

# Architecture and the Senses

12. – 14. October, 2018

The Center for Building Heritage in Plasy

Plasy and the state heritage monastery of Plasy



# **PROGRAM**

**Friday, 12 October 2018**

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**11:00–12:00 Abbey stables: Registration**

**13:00 Mathey auditorium**

Miloš Vojtěchovský / Vít Bohal: Welcome of guests, information about the program and introduction to the themes of the seminar

Pavel Kodera: Welcome of guests

## **THE SACRED AND THE PROFANE**

13.30 – 15.30

**13:30 Mathey auditorium**

**Irena Bukačová: About Light, Sound, Jan Blažej Santini-Aichel and Mauricius Vogt**

In the sacred baroque space, communication and the accentuation of qualities of location is determined not merely by sound and acoustics, but also depends on the dialectics of light and darkness. In my talk, I will touch upon the important role of light in Baroque architecture and in architectural theory. Such Baroque musical theory was practised by the Abbot Mauritius Vogt in Plasy (the book *\_Conclave magnae artis musicae*). According to his theory, musical intervals correspond to the harmony of the Cosmos, which is imprinted via the concepts of Sacred Geometry and of the Kabbalah into sacred architecture.

PhDr. Irena Bukačová is a historian, journalist, translator, and the director of the Museum and Gallery of the Northern Pilsen Region in Mariánská Týnice. She studied philosophy, history, and art history at the Philosophical Faculty of Charles University in Prague, writing her doctoral thesis on the history of Italian philosophy. Her work focuses on historic preservation and the Northern Pilsen region.Czech, 30 min

**14:00 Mathey auditorium**

**Anna Kvíčalová: Church Acoustics in the History of Knowledge**

Although Christian church building practices have produced some of the most acoustically impressive structures in Europe from the early Middle Ages to modernity, little is known about the acoustic models used in their construction. It is unclear to what extent the architects aimed for specific acoustic effects and what exactly they knew or assumed about acoustics. Architectural acoustics as an exact science capable of precisely calculating reverberation time emerged only after the physicist Wallace Clement Sabine determined the reverberation equation around 1900. However, the behaviour of sound – especially the sound of the human voice and musical instruments – in both enclosed and open-air spaces had been discussed within the context of rhetoric, music and the performing arts, religion, and architecture for many centuries. In my talk, I will argue that the history of church acoustics reveals the fluidity of boundaries between different regimes of knowledge. What

we would today call an empirical and scientific understanding of acoustics was not necessarily in conflict with religious and cosmological views of sound and audition derived from ancient sources. The “hybrid” notions of sound and hearing generated in this context did not necessarily result in poor acoustic design due to a misunderstanding of the nature and propagation of sound. Rather, we can see them as reflecting a mix of practical acoustic, cosmological, and religious concerns, which met particular historical requirements and expectations.

Anna Kvičalová, PhD is a postdoctoral fellow at the Centre for Theoretical Study in Prague.  
English, 30 min

**14:30 Mathey auditorium**

**Pavel Kodera: Pots of Singing: Several Notes on the Resonant Vessels in Medieval Buildings**

Shortly before the Christian era, Vitruvius wrote in one of the chapters dedicated to the education of the architect that “the builder must also have a say in music to understand sonic laws and mathematical theory of sound.” Further, he describes the correct placement of bronze vessels in the theater so that “the consonance of the actor’s voice was intensified and changed in such a way, to make it clearer and more pleasant to the ears of the audience.” In recent years, we can see considerable attention towards the phenomenon of resonant vessels especially in foreign literature. About ten individual articles have already been published in the Czech context. The talk will focus on this issue located at the edge of architecture and acoustics.

Mgr. Pavel Kodera Ph.D. is a director of the Centre for Building Heritage in Plasy.  
Czech, 30 min

**15:00 Mathey auditorium**

**Yiorgis Sakellariou: Between The Physical And Supernatural: Sacred Soundscapes  
and Electroacoustic Music**

A church, like any temple, can be regarded as a sacred space. Is there an essence of spirituality embedded in its aural atmosphere or is this something imagined by the visitor? Can the soundscape of a church transmit an exclusively religious message or perhaps it can have a purely sonic and musical context? This lecture will address these questions by describing the methods of composing and performing Silentium, an electroacoustic piece based on sounds of churches, bells, and organs. Exploring the sacred soundscape of a church initiates an aesthetic inquiry into sounds of religious origin with the aim of opening up a discourse about sacred and secular spaces in relation to acousmatic music performance and listening. Moreover, Silentium examines the contrast between the mundane and chaotic urban noises and the attentive worshipful silence of a concert. The act of listening to Silentium is an immersion into what historian of religion Diarmaid MacCulloch has described as a border zone between the physical and supernatural.

