

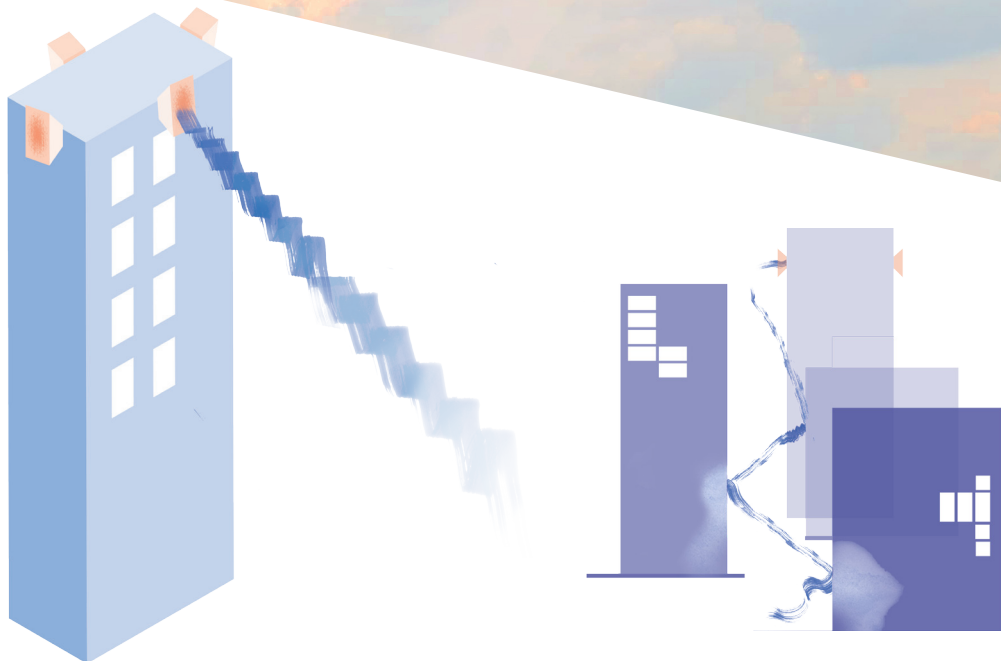
# THE CLOUDSPEAKERS

Gardening the soundscape



Décor Sonore

The Cloudspeakers spread a rumor in the city: the urban space becomes inhabited by elusive sounds which seem to flee through streets and squares, emerge from facades, merge and disappear into the existing soundscape. Played through very high (c)loudspeakers (installed on high spots such as skyscrapers, cranes, etc), the sound creation is always site-specific, composed from field recordings, with the participation of residents.



The installation spreads at 360° sounds that move through multiple ultra-directional loudspeakers placed on an overlooking spot – like an acoustic lighthouse. Thus, the played sounds can never be heard as coming out from the source but from all the various reflecting urban elements around.

***The city transforms the sounds, the sounds transform the city.***

The composition interacts with the *déjà-là*, all the “already there” daily sounds that everyone knows but never listens to. Inspired by these sounds, the creation alters them in return through digital processing, reflections in the architecture and movements in space, with the will to organise this chaos and to arouse the hearing of passers-by intrigued by these sound illusions.

## An unlimited audience

This production is designed to reach a wide audience. Although it does not involve giant sculptures or dozens of technicians, it is in its way a «big format», an event at the scale of a locality or even a town.

The Cloudspeakers go beyond the traditional capacity of a show, and its «spectators» can hardly be counted or identified.

While the view is stopped by physical obstacles, obscurity or distance, sonic waves can travel along or reflect on the buildings, and between them. The latest experiments have shown that The Cloudspeakers can be heard from at least a mile away.

## Alternative timings

The Cloudspeakers' broadcast is not limited to ordinary show durations and times. The sound design can be heard fleeting at unexpected moments, or occur regularly and become a landmark in the city's time-space. And finally, it can reach a climax during which people are invited to share an urban soundscape concert.



There are 3 «layers» of audience:



- passers-by, who become active listeners when they are surprised by these strange sounds mixed in the city soundscape, and may try to figure out where they come from and what is going on;
- people who know about this installation: they have heard or read about the project, identify the sound design when they hear it; they can even secretly collaborate to this hacking of the soundscape, spread the rumor around them or even interact with the sounds using instruments or props;
- the online audience: when trying to find out what is happening, the intrigued passers-by may ask their virtual communities, search engines and social networks about these odd events. The rumor then starts to spread on the Internet, far out of reach from the actual «sound lighthouse».

## Outreach possibilities

While it is elaborating a tale amongst a large population, The Cloudspeakers generate a whole range of reactions and situations. Besides, we should always keep in mind that sound does not observe the limits between public and private space, and thus can be perceived as intrusive, frightening, or aggressive. These are the limits questioned by this project.

