

re-worked outside & beyond any real-time. something concrete & flexible, able to be the sound on magnetic tape changes into real-time—as in early sound film & radio of being confined to mixing or editing in & a praxis of splicing & cutting. Instead & re-record onto the same medium begins— With tape the potential to record, erase, audio is electrified & printed onto tape. sound become 'frozen' onto media & slowly in memory. By the 19th century figures of sound was once an ephemeral sense hard to the advent of magnetized tape recordings. Sonic possibilities are revolutionized by

Reel-to-reel tape does Hi-Fi at the hands of German engineers under WWII Nazi rule. After the war ends, Hollywood adopts tape recording, with significant interest from Bing Crosby, & the format begins to snake into a commercial form for entertainment. In Europe, Pierre Schaeffer & his 'Groupe de Recherche de Musique Concrète' attract the attention of avant-garde composers; & in the US, experiments with tape are made by Les Paul & Ross Bagdasarian. It didn't take long for tape effects—delay, phase, etc—to become an everyday part of studio practice. Think of: Delia Derbyshire, The Beatles, King Tubbey, or Pauline Oliveros.

One of the practices enabled by recording to tape is the potential to create loops. Repetition of sound is a technique old as music itself, but the prospect of a sound repeating 'exactly' only appears with the dawn of recording. Tape loops make this a simple procedure. Whether long & extended—such as the work of Fripp & Eno or also Eliane Radigue—or short & brief—like in Steve Reich or James Tenney—loops extend the capacity of listening. In the former, new soundscapes are dreamed up as Ambient Music or what would later be named Drone. Loops allow a musician to generate layers of sound in real-time procedurally, so an impossible sound spans new architecture. In the latter, snippets of sonic material become raw matter to compose with, a loop

the deep listening club
passos manuel

#5: tape
2025

Sonic possibilities are revolutionized by the advent of magnetized tape recordings. Sound was once an ephemeral sense hard to pin down: all that one heard vanished but in memory. By the 19th century figures of sound become 'frozen' onto media & slowly audio is electrified & printed onto tape. With tape the potential to record, erase, & re-record onto the same medium begins— & a praxis of splicing & cutting. Instead of being confined to mixing or editing in real-time—as in early sound film & radio—the sound on magnetic tape changes into something concrete & flexible, able to be re-worked outside & beyond any real-time.

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allowing for novel perceptions to appear. Repeating a phrase can transform what can be heard in it. This can be exaggerated a bit further when the repetition is exact.

The ubiquity of people walking the street with headphones on has its history in the development of magnetic tape as well. The first portable audio players were reel-to-reel machines made in the 1950's, mostly used by reporters. By the 1960's, Philips produces a battery-operated recorder with compact cassette. Meanwhile, 8-track tape—an ill-fated format, due to its serious bulkiness & inconvenience—became popular for use at homes & in car stereos. As the tape deck began to eclipse the 8-track in popularity, Sony releases the Walkman. It transformed portable audio in 2 ways: the tape player offered high-resolution sound in convenient size; & came with a pair of stereo headphones, rather than a built-in speaker. The way music was to be consumed had gone through a considerable mutation.

Cassette tapes have never left, & artists continue to release on the format. It may be due to the cheapness of its production or a bout of nostalgia, but tape cultures maintain a DIY connection that many other formats of audio do not. Tape-trading was an important part in the growing networks of certain genres: metal, noise, punk. As cassettes were quite easy to duplicate at the consumer level, tapes could be shared & created with little expertise. This led to the secondary economies of the bootleg & of the mixtape: formats to share sounds before the web would remodel music again.

Some of what was heard:

anna & matthew.....WATERMELONS IN SPACE
homnimal.....VOCAL STUDIES #21

&

max eilbacher.....antônio feiteira
inês malheiro.....the angströmers
dj crackle & dj skip.....trauma sutra
portuguese band of san josé 1997..1 con

bring-your-own-tape [cassettes & reels]

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why have you done today?

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