

FEMINIST SONOGRAPHERS  
OF SITUATED LISTENING

Sono-(soro)ridades Collective

(Victoria Polti, Amanda Gutiérrez, Freya Zinovieff,  
Gabriela-Aceves Sepúlveda, Ana Mora and Laura Balboa)

SOUND SCRIPT

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SOUND SCRIPT

## COLLECTIVE VOICE

We are united by our interest in Sound, Noise and Listening as generating elements of *sono(soro)rity*; elements of a methodology that connects our theoretical-practical interests in sound art, feminist activisms inside and outside the academy and in the potential of the sonic to imagine other futures. Futures in which patriarchy, heteronormativity and white supremacy do not rule our feeling-thinking. Ours are not isolated interests. They emerge simultaneously through affective networks of solidarity that run from south to north; from north to south; from east to west and vice versa. We cross these routes and create transversal networks, which like sound, cross national and geopolitical borders, through situated experiences and from the theoretical elaboration that bifurcate our individual and collective investigations. This with the purpose of creating maps, quotes, collaborative constructions based on feminisms centered from and in the Global South.

As a neologism formed by the combination of sorority and sonority, we offer *sono(soro)* as a critical frame that interrogates the sonic dimensions of capitalism and hetero-normative patriarchy. In response to a multitude of recent sonic expressions demanding social justice across the Americas – from The Chilean anthem: “El Violador Eres Tú”, creada por el grupo de performance Chileno “Lastesis”, to the Argentinian activist initiative #NiUnaMenos, #vivasnosqueremos, #Metoo and #BlackLivesMatter– we propose *sono(soro)rity* as a feminist intervention in the archives of sound art and activism that makes visible how sound, gender, class and race intersect each other. *Sono(soro)rity* highlights the potential of the sonic to unveil and make audible unequal power dynamics in which gendered and racial violence are perpetuated. More importantly, we argue, it has the potential to generate spaces for solidarity and care that place our broad political

understanding of sisterhood at the center. This collective was formed in 2020, influenced and as part of a broader context that has been widely researched by musician and academic Ana Alfonsina Mora in her current research on Redes Sonoras Sororas in the Americas.

Amanda Gutiérrez used for the first time Sono-(soro)ridades (in Spanish) as the title of a panel in the academic track on sound and gender that she organized at the first international meeting of the Mexican Acoustic Network in 2020. As part of the Gender and Sound track, Gabriela Aceves Sepúlveda presented the lecture, “Hacia otra historia de la música electrónica y el arte sonoro: Mujeres compositoras en Latinoamérica, 1889-1980” and research on Latin American sound artists as part of her efforts to focus on the contributions of female artists to global histories of media art. Focusing on sound production and collective feminist practices, Ana Alfonsina Mora, Laura Balboa and Lena Ortega presented their work as part of the panel “Sono-(soro)rities, Sound Production and Feminist Practices” along with a sound and music program curated with independent artist and researcher Laura Balboa, as part of the sound program of the Acoustic Ecology Network meeting.

Currently the work of Amanda Gutierrez explores the experience of political listening and gender studies in Sono-(soro)rities by bringing into focus soundwalking practices, she uses a range of digital media tools to investigate everyday life aural agencies and collective identities.

## ***Amanda Gutierrez Soundtrack***

*At night, sound presents itself as a living entity that is usually asleep.*

*Within the framework of the Tsonami Festival, issue 16, we all walked at night on the slopes of Cerro Baron in Valparaíso, Chile. This experience made me think about why it is important to share the situated experiences of collectivities and individuals, who cross the night with the objective of listening to each other. Our echoes resounded on foot at night. When I looked at my steps I saw a multitude of women, queer and non-binary walkers, maybe 15. Many of us participated by giving an instruction that led us to the acoustic game. Each proposal approached in a playful way to listening, in a free way to get to know each other through movement and sound.*

*It was a fleeting moment that could be heard in the ambient sound, the soundscape....*

