



MICHAEL NORTHAM (b.1970)
sound-scape design as experiential-life research

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For nearly three decades - I have continued to examine the essence of experience through the medium of sound. Through a variety of means of sound-design I have applied my self to a research of how sound can influence the experience of visual arts, performance arts, film, installation as well as a broad range of educatal experiences — the medium of sound becomes a medium of understanding of listening. Where the extraordinary can be experienced in the ordinary.

2020

- Sound design for the documentary ‘Shamans of the Streets’ produced and directed by Anirban Datta - Amnesian Films.

2019

- Sonic-Art workshop for the Kochi Binnale
- Introduction to Sonic-Arts workshops at Himalayan Academy of Music Technology
- Sound design for ‘BARDO’ by Judith Egger, live performace at Sala XX Madrid.

2018

- Audio restoration for the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives. **Dharamshala, India**
- ‘Listening at the Frontiers of Mind and Space’ - Listening and survey of experiential music/sound-arts workshop discussing - Ashoka University & Sri Aurobindo College of Art and Communicaiton, **New Delhi, India**
- ‘Sonic-Arts for Visual Artists’ - I created weekly listening salons, open creative studios and discussions on Sonic arts for this traditional art academy founded by Tagore. **Vishva Bharata, Santinikitan, West Bengal, India.**

[External LINK](#)

2017

- ‘intertwining’ - trans-media sound, performance, installation collaboration with ChiMuk, Nikhil Chopra, Enith Maria, Kuru Cirkus - HH Art Spaces, **Arpora, Goa, India**
- ‘sleep action 2017’ - KIPAF17 - created a space for deep listening throughout the night. **Kolkata, India**
- ‘Breaking Open The Ear’ - Immersive ‘Sound as an experiential medium’ workshop - Polyphony Studios & Ashoka University, **New Delhi & Vaayu, Goa, India**

[Sound Sample](#)

2014

- Composed & performed surround sound work for ‘The Way of Light’ installation in **Mumbai, India**. A site-specific sound and light presentation in collaboration with Shumona Goel, Tabasheer Zutshi and Avijit Mukul Kishore presented by Experimenta India
PRESS Links : [Mumbai Mirror - IndiaExpress](#)
Published ‘Le Septème Déguisé en Neuf’ on [OBS records](#) in **Rostov on Don, Russia**

[Sound Sample](#)

2013

- moved home base to rural **Southern Oregon**.

2012

- Residency at Villa Waldberta and commissioned live surround sound work for ‘Bardo’ performance theater by Judith Egger in **Munich, Germany**
- Composed ‘FARNE’ for PLANTS TALK 2012 at the Botanischer Garten der Universität Potsdam in **Potsdam, Germany**. {an eight-channel aleatoric compositon for ferns}
- Improvised sound & vocal performances in **Barcelona** and **Berlin**.

[Sound Sample](#)

[Sound Sample](#)

2011

- Composed ‘watchthingsgrow’ as part of ‘Plants Talk’ at **Witzenhausen, Germany** {multi-channel aleatoric sound installaton intended for sonifying greenhouses }

[Sound Sample](#)

2010-12

- Assistant to composer **Catherine Christer Hennix** - worked with theory, practice, sound-design and installations.

2010

- Commisioned surround sound design performances for Arte Sonoro (**Madrid**) and Intr:Muros (**Seville**) as well as tour of Italy at various venues (**Genoa, Milan, Bologna, Rome**)

2009

- Sound design for feature length film ‘Red Belly’ by John DiGeorge in **Battelboro, Vermont**
- Residency with **Hitoshi Kojo** at **La Pommerie, France** {a three month residency of sound-mapping rural french country side - with location improvisations and sound gathering }

2007-8

- Living in India - recordings of temple acoustics of **Hampi, Badami, Pattadakal** - as well as documents from other locations in South India.
- Sound studies in **Varanasi** and **Bhopal** - with Pashupatinath Mishra and Ramakant Gundecha.
- Sound design for Shumona Goel’s ‘Family Tree’ site-specific installation in **Mumbai, India**

[Sound Sample](#)

2007

- Solo installation ‘membrane seeding’ White Box : **New York, New York, USA** {multi-channel sound and video work installed and solo sound performance happening }

2006

- Residency at KHOJ Sonic Arts Program, **New Delhi, India** - published ‘Golden Shadow’ sound explorations of New Delhi and improvisations during five week residency - recording surveys made at **Khajuraho** and **Varanasi**

2003-6

- Art Director and Curator for record label based in **Epesses, Cully & Geneva Switzerland**.

