



## Research > MEMORABILIA. COLLECTING SOUNDS WITH... ED VEENSTRA

MEMORABILIA. COLLECTING SOUNDS WITH... seeks to break through to unearth and reveal private collections of music and sound *memorabilia*. It is a historiography of sound collecting that reveals the unseen and passionate work of the amateur collector while reconstructing multiple parallel histories such as the evolution of recording formats, archiving issues, the collecting market and the evolution of musical styles beyond the marketplace.

Each episode in the series is accompanied by an additional programme featuring an exclusive music selection by each of the collectors.

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Produced by Genís Segarra.

Genís Segarra is a musician. Since 1996, he has been the public face and artistic mastermind of Barcelona-based collective and record label Austrohúngaro, and a member of the groups Astrud and Hidrogenesse. He has produced, remixed and released projects by independent electronic pop groups that exaggerate all the strengths and weaknesses of consumer pop music, except one: business. [www.austrohungaro.com](http://www.austrohungaro.com)

Dutch collector Ed Veenstra collects all kinds of music-objects by plastic artists (a total of around 3,500) who have worked with sound at some point in their careers. Records, but also what he calls Anti-records, strange, impossible and unclassifiable formats that approach the object from a radically different perspective and exceed the traditional functions of the medium. His thorough and detailed collection and classification work sheds light on the art world's fascination with sound and music.

# MEMORABILIA. COLLECTING SOUNDS WITH...

Ed Veenstra

Dutch collector Ed Veenstra is one of the world's leading authorities on the genre of Broken Music: records and paramusical works produced by visual artists and other avant-garde creators. Veenstra's collection meticulously brings together thousands of examples of this and other 'accursed' genres. Rarities of all kinds that offer an alternative reading of twentieth century art and music, and an obsessive self-portrait of their collector.

## 01. Summary

In reference to the work of the collector, Walter Benjamin wrote that the objects in a collection do not 'come alive in him; it is he who lives in them.' This quote is totally applicable to Dutch collector Ed Veenstra. Suffering from asthma as a child, Veenstra spent the first years of his life virtually confined to his house. His parents, who had discovered the soothing properties of music, constantly played all types of records for him. According to him, this sealed his fate as a compulsive hunter of sound rarities. These days, Veenstra not only lives literally surrounded by his objects of desire, he also tells how he sacrificed his lifestyle and diet for years in order to acquire the more than 3,500 pieces that make up his collection. Veenstra is one of the foremost collectors of Broken Music, an umbrella term coined by Ursula Block and Michael Glasmeier to refer to the musical and paramusical objects conceived by visual and other avant-garde artists experimenting with the record medium. The catalogue of the homonymous exhibition curated by Block and Glasmeier at Daad Galerie in Berlin in 1988 compiled much of the material that had been published up until then by artists from around the world.

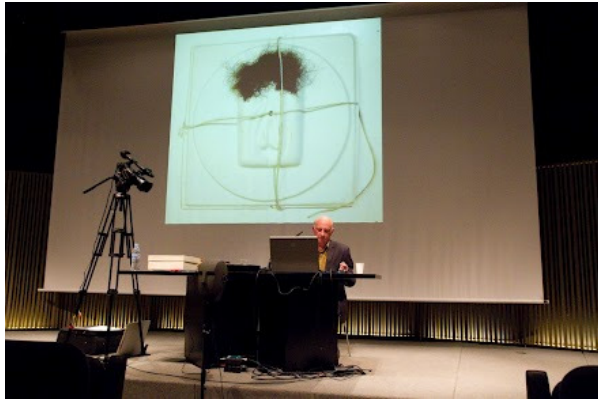
From Marcel Duchamp's kinetic-optical discs to Jean Dubuffet's numerous musical experiments, Nam June Paik's sound-themed performances and, of course, ontological reflections by Christian Marclay and many others, the catalogue (which collectors still venerate as the ultimate guide to the genre) compiled all types of record-objects, acoustic documents of art installations and events, anti-records, sound sculptures, and simply records designed to challenge the original function of the format and transcend the musical sphere. With obsessive fetishism, Veenstra's collection draws together the objects in this strange category that has been pushed into the background in conventional accounts. A no man's land that lies between the art and musical establishments (without fitting into either of them) and offers a historical snapshot of several generations of creators who saw records as more than just another medium: an icon of the culture of the times, and a symbol of what Benjamin called 'the age of mechanical reproduction.'

Ed Veenstra collects musical objects of all types by artists who have worked with sound at some point in their careers. Records, but also what he calls Anti-records, strange, impossible formats that resist classification and approach the object from a radically different perspective, going beyond the traditional functions of the record medium.

## 02. Playlist

### Part I

- Bigfoot 'Untitled' (1996)
- Julio César Morales & Eamon Ore-Giron 'Dengue Mix' (2003)
- Black Sun Productions 'Glüewürmlitanz' (2004)
- Honey-Suckle Company 'Eau D'ohn End' (c. 2000)
- Theodoros 'Manipulation III' (1977)



[Ed Veenstra during the lecture MEMORABILIA. COLLECTING SOUNDS WITH...]

Gust Gils 'Resonance' (1970)  
Marina Rosenfeld 'Simply Beautiful' (1998)  
Nathalie Bles '+New Cult+' (2010)  
Peter Baren 'Haard' (1987)  
Nam June Paik 'My Jubilee Ist Unverhemmet' (1977)  
Laurie Anderson 'Tape Bow Song for Juanita' (1977)  
Florence Marley 'Space Boy' (1966)  
The Whippets 'I Want to Talk to You' (1964)  
Barbara, The Gray Witch 'Witch's Love Song' (c. 1970)  
Artista desconegut 'Out of this World' (1953)  
Christopher Robin 'Down on the Pond' (1929)  
Mclaren Welschriesling & Muskat Ottonel & Pinot Gris & McLaren Sämling  
'Quartet' (1996)  
Unknown artist, unknown title (c. 1940)  
Jan Dibbets 'Afsluitdijk 1969. Driving 5 Km on a Straight Road with a Constant  
Speed of 100 Km' (1969)  
Dennis Oppenheim 'Theme from a Major Hit' (1974)  
Vassily Smyslov 'Stenka Rasin' (1981)

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### 03. Related links

MEMORABILIA. COLLECTING SOUNDS WITH... lecture series, Spring 2011  
[www.macba.cat/en/memorabilia](http://www.macba.cat/en/memorabilia)

Conversation with Ed Veenstra, Spring 2011  
[rwm.macba.cat/en/extra/memorabilia\\_ed\\_veestra\\_conversation/capsula](http://rwm.macba.cat/en/extra/memorabilia_ed_veestra_conversation/capsula)

Lecture  
[www.macba.cat/en/audio-ed-veenstra](http://www.macba.cat/en/audio-ed-veenstra)

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### 04. Acknowledgements

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