

Abstract for Audiovisuality, Aarhus University, Denmark, May 2011
Tansy Spinks

Title of presentation:

“Sounds lasting and leaving from different places” (Marcel Duchamp)¹

The presentation will consider the notion of site-specific sound as an art practice drawing particularly on the pioneering sound works of the American, Max Neuhaus and on my own improvisatory performance/interventions.

Max Neuhaus states that our perception of a space is as dependent on what we hear as on what we see. In considering the need foremost to listen, he questions the sound space in and between the sounds of everyday life.

A sound artist approaching the devising of a work for an alternative to that of the conventional gallery space, may well consider some or all of the following issues: the nature of the space, both functionally (domestic, industrial, interior, exterior, a place of transit or of waiting), and its physical and architectural characteristics, the nature of the acoustics, the type of inhabitants or users of the space and whether they are to be involved as participants in some way, albeit perhaps unwittingly. Another contributing factor may well be the histories and associations inherent in or suggested by the site, waiting to be uncovered, allowing the artist to assume successively, many mantels: of amateur historian, ethnographer, acoustic technician, director, deviser, mimic, performer and audience.

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