesn't regenerate the natural surroundings, it doesn't protect, create or restore habitats. The regeneration is directed to the human body. It is a device with measuring sensors, but the outcome is not numerical. The sensor itself is a metaphor for connection per se, for the acknowledgement of the overlooked agencies. And the resonance that the soil's humidity and temperature data manipulates – a resonance that happens on the terms of that particular unique glass shape that took place – is a signal to our bodies, not to be understood anymore as a numeric value but as a happening of attention.

## December 2022

The process starts with an on-site visit to Amstelpark, Amsterdam during the winter time. To me the starting point to any work is an instantaneous, bodily reaction to the site where the project is rooted in. At the park my attention directed to the different ways the land, in the context of an urban park that we are in, is being gardened, stewarded. Which areas of the park are covered with asphalt, which areas have the shortest grass, which areas the falling leaves are collected away from, and where perhaps the soil can aggregate unattended.





## PUBLIC PROGRAMME

### CIRCULAR SEMINAR

**Polyphonic Landscapes  
the Orangerie, Amstelpark**

**14 June 2023 • 12:00–17:00**

The four participating artists engage in a circular and participatory setting to share and discuss the key concepts of their research with the audience.

### OPENING Exhibition

**Friday 6 October • 16:00–19:00**

16:00 walk-in

16:30 introduction and artist talks

17:30 round table discussion

18:00 performance and drinks

### WORKSHOP Letting Sounds Go

**Budhaditya Chattopadhyay**

**Saturday 28 October • 17:00–19:00**

Participants will take a listening walk through the Amstelpark, and engage with manifold sonic environments emerging or coalescing on the site. By subverting the technological obsession to capture all and surveil everything, the participants will focus on intimate encounters, co-listening, and forgetting. The workshop will conclude with a performance giving away sounds where they belong: on the land, as vibrating sources ingrained in and embedded with the sites.

### FINISSAGE A sound event by Lia Mazzari

**Sunday 3 December • 16:00–18:00**

For the Finissage of *Polyphonic Landscapes* Lia will return to Zone2Source to present a hybrid live performance and experiment on site taking place under Amstelpark's roaring flight paths. Using the live audio streams that were placed and installed around the waterways of Amsterdam, the audience will be connected to *hydroFiles* in real-time. Immersed in a pool of telematic sound, streaming from multiple locations above and below the water ways of Amsterdam, we will traverse distant social sites exploring spatio-temporal relations, duration and our resonating bodies.

Het Glazen Huis is open Friday – Sunday between 13:00 – 17:00 and by appointment. Outside works are scattered throughout the Amstelpark. The park is open daily from 8:00 until half an hour before sunset.

Would you like to stay updated about Zone2Source, our exhibitions and public programme (including workshops, lectures and other events)? Please subscribe to our newsletter, take a look at [zone2source.net](http://zone2source.net) or follow us on Facebook or Instagram.

## zone2source

Amstelpark 4  
1083 HZ Amsterdam  
[info@zone2source.net](mailto:info@zone2source.net)  
[www.zone2source.net](http://www.zone2source.net)

## LOCATIONS

**het Glazen Huis** exhibitions & presentations  
Park Studio & presentations  
**Orangerie**  
**Rietveld Pavilion** office  
**SchaduwTuin** presentations

In collaboration with

**ArtEZ**

Professionship

Theory in the Arts

Zone2Source is made possible by

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fund NL**

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& erfgoed



**WaterNet**  
waterschaps unie  
in het west  
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Exhibition photos: Thomas Lenden

