



One of the electronic music scene's less exposed corners is sound art - the thoughtful cousin of electronic dance music. A place where the pace is lowered and the dance shoes are tidied away in advantage of deep thoughts and deep listening. The sonic universe stretches over tones through noise and silence, to recorded sounds from everyday life; so-called soundscapes. The goal is not to keep the party going, but to take on a consciousness-expanding listening trip into the world of sound art's weird and wonderful sounds.

I'm on the second front row right behind Tine Surel Lange, who is about to perform her work. I've just heard lots of new composition music for instruments, singing voices and electronics. Now it's the sound artists' turn. It starts out pretty quiet. The sound of a stream tones through onto my inner sound-retina and the water runs smoothly as on a frosty day. The sounds are so clear that I can almost feel the frost in my nose and the sun's bright shine in my eyes. The sound of the stream becomes stronger and the sonically changes and turns into a violent waterfall. "Schhrrrrwwschhrrrrww ..." it says; water sounds plunge into my ear and face. Remarkably the sound of a bee swarm protrudes behind the waterfall - where did it come from? I understand nothing. My poor consciousness tries in vain to grasp the various sound layers that run in and out between each other. I am on a sound trip, all my senses are driving at high pressure and I have no idea where we are heading. All I know is that the sounds go straight towards my reptile brain and push all the buttons that they can possibly push.

The sound artist behind the work is Tine Surel Lange. Two years after this concert, I have met her twice - once at an airport and once via a crackling Skype connection. We talked about electronic music and sound art; what kind of sizes they are, what they have in common and how they differ from each another.

Tine Surel Lange is a Danish-Norwegian composer, born in 1989. She studied early music at the Royal Danish Music Conservatory in Copenhagen, Sonic College in Haderslev, The Norwegian Academy of Music and The Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre. Her compositions range widely from chamber ensembles with live electroacoustic music, where classic instruments are driven through various electronic setups and effects on stage, to live mixing of soundscape compositions - hard industrial sounds, noise, graphic art and video material.

Tine Surel Lange loves real sounds; sounds from everyday life and the world around her that she captures and collects for use in her soundworks. These may be sonic material she finds in nature, like rippling water from a stream, or the sound of a spoon stirring in a bowl. They can also be sounds from instruments where she manages to extract all sorts of tones and clangour from. In Tine Surel Lange's sonic universe there is no difference between instruments and everyday sounds. They are all sounds with different qualities that can be recorded with a microphone, reversed and rotated in different audio programs and examined for the musical possibilities that lie within them.

Working electronically with sound gives Tine Surel Lange a lot of freedom as a composer: *With electronics I have the freedom to use all types of sounds that I find in the world and that I think are amazing. Often I choose to abstrahate the sounds completely from what they originally were. Or I choose to focus on the sonic quality of the sound and highlight what I think is interesting about the sound itself. Working electronically makes the whole world my color palette - my audio palette.*

Tine Surel Lange also works consciously with the multitude of perceptions of sound: *Many people think that my sound recordings are digital, meaning made on synthesizers, but in reality they can be sound recordings of natural phenomena. I think this has got something to do with when we hear a sound for the first time, we very quickly categorise it. If we continue to listen to the same sound, the brain becomes confused and begins to feel bored, wondering why we should listen to it for such a long time? The human brain wants to analyze why it should be listening to this particular sound, and then after a while begins to explore other possibilities, listen on other levels, and thus start hearing completely other things. At one point in the listening process, we forget the original sonic impression of the sound and are able to disappear elsewhere in it.*

Sound art requires that the listener takes time with the material. Time for the brain to guess correctly; categorize and visualize the sounds you hear. Then take the time to doubt what was guessed and whether it is right or wrong. Then time to give up the process, start over again and guess something completely different again.

Behind all of Tine Surel Lange's works is a burning desire to make people listen to the world. Her opinion is that people do not listen anymore. They are too busy in their everyday life and wish to shut out the noisy world: *I don't think many children today lie underneath a tree and just listen to the complex sound of the wind in the treetops, or the sound of a small stream and all the tones that are actually in such a stream.*

Tine Surel Lange sees a connection between the fact that people forget to listen to the nature and people's general indifference to nature and the environment. When we no longer give ourselves time to listen to nature, we start not caring about it and forget about it. On the other hand, the concert hall is a great place to force people to listen. In that space one listens in a particularly intense way: *the audience start to listen to the sounds themselves. That's why I work a lot with nature, to give people renewed urge to come a little more into nature. Be a little more present.*

Another way Tine Surel Lange makes people listen is working with the visual side of her live concerts. She projects video material inspired by nature onto herself as she performs. In this way she invites the audience directly into her own sonic universe whilst watching her perform and working with the sounds while simultaneously looking at visual material from where the sounds are recorded. The live element is also important because of the unstability of the concert situation. In live performance there is room for spontaneity, inspiration and mistakes that take new directions: *What is exciting about concerts is that something can go wrong. Suddenly a string or the bow falls apart. Suddenly you are distracted by a spider falling onto your arm. The fact that something can go wrong seems to me to be incredibly exciting. Therefore it's really important for me in my electronic music and sound art that it contains a live element that give life to the works. There must be reason for experiencing the works in the concert situation and not at home in front of the speakers.*

I ask Tine Surel Lange whether there is a difference between her electronic music and sound art: *It's a little difficult to answer that question, because what is sound art? It is an incredibly wide artistic area. I feel there is very much sound art in my electronic music and very much electronic music in my sound art. Some of my instrumental works are actually electronic works, where the sound just comes out of the instruments instead of the speakers and vice versa, so it's very fluid. But basically I have more focus on composition in my electronic works. A greater focus on a structure that has to move towards a certain place. However, in my sound art, I do not fully know what or where we are going. There I relate more to the sound itself: what the sound wants and where it wants to move.*

For Tine Surel Lange, the question of what electronic music is and what sound art is, is inherently connected to how she handles her audio material. Whether she deliberately pushes the sounds in a certain direction - in her direction - or if she lets the sounds push her in their own direction - for example, leaving them alone as pure raw sound recordings. One way or another, they can be enjoyed in their own right.

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