2005

- Created installation 'withinside' – Chant Mechanique festival : **Lille, France**
- Durational immersive sound event 'suvaFLUX' – Sõmerpalu Mois : **Sõmerpalu, Estonia**

2004

- Commissioned works for performance: as ENTRELACS (with Yannick Dauby) in **Paris, France**; 'Forage' (with Tero Nahua and Lars Larson) in **Mooste, Estonia** and solo for Fête de la Musique, **Geneva, Switzerland**.
- Solo surround sound design event at 964 Natoma - **San Francisco, USA**

2002-3

- Research based in Valetta, Malta of various prehistoric sites. Composed 'Gebel' for ORF radio (**Vienna, Austria**)
- Extended travel/research in North American Southwest and Northeast examining historic sites such as Chaco Canyon, Serpent Mound which culminated in the production of Autumnal 2003 CD. **DISCOVER**

2002

- Commissioned works for solo performance at Experimental Intermedia in **New York City**; Champ Libre in **Montreal, Quebec**; and residency at STEIM (with Yannick Dauby) in **Amsterdam**.
- Radio work 'memoirs of four discarded objects' commissioned for ORF

2000

- Recordings at various sites in **Western Ireland** creating the basis of composition 'oweynagat' based on improvisations made around dolmans of western Ireland.
- Performances in **Dublin** and **London** with Michael Prime.
- Composed sound work for theater production 'Posture Queen' **Portland, Oregon**
- Publication of ready-made sound work 'Breathing Towers' on Dorobo in **Australia**
- Received Oregon Regional Arts and Culture Council travel grant.

1999

- Homebase created in Portland, Oregon.

1998

- Collaborative performance event at ARS electronica **Linz, Austria** with John Grzinich.
- Solo site-specific installation "Filtering the Current" at AMORPH98, **Helsinki, Finland** {Aeolian Harps installed in structure on Suomenlinna Island }
- Travel to **Lower Mustang, Nepal** - soundscape project recording communities of **Kagbeni, Marpha, Jomsom** as well as **Kathmandu**.

1997

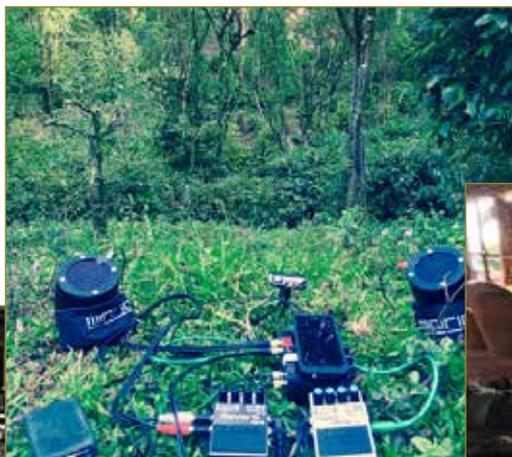
- Solo performance sound design event at Teatro FANAL in **San Jose, Costa Rica**

1996

- 'nine irregular waves...' – Berner Gallery : **Bern, Switzerland**
- Improvised performances with John Grzinich in **Italy, Austria** and **Poland**.

1991-3

- First published CD 'An Opening of the Earth' with Martin Franklin
- Travel through **Morocco** and **North American west** - the project 'orogenetics' begun.
- Travel through **Mexico** exploring sacred sites around **Real De Catorce** and **Pelenque**
- Year travel throughout **Europe** meeting and collaborating with a wide variety of artists. Notably living a few weeks at **Mary Bauermeister's** house at guest room of what was once **Karl-Heinz Stockhausen's** home.



Further Information on the work of Michael Northam

Links: [Website](#) | [Discography](#) Articles: [Classical Drone Articles](#) | [Mumbai Mirror](#) | [IndiaExpress](#)

Reviews: [Dusted Magazine](#) | [FoxyDigitalis](#) | [History of AvantGuard Music](#)

Selections of Documentation

“The Way of Light”

a site-specific sound/light installation

April 10 & 11, 2014

C.K. Cama Hall

Kala Ghoda, Mumbai, India

[Sound Sample](#)



Based on six years of dialog with experimental filmmaker Shumona Goel. I was commissioned to create an immersive sound and light experience for her project “The Way of Light” which included also the set-design of Tabasheer Zutshi and the lighting design of Avijit Mukul Kishore.

