

The Speculative Listener's Field Guide



1. Drift

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Immerse yourself in the soundscape. Allow your mind to drift as it follows sounds. You can choose to physically move or remain in one place.

≈ 20 minutes

REFLECTION (WRITE / SKETCH)

What were the shapes of the sounds? What questions and/or feelings did the sounds evoke? Did you experience any synesthesia – for example, were the sounds heavy, bright, bitter, smooth, or something else? What did you like the most? Which would you seek out again? Why?

**“As you listen, the particles of sound decide to be heard.
Listening affects what is sounding. It is a symbiotic
relationship. As you listen, the environment is enlivened.
This is the listening effect.” – Pauline Oliveros (Quantum
Listening, 2022)**

REFLECTION (WRITE / SKETCH)

2. Earth Tones

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**Seek out the primal
sounds of the Earth's
voice like wind, water,
vegetation, and stone.**

≈ 20 minutes

REFLECTION (WRITE / SKETCH)

What were the shapes of the sounds? What questions and/or feelings did the sounds evoke? Did you experience any synesthesia – for example, were the sounds heavy, bright, bitter, smooth, or something else? What did you like the most? Which would you seek out again? Why?

**“[We] are suffering from a collective form of dementia...
It is a form of violence, in which time is purely human and
existence itself is reduced to an exclusively human affair.” –
Monica Gagliano (Thus Spoke the Plant, 2018)**

REFLECTION (WRITE / SKETCH)

3. Beautiful Mingle

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**Seek out a beautiful
convergence of human
and non-human sounds.
You decide how a
beautiful mingling
sounds.**

≈ 20 minutes

REFLECTION (WRITE / SKETCH)

What were the shapes of the sounds? What questions and/or feelings did the sounds evoke? Did you experience any synesthesia – for example, were the sounds heavy, bright, bitter, smooth, or something else? What did you like the most? Which would you seek out again? Why?

“Experience is also based on temporal extension, on interconnections between temporal horizons...The subject of experience...inhabits the transition from past to future.

Experience [Erfahrung] encompasses a vast temporal space...When life loses all rhythm, temporal disturbances occur. One of the symptoms...is the vague feeling that life itself is accelerating, when in reality nothing is accelerating.”

– Byung-Chul Han (The Scent of Time, 2017).

REFLECTION (WRITE / SKETCH)

4. Noise

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**Seek out the most
broken convergence of
human and non-human
sounds.**

≈ 20 minutes

REFLECTION (WRITE / SKETCH)

What were the shapes of the sounds? What questions and/or feelings did the sounds evoke? Did you experience any synesthesia – for example, were the sounds heavy, bright, bitter, smooth, or something else? What did you like the most? Which would you seek out again? Why?

“Noise. Sensory erasure. Listening reveals injustice and fracture. The practice of floating for just a few minutes in the physicality of unwanted sounds can be helpful. We better understand how senses, anger, and sadness are wrapped into one another. We give ourselves an opportunity to play with that important moment between stimulus and response. Perhaps in this exploration we can find firmer inner ground for outward action.” – George David Haskell (Playful Listening, 2022).

REFLECTION (WRITE / SKETCH)

**“We are here to remember the future, reverberating whole
galaxies toward us as we breathe in.” – Monica Gagliano
(Thus Spoke the Plant, 2018).**



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JESSE THOMPSON (2024)