

Title	<i>Listening as life, life as listening, listening as life, life as listening, listening as life, life as..</i>
Conversationalist	Sophia Sagaradze
Conversation number	XI
Date	26th of September 2023
Place	Superkilen, (public park) Copenhagen
Time of recording	56 minutes
Context	There is no particular context for this conversation, other than a shared interest in listening, and a simple starting point in Sophia's work as composer.
Note for conversation	The conversation took place outside, sitting at a skating slope near the black square / Superkilen, Nørrebro, Copenhagen. We spent a longer while catching up before starting the conversation.

Publisher	Bureau <i>for</i> Listening
Contact Publisher	https://bureauforlistening.com/ bureauforlistening@gmail.com
Year for publishing	2023
ISBN	

(Sophia Sagaradze): You should be ready.

- (Lukas Quist Lund): [

] where does that start for you? Where does the idea of listening and your own practice with listening start? Do you have some place, where you like to return to or []?

[] So I am not thinking about listening to music or listening to something pre-made, but just listening to nature or where I am. That is the first thought that comes to me when you are mentioning listening. The presence around me.

- What is presence for you?

Feeling alive and I think that is what I have realized recently, that actually sound makes me feel that I am alive. [

] It is going to be more scary than if I am going to just get blind and not touch anything. But I will be able to hear because it is more like real time for me, that part. And it is about like, it is so short, so small and so powerful with all the information that comes to your ears, that is processed in your brain without knowing that it is processed in your brain.

- []

[]

- []

[] And like it is so slow, the image. Like for example observing the painting or observing the movie or observing what we have in front of us. I can observe, I have time to observe. But with

sound it is always like, it is just *now*, it is life now. And then it is past already or it is something that you, yeah, it is just now. []

- [] what about the sounds that are in or traveling from the past? []

[]

[] I don't know, it is the most difficult at the same time for me because maybe you can have a dream and then you see all these images in a different way. But with the sound it is the most difficult. []

[]

- [] And you are just trying to find a way to be in that maybe submissive relationship with the sound. Because it is just happening and you cannot really do too much.

Yeah, you can't stop like, stop this sound, like it will never, you can't stop it.

- []

Either it will come or it happened. So there is no stop.

- Is that the same with life? Is there no stop to life?

[]

- []

[] It is the most untrained part, even though that I am a musician, I think that I forget how much information I get from sound. Like you see somebody walking, you see you avoid, but with sound unconsciously you are doing, but you don't really consciously realize, []

- But how do you train listening?

[] you can't always absorb all the information. And that is also nice, I always when I talk with my students, I also say like, yeah, our brain filters, our brain compresses sometimes some information, otherwise probably we would get mad if we would hear all the small noises around that we have.

- [] and filtering information that we don't even have a very good sense of what information is out there.

Exactly, exactly. Which is a good skill of the brain.

- []

Exactly, we are able to sleep, [] maybe I am going to open this door and not going to sleep yet, but we will be happy to hear, observe the small details and find something small inside the, I don't know, inside the nature or around me or in the music as well, and that is why I like that.

- []

[

] just like zooming with my ears.

- [

]

[

]

- [

]

Like zooming. Appreciation. [

] because microphone that can't do that, my microphone just catch whatever, and then I can be a conductor of my listening [

]

- [

]

- [

]

[] for a microphone everything is equal, kind of.

- [

]

It's just that we tend to listen to something, like focus or more bias of what to listen. [

] It also depends on my mood, it depends on which day it is. It's also beautiful, because every time you just wake up with the new ears, you're living your beautiful life or terrible life.

- []

[

]

- [

] I do not necessarily control the position that I'm in. There are so many things influencing my listening, [

]

[] I think every day you have a different equalizer in your ears. But at the same time, you can train in that to open those. [

] okay, can I just sit down now and be more attentive?

- []

[
] If you're not attentive, you're not able to see all the details.

- [

]

I don't know. Honestly, I think it's more, yeah, it depends. [
]

[
] even though the work is not that something special, it's still beautiful to
listen to. [
]

[
] I mean, more like close to the
nature, that I actually there are few details and I can just observe, because if it's like super
loud place, then it's difficult too. [
]

- [

]

That's true and then also at the same time I'm thinking like I'm still a city girl, born and raised
in a big city [
]

[
] but I need to go sometimes there and
rest and listen and then maybe come back in this noise, because noise also, it's not, I'm not
saying it's not beautiful, it's sometimes beautiful and important.

