



August 1st 2024 Sound Art Diffusion Series

Contemplation on Water and Steel

Jess Conn-Potegal

What is Sound Art?

Sound is ubiquitous – be it a word, a musical note, thunder, or a bird call, we are constantly awash in it. So often sound is a side effect, a result. It indicates that there is a bird nearby, an idea being communicated. By contrast, Sound Art emphasizes the aural as both a means and an end unto itself. Sound becomes the subject as well as the medium.

Listening in-situ forges a bridge between sound and place: by creating music in a specific setting, soundscape becomes an integral part of landscape. This line of thinking facilitates artist Jess Conn-Potegal exploration of the JRSP as a sonic entity.

About the Artist

Jess Conn-Potegal is a musician, DJ, audio storyteller, and playlist curator based in Montreal. His work focuses on intuitive, embodied modes of sound production to create immersive aural environments. Having performed at numerous festivals across Canada – The Vancouver International Jazz Festival, Festival Internationale de Musique Actuelle among them – and been a member of the Broken Record Camber collective, Conn-Potegal works as a music consultant to design specialized auditory environments for corporate spaces.

About the Artwork

Artist talk at 11:30, with guided listening sessions throughout the day.

Jess Conn Potegal's 2023 *Contemplations on Water and Steel* is a sound-based exploration of Jeffery Rubinoff's sculptures. In collaboration with JRSP Curator Karun Koernig on bass, keys and flute, Conn-Potegal engages with Rubinoff's work as aural entities in this project: deploying mallets and contact microphones, he effectively plays the sculptures. The result is an assemblage of sculptural forms transposed into an auditory landscape, complimented by aural fragments from the natural environment.

Sound remains the subject of *Contemplations*, but it is also the instrument which enables it. In eliciting sounds from the sculptural forms, as well as collecting environmental noises from the grounds of the JRSP, Conn-Potegal explores sound as an organic occurrence – both contrived and natural.