

[...]

Jesper Vesterlund

Masteressay

[...]

Vulnerable in the face of existence

curiosity wanders

longing

with the eyes of a child

listening and seeing

open and hungry

*sensibly reminded of a place,
there is something more.*

*Beyond the horizon sounds its epithet,
comfortingly capable.*

Well versed in books

composed in music

*the water flows,
down from the cheeks.*

[...]

I have a lot of things to say.. actually a ton, however sometimes words feel inadequate and do not posses the possibility to manifest everything a person feels or thinks. Words in that sense are rather futile.

[...]

Things are simply what they are, whet-ever I like it or not.

[...]

Though, I am restless... It feels like my body is on pins and needles.

[...]

I guess I just want to enjoy life, you know? Not just rushing through it.

[...]

I want to create useless things, sort-of.

[...]

Engage head-on, ferociously.

[...]

And do so in joy.

[...]

I must say I am a productive little fucker.

[...]

I do work really hard.

[...]

Maybe Karl Marx was right about attaining true happiness through hard work and sweat.

[...]

However I'm not really sure if my body of works is for the benefit of mankind, or to bring any greater happiness(Sorry Karl). Though I'm yearning for some kind of change and greater meaning in life.

[...]

Sorry to let you down..

[...]

It's just art.

[...]

[...]

I had this thought to attempt writing about my practice in a more formal way. To extensively give it a go about introducing influences, approaches etc in a chronological format.

[...]

But that's just not me.

[...]

I do not want to pretend. Or give false impressions of being someone else. I guess I'm trying to convey some kind of honesty, both to myself and directly to the reader through my writing.

[...]

My intention is, I suppose, to write something that I myself would enjoy reading, something on a personal note.

[...]

This approach is true also for the making of my works.

[...]

I rarely think about any audience in the back of my mind in the process of making works, other than maybe my closest peers and friends.

[...]

To put it simply, I do work that I myself appreciate and would like to see and experience.

[...]

I just don't have any interest or intentions to affiliate with the commerce or a broader audience, nor to package complex thoughts and questions through formats of simplifications that ends up as commodity. You could say I'm actively and deliberately burning down the bridges through choices in my practice. And i'm quite happy about it.

[...]

I know though that this statement may sound pretentious, but I couldn't care less because it's the truth.

[...]

For me personally true satisfaction can only be found in the process of experimentation and play, where the investigation has no final goal, an end clamp.

[...]

Let's think about it metaphorically for a second. Think of the artistic process as river with many connecting and diverting streams. If you were to travel on this river with a goal in mind, most likely you would go straight ahead from point A to B as fast as possible with little or no diverting from the main travel path. Surely it would make a nice and painless trip in broad strokes, but the end result would become perhaps somewhat illustrative and expected as it was mapped out early on in the

beginning. So what if instead, the intention were not to establish some kind of completion of a predetermined goal but rather an adventure, a travel for the sake of discovery, chance and unexpected encounters.

[...]

Personally, I'd rather take the risk and travel alongside the process curiously with my hands off the steering wheel than disallowing and miss out on potentially undiscovered perspectives and circumstances - and in the end playing it safe.

[...]

Sometimes this work ethic and approach can be, to put mildly, troublesome. At times it feels like I'm completely at loss, which may result in facing various types of hardships and inner turmoil (even hair-loss). However, I trust the process and make use of the elements of doubt and frustrations as material for the making of works.

[...]

Consequently as I attempt to make the most out of potential failures and frictions appearing in the process I acquire natural elements of tension and possible dramaturgi to the works, which I can play with and manipulate.

[...]

I'd say I have an appetite for notions of intensity, resistance and rather destructive elements. I suppose it runs in the family.

[...]

There is something so alive and exciting about things breaking in to pieces or malfunctioning that I can truly relate to.

[...]

I have troubles to eloquently and with precision formulate why I 'm so fascinated by elements of mistakes and continue to work with them other than it feels good and tickles my imagination.

[...]

