



AUDITORY VISIONS

Lismore Regional Gallery, 12 September - 24 October 2015

Auditory Visions is an exhibition where sound and vision meet.
visit auditoryvisions.org to listen to the sound works.

above: Jan Davis, *La Laguna, Sant'Alvise III* 2014
sugar lift etching with chine collé, 15 x 20cm
courtesy of the artist



AUDITORY VISIONS

G.W. Bot, Jan Davis, Rona Green

Alexi Keywan, Bruce Latimer,

Travis Paterson & Michael Schlitz

Soundscapes by Jay-Dea Lopez

Curated by Jay-Dea Lopez & Rona Green

above: Michael Schlitz, *Atmosphere I* 2014
woodblock on kozo paper, 69 × 90cm
courtesy of the artist

cover: G.W Bot, *Fallen Glyph I* 2014
linocut on Korean hanji paper, 88 × 62cm
courtesy of the artist and Australian Galleries

*It is rare if ever that we perceive through the attention of one sense only. The senses perform in concert, a 'clump of sensation' rather than distinct, independent and rarefied channels.*¹

Auditory Visions is an exhibition where sound and vision meet. Seven printmakers were asked to create two pieces of work with the knowledge that it would be given an auditory companion composed in response to the literal images or psychological layers in each print. Thus the visual work in *Auditory Visions* was created with the hum of imagined sounds within the artists' minds.

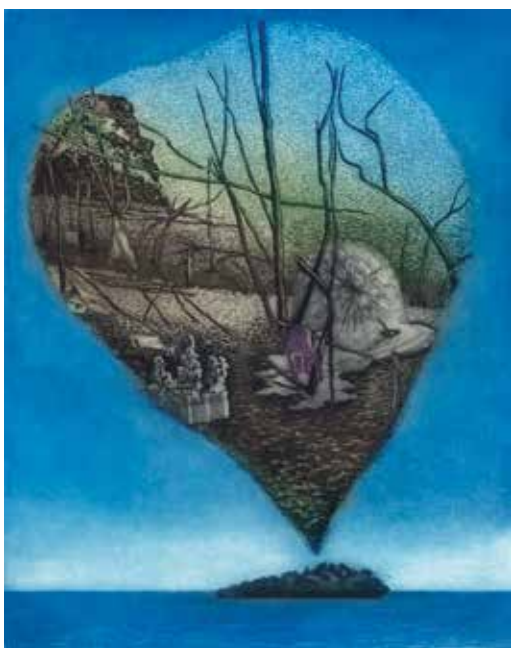
The medium of printmaking was selected for its materiality; its richness and diversity of texture, shades, imagery and substrates, all of which can be found in the elements of sound. By combining these visual elements with sound the viewers are presented with an additional way of experiencing the prints, thereby enriching the engagement with the works.

The artists included in the exhibition were selected based on components within their work that corresponded with my own interests as a field recordist and sound designer. Themes of environmental concern, mortality, memory, urban and imagined

spaces were common areas of exploration. And so it was that G.W. Bot, Jan Davis, Rona Green, Alexi Keywan, Bruce Latimer, Travis Paterson, Michael Schlitz became the seven visual artists to contribute work for *Auditory Visions*.

I had been eager to add sound to Bruce Latimer's work for some time. His prints, with dreamlike combinations of human artefacts placed in incongruous settings, are filled with sonic possibilities. *Wetsuit* and *The Coral Sea* were produced after a sailing trip around the islands off New Caledonia. Both works merge images of real objects into newly imagined contexts allowing me to create soundscapes combining marine-based field recordings with heavily synthesised wavering tones. My intention was to create the sounds of the subconscious floating beyond Latimer's vivid etchings.

Moving from the tropical blue of Latimer's work Jan Davis presents a view of water from a different part of the world - Venice. In 2014 Davis spent time observing the way in which light reflected from the ripples of the Venetian lagoon. While in Venice she completed *Sant'Alvise III* and *Sant'Alvise IV* for *Auditory Visions*. Rather than interpret the prints with a literal soundscape I took a different approach. For



above: Bruce Latimer, *Wetsuit* 2014
etching, 44.5 × 35cm
courtesy of the artist and Australian Galleries

above right: Alexi Keywan, *Ascension III* 2015
drypoint etching and pinhole perforations, 98 × 58cm
courtesy of the artist and Australian Galleries



Sant'Alvise III I imagined the life that exists outside its frame. Thus the sound of church bells and musicians from a Venetian conservatorium blend with the sound of water lapping against the hull of a gondola, none of which are present in the print. In *Sant'Alvise IV* the listener is pulled under water through a series of hydrophonic recordings taken from beneath the lagoon's surface. Here the dominant sounds of ferries mirror the boat-like shape of the print. The inclusion of sound from beyond the frame hints at the life that depends upon these waters.