*The silence also welcomed us to the walking sorority, where we experienced sounds that we emitted when we walked down the stairs, walking up the hills, when we touched our soles to the floor that opened like a communal anchor. When we walk in a group fear is diluted because we are one body. Our experiences intertwine like a rope and remind us that we are not alone. Therefore this nocturnal and ephemeral collectivity was a symbolic exercise of solidarity. These collectives are taking the public space through the denunciation, screaming, marching, through a deambulatory communication by sounding together. I walked with the collectives of Sonoras from Chile, Akelarre Suversiva from Bolivia and Dodecafónicas from Brazil. Walking at night made me think about our situated forms of solidarity, which translates into the performative way of knowledge creation, by sharing methods and extending our embodiments as a way of research-practice.*

*In my work, soundwalking practice takes the form of a collec-*

*tive body, speaking and listening while enacting the right of transiting the public space. In the case of Sono(soro)rities, it could be manifested as collective listening, where we can first position our personal experiences given by race, class, ethnicity, able-body capacities, age, opening a dialogue to understand our differences beyond gender. However, in order to find sorority it is important to understand fundamental differences as part of the feminist dialogue. The term of sono(soro)rities, aims to assert an intersectional perspective, in search of complexity among different feminisms. We disagree with the hegemonic patriarchal ideology that accepts inequality, while understanding this personal social background in order to form the politics of sisterhood.*

*bell hooks pose two important questions and critical views about the sorority, which are crucial if we intend to use that term for the project research on Sono(soro)rity. She gives us a significant background about this historical moment and the systemic problems of white supremacy patriarchy in the development of a sorority. According to hooks, a sorority based on women's common oppressions and victimization by patriarchy is a damaging concept for the feminist movement. First, because as women, we do not have the same experiences of oppression since our class, ethnicity, race, and citizen status differ, our struggles are not equal. hooks proposes constructing a Sisterhood based on dialogue, embracing the conflict and dissonances that come with speaking and learning from each other through critical pedagogies. In the case of Sono(soro)rities, the negotiation of dissonances could be manifested as collective listening, where we can first position our personal experiences through intersectionality.*

*My first question arises when I read several feminist texts using two different words for the same concept; sisterhood and sorority. I wonder if they contextualize the concept of solidarity centering it only on women or if it could go be-*

*yond the monolithic concept of womanhood. The sono-sorority that we propose considers LGBTQ+2 subjectivities and experiences as a crucial part of their ethos and as part of the formation of positional listening.*

## **COLLECTIVE VOICE**

Mexican anthropologist Marcela Lagarde celebrates “sisterhood” as a relationship between women to do politics from a feminist perspective that promotes the development of capacities, resources and tools to mitigate enmities and promote common interests (2013). While Black-American scholar and activist bell hooks calls for sorority based on a commitment to fight sexism and racism rather than a discourse to perpetuate dominant ideologies and social inequities (1984). Building from both concepts, we put forth *sono(soro)rity* as both a theoretical consideration and a social practice to investigate the ethical, political and practical dimensions of contemporary feminisms through sound. Discussions on sisterhood and sorority have been integral aspects of feminist movements, scholarship and advocacy. Embraced as vital for the building of solidarity among activists and critically denounced as discourses that negate the different experiences of racialized, queer and non-western feminisms, sisterhood and sorority have been both vilified and celebrated as necessary for sustainable feminist transformation.<sup>1</sup> Aware of the complex histories of both terms, we propose the term *sono(soro)rity* to explore the capacity of the sonic to build intersectional affective and supportive solidarity across political demands, including the more-than-human perspectives in the borders of several species and spaces.

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<sup>1</sup> (Hooks 1984, Lagarde 2013, Hemings 2012, Dean 1996).