Yiorgis Sakellariou is a composer of experimental and electroacoustic music.  
English, 30 min

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**15:30–16:00 Break**

# LANDSCAPES, ECOLOGIES, SOUNDSCAPES

16:00–18:00

## 16:00 Mathey auditorium

**John Grzinich: Totems of Linearity**

Much of the landscape is strewn with artefacts of linearity. Inscriptions of human transmission coded and uncoded demarcate borders, electro-materialist dependency and radio-teleological communication systems. Points may be connected via visible lines of wires or arrays of invisible signals transmitted via techno-telepathic networks. Physical in every aspect, these artefacts expose the parallel worlds of modernity yet remain isolated from their surroundings, standing out as sculptural figures traversing the open land. As structures unto themselves, they can be intrusive and out of place. Should obsolescence of their intended purpose set in by circumstances entirely unrelated to their location, they will either be left to weather, occupied by vegetation or recycled for their material value.

John Grzinich (b. 1970 New York) lives and works in Estonia and has worked since the early 1990s as a freelance mixed-media artist and cultural coordinator with various practices combining sound, image, sites, and collaborative social structures.

English, 30 min

## 16:30 Mathey auditorium

**Taufan ter Weel & Sara Pinheiro: Sense of Space-time**

Our sense of space-time is historically and geographically divided. In other words, the ways in which we experience, conceptualise and organise (or relate to) space and time are intertwined with social, cultural, technological, political and economic developments — both local and global. The lecture focuses on the tension between abstractions of space/time and site-specificity — between dominant models or representations of space and/or time (Cartesian, Euclidean and non-Euclidean geometry, Newtonian logic, but also scientific management, Fordism, algorithmic programming, smart control) and what is called sense of place or situated knowledges and rhythms — which seems apparent in the global history of colonial and industrial capitalism.

Taufan ter Weel is an architect, artist and researcher who takes an interdisciplinary approach at the intersection of sound art, architecture and socio-spatial research.

Sara Pinheiro (b. 1985) is a sound-maker who lives and works in Prague.

English, 30 min

**17:00 Abbey stables****Petra Kapš alias OR poiesis: Doors to Paradise**

Doors to Paradise addresses the edge of the imaginary and confronts the barrier of the (not) allowed. Liquid phantasy of micro locality. The work falls within the scope of the author's devotion to the phenomena of the wall, paradise, body, voice, rivers. The flowing fleetingness of the captured voices in the language of the water continues its cosmic eavesdropping. In the intimacy of the interior regions, the fountain recalls the uncertainty, the hearing awakens. Talk about the performative piece Doors to Paradise and presentation of the artist book The Golden Walls, a short version of the sound performance PARADISCO.

Petra Kapš alias OR poiesis (b. 1975, Slovenia) weaves her work among the arts of sound, radio, chrono-spatial poetry, poetic performance, books and reflection.

English, 30 min

**17:30 Abbey stables****Jez riley French: The Choreography of Perception**

The works of Jez riley French include pieces capturing the sound of the dolomites dissolving, ants consuming fallen fruit, the Tate Modern building vibrating, the infrasound of domestic spaces around the world, glaciers melting in Iceland, and the tonal resonances of natural and human objects in the landscape. Recent projects and research include "design and detail of the spaces between buildings" in Japan and "salts". French makes use of intuitive composition, field recording, improvisation, and photography, and has been exploring his enjoyment of and interest in detail and simplicity and his emotional response to places and situations for over 3 decades. Alongside performances, exhibitions and installations, French lectures and runs workshops around the world. His range of specialist microphones is widely used by recordists, sound artists, musicians, sound designers, and cultural organisations. He also works as a curator of live events, a record label, sound installations and an art zine \_Verdure engraved.

