

About the artist

Angelina Almanza holds a BFA in New Media from Toronto Metropolitan University. Her work combines art and technology to create immersive experiences - blending music theory, visual art, design, storytelling, and creative coding around current themes of interest. This variety of techniques encourages "play" in her workflow - experimenting with mediums to explore their potential for subversion or exploitation while developing diverse production and fabrication skills.

Angelina Almanza is the 2024 winner of the InterAccess Media Arts Prize.

About the writer

Sierra Weston is a Toronto based artist and writer from the California Bay Area. She holds a B.A. from the University of California, Davis in Design and Art History, as well as an M.A. in Art History from the University of Toronto. Weston's visual work engages natural and digital landscapes through the mediums of ceramics, sound, and performance. She is fascinated by the ways that the human mind and memory fracture the logic of systems that are created in an attempt to decipher the chaos of the natural world. She has been an Artist-in-Residence at PIX Film Gallery, and as a member of two experimental music groups, Ecotone Orchestra and Sweet Lips, she sings and plays the no-input mixer.

About the InterAccess Media Arts Prize

Since 1990, the InterAccess Media Arts Prize has been granted annually to a graduating student whose work exhibits excellence and innovation in new media practice. Faculty from university programs within the GTA are invited to nominate a student to be considered for a solo exhibition in InterAccess's gallery. Nominations are adjudicated by InterAccess's Programming Committee, who select a prize winner to be awarded a solo exhibition opportunity, a complimentary one-year studio membership, and professional development and mentorship. All finalists receive a complimentary one-year studio membership to InterAccess and an opportunity for a public artist talk.

Inter/Access

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interaccess.org

Gallery Hours
Tuesday—Saturday
11AM—6PM
Admission is always free

Founded in 1983, InterAccess is a non-profit gallery, educational facility, production studio, festival, and registered charity dedicated to emerging practices in art and technology. Our programs support art forms that integrate technology, fostering and supporting the full cycle of art and artistic practice through education, production, and exhibition. InterAccess is regarded as a preeminent Canadian arts and technology centre.

InterAccess thanks our funders for their continued support.



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RESONANCE

**InterAccess
Media Arts Prize 2024
Exhibition by
Angelina Almanza**

January 15 - February 15, 2025

**Essay by
Sierra Weston**

The air gets tight upon entering the gallery space of Angelina Almanza's *Resonance*. An atmospheric shift occurs. It's similar to entering a dark, dank chapel or a clearing of trees. There is an unexpected holiness here; it can catch you off guard. It feels devoted to something larger, of which you immediately become a part of. *Resonance*, after all, is about participation through embodied listening. Realize that you are not simply skin, that you are also goo and light and water. There is no choice to be made: upon entrance you become a part of this chorus. The vibration runs through you and you become a part of the equation. To resonate is to be one with others.

Four monolithic pillars rise through low lighting, singing close to the ground. Four others are adjacent presences. Within every one of the pillars is a small computer, attuned to a server

that attaches each to an algorithm. As they move between notes, they are listening to one another and adjusting accordingly, choosing what note to sing next based on what is being sung around them. In the centre of the ring of pillars, a circular rug encourages you to lay down, as one would at the base of a tree or in dewy grass. If you feel an immediate hesitation you must fight it, allow yourself to be permeated by atmosphere and architecture.

I became a part of the equation. I feel like you could split me into quarters if you wanted to. I could become this singing ring of pillars. You could split me into fours and mold each one to be tall and thin. To be proud and menacing. To intimidate and stretch and arch and stand firm. To be immovable. I feel as though I could become one of them, to join in their oscillating chorus, to sing and scream as though we are many cicadas

crouched in a cluster of trees. To be one with the others. I have been thinking about a line at the start of Walt Whitman's *Song of Myself*, "for every atom that belongs to me as good belongs to you". I think about how each sound I hear physically moves through my body and touches my skin. This can be the sound of another voice, the singing of someone next to me, the prayers, the hopes, the wishes. I think about how I am a part of all of these sounds, and they, in turn, are a part of me. I hear it in my ears; I feel it in my bones.

As I think of resonance, I think not just of relationships with other people, but also relationships with tools and instruments. Instruments can become owners of their own presence, and I know one quite well, the no-input mixer. A no-input mixer is well described by its name, it's when one plugs in the input of a mixer into the output and then

manipulates the feedback by twisting and tweaking the knobs of the interface. It's a cacophonous instrument, even the smallest of adjustments can significantly change the sound which ranges from high pitch wavering sirens to thunderous, percussive heartbeats. Because I'm playing feedback, I need to listen intently to chase the sound I desire. The sounds of the mixer will hint at something and I have to slowly adjust the knobs to get closer to a specific drone or beat.

Sometimes I don't need to adjust or even touch the mixer, it will transition to a new sound entirely on its own. Its ability to change without intervention, its sudden surprises and the element of chance, all make me feel like I'm holding something alive. It makes its own decisions, takes its own turns and breaths. My relationship to it when I play is not one of using, it's one of addition. It

plays and I listen, I play and it listens. It feels like a harnessing of both of our energies, it feels like singing or screaming together. The looping, loping feedback of a no input mixer is a resonating instrument and when I play it, I feel conjoined.

Sound brings us together, whether it's harmonious, dissonant or, as simple as breath. The world is so cruel in all of its horror and injustice and it can all make me feel helpless and hopeless. It can make me feel dog-tired. There is time for action and grit, but in some moments all I can do is to listen. All I can do is sit in a dark room and listen to someone or something play a dissonant note for thirty minutes. Or sit in a church pew and listen to an organ note, quivering through morning air. Or lay on a rug in a gallery and listen to computational performers singing to each other. In these moments I can even

grow a little bored of listening, I'm a little restless. But if I hold out, if I push a little longer, there is a particular place I enter.

Listening feels like a kind of worship here, an integration of body, mind, and spirit. In this place, I worship at the feet of a life that is so broad and bright it hurts me. The collectivity is palpable and the connection is awe-inspiring. It's laced in a hum that's all around. It's in the sound of the cicadas and wasps. Even the trees themselves hum. Cicadas must get hot in those summer months, I think. Screaming must make their small chests hurt and crispy armpits sweat. It must be catharsis and pain and rage and love, their singing together, in communion and fragility. But oh, I will always have hope in this life when there are people and things to sing alongside. So long as the forest hums, I have hope.