Parts of this research were presented a year earlier in 2019 at the RE SOUND Media Arts Conference at Aalborg University as part of an academic panel chaired and co-organized by Freya Zinovieff and Gabriela Aceves Sepúlveda. The panel brought together Aceves Sepúlveda's interests in crafting alternative historical narratives that make audible the voices and practices of women and non-binary artists who have been excluded from the media arts canon, with Zinovieff's interest in the agency potential of sound to raise awareness of the unequal power relations at play in borderlands, and the silencing of the voice of the non-human other in border spaces. Soon after, Freya, Amanda and Gabriela, all based in Canada, began to develop a theoretical and historical framework for understanding sono(soro)rity and, together, proposed an academic track in 2021 at the CIPS conference, Borderline Sonorities, a trilingual (English, Portuguese and Spanish) program hosted by the Federal University of Santa Catarina, Brazil to continue researching and enacting the political potential of sound through sono(soro)rity. In this track we meet Victoria Polti, whose academic and artistic work enriched the collective thinking and contributed to the development of the concept of Sono(soro)rities.

Freya's research looks at and listens to the entwined histories of British colonial administration, the climate crisis, and neo-fascism. Especially, how these occurrences are evidenced in borderlands, and how different sonic practices might generate embodied, textural relationships to these histories and foster activism. Her work is often collaborative, and explores feminist research methodologies as decolonial praxis, with the aim to challenge outdated hierarchies from the ground up.

## **Freya Zinovieff Soundtrack**

*This sound is the sound of protest. A protest which happened in January 2022, in London, England, against the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill. This bill gives the police more power, and jeopardizes British citizens right to protest. This sound is the sound of Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) citizens, and their allies and loved ones, standing up and saying no. Shouting no. We cannot be silent any more. We will not be silent. We will no longer turn a blind ear, or as Dylan Robinson describes when talking about settler-innability to listen, a tin ear (Robinson 2020). We will no longer do as we love to do in England, and brush under the carpet, the violence of the British colonial/imperial project. The violence that continues to inflict harm.*

*With this in mind, what does it mean to listen to our listening?*

*This question was posed by Stephanie Loveless, and discussed by us both at the world forum for acoustic ecology in march 2023. As a sound artist with white cisgender privilege, and colonial heritage on my mother's side, I am deeply interested this question, especially in the context of the relations between sound and power.*

*Beginning with a critique of British colonial administration, and the ongoing violence of that spatially distributed event, I am interested in the ways that sound and different practices of listening impose, cede, or make space. And also, the assumption of epistemic authority when making space, when really we need to dismantle the whole colonial matrix and formulate something new.*

*Is this possible from inside the institution?*

*As Laura describes, 'silence can be violent'. So much of British culture is predicated on the violence of silence. As a country founded on the exploitation and slavery of others, I think about how every street, every building, every institution, the education system, the continuing class system, all emerge from this violence, yet we don't name it. As a country, we are silent.*

*Along with many others, I don't want to be silent. I seek to understand the ways that listening might enable connection, understanding, and the potential to dismantle arbitrary hierarchies. This is an ongoing, collective, lifelong project, supported by the networks of feminist practitioners I have been lucky enough to encounter. Part of this project is about stripping away the veils of our colonial conditioning. Looking at and listening to, the ways sound and listening might intentionally or unintentionally inflict violence. Sitting with what Donna Haraway calls 'the trouble' (Haraway 2016) of discomfort, or what Silvia Rivera Cusiquanci calls *ch'ixi*, which describes contradiction (Cusicanqui 2012).*

*Yet, how do we sit with the contradictions of our complicity?*

*As scholars using technology, made possible through the mining of rare earth metals via child labour, in some place that isn't here. As sound artists, burning fossil fuels so we can connect. As listeners, listening to the climate crisis escalate around us. As listeners whose crisis has already happened. As listeners who yearn for change but are too enmeshed in the violence of a system and cannot see a way out. As listeners whose social, political, or physical limitations prevent a way out.*

*In the context of all these unequal power dynamics, how do listen to our listening in a way that counters the ongoing violence of the colonial project?*

*Cusicanqui, Silvia Rivera. 2012. "Ch'ixinakax Utxiwa: A Reflection on the Practices and Discourses of Decolonization." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 111 (1): 95-109. <https://doi.org/10.1215/00382876-1472612>.*

