



<http://revueties.org>

Revue TIES

3 | 2019

Poétique / Politique :
l'esthétique en partage

The Politics of Noise in Henri Chopin's Audiopoems

John Melillo

RÉSUMÉ. Cet article voudrait, à travers l'écoute et l'étude de deux œuvres d'Henri Chopin, poète sonore et concret français, théoricien et éditeur, tenter de mieux comprendre ce que Charles Bernstein a appelé le « seuil à partir duquel le bruit devient phoniquement / significatif » (« Artifice of Absorption »). Les audio-poèmes d'Henri Chopin réitèrent et défamiliarisent simultanément la communication orale par des processus d'enregistrement, de répétition et de distorsion des sons émis par la bouche. Nous voudrions montrer qu'en déconstruisant et en reconstruisant continuellement la « signification phonique » grâce aux techniques du corps et aux technologies d'enregistrement et d'amplification, les cassettes de Chopin représentent le bruit comme métamorphose plutôt que la voix poétique comme métaphore. Ce faisant, elles placent le corps parmi les sous-produits invisibles, presque inutilisables, mais toujours présents, créés par les matériaux, les marchés, les pouvoirs et les habitudes. Cet essai propose d'écouter les manipulations rythmiques et temporelles des enregistrements sonores de Chopin pour comprendre dans quelle mesure ils font écho à ce que Lisa Robertson a qualifié d'« historicité du non-sens » et ce que Theodor Adorno a théorisé comme « l'historicité intérieure » des travaux musicaux. Au-delà de toute figuration, la production de bruit de Chopin ainsi que sa théorisation implicite mettent l'accent sur la fragilité humaine face à la violence de l'histoire.

ABSTRACT. *In this essay, I conduct two close listenings of the French sound poet, concrete poet, theorist and editor, Henri Chopin, in order to investigate what Charles Bernstein has called the “threshold at which noise becomes phonically / significant” (“Artifice of Absorption”). Henri Chopin’s audiopoems simultaneously reiterate and defamiliarize oral communication through processes of recording, repeating, and distorting mouth sound. I argue that by continuously de- and re-constructing “phonic significance” through techniques of the body and technologies of recording and amplification, Chopin’s tape-works figure noise as metamorphosis rather than poetic voice as metaphor. In doing so, they situate the body within the invisible, nearly unlistenable—and yet ever-present—sonic by-product created by materials, markets, powers, and habits. In this essay, I listen to the rhythmic and temporal manipulations of Chopin’s sound recordings in order to understand how they mark what Lisa Robertson has called the “historicity of non-meaning” and what Theodor Adorno has theorized as the “inner historicity” of musical works. Before and beyond any figuration, Chopin’s production of noise (as well as its implicit theorization) emphasizes human frailty in the midst of the vast sweep of history’s violence.*

MOTS-CLÉS : Henri Chopin, bruit, historicité, temporalité, poésie sonore, voix, corps, enregistrement sur bande magnétique

KEYWORDS: *Henri Chopin, noise, historicity, temporality, sound poetry, voice, the body, tape recording*

“[...] there is no fixed threshold at which noise becomes phonically significant; the further back this threshold is pushed, the greater the resonance at the cutting edge. [...]”
(Bernstein 1992, 12)

