

UNTAMED LISTENING: Reflections on the Undomestication of our Listening Practices

Daniela Medina Poch

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Craving silence and attention desperately, our oversaturated and individualistic western worlds have often overlooked and diminished the relevance of listening practices. Within the fiction of time and space scarcity, listening has come to be misunderstood as a protocol, a commodified service, a counterintuitive instinct, a sign of ‘passivity’, an interruption of our hyper accelerated pace – almost a sacrifice. Very often, listening occurs as a sign of ‘social respect’ and domestication. How can we understand listening as an untamed practice and how to expand the notion of the untamed beyond the binary of civilized and savage through listening? How could we desaturate our environments to reclaim our listening potential? How does listening serve as a tool for deothering and debordering? Which voices voice voice and what remains unvoiced? Which channels do we listen to and which remain unactivated? Who listens to those who listen? And how can an untamed listening become an emancipatory tool to detach from certain epistemologies and tune in with other frequencies?

Our notion of the tamed and untamed has been heavily influenced by the colonial duality of the civilized and the savage, a binary which sows a toxic correlation of frameworks that privilege certain worldviews – worldviews that maintain the hegemonic order, the standard, the social contract.

Embodying the untamed is thus undoing years and years, and centuries, of corporal oppression, of historical classifications and of gender performativity.

Incorporating the untamed is aligning the body with the landscape, both as a listening device and as a channel.

The untamed is not disorganized nor loose of structure, it is rather organized within a generative alignment and a profound order.

Within the untamed there is the possibility to conceive the yet unconceived.

What if we devise listening practices which understand the diversity of roles within the listening experience as dynamic interchangeable positions in flux, all vital and fundamental?

Untamed listening involves questioning the binarism of active and passive, transmitter and receiver, subject and object – untamed listening enables the dissolution of such divisions.

Untamed listening recognizes everything in the context as active subjects with agency, radical interdependent elements that send and receive, simultaneously, as transceivers. It recognizes that every element of the context adds a specific quality to the listening experience.

Right now, right here, we are all speaking and we are all receiving... I am also listening to you all.

Untamed listening contains the possibility of establishing common soil, and common earth amidst our differences, the possibility of melting borders between us, weaving us through what lies in between, what is yet uncategorizable.

Untamed listening is the possibility to feel / think together... the potentiality of conviviality.

Untamed listening involves establishing a pact, a tacit arrangement of compassion and empathy, as in feeling with the other, as in being a safe space for the other.

Untamed listening is to allow porosity play with opacity. A reciprocal consent to be touched. From the sound waves that travel across my clothes, my skin, my flesh, my bones shaking the concentration of all waters, both fluids and emotions – the relationship of sound and skin and sound and touch is multilayered.

To listen we must have time and space.

By defying the fiction of time and space scarcity, untamed listening generates time and space ... time and space across locations, across borders. In fact, it implies understanding there is enough room for every being.

Untamed listening involves generating a magnetic field of attraction beyond preconceptions and cannons, dealing with other laws of physics, opening unexpected doors and windows.

Furthermore, it involves developing a certain agency on how information goes through the body, shaping what remains and in which conditions it remains – how it ferments.

What is the breadth of your time and space?

Tuning both channels, the inner and the outer, and everything in between, untamed listening involves a negotiation, a confluence, an alignment of all voices inside and outside.

Assimilating the untamed is letting multiplicity occur through us, through an expanded us that recognizes that there are many bodies within and outside ourselves.

Untamed listening practices contain a horizontalizing potential, a potential for redistributing attention, for revealing the unseen, for harvesting space for those systematically and historically invisibilized or unheard.

What would our systems be like if listening spaces would enable dialogues in between structural power and citizens? What would our collective psyche be like if we were provided – or if we opened up – listening spaces?

Untamed listening implies listening between the lines, listening to the parentheses, listening to what is not said and to the unsaid, deciphering information within the information.

By recognizing listening channels and listening to the listening, borders and frontiers might become blurred and even dissipate. In this way, untamed listening can be a tool for de-othering and debordering.

Nevertheless very often listening has come to be misunderstood as an empty protocol, a commodified service, a counterintuitive instinct, an interruption to our train of thoughts and plans, a manifestation of ‘passivity’.

Who can afford listening spaces? And who listens to those who listen?

I believe that sometimes when we listen to ourselves, the planet is speaking through us, the planet is imagining through us. I believe untamed listening also enables this threshold, to listen within a situated context

while also listening within an extended context, to listen to and through and to become listening channels through which other elements can listen to, to become multidirectional plurisomic channels.

Untamed listening is non-linear and it enables us to access a realm of intertwined temporalities. We listen polyphonically, binaurally, from a wide range of angles, layers of identities, manifestations of life, interrelations.

Untamed listening involves understanding that everything is evoked in specific temporal spatial contexts. It implies understanding that **NOTHING REPEATS. NOTHING REPEATS. NOTHING REPEATS.**

No matter how many times words are evoked, they come up again at specific times and places – messages are interrelated within shifting contexts and untamed listening involves participating in and witnessing such complexity.

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Daniela Medina Poch (Bogotá, Colombia) is a visual artist, writer and researcher. From a research-based practice, her work aims to deconstruct hegemonic discourses which perpetuate asymmetric power relations. As a hybrid practitioner, Daniela develops site-specific artistic interventions, curates artistic programs, writes texts and carries out long term research processes. Daniela is currently part of the MA program at Kunst im Kontext - Universität der Künste Berlin, CO-RE collective and the Neue Auftraggeber network.