

2 – 4 March 2021, Tobias Koch, *Chamber Music*
5 – 7 March 2021, Rada Koželj, *Greedy, greedy, greedy I am!*
8 – 10 March 2021, Double Goocher Shop, *The Kaplan Text*
11 – 13 March 2021, Samuel Lala, *Mortal coil*

The first exhibition in the new space of Lateral Roma, located in the Roman neighbourhood of Appio-Latino, brings together four sound works by artists Tobias Koch, Rada Koželj, Double Goocher Shop and Samuel Lala. Each artist's work can be heard for three days, inviting visitors to concentrated listening sessions.

Who is listening in, listening on, listening out, to whom and why? In an article for the blog *Sounding Out*, Gustavus Stadler gives a striking example of how the sound in question makes the who, whom and why in this very generic question specific, even highly political: What does an ever-nearer, ever louder police siren sound like in different neighbourhoods? Rescue or invasion? As he goes on to write, the contrast here is perhaps a little too paradigmatic to prove the point: listening is shaped by social difference, cultural norms, personal experience. An example close to home: Travelling between Italy and Switzerland I know I have crossed the border when I no longer hear people phoning via loudspeaker but I am notified by my compartment neighbour that they will be on a personal call now that might be a little uncomfortable. "That's ok, I'm wearing my headphones, you go ahead", I reply. Who's to say which sounds are desirable and which aren't? Some can choose not to listen, cancel that noise out, others cannot, and still others are not able to. In his book *Hush: Media and Sonic Self-Control*, Mack Hagood looks at devices such as noise apps that provide affective relief from every-day stress or noise-cancelling headphones that block unwanted sounds out, addressing questions of freedom and control over what we do and do not hear, those invisible but palpable codes that dictate which behaviours are acceptable as speaker and which as audience. This is also what Bill Dietz goes into in his talk *Feelings Are Alternative Facts*: "In the first half of the 19th century, the audience learns to "shut the fuck up and listen". Not just to follow rules, not just to be self-aware of behaviour but a full-on internalisation of a way of listening that we remain with today. Obviously though this isn't enough. Taste and free speech are the unfortunate side effects of a crowd of proper citizen listeners, of a bunch of bros – "If I'm totally not being passive and totally maintaining my phallic integrity in my way of receiving then I totally have the right to man-splain." Which is to say, the audience shut up but there was still the matter of applause, of the boo [...] Now that I'm educated and listen I'm going to tell you what I think."

To make it clear: Whilst these thoughts around the politics of listening and listening as a political act are important to the specific sonic worlds the artists in the show have created, they are more of a side note, or a back-drop to the exhibition, musings on the topic at large. The pieces in this exhibition propose other dimensions of listening than those we are used to, addressing their historical baggage – Tobias Koch's multi-dimensional soundscape, reminiscent of baroque music, suggests a highly simulated sonic world; Rada Koželj's jingles address us subconsciously as melodies from advertising; Renato Grieco takes on a famous Hitchcock character and unwinds his story; and Samuel Lala warps classical sounds we have associated with the bourgeoisie into zombiesque soundscapes.