The work of the French sound poet Henri Chopin (1922 – 2008) offers a deep investigation of the “threshold at which noise becomes phonically significant.” As a performer, a theorist, and the curator of the multi-arts magazine *OU* (1964–1974), Chopin’s career connects early twentieth-century “verse without words” by Dadaist poet-performers like Hugo Ball, Raoul Hausmann, and Kurt Schwitters, mid-twentieth-century technological and sonic experimentation (particularly through *musique concrète* and experimental sound poetics), and the contemporary genre of process-based electro-acoustic improvisation (EAI) or “noise music.” Chopin emerged from a post-World War II experimental avant-garde intent on a revolutionary reinterpretation of culture from the bottom up. For his immediate predecessors, the Lettrists, led by Isidore Isou, the reduction of language to the abstraction of the letter became the first step in a programmatic restructuring of sound and sense. The Ultralettrists, a group that Chopin founded and moved away from later in his career, embraced new technologies like the microphone and tape recorder as a way of moving beyond the alphabetic grid. Among that group, which included other sound poets like François Dufrêne and Gil Wolman, Chopin stood out for his emphasis upon the mediation of the recording mechanism as a site for experimentation and exploration in itself. In his performances and recordings, Chopin continuously tested the limits of poetry by attempting to move beyond the enclosed regions of the phoneme, letter, and voice. At the same time, he played with the limits of the technology—a reel-to-reel tape machine—with which he worked. He created dense meshes of sound by recording clicks, breaths, (sub)vocalizations, and other bodily sounds into his tape machine. He then manipulated these recordings by looping the tape, adjusting playback speed, and amplifying the sounds at very high volumes. Chopin’s stage presence paralleled the expansive intensity of the sounds he manufactured. The artist and media theorist Dick Higgins commented on the “really terrifying” performances of Chopin: “He seems to grow to a gigantic scale, the gravity of his expression suggesting some kind of vampire or evil spirit” (“The Golem in the Text,” quoted in Zurbrugg 2001, 27).

Many authors have taken up the questions of amplification, somatic technique, and technological mediation that Chopin’s work presents¹. In this essay, I would like to inflect these questions by thinking about Chopin in relation to the noise that his work simultaneously inhabits and figures. I will argue that by continuously de- and re-constructing “phonic significance” through techniques of the body and technologies of recording and amplification, Chopin’s tape-works model noise as metamorphosis rather than voice as metaphor. In other words, Chopin’s work

¹ See, in particular McCaffery (1998), Wendt (1993), and Zurbrugg (2001).

emphasizes what Douglas Kahn calls “the trouble” of noise: “noises are never just sounds and the sounds they mask are never just sounds: they are also ideas of noise” (Kahn 1999, 20). Through his tape works *Vibrespace* (1963) and *Dynamisme Intégral* (1973), Chopin refuses an aesthetic attitude that would hear “just sounds.” He seems less interested in the mid-century sonic avant-garde’s turn toward a purified “sound itself.” Instead, he figures conflicting and reverberating frequencies that chaotically envelop and index social time and social space. The threshold between noise and phonic significance thus becomes the thematic material of a form of poetry far removed from the page but not from writing. Rather than embodying the poetic metaphor of a speaking voice, Chopin imagines a poetic act that is continuous with and embedded within the unstable political, ideological, and aesthetic milieu of noise.

As sound-writing or “phono-graphy,” Chopin’s tape-works record the sonic traces of a body in time. At the same time, they register the dissipation of these traces within noise. As tape writes the historicity of a body, or the time-bound character of a particular body’s movements, it also erases those gestures by detaching and abstracting the body as a gap between the social expectation for reference and the masking distortion of echo, volume, and over-saturation. This enfolding of tracing and erasure marks both an aesthetics of feedback, in which the output of a recording process returns again as the input of the same process, and the materiality of magnetic tape, in which sounds can be recorded, temporally shifted, and processed in various ways by the electronic reorganization of magnetized iron on a plastic strip but only alongside a continuous and inarticulate “hiss”—a recalcitrant resistance of the medium to its working. In these ways, Chopin’s work listens for and plays within the threshold between noise and phonic significance (voice) not in order to police this binary but rather to suture and undo the forms of distinction and articulation that would create such a threshold. What seem like defined spaces between noise and significance are actually mutually imbricated layers that allow us to rethink the relations between inside and outside, flesh and technology, sound and writing, self and other, poetic form and political will.

In this way, noise—a word Chopin rarely uses to describe the work he and other sound poets do—emerges not as a projective disruption, destruction, or violation of an acoustic order (Attali 6) but rather as the materialization of a violence inherent within the language and environment of political life. Chopin’s poetry does not model a simple anarchism, a negative liberty on the level of the acoustic. Instead, it places language in contact with a reverberating sound world that reaches inhuman proportions through human means. Through the disfiguration of voice, speech, and body within the metamorphosis made possible by tape-recording processes, Chopin composes noise. This sounds like an oxymoron, but Chopin constructs and layers sound in order to reference and withhold the signifying sounds of language. By doing so, this work resonates beyond language and into the rhythms and temporalities that mask the excessive energy and invisible violence of social force and political will.