*Haraway, Donna J. 2016. *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Duke University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822373780>.*

*Robinson, Dylan. 2020. "Hungry Listening." In *Hungry Listening*, 37-76. *Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies*. University of Minnesota Press. <https://doi.org/10.5749/j.ctvz-pv6bb.4>.*

## **COLLECTIVE VOICE**

The word (*sono-sororidad*) is proposed to make known and broaden the conversation around the musical production made by women, which is intrinsically related to the feminist movements in Mexico and Latin America, where sorority is present. These sound communities generate the opportunity to meet new people and, at the same time, to recognize and interact with those who travel similar paths. It is then that the collectivity represents an opening to dialogue and to other much deeper listening. There are horizontal relationships, affection and sorority, which makes collectivity an alternative to subvert patterns and dynamics that do not allow such actions in our day-to-day life in the music scene. This allows us to reconfigure self-perception by building relationships that enable development, organization, growth and accompaniment within a safe space of belonging. To this extent, Gabriela Aceves Sepúlveda, a media artist and cultural historian, focuses her research on feminist media art, research-creation and Latin American art and its diasporas

## **Gabriela Acevez Sepulveda Soundtrack**

*[“La facultad is the capacity to see in surface phenomena the meaning of deeper realities to see the deep structure below the surface” - Gloria Anzaldúa]*

*Mi interés en el sonido surge de mi práctica como artista visual y mi investigación sobre el arte y los archivos feministas en Latino America.*

*[Entrevista con Mónica Mayer]*

*A major inspiration in my work has been Mónica Mayer’s now iconic installation El Tendedero, in English, The Clothesline, from 1978.*

*El Tendedero is a participatory art installation that consists of small pieces of pink paper with the phrase “As a woman, what I most dislike about the city is...” written on it.*

*Como mujer lo que más me disgusta de la ciudad es...*

*Mayer distributed the papers on the streets of Mexico City and asked women passing by to complete the phrase.*

*La oscuridad*

*A los hombres, principalmente a los cebollitas*

*Que me den una nalgada*

*Que me griten mamacita*

*Que me sigan*

*Las miradas de los hombres*

*Que me toquen*

*Que me chiflen*

*Que los hombres se adueñen de la calle*

*La oscuridad*

*I consider this work an archive of sorts not only because it resembles one due to its form, and the fact that it collects and keeps information but because it interrogates and furthers the notion of the Archive through the kind of information it seeks to record, how it does so, and to what ends.*

*At the same time that Mayer recorded the sounds of women’s everyday experiences of sexual harassment and made them readable( that is visible and audible) in a museum of modern art, in the Global North members of the World Sound Scape Project idealized the sounds of nature and dismissed the gendered, sexualized, and racialized sounds of urban soundscapes as noise.*

*It is well known, that in their aims of capturing Canada’s national soundscapes, they disproportionately represented the voices and sounds of White European Canadians, effectively silencing the sonic traces of the many immigrant and Indigenous communities in the country while they romanticized a return to a non-existing pristine natural soundscape.*

*In contrast, El Tendedero centered women’s experiences as an integral part of the soundscapes of one of the largest cities in the Americas. Paraphrasing Sarah Ahmed, Mayer lent a feminist ear to the more than 200 women that responded to the pink papers in 1978. She continues to do so for the more than thousand people who continue to respond to El Tendedero through its many iterations since then.*

*El Tendedero also disrupts the institutional order of the Archive by using a domestic format to file and store data. At the same time, the participatory aspect of the installation produced new records that not only made evident how sexual difference was constructed and experienced through the streets of Mexico City in the 1970s but, most importantly, prioritized women as the agents of the Archive.*



*In listening to the responses recorded on those papers and looking at the papers as traces of embodied experiences, I turned to my family archives.*

*I turned once again, my feminist ear to listen to other histories that have not been heard. I attuned my ear to make audible the voices and practices of women and non-binary artists who have been excluded from the canon of media arts.*

