

Essay on “Dunrobin Sonic Gems,  
Deep Listening 25th Anniversary Concert, A Live  
Recording Simulating the Cistern Acoustics”

By: James Perley

*“I sit quietly with my alarm clock, close my eyes and open my ears. At this point the curtain rises and the performance begins.” - Pauline Oliveros<sup>1</sup>*

As I fly across the United States again, I am writing and parsing through my research regarding Pauline Oliveros and the Deep Listening Band. While I write I am listening to Johannes Welsch's latest mix of the newly titled "Dunrobin Sonic Gems, Deep Listening 25th Anniversary Concert, A Live Recording Simulating the Cistern Acoustics." I am logged into the airplane's wifi and I am receiving all email correspondence between the musicians who performed at the Dunrobin Sonic Gym October 5, 2013. The correspondence pertains to the assemblage of the "Dunrobin Sonic Gems" CD release. I feel extraordinarily fortunate to not only have had the opportunity to document and archive this event, but to also be included in the breadth of ideas in producing and manufacturing its CD release. In these emails Pauline Oliveros and Stuart Dempster are piecing together names and track titles for the different sections of the performance. Johannes Welsch is explaining his mixing techniques and the audio plugins he used on the recording. Stuart is offering editing suggestions for Johannes while Jonas Braasch is giving further advice to accurately represent the cistern simulation on the recording without overly modifying the performance. Jesse Stewart contributes by bringing attention to the band of another performance and

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<sup>1</sup> Pauline Oliveros, *Software for People: Collected Writings 1963-80* (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 1984).

residency opportunity next year at NUMUS<sup>2</sup> in Waterloo Ontario for its 30th anniversary. Jesse concludes his email, "It was truly an honor to work with you all on this!" I feel Jesse's assertion encapsulates my own lasting impression of the performance at the Dunrobin Sonic Gym. Ione opened the evening with a powerful and eloquent invocation that reinforces my impression; she began the invocation with, "It is, indeed, auspicious that we are here together this evening." As I revel in the memories of the performance at the Dunrobin Sonic Gym that night, I also feel that it is "auspicious" for myself to be a part of the correlation that processes these ideas; I feel as though I am part of an elegant machine that produces and archives these historical performances. I have to admit that I started this particular email dialog. I have been working on the video footage for about two months and showed my first draft to the band in November. Making final editing decisions and coming close to finishing the video, I wanted to make sure I had the right production aesthetic they were looking for, appropriate credits, the correct spelling of names and instruments, and most importantly, the title for the performance, which had not yet been determined.

The inspiration to attend the Dunrobin Sonic Gym performance arose the minute I met Pauline Oliveros. Although this first meeting was during a class Skype conference in a room full of eighteen other graduate music students in the ensemble room of the Mills College Music Building. Pauline was genuinely focused and connected with the group, a lucidity I did not expect communicating through a web video conference. At the beginning of my first semester in the Mills graduate music program and prior to the

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<sup>2</sup> "NUMUS was founded in 1985 by composer Peter Hatch and based in Waterloo, Ontario, NUMUS is one of Canada's foremost new music organizations, renowned for its electrifying contemporary programming and high standards of artistry." Excerpted from <http://numus.on.ca/about/>

video conference with Pauline, I had been investigating the cistern simulation, a Max/MSP software patch created by Jonas Braasch, an acoustician, musicologist, and sound artist who has worked extensively with Pauline while also teaching courses in acoustics, music, and the Doctoral Seminar at the School of Architecture at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.<sup>3</sup> I had learned that Jonas' Max patch was first employed in a concert at EMPAC<sup>4</sup> for Pauline's 80th birthday May 10, 2012.<sup>5</sup> However, Prior to the concert at EMPAC, Deep Listening had completed two residencies which initiated the idea to develop a more elaborate simulation of the original 1988 cistern recording titled "Deep Listening."<sup>6</sup> In January of 2011, Deep Listening completed a residency and concert at the Town Hall in Seattle Washington, later titled, "Great Howl at Town Haul".<sup>7</sup> This performance would be the last time the band would perform with David Gamper who passed away later in 2011. In October of 2011 the band had performed a second series of concerts at Lawrence University in memory of David Gamper.<sup>8</sup> While reading recent histories of the Deep Listening Band, I couldn't help but question if the band would be visiting the West Coast; maybe a performance at Mills College, UC Berkeley, or UC San Diego? While scrolling through the Deep Listening Band website looking to see what they might be planning in the coming months, I read, "Tuesday, October 1,

