

Listening as Composition: a colloquium with Steven Feld

March 21-22, 2017 – Milan, Italy

Promoted by

University of Milan – Department of Cultural and Environmental Heritage;
Laboratory of Ethnomusicology and Visual Anthropology (LEAV)

In collaboration with

Conservatory of Music “Giuseppe Verdi”, Milan
Department of Composition and New Technologies

Steven Feld is an American sound artist/performer, anthropologist, and linguist. He is among the most complex and representative figures at the intersection of musical genres and practices over the last decades. He has moved with nonchalance from the field recordings to soundscape composition, as well as from the academic activity to the production of audiovisual documentaries. An intense theoretical reflection has supported his multiple engagements, resulting in the publication of important works; among them, the monograph *Sound and Sentiment* (2012 3rd edition) (Italian translation: *Suono e sentimento*, il Saggiatore, Milano 2009).

After his path-breaking research project in the Bosavi rainforest of Papua New Guinea from 1976-2000, Feld has conducted subsequent studies in other geographical and cultural areas, such as Europe and West Africa, where he focused on cross-cutting issues ranging from the social and musical roles that bells play in cultures worldwide to the sounding of festivals in Southern Italy and jazz cosmopolitanism in Ghana.

The seminar, hosted by the University of Milan and the Conservatory of Music “G. Verdi”, will take place in Milan on March 21-22, 2017. On this occasion, some aspects of Feld’s rich musical activity will be taken under closer examination, especially from the moment of listening and recording sound events to their organization through compositional processes and by the means of recording and editing technologies. Thus, the event will be an opportunity to reflect on the intersections between technological issues, ethnographic approaches and compositional practice, even in its multimedia forms.

The central moment will be the listening to a 25th anniversary concert edition of *Voices of the Rainforest*, newly recomposed in the 7.1 cinema surround sound format. The acousmatic concert performance in Sala Puccini, Tuesday, March 21, 2017 at 9pm will be a European premiere of this newly completed work.

Moments of dialogue and theoretical reflection, along with the presentation from other sound and film works, will take place both at the University and at the Conservatory.

Program

Tuesday, March 21, 2017

Conservatory of Music “G. Verdi”
via del Conservatorio, 12

10:30 AM, Foyer G. Verdi

A conversation with Feld; introduced and coordinated by Nicola Scaldaferrì.

6:30 PM, Sala G. Puccini

Open rehearsal of the concert

9:00 PM, Sala G. Puccini

Voices of the Rainforest (1991/2017), by Steven Feld (68'32")

Acousmatic Concert in 7.1 Surround Sound

Wednesday, March 22, 2017

University of Milan

via Noto, 8

11:00 AM

Book presentation: *When the Trees Resound. Collaborative Media Research on an Italian Festival* (Nota, Udine, 2017) edited by Nicola Scaldaferrì and Steven Feld. English translation of *I suoni dell'Albero. Il Maggio di S. Giuliano ad Accettura* (2012) edited with an introduction by Lorenzo Ferrarini.

12:30 AM

Film screening: *JC Abbey; Ghana's Puppeteer* (2016). A film by Steven Feld and *Anyaa Arts Kollektif*.