

The Creative
Immateriality of Sound
Higini Arau

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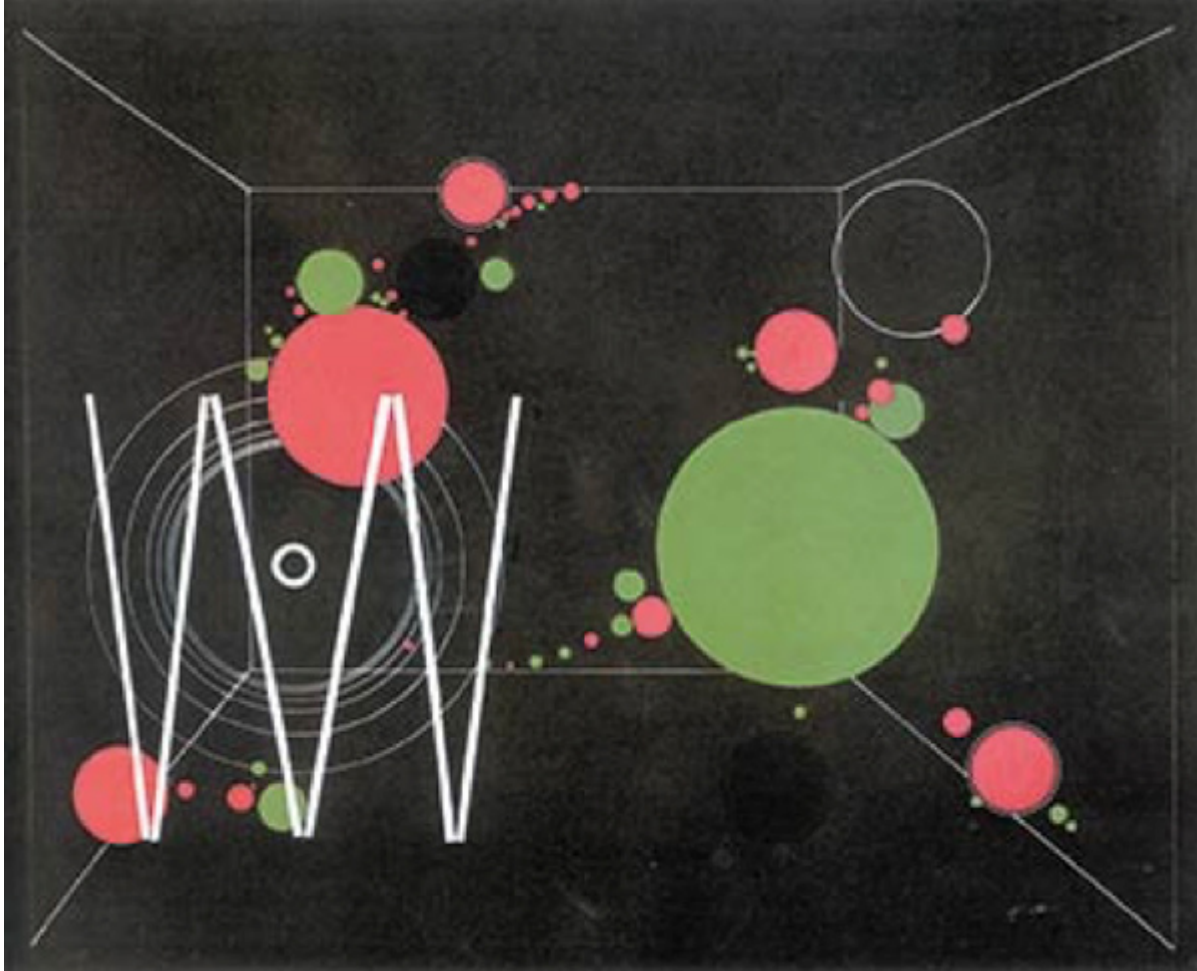
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The creative magic of sound lies in its immaterial essence. You perceive it but you cannot touch it. It harnesses matter as a means of transportation, but it is not matter.

It floats like a wave through the air, a jingling transparent wake, a spirit escaped from Pandora's box, full of surprises; it aims to delight those who enjoy it, yet it is a disturbance when it is unwanted.



Roman Clemens. Stage Design for “A Play on Form, Color and Sound – A Russian Tableau”, 1929.

Matter, with its properties of inertia, elasticity and porousness, provides a corporeal covering; body and soul form a new being, initially born amorphous, eager for a form to be conceived for it. Matter is the boundary that limits form and the volume it contains, where sound is reflected and

absorbs, whose genesis resides in design.

Design is an intellectual exercise that emanates from the emotional properties of the spirit and the rules of art established over time. Yet, the laws of physics and mathematics also participate fundamentally in this exercise that regulates the conception of form, helping us to establish the best silhouette or outline for that immateriality.

And so the creative aspect of sound is multi-faceted, with many sides that provide it with content; depending on which side is dominant over the others, the result will be different. What will it sound like? That is the question we ask when looking at a new form.

A good soundsmith has to be able to achieve a delicate combination of design, conceived as an art form, with the laws of matter, helping to achieve the exact volume and form adapted to the physical possibilities to ensure that the new being will be born in harmony and balance.

Both symmetry and asymmetry can create balance, so long as they obey the universal physical laws that regulate the process of evolution.

Working with acoustics is tantamount to playing, innocently and free of prejudices, with the immaterial qualities of thought, which are expressed in the clay of matter – like a child playing on the beach, building sand castles that disappear and reappear with the movement of the waves.

Sound, in its creative genesis, is an ethereal being that longs to become matter in order to preserve itself; but it cannot because the essence of sound is immaterial, and that leads to perplexity, admiration, and a profound sense of humility.

Sound is that quasi-emotional being that is revered like a mysterious genie, emerging from the magic lamp, causing utter astonishment.

Sound is the bewitching breeze that penetrates every fiber of our beings, as we hunger for new sensations.

It is even the lightness of a being with the ability to transport us toward God. That might be our ultimate delight, but perfection is unreachable and that is what drives us to continue exploring new forms, sensations, materials and physical laws.

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