

Portfolio

Cathy van Eck

solo performances



© Axel Crettenand.

Cathy van Eck

I am a sound artist, and interested in setting my movements, actions and gestures into relationships with a rich palette of different sounds, exploring peculiar sonic sceneries. The result could be called “performative sound art”, since it combines elements from performance art, electronic music, and visual arts.

In this portfolio you find a selection of my performances, that I perform alone. I usually perform one, two or three of these during an evening, often sharing the evening with another musician, performer or group. The pieces are listed from newest to oldest.

You can find more information, videos, images, and text on www.cathyvaneck.net.

If you want to contact me for more information, questions, or technical riders do not hesitate to write me on info@cathyvaneck.net.



© Carlos H. Juica

Our Time (2025)

for performer, kitchen timer, used plastic, whistle, and live electronics.

Our time is limited. Sometimes we have too much time, sometimes not enough. Sometimes time seems to pass quickly, sometimes too slowly. Sometimes we might be worried if we still have enough time.

This work begins with the turning on of an analogue kitchen timer, setting the duration of the performance. Soothing sounds of unpacking plastic bags alternate with more alarming sounds from blowing a sports whistle. The end might come unexpectedly.

I have not performed this piece myself yet, but first performances by me are planned in March 2026. There is no documentation video yet.

Commissioned and premiered by Emilio Guim.



In Search for Another Place (2024)

for performer, many beach balls, live electronics, microphone and loudspeakers.

This is a short demo video of the work: <https://vimeo.com/1060775368>

In certain environments, our behaviors and movements are clearly defined. I know how to act in a shopping mall, at the beach, or in a train station. It would seem quite strange if I deviated from these expected norms. However, some places fall into a grey area without many predefined patterns of behavior. In these spaces, I feel to have the freedom to move and act as I choose, without feeling awkward.

In this work, I introduce a specific action in the passage to the centre of the Kasernenareal and explores how this influences and transforms the space. Amplified by a sound system, I perform an almost ritualistic action that one might commonly see elsewhere. *In search for another place* is a performance conceived as an archeological exercise in searching for the unseen and unheard aspects of places, hidden traces that exist wherever we are.

Commissioned by OTO Sound museum, performance curated by Zaira Oram, Francesca Ceccherini.



© Axel Crettenand

April Sky (2023)

for performer, a bag, two small loudspeakers, sensors and live electronics.

This is a short demo video of the work: <https://u.pcloud.link/publink/show?code=XZYYuK5ZQ6b99KSOCcftqzmgYCVdOh9blFRk>

I walk around, wearing a bag, and inside the bag are two small loudspeakers. I point upwards, and listen to what happens in the sky above me. Strange birds, soft drones, and noisy crackles all appear from the sky. In the beginning, these sounds are in my bag, but later I take the small loudspeakers out of the bag and move them around in the space. The piece reflects our many relationships to the sky above us: our admiration for the music made by birds, the more mundane sounds we added ourselves such as airplanes and drones, and the ever-returning wish to be able to fly ourselves.



In Paradisum (2019)

for performer, an apple, contact microphones and live electronics.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F8wyeDOU92I>

There is not much to say about this performance: I simply try to find the perfect sound for eating an apple. Since the apple is evidently a fruit loaded with associations and cultural references, every bite might reveal a glimpse of the worlds beyond eating an apple.

During this performance eating an apple becomes a sonic event: every bite I take opens a new sonic scene through which I can chew sound by sound.



© Carlos H. Juica

Empty Chairs (2018)

for performer, three chairs, sensors, live electronics, three loudspeakers, and one microphone. Commissioned by and developed at iii.

<https://vimeo.com/250849187>

I enjoy looking at empty chairs. How they are placed, how their positions tell me something about who sat on it or who will sit on it. Rows of chairs, chairs in a circle, chairs standing chaotically. Then at some point in our lives, chairs also remain empty. Forever. My piece *Empty Chairs* stages three empty chairs, each with a loudspeaker attached. A system of live recorded sounds and electronic processing brings them to life. A performer interacts with the chairs by moving them, placing them in new formations, and trying out different positions. A microphone placed in the middle of the room is looking for utterances and reminiscences of people who once sat on those chairs.



Cheering for others makes you a leader (2016)

for performer, metallic cheerleader pompons, sensors and live electronics.

<https://vimeo.com/339997680>

Pompons and cheers such as hurrah, yippie, yeah are the elements for this performance. With the help of sensors my gestures control the electronic processing of all the hurrah-sounds. The performance can also be understood as an investigation in what we cheer for nowadays and if we should applaud and cheer at all.