- [

]

] I think maybe the volume is less, lower, but the

intensity of sound, like if you listen to the ground, you have the same feeling of sound just overtaking you []

Yeah, it's diverse, it's more shaped.

- Yeah, and for me that's equally overwhelming in some way. [] I can say it's okay that I teach my mind to filter off the cars and the bikes and other people talking, these things, there's just too many. I cannot over comprehend it, so I can just take it out. It's okay that my mind does that. But I feel, at least where I grew up, or in nature, it's like my mind will not do that. I cannot tell my mind to de-listening from nature. It's like it will listen to all the sounds and I cannot tell it not to do that. [] So sometimes I feel it's more overwhelming to actually be in a nice, quiet nature space. []

You forgot your filter, you lost your filter. Now you only have your city filter.

- []

I love noisy sounds, but I don't like loud sounds. So I'm pretty sensitive if it's loud, but if it's more like a weird, noisy-ish sound that is small and I feel like, okay, there are different details, it's out of tune, []

[] If it's big, it doesn't mean that it's the best.

- [] What is big listening?

[]

- []

[
] being able to take out yourself from where you are [and then be like,
okay, I can actually observe all of the details around me and then] being able to zoom
wherever you want. [
]

] how can I play with those, being a big conductor with what comes. [
]

- []

[]

- []

Small listening? I don't know. Yeah, no, I don't know what can be opposite also. [
]

- [
] I really wanted to comment on your hand gestures, because in some way it was an
important point that could not go on the record, because there's like this sort of
movement around. And it was very, you know, physical, sort of like...

BIG.

- Yeah, it was like, taking in the world in its vastness and greatness. [
] listening is so much also the gestures and the physicality of the
world. [
] it's more the matter and the vibration and
knowing that you are in a world where you're not alone.

[]

- []

[

] Like the molecule is moving and it touches you. [

] It's just like touching. It's just touching you at least 40 hertz
per second or something, []

- [

] but listening is then also this emotional and relational way
of being in the world. But that's also physical. [

]

[

]

- [

]

[

]

- [

]

Or maybe it's more romantic.

- [

]

[] So you think about something and then you listen to music and then it just doubles the emotion. []

- [] Like a touch or gesture or anything really.

[]

- [] Why is listening something that matters? Why is listening to you of value?

[

] I became so busy and I have a period where I can't really listen. I'm just doing stuff. So I feel that's really important... Because while I'm really listening I'm just like trying to be present. Probably being like I'm here. [

] I mean now sitting outside I'm really happy. It's like it's beautiful. It's more beautiful than us having this conversation inside the cafe where it's super crowded and all the people are talking.

- [] even before starting a conversation about listening is like asking. Under which circumstances do you like a conversation for listening? Should we be walking? Should we be laying down? Should we be at the beach? Should we be drunk? Like what does it take to have a good conversation for listening? []

[]

- [

]

[]

- [] Because the consequences of that is when you are too busy to listen, are you then also too busy to be present, too busy to be alive?

[]

- [

]

I can't even listen to music if I'm super stressed. [

]

And I'm not that good a music listener. I think I'm a good listener generally, like observing objects around me. [

] And then like everything is the same and I always have

the connections to my work life and my private life and my... this life. And everything is always in the same form or the same shape in a different form. I don't know [

] if there is something that doesn't work in 'work life' similar logic doesn't work in private. [

]

- Is honesty a tool to listen? [

]

I'm not sure about honesty but definitely about trusting.

- []

[

]

- []

[

]

- [

]

[

] if I'm not really trusting my feelings then work doesn't work. So what I do is not that valuable a project.

- [

]

[

] I don't know. I always ask and I guess my answer is different every year. And because I'm also changing what is my way also to expressing my feelings or their feelings or just no feelings but like what is around us. I don't know. It's just it's also beautiful [

]

- [

] And I was just

wondering that because sound is to have something more than you, is it then really about you?

It's not about me. But if I'm doing it, it is still anyway through me or from my angle. [

]

- [

] Isn't it more like the sound of the music just expressing themselves through you. [

] You are the product of sound and not the other way around.

[]

- [

]

[] It's not only like me
expressing but I'm also creating something and then finding myself staying as a listener as
well. []

- [

]

[

]

- Yeah I know.

