[theatrum-mundi.org](http://theatrum-mundi.org/" \t "_blank) | [@TheatrumM](https://twitter.com/theatrumm)

**Hearing Montparnasse through Bodies and Machines**

What of a city can be heard: its past, it future, its materiality, its politics, its desires? What modes or technologies of listening are required to become sensitive to each of these real or potential attributes? Can they be redesigned in ways that are audible rather than visible ?

This exercise, taking place over 2 days, uses performative and phonographic techniques to challenge and extend the ways we habitually use hearing to develop knowledge of the urban environment. By experimenting with different ways of noticing, making, and recording sound we will explore relationships between musical and architectural ways of creating form. The aim will be to produce together an acoustic document of Montparnasse that reveals fragmentary, overlapping, and contradictory ways of hearing a single place, as the basis of a discussion for how architectural design might work with the sonic material it gives rise to.

*The exercise will take place in 3 parts over 2 days:*

**Reading Group**

A reader of short extracts from texts addressing ways of hearing will be shared in advance of the session. Everyone is also invited to bring new texts written by others or themselves, addressing this topic or the understanding they have developed of the study site throughout the previous week. Each person will be invited to choose a text to read out loud, provoking a conversation about existing interests and concerns, and ways these could be re-appraised through aural modes of attention. Together we will identify individual or group questions to attempt to listen to in Montparnasse.

**Walk**

With our questions in mind, we will go out into public. Starting together with attunement exercises we will then take separate paths, being led by our ears in the search for answers to questions. Does this search require us to travel or stay still? To be silent or to speak? To construct or to faithfully document? To record or to represent in other ways? Re-assembling at Reid Hall we will share our first impressions and ideas of how to work with the material collected.

**Charrette**

The final session of Hearing Montparnasse will take the form of an atelier, attempting to answer the 3 key questions of the exercise: what questions can be heard, what modes of listening do they call upon, and what kind of design do they give rise to? The first hour will be a chance to develop materials further through editing, discussing, writing, and rehearsing together. Following this, each person or group will be invited to share the answers they gathered and reflect on, or demonstrate, the techniques they needed to do so. Ideally, we will make a collective design proposition that translates these new forms of knowledge and craft into a way of intervening back into the site under investigation.