

PROGRAM *(Updated 13 November 2021)*

Music as Spectral Infrastructure

13–14 November 2021

Two-day program of discussions, sound works, film screenings, and DJ sets. Devised by Louis Moreno for *freethought* and BAK, basis voor actuele kunst, Utrecht in collaboration with Le Guess Who?

Saturday 13 November 2021, 14.00–18.00 hrs

Day one reflects on the present and historical state of electronic music and how it registers traces and resistances to the drive by states and corporations to structure collective musical and sonic desire.

14.00–14.15 hrs

Introduction

Louis Moreno (member of *freethought* and lecturer in the Department of Visual Cultures, Goldsmiths, University of London, London)

14.15–15.30 hrs

India Tapes (1969–1972)

Paul Purgas (artist and musician)

Presentation and conversation with music

The opening session explores the life and afterlife of early experiments in electronic music produced at the National Institute of Design in the city of Ahmedabad, Western India in the 1960s and 1970s. The presentation and conversation revolves around Paul Purgas's archival research into India's first electronic music studio and how we can think of the studio as a form of spectral infrastructure.

15.30–17.00 hrs

Music for Airports, Playlists, and Other Rent-Seeking Platforms

Paul Rekret (researcher and teacher) and Ollie Zhang (writer, editor, curator and musician)

Presentations and conversation with music excerpts

This session discusses the consumption and production of electronic music today, and how music has become both an ecological system and a new personalized frontier for digital capital. Paul Rekret and Ollie Zhang consider the financial and digital infrastructures that use music as a means to curate and segment collective forms of sonic desire. What kind of spectral infrastructure can resist these systems?

17.00–17.15 hrs

Break

17.15–18.00 hrs

Radical Spectrality: Solstice 93

Laura Grace Ford (artist and writer)

Listening session for a new sound work by Grace Ford

The session features a new sound work by Laura Grace Ford, articulating what Grace Ford calls “social forms of radical spectrality,” which haunts and resists the spatial apparatuses of urban gentrification and policing.

Sunday 14 November 2021, 13.00–18.00 hrs

Day two considers the sound system as a form of spectral infrastructure, and how anti-colonial resistance to racial capitalism was channeled through sound system music such as dub, house, techno, and jungle.

13.00–13.15 hrs

Introduction

Louis Moreno (member of *freethought* and lecturer in the Department of Visual Cultures, Goldsmiths, University of London, London)

13.15–14.30 hrs

Black Audio Film Collective (Reece Auguiste), *Twilight City*, 1989, 60 min.
Film screening

The day begins with a screening of Black Audio Film Collective's 1989 film *Twilight City*, which presents the financial deregulation and spatial restructuring of London in the late 1980s as a global shift in the economies of social domination that began in the colonial plantations of the Caribbean. The film presents a woman's letter to her mother in Dominica, accompanied by interviews with historians, theorists, and journalists that reveal London as a city undergoing a global financial transformation where people live in worlds separated by race, gender, and class. *Twilight City* is a profound meditation on London, exile, queerness, abandonment, and on the racial violence unleashed by the Margaret Thatcher government.

After the film, a set of conversations with Lynnée Denise and Edward George reflects on Black electronic music's extraordinary capacity to articulate an infrastructure of feeling in resistance to the racial and sexual regimes that reproduce capitalism.

14.30–15.15 hrs

Turntable Epistemologies

Lynnée Denise (artist, scholar, writer, and DJ)

Presentation and conversation with music excerpts

In this session, Lynnée Denise discusses her research into sound system culture during the rollout of neoliberalism in the 1980s, focusing on how one can think about sound system culture as a mode of survival for Black queers and migrants under assault from Thatcherism and Reaganism. The conversation reflects on how the contemporary understanding of neoliberalism as a racially and sexually oppressive regime is due to the cultural work of sound system producers and dancers.

15.15–16.00 hrs

The Strangeness of Dub

Edward George (writer and researcher)

Presentation and conversation with music excerpts

Edward George's radio show *The Strangeness of Dub* combines critical theory, social history, a cross-genre musical selection, and live dub mixing to explore dub's dimensions, spaces, and influences. This session focuses on *The Strangeness of Dub* and the themes of the Black Audio Film Collective's film *Twilight City* (1989). George's research articulates how dub is, as George says, a "marginal music and a music of margins, first and most enduringly located on the 'b side'." This conversation revolves around how dub queers our sense of what an infrastructure can do.

16.00–16.15 hrs

Break

16.15–18.00 hrs

Turntable Methodologies and Sound of Music

Listening Sessions

As a culmination of the two-day program, Lynnée Denise and Edward George play tracks and music that manifest the strangeness and wonder of sound system culture.

Turntable Methodologies Listening Session

Lynnée Denise (artist, scholar, writer, and DJ)

Sound of Music Listening Session

Edward George (writer and researcher)

The realization of this program has been made possible with financial support from the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the City of Utrecht.