*[Fabricación, Carmen Barradas]*

*In 1918 the Uruguayan composer Carmen Barradas created one of the first graphic notations, a visual language she labelled “Plástica Musical.” Carmen was interested in making visible the vibratory nature of sound along with its full resonant spectrum.*

*Through her piano recitals which made use of a prepared piano, she began to investigate the embodied properties of sound and to reflect on the messiness of life by adding chance and randomness to her compositions.*

*Just as Mayer attuned her feminist ear to the noises of Mexico City soundscape, Carmen attuned her ear to the noises of the mill and the factory as inspiration for her compositions. Both women were attentive and attuned to how the noises of modernization impacted women’s experiences on city streets.*

*This research led to my collaboration with other Latin American-based researchers and artists interested in the potential of sound to generate spaces for solidarity and care that place our broad political understanding of sisterhood at the center.*

*[“La facultad is the capacity to see in surface phenomena the meaning of deeper realities to see the deep structure below the surface” - Gloria Anzaldúa]*

## COLLECTIVE VOICE

Gabriela Aceves and Ana Mora focus on noise as a sonic agency to work collectively with feminists in the Mexican sound and music scene. As Mora writes, her research is a digital sound ethnography that maps and historically traces feminist methodologies of sound art and music in Latin America.

Mora’s primary research focuses on how women and LGBTQ+2 create collectivity by producing what she calls “feminopraxis ruidistas.” As a concept constituted by the word “ruido” (noise in Spanish) in connection with feminist praxis of experimental music. Feminopraxis ruidistas, challenge canonical music frameworks while embracing collective production and distribution through transdisciplinary research-creation cemented in the epistemologies of the Global South.

### **Ana Alfonsina Mora Soundtrack**

*Ruido es brujería. Ruido es magia. Ruido es placer- Híbridas y Quimeras*

***[Live recorded tracks of Feminoise Festival- Fragments]  
[Híbridas y Quimeras tracks- fragments] Sounding in the background***

*We live in a world where we are immersed in sound. Our ears never rest and even though sometimes we decide to ignore what is happening around us.*

*What is sound? What is noise? How have we built and trained our ears to listen to and to determine what is music and what is not? It took me years to relearn to listen to and understand the sounds that surround me, but this time with a feminist ear and the whole body.*

Noise/ruido is considered as an element of interference in the communication system, But listening to the sound practices by many women and non-binary artists in a collective way in Latin America that I call *Feminopraxis ruidistas*, noise . became an element of unity, connection and creation. Noise is the core of my research, but it has also become part of who I am.

What is noise then? The first and most complicated question, and the answer that I am always curious to heard from the artists and friends I have had the privilege to encounter through this sonic path. I would like to invite you to listen to some women sound artists from Latin America and their perception of noise to create and work not only individually, but also as part of collectives like *Feminoise Latinoamérica* and *Híbridas y Quimeras* that have a feminist perspectives in the way they organize themselves and create noise in a musical scene mostly male dominated.

For Cristina Collazos from Cochabamba, Bolivia noise is a place, a refuge. When she makes noise is the moment where she is at her most calm. It is a meditative state, thinking of nothing and just listening to and feeling. [Cristina audio in the background ]

For Maia Koenig noiser from Argentina, Noise is everything. It is something that since the moment we were born is waiting inside and it comes out. It is a form of being conscious through listening. From the sound of our heart, the sound of the birds and the way in which we can connect with the world. [Maia audio in the background]

For Jenny Ramírez composer from Colombia but living in Argentina, noise is something that she doesn't focus on, for example the music at this moment (music in the background ). And this resembles the role of us (women)that have been placed in society. We always have been there talking and communicat-

ing but never we have been heard. So now *Feminoise* is making noise so we can have the attention, and a voice. [Jenny audio in the background]

Now we are going to listen to some artists that are part of the *Collective Híbridas y Quimeras* based in Mexico and her thoughts about noise:

For Constanza Piña Chilean, sound and visual artist noise is all the sounds that the music leaves out, noise is something displaced, it passes through everything but always to reach it you have to go beyond. That can also be shifted to social behavior. Then I feel like in noise there is a tremendous message but as it has no form, it is difficult and it is often illegible.

