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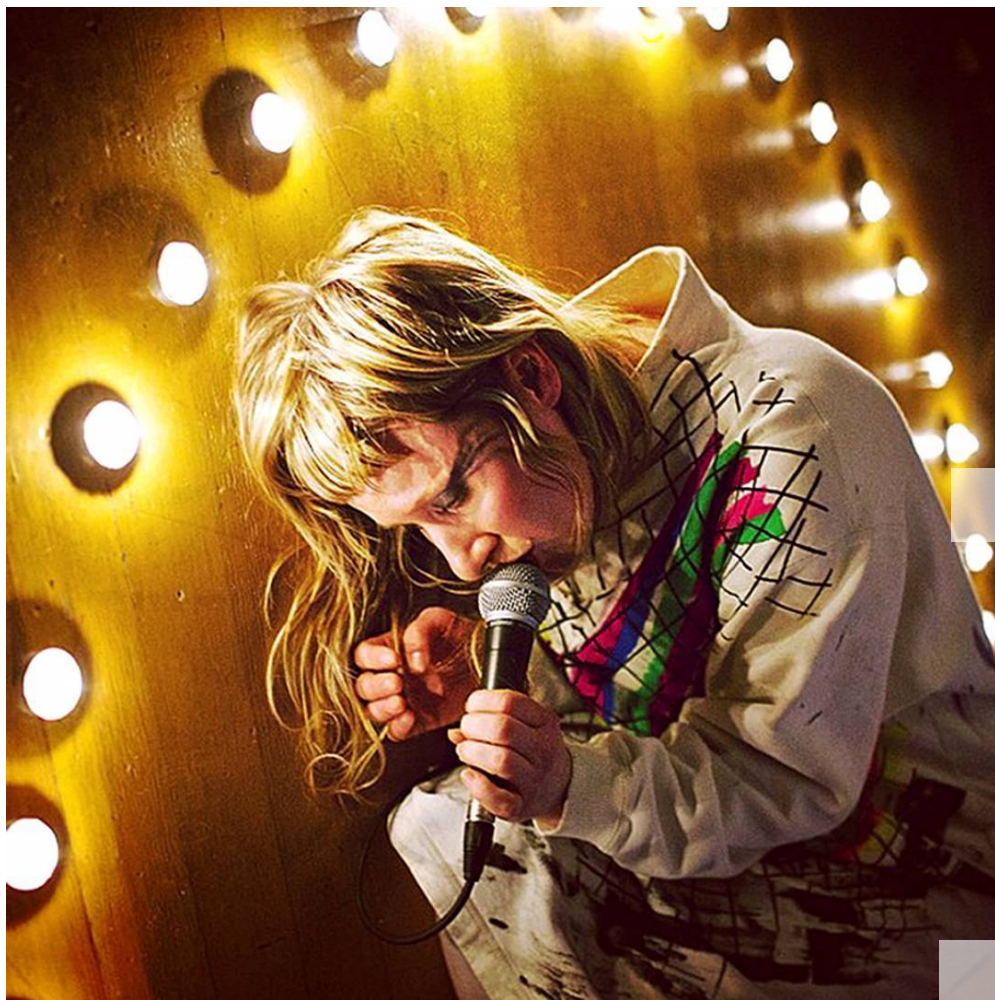
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# International Symposium on Electronic Art takes high tech to the park

At ISEA, Oscillations offers multimedia installations, voice processors, and even dog frequencies

by Alexander Varty on August 12th, 2015 at 12:10 PM

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Local sonic explorer prOphesy sun brings high-tech sounds to an urban oasis.

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Booked into this urban oasis on False Creek's south shore as part of Oscillations, one of the public components of the [International Symposium on Electronic Art](#), the two multimedia creators have decided to honour their site in a very specific way.

"The space we're going to be using is, technically, a dog park," explains sun, reached at home in East Vancouver. "And since the theme of this year's ISEA is disruption, we're imagining, if you will, that we're being parachuted into the landscape. So with *Send and Receive*, we're coming at it like alien life forms, or investigators. We have costumes that are kind of handmade, parachutelike outfits, with large booms that will come from our backs, and what we'll be doing in the space is really

investigating our relationships with that environment. And since the location is a dog park, in addition to the movement I'm going to be making a score which will incorporate frequencies that we can't hear, although dogs can hear them."

Humans *will* hear sun singing into an array of electronic processors, along with a variety of repurposed sounds collected on prior visits to the park and amplified through clean-fuel-powered speakers. "The sounds will be planes or helicopters or the sounds of the ocean—just other things that are close to that environment," says sun, a wildly imaginative electronic composer and performance artist.

Rosner and sun's contribution is likely to be the most performative part of the evening, but it's not the only one that looks at the unique sonic properties of this waterfront park. Oscillations begins at 7:45 p.m., with a sound walk led by acoustic ecologist and composer Jean Routhier; moves on to *Send and Receive*; and closes with a display of 15 electronic art installations curated by LocoMotoArt's Laura Lee Coles, in collaboration with Vancouver New Music and the Vancouver park board.

"We're a group of multidisciplinary artists who want to bring a new form of digital exhibition to audiences," says Coles, in a phone conversation from her Kits home. "Our goal, mostly, is to re-envision urban space, so that we go out into a park or an arboretum or somewhere where there's outdoor, natural urban space, and provide the experience of technology along with the nature experience."

A still from Geronimo Inutiq's *ARCTICNOISE*.

Part of the idea, she continues, is that both natural and multimedia environments are "multisensory". When combined, they induce a unique openness toward art and a willingness to expand what we think might be possible within the urban landscape. In that context, Charleson Park seems an ideal laboratory.

"The park is a built environment," says Coles, acknowledging that it's an architect's vision, not a relic of the forests that once lined False Creek. "But there are times when you can kind of disappear into the trees and hear the birds and smell the pines."

Many of Oscillations' 22 artists, she adds, are taking that as their starting place. "We have

a piece called *Old Stream*, and it's presented by sound artist Dave Leith," she notes. "Dave has gotten maps from the Vancouver Archives, and they show where a lot of the old streams used to be....He's looking at the historical route of the stream that used to go through Charleson, and he's got a visual element with it as well, where people will experience looking off into the distance and seeing this big, huge sphere—and it's the embryo of a fish. So there's this combination of the sense of the stream and the possibility of the cycle of life that's in the stream."

Art alone won't bring salmon back to False Creek, once a major fish nursery. But Leith's installation might help spark the public will to make that happen—and at the very least offer a strange and magical respite from ordinary urban clatter.

**Oscillations, copresented by LocoMotoArt and Vancouver New Music as part of the 2015 International Symposium on Electronic Art, takes place at Charleson Park on Sunday (August 16).**

Follow Alexander Varty on Twitter [@alexandervarty](#).

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