



The future belongs to those who can hear it coming

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ABSTRACT

Life-affirming soundscapes – the original organic narratives and audio signals from the living world – have been a primary source of information since receptive organisms first detected acoustic signals 550m years ago. What began and developed as splendid proto-orchestrations of melody, structure, rhythm, and texture, has devolved as a result of human endeavor into a chaotic and incoherent din of human noise.

Biophonies – the collective sound produced by all organisms in a given habitat – began at the inception of organic life and speak to the viability of habitat health. As time progressed to the present, we are now forging a giant cross-fade whose trajectory posits a future where natural sound disappears into an infinity of disquiet – one where humanity becomes overwhelmed by the presence of another strange signal – the sole reverberation of its own manifestation. It is an inflection point, a scenario that swells to a giant crescendo before fading out into dead silence as all the life force that powered it ceases to exist if we are not very careful.

This program will trace the history and power of natural soundscapes as they speak with their own special voice to the viability of the planet and ways to preserve it from decline primarily through the combined lenses of the environmental sciences and the fine arts whose languages we must learn to hear if we are to thrive.