

# Oscillations:

## Sonic Inquiries and Practices



**OPEN CALL**  
for Residencies in 2023 / 2024  
Cape Town and Berlin  
**Deadline: 4 April 2023.**

Subway Ghost Walkers by Brian Carson

**OSCILLATIONS: Sonic Inquiries and Practices** is a two-year project jointly organised and curated by the Akademie der Künste (Berlin), Centre for Humanities Research at the University of the Western Cape (Cape Town) and Deutschlandfunk Kultur / Klangkunst (Berlin).

This Open Call for Residencies is aimed at sound artists, scholars and cultural practitioners based in southern Africa. Directed at mid-career sound artists, the Berlin open call, partly supported by the DAAD Arts & Media Program, includes three residencies, each for a period of two months. In Cape Town, the call includes two two-month residencies for mid-career practitioners and two one-month residencies for entrants new to the field of sonic inquiry and practice. Residencies can be taken up in the June 2023 – March 2024 period.

## **What to expect**

### **Two-month residency in Berlin**

- Return economy flight from a major city in southern Africa to Berlin
- Residency stipend 2 700 € (incl. Accommodation, ground transport, insurance, daily allowance)
- Participation in regular meetings and workshops at the Academy of Arts during the residency
- Collective exchange with project participants in regular online meetings and participation in listening and reading sessions with the CHR's Sound Working Group
- Development of an audio work to be presented as an installation at Akademie der Künste, Berlin and as a radio broadcast at Deutschlandfunk Kultur / Klangkunst (German broadcast), April/May 2024
- Progress on an article-length manuscript with the view to publishing in a peer reviewed academic journal in 2024/2025 if appropriate

### **Two-month residency in Cape Town**

- Return economy flight from a major city in southern Africa to Cape Town
- Residency stipend 2 700 € (incl. Accommodation, ground transport, insurance, daily allowance)
- Participation in regular listening and reading sessions with the CHR's Sound Working Group
- Participation in reading group/laboratory on archiving sound art
- Participation at the CHR's Annual Winter School
- Presentation of work in progress at the Oscillations Workshop, scheduled to take place 11 – 14 Sept 2023
- Development of an audio work to be presented as an installation at Akademie der Künste, Berlin and as a radio broadcast at Deutschlandfunk Kultur (German broadcast), April/May 2024
- Progress on an article-length manuscript with the view to publishing in a peer reviewed academic journal in 2024/2025 if appropriate

### **One-month Residency in Cape Town**

- Residency stipend of 2 000 € for Cape Town-based artists
- Participation in reading and listening sessions at the Centre of Humanities Research
- Participation in reading group/laboratory on archiving sound art
- Presentation of work in progress at the Oscillations Workshop, scheduled to take place 11 – 14 Sept 2023
- Development of an audio work to be presented as an installation at Akademie der Künste, Berlin and as a radio broadcast at Deutschlandfunk Kultur (German broadcast), April/May 2024

## **The following documents/files should accompany all applications**

- CV
- Portfolio of work, 2-3 works in audio or video files
- A letter of motivation or artist statement on why this open call appeals to your practice
- [Completion of the Personal Details Form](#) provided
- Location of choice for residency, namely Berlin or Cape Town or both cities
- Preferred month(s) for the residency
- In no more than 300 words, a brief sketch of an audio project you hope to realise during the residency

## **Selection Process**

- Selections are made jointly by a steering committee comprising members from participating organisations.
- The DAAD Arts & Media Program offers awards to outstanding mid-career artists who have already developed a consistent body of work and have made a significant contribution to their artistic environment. An academic background is not requested, but a critical approach to historical and current issues and discourses is most welcome. We encourage applications from female and diverse artists. The grant is not for students or newcomers, but there is no age limitation upwards.
- The call is open to African nationals located in the continent and the selection process will prioritise the applications of Southern Africans located in southern Africa, as defined by the Southern African Development Community (<https://www.sadc.int/member-states>).
- The final decision rests with the Steering Committee. The committee may interview applicants.

## **Submission Process**

- Applications along with all required documents must be submitted online and emailed to [mfelix@uwc.ac.za](mailto:mfelix@uwc.ac.za) by no later than 4 April 2023.
- Audio and video files must be secured with permanent links.
- Successful applicants will be notified during the first week of May 2023.

## About Oscillations

OSCILLATIONS is founded on the premise that sound is knowledge. Epistemological and sonic objects usually circulate together, connecting geographies of the global south and north which we understand as trans-hemispheric connections. However, their coupled oscillations also exhibit erasures and distortions, as traces of violence and ignorance.

Animated by the project partners' commitment to critically engage with contemporary shifts in sound discourses, artistic practices and aesthetic histories, OSCILLATIONS is intended to bring a trans-hemispheric relation into sound practice and sonic inquiry. Implicit to the relation, and process is a conceptual framing that pays attention to the historically asymmetrical and ambiguous character of shared colonial histories.

Nourished by a sustainable exchange with scholars, archivists, and technicians, the participating artists will be given the opportunity to produce and present new work in the fields of sound and radio art, audio performance, podcast, and multimedia creation. As a process, the project aims to counteract stereotypical and transparent views on and about Africa – as physical geography open to all manner of exploitative extraction. To the question, how does sound and the sonic figure in building an ethics, and aesthetics of care and of freedom, OSCILLATIONS aims to experiment with archival modalities, and practices, that may open a renewed understanding of what might constitute the archive of sonic production. As an exemplar of shifts in the discourse, and trans-hemispheric relations, OSCILLATIONS attends to how politics, power and agency interlock with the materiality of sound – as an object; with sonic artistic practice – as knowing; and with sounds' aesthetic histories – as a way to develop criticality and intellectual capacities.