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<sup>3</sup> Jonas Braasch, Ph.D., D.Eng. Associate Professor, School of Architecture, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, NY. <http://symphony.arch.rpi.edu/~braasj/>

<sup>4</sup> EMPAC — The Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center <http://empac.rpi.edu/>

<sup>5</sup> "Oliveros at 80" <http://empac.rpi.edu/events/2012/spring/oliveros-80>

<sup>6</sup> Pauline Oliveros, Stuart Dempster, Panaoitis, "Deep Listening" 1989

<sup>7</sup> Deep Listening: Concert at Town Hall in Seattle, WA, January 15, 2011. Commercial CD release titled "Great Howl at Town Haul" <http://importantrecords.com/imprec/imprec359>

<sup>8</sup> Deep Listening Band in Concert, Lawrence University, Appleton WI October 27-29, 2011 [https://www.lawrence.edu/conservatory/performance\\_series/new\\_music/past\\_series/node/6655](https://www.lawrence.edu/conservatory/performance_series/new_music/past_series/node/6655)

2013 (All day) - Sunday, October 6, 2013 (All day) — Deep Listening Band Residency & Concert with Jesse Stewart, Pauline Oliveros, Stuart Dempster, Jonas Braasch, Ione and Johannes Welsch. Concert will be streamed live url TBA<sup>9</sup> I thought that streaming the concert was a great idea, however, for me, this would not be enough to capture the experience. I felt in order to fully capture the performance I had to listen and experience it in person. At this point I had not intended to fly to Canada and attend the Dunrobin concert, but after speaking with Pauline I was instantly inspired to make the trip. During that first video conference, Pauline had asked the class if they had any questions regarding unconventional venue spaces, questions about her venue experiences, and ideas that might inspire and influence our own compositions and venue choices. I immediately inquired about the Dunrobin performance, the cistern simulation, and what they had planned for the residency in October. She enthusiastically replied, "Stick around after class and let's discuss it, it's really going to be something!" — And it most certainly was!

The Dunrobin Sonic Gym is located thirty minutes west of Ottawa in Ontario, Canada. When I landed in Ottawa, I was without cellphone service outside of the United States. However, I connected to the airport wifi and downloaded the directions to Dunrobin. Driving down numerous desolate roads and winding through cornfields and prairies, I found myself in a quaint neighborhood against a vast area of trees. It was then I saw Johannes' gong I was told to look for upon arrival. I pulled down a road that was not paved or graveled, simply two ruts serpentining through tall trees that led to a rod iron gate. Johannes was the first to welcome me. He opened the gate and pointed

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<sup>9</sup> Excerpted from Deep Listening Institute Past Events, <http://deeplisting.org/site/archive>

to where I should park my car. He was naturally friendly and offered to help carry in all the equipment I had lugged through customs earlier that day. Johannes lifted one of my bags and said, “Wow! What all did you bring with you?”