A Prosody of Noise

In suggesting that Chopin disfigures voice in order to figure a sensation of noise, I am rethinking Chopin's own claims about the uses for and power of his work. Chopin was very clear about his explicit antipathy to "The Word." In the essay, "Why I Am the Author of Free Poetry and Sound Poetry," Chopin lays out the depredations and failures of the "all-powerful Word" (Chopin 1967, 80). He perceives "The Word" as the abstract functioning of language as a means to order, command, obey, and, in general, to falsify life by making meaning out of it. The manifesto follows many of its early modernist forebears in laying out a set of stark pronouncements: "The Word has created profit, it has justified work, it has made obligatory the confusion of occupation (to be doing something), it has permitted life to lie" (80). Even more, The Word acts as a veil responsible for "the general incomprehension of beings who succumb to murders, racisms, concentrations, the laws, etc." (81). The "role" of his art, then, is to "open our effectors to our own biological, physical and mental potentialities beyond all intellect" (81). It refuses understanding, judgment, or clarity in order to cast out the Word. It attempts "to establish chaos as a system" (81).

Like his contemporary William Burroughs—whose work Chopin published in *OU*—Chopin cuts up and manipulates tape in order to undo and remove the replicating, tape-like quality of language, which tends to transform humans into "pre-programmed tape recorder[s] set to record and play back" (Burroughs 338). In their manifestos, "the Word" stands on the side of "phonic significance" while the body's "biological, physical and mental potentialities" stand on the side of noise and chaos (Chopin 81). The Word marks an assault on the body in the name of identifying it. In his sound-work, Chopin hears the body—and the body's relationship to words—*anew*. The sounds Chopin creates call for the misrecognition of the body against its identities as a self, a consumer, a citizen, etc. His work, then, does not simply stop at negating the word. Rather, Chopin's call for disobedience to the word involves an intricate signal processing in which the possibility of an indicative language is both raised and foreclosed. In this way, it is not simply marked as the "outside" to the word but is rather an attempt to systematize chaos. But, just as Chopin saw the order of language as illusory, the oxymoron of a systematized chaos may also prove illusory. The works take shape even if they are less "organizations of sound" than processes in sound, and they take shape around the "system of chaos" that undergirds the seeming order of political economic life. The sounds of these works figure, to use the rich phrase of the contemporary poet Lisa Robertson, the "historicity of non-meaning," (63). That is, they index the twittering of production's happening, the constant energetic, vibratory output of social existence.

In works like *Dynamisme Intégral* (1973, first released on cassette in 1983) Chopin realizes a continuously changing field of sounds marked by their unsettled and unsettling relationship to "familiar" sounds. As the name suggests, a dynamic integration occurs: sounds combine, come apart, and recombine in an unfolding

multiplicity. Layers of distortion and feedback sound out frequencies without the structure of pitches, phonemes, or recognizable beats. These sounds exist in a nether region between and beyond the abstractions of music, the conventions of speech, and the sounds of daily life. If there are indications, they are toward the mouth and the body as sites of sonic production. This relationship is explicit in one of his most well-known pronouncements: “The body is always like a factory! It never stops! There’s no silence!” (quoted in Zurbrugg 28). Chopin amplifies these sounds through many different effects: 1) he places the microphone inside of his mouth to find different resonant cavities in order to create ringing electronic feedback; 2) he places the microphone very close to the lips, tongue, and teeth to get close to the percussive—and yet liquid—sounds of flesh flapping against flesh; and 3) he loops all of these sounds together at various speeds. At times, he repeats echoes of previous sounds “verbatim,” and at other times he speeds up and slows down the looped sounds. In capturing and multiplying the factory-sounds of the body, he renders them simultaneously explicit and abstract. Rather than performing the presentation of the rhetorical figure of poetic voice, Chopin seeks out instances of non-voice that emerge through the pliability of tape as a medium for sound writing. This work is not so much polyphonic or polyrhythmic as impossibly polymorphic.

