

Editor's Introduction, Somaesthetics of Noise

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Somaesthetics of noise recognizes noise as a somatic phenomenon that extends beyond the auditory, affecting us in most realms of experience. Noise is heard, and it is also felt through vibration, pressure, irritation, disturbance, interruption, fatigue, excitement, and sometimes pleasure. It can unsettle attention, reorganize bodily orientation, thicken atmosphere, and expose the limits of perception. For the most part, noise has been a largely unexplored source for somaesthetic inquiry. If somaesthetics examines the soma as a medium of sensory appreciation, self-cultivation, communication, and world-disclosure, then noise directs our attention to those moments when embodied experience becomes excessive, difficult, unruly, or resistant to immediate assimilation.

The essays and interviews gathered in this volume approach noise in an expansive somaesthetic sense. Some focus on explicitly sonic practices, including experimental music, noise performance, and sound poetry. Others extend noise beyond the auditory, considering restlessness, bodily interference, atmospheric disruption, and the governance of embodied presence. In all these contributions, noise is what urges renewed attention to the conditions through which meaning, sensation, and social order are formed. Noise can overwhelm and disrupt, but it can also attune and help us refocus. It can produce discomfort, but discomfort often stimulates inquiry. It can be treated as disorder by institutions, but it can also become a resource for resistance, self-stylization, and shared experience.

The contributions to this volume show that noise is one of the ways somaesthetic life becomes palpable. The noisy body helps disclose how perception is shaped through habits, environments, tools, sociocultural norms, and other practices. Somaesthetics of noise addresses how bodies are affected by noise, produce noise, are governed as noise, and how noise may generate new forms of bodily awareness. Noise is acknowledged as a crucial medium through which embodied experience becomes transformed.

Beginning the volume, Derek Hillard and Serena Massimo's "Noise as Atmospheric Interference: Sound Poetry and Romina De Novellis' *Arachne*" examines noise as a form of embodied and affective interference with established codes of meaning, movement, and social order. Through its pairing of Dada sound poetry with De Novellis' site-specific performance, *Arachne*, the essay describes how noise can unsettle habitual relations between body, environment, language, and normativity. In the Dada sound poem, vocal noise disrupts semantic expectation and returns language to its corporeal production. In *Arachne*, noise becomes atmospheric and performative, operating through silence, walking, discomfort, and complicity rather than through sound alone. The essay's relevance to the issue's theme lies in its account of noise as a destabilizing force that reconfigures meaning by producing discomfort. In dialogue with atmospherology and the somaesthetics of discomfort, Hillard and Massimo present noise as

an artistic means of making bodies and environments newly perceptible, especially where hegemonic norms have rendered suffering, alienation, or misfitting invisible.

Reza Shirmarz's "Somathorybics: The Governance of Bodies as Noise" introduces a powerful conceptual vocabulary for analyzing how institutions regulate embodied presence once certain bodies are treated as forms of noise. The essay defines *somathorybics* as the governance of bodies as noise and develops four operators of sensory governance: filtration, compression, amplification, and leakage. Through Shirmarz's concentrated case study of Iran's compulsory modesty regime, the article shows how state power operates by organizing perception itself. State power works to determine which bodies may appear, how they may move, what they may sound like, and under what conditions they become legible as proper or improper. Somathorybics expands the concept of noise beyond the auditory into a cross-sensory and political category. Noise names the excess of embodied life that institutions seek to filter, standardize, and surveil, as well as the irrepressible leakage through which bodies continue to resist hegemonic control. The essay provides a framework for understanding sensory governance as a somaesthetic problem.

Tomokatsu Kono extends the theme of noise into the domain of neurodivergent embodied experience in "Toward a Somaesthetic Participatory Cognitive Science of ADHD: From Feelings of Restlessness to the Somatic Noise Hypothesis". Kono interprets feelings of restlessness in ADHD as a form of *somatic noise*. Rather than a mere behavioral symptom or internal distraction, somatic noise is proposed as a bodily disturbance that can interfere with the aesthetic quality of everyday experience and with interoceptive signals involved in prospective memory. The essay is especially important for this issue because it suggests how somaesthetics can help translate lived bodily experience into both philosophical interpretation and empirically testable hypotheses. Noise, in this account, can arise from the body as background, shaping the field of salience through which tasks, memories, and aesthetic qualities come into focus or fail to do so. Kono's essay provides a promising path for a participatory somaesthetic cognitive science attentive to neurodivergent self-interpretation.