With me I had two Canon 5D Mark II DSLR cameras, one with an ultra wide angled 16 - 35 mm lens which would capture 114 degrees of the space. The second Canon was equipped with a 28 - 75 mm lens. For capturing audio I used a Zoom H4n portable recording device connected to two AKG C451 B condenser microphones. I also carried various XLR cables, power strips, electrical cords, headphones, patch cables, various tripods, boom microphone stands, and my laptop. I have found in the past that traveling with this type of equipment is a complicated process when passing through airport security. I am usually pulled aside to be questioned by the TSA about the gear I am carrying. I spoke to Pauline about this while preparing for the trip. She had advised me to put together an international carnet, a document stating that I was a graduate student doing research, and the reason for my visit to Canada was not for commercial purposes. This carnet included a list of equipment with serial numbers, retail costs, signature and date. To arrive in Dunrobin I flew from San Francisco to Chicago, then from Chicago to Toronto, where I entered Canada. I then flew from Toronto to Ottawa, rented a car in Ottawa and drove to Dunrobin. I prepared myself to be asked frequently about the equipment and with a bit of “Murphy’s law,” I was not asked a single time.

When I first entered the Dunrobin Sonic Gym, it was clear to me, as Pauline had foreshadowed, that this was, without question, “going to be something!” I did not realize that the Dunrobin Sonic Gym was not only a public venue and but also a home and athletic facility owned and maintained by Johannes Welsch and his wife Tina. Entering

the north end of the building through the garage, we walked through a small utility room that connected us to the north access of the gym. I put my equipment aside and Johannes gave me a tour of the building. Starting on the ground floor there was the gym, an entrance lobby area, a recording studio, a library, aka “the reading cocoon,” a conference space, kitchen and juice bar. The second story was a dedicated living space that also gave access to a balcony overlooking the south wall of the gym. The balcony ran directly above the left side of the stage and down the south wall to the back of the gym, where I set up most of my documentation equipment. Recording the concert from the balcony allowed me to capture the performance at an angle not entirely realistic of how the audience would experience the performance but felt it would be an abstract and unusual perspective to document the performance. I believe that Deep Listening welcomes, if not encourages, stretching the imagination when it comes to their projects and performances, and the documentation would view just that. The Sonic Gym was quite large, constructed mostly of wood, including the wall panelling and ceiling. On the west wall of the gym, where the stage was placed, there was a large upside-down triangular window arranged in squares. When I first entered, the autumn sun pierced through the fall foliage penetrating the window and stage which reflected light off the floor and refracted throughout the gym. Even though the performance took place after sundown, the window added a visual and conceptual element to the performance, a connection to the nature outdoors linking the Deep Listening Band performing indoors. Through various retreats that Pauline Oliveros has facilitated, nature has played an important role. On the Deep Listening website it states, “The practice includes bodywork, sonic meditations, interactive performance, listening to the sounds of daily

life, nature, one's own thoughts, imagination and dreams, and listening to listening itself."<sup>10</sup> I felt implementing the role of 'nature' during the Dunrobin performance was ideal and celebrated the essence of Deep Listening's mission.

After setting up my audio and video equipment, I took a walk down to the main floor of the gym to snap some photos and capture a video walkthrough of the stage, soundboard, and audience area. When viewing the stage area it was clear to me where each musician would be placed. Beginning on stage right was Jonas Braasch's chair with his soprano saxophone placed on the side. To the left of Jonas was Pauline Oliveros' setup which included her V accordion, conch shells, rocks, smaller instruments, and her Expanded Instrument System (EIS) which were all placed strategically on the floor around her chair. To the left of her laid Stuart Dempster's setup consisting of a trombone, didjeridu, conch shell and other small instruments. On stage left was Jesse Stuart's complex and unique percussion setup. Behind the four setups and spread out against the entire back wall of the stage laid Johannes Welsch's extensive gong setup including three enormous gongs in the center, "The Great Moon Gong" placed directly upstage.<sup>11</sup> Live sound engineer Jeff Pratt's soundboard was placed in the center of the gym connected to the Max/MSP cistern simulation. It is stated on the XSEAD website that the cistern simulation "consists of four channels of audio to create a diffused sound field, if these channels were distributed over 32 loudspeakers."<sup>12</sup> For the setup at the Dunrobin performance there were eight standing

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<sup>10</sup> Excerpted from "Mission Statement: So What is Deep Listening?" <http://deeplisting.org/site/content/about>

