

No.5

July  
August  
2024

*In the beginning  
was listening...*



MUSÉE RÉATTU

Sound Art  
Department

# On the air

## Phonurgia Nova Awards retrospective

– Listening Balcony

**Cicely Fell** *Call Signs*

**Nina Perry** *Melting Point*

– Listening Room

**Kaye Mortley** *Là-haut, le Struthof*



With *Call Signs*, Cicely Fell won the 'Archives de la Parole' Award at the last Phonurgia Nova festival, held in Paris at the Centre Wallonie Bruxelles last November. This masterful work uses a very special remote recording method to let us hear the voice of Volodymyr Gurtovy, a radio amateur living in Kyiv at the time of the Russian invasion. Barricaded in his flat where, since his family left for Poland, he lives alone with his hamster, the former lawyer and father, originally from Donbass, uses home-made antennas to listen to the broadcasts of Russian pilots and repairs his neighbours' transistors. A first-person narrative set during war, on Europe's doorstep. A lesson in generosity and radio.

# Listening Balcony

(4 Hi-Fi headphones)

Level 1 / Loggia

## Cicely Fell

*Call Signs* (2022, 27'30")

A Falling Tree production for *Lights Out*, BBC Radio 4.

Original music composed by Ollie Chubb.

First broadcast December 2022, BBC Radio 4

Man, Mouse and Morse: the story of a radio amateur in Kyiv as the Russian invasion unfolds. When his family flees to Poland, Volodymyr Gurtovy stays in their apartment with only his radios and his hamster for company. Before the war, he used to wander through the pine forests, weaving networks of wire antennas in the treetops with a fishing rod, to pick up signals from faraway countries. When martial law bans amateur radio transmissions, he becomes a listener, intercepting the conversations of Russian pilots and warning his neighbours to hide in shelters long before the sirens sound. After three months of silence, he begins transmitting again. During air raids, he hides behind the thickest wall in his hallway, close to his radios. A story of sending and receiving signals from within the Kyiv blackout.

*"A wonderful long-distance dialogue between a man in Kyiv who is crazy about radio and Cicely Fell, who finds him through shortwave listening. She sends him a recorder by means of a humanitarian convoy. He records himself; she is on the phone with him. He tells her how he lives; his family exiled in Poland, his life with the hamster that remains the only member of his family to talk to... He picks up messages from Russian soldiers and warns his neighbours of imminent attacks. He fixes other people's radios, watches the skies over Kyiv and talks to Cicely."*

Pascale Tison, member of the jury

*"Occasionally, there are moments of sheer beauty and audibility. A network of concealed signals is created, ghosts remind us of the history of a shattered Europe and open a realm of co-hearing that it is our duty to embrace."*

*Thank you Volodymyr Gurtovy for opening the doors of your infra-world to us. I extend all my affection to your cobbled-together aerials, your fragmented writing, your silent pine forests and your dormant fishing rods. You are as fine as your signals, and the tunes carry the score all the way here."*

Severine Jansenn, member of the jury

## Nina Perry

*Melting Point* (2009, 28'16")

A Falling Tree production

Violin performed by Pete Cooper, Voice Julia Traustadottir

First broadcast on BBC Radio 4

*Melting Point* explores both the human experience and musicality of ice as it melts. This "composed feature" by Nina Perry (whose previous BBC productions include the acclaimed *Sounding Post* and *Mirror, Mirror*) explores the icy landscapes of Greenland, Iceland and the Highlands of Scotland through recordings of environmental sounds, interviews with people going about their day to day lives and gathered music that expresses cultural and emotional connections to the weather.

The winter thaw into spring is a time most often associated with renewal and hope, yet paradoxically in light of climate change melting ice has taken on the more ominous connotation of disappearing ice mass and rising sea levels.

Among the voices heard are an Icelandic writer, a Greenlandic fisherman, a drama therapist for whom an ice cube provides a telling metaphor and an ice-climbing fiddle-playing mountain rescuer from the Cairngorms. Their words are interwoven with spectacular recordings of the Greenland ice sheet as it calves and destroys and a specially composed musical soundscape to reveal the dichotomy and emotional resonance of the thaw.

# Cicely Fell


Since her first short feature for RFI in a Parisian laundrette in 2003, Cicely has written and produced radio documentaries and podcasts for BBC Radio, among others. In her sound work, she weaves together landscape, music and memory, glimpses of everyday magic or human connection

# Listening Room

Level 1 / Room 18

## Kaye Mortley

« *Là-haut, le Struthof* », (June 2024, 38'50")

 Produced by Atelier de création radiophonique, France Culture

With Leon Boutbien, Roger Linné, Gilbert May and other former prisoners, José Flageolet, Jean-Paul Klee, Freddie Raphaël, Conrad Winter and others from Alsace, Voices: Jürgen Ellinghaus, Yvonne Steil and Mathilde

Production group: Eric Boisset, Monique Burguière, Ghislaine David

Texts: Aschenspur/Traces of ash Klaus F. Schmidt - Mâcon

Music: Gorecki

"Once, a long time ago - I was a student in Strasbourg at the time - I discovered the Struthof camp in the Vosges - the only officially established 'extermination' camp on French territory. It was a shock.