[Constanza audio]

Libertad Figueroa mexican sound artists and coder says that noise is a free experimentation with the sound

[Libertad audio] Itzel Noyz , mexican composer and singer reminds us that noise is also a genre with no limitations [Itzel audio]

After this and more enunciations of the meaning of noise through the ears of noisers in Latin America and my reflections I have some thoughts on noise that I would like to share:

Noise is political. Noise is movement. Noise is powerful. Noise is raised to have the right to be heard. Noise is to be against the conventions. Noise is undisciplined. Noise has no limits and transcends borders. Noise creates community. Noise pledge for justice when there's none Noise creates a safe space for the ones who were displaced, unseen or discriminated against. Noise is all of us resonating together. Noise is the message. Noise is *sono-sorority*.

*And for you how does noise resonate? Are you willing to open your ears and listen to the noise and noisers around you?*

## **COLLECTIVE VOICE**

For Ana Mora and Laura Balboa the process of producing “fem-noise” in collectivity, is an organizational, political, and emotional force, having as a common goal the access to tools and knowledge that queer and feminist communities bridge through autonomous platforms, such as music labels, sound databases, workshops, independent seminars, sound collectives, and radio production initiatives. These feminopraxis ruidistas initiatives emphasize the use of technological tools from the (Do It Yourself Culture).

### **Laura Balboa Soundtrack**

*[Cortinilla]*

*Excerpt [ The Sublime - The Marriage of the Sun and Moon ]  
In 2020, I decided to transform my research on gender and experimental sound into a radio project inside a community radio called Radio Nopal in Mexico City. Looking through decades of personal archives, an editorial project, and contacts in the media art field I decided to do some interviews where I recorded and prepared questions carefully, and I made scripts and a couple of podcasts. But I was not sure about the results. After transcribing the interviews I realized that questionnaires were pointless. Important reflections and data were right there in the informal chat, in the intimacy of exchanging life experiences, tips, preferences, sentiments, and thoughts.*

*Excerpt [ Sol Rezza - All is waves ]*

*With this realization and the pandemic in between, I took a step back to do something more pragmatic, raw, open, and mindful about the lives of the people I was researching. I decided to make Bulla, a two-hour conversation streamed in real-time on internet radio (with curated audio tracks in between). I opted for a strict policy with no scripts, no cuts, or predefined questionnaires, and no restrictions on topics to discuss. A space for true sharing with a gender perspective, a platform to converge silenced voices into open dialogue and open listening.*

*Bulla is about listening to the nuances of life experiences in real-time streams of two-way communication and in multiway thinking streams amplified by radio transmission.*

*How can we build a body of knowledge about experimental sound practices taking into account the life experiences of their creators? How do we problematize musical canons, the western practices of experimental music, and the avant-garde, how does that exist in Mexico? How do popular culture and traditional music inform experimental practices in Latin America? What happens with women and nonbinary people doing sound experimentation that raise issues of anticolonial thinking?*

*Excerpt Bulla 21 [ Verónica Mota talking about decolonisation ]*

*We need the space to discuss the constraints we live under as Global South artists with less access to technology even though we provide labor and materials to develop it. We need the freedom to define how we experiment, and what we call experimentation.*

*Excerpt [ Jessica Rodríguez, Rolando Rodríguez, Tonalli R. Nakamura, Alejandro Brianza, Guzmán Ziráte, Edison Vaca - TUYUC ]*

*We need to discuss this as women, as discriminated individuals, and as immigrants. As people with diverse ages, gender identification, sexual orientation, backgrounds, ethnicities, and from different social classes and education. We are already experimental in Latin America, as Constanza Piña said to me once cuando hicimos Bulla.*