Such as land art in the contemporary arts field, and just like every genuinely site-specific creation, The Cloudspeakers need to be thoroughly planned in its artistic and technical conception and relation to the audience. A connexion has to be established with the inhabitants through local organizations.

There are many outreach possibilities: meetings, «sound raisings», interviews of passers-by, musicians interacting with the soundscape or posting videos online to amplify the rumour, advertising (posters, social networks...).

*Presentation video (English subtitles):*

<https://youtu.be/o2JUtgz8Lg>

## Residencies and performances

### 2019

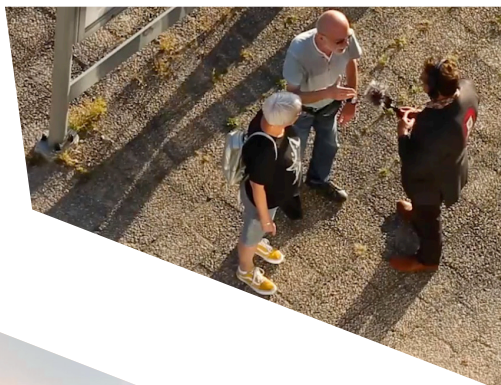
- Encausse-les-Thermes, 2 weeks
- Aubervilliers, 2 weeks
- Saint-Denis, 1 week
- Cergy, 2 weeks
- Paris, 1 week

### 2020

- Paris, 3 weeks
- **WORLD PREMIERE:** Cierp-Gaud, 1 week

### 2021

- Nanterre, 1 week
- Châtillon, 1 week
- Malakoff, 1 week
- Bagneux, 1 week
- Chalon-sur-Saône, 1 week





## Biographies

### Michel Risse

Composer, multi-instrumentalist, electro-acoustician and artistic director of Décor Sonore, Michel Risse thinks the city as an open space for inventing new musical compositions.

He studied music and percussions at the Strasbourg Conservatory and Paris 8 University, but also with Gnawas and Ahuaches traditional musicians of North Africa, many rock, jazz and French alternative bands, as well as very different artists such as Moondog, Vince Taylor, Angel Parra, Nicolas Frize or le Grand Orchestre Bekummernis. His experience as a percussionist, composer and improviser soon led him to record stage and film soundtracks.

From 1972 he started composing his first « décors sonores » (sound sceneries): site-specific electroacoustic installations for public spaces.

Ever since the foundation of Décor Sonore, he has produced numerous works, many being still on tour today, ranging from very intimate forms to spectacular performances and urban installations for unlimited audiences. Nowadays more and more involved in sound ecology, he considers himself as a kind of “acoustic gardener of the soundscape”.

He has recently been named Chevalier des Art et des Lettres (Knight of Arts and Letters) of the French Republic.



### Décor Sonore

Created in 1986 by composers Michel Risse and Pierre Sauvageot, Décor Sonore is a unique composition and production tool, aimed at sound creation for open spaces and street arts.

The city is Décor Sonore's medium and material for its dramatic investigation. Its creations indulge in sounds, resonances, harmonies of natural or industrial elements our everyday urban life is composed of, to offer us a unique perception of the world. Its unusual productions invite us to listen differently to our sound environment and re-invent our relationship to music.

Besides producing its own works, Décor Sonore developed the Fabrique sonore (« The sonic Factory »), which supports innovative works by other artists and companies, especially in the fields of street arts and new scenes. Its activities include research in specific sound technology and media, education in sound and music staging, and acoustic ecology.

## Technical specifications

### Location

The loudspeakers are set up on a high point : rooftop or last floor of a building. There is no minimal height as long as the nearby buildings are lower, especially if they are occupied.

We need :

- daily access to the rooftop.
- power supply.
- a 25m2 locked-up room used as mobile studio/ control room as close to the building as possible (ideally inside).



*Loudspeakers on the rooftop*



*Control room*

### Audio equipment

To make sound come from the sky, specific audio equipment is required. For the project in New York, it could be useful to build a partnership with a manufacturer or a rental provider. Some particularly innovative French manufacturers (L.Acoustics, Nexo...), might collaborate and bring their expertise.

List of equipment required :

- speakers : 8 HP (example KIVA II by L.Acoustic.)
- amplifier : 1 amp (example LA4X by L.Acoustic.)
- grips : 4 stands (example T104, with couplers for KIVA KIET L.Acoustic.)
- wiring : 8 cables HP speakon 150' (50 m).

### Relations with locals

It is essential that the people living and working in the surrounding areas of the building where the loudspeakers are set up know who we are and why we are here for. Therefore, it is necessary to announce our presence in advance to as many locals as possible, for example using flyers and posters in the hall of the building, surrounding buildings, and local stores.

We use interfaces such as social media and a dedicated mailbox so that people can give us their feedback.

# THE CLOUDSPEAKERS

## Gardening the soundscape

### Contacts

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### Partners



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