In recent years French has been working extensively on long-form recordings of surfaces, spaces, and situations and developing the concept of photographic scores and "scores for listening," which have featured widely in publications and exhibitions.\_

English, 30 min

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**18:00–18:30 Break****18:30 Hodiny - spatial sound performance****Martin Marek, Jan Kromholz, Iva Polanecká, Polina Khatsenka (UJEP)**

**19:00–19:30 Convent**

**George Cremaschi: Improvisation for contrabass and echo**

George Cremaschi was born in New York, where he studied music and composition. He later lived for many years in California and currently lives in Prague. Cremaschi makes use of a variety of approaches in the overlapping areas of music, sound art and noise. In thirty years as a composer and performer, he has a long and diverse history of working with musicians, filmmakers, dancers and choreographers, visual artists, and writers.

**20:00 Ian Mikyska: Plasy Silence (a workshop)**

A participative performance exploring the acoustic properties of the Plasy Monastery and its two chapels. The audience members – who are also the performers – receive a small folded booklet with instructions which they gradually leaf through as the piece progresses. A repeated return to silence and the various manners in which a group can approach and achieve quietude and stillness are at the heart of the piece.



**Saturday, 13 October**

## **RESONANCE AND LISTENING**

**10:00–12:00**

**10:00 Mathey auditorium**

**Miloš Vojtěchovský/Radoslava Schmelzová: À la Recherche du Temps Perdu**

Projection

The cultural layers of the former Cistercian monastery of Plasy have an almost millennium-long history, but the media archive concentrates mainly on the events initiated by the Hermit Foundation and later the Center of Metamedia Plasy. This series of activities began in the winter of 1991 and lasted until the winter of 1999. In spite of their relative longevity, there is rather little reference material about these events circulating in the public sphere.

Radoslava Schmelzová Mgr. studied art history and cultural heritage management at the University of Ostrava, and the theory and history of design and new media at the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague with theses about the project Hermit Foundation.

Miloš Vojtěchovský (b. 1955, Prague) is a curator, art historian, and audiovisual artist. In 1991 he initiated The Hermit Foundation/The Center for Metamedia.

**10:30 Mathey auditorium**

**George Cremaschi: Music, Architecture and Acoustics**

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**11:15–11:30 Break**

**11:30 Mathey auditorium**

**Ian Mikyska: Sensory Strolls – Contemplation, Reading and Solitude in the Economy of Attention**

If we are living in an “economy of attention,” how we direct our attention through reading, looking, listening and being is crucial in constructing our relationship to the environment and being in time. I will discuss my own work in relation to approaches (through text and listening) to ideas of the everyday, waste, impermanence of experience in self, with the goal of articulating a concept of personal contemplative politics, with connection to current trends in philosophical thought, including new and speculative materialisms, as well as ideas on time from Bergson and Deleuze. I will mostly focus on a series of “sensory strolls,” book-guided installations made in Prague (Convent of St. Agnes – National Gallery) and Pardubice (Automatic Mills) in 2017. The visitors receive a small booklet, which provides both maps and instructions for navigating a particular path through the space, as well as “scores”: instructions for performative events. These events, however, are generally not outwardly performative,

and rather involve “performing” with one’s senses: seeing or hearing or touching in a particular way, with a particular focus. Each of these walks was tailored to a radically different space: The memory of these spaces was crucial in both walks, as well as the theme of solitude in concentration. While in Pardubice, topics of technology, utility, uselessness and our sensory apprehension of these elements were dominant; in the Convent – a much more public space – solitude and contemplation were more present. In both cases, finding new ways to engage our environments in a contemplative manner, thus reclaiming (public) space, is a central concern.

Ian Mikyska is a Czechoslovak composer who generally works on the edges of sound: he makes installations, walks, videos, texts, as well as sound in collaboration with other artists.

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#### **12:15–13:30 Break**

#### **13:30 Abbey stables**

**Csaba Hajnóczy: What Are the Thoughts Behind CESSE?**  
(Central European Society for Soundscape Ecology)

The first conference of the Central European Society for Soundscape Ecology, which will take place at the end of November in Budapest, will be dedicated to the establishment of a new organization for convening and coordinating energies towards the improvement and saving of our region’s soundscapes. Keywords include contemporary art, science, and technology, focusing on liveability and sustainability. The original idea was to connect motivated people, coming from various backgrounds, in the Visegrad countries. Soon the circle expanded to other countries as well.