You know.

- Yes.

But I totally agree.

- The recording does not know.

Yeah. Exactly. [

] Like maybe they can perceive all
the colors. They only see like two colors. You have 10. Someone can see 2. Someone can see
7. Someone can see 20.

- [

by coming in as an audience not all emotions are welcome there. Not all kinds of movements are welcome there. You have to suppress certain memories and things that exist in that room. [] That

[] Maybe you find creativity more in the frames than without the frame.

- []

[] Sometimes you also need to help them to listen in a way that might open a new door for them. If they're going to keep only doing what they want. Maybe they're never going to discover a new way of listening. So sometimes maybe it's also good to put people in this big concert hall. []

- I'm glad that you are defending some good points within that. []

[

]

- [

] how I can invite others carefully into a listening space. How can I help them in order to do this? How can I be the good guy offering a space and time for listening. Where they can listen on their own terms. And not by the terms or ideas of listening projected by me.

[

] And then they decide.

- [

]

Training. Training. Because people don't know. Sometimes [

] So sometimes it's also education. Training. So you need to help. You need to be a bit like... You know... help to... how to jump in the water and swim. If they are never going to jump into the water. [

]

- [

] Which waters of listening do you jump into in order to educate yourself? Do you have some tips?

For other people to jump in?

- [

]

No idea. I always start like... Suggesting first listen where you are now. Like right now. It's impossible. They are never going to find a place where they can't hear anything. So just stop. And stay. hey look this is so beautiful now this small dog.. [

] What is the life of that question? [

] Doggo is running. Some people are discussing something.
Going home stressed. But that's life. So listen where you are. And then maybe... Then maybe
I don't know. I right now really want to be in the forest. That's what I kind of miss. Like in
mountains. But I just miss that and that's why. So I'm not sure if it's like the way they need to
jump. If they are already in the mountains. []

- [

] That it's

all about life really. [

]

But actually, this is something I learned pretty late.

- []

[

] Does it resonate to me? What am I really doing? What is my goal? [

]

- [

]

[]

- Because what do we resonate with? [

] Well you are like a guru.

[]

- []

Oh it's so difficult. No, no, I'm not... It's a dream that I'm talking about right now. [

] You learn more and then you are getting more doubts. You learn more and then people experience that. Also as a composer I think. We are all ambitious in a way. That we all want to create something new. []

- []

[]

- [] I think life will just laugh at your face. [] Who are you, to think you are inventing new things in life?

[]

- []

[]

- []

[]

- [] But for you living life. And discovering life. There are a lot of new feelings all the time. []

[]

- []

Slow down.

- Going to work is also training for listening. But it is the wholeness that matters. It is not you saying this is more important than that. But the wholeness of living life. Going to a funeral as well as giving birth. So where does that leave us? [

]

[]

- [] Is there something we give too much attention to within the topic of listening?

[]

- []

No more listening. []

- [] What influenced this conversation, this time and space for you?

[]

- []

Life, presence, those kinds of details I think.

- []

They definitely should know where we are sitting. I think it also inspired me, that is why I talked a lot. I think that was more inspiring. These bikes passing us, this doggo running. Still close to nature, even though it is still not that much. But it is still something to compare. We have the green, you see the green, you see the trees. You see the couple walking.

- [] all the things we talked about,
we just took them right in front of us.

[]

- []

And then also like me and you sitting now and forgetting that we are super busy. You know all this life, need to go home or need to go somewhere. It is just like presence. I am here having a conversation with you that is about life and not about work. [

]

- []

[]

- []

[]

- []

[]

- []

] So it all comes, it all influences.

[]

- [] how would a conversation
stripped from all of that be? []

[]

- []

[]

- []

No, actually not right now.

- []

It would be nice actually to talk after two, three years. [

]

- []

Yeah, that's my last comment. Talk to me after three years.

- []

[]

it was nice to let this emotion go and remind yourself why you do stuff and why you don't do stuff. And what are the values of your life? Also not only work as a listener, but life. Why am I doing all those things and all the conversations? [] I'm really glad.

- I'm a little bit sad that I didn't have a little camera filming your body language. Because now I'm just curious about what is the body language of listening?

[]

- []

[

]

- [

] But

with you, there's just this harmony between what you're saying and the way you're saying it.