<sup>11</sup> "Percussionist Johannes Welsch Playing The Great Moon Gong" Photos courtesy of Ken Walker, Jim Des Rivieres, Gordon King and Rick Lecuyer. <https://sites.google.com/site/dunrobinsonicgym/impressions>

<sup>12</sup> Excerpted from "Simulation Software in Max/MSP" <http://xsead.cmu.edu/works/63>

loudspeakers on the floor of the gym that were turned completely backwards facing the walls. I noticed this immediately when I entered the gym and inquired Johannes about the positions of the speakers. He explained that to simulate the cistern the walls had to be recreated. Jonas Braasch's Max/MSP patch is acoustically accurate and the only way to simulate the cistern is to diffuse the sound by facing the loudspeakers toward the walls of the gym. The Max/MSP patch is so accurate that it is also programmed to compensate for the sound absorption of the audience.<sup>13</sup> Mentioned earlier, I had noticed that the gym was primarily constructed of wood. I recently had an email dialog with Johannes about this and if that was something he considered when assembling the twenty-two piece gong setup. He responded with a short essay he wrote on the Drum Solo Artist's website. In this essay he wrote, "When preparing a performance I give great attention to the chamber because it becomes part of the instrument. The gong itself is like a string of an acoustic guitar — and just like the string needs the wooden body to amplify its vibration, the gong needs an impressive sounding chamber."<sup>14</sup> After reading this essay, it was clear to me that the Dunrobin Sonic Gym was constructed strategically and this, perhaps, was another interest Pauline had considered when investigating a venue for the 25th anniversary performance.<sup>15</sup>

During the months editing the video footage, there was little communication with myself and the band except with Pauline. While working on my first draft of the video documentation, I asked Pauline if she would agree to do an interview with me via

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<sup>13</sup> Press Release and Cistern Simulation explanation for the performance at the Dunrobin Sonic Gym <https://sites.google.com/site/dunrobinsonicgym/deep-listening-band>

<sup>14</sup> Johannes Welsh's essay "Cymbal Setup of the Year!" <http://www.drumsoloartist.com/cgi-bin/news/news.pl?record=38>

<sup>15</sup> "Dunrobin Sonic Gym Walkthrough" shot by James Perley. <https://vimeo.com/81897163>

Skype. I wanted to ask her questions about her interests in the Dunrobin Sonic Gym, the residency that took place that week, the participating members, and what inspired them to do the concert in Dunrobin. Additionally we discussed Deep Listening's future projects, book launches, which then naturally ensued into discussions regarding unusual venue spaces, the Expanded Instrument System (EIS), and opportunities for myself to assist and work with the Deep Listening Band. During the interview, I started to experience the same sentiment I experienced while reading, *Sounding the Margins*<sup>16</sup>, and *Anthologies and Essays on Deep Listening*.<sup>17</sup> *Sounding the Margins*, written by Pauline Oliveros and *Anthologies and Essays* written by contributing members and participants of Deep Listening over the years, both texts exemplify Pauline Oliveros' unique personality, humor, and her "deep" understanding of "listening." While reading through these texts I also felt what it means to be close with these members and the participants of Deep Listening. I wasn't exactly certain what I'd experience in person, even so, I was sure I would experience something dynamically aural and authentic. While reading and unpacking both texts I was drawn to a kindred sentiment that there are various parallels between Pauline Oliveros and myself. I feel as though we have many similarities in the way we compose as artists and listen as human beings. However, we come from different worlds and from different times, but our paths and destinations are not so vast.

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<sup>16</sup> Pauline Oliveros, *Sounding the Margins: Collected Writings 1992-2009* (Kingston, NY: Deep Listening Publications, 2011).

<sup>17</sup> Edited by Monique Buzzarté and Tom Bickley, *Anthology of Essays on Deep Listening* (Kingston, NY: Deep Listening Publications, 2012).