I know.. I know that it is a rather fruitless way of formulating my thoughts, I should maybe rather rephrase my liking and fascination for destructive elements as an interest and artistic tool for deconstructing materials and elements. It sounds better.

[...]

And for the record, I exclusively find death, violence and ruination interesting in theory.

[...]

I'm fascinated by ideas about the eternal, and I think a lot about death. Sometimes when my mind wanders I think to myself, what if death is no more than sounds? Solely some kind of electrical noise, sounding forever.

[...]

Since I can remember I have always been very aware of the emanated sounds and sonic sites surrounding me. Sound has been an integral part of my life experiences and of my understanding of the world - it's basically the only thing that got stuck with me. So when I try to remember back at things and attempt to recollect memories the best I can, I'm most of the times deprived of any visual content and I simply rely on the auditorial fragments.

[...]

This is not a setback, actually quite the opposite. I find my relation to sounds satisfactory and very useful for artistic purposes. As a matter of fact I would argue that it goes hand in hand with my approach to the artistic process. Sound possesses a great openness for interpretation, imagination, experimentation and is fairly easy for a potential listener to relate to. Jumping back to the metaphor used earlier in the text, if the artistic process is the river - then in this parable sound is the raft.

[...]

I think in order to understand the world and the absurdity of human conditions it is important to nourish and gently attune to the never-ending humming sounds of life by listening attentively.

[...]

Perhaps naively but nonetheless I would like to proclaim that sound material possesses conditions in which we can find a way to relearn the "familiar" but through different scopes. Kind of seeing things for what they are and then speculate what it potentially could be instead. There is in sound material a potential measure for applying critical thought which is truly interesting.

[...]

For some time I have in my practice recorded and documented raw content of existing environments and objects.

[...]

I really enjoy field-recording, It's fun. In a way it enables one to listen in to social and cultural environments. It makes you move beyond the surface of things.

[...]

You pack your gear and fill your backpack with the essential stuff - coffee, batteries, recorders etc - and go out mostly without any principal motive (at least for my sake) to first and foremost listen, and of course record material. The ritual aspect of field-recording is very rewarding on a personal level.

[...]

Because in my life I have always been afraid of things that take time - essentially to slow down. I found slowness synonymous with being vulnerable and exposed to external threats and dangers. The

conditions of field-recording and it's rituals kind of forces my body to become still and to think. Capturing a site takes time and concentration and in a sense becomes an invitation for my body to take a step back to sensibility, breath and ultimately care.

[...]

On a more practical level one could say I use field recording for the purpose of finding a greater meaning in life other than just surviving in the imperfect beauty of nature. By nature I don't mean merely a picturesque forest in rural life relatively untouched from humanity, but rather that it extends to even the most electrified conditions of hyper-modern life and all things that comes with it. It's easy though to be under the impression that when you hear the term field-recording and nature that the recordings must have taken place in desolate environments.

[...]

I realise now though that I may have in this text presented myself as a character with zero self distance nor humour, with a tone the makes you think that I'm deadly serious. But that's not the case. I like to use elements of humor in my practice, just not as pronounced. Going back to my disposition regarding destructive elements I see great humor in mistakes. Personal failures and mischiefs are great frameworks for materialising humor rather than illustrating it. I tend to find humor intriguing when it becomes physical.

[...]

However, I wouldn't state for the record that I consider myself as an especially humorous artist.

[...]

Any who, let's focus on the exposition about sound in my practice.

[...]

A problem I see in this world right now is the lack of applied critical thought. I'm thinking that right now in these times we as people on a broader societal scale do less thinking and more talking. How does this relate to sound in my practice you may ask? Well, I think that I perceive this issue as relevant for addressing problems I recognise in artistic practices and materials. My gut-feeling is that it has become less and less actual time spent with works from practitioners, and increasingly more about entertainment and distribution. It's just surface and quantity, no real conceptual depth nor critical thought.

[...]

And so I would like to argue that sound because of it's unstable position in art-history and its fluidity as a material is a great entry point for developing critical thinking, and not only for practitioners but also for consumers of art. However, I don't really like the general idea commonly thought of in relation to sound-art that sound "speak for itself" but I rather feel that it more importantly informs us deeply about social experiences, ecologies and your own bodys relationship to sites. You just got

to listen, profoundly, carefully, critical - and study sound, not only as an object but as a framework for knowledge.