Such an efflorescent, unfolding quality suggests that the relationship of the body’s factory-sounds to the ever-emerging noises of production and exchange is not simply one of anarchic release from binding power structures. Nor is the body a symptom of those structures. Rather, the body imaginatively inhabits the noise within which it is located. Much of Chopin’s performance practice after 1963 plays with the para-linguistic mouth-sounds that occur in excess of the meaningful sounds of language. Produced by the action of teeth, tongue, glottis, throat, and more, these sounds happen with and through every act of signification in speech. Steve McCaffery calls these noises “heterological” (McCaffery 1997, 159). Such heterological noises are a by-product within a world made possible by the “Word.” If a generalized political space emerges through acts of recognition, commandment and obedience to language, Chopin’s heterological sounds amplify a resistance within the seemingly smooth functioning of speech and social life.

However, this amplified and hypertrophied resistance at the level of the mouth also bursts into rhythms and frequencies that turn the body outside in. Not only is the body before and after significance or identification; it is also a recording node in the midst of rhythms, energies and sounds that move through, with, and on it. In a different context, Lisa Robertson describes the flux of city noise as a disquieting prosody of non-commensurable rhythms: “In noise, the listener finds rhythm, and it is discontinuous, effacing its own figuration and count even as it begins. A lurching, a jarring, a staccato surge, a blockage, a meandering, a too-brief alignment...” (61)

Such a description could also apply to *Dynamisme Intégral*. The metamorphic processes in Chopin’s sound poem—its continuous/discontinuous acts of effacement and figuration—create a “prosody” that continuously marks and

effaces this mimetic body. Robertson's listener feels a discomfort as she moves between particular attentions to chaos that lurch into erasures and "unstable caesura." She links such disquiet to fragility: "...the prosody of noise parses a discomfort that uncovers, in its unstable caesura, the fact of the citizen's material fragility" (61).

In Chopin's audiopoem, the "fact of the citizen's material fragility" dynamically arises from a methodology that distends and overwrites mouth-sounds such that they reveal an instability: an affective precarity and responsiveness. This project does not finish with "the killing of speech in its capitalistic embodiments" (McCaffery 172), but rather begins with and moves within a prosody of recording which is a prosody of noise. The body becomes a recording machine undoing itself as it finds itself undone by the forces that move through and around it.

Disfiguring Bodies

Steve McCaffery has called sound poetry a "simulacrum of a semiosis" (164) in order to describe the ways such poetry mimes or plays at the act of articulation and meaning-making. Chopin's sound poetry functions as a simulacrum of a movement between semiosis and noise. His audiopoems do not merely mum at not-saying but project a different prosody that encompasses noise as an undoing of self. In this way, they present a curious "simulacrum:" there is no representational fidelity to a soundscape but rather a presentation of a process of figuration and disfiguration. R. Murray Schafer's *Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World* (1977) imagines a technological intervention in which tape recordings can allow acoustic ecologists to map and identify noise by representing a total sound world in which noise figures as pollution. Chopin's invocation of noise does not hear it merely as an exteriority to be mapped (and ultimately "cleaned") but rather uncovers it within the seemingly silent, metaphysical space of semiosis. Chopin's manipulations of tape are manipulations of and in time and space. Through microphonic feedback, he can sound out interior physiological spaces like the hollow cavities of mouth and throat, and he can transform such "heterological sonic phenomena" (McCaffery 159) through tape loops that enfold and refold these outside-in spaces. He can slow down, speed up, repeat, and remake temporality. Though Chopin is often thought of as a poet of "space," his work is not a static exploration of a newly discovered geography of bodily para-signs, but rather a choreography of frequency transmission that plays with the instability of the body in time. The prosody of the body's noise emphasizes its historicity: the uncertain but real transposition of time upon its surfaces and depths.

In *Vibrespace* (1963, first published in *review OU*, No. 20/21, 1964), Chopin explicitly turned to this historicity and instability. The work was a turning point in Chopin's career. In it, he shifted from declaiming distorted language sounds [in works like *Pêche de Nuit* (1957)] to improvising microparticles of mouth-sound through performances on tape. Chopin also began to manipulate his recordings in

