



Leif Inge, *9 Beet Stretch*, 2004, installation view, 964 Natoma, San Francisco. Courtesy the artist

# sound art:

(lydkunst)

words Erlend Hammer

## Remastered masters

Norway's most well-known contribution to the sound art canon is Leif Inge's *9 Beet Stretch* (2002–), in which a recording of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony is stretched to 24 hours, without any of the symphony's pitches changing. The result is a long drone that alternates gradually between the tender and the overwhelming – transformations that can require more than 20 minutes to take effect. The work is as important for its reconfigured musical relationship to Beethoven as for its development of a social space among a group of people who, at the work's end, have spent 24 hours together. There is nothing quite like hearing the slowed down entry of the famous fourth movement while half-asleep on a church floor at five in the morning.

## Bringing it all back home

The grandeur of *9 Beet Stretch* makes it atypical, as much sound art in Norway tends to feature sound on a more understated scale. At this year's Høstutstillingen, the annual exhibition organised by the Norwegian Artists Association in Oslo, the buzz was around twenty-year-old art student Kristoffer Myskja's installation *The Sound of...* (*the Sound of Cotton, the Sound of Coffee, the Sound of Gold*) (2006). The work is a sculptural triptych in which a collection of items – a cotton bud, a piece of gold and a coffee bean – plip, plop and scratch their way across various surfaces, creating sounds that are barely audible to the audience. The young artist's piece alluded to an important work presented by Maia Urstad and Sissel Lillebostad, *Where Are the Monuments?*, at Høstutstillingen in 1987 – a work that, in retrospect, has become an important reference point for many young artists. Similarly combining everyday objects with small everyday sounds, Urstad and Lillebostad's piece discreetly responded to the huge, throbbing maleness of so much 1980s art.

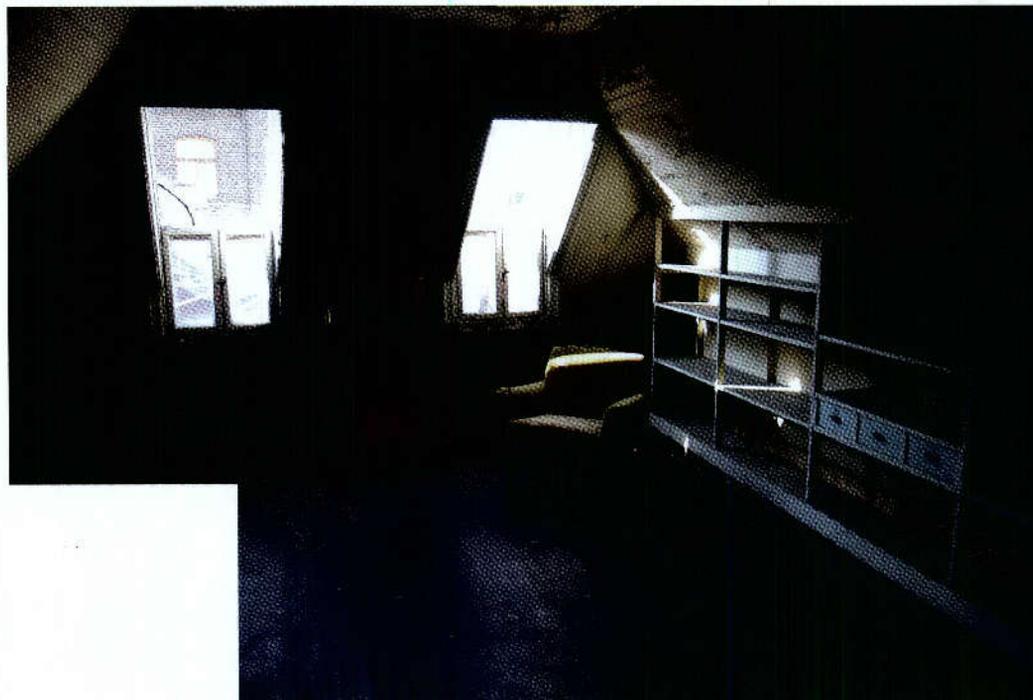


Maia Urstad and Sissel Lillebostad, *Where Are the Monuments?*, 1987, audiovisual installation. Courtesy the artists

ArtReview:  
Norwegian art scene

Sounding off

While Oslo may have the most vibrant art scene in general, the centre of Norwegian sound art is in Bergen, which is home to a number of artists and to the project space Lydgalleriet, which is about to open a sound art gallery – giving sound art its first real Norwegian home. Above right: Jørgen Larsson, director of the Lydgalleriet, and the artist Maia Urstad. Below: A recent sound installation at the space, Arne Bakke's *Untitled*



Geir Jenssen, *Recordings from Tibet*, 2006.  
Album cover design by Jon Wozencroft.  
Courtesy Ash International/Touch

Geir Jenssen  
**Cho Oyu 8201m**  
*Field Recordings from Tibet*

Day 3

*We are sitting in a café in Kathmandu discussing high altitude medicine. For or against. Most members have already started to use Diamox, a medicine used to reduce the symptoms of edema (an excess storage of water by the body that leads to localized swelling or puffiness) and altitude sickness. It is also used to treat a number of disorders, including the control of epileptic seizures in those who suffer epilepsy.*

*Unwanted side effects while taking Diamox include drowsiness, fatigue, or a dizzy lightheaded feeling. Other common side effects include shortness of breath. In some cases, individuals may suffer depression, pains in the area of the kidneys, and bloody or black tarry stools.*

*I have already decided not to use Diamox.*



Ash International # Ash 71  
MADE IN ENGLAND



Arne Bakke, *Untitled*, 2006,  
sound installation, Lydgalleriet. Photo: Eirik  
Lande. © the artist. Courtesy Lydgalleriet

World directions

Geir Jenssen – a musician who has released music under the name Biosphere for almost two decades and who composed the sound for the original *Insomnia* (dir. Erik Skjoldbjærg, 1997) – is about to release an album of field recordings from Nepal. The delicate sounds of the new work create a politically charged listening experience, exploring questions of internationalism and global ecology.

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