[...]

Am I going to fast? ..Well I apologise if I'm speeding through a bit now, I do hope you can still follow my thoughts. It's just that my relationship to sounds is close at heart and I tend to get a bit excited to say the least and loose the tread at times.

[...]

I guess what I wanted to tell you is that sonic materiality presents on the contrary to a lot of other materials critical thought, not critical speech. It makes you think, analyse and imagine beyond words.

[...]

If you want, you can call me a romantic, it's okay, it doesn't bother me. However I see myself rather obsessive to be frank.

[...]

Anyway, my approach to sound in my practice is not only confined to passive methodologies and presentations of sonic material. I'm also actively making, composing, scoring and performing sounds.

[...]

It's quite a physical process when I engage working with the making of sounds. I fondle with objects, misuse machines and technology, tap and bang my body.

[...]

And sometimes it hurts, other times it feels good. For the most part I try to keep a healthy relationship to the making of sounds.

[...]

When I work with making sounds I circulate around an idea about noise. Noise is, I guess for most people equated with something disturbing, unwanted or simply unbearable. But what is noise to one person can be significant to another - and what was considered a repulsive sound yesterday is maybe not that today. Personally I feel that noise can be an entry point for reflections about contemporary life with adequacy if de-constructed and treated properly.

[...]

I like to think of noise in relation to the statement; Music is the space between notes. But with my own version of it; Truth is the space between noises. I want to believe that there is truths to unfold and breath to discover in the room of silence created in between the sound of noises. A site for reflection.

[...]

mourn the cold morning

layers of mist,

penetrating silence
frozen, crisp air

breathless smiles

desolate, colourless
terrains.

A friend and I at work had a relevant discussion about this thought I had about noise and came to talk about the German sociologist Hartmut Rosa and his thinking about the concept of resonance. Rosa claims that human-beings are included in a net of mutual dependencies and relationships, and that by experiencing reciprocity we fill ourselves with a feeling that both ourselves and the world arounds are in-fact alive and are described with the word resonance. According to Rosa the concept of resonance can be defined in four different steps.

[...]

The first step of the concept is through touch and is about impact. Rosa says that a human-being, a landscape, a melody or an idea, to take a few examples, can speak to us. This effect can be equated with a “call”. He further states that something calls to us externally and that the touch of it can penetrate our defences of detachment and indifference - and can be for example recognised on an empty gaze that suddenly glimmer and tear up. Essentially he means that the “call” can have both emotional as well as physical or cognitive elements.

[...]

The second step, which I find to have a point of contact with my body of works and methodology, is to response and act on which effects us. And so Hartmut claims that you can only talk about resonance if the “call” or touch leads to an inevitable inner bodily response but also as well in the dimensions of the psychological, social and knowledge based. Rosa says that the response is described often through bodily reactions and is mentioned by notions such as “goosebumps” or “giving one the creeps”.

[...]

I don't want to be too exhaustive about Hartmut Rosa and/or of his writings about the concept resonance, but I feel that the concept of resonance has a dimension to it that can contextualise my works and my relation to site-specificity and sound.

[...]

I highly recommend reading Hartmut Rosa. You ought to check it out.

[...]

Anyway, Let's get back to it.

[...]

The third step is about the element of transformation. The “call” and the eventual response according to Rosa's thinking leads to different forms of changes. He states that by encountering and experiencing resonance with another human, a book, a melody or an idea - can by very varied degrees lead to transformation. The transformations he says, varies from subtle ones barely noticeable, to other that fundamentally and profoundly changes us as individuals and human-beings.

[...]

However, experiences of resonance implies changes of our relationship to the world, and mediates perceptions of being alive. And so accordingly to Rosa's thinking, if we don't open up ourselves to changes and reject to answer before them it may very well be so that the element of transformation fails to appear. Consequently feelings of petrification and loss of life may rise to the surface.

