

Joel Ong

ARTIST STATEMENT

Goethe was first to describe architecture as frozen music. Through an invisible connection, sound and space inform each other, implicating physical architecture as a sonic witness. Echoes reverberating from and through the walls intertwine with memory and construct a musical profile of every space we've ever known in our minds.

One of my earliest sonic memories was the sound of the room that I studied in as a kid - it was small, boxed, had only one window, and it echoed with a resonant ring when I stole a few moments every hour to kick a ball against the wall.

What is your earliest sonic memory?

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Systems/Polyphony

my works often begin in improvised ensembles where members come in the form of live instrumentalists, robotic assemblages, scientific apparatus, and digital data. They begin as experimental objects released from original intent and made to intertwine as polyphonic resonances, emphasizing the processes of communication and the unfolding informative relationships between them.

I am inspired by organic flux and transitional states such as those found in the wind and tides, and aim to express a nostalgia for what we remember as natural rhythms. Understanding more about our relationships with our environments is an interdisciplinary process, and at the core of my work is a commitment to explorations across different disciplines.

At the same time, every environment has a unique rhythm, a pattern and a lineage. My work proposes that the quintessential human nature is founded in constant adaptation and perennial motion, creating a rhythm through which we constantly improvise with our surroundings. I build instruments that rely on quotidian, pedestrian processes to subtly make shifts in the sonic environments. My digital, narrative works propose ways we might reinterpret universal concerns in conservation, migration, home and identity.

Most recently, I explore the idea of the serial migrant as a common identity, collecting memories from visitors and developing strategies for locating these narratives within the flux of social media and online data streams. I also utilize experimental 3D printing as a way to ornament these processes.

An artist with an interest in composite digital, biological environments, my research studio is programmatic, mobile, invisible, synthetic and noisy. My ideal gallery is often like its visitors, nomadic and transitional.