No one had ever told me it existed... At the time, the camp was still standing. Hidden in deep forests, rows of wooden barracks descended a mountainside so steep that no prisoner could escape... the gallows... the operating table... the crematorium... even the former deportee, a lad from the neighbouring village, who acted as a guide mimicking the tortures inflicted on those interned. I went there two or three times... In the end I was disgusted. I couldn't go back. Years went by... And I knew that I had to go back again... That I had to listen to this place of silence, that I had to try to make it speak... »

conjured through sound. One of the threads running through her work is radio itself, from the snippets of shortwave heard during the Moscow coup in 1991 (*Looping Swans*), to a Dust Bowl survivor's memories of the first radio broadcasts reaching Oklahoma's No Man's Land (*Dust Bowl Ballads*). Her documentaries have won international awards, including the Phonurgia Nova (2023), the Whicker's Documentary Award and the Grand Prix Marulic for best documentary (2017).

## Find out more

A radio interview (in French) with Cicely Fell, by Pascale Tison, for *Par Oui-dire* on La Première - RTBF. Available until 19/11/2024

## Nina Perry

As sound artist, she produces innovative pieces of audio works for BBC Radio. She has a strong interest in links between arts & health. In *Storytrails*, she developed an immersive psycho-geographical map of her home city for the 3D internet. Her documentaries marry soundscape, field recordings and electroacoustic composition with personal testimony and scores for instruments. She received a PhD awarded in 2017 (Bournemouth University). She teaches, researches and consults.

[www.ninaperry.co.uk](http://www.ninaperry.co.uk)

## Kaye Mortley

Born in Australia, after studying literature in Sydney and Melbourne, she gained a PhD in literature at the University of Strasbourg. She then began a career in radio, by chance, at the ABC (Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Sydney)... She discovered the work of the ACR at France Culture (where she did a year's internship), then returned to Australia, which she left in 1981 to settle in Paris and pursue her career as a freelance radio writer and director in France and elsewhere, notably at the Atelier de Création Radiophonique at France Culture. Her "sound writing" draws its material from "reality" (a reality that has been badly treated, jostled but never "transformed") and aspires to say what only sound can say.

**The DAS**, a pioneering Department of Sound Art in a museum that is already a pioneer in photography

Through a programme that draws on the Phonurgia Nova Awards and the legacy of the association of the same name, this sound art department, which is supported by the CNAP, is blazing a unique trail in the history of radio and sound creation, reshaping the realm of audible expression and redefining the traditional boundaries that have long separated the visual, spoken and aural spheres. By deliberately putting images on the back burner, the *Listening Room* and its subsidiary, the *Listening Balcony*, restore the native emotional power of sound, revealing the narrative and plastic power of works that use sound as their primary, if not exclusive, source material.

## A museum with a listening ear

Sound has reached the status of a fine art, in the same way as photography and video. To reflect this development, a "sound art department" was set up at the Musée Réattu in 2007. The first of its kind in France, developed in partnership with Phonurgia Nova, its aim is to explore the visual and radio approaches to sound in an unrestricted dialogue with its collections of painting, drawing, sculpture and contemporary photography. The name of this "Listening Room" is borrowed from a famous painting by René Magritte. The CNAP has been supporting this approach since 2018.

## To complement your visit

### Online museum

From Luc Ferrari to Hanna Hartman, from Francis Dhomont to Alessandro Bosetti, the greatest names in European radio and sound creation, past and present, are waiting for you on the [www.sonosphere.org](http://www.sonosphere.org) website developed jointly by Phonurgia Nova, the Musée Réattu and Deutschlandradio Kultur Berlin.

### Listen to Arles

47 sound itineraries in the city of Van Gogh are also available on [www.sonosphere.org](http://www.sonosphere.org) by Kaye Mortley and the students who have attended her *Creative Sound Documentary* workshop for 30 years. The Arles people and the streets of Arles, recorded day and night, are the inexhaustible source of inspiration.



**Phonurgia Nova** unveils artists who are driving forward the practice of sound as a medium and as an art form. Established in Arles in

1986, the association supports authors in their professional development and helps to promote them on European radio and digital media. Over 250 creators take part in its sound writing courses every year.

[www.phonurgia.fr](http://www.phonurgia.fr)



## RÉATTU THE PIONEER

An innovative commitment:  
the creation of the photography  
department, the invention of  
a sound art department.