Furthermore he states that it doesn't matter how much we indulge or consume relations, nature or cultural expressions if we are simply not open for change. We need, as I read it, to develop empathically, curious to the world around us, In order to profoundly experience transformation through the concept of resonance. Just dare to break the mould, and be sensible.

[...]

And lastly, the forth step is described by the word unprocurable. Resonance can't, Rosa argues, be calculated, controlled or simply created by any instrument. There is simply no guarantees that we are able to tread in to resonance with other people or objects. It doesn't matter how much effort you put in attempts to configure circumstances for recreating resonance. Because resonance can't be predicted neither completely excluded in life. Resonance is in-fact inaccessible in it's very nature in that sense.

[...]

As mentioned in the forth step similarly my relationship to the concept resonance is not to try to make or create resonance, I simply feel a responsibility to be observant as an artist and act upon the circumstances and encounters which resonates within me and artistically express myself from those experiences.

[...]

In addition to the utilisation of the concept resonance accordingly to Rosa's thinking in my artistic process, I have an interest for resonance as concept of music and sound production. Resonance in relation to sound can be explained in short that it is the frequencies that objects like to vibrate at. Let's say you apply force to an object, like strumming a guitar string, then accordingly the force will cause vibrations that matches the natural vibration of the object, hence you hear resonance. In contrast to the concept of resonance in terms of sociology, resonance in music and sound production can be altered and tempered with in relation to various "resonators". Depending on some "resonators" such as size, material, and acoustics you can achieve different resonating frequencies.

[...]

I'm thinking that the two different concepts aren't so distant from each other when treated and channeled through artistic mediums. Maybe the only difference between the two is the notion of subjectivity. I'm curious, what if Rosa's concept of resonance potentially can be framed somehow

through the concept of resonance in relation to sound production and furthermore amplified?

Perhaps even arranged by musical compositions?

[...]

Maybe it can't be framed, but I would argue though that one could orchestrate and condition spaces to heighten the probability of individuals experiencing some sort of resonance. This is nothing new I suppose, but nevertheless potent and have been used by numerous religious and political institutions.

[...]

There is something quite interesting about articulating ideas in a constructed environment that comes with a set of rules or instructions. Especially in the exploration of sites that are not intended for exhibiting art.

[...]

I'm honestly really tired of the gallery context. Or rather commercial galleries. The whole gist of it feels infected.

[...]

Any who, I just think there's an intriguing dialogue that can happen when exposing and exhibiting artistic material to locations that are external to the art world, and furthermore experiment with spaces that have some kind of innate agenda and purpose.

[...]

Listen, in all seriousness though, I mean just ..explore, have fun, toast a drink and see where it takes you. Art doesn't necessarily need to be so definite at all times, at least that how I treat it. It's important to value and invest yourself in exploring, and learning. Maybe I feel this way just because I'm so damn nosey as a person, or is it just because I have this vigorous child like driven curiosity.

Who know's?

[...]

Well, I think at this point of our conversation that I might sketch out and acknowledge what motives and some concepts that pilots my body of works. Basically my body of works is a messy mixture made up of my interest and the blending of the ingredients in those. Experimental music, philosophy, writing, natural decay, a bit of family history, mental-health and fiction to name a few. I'm keen to really push the boundaries of my interest artistically by reworking them and have them undergo certain treatments and rules methodologically. I've never really understood or possessed the capacity of conforming to the imperatives of knowledge and rules, and I suppose as a consequence of that I find myself curious in mistreating and misusing material and intentions. It is just something about turning perceptions and twisting expectations on its head that simply touches my innermost being. Artistically I work intensively with a notion of yearning as well as the awareness of the

impermanence of things. I guess you could say I'm searching for some form of tranquility in life through art making. Something dear.

[...]

Oh damn!

[...]

I just realised the time, I'm terrible sorry my dear. I hope you enjoyed our moment together, but now I think it's time to end of our conversation.

[...]

Got to run.

[...]

Take care! And let's keep in touch, I really enjoyed this.

[...]

Bye.