My interview with Pauline was primarily drafted to examine her relationships with the participating members of the Dunrobin performance. I wanted to assess the mood between them, how the recordings during the week residency reflected the final concert on October 5, and how some of the texts I have been reading mirror the modern practices of Deep Listening. The first question I asked Pauline was what prompted the band to do the 25th Anniversary Recording of the Deep Listening Band at the Dunrobin Sonic Gym. She replied, "I had been to Dunrobin before and did a recording with Jesse Stewart, 'The Dunrobin Session.'<sup>18</sup> I was really fascinated with the gym, I thought it was really beautiful, especially the gongs. We didn't use the gongs on the 'The Dunrobin Session,' we used Jesse's percussion instead. I enjoyed working with Jesse. So it turned out Jesse also worked a lot with Johannes Welsch at the Dunrobin Sonic Gym, which he has done many sessions with Jesse. When doing the recordings at Dunrobin it occurred to us that October 8, 2013 marked the 25th anniversary of Deep Listening Band cistern recording. Johannes offered us to have the anniversary performance at the Dunrobin Sonic Gym. I was excited and felt that Stuart Dempster would have a great time collaborating with Johannes with the gongs. And then it turned out that Jesse would join us as a guest artist with Johannes as well. Jesse Stewart, Johannes and Jonas Brassch were guest artists with the Deep Listening Band and we were able to utilize Jonas's cistern simulation in the gym, which as you know, was pretty amazing!"<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Pauline Oliveros and Jesse Stewart, "The Dunrobin Session" Recorded March 16, 2011 by Johannes Welsch at the Dunrobin Sonic Gym, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada"  
<http://www.deeplistening.org/site/content/dunrobin-session-pauline-oliveros-jesse-stewart>

<sup>19</sup> "Interview with Pauline Oliveros by James Perley 11.10.2013" Page 1

My interview with Pauline segued into another question regarding her mediation practices during a performance referencing one of her Text Scores from the *Anthology of Text Scores* publication. On page 47 it reads, “New Sonic Mediation - During a time, have a randomized cue (or cue synched with a slowly reoccurring biorhythm). Meditators respond with sound on cue.”<sup>20</sup> I asked, “Comparing ‘New Sonic Mediation’ written in 1977, with the original *Sonic Mediations*<sup>21</sup> of 1970, is this one that you may be practicing while performing?” Pauline’s response, once again, drew another parallel between us pertaining to how we both experience “listening” while composing and performing. She replied, “All of the practices I've participated in and that I have facilitated, I’ve gone into as a composer, a performer and an improviser. I make distinctions between each of those roles. So when I'm playing I'm not particularly focusing on a mediation that I have written. Although I could be if we decided to do that. But as I say, I'm doing Deep Listening practice when I perform, which is expanding my global attention as far as I can while also focusing on the sound I'm making. My attention is fully loaded. What that means is that I'm not thinking about something else, something I might be concerned about, something I want to do later, those kinds of distractions are not there. What I sometimes like to focus on is the transmission of energy through my hands as I'm playing. I think there is a difference when you are transmitting energy and when you are not.”<sup>22</sup> During the Dunrobin performance, I exercised and practiced the “New Sonic Medication” even without having influence by

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<sup>20</sup> Pauline Oliveros, *Anthology of Text Scores* (Kingston, NY: Deep Listening Publications, 2013).

<sup>21</sup> Pauline Oliveros, *Sonic Mediations* (the University of Michigan: Smith Publications, 1974).

<sup>22</sup> “Interview with Pauline Oliveros by James Perley 11.10.2013” Page 4

reading the Text Score at this point. It only seemed natural for me to participate with the sounds through my body and to discover new resonances within it. Even though I was not a participating musician on stage, I was having experiences with the sounds that were coming from the performance. This idea and practice was first influenced by Johannes Welsch. When I first arrived at the Sonic Gym and started setting up my recording equipment, Johannes welcomed me to the venue by striking a large gong which was not connected to the cistern simulation. The gong had its own natural and extensive decay reverberation. The striking of the gong was primarily done so I could check audio levels on my equipment, but something aural and hypnotic also sonically occurred inside of my mind and my body. At this point I had not yet read “New Sonic Mediation.” However, I was surprised later when I did read the Text Score, realizing that I was practicing the very same mediation throughout the performance.