Csaba Hajnóczy (b. 1957) is a musician, composer and musicologist living and working in Budapest. He teaches at Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design, Budapest.

English, 30 min



## **14:00 Abbey stables**

### **Miloš Šejn: A Nightingale with a Flat Flight, Path in Translation**

I record a moment of the nightingale's living space. I have entered his house, his home. Reflections of vegetation, overhanging willows, and viburnums on the surface of the water say something of our, yes, perhaps our dialogue. I don't know what the avian beings truly see and feel, but I am enraptured by the visual impression of this moment. When I wake up early in the morning, I lie on my bed and the branches from the garden stretch in from the window, clouds, the first rays of sun, and birdsong, it's a perfect situation. Half asleep, loved ones and acquaintances approach, my consciousness is just as much between corporeality as between a dream and the consciousness of the house. I don't know how the singing birds perceive this moment, and I know even less how long it has been since people have tried to capture this musical stream of speech in their own language – probably since time immemorial. Various languages and dialects hear something different each time. What follows are examples of translations of nightingales from the history of ornithology. And do we hear today at least some of a fragment of the nightingale's building of a house?

Miloš Šejn (b. 1947) is a visual artist and performer who addresses issues of visual and sonic perception. He organizes workshops, such as Bohemiae Rosa.

Czech, 30 min

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## **14:30–15:30 Break**

## **15:30 Mathey auditorium**

### **Vít Zavadil/Stanislav Abrahám: Acoustic pollution in current and former military areas**

The problem of acoustic pollution makes it difficult to record bird and frog votes. In this sense, the best pictures were taken in functional military slopes, where about two times a year there were several military exercises, then there was peace and acoustic background was almost zero. After 1989 there were some military training facilities 1) abolished, right in the 1990s: Dobrá Voda - now part of Šumava NP, Mladá (Milovice), Ralsko, in the last years Brdy-Jince (today Protected Landscape Area Brdy) 2) others were diminished and with the relaxation of the social conditions there is also less access to the access (Hradiště-Dourov, Boletice, Libavá). The first case led to the colonization of the development activities of these areas, in the second case, tourists, cyclists, bikers, riders on quadricycles, and so on. In both cases, there has been a disturbance in peace, so taking pictures is difficult here. In the past, heavy military technology has created a convenient biotope for species that have almost disappeared from the intensely agricultural and forest-based landscapes during the past century. In the context of a change in military strategy and technology, these territories lose importance to the extent that nature conservation somewhere creates similar management for nature in cooperation with lovers of historical military weapons and technology. This happens only in places and the former beautiful and rare fauna inhabited areas often lose importance. The soundtrack is a collage of several recordings (mixed by A. Stanko): slamming the garage door for tanks in the deserted military space of Ralsko, rain, penetrating into the abandoned semi-destroyed oyster

plains on Kraslicko district (chorus singing in the background) and choir singing kvíčaly at the former military shooting range Vrchbělá.

Vít Zavadil (b. 1953) is an ornithologist, batrachologist, herpetologist, music critic, poet and ecologist.

### **Stanislav Abrahám: Drone**

This installation reflects on three aspects of the sonic medium. Temporality or duration, typical for so-called drone music. Duration expresses the character of time, not "running" or "passing" by, but existing instead as constant presence. Resonance as an elementary means of amplification. Resonance is more than listening. It is tuning in to a common vibration. This way, vibrations are amplified. The principle of resonance is encompassed in the oldest musical experiences of humanity, in the form of throat singing on the Tuvan steppe or the musical bow of the Amazon rainforest. In the installation, this principle is represented on two levels. The first are small resonance tubes, placed above the propellers of the fans. The second level consists of the resonance of the resultant harmony in the acoustics of the chapel. The non-musical sound object as instrument contains a layer of higher resonant frequencies that interfere with one another. Then we can hear music created from sound in which we would not search for music.

Stanislav Abrahám is an audiovisual performer and sound artist who lives and works in Prague Czech, 30 minutes



**16:30 Mathey auditorium****Judit Emese Konopás: Engaging in the Present and Letting Things Flow**

The project I will present was created during my stay in the Czech countryside, where I was focusing on nature, as well as urban life and the impact this has on nature. The forest enfolds people in intimacy. It still has the energy to let us be present with it. The piece shows how nature and the disturbance of it creates a pair influencing one another in various layers and textures. If the urban environment changes, nature will soon follow, with changes in both the flora and the behaviour of animals. Their changing attitude and voice and the effect this has on urban living influence each other back and forth. Listening to and looking at these effects, we can arrive at a feeling of interrelation. We are all dependent on one another irrespectively of the direction of our attraction towards each other.

Judit Konopás is an architect, sound researcher, artist, and organizer involved in various sound-based activities.

English, 30 min

**17:00 Convent entrance****Davide Tidoni: Listening/Intervention Workshop (introduction)**

This workshop resembles an extended performance where participants become actively involved in the creation/experience of the proposed activities.

English, 30 min

Participants: minimum 3, maximum 15.

Duration: 3 hours

The workshop will take place in English on Sunday from 9 to 12.

To sign up, send an email to [sound@agosto-foundation.org](mailto:sound@agosto-foundation.org).

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**17:30-19:00 Break****19:00 Abbey stables****Martin Zet: Transmutation**

Sound event – gypsum, 10 minutes

dust from stone through heat  
stone from dust through water  
atoms molecules bonds  
change warms  
the shallowness of squelching  
will ring out  
will sound out

Martin Zet (b. 1959) is a visual and performance artist.

**19:15 Mathey****Jakub Wagner and Martin Klusák: Krastí**

We will present an ongoing set of four short experimental film poems focusing on the relationships between internal and external landscapes; the margins of plains, forests, the city, myth, and imagination. Each film is the result of a creative collaboration. The filmmakers are: the documentary filmmaker Květa Přibylová, the composers Martin Klusák and Jan Rybář, and the musician and filmmaker Marek Matvija. The authors explore the boundaries of the visual and sonic, accenting – rather than narrating – the rhythm and movement. Krasti is a crossmedia work to be presented as a series of short films and as a video projection accompanied by live music, produced by GPO Platform (Jakub Wagner, Martin Kohout) and Music in Context (Jan Rybář). The project is currently in the shooting and post-production stages.

Martin Klusák (b. 1987) is a Czech composer and audiovisual artist.

Jakub Wagner is a screenwriter, director and producer.

**20:00 Abbey stables****Saša Spačal: CYCLES**

Cycles is a sound performance in the series of sonic close-ups with live crickets Acheta domesticus. Cycles seem natural and eternal, however their constant metamorphosis is never the same. Cycles follow their own trajectory of evolution and emergencies as strings of moments. Moments are sliced, lived and experienced, almost materialized in experience. Experience that can perceive a cycle, however only thought can follow a trajectory from the past through the present moment into the future.

Saša Spačal (b. 1978) is a post-media artist, living and working in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Her work is at the intersection of living systems research, contemporary and sound art, focusing primarily on the posthuman period, when human beings exist and act as one of many elements in the ecosystem and not as sovereigns.

## Sunday 14 October

**09:00 – 12:00 The Convent and environs**

Davide Tidoni: Listening/Intervention Workshop

**10:00 – 12:00 Abbey stables**

Open forum for contributions and discussion

Exteriors/Interiors

**John Grzinich: Resonant Geometry**

Resonant Geometry is a performative exploration in redefining geometric space through the phenomenon of resonant feedback. The framework of the project is based on a tempered or adjustable system intended for real-time performance using tensioned lengths of instrument wires that act as both real and metaphorical lines that define space. The dimensions of this space will be measured by the sonic responsiveness of the signals in the system. In this way, not only does the installation itself function as an instrument but becomes an extension of the space itself. The wires resonate when induced with direct signals to generate electronic tones resulting from the physical movement of the wires. What we hear, in a sense, is an auditory translation of a spatial dimension. Such an experiment is based on speculative reasoning, to “measure” the degree to which a space has an inherent “tuning” based on its geometric proportions. The point to point 2-dimensional lengths of wires can be extended, woven and crisscrossed in a 3-dimensional space adding complex layers of tonality, dissonance and harmonics to the auditory translation process.

**Sound installations and interventions by students from AMU in Prague and Faculty of Art and Design UJEP in Ústí nad Labem:** Tomáš Roček, Martin Marek, Adam Hejduk, Zuzana Šklíbová, Jan Kromholz, Iva Polanecká, Polina Khatsenka, Matěj Šenkýřík.

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**12:00 Lunch break**

**13:08 Bus trip to Mariánská Týnice. An introduction to the space of the monastery by Irena Bukačová and Hana Blochová.**

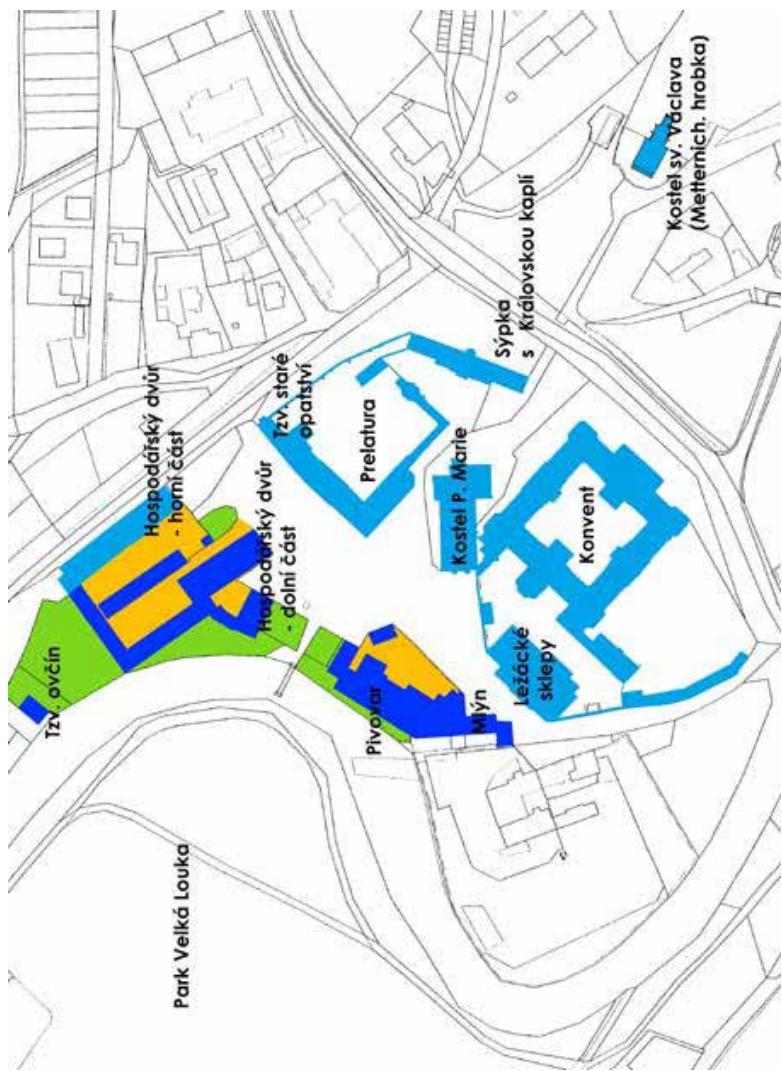
**14:00 Irena Bukačová Guided Tour**

**15:00 Jiří Rouš - Sound Intervention in the Church**

**15:30 Hana Sar Blochová: The Music of the Spheres and the Geometry of Sacred Songs**

Mariánská Týnice and its central dome will be sounded by a capella voice, string instruments, bells and the music of the spheres.

Hana Sar Blochová focuses on philosophy, music, architecture and fine art of the classical and medieval periods. She is director of the liberal arts school Kvadrivium, and play replicas of medieval and renaissance musical instruments.



The event is organized as part of the recently published archive of the Hermit Foundation and Center for Metamedia Plasy which is part of the Agosto FOundation Mediateka, and is connected to the Soundworms Ecology Gathering which took place in Mariánská Radčice, as well as to the preapred publication of the translation of “The New Soundscape” by R.M. Schafer.

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