real time by using matchsticks to adjust the speed of the reel-to-reel tape (Chopin 1978, n.p.). He was blunt about the meaning of the work: “The title suggests what it is; we are in space and vibrating with space” (1978, n.p.). The audiopoem sounds out various breaths, grunts, non-vocal whispers, and lip smacks while also slowing down, speeding up, and layering these sounds. The piece moves by stringing together different effects: sounds happen at one speed, then another, and another, so that breath sounds already manipulated by the variability of the mouth move through the frequency spectrum—slowing down, speeding up, and emerging, very clearly, as different articulations of vibration. Unlike *Dynamisme Intégral*, the piece emphasizes the different effects as various set-pieces of vibrational movement. *Vibrespace* begins with a very high and very low pitch, and these pitches set the frequency envelope for the whole piece. The frequencies quickly wander away from these limits: particular sounds recognizable as breath become more and more defamiliarized through transformations in speed. Often these happen in even ratios that double or halve the speed of the tape, and so the pitches are transposed up or down by octaves. For instance, at 3’10”, a particular breath-sound moves up in frequency-space with a recognizable doubling of tape-speed. The sound has a stepped movement that manifests a stratified and partitioned sound space. This feeling also applies to the movement of the piece along its time-axis. The apparent cuts between one set of sounds and another present “unstable caesura[s]” (Robertson 61) that simultaneously suture and separate the fragments of the piece. Intermittently within the work, e.g. at 2’44”, these splices are apparent in one particular frequency layer while other sounds continue in the background. At other times—such as a dramatic break at 3’59”—the entire array comes to a stop, and a new set of sounds begins. Such stops and starts become particularly jarring in the final minutes of the piece. The sounds “fade-out” nearly to disappearance in the tape hiss (at 7’22”), only to emerge again with cuts and frequencies that create an illusion of fixed pitches at 7’44”. The work closes with a metallic, electrified sound resonating in a thoroughly disembodied, decontextualized vibrational space.

In such a vibrational space, “rhythm has to do with framing rather than counting” (Weiss, 2008, 58). Rhythm accounts for the relationship (cut, montage, looping, layering) between any two sound-events as such. It does not work by a controlling beat, meter or periodicity. And yet, the periodicity inherent to sound—the frequency of vibrations at various microtemporalities—is very much on display. In this way, Chopin asks us to hear the relations between sounds in terms other than harmonic. At the same time, there is no “sound itself,” as in the concrete music of Pierre Schaefer or in the compositions and manifestos of John Cage. Rather, the sounds are related by a chaotic syntax, and they unfold like an unreadable hieroglyphic scroll composed of discrete yet associated statements within and through a field of action. Linear time dissipates into a series of differing temporalities: the moving parts or planes of sound work with and against each other. Such a dissipation of time creates a sense that Chopin is, to use the title of

an obituary of Chopin, “Un architecte d’espaces sonores,” an architect discovering and working with the body’s resonant sound-spaces (Fontana 80).

Chopin’s recorded performance in *Vibrespace*, however, also disfigures these spaces. It pluralizes what Paul Zumthor (a friend and collaborator of Chopin’s) calls the “double temporalization” of poetic performance (Zumthor 119). Zumthor described performance in general as “doubly temporalized—by its own length, and by virtue of the moment of the social duration in which it is inserted” (119). This recording feeds this doubled time back into the looping and recording process. It does so on an “axis of selection” and an “axis of combination” (Jakobson 368). First, on the axis of selection, a vocabulary emerges by decontextualizing the body’s heterological noises with technological effects that change the frequencies of the vibrations that make up those sounds. Second, on the axis of combination, a grammar emerges in which the rhythm of cutting and montaging frames exchange (of energy, of language) as always out-of-sync. Even if the sounds Chopin records are defined by a repetitive technique, they distort the social time of any “phonically significant” performance (in speech or music) by continuously amplifying “the cutting edge” of any possible exchange (Bernstein 12). We hear what calls “starting points, nothing more and nothing less” (1995, n.p.). There is no figurative situation of address, nor any speech act. Instead, there is only an unmoored and continuous positing of possible exteriorities. Every resonating space is disembodied as a vibrational effect. There is no “body” (and “nobody”) here, only the attenuation, augmentation, and diminution of energetic by-products.

