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THE HYPERLISTENING BODY.  
STORY OF AN EMBODIED LISTENING EXPERIENCE  
AND ITS EXTENSION IN AN ATMOSPHERIC APPARATUS

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ABSTRACT

This research and creation dissertation calls for a reflective approach. Its central question and process is based on a singular first-hand listening experience in 2002. At the time, this experience thrust me into a new relation to sound and to the world, and more precisely to the place itself and to a sensation of penetrating sonoluminescence. From then on, in my musical compositions, I aimed to encapsulate this new experience of my listening body vibrating from the place, in the place, my hyper-listening body. Over the course of this practice, a rupture of meaning appeared between my way of working, my artistic output, and the concert situation. Hence the guiding question of my dissertation: what listening *apparatus* could best host my music and simultaneously offer it up as a listening sphere in which to experience astonishment? Thus was initiated my research and the experimentation with various concert-installation proposals which, eventually, generated a set-up as listening and experiencing environment which I called “atmospheric *apparatus*”. This dissertation has led to the public presentation of four projects: *From There to Hear* (2013) for piano, electronics and ambient sounds; *Sculpting Spaces* (2013) for electric guitar and drum kit, field recordings, and artists at work; *Intra-muros* (2014) for tuba, amplified bell plates, live electronics, and sound installations; *Chambre d'écoute* (2017) for percussion, live electronics and objects manipulations.

My dissertation begins with the examination of the initial listening experience which brings to light its unreproducible and “événementiale” nature (Claude Romano), open to transformation where body, sound, and place experience a unified moment. At the core of the development of this reflection is a phenomenological conceptualization drawn from many philosophers and academics including Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Henri Maldiney, Gilles Deleuze, Jean-Luc Nancy, and Nishida Kitaro. Nishida’s concept of active intuition sheds light on my own practice of an embodied intuition in the creative process, bolstering my reflection on embodied listening with his concept of “embodied organ”; I link this concept with Francisco Varela and al.’s enaction, which recognizes that body and spirit constitute an inextricable entity governing the subjective experience of the world. My reflection on musical composition and the *apparatus* is informed by that of Luigi Nono, Max Neuhaus, and the *Dream House* project from La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela, to name but a few.

The whole process is anchored in an iterative “practice as research” methodology, the *apparatus*' experimentations aiming to create the conditions for inviting the visitor-listener, a subjectifying frontier between reality and art, to dive into the artwork, a process-based space intertwining intimate listening and listening to the place itself. Each *apparatus* is explored using an *in situ* approach and the search for a new way of articulating the relationships between plasticity, technology and musical performance. My work reveals the fundamental role of the atmosphere that binds all the elements at play. Within this new research field, I am expanding the concept of atmosphere in light of reflections by various thinkers including Gernot Böhme, Hermann Schmitz, Jean-Paul Thibaud, Jean-François Augoyard, and Peter Sloterdijk. The atmospheric *apparatus* emerges as a result of a reticular organization of sonic-spatial-luminous flows, the art of impregnation, which echos the hyper-listening experience that is foundational to the whole process.

KEY-WORDS: listening, body, hyper-listening, listening body, embodied listening, embodied intuition, enaction, visitor-listener, phenomenology, concert-installation, *apparatus*, atmosphere, ambiance, art of impregnation, *in situ*, place, sensation, experiential art, process-based space, eventual, événementialité, l'Ouvert.