Living in his Tasmanian bushland home Michael Schlitz is closer to nature than most. As a result Schlitz's work depicts abstracted trees, landscapes and representations of the elements. His *Atmosphere* series continues this practice with *Atmosphere I* and *Atmosphere II* illustrating different patterns of weather that envelope and affect us. Schlitz's striking woodblock prints are at once alien yet recognisable. Fine black lines cut through the air in a tempestuous yet balanced manner. For *Atmosphere I* I have used highly processed sounds of water and wind to portray the upward movement of water as it evaporates. Caught inside the rising molecules are faint radio signals from earth. A field recording of gravel-sized snow dropping on fallen dried leaves makes up part of

the composition for *Atmosphere II*. Both soundscapes position the viewer high in the atmosphere in a place of solitude or isolation.

The work of Alexi Keywan can be identified through her etched silhouettes of quotidian urban scenes. This is shown to a powerful effect in her *Ascension* series. In *Ascension II* and *Ascension III* towers rise above the horizon dominating the landscape. Pinholes mark the paper, almost signifying the perimeter of the towers' sonic territory. For these works I wanted to adjust the viewer's sense of perspective. For *Ascension III* layered field recordings of cables vibrating in the wind pull the viewer's attention upward. In contrast, recordings of electrical activity draw the viewer's attention down upon the township overseen by the tower in *Ascension II*. The use of field recordings in these works illustrates the life that exists within these seemingly static objects.

Rona Green is well known for her hand coloured linocuts of hybrid figures. *Shitehawk* and *Dirck 'Foo Foo' De Cock* exemplify her interest in the hyper-masculinised world of men living on society's edge. In these portraits both figures are about to engage in a street fight where there can be only one winner. Green's figures require extreme sounds to amplify



above: Travis Paterson, *Lacrimosa* 2015
lambda print, 92 × 90cm
courtesy of the artist



above right: Rona Green, *Shitehawk* 2015
hand coloured linocut, 76 × 57cm
courtesy of the artist and Australian Galleries

the narrative told in two parts; before and after the fight. Recordings of a chaotic urban world merge with processed sounds to represent this gritty drama.

G.W. Bot is an artist who has created her own language of visual signifiers through what she terms “glyphs”. These mark the movement of life upon the landscape, most predominantly represented through the gnarled silhouettes of trees. The development of Bot’s glyphs can be seen in *Threnody* (1993) and *Fallen Glyph I* (2014). *Threnody*, a song of mourning, looks down upon a snowy landscape where stark trees break through a white surface. Named, in part, as a tribute to Peter Sculthorpe’s composition of the same title, the dominant sound for this work is a cello progressing in slow harmonic intervals. My aim was to acknowledge the musical connection identified by Bot whilst capturing the steady mood of her print.

Almost two decades later Bot’s evolution as an artist can be seen in *Fallen Glyph I*. The stillness of this work with its quiet blue moon and lone figures needed to be reflected in its auditory counterpart. Therefore this tightly balanced scene was harmonised with only recordings of insects and a slight wind.

Travis Paterson is an artist whose work often explores

queer identities and histories. The Lambda prints, *Lacrimosa* and *Drawn*, are comprised of large scans of Polaroid originals. *Lacrimosa*, Latin for weeping as well as a mass for the repose of the souls, shows a partial view of a skull seeming to weep a single tear. It is accompanied by the sound of a pipe organ slowly moving in tonal intervals, referencing its connection to the Roman Catholic Requiem. In contrast to *Lacrimosa*’s sense of grief, *Drawn* presents an erotic and highly charged depiction of sexual desire. Using Polaroids to translate found imagery Paterson has created two ambiguous portraits that speak of loss and longing. In each work a needle reaches the end of a record, its rhythmic beat signals finality.

In *Auditory Visions* sight is focused by sound. Here the inclusion of sound adds a further layer to the ink on the artists’ paper, drawing an additional line of accessibility between the viewer and the prints. Listen as the images unveil themselves to the ear.

1 Sebastiane Hegarty, (2007). Aftersight: let’s hear what we can see. In *Optical Sound Films 1971-2007*: Guy Sherwin. LUX, London.

Essay by Jay-Dea Lopez, field-recordist and artist



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