With OSCILLATIONS, the partnering institutions want to support artistic production that encourages and responds to the need for critical listening. The mindset of critical listening will be the main guideline, not only for the curation, research and production process, but also for the form and presentation of the emerging artwork. Audiences both in South Africa and Germany shall be invited to reassess their modes of aesthetic and informative auditory perception. To take pleasure in listening to unfamiliar sound materials, to gather knowledge through sonic translation, and to question inherited assumptions about cultural and economic hegemony remain key to a critical sonic practice.

The Akademie der Künste, the Centre for Humanities Research at the University of the Western Cape and Deutschlandfunk Kultur bring complementary horizons of experience to the interplay of sound and knowledge production. To this end, they activate the circles of scientists, artists, technicians and archivists associated with them. In this way, a trans-hemispheric community is created beyond disciplinary habits and boundaries. Their goal is to find new, sustainable and equitable ways of sharing sound and knowledge.

## Short Profiles of participating institutions

**Akademie der Künste, Berlin:** Founded in 1696, the Akademie der Künste in Berlin, is one of the oldest cultural institutes in Europe. It is an international community of artists and has a current total of more than 424 members in its six Sections (Visual Arts, Architecture, Music, Literature, Performing Arts, Film and Media Arts). The Akademie der Künste is an exhibition and event location, a meeting place for artists and people interested in the arts, where public debates on art and cultural policy take place. A key part of the Academy are its Archives. With over 1,200 estates by artists and an extensive art collection and library, the Academy Archives are one of the most important interdisciplinary archives of 20th century art. The event programme of the Academy serves to present contemporary artistic positions to the public and is dedicated to safeguarding cultural heritage.

In its two permanent locations in the heart of Berlin the Academy shows exhibitions, organises concerts, debates, readings, awards ceremonies, as well as film, theatre, and dance performances. The Academy has a residency program for young artists and an electronic studio.

**Centre for Humanities Research:** In the years since its establishment in 2006, the Centre for Humanities Research has accomplished its goal of giving new impetus to the experiments in ideas for building a post-apartheid future that defined the University of the Western Cape in the 1980s. This has allowed it to reflect critically and affirmingly upon earlier debates about foundational concepts in the Humanities placing the arts at the heart of its inquiries. Rather than casting itself as neutral and devoid of perspective, the CHR insisted on beginning with an inquiry into the very conditions that brought the university into being under apartheid. In place of assuming the role of diagnostician, it offered a space of working through but also working out its relation to this untenable inheritance so as to offer a concept of freedom to the world. This conception has defined an ethos shaping the aesthetic and scholarly approaches of the CHR since its inception. A humanities inquiry informed by its location and history, the CHR lends itself to asking pertinent questions that have a significant impact on locating intellectual traditions in Africa in a global discourse on the contemporary human condition. The CHR's graduate fellowship and artist-in-residence programmes have nurtured a humanities discourse that is responsive to shaping a discourse on postapartheid freedom exploring the relationship between the human, the arts and technology in our contemporary world, especially as these relate to rapidly transforming notions of society and politics. With partnerships across and between institutions, particularly universities, schools, public arts projects, museums, archives and art galleries, the CHR nurtures future generations of humanities graduates, educators and arts and cultural practitioners energized by transhemispheric collaborations that extend the reach of local and international humanities scholarship, as well as opportunities for arts education and cultural production beyond the institutional site of the university. Deutschlandfunk Kultur / Klangkunst: Radio as an exhibition space for acoustic art – that is the mission of Klangkunst, Deutschlandfunk Kultur's weekly sound art program. Since 1998, it has commissioned and broadcast audio works by international artists – including more than 250 new productions to date. Here, sounds, noises, and voices have the opportunity to develop their inherent artistic potential – beyond established genres, narrative, or musical conventions. A core feature is the "site-specificity" of radio: The ability to cause numerous places and eardrums to vibrate by means of electromagnetic waves. Klangkunst is part of the radio drama department at Deutschlandfunk Kultur, the culture channel of Germany's national public radio.

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**Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst:** The DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program is one of the most renowned residency programs for international artists and cultural practitioners in the fields of visual arts, film, literature, and music & sound. Each year, it awards residencies in Berlin to around twenty outstanding cultural producers. The residency enables the chosen fellows to focus on their creative thinking, actions, and research pursuits without being obliged to produce. Encounters with other artists and cultural producers stimulate transdisciplinary cooperation and initiate reciprocal learning processes. In addition to the Award Grants, the team of the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program administers a number of other support programs in which international artists and scholars from many different disciplines are invited to come to Berlin, among them the DAAD Arts & Media fellowships.



Oscillations is a project by Akademie der Künste (Berlin) Centre for Humanities Research at the University of the Western Cape (Cape Town) and Deutschlandfunk Kultur / Klangkunst (Berlin). Funded by the TURN2 Fund of the Kulturstiftung des Bundes (German Federal Cultural Foundation). Funded by the Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Kultur und Medien (Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media).

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