

Underwater Soundscape

UYGUR VURAL



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Abstract

This project aims at contemplating the concept of Underwater Acoustic ecology which is being my long term artistic research and creation process. It is including awareness of underwater soundscape and noise pollution, historical research and story telling, creative use of any underwater Audio/Visual materials such as creating musical pieces, exhibitions, and several awareness activities.

Keywords

Underwater Acoustic Ecology, Underwater soundscape. Underwater noise pollution, city Soundscape, History and Story, Hydrophone, Nature, Underwater sound recording, Storytelling

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Motivation/Motivation

I have several motivations to start this project;

Personal

I have worked with many mediums such as advanced and traditional musical performance techniques (extended techniques on violoncello), as a performer, sound artist and video creator: I continue to refine my technique and find new ways to capture the beauty around us. I created artistic projects with sound and music. Now it is time to move my artistic research to the new stage, under the water.

Hydrofon's have opened a new area for sound artists. Many sound designers are using underwater sounds recordings for their sound effects and audio designs. I believe that underwater soundscape has a good potential for artistic concept development research. In this project I am to focus on this area.

Environmental

As an artist, I strive to include enough themes about the environment and activism



in all my projects. That's why environmental awareness of underwater sound pollution is my another motivation in this concept. I am excited to work more with hydrophone and willing to listen to underwater sounds carefully like we do the same in above and discover a new aural perspective.

Storytelling

The underwater environment hides stories through sound waves: it is as if underwater vibrations do not disappear and are immortalised by constantly echoing somewhere. It is like thinking that when one enters a room for the first time whose door has not been opened for 200 years, the last conversations in that room are still echoing

on the walls. It is in this perspective that the project also carries with it an historical, symbolic, evocative and anthropological level and aiming to become a story teller.

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Introduction

Potential of Underwater Sound Ecology

Since Humankind left to sea with Tiktaalik's first arrivals to the land life 375 million years ago, we adapt to listen only above soundscape and forgetting to underwater secret and surprising soundscape.

Now, human being has still limited information about under sea life. Development of underwater sonic and video recording technology is helping us to discover the marine life more. It guide us to understand how sea animals communicating, underwater acoustic ecology secrets and help us to analyse many other research parameters.

Cities

In modern human story, All cities are building near or around water source. So all big cities has relation with a water. In this project I intend to carry out in different cities around the world which have deep connection with water (through sea, rivers, lakes) such as Istanbul, Lisbon, Venezia and beyond Europe... and discover/listen/record their underwater sonic environments. In the mean while i will research water related stories and combining them with sound recordings to create several artistic artworks, using them in my compositions and live performances on the stage with my instrument (Cello).

What does "deep listening" means?

Deep listening of underwater is, mapping and describing the underwater acoustic ecology, researching differences and characters of city soundscapes and the most important one, using and exhibiting them in my artistic activities. Also I will create using my underwater listening, recording and processing skills in the process of creating project related to underwater realities and stories.



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Concept Development

After along soundscape research and creation, now want to focus on underwater sounds as a source material for my musical creation and performances.

While I was making this research, I even came across some academic works about how human being increasing undersea noise pollution by sea traffic and industrial activities in the ocean, it affects many marine species and their ecosystem negatively.

In other words, with industrial development, we are causing sound pollution under the water same as on the land. And this cause serious ecological problems in marine life such as deafness of fish, inability of whales to communicate with each other, and permanent, extraordinary migration.

Time to take action as an artist to helping to create awareness about under water acoustic ecology effect of underwater noise pollution which cause by human activities.

What will I do?

I will listen/record underwater with specially designed, sensitive underwater microphones (Hydrofone). Hydrophones can go really deep in the water. Recording will be with hi-res formats (32-bit float) so it will be sensitive for low and deff for high volumes. I would like to develop various projects with the materials I will collect and display them in various mediums:

- making **Live Electro Acoustic performances** or recordings with my main instrument cello and Underwater sounds,
- creating short or medium-length **artistic documentary films**, and social media feeds,
- writing a **blog** or using a digital platform where I can share daily listening analysis and regular reports,
- producing **installations in exhibition** format using artificial intelligence visualisations
- developing **Underwater Sound walks** for the public contribution
- possible collaborations with other artists and organisations.. For instance, one of my sound installations will be “deep underwater in Pitch darknes”. I want to present this experience in a pitch-dark environment. Because of pitch darkness, the removal of vision enhances the other senses and increases listening pleasure. Nowadays this technique uses in restaurants for a better gastronomic experience. In this project, I would like to collaborate with dark dining venues in the cities I work.