In this way, Chopin’s work expands into its “gigantic scale” (Higgins, quoted in Zurbrugg 27), which is the scale of a historical time and a generalized noise that emerges with and through the mediation of bodily techniques. To recall Robertson’s definition of noise as the “historicity of non-meaning” (63), the multiplied durations of the performances within *Vibrespace* (and other audiopoems) figure the continuous, collective, and non-meaningful time of history in and on the body. Theodor Adorno describes a connection between music and historicity in his essay “On the Contemporary Relationship of Philosophy and Music”: “the time that is immanent in every music, its inner historicity, *is* real historical time, reflected as appearance” (2002, 144). In this way, musical time is “not only genetically but substantively” social time (144). Chopin does not make “music” in any sense of a given structure of pitches, scales, and forms, and so works like *Vibrespace* and *Dynamisme Intégral* compose an “immanent time” that is itself fragmented through a piling-on of sound effects and micro-temporalities in performance. This compositional mass is, in turn, the re-shaped substance of “real historical time”—that is, the continuous movement, arrangement, remembering and dismembering of individual and social bodies in time and space. Chopin’s body—recorded, deconstructed, and reconstituted as a node within force fields of energy—becomes the site upon which “real historical time” is written, overwritten, and erased. Chopin’s work, then, writes noise into performance: non-meaning, aimlessness, and instability exposes the fragile body and self while also

reconfiguring the temporality in which performance might create the appearance of social order.

The materiality of this writing is the materiality of magnetic tape. Such tape works by using electronic force fields to distribute the iron filings on a thin strip of plastic. Sound transduced by the microphone into electronic impulses becomes an “image” within these microscopic collections of iron, such that those sounds can be reproduced when the tape is played back. A persistent effect of magnetic tape is the hiss or hum constituted by unmoved, disorganized iron filings left on the strip. Even in high quality recordings, this effect is notable, and in Chopin’s work one hears it as a connective phenomenon. In cuts and fade-outs (particularly around 7’30” in *Vibrespace*), the quiet but consistent hiss can be heard. Adorno coined the term “hear-stripe” to describe the persistent electronic static of radio transmission (2008, 114). The effect of this phenomenon, for Adorno, is to undo the “reality” of music:

Perhaps we may say that music, normally aloof from the noise of the real world, and because of this aloofness, appearing to be “real,” loses this “reality” when at each moment it is confronted by the hear-stripe, hinting so definitely at the empirical world. Radio music, in a way, seems to remain suspended in time. It is deprived of its integrating force over time. (2008, 116)

The continuous resurgence of the “empirical world” into the “integrating force” of music is absolutely negative for Adorno, but Chopin’s tape apparatus and recording performances precisely insist upon and technologically manipulate the interruption of the “noise of the real world” in the appearance of poetry. While tape-hiss is not an explicit element in Chopin’s work, the way in which he writes sound parallels the most important effect of the hear-stripe: the sense that “the music appears to be projected upon the stripe, like a picture upon it” (Adorno 2008, 115). The projection of sound upon a moving strip not only describes the material quality of the audiopoems but also describes the formal and syntactical strategies at work in them. Rather than allowing the hear-stripe to be a nearly unconscious but perceptible effect, Chopin calls up figures of noise out of the static of electronic manipulation. The hear-stripe becomes the substance of the work, and the hear-stripe is, moreover, an empirical index of the “real world of noise.”

In other words, these sounds reflect and rearrange historical time by simultaneously indicating and erasing not only the body but also the static-filled mediations that produce social time. Through this chiasmus, the inward, autonomous temporality of the artwork (the temporality associated with the metaphor of “voice” in poetry) and the outer, insignificant temporality of daily life cross and converge. There is no voice in need of an invented speaker who will inhabit it, no voice demanding the appearance of a self, no voice to command. Rather, vocality disappears in the midst of a dynamic integration and conglomeration of tiny sub-cognitive movements within a larger array, and that array is itself only the confluence of other smaller and repeated movements. This is

not a purely formal invention or discovery but rather an attitude toward the social conventions of language that are immanent within the form and substance of the audiopoems. These poems mark and remark upon the body's materiality beyond language, but they also take up the generic historicity of noise as a problem of sense and sensibility. Imagined as the non-meaning by-product of bodies, materials, powers, and habits, noise suffuses the innumerable occasions of performance—listening, speaking, recording, and acting—in social life. To figure noise's empirical disruptions of a “real” image of time—or voice—is to substantiate the “citizen's material fragility,” to emphasize a human frailty in the midst of the vast sweep of history's violence (Robertson 61).

