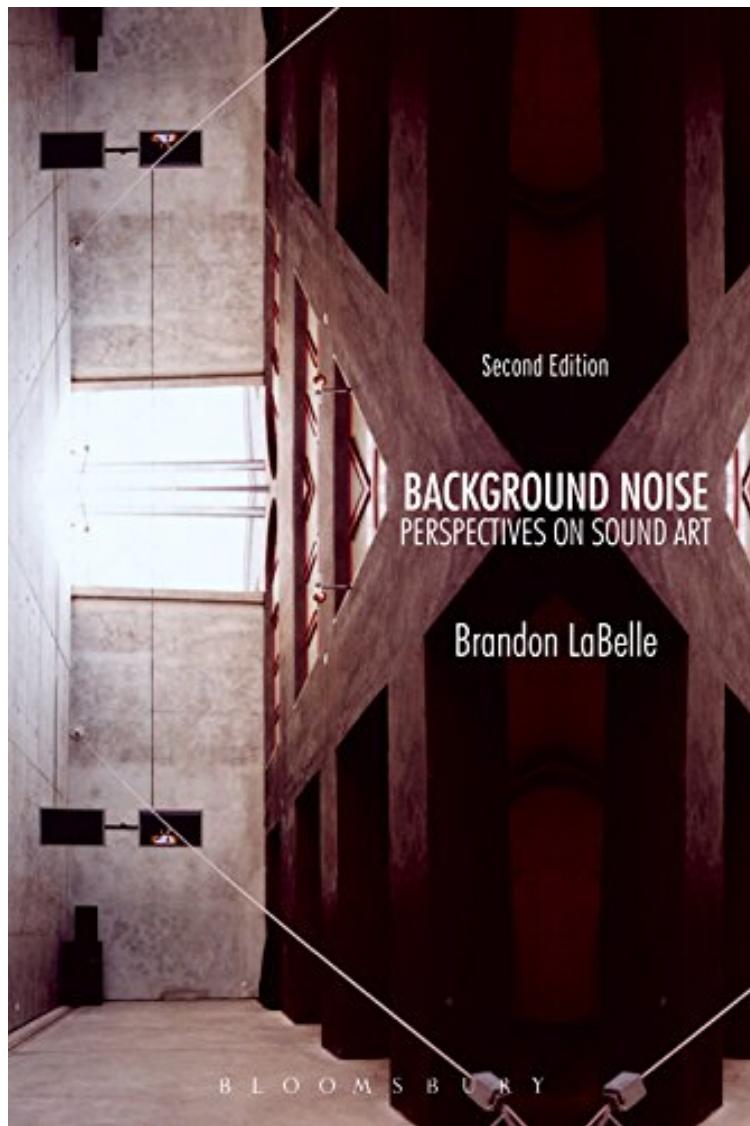


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## Background Noise, Second Edition: Perspectives on Sound Art

*Brandon LaBelle*

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Background Noise follows the development of sound as an artistic medium and illustrates how sound is put to use

within modes of composition, installation, and performance. While chronological in its structure, Brandon LaBelle's book is informed by spatial thinking - weaving architecture, environments, and the specifics of location into the work of sound, with the aim of formulating an expansive history and understanding of sound art. At its center the book presupposes an intrinsic relation between sound and its location, galvanizing acoustics, sound phenomena, and the environmental with the tensions inherent in what LaBelle identifies as sound's relational dynamic. For the author, this is embedded within sound's tendency to become public expressed in its ability to travel distances, foster cultural expression, and define spaces while being radically flexible. This second expanded edition includes a new chapter on the non-human and subnatural tendencies in sound art, revisions to the text as well as a new preface by the author. Intersecting material analysis with theoretical frameworks spanning art and architectural theory, performance studies and media theory, *Background Noise* makes the case that sound and sound art are central to understandings of contemporary culture.

The rise of a prominent auditory culture, as seen in the recent plethora of art exhibitions on sound art, in conjunction with academic programs dedicated to "aural culture", sonic art, and auditory issues now emerging, reveals the degree to which sound art is lending definition to the 21st Century. And yet sound art still lacks related literature to compliment, and expand, the realm of practice. Written by *The Wire*'s contributor Brandon LaBelle, *Background Noise* sets out an historical overview, while at the same time shaping that history according to what sound art reveals-the dynamics of art to operate spatially, through media of reproduction and broadcast, and in relation to the intensities of communication and its contextual framework. *The Wire* 2010 *Background Noise* follows the development of sound as an artistic medium and illustrates how sound is put to use within modes of composition, installation, and performance. While chronological in its structure, Brandon LaBelle's book is informed by spatial thinking - weaving architecture, environments, and the specifics of location into the work of sound, with the aim of formulating an expansive history and understanding of sound art. Dailywatch.com Reading *Background Noise* for the first time introduced me to the world of sound art, to its rich history, its incredible variety of concrete works, its overview of artists working in the field, and its discourses. It taught me how to think about sound in relation to space instead of time. Now, some seven years later, *Background Noise* is still one of my most important sources. It is a must-read for anyone interested in auditory culture and sound art. Marcel Cobussen is editor-in-chief of *The Journal of Sonic Studies* and co-editor of *The Routledge Sounding Art Companion* (2015) There are stones here. Stones gathered with great shrewdness by Brandon LaBelle from the broad shore of relational artistic practice; each carries the weight of its own historical significance; each is perfectly shaped to deliver its conceptual impact; each is thrown outwards in just the right sequence and with just the right trajectory to set the ripples running, producing patterns that continue to inspire the reader long, long after the momentum of the book has come to rest. *Background Noise* is the very best of books: as reverberant as the phenomena it so beautifully articulates. Angus Carlyle, Professor of Sound and Landscape, University of the Arts London, UKAbout the Author Brandon LaBelle is an artist and writer working with sound culture and locational identities. His previous book, *Background Noise: Perspectives on Sound Art*, was published in 2006 by Bloomsbury Academic. He is the editor of Errant Bodies Press and organizer of the related Surface Tension project. He is currently Professor at the National Academy of the Arts in Bergen, Norway.