During the last couple of months editing the video footage of the performance and analyzing every move each musician made, I began to notice that each member seemed to be practicing a variation of “Telepathic Improvisation.”<sup>23</sup> Pauline and I had a brief discussion on the topic, which she had playfully chuckled at. Nonetheless, I realized that it is, indeed, for real! Visual eye contact is usually a practice musicians use while improvising, a signal to cue a change or signal when a solo is to begin. However, eye contact is not usually observed with Deep Listening. It is fundamentally focused on listening and improvising with the sounds the others are making, instead of visualizing physical movements. William Osborne unpacks his own theory of “telepathic transmission.” He states, “Deep Listening attempts to create, expand, and deepen new

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<sup>23</sup> Martha Mockus writes on “Telepathic Improvisation” on Page 43 and 44: *Sounding Out: Pauline Oliveros and Lesbian Musicality* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008).

or overlooked modes of awareness. This ideal is illustrated in 'Sonic Meditation III' which experiments with forms of 'telepathic transmission.'"<sup>24</sup> This "telepathic" ideology refers to another point Pauline addressed when first introducing Johannes to the practices of Deep Listening and how it is accomplished. She explains an encounter with Johannes during the residency recordings; "Johannes had his rain drum and said he had a composition idea. So he does it and it just doesn't work. The thing was he had a plan he wanted to carry out and what that meant to me was that he was not really listening to what was going on because he was trying to follow some plan. It was very interesting to see Johannes gradually come to that understanding that he really had to just listen. I think he played quite brilliantly when it came to performing at the concert."<sup>25</sup>

On my flight to Ottawa I had begun reading *Anthology of Essays of Deep Listening*, and found myself absorbed in Stuart Dempster's essay. Stuart, undoubtedly, has a way of storytelling. He captivates the core of sound imagination in his narrative rather than triggering visual imagination. He wrote about how his 'deep listening' practices began as early as the age of five and throughout his years of composing and performing he reaches back to memories of childhood and reconnects to his primary practices of listening. He recalls, even at such an early age, musical theories such as partials and harmonics were not a particular interests of his, he was more interested and aware of unnoticed sounds. He writes, "Our house itself was especially creative in sounds it presented, such as creaking during change of season or windstorms, and

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<sup>24</sup> William Osborne, "The Development of New Modes of Awareness" *Sounding the Abyss of Otherness, Pauline Oliveros' Deep Listening and The Sonic Mediations*, Published as Chapter 3 in *Women Making Art* (New York: Lang, 2000) Pages 65-86. <http://www.osborne-conant.org/oliveros.htm>

<sup>25</sup> "Interview with Pauline Oliveros by James Perley 11.10.2013" Page 3

peculiar traveling sound waves and attendant wobbles that would come during regular, smaller earthquakes from the nearby Hayward Fault. Our backyard hummed with bees and insects and, if I should eat my lunch outside, distant train whistles could be heard from several miles away traveling along the East Bay shoreline. At that time Arlington Avenue traffic was minimal enough that one could easily ‘hear through’ it”.<sup>26</sup> Stuarts fundamental listening practices can be observed while watching him perform. For example, during the third section of the Dunrobin performance titled, “Amethyst,” Pauline and Stuart invoked and initiated a “roar,” as I call it, that was eventually chimed in by the rest of the band. This particular distinguishable “roar” can be heard in previous Deep Listening recordings. During the Dunrobin performance, Stuart Dempster was playing the didjeridu and Pauline was using the Expanded Instrument System performing with vocal choir sounds. Stuart started the “roar” by playing the didjeridu at a volume that resonated the entire gym. The sounds they were making together were then combined with Johannes’ gong sounds by dragging soft mallets across them. Jonas then added long breathed notes of the soprano saxophone, which then led Jesse to provide the right amount of rigorous percussion that made the whole group howl. It was at this point of the performance that I experienced a heightened awareness resembling the “New Sonic Mediation.” I found myself captivated by what was occurring on stage. Similar to the sounds observed on “Deep Howl at Town Haul”, a resonant