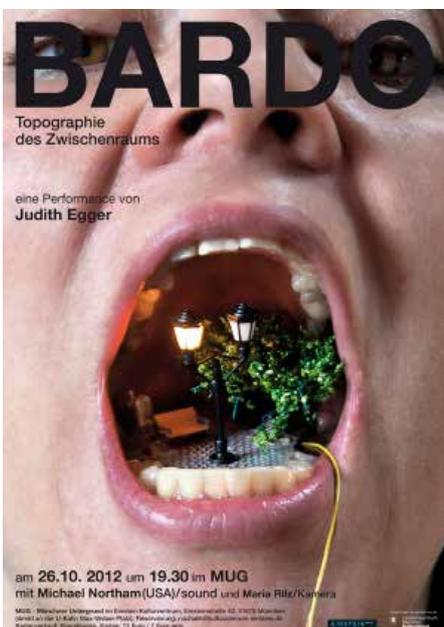
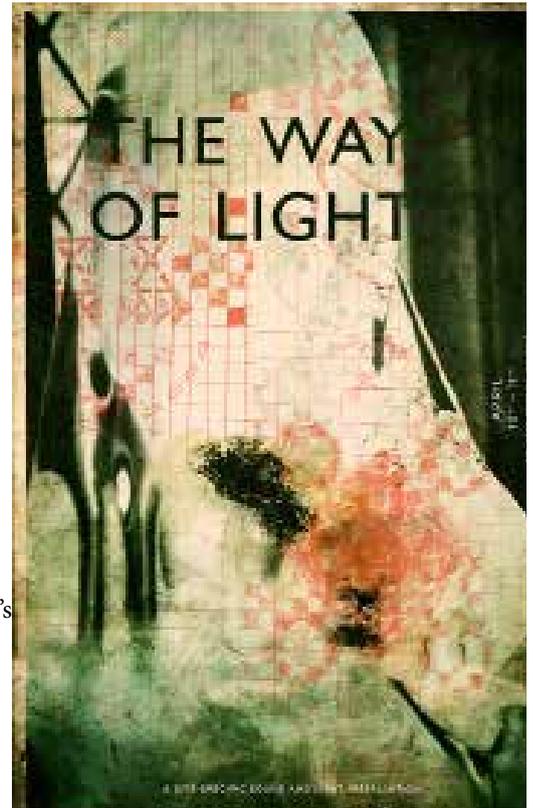
The work took place in C.K. Cama Hall which is a cultural center for Mumbai's Parsi community - and was located in the Kala Ghoda district of the city. The piece was presented in a controlled atmosphere of four distinct presentations to an audience that was instructed to still their minds and enter into a state of reception.

It was a remarkable event in as far as that my sound work is quite inspired by Indian aesthetics about sound and meditation and here I found that I was given the opportunity to offer my own hybrid form of meditative sound experience back to the culture that originally inspired me. Many of the audience remarked that this work was an invitation for them to return to practices that they have known since childhood but in the hectic speed of modern India, have often neglected.

Audiences responses:

“it was intensely powerful which made me travel through the cells of my body. it was as if light being infused through the nervous systems and entering every cell of my body.” - Parul Thacker

“It was a wonderful experience. I have never witnessed anything like this before.” - Rashida Amir



“Bardo”

a live surround-sound performance
for Judith Egger's performance art work

October 26, 2012

MUG

Munich, Germany

[Sound Sample](#)

“Bardo” was a work conceived of by Judith Egger where she created a series of scenes within her mouth. Each scene was set up and then projected on to a large screen in the performance space.

We worked together to establish the mood of each scene and I then performed with a specially designed system developed concurrently during my residency at the Villa Waldburta a way to ‘weave’ different sonic elements into a quadrasonic system that was surrounding the audience

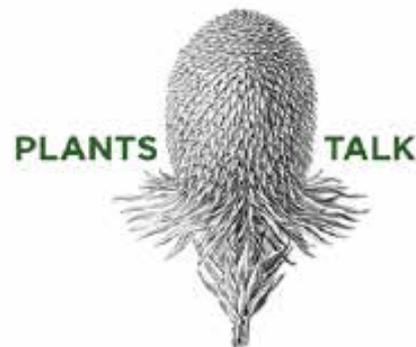
'FARNE'

eight-channel aleatoric composition
designed for a fern greenhouse

[Sound Sample](#)

May 12 through June 10, 2012

**Presented as part of group show PLANTS TALK 2012
(Including also the sound works of Rolf Julius and Miki Yui)
at the Gewächshäusern des Botanischen Gartens
Potsdam in Potsdam, Germany.**



PLANTS TALK is a series of sound-art exhibits for greenhouses that I co-curated with Jörg Hasheider. The idea was to bring attention to the consciousness of plants and the immersion within the field of living organisms while at the same time appreciating sound composed for such circumstances.

'watchthingsgrow'

eight-channel aleatoric composition
designed for a tropical greenhouse

[Sound Sample](#)

**November 19 through
December 4, 2011**

**Presented as part of group
show PLANTS TALK 2011
(Including also the sound
works of Olof Hochherz)
at the Tropengewächshaus
der Universität Kassel at
Witzenhausen, Germany.**