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Medium

At the first step, I will use all these materials to create some art works.

Recorded sounds will be used as a sound material for my audio collage to create an artificial soundscape or composing electronic pieces and perform them digitally or live on the stage alone or with other artists.

In the exhibition set up, there are several different installation ideas, such as;

Submarine Fanus

With a radius of 1 meter, and a height of 60 cm, cylindrical personal experience sheet metal platforms will be suspended from the ceiling. The platforms will be sounded with the help of resonance speakers to be applied to the metal sheet, and a sound pool will be provided that surrounds the listener 360 degrees. It's kind of like an analog VR experience. The audience will listen to the composed underwater soundscape accompanied by images produced by artificial intelligence and digitally applied inside the cylinder.

Under Water Soundscape in Pitch Darkness.

This can be a performance or ongoing installation. Listening to a deep water soundscape composition in a Pitch Dark room environment. This experience should be a minimum 20 minutes long for the audience to temporarily lose their seeing and orientation sense and focus deeply on the music and the deep water atmosphere in their imaginary world.

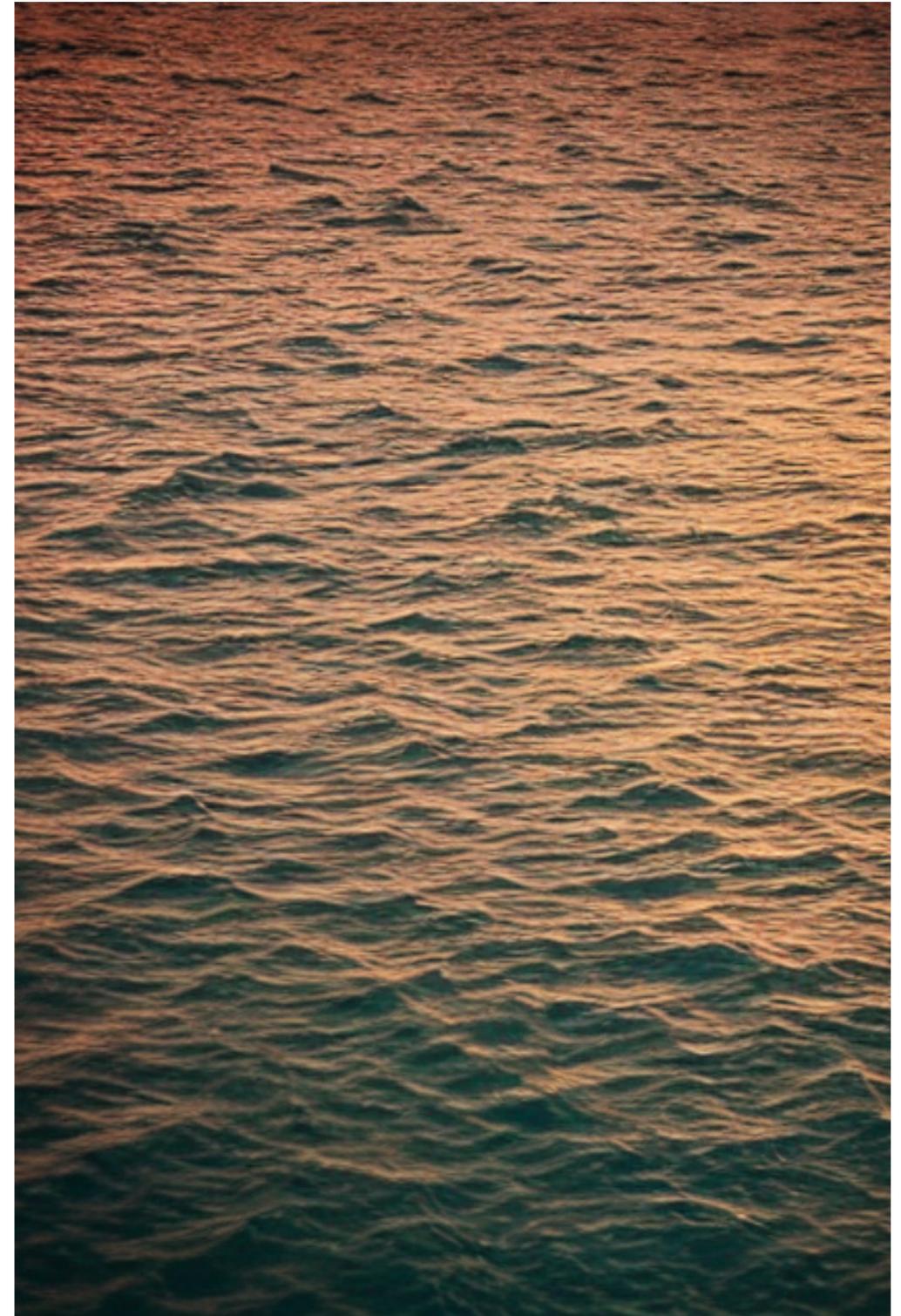


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Equipments

For this project those are my starting equipment:

- As a microphone, I am using highly sensitive, phantom powered AQUARIAN AUDIO H2D hydrophones which manufactured to withstand pressure down to 80 meters of depth. I can use more low coast hydrophones form different water levels and recording scenarios later.
- As a recording device I prefer to use 32 Bit Floating recording Tascam X8system for easy handling too low or too high volumes.
- For the visual documentation, I prefer waterproof action camera Go Pro 11 (may be multiple)
- I definitely need more specific and professional hydrophones and 32 bit field recorder later time of the project if I find an enough financial support.
- In a certain point I want to work on creating my own hydrophone according my needs.



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Future Projection

I see a bright future for this project. There same idea I want to achieve in long term;

- Creating a city underwater sound map,
- Organising and leading underwater sound walk tours,
- Gathering with other artist who work and produce materials about underwater sound and acoustic ecology and escalate it as an artistic association.

First step of the project is working on the field, producing materials (Audio/video recordings, diary, meeting people to listen stories about underwater of the city, etc.) This projects will happen as many city as possible which has strong connection with the water. Here are some example cities where I want to start the project;