Communication, however, *does* function in the midst of such noise. What Chopin makes apparent is the way in which language remains another noise among noises, not a privileged term on one side of a binary between noise and meaning. Chopin's excess of sonic artificiality does not present poetry as the place for a reformation or even atonement for political speech gone wrong. He does not make a claim that poets are legislators. Instead, his audiopoems function as the instantiation of an unstable practice of listening to noise and bringing forth that noise in processes of sound-making that underscore the relationships between sound forms, bodies, and recording. Unlike his Dadaist predecessor, Hugo Ball, who hears in sound poetry “the conflict of the *vox humana* with a world that threatens, ensnares, and destroys it” (Ball 57), Chopin records the noise in the voice and discovers the possibility of new voices within noise. Listening again—by recording and looping—to the continuum of noise both inside and outside of the filter of the human body allows Chopin to rethink and remake the figures of voice and temporality that produce speaking animals and political beings

Works Cited

- ADORNO, Theodor. *Current of Music*. London: Polity, 2006.
- ADORNO, Theodor. “On the Contemporary Relationship Between Philosophy and Music”. *Essays on Music*. Ed. Richard Leppert. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002. 135-162.
- ATTALI, Jacques. *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*. Trans. Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985.
- BALL, Hugo. *Flight out if Time: A Dada Diary*. Ed. John Elderfield. Trans. Ann Raimés. New York: Viking, 1974.
- BERNSTEIN, Charles. “Artifice of Absorption”. *A Poetics*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992. 9-89.
- BURROUGHS, William S. “The Invisible Generation”. *Audio Culture: Readings in Modern Music*. Eds. Christoph Cox and Daniel Warner. New York: Continuum, 2004. 334-338 [Originally published in *The Ticket That Exploded*, New York, Grove, 1962.]

- CHOPIN, Henri. *Audiopoems 1956-1980*. Cologne, Germany: Edition Hundertmark No. 89, 1983. Cassette. [Available online at : ubuweb.com/sound/chopin.html.]
- CHOPIN, Henri. "The New Media". Trans. Sandeep Bhagwati, April 1995, n.p. <http://www.ubu.com/papers/chopin.html> [accessed June 15th, 2017].
- CHOPIN, Henri. *OH: Audiopoems*. London: Balsam Flex, 1978. Cassette with liner notes by Chopin. [Some audiopoems available online at: ubuweb.com/sound/chopin.html]
- CHOPIN, Henri. "Open Letter to Aphonic Musicians 1967". In *Sound Poetry: A Catalogue*. Ed. Steve McCaffery and bp Nichol. Toronto: Underwiche Editions, 1978. 48.
- CHOPIN, Henri. "Why I Am The Author Of Sound Poetry And Free Poetry (1967)." trans. Irene Montjoye Sinar. *Hispanic Arts* 1.3-4 (Winter/Spring 1968): 80-81. [Available online at: <http://www.ubu.com/papers/chopin.html>]
- FONTANA, Giovanni. « Henri Chopin (1922 - 2008) – Un architecte d'espaces sonores : Le Revox, symbole acoustique de l'avant-garde analogique du XX^{ème} siècle, s'est arrêté ». *Inter* 99 (2008) : 88–89.
- KAHN, Douglas. *Noise Water Meat: A History of Sound in the Arts*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999.
- JAKOBSON, Roman. "Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics," in *Style in Language*. Ed. Thomas A. Sebeok. New York and Cambridge: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. and The Technology Press of MIT Press, 1960.
- MCCAFFERY, Steve. "Voice in Extremis". *Close Listening: Poetry and the Performed Word*. Ed. Charles Bernstein. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. 162-177.
- ROBERTSON, Lisa. "Disquiet." *Nilling*. Toronto: Book Thug, 2012. 55-70.
- WEISS, Allen. *Varieties of Audio Mimesis: Musical Evocations of Landscape*. New York: Errant Bodies Press, 2008.
- WENDT, Larry. "Henri Chopin and Sound Poetry". *Furniture* (1993): 2.
- ZUMTHOR, Paul. *Oral Poetry: An Introduction*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990.
- ZURBRUGG, Nicholas. "Technology, Polypoetry and the Aura of Poly-performance". *Visible Language* 35.1 (2001): 20-35.