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<sup>26</sup> Stuart Dempster’s Essay, “Training for Listening: A Lifelong Practice” Pages 13-27, *Anthology of Essays on Deep Listening* (Kingston NY: Deep Listening Publications, 2012)

occurrence permeated the gym that I felt was influenced and directed by the synergy between Pauline and Stuart.<sup>27</sup>

The experience of being present at the Dunrobin Sonic Gym on October 5, 2013 will be never be superseded in my lifetime. After the performance concluded I had started to pack my equipment with the idea to head back to my hotel in Ottawa. During this time the band remained on stage and welcomed all to come up and visit. After I was finished collecting all of the documentation and putting my equipment aside, I was invited to join the band in the lobby area for conversation and tea. Pauline had introduced me to the members of the performance. Ione's choice word "Auspicious" came to mind again when I shook the hands of the members I had learned so much about during this journey through time with Deep Listening. It felt that it was fortuitous to be with them on the 25th Anniversary of the original Deep Listening cistern recording. While drinking tea and meeting with the band, many conversations emerged. Stuart and I, both of us having spent time in Chicago, reminisced about various train sounds we observed on the South side. Ione had shared information regarding her new book *Spell Breaking; Remembered Ways of Being- An Anthology of Women's Mysteries*,<sup>28</sup> a book of eighteen essays about breaking spells and ways of being. Pauline has also contributed an essay in this text discussed its launch later in November. Further in the conversations around the table I had congratulated Jesse Stewart and Jonas Braasch on their remarkable performances and shared conversations about current projects we

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<sup>27</sup> "Amethyst", "Dunrobin Sonic Gems, Deep Listening 25th Anniversary Concert, A Live Recording Simulating the Cistern Acoustics" Documentation by James Perley, <https://vimeo.com/79817489>

<sup>28</sup> Carole Ione, *Spell Breaking: Remembered Ways of Being* (Kingston, NY, Deep Listening Publications, 2013)

were all working on. Johannes came over to thank me for flying out and documenting the event and to make sure we stayed in touch while he edited the audio recording as I edited the video documentation. It was difficult for me to part with the group, but it was time for me to head back to Ottawa.

On my drive back to the hotel, I played the original “Deep Listening” compilation in the car. “Lear,” the first track on the compilation, saw me through the dark desolate roads that winded me back to the freeway to Ottawa. It was at this time I had realized that something inside me had altered, artistically, sonically, and consciously. Even after only having three hours of sleep the night before, I was “awake.” With the car window cracked open, I could sense the autumn night air; the rising fog on the ground danced with the thin smoke of burning leaves in the prairies. My senses were alive and focused, my attention was, as Pauline eloquently put it, “fully loaded.” The road back to the freeway seemed to have changed, almost as if my internal compass had completely reversed. This internal shift often occurs when I cross a particular threshold during an experience uncovering new layers. This time uncovering new layers of Deep Listening; the ideas of Deep Listening as a concept and as a band of members had shifted my consciousness to a new and unusual place, yet it felt familiar. “Lear,” a track I had listened to many times before, even sounded differently to me, a new born resonance resembling a familiar sound I had never actually heard before. For me, Deep Listening is not just about what we hear and imagine in our minds and experience in our bodies; it is also about balancing the present with memory through a channel of sound, a reverberation and resonance that is internal as well as external. There is a dynamism and energy in these sounds, a history marking the many miles traveled by Pauline

Oliveros and her ever-evolving sonic concoctions. I find it difficult to extrapolate the multitude of complex and conceptual ideologies of Deep Listening, what unfolds in the future is within the “alarm clock” that Pauline sits quietly with... awaiting the rise of another curtain.

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