*Excerpt [ Laura Balboa talking about the Bulla Archive ]*

*I really don't know how to summarize 82 hours of conversation...Verónica Mota says she's everywhere, she can participate in a hyped electro-acoustic concert in a church as well as in a squat for a hard-core event. In an underground movement, she found her space and founded a label for marginalized artists in Berlin. Constanza Piña thinks of noise as a social agent, she doesn't release recordings, her work is relational, and she is interested in playing with people. Another thing that people I have made Bulla with share is their classical training. They don't identify entirely with it, especially playing the music of western European dead composers from the 18th and 19th centuries. They did not find joy or full interest in it as a full-time career. Alexandra Cárdenas found in the live coding community a space of expression that she could not access before. She demystified the idea of the isolated music composer genius by making her processes completely visible including the so-called "mistakes" that she regards as opportunities.*

*Excerpt [ Laura Balboa mentions the list of Bulla guests ]*

*Ana Ruiz, Alejandra Hernández, Camile Mandoki, Luz María Sánchez, Amanda Gutiérrez, Verónica Mota, Aimeé Theriot, Yotzin Viacobo, Alexandra Cárdenas, Albania Juárez, Constanza Piña, Gabriela Gordillo, Mishel Rojas, Sofía Fuentes, Adriana Camacho, Alda Arita, Tania Pomar, Leslie García, Ana María Romano, Alma Laprida, Lena Ortega, Bárbara Lázara, Ana Mora, Jessica Rodríguez, Samantha Canchola, Gibrana Cervantes, Xi-*

*mena Martínez, Marianne Teixido, Sol Rezza, Alina Maldonado, Loreta Ratto, Tatiana Heuman, Sarmen Almond, Valis Ortiz, Ana López (nnux), Nohemí Rascón (Badmoiselle), Ivonne Valdez (Ice Cyborg), Piaka Roela, Eliz Gómez (Suminagashi), Griselda Sánchez, Ofelia Negrete*

## **COLLECTIVE VOICE**

These transfeminist activisms have gained a strong presence both in collective manifestations in public spaces and in platforms, networks, and numerous spaces linked to the field of sound, resituating the capacity to question meanings from sound and listening.

Collectives such as Arda in Argentina, Lastesis in Chile and Las Fieras Fierras in Mexico show a collective and collaborative enunciation, a geopolitically situated adscription and a particular power in the replicability of these practices. Victoria Polti, an Argentinean sound anthropologist, has been working on the performative effectiveness of sound and listening in transfeminist activisms from the South. To this end, she situates herself at the intersection between sound and aural studies, performance studies and studies on corporeality.

### **Victoria Polti Soundtrack**

*For years I wondered how to listen to the cracks of inequality, how to amplify the creases of weariness - of the daily and silent violences. How to replicate the yelling of the unsatisfied, annoyed, subnormal, bad mothers, the 'feminazis'. The ones that complain about everything.*

*The practice of rising awareness is not easy. Yet it allows*

*us to intensify our perception of our social practices, of our cultural and political environments.*

*What makes it possible for us to make the sound, noise, silence?*

*In how many different ways are we able to listen to one source of sound or many? When we listen, what is the role of time, experience, our singular voice or a collective one?*

*Where is the power in “I hear you, I believe you sister”?*

*We may view this long transformation process that today can be defined as the Fourth Feminist Wave; where the situated listening is a key concept. This explains that actions are conceived and take place in a certain public space with a geo-political reference. It is from there that meaning is produced; historical, symbolical and political facts happen. This allows us to understand its performative efficacy.*

*[Audio 2]*

*#NiUnaMenos begun in Buenos Aires in 2015. It was a driving force and key movement for the Fourth Feminist Wave to emerge. The rising of this movement in the Southern Hemisphere brought to light the impact of the crisis due to inequality in the Patriarchal Capitalism, where women and dissenting identities are excluded.*

