

SPEAKER SCULPTURES

from

Benoît Maubrey

participative sound sculptures
created with recycled electronics
and communications media

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web link: <http://www.benoitmaubrey.com/?cat=5>

video link: <https://vimeo.com/66304704>

Statement and explanation on Speaker Sculptures:

My decision in the early 1980s to stop working with pigments and canvas came from a desire to interact directly with public spaces. This is why I decided to work with loudspeakers and media. Loudspeakers have long been integrated into modern life inside our homes, mass transportation, and public spaces. Speakers are cheap and commonplace: they can be found at flea markets, second-hand stores, or recycling centers. I use them much in the same way that a sculptor uses clay or wood: as a modern medium to create artworks with the added attraction that they can make the air vibrate ("sound") around them and create a public hotspot.

Since 1990 I have been creating interactive sound sculptures made with hundreds of recycled speakers. Found in public places, these electroacoustic sculptures have taken on various shapes like an gateway, an arena, a country field, a temple, an igloo or a wall. The speakers are all connected and allow passersby to express themselves through them: the sculptures are equipped with amplifiers, a mixing board, a microphone, a "line in" for guitars and music players, Bluetooth receivers, telephone answering systems (anyone can call up the sculpture and talk through it for 3 minutes), "audio" Twitter, and radio receivers. Additionally local bands, "open mike" participants, and community organisations can use the sculpture for meetings and events.

Most of my Speaker Sculptures are temporary, some are permanent: the loudspeakers and membranes are replaceable, the base structure onto which they are fixed is solid and waterproof. The main electronics is situated in a closed space not far from the sculpture. The volume is regulable via a mixing board. The sculpture itself has only signal cable and therefore is not electrically dangerous. Graffiti (for example "Speakers Arena"): sprayers are most invited to "tag" the backside of the sculpture (visual graffiti = oral graffiti).

My work is site-specific: each individual project is created specially for a public space, sometimes directly embedded into a pre-existent structure. A precise budget requires a residency or preview visit. The artwork itself can be created on site in cooperation with recycling companies and industry, youth organisations, local associations, neighborhood groups, handworkers, electronic "nerds". The work is communicative, cooperative and collaborative.



SPEAKERS ARENA (Berlin 2019)

Interactive sound sculpture conceived in the shape of an amphitheater constructed with 320 recycled loudspeakers (all connected). The sculpture functions both as a mobile “Speakers Corner” — a “hotspot” for local participation and self-expression but also as a forum for small events and concerts.

The public, local artists, musicians, and groups can participate through a variety of ways: relaying songs and messages via Bluetooth. by calling a specific telephone number and expressing themselves “live” for 3 minutes, by connecting their devices, a microphone, and/or instruments via a direct „line in”, or via “Audio Twitter” (#speakersarena).

Additionally ARENA can be used as PA system for events, DJs, and small concerts. link: <https://www.benoitmaubrey.com/?p=2867>



SPEAKERS ARENA
 (Kitchener/Canada 2018, Berlin 2019)
 Video documentation links: <https://vimeo.com/359487006>
<https://vimeo.com/381415569>

Backside view: used by graffiti artists

Obelisk

Cairotronica, Palace of the Arts, Cairo 2018. Intersonanzen, Platz der Einheit, Potsdam 2019
350 connected loudspeakers, microphone, Bluetooth receivers, amplifier.

link: <https://www.benoitmaubrey.com/?p=2772>



TEMPLE (2012)

ZKM / Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe/Germany.
Adaptation of the Delphi Temple Ruin.

An electroacoustic sculpture made of 3000 recycled loudspeakers, amplifiers, radios and mixing board.
Sound: white noise. Additionally people can call up the sculpture and talk through it for 3 minutes.

link:

<https://www.benoitmaubrey.com/?p=1963>





Karaoke Torii

Kamiyama, Japan 2017

300 connected loudspeakers, Bluetooth receivers, microphone, line-in, amplifiers.

People can play tunes and messages via Bluetooth or speak directly through the sculpture. link: <https://www.benoitmaubrey.com/?p=2658>



GATEWAY (2014) commissioned by the Berliner Festspiele / MaerzMusik Festival.