Berlin GERMANY,
Istanbul TURKEY,
Lisbon PORTUGAL,
Bari ITALY,
Athens, GREECE,
Venezia, ITALY,
Valencia, SPAIN,
Cairo, EGYPT,
Beirut, LEBENON,
Gibraltar, UNITED KINGDOM,
Lampedusa, ITALY,

Referance Project

IN TUNE WITH THE BUILT



Investigating the relationship between environmental sound pollution and architecture, the project entitled “In Tune with the Built: E-1@santralistanbul” is the outcome of a research on the effect of sound pollution produced by the electronic and industrial revolution on our daily lives, on acoustic ecology and on soundscape, and the lo-fi sound systems produced by noise pollution. Composed of a 6-minute music and video.

Video Credits

Project: Uygur Vural

Composition: Uygur VUral

Photo and Video: Uygur Vural, Refik Anadol

Post Production: Uygur Vural, Efe Mert Kaya, Refik Anadol

Durration: 6' 30”

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JJDFZgfs-go&t=37s>

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Project by and Contact

Uygun Vural

Berlin-based multidisciplinary artist/environmental activist Uygun Vural was born in Antalya/Turkey. He studied Cello and Composition at İstanbul Bilgi University Turkey and he received his Master of Fine Arts degree in Visual Communication Design at the same university. Beside the cello music performance, he is involved in research and project creation in the field of sound art.

As a performer, Uygun is performing in Europe with various artists and groups from different genres and cultures. Uygun has been working and researching experimental performance techniques and non-classical (Classical Western Music) forms of cello, using them in his improvisation performances. His music interacts with many different musical styles such as Free Improvise, Classical Ottoman/ Indian/Arabic and European Contemporary music, free jazz, etc. It is often possible to hear the influences from a very rich background of Anatolian musical and cultural richness through his music.

As a sound artist, environmental awareness and sustainability are keywords in his works. He studied and researched soundscape and sonic ecology during his Master of Fine-art degree and successfully graduated with the project called “In Tune With The Built” which was a composition of steel construction building in Istanbul. Nowadays he focuses on Underwater Acoustic Ecology and designing projects to use underwater sounds for storytelling, installations, or integrating them into his musical performances. In the scope of the ongoing project Underwater Soundscape, he is working on applying the project to different cities around the world which have a deep connection with water (through sea, rivers, lakes)

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