*The 26th of March of 2015, a “marathon reading” against femicides was organized by a group of writers, journalists, researchers, academics and artists. From that gathering, many other practices and representations begun progressively to emerge. The notions of “mobilizing”, “putting the entire body at a place”, “activate”, “tell their stories”, “enunciate” started to appear. All of which made possible to expose*

*the hegemonic discourse and create alternative ways, bring together alliances between different feminisms.*

*Three years later, the “Mare Verde” (the green tide) brought back strength to the movement #NiUnaMenos had started. And then, on December 30th of 2020 the Senate, in the middle of the pandemic, passes the bill on pregnancy interruption. Abortion is no longer illegal.*

*[Audio 3]*

*In this context, many groups of activism are born, like ARDA - where highly feminist and trans-feminist-content activities are displayed. Other performative languages, aesthetic modalities and rituals come forward, where enunciating, voice and yelling are key concepts.*

*[Audio 4]*

*“They are afraid of us because we are not afraid” became an anthem thanks to numerous interventions in public spaces. The group Lastesis from Chile, known worldwide for its performance “Un violador en tu camino” (a rapist in your way), published five years later a book. The title is “burn the fear”, taking up ARDA’s slogan.*

*I take up Sara Ahmed proposal. I decide to “lend a feminist ear” to women’s and dissenting identities’ interventions in public spaces. Also to practices and representations of our universes, to different ways of being and being here. To other strategies to trace counterpoints to hegemonic discourses and regimes.*

*The reflective, situated, deep listening, the voices as embodied resonances, the collective cry as enunciation of the divergent, feed new archives.*

*To “lend a feminist ear” implies highlighting its active and divergent role.*

*The following recording was made from ethnographic records of transfeminists interventions in public spaces, the media and phonographic music material. The subject: fighting for legal abortion in Argentina.*

*The recordings were made from public demonstrations like the 8M (8th of March), women’s international strike, the 34th Women’s National Encounter, Lesbians, Transvestites and Non-Binary. Also articles from newspapers, extracts from songs like “Amablemente” (a tango that naturalizes femicides by Edmundo Rivero), and current songs like “Ramita seca” by Aldana Bello and “Qué calor” by Pibes Chorros in a cover and adaptation by “Sudor Marika”. We may also hear the interspersed voices of Celeste MacDougall (feminist activist from the Right to Abortion National Campaign), anti-rights octogenarian television hostess Mirtha Legrand, journalist Eduardo Feinman and the recently deceased Cacho Castaña. The recording finalizes with edited recordings by composer using Zoom H6 and interfaces like TC Helicon and Ableton.*

*This recording is part of four clips made for the Human Rights Festival in Argentina and the 40th anniversary of CELS (Legal and Social Studies Center), a pioneer human rights organization.*

*Through the performativity of sound we can listen to the social constructions of gender (among them the aural dimension of patriarchy), the (sono) violence of daily life, the tensions and disputes for meaning and power, which arise from the aural regimes to their affecting materialities.*

*Therefore, the purpose is to share sono(sor)orities that emerge from local activist proposals in Buenos Aires.*

*Given their strongly aesthetic, collective and public character, they have the potential to reconfigure plural political agencies and agendas, making audible in novel ways the violence against women, lesbians, transvestites, transgender and non-binary.*

## **COLLECTIVE VOICE**

Through performative listening, it is possible to decolonize our audibility and resonate collectively from our corporeal-sentient experiences.

Inquiring how these expressions make their political potential audible gives us the opportunity to orient our expectations towards non-exclusionary futures.

We believe in the construction of a network of relationships that allows a non-binary feminist politics through sound. And we deeply believe in the possibility of collaboratively building a plural academic field that allows us to think and promote collaborative north/south links, dialogue with activism and the incorporation of dissident voices.

**END**

## **CREDITS**

*Sono-(soro)ridades sound essays  
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De la Puta electronics - T R A M P A - 04 Motivo  
flores volcánicas - volcánicas II - 04 porosidad sonora  
Isabel Nogueira - Maia Koenig - Isama Noko - 02 Sin Descanzo  
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