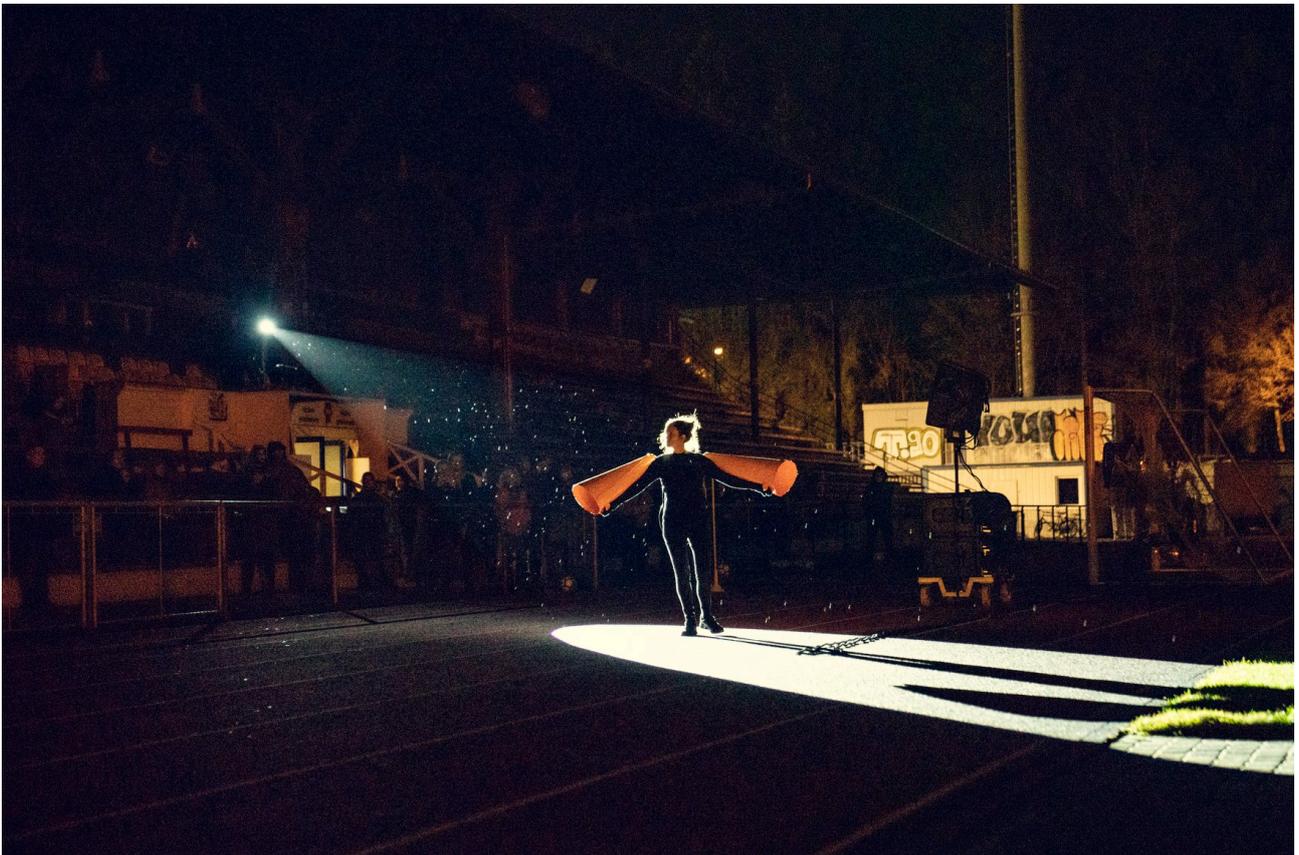
© Marije Baalman

Klangverordnung (2012)

for performer, two big orange loudspeaker horns and forbidden noises.

<https://vimeo.com/76705797>

Machine noises, screaming, or alarm sounds are often perceived as disturbing. Therefore, many sounds have been forbidden at certain times and places by law during the last centuries. In many places, singing and shouting, motor noises, car hooping and even the barking of the dogs are not allowed. I bring these forbidden noises, that have been silenced by law, back in their original surroundings. I project these perishing noises through two orange loudspeaker horns. Sounds that could never be heard are brought to life. Evidently by not having been able to appear for such a long time, these sound corpses have changed over the years. Barely recognisable they find their noisy way out of the unheard.



Music Stands (2011)

for performer, music stands, small loudspeakers, contact microphones and live electronics.

Video documentation of the version for two performers: <https://vimeo.com/1099325631>

What normally stays silent during a musical performance—a music stand—is creating the sound in this performance. Two music stands are unfolded at the start of the performance. Both are amplified using a contact microphone glued onto the stand and a small loudspeaker, placed on the floor. During the performance, the loudspeakers are placed on the stands. The vibrations of the loudspeakers are transmitted through the metal of the stands back to the contact microphones and in this way an acoustic feedback loop occurs. By changing the altitude of the stands, the distance between microphone and loudspeaker changes, and therefore, the acoustic feedback sound changes as well. The music stands are “played” by the performer similar to how commonly musical instruments are played. The performer is searching for the sound behind the score.



© Dominik Hodel

Song no 3 (2010)

for performer, gestures, loudspeaker, microphone and live electronics

<https://vimeo.com/87466717>

Song No. 3 is a performance during which I use arm gestures normally used by singers as a byproduct of their singing performance as a means to control electronic sound. I am not making any noises with my voice. Instead, the input volume of the microphone is controlling the sound processing done by the computer. This sound is then diffused through the loudspeaker (with a white paper glued on the membrane) in front of my mouth.



© Silvana Torrinha

Groene Ruis (2007)

for performer, a small box tree, hairdryer and live electronics

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d0G7Deg2neM>

This performance takes two simple every day objects—a plant and a hair dryer—to investigate in our relationship with our “natural” environment. Looking for transitions between human, plants and machines, the story of the nymph Daphne, who transforms herself into a tree is taken as a starting point. Electronic processing of the sounds as well as visual gestures transform the tree into a human being and the sound of the hair dryer into a big storm. By exploring these typical categories of human, nature and machine objects, the borders start to blur.

