



WETLAND PROJECT

The *Wetland Project* brings the sound and light of the TEKTEKSEN marsh to the “City of Light”

[Brady Marks](#) | [Mark Timmings](#) | [Stephen Morris](#)

[WETLAND PROJECT](#) | [Le Marais de TEKTEKSEN](#)

[Une immersion sonore dans la biodiversité de l’île Saturna](#)

[A sound immersion into the biodiversity of Saturna Island](#)

Organized by the [Canadian Cultural Centre in Paris](#)

curated by Catherine Bédard

with the contribution of

Les Cris de Paris, under the artistic direction of Geoffroy Jourdain

musica intima (Vancouver)

Aligre FM (Paris)

Radio Vassivière (Royère-de-Vassivière)

EXHIBITION

April 24–May 20, 2023

Monday to Friday, 10 am–6 pm (free access)

[130, rue Faubourg Saint-Honoré, 75008 Paris](#)

Featuring a monumental field-recording-to-colour-field new media installation and an exhibition of the *Wetland Senario* illuminated musical score accompanied by an audio recording by vocal ensemble [musica intima](#)

OPENING

[Earth Day, Saturday, April 22, 12 pm–8 pm](#)

4 pm, 5pm and 6 pm: [Live performances of *Wetland Senario*](#) by [Les Cris de Paris](#)

Online launch of the French translation of the texts from the artists' book [Wetland Project: Explorations in Sound, Ecology and Post-Geographical Art](#)

ON THE RADIO

7th annual *Wetland Project* slow radio broadcast

Earth Day, Saturday, April 22

[Aligre FM](#), Paris 93.1 FM

[Radio Vassivière](#), Royère-de-Vassivière 88.6 FM

Aubusson 88.0 FM / Ussel 92.3 FM / Meymac 103.1 FM

[Click here for the complete list of broadcast times for participating stations around the world.](#)

SPECIAL EVENT

La Nuit européenne des musées, Saturday, May 13, 6 pm–11 pm

Visit the *WETLAND PROJECT* exhibition late into the night!

The [*Wetland Project*](#) is a multipart, multidisciplinary study of an environmental soundscape based on a 24-hour field recording. Its inspiration lies in a tiny bit of Earth and the sounds that emanate from it: the ȚEKȚEKSEN marsh in unsundered WSÁNEĆ territory (Saturna Island, British Columbia). For ten years, this “more-than-human” soundscape featuring birds, frogs, insects and airplanes has been investigated by artists [Brady Marks](#) and [Mark Timmings](#), and musicologist [Stephen Morris](#), and shared with audiences around the world in the form of slow radio broadcasts, new media installations, musical performances, an illuminated score and an artists’ book. Each iteration of the *Wetland Project* delineates a distinct path to knowledge, a means by which the sonorous source is investigated in all of its dynamic, life-affirming power.

The presentation in France brings together all iterations of the *Wetland Project* for the first time. The exhibition at the Canadian Cultural Centre and the slow radio broadcasts provide an opportunity to engage with French audiences and pay homage to French artists who count among the influences and inspirations for the *Wetland Project*.

Listening practices have been deeply impacted by French composer and sound theorist Pierre Schaeffer. In the 1940s, he began to explore the use of recorded sounds (or “sound objects”), including sounds from the natural environment, as the raw material for music composition. The development of *musique concrète* and founding of the Groupe de recherches musicales in 1958 have opened ears in new ways and created a springboard for further exploration of sound by subsequent movements. One of these movements was the World Soundscape Project founded in the late 1960s by Canadian composer R. Murray Schafer. Its members initiated the discipline of acoustic ecology by studying relationships between humans and their environment through active listening. The *Wetland Project* builds on this legacy by seeking to relinquish authorship to the wetland creatures, letting the source material speak for itself.

Another key conceptual premise of the *Wetland Project* is rooted in an original algorithm that transforms sound frequencies from the field recording of the ȚEKȚEKSEN marsh into pure colour fields in flux. Works such as the *Wetland Project* new media installation find inspiration in the *Water Lily* paintings produced by French artist Claude Monet between 1897 and 1926. With their lavish applications of pure colour, they are considered to be one of the precursors of monochrome painting. The disappearance of the horizon line signals a relinquishment of the anthropomorphic ambition to organize and control nature through perspectival space. Afflicted by cataracts during the later years of his life, Monet’s perception of colour shifted and the palette of his painting yellowed and darkened. Following surgery, one hundred years ago, in 1923, the rich blues and greens were restored to the final *Water Lilies* he produced. Considering Monet’s failing eyesight, and his interest in capturing the atmospheric qualities of place in his work, it is

tempting to speculate that the vibrant soundscape of frogs and birds he heard at Giverny might have also influenced his painting.

In the writing of *Wetland Senario*, the role of composers Stephen Morris and Mark Timmings is essentially that of scribe. The piece is a strict transcription of soundscapes from field recordings of the ȚEKȚEKSEN marsh onto a musical score. The true composer is the marsh itself. While *Wetland Senario* is notable for its holistic approach, the inclusion of wildlife sound notation in musical composition has a rich history. Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992), one of the major French composers of the 20th century, was also an ornithologist. His lifelong passion for birdsong led him to notate the calls of the birds he loved and arrange them into his musical compositions. Messiaen was a synesthete who perceived colour in music and, on occasion, included notations on colour in his scores. The *Wetland Project*, including the *Wetland Senario* illuminated score, finds resonance in this multisensorial aspect of Messiaen’s work and its power to amplify our perception and to re-enchant our relationship with the natural world. Les Cris de Paris, one of France’s most innovative musical ensembles, will perform *Wetland Senario* during the opening celebrations at the Canadian Cultural Centre on Earth Day.

The *Wetland Project* respectfully acknowledges that its work takes place on the unsundered, ancestral lands and waters of the W̱SÁNEĆ First Nations and within the extended territories of the Huldumíruń and hən̓čəmíróń-speaking peoples.

Artists Brady Marks and Mark Timmings wish to thank curator Catherine Bédard and her team at the Canadian Cultural Centre for their support and enthusiastic commitment to bring the *Wetland Project* to France. Merci to Benjamin Narvey for the introduction to Les Cris de Paris whose vocalists, under the artistic direction of Geoffroy Jourdain, bring their sensitivity and creativity to the live performances of *Wetland Senario*. Thanks also to vocal ensemble music intima for the beautiful recording of their performance of the piece. Much gratitude to Aligre FM and Radio Vassivière for disseminating the slow radio broadcast to French listeners. The artists also wish to acknowledge recording engineer Eric Lamontagne, programmer Gabrielle Odowichuk, donor Loren Smith, and Jean-François Renaud for their enormous contributions to the *Wetland Project*. Finally, a special nod to Karen Love for seeding the idea to bring the ȚEKȚEKSEN marsh to Paris.



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