In "Embodied Vibrations: Noise, Mood, and Subtractive Synthesis in High Intensity Acoustic Experiences" Jordan Kokot and Aaron Michael Smith approach noise as a condition through which attention, mood, and shared atmosphere become possible. Drawing on experimental and high-intensity acoustic experiences, the essay develops sympathetic resonance and subtractive synthesis as conceptual models for understanding how persons become attuned to situations. In this essay, noise is presented as the dense field of possible resonances from which embodied attention takes shape. The essay's contribution to this issue lies in its insistence that noise is central to somaesthetic life because it reveals the plurality of ways bodies resonate with atmospheres. In doing so, it also challenges any politics or aesthetics that would seek to homogenize experience by eliminating the very noisiness from which shared yet differentiated presence emerges.

The section on noise concludes with Janne Vanhanen's "Noise belongs to everyone': Interview with Vilho Koivisto, a Noise Musician." This dialogue provides a practitioner-centered account of noise as a subcultural musical practice. Through Koivisto's reflections on listening, recording, performing, releasing, and distributing noise, the interview offers a rich picture of noise music as a scene built around tactile sound, DIY circulation, cultivated listening, and the search for one's own sonic voice. Noise music shifts aesthetic experience away from conventional musical anticipation and toward the lived immediacy of sound as pressure, texture, density, and somatic encounter. Koivisto's account emphasizes the edge between control and chaos, where sound almost gets out of hand but remains fertile for both performer and listener. The interview frames noise as a democratic and embodied art of attention that ultimately belongs to everyone.

In addition to the section devoted to somaesthetics of noise, we also include two interviews

concerning somatic practices.

“Somaesthetics of Bharatanāṭyam: The Dancer as Yogi” offers an illuminating interview with Smt. Vrinda Ramanan on Bharatanāṭyam as a lifelong discipline of embodied cultivation. The interview foregrounds the dancer’s soma as the central medium of communication, showing how gesture, posture, breath, facial expression, rhythm, costume, music, and devotional identification are integrated through sustained practice. Ramanan’s reflections present dance as a spiritual and ethical practice through which the body, mind, and breath are brought into consonance. Especially significant is the discussion of *abhyāsa*, or repeated practice, through which the dancer refines the body until movement, emotion, and meaning become internalized rather than externally imposed. The interview also clarifies the pedagogical and moral dimensions of *Bharatanāṭyam*, the *guru-śiṣya* tradition, the cultivation of humility and discipline, the formation of resilience, and the gradual embodiment of *bhāvas* that allow spectators to experience *rasa*. Understood through the framework of somaesthetics, the dancer appears as a yogic practitioner whose art depends on the cultivated body’s capacity to transform literature, rhythm, emotion, and devotion into lived expression.

“Articulating the Indiscernible” presents an interview between Quim Bigas Bassart and Rasmus Ölme that reflects on dance as a practice of sensing, attunement, and relational inquiry. Emerging from Ölme’s research project, *An Indiscernible Zone*, the conversation centers on a score in which the body becomes a felt-sense instrument for mediating one’s experience of place through movement. The interview approaches dancing as a way of remaining with complexity. Dance allows impressions from an environment to become bodily expression, loosens habitual definitions of objects and spaces, and attends to the threshold before experience becomes fixed in language. The practice described is deeply responsive to place, since each space alters the dancer’s perceptual and physical possibilities. Dance is described as “dancing with” (with a score, an object, a room, another practitioner, or an audience) so that performance becomes a relational and ongoing mediation between soma, context, and action. Bassart and Ölme offer a compelling account of contemporary dance as cultivated somaesthetic acuity. Dance becomes a disciplined yet playful practice of discovering how the soma and its world continually form one another.