700 recycled loudspeakers integrated into the lobby. An interactive electroacoustic sculpture created from recycled loudspeakers. Sound (regulable via a mixing board): radio "white noise" and spectator's voices. People can call up the sculpture and talk through it for 3 minutes also via Bluetooth receivers spectators are encouraged to participate "live" by playing music from their smartphones. Photo WALTER.FOTOGRAFIE

video link: <https://vimeo.com/103945269>



The CUBE (2013)

Hard Rock Hotel, Palm Springs Ca.
500 recycled loudspeakers that are soldered together as an “active” public sound sculpture. The electromagnetic signals from recycled radios produce a low-level “white noise” into which local spectators can add their own tunes and pre-recorded messages. The sculpture is also conceived as a full-blown interactive sound sculpture where participants can play guitar and add their voices via bluetooth technology. Sound is regulable via mixing board.



web link: <https://www.benoitmaubrey.com/?p=2224>



SPEAKERS WALL . 2011. Le Quai-Forum des Arts Vivants/Angers. Accroche-Coeurs Festival
Materials: original Berlin Wall segment, 1000 soldered (recycled) loudspeakers amplifiers, tuners, and mixing board. Via a telephone answering machine people can call the sculpture and talk through it for 3 minutes. Sound is regulable. video link: <https://vimeo.com/28495625>



AUDIO IGLOO. 2013 Sculpture Museum/ Marl. 1997. Hull Time Based Arts, U.K.
2004 Parochial Church, Singuihr Gallery/Berlin. Materials: 300 recycled loudspeakers, tuners,
record players, and receivers. Sound: electromagnetic air waves (white noise).



Jobfield 3000

Village Resort Exhibition / Kunstpflug e.V., Beelitz. 2008

Materials: imitation asparagus field, 60 connected telephones,
4 amplifiers, 4 MP3 players. Sound: job offers from the internet.

Sound: 4 channels of job offers recorded from the internet. web link: <https://www.benoitmaubrey.com/?p=748>

Field

2017 Interim Festival, Grabenstetten, Germany.

A field is "planted" with 48 recycled loudspeakers as socio-archeological artifacts. The loudspeakers "talk" and "sound". The loudspeakers are half-buried in the earth and connected to 4 amplifiers equipped with SD cards with voice samples. There are 4 rows corresponding to 4 channels.

The 12-volt system is powered via photovoltaic panels.

The sound : local recordings in the dialect of Schwabische Alb (Hülben in Baden-Württemberg) from 1940s and 50s (birthday, wartime letter, folksongs, New Years celebration...)

web link: <https://www.benoitmaubrey.com/?p=2682>



2019 VANS OPENS ASIA'S FIRST BRAND SHOWCASE STORE IN THE CENTER OF GANGNAM, SEOUL

quote from Vans Press: *"Vans opened the first brand showcase store in Asia located at the center of Gangnam, Seoul.*

The Vans brand showcase store combines brand experience and storytelling - a wall of vintage speakers (all connected : included a "Speakers Door" that swivels) designed by Berlin-based American sound sculpture artist Benoit Maubrey, is installed at the first level of the store. The vintage speakers sourced from archives and junk piles from the 1960's to the 1990's, are wired into a full DJ console offering both CDDJs and vinyl decks. Adjacent to the speaker wall is a live radio space enabling artists and musicians to gather and share their music and creativity to customers...."



CV : Benoît Maubrey

1952: born in Washington, DC

1975: BA from Georgetown University.

Exhibitions, Performances and Festivals (a selection):

2018 Obelisk, Cairotronica, Cairo.

ARENA, Cafka Biennial, Kitchener, Canada.

2017 Field, Interim Festival, Grabenstetten (Schwäbische Alb) Germany.

2016 Karaoke Torii, Kamiyama, Japan.

2015 Shrine, Kobe Biennale, Japan.

2014 MaerzMusik Festival, Berliner Festspiele.

2013 Sculpture Museum Glaskasten Marl,

-- "Nuit Blanche" Kosice European Culture Capital.

2012 ZKM/Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe, SOUND ART.

-- STATT FARBE: LICHT Bauhaus Museum, Dessau.

2010 Zero1 Festival, San Jose Biennale, San Jose Ca.

-- NAISA, Toronto.

2008 MOSTRA DES ARTES SESC/ Sao Paolo, Brazil.

-- MUSICA EX MACHINA/ Bilbao.

2007 INGENUITY, Cleveland Festival for Arts and Technology.

-- Digital Arts Week, Zurich.

2006 Taipei Digital Arts Festival, Taiwan.

-- Sitelines Festival, NYC.

-- SIGGRAPH, Boston.

2002 AUDIO BALLERINAS, Location One, NYC.

-- Hamburger Bahnhof, Museum fuer Gegenwartskunst, Berlin.

2001 New Haven Festival for Arts and Ideas.

-- Seoul Performing Arts Festival.

-- Musee des Arts et Industrie, Saint-Etienne.

2000 Monaco Dance Danses Forum, Montecarlo.

1999 AUDIO IGLOO, commissioned sculpture at Hull Time Based Arts, UK.

1998 International Symposium for Electronic Arts, Chicago..

1997 AUDIO GEISHAS, ICC-NTT Tokyo City Opera House.

-- XIX International Triennale Exhibition of Milan.

-- SONAMBIENTE Sound Art Festival, Academy of Arts, Berlin.

1994 International Symposium for Electronic Art, Helsinki.

1992 Cleveland Performance Festival, Ohio.

-- TISEA, Sydney.

1991 European Land Art Biennale, Cottbus, Germany.

-- INTERFERENZEN-- Art from West Berlin, Riga, Lettland

1989 Festival PERSPECTIVES, Saarbrücken.

1988 "Parcours Sonores", Musée de La Villette, Paris.

1987 STEIRISCHE HERBST, Graz, Austria.

1986 ARS ELECTRONICA, Linz, Austria.

-- The Mattress Factory, Pittsburg, Pa.

AWARDS:

2018 Urban Interaction Award at the Media Architecture Biennale Beijing.

2017 1st Prize in Hacking Urban Furniture Competition, ZKU / Center for Art and Urbanistics, Berlin.

2008 Marler Video Installation Prize, Skulpturenmuseum Marl.

2006 Franklin Furnace Fund for Performance, NYC.

1991 Prix Ars Electronica, Acknowledgment for Interactive Art:

1983 Speakers Wall, Overcoming the Wall Competition, Haus am Check point Charlie, Berlin.

Grants / Residencies:

2018 Berlin Kulturhauptstadt Fonds Grant for ARENA.

2016 Grant from the City of Berlin for New Music and Sound Art.

2011 DIVA artist residency in Aarhus, Denmark.

2010 Artist-in-Residence at MuseumsQuartier Vienna.

2006 Composer-in-Residence, Schloss Wiepersdorf, Brandenburg.

2002 Audio Peacocks, Artist in Residence, Lieux Publics, Marseille.

1999 Hull Time Based Arts, UK.

Budget plan (itemized but dependant on project)

N.B. My work is site-specific: each individual project is created specially for a public space, sometimes directly embedded into a pre-existent structure. A precise budget requires a residency or preview visit. The artwork itself can be created on site in cooperation with local recycling companies, young people, carpenters, local electronic "nerds". The work is cooperative and collaborative.

-- Up to 400 recycled loudspeakers (collecting and storing + transporting):

-- Artist preview visit and residency:

-- Amplifiers, 4 Bluetooth receivers, mixing board, 12 assorted cinch and adapter cables, 2 Smartphones, 4 sim cards), answering machine software , software, IT work/programming (3 Arduinos, 4 Raspberry Pis), mobile router, heavy duty outdoor loudspeaker cable (200m), loudspeaker cable (200m), microphone cable (200m) + assorted electronics, soldering irons/ solder:

-- Lumber, polyurethane glue, caulking guns, electrical and gaffer tape, outdoor house paint (grey), screws, hot glue gun, extension cables, impact screwdrivers :

-- Construction (carpenters using Torx Head Screws and impact drills):

-- Local building site, ladders, forklift + transportation equipment from building site to installation site:

-- On site: local electrical room (not more than 50 meters) for electronics .

-- Hanging of cables or digging on site.

-- Structural engineering, design, foundation work, local permits, insurance

-- 4 local building + soldering assistants (local circuitbenders, electronic "nerds":

-- Maintenance (cleaning up, checking electronics, replacing broken membranes):

-- At the end : further storage or transport or demolition: