

[Invitation / Preview](#)

**Re-Play: 21 'vanished' works of net art  
Timo Kahlen's interactive film & interactive sound**

**February 1 - July 31, 2023**  
at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/>

From 2005 to 2020, sound sculptor and media artist Timo Kahlen (born 1966, based in Berlin) published 21 works of net art: interactive, thrillingly 'tangible' film and sound projections on the world wide web. All of these 21 works have vanished, have become muted and blind, invisible and inaudible with the end of browser support for Flash on January 1, 2021.

They have now been revived: recoded and made visible, audible and tangible once again — with some glitches and drop-outs, and a bit of sonic tumult and difference to the originals... Refurbished archaeological objects of interactive media art — if you will — restored for your benefit.

See <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/>

All individual interactive works can be explored at

<http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/sounddrift/> (Sound Drift, 2005 in collaboration with Ian Andrews)  
<http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/audiodust/> (Audio Dust, 2011)  
<http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/in-medias-res/> (in medias res, 2020)  
<http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/source/> (source (postfactual), 2017)  
<http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/numbers/> (Numbers, 2011 or 2013)  
<http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/compatible/> (YesNo, 2011; re-released 2016)  
<http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/drama/> (Drama, 2011)  
<http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/mistakes/> (The Essence of Art, 2016)  
<http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/migraion/> (migraion, 2016)  
<http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/dioden/> (Diodenzwitschern, 2006)  
<http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/rohschnitt/> (Rohschnitt, 2016)  
<http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/signal/> (Signal-To-Noise, 2011)  
<http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/insignificant/> (insignificant, 2020)  
<http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/articulate/> (articulate, 2018)  
<http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/unstable/> (unstable, 2017)  
<http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/delete/> (Undo/Delete, 2011)  
<http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/fromscratch/> (From Scratch, 2011)  
<http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/ping/> (ping tschä tschä, 2005)  
<http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/carpe/> (Carpe Diem, 2011)  
<http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/ur/> (UR, 2006)  
<http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/error/> (error, 2020)

Experience the works - always live and always different, in real time -  
with your mouse cursor, at your own pace and with your own timing.  
Please, turn on your speakers — or put on your headphones.

All of the interactive film & sound projections are generated absolutely live: reacting to the position, the direction and/or speed of your cursor — hovering above, clicking at or pausing on the touch-sensitive, tangible visual surface— as you explore and trigger invisible, complex and multiple layers of sound, noise and vibration embedded in the objects. Allowing for subtle sonic and visual experiences, and individual compositions, as you become part of the work.

All works documented here collection and courtesy of ZKM | Karlsruhe,  
Cornell University, Akademie der Künste Berlin, Ruine der Künste Berlin,  
and the artist. Revived with Ruffle.rs. Sound Drift (2005) created in collaboration  
with Sydney-based artist Ian Andrews. © Timo Kahlen/ VG Bild-Kunst 2005 - 2023.

For your interest: A documentary video of  
Kahlen's works of Net Art 2005 - 2020 (24:24 min,  
stereo) is available at <https://vimeo.com/441602551>

## Descriptions

1.

Sound Drift, 2005

Generative sound and film projection in collaboration  
with Ian Andrews, Sydney

at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/sounddrift/>

'Sound Drift' (2005) by Timo Kahlen (Berlin) and Ian Andrews (Sydney) allows the viewer to meander through a series of exhibition spaces that contain floating, drifting, interactive 'clouds' filled with the pulsing, twittering, hissing, dirty static noise of interfering radio waves. Each of the interactive 'clouds' - when clicked at - leads to one of the next rooms. Conceived as a site-specific work for the gallery space at the Ruine der Künste Berlin - roughly re-modelled by Kahlen from recycled cardboard and photographed, then embedded with Andrews' complex sound and graphic clusters in Sydney, and re-transferred to the exhibition space in Berlin, via internet and modem - and simultaneously published online as a generative work of net art, 'Sound Drift' shows the transparent volume of air of the assumingly 'empty' exhibition space to be already full of information, full of data and sound. The interactive work is generated - always different and live - as the viewer's mouse cursor navigates across, pauses or clicks at the responsive surface of the visual projections.

Architektur durchdringende Klangwolken

gurgelnder, zwitschernder, knirschender, singender Klang interferierender Radiowellen

2.

Audio Dust, 2011

Interactive film and  
sound projection

at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/audiodust/>

The soft, round fur object whirs, hums and crackles. As soon as the viewer's mouse cursor touches the sounds embedded in the interactive surface of the image projection, it creates a composition of seductively beautiful incidental and disturbing noise: generated by the viewer at that moment, always live and always different, depending on the position, speed and direction of the cursor's movements, or intentional pauses, with which the viewer chooses to interact with the object.

The interactive film and sound projection 'Audio Dust' (2011) addresses the difficult technical process of recording sounds. Dusty, scratchy, only partially decipherable noise and acoustic fragments directly linked to the recording process have become entangled in the furry windshield of a microphone, have left multiple sonic traces in its tentacles. Static and moving fragments of sound embedded in the object form humming, whirring, buzzing and rustling microcosms that the viewer triggers by touching, hovering above or clicking on the soft, furry surface with the mouse cursor. "Windjammer, poodle or deadcat: the windbreak made of long-haired fur, which allows microphone recordings even in extreme wind conditions, has many names in the jargon of sound engineers. Timo Kahlen takes the image of filtering noise as the starting point for his interactive sound work. 'Audio Dust' makes audible all the ambient and background noise that a windbreak usually absorbs. Our attention shifts from the microphone to the residues of noise caught in the thicket of the fur" (Julia Gerlach, ZKM Karlsruhe 2012). Raw, dirty sounds capture our attention.

Installation view at Sound Art: Sound as a Medium of Art,

ZKM Karlsruhe 2012. Photo: Steffen Harms

© ZKM | Karlsruhe

In the reconstructed version on view in 2023, due to glitch, drop-outs and incompatibility, some elements of fine graphic detail in the center of the object have been lost - irrevocably.

3.

in medias res, 2020

Interactive film and  
sound projection

at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/in-medias-res/>

Digital warmth, emotion and closeness are deceptive. Right there, in the midst of everything that's currently

happening, virtually 'in medias res', and yet at the verge, physically isolated and distant. Created in times of pandemic lockdown, of home office and 'social distancing'. The interactive work of net art was generated live, as the viewer's own cursor explored visual clusters of other cursors, paused or clicked at the 'touch'-sensitive surface of the visual projection embedding sound and unexpected movement. Timo Kahlen's interactive sound / net art work in medias res (2020) was visible and audible at [www.staubrauschen.de/in-medias-res/](http://www.staubrauschen.de/in-medias-res/) during times of lockdown due to the spread of the Covid pandemic. In 2021 and 2022, the work became invisible due to the end of browser support for Flash on January 1, 2021.

4.

/source/ (postfactual), 2017

Interactive film and  
sound projection

at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/source/>

Change of values ? '/source/ (postfactual)', 2017 invites the viewer to search for reliable sources, for valid 'facts' and nodes of information on the Internet. A seemingly void, monochrome white surface is all it shows; and frustrates the viewer with a mouse cursor, which is difficult to locate, to control and to direct, as isolated potential 'facts' pop up in interaction with the cursor: appearing but distorted, head-over and uncomfortably remote, as if projected onto the reverse side of the computer screen. The alternating objects are accompanied by outbursts of sound and bustle, only to be quenched and extinguished shortly afterwards. The interactive work of net art is composed of multiple embedded layers of sound woven into a touch-sensitive visual projection. It is generated by the viewer – live, and always different –, depending on the relative position, movement and speed, on eventual pauses or on changes in direction of the mouse cursor, as the viewer's attention meanders across the touch-sensitive visual projection. Search, roll over, pause or click at the 'empty' white surface of the computer display with the mouse cursor, to discover and discard potential facts in real-time. Released on January 20, 2017 or later. According to rumors, however, the work was already visible and audible before. This is alternatively true. Published on Digital America. Honorary mention at the prize question 'What's the Net Listening To ?' (Junge Akademie Berlin, Leopoldina and ZKM I Karlsruhe), 2017.

5.

Numbers, 2011 or 2013

Interactive film

projection at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/numbers/>

Thank God! At least, in the midst of all the financial crisis and accelerating digital change, it's numbers that we can rely on, numbers that will be safe and sound. The interactive work of net art 'Numbers' was created in 2011, or possibly in 2013. In fact, numbers seem to lose their rigidity and integrity in this interactive work of net art, as they twitch and dissolve when touched by the cursor.

6.

YesNo, 2011

Interactive work

of 'frozen' net art at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/compatible/>

Are we still compatible with the technological and political systems we live in ? Or in need of a change ? Yes. No. Maybe. Search, investigate, roll over and click at the seemingly indifferent, inactive, 'frozen' monochrome surface of the monitor with the mouse cursor to generate multiple layers of embedded sound and text. A carefully designed, 'stuck' webpage. Reluctant and with no answers provided.

7.

Drama, 2011

Interactive film loop

at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/drama/>

A virtual reanimation of an insect - lying on its back. A miniature 'Drama' (2011), an emotional visual metaphor: the individual's struggle at the borderline of life and death, with various and chance-generated endings, triggered by the viewers, as they play the interactive film loop again and again. The silent interactive film, approximately twelve seconds long, is closely related to Kahlen's kinetic sound sculptures 'Tanz für zwei Fliegen' (Dance for Two Flies, 2005) and 'Tanz für Insekten' (Dance for Insects, 2010): here, several insects - found dead (objets trouvés) - pulse, float and dance on the membranes of loudspeakers, resonating silently.

8.

The Essence of Art, 2016

Interactive film and sound projection

at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/mistakes/>

The essence of art is to make mistakes. Trust me, I'm an artist. A conceptual and personal exploration of the essence of art. Explore the handwritten text, touch and investigate objects with the cursor, click at, roll-over or pause to generate your individual and interactive, live 'reading' of the work. Take your time. The interactive sound and film projection 'The Essence of Art' (2016) is generated from multiple layers of embedded sound and visual notations.

9.

m i g r t a i o n, 2016

Interactive text and sound

projection at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/migrtai on/>

'm i g r t a i o n' (2016) is an interactive text and sound projection RFLCTEING MIGRTAION. It is based on the disrupted, broken melodic sound of a 'merry-go-round' music box - and the isolated letters of a short text, that dissolves and replaces itself, generating new meaning, as the mouse cursor rolls over or clicks at the handwritten, transitive letters. Roll over and/or click with the mouse cursor to generate the sound of displacement, and to read between the lines. First published on Digital America.

10.

Diodenzwitschern, 2006

Interactive proposal for site-specific sound installation,

Nominated for the German Sound Art Prize 2006,

at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/dioden/>

'Diodenzwitschern' is Kahlen's proposal for a permanent sound installation in public space: consisting of a site-specific four channel audio composition with sculptural, ring-shaped speaker elements encircling the stems and branches of trees in proximity to the Skulpturenmuseum in Marl. Intimate sounds, based on the utterances of a nightingale recorded directly on site, permutate from speaker to speaker, from tree to tree. The song of the local nightingale - a bird known for its amazing ability to imitate complex sounds of its immediate environment - has been dissected, reorganized and carefully reshaped, creating a soundscape that seems synthetic and mechanic, yet strangely represents and refers to its origin in nature. The proposal, presented to the jury of the German 'Sound Art Prize 2006', is a generative, virtual model of the installation. It's variable acoustic composition is generated - always live and differing - as the mouse cursor moves across, pauses or clicks at the touch-sensitive surface of the consecutive visual projections. Originally published at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/dioden/>

Nachtigall (*Luscinia megarhynchos*): Unscheinbar braunes Gefieder. Gesang aus schmetternden, schluchzenden, ziehenden Strophen, streng gegliedert

11.

Rohschnitt, 2016

Interactive sound and film

projection at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/rohschnitt/>

'Rohschnitt' (Rough Cut, 2016) is a virtual and hybrid, rough cut cardboard model of an exhibition space filled with an interactive, complex archive of sound, noise and vibration. The sounds embedded in the room represent sounds recorded when constructing the model from scratch, from cardboard and paper, and when reworking the model and sounds on the computer: raw, rough sounds of drawing, cutting, creasing, folding, ripping, copying, pasting and reediting; acoustic fragments of an artist's 'work in progress'. The online work was specifically created for the sound art exhibition 'Hörschwelle' at the project space of Deutscher Künstlerbund in Berlin. Base to the interactive work is the small-scale cardboard model, approximately equivalent to the specific exhibition space and its sequence of rooms; photographed and 'filled' with (analog and digital) acoustic and material debris, with the tools and sculptural studio work still in place. 'Rohschnitt' is a site-specific conceptual work of sound art, short-listed for the 'Schloss-Post web residency #2' at Schloss Solitude, Germany 2016; and first exhibited at 'Hörschwelle', Deutscher Künstlerbund, Berlin 2016. The generative film projection embeds multiple layers of hidden, static and moving interfaces. Touch and explore objects with the cursor, click at or pause to generate

your individual composition of noise and beauty written into the exhibition space.

Schneiden, falzen, kleben, reißen. Ein Raum und der Klang seiner Entstehung

12.

Signal-To-Noise, 2011

Interactive film and sound

projection at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/signal/>

The interactive work 'Signal-To-Noise' (2011) relates to the history of recording media, to the Vinyl LP. An analog object, covered with scratches, with dirt, and embedded fragments of sound is seen rotating in space. The work emphasizes the unintentional mistake, the glitches, the deviation from the technical norm, in the difficult process of recording and playing back acoustic signals. What can be heard, as the viewer generates multiple layers of sound from invisible interfaces hidden beneath the flash projection of the scratched and ruptured rotating surface, is a grinding, dirty, dusty static noise, which leaves little room for the desired acoustic signal itself. The unbalanced signal-to-noise-ratio of what is desired and what is recorded, is the work's main principle of design.

In the reconstructed version on view in 2023, three essential graphic layers in the center of the object have been lost - irrevocably.

13.

insignificant, 2020

Interactive text and sound

projection at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/insignificant/>

'insignificant' (2020) presents objects too small and too insignificant to be noticed. Yet all decisive. Unexpected buzzing, humming, whirring, rising and dying layers of tangible sound and vibration are generated as viewers touch the hand-written text with the cursor.

14.

Articulate, 2018

Interactive text and

sound projection at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/articulate/>

'Articulate' (2018) presents an uncensored dialogue. Pure sound. Enter the dialogue. Go play, and value your freedom of speech. In fact, it's quite difficult to be articulate. The work is generated as viewers move their mouse cursor, roll over, pause or click at the sensitive surface of the hand-written letters on the screen, thereby activating multiple embedded layers of generative fragments of sound. Meaningful. Unintelligible. Poetic.

Due to error, glitch and incompatibility, in the reconstructed version on view in 2023, the sounds generated now seem to pile up, to loop and to get 'out of control' a bit too quickly.

15.

unstable, 2017

Interactive film and

sound projection at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/unstable/>

An exploration of 'unstable' media, in 2017. The viewer's cursor seems to lose control of the game that is being played. No obvious rules seem to persist. The viewer does generate minimal visual marks and acoustic incidents, yet these seem to avoid and flee the presence of the cursor on a blank and 'void' white monitor. The frustrating and interactive work of net art is generated - always live - as the viewer's modified cursor moves across, pauses or clicks at the responsive surface of the monochrome visual projection.

16.

Undo/Delete, 2011

interactive net art

at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/delete/>

Create and save - or discard and delete ? In 'Undo / Delete' (2011), the viewer's interaction, once again, triggers

but minimalistic, short-lived visual marks and acoustic incidents on a white webpage: generating virtual objects that seem to flee and to avoid the presence of the mouse cursor, popping up in the wrong places, and immediately vanishing thereafter, with a bustle of harsh sounds - acoustic traces of an analog process of undoing and revising, of erasing, ripping and crumbling, of deleting and discarding bits and pieces of information, of concepts and visions sketched down on paper, archived and hidden on the blank monitor page, invisible to the eye.

The reconstructed version on view in 2023 differs significantly from the 'monochrome' white, 'blank' original.

17.

From Scratch, 2011

Interactive film

and sound projection

at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/fromscratch/>

The artist once again walking and recording on thin ice: as an homage to the fragility and frailty of all life. The fragility of a ruptured, frozen surface of water, its acoustic and sensual quality (and short-lived existence) has inspired a number of the artist's works (who, himself, was shipwrecked near the Galapagos islands in the Pacific in 1980): including sound installations like 'Breaking Ground' (2008, in Orvieto, Italy), the photographic series of 'Schmelze' (Melting, 2011), the audio miniature 'Bits & Pieces' for Radius (Chicago, 2011) and the interactive film and sound projection 'From Scratch', published at [www.staubrauschen.de/fromscratch/](http://www.staubrauschen.de/fromscratch/) in 2011. In the interactive work of net art, viewers encounter splintering, crunching, slushing, cascading sequences of sound and vibration as their own mouse cursor meanders across a 'touch-sensitive' visual projection of a fragile, ruptured surface of thin ice.

Due to error, glitch, incompatibility and the fragility of the original file, in the reconstructed version on view in 2023, the sounds and images generated have been chosen to be a variation of the original work.

18.

ping tschä tschä, 2005

Interactive sound and

film projection at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/ping/>

In „ping tschä tschä“ we hear birds chirping and singing, are immersed in the 'natural soundscape' of the work - until we slowly realize the setting to be strangely distorted, fragmented and manipulated, somehow mechanical and remote. Kahlen's early interactive film and sound projection 'ping tschä tschä' (2005) embeds scientific, ornithological descriptions and digital, synthetic sounds closely imitating birds' voices in the image of a wood. Viewers generate their individual and live composition of 'natural' sound as they explore the image, move their cursor across, hover or click at the visual projection. 'ping tschä tschä' was installed at the Ruine der Künste Berlin, and simultaneously published online, in 2005. The work alludes to a process of a scientific and exact, mimetic, yet strangely abstract and fragmentary acoustic re-creation of nature. The utterances of birds and their descriptions have been of interest to the artist ever since his very first works of sound art in 1988.

zewidewit zizidäh - dü hüitt - trijet tret tret tret - ping tschä tschä - dschü - tschjak - tetui tic tic tic - hiiüp

19.

Carpe Diem, 2011

Interactive sound and

film projection at [http://](http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/carpe/)

[www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/](http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/carpe/)

[carpe/](http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/carpe/)

An image of vanitas, a ripe yellow fruit (a quince), showing the first signs of deterioration, decomposition and mold, is at the base of the work 'Carpe Diem' (2011). The soft, fragile surface of the object embeds and encloses particles of organic noise and vibration: activated by the viewer as he maneuvers the mouse cursor across the resonant object. The soundscape and acoustic composition of the work is generated - always different and live - at the pace chosen by the individual viewer: as the mouse rolls over, hesitates and hovers above, or clicks at the responsive surface of the visual projection. The interactive work of net art is closely related to 'Emission' (2009 - 2020), a series of digital photographs of a quince with first signs of mold and minimal graphic inscriptions.

die Quitte rauscht und knistert

eingebetteter Klang

20.

UR, 2006

Interactive sound

and film projection at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/ur/>

In 'UR' (2006) surfaces and vessels become the containers for unwanted noise and 'dirt' generated by technological media and communication. Bits and pieces of grinding, creaking, humming sounds and white noise create complex microcosms, generated by viewers when they touch or click, hover and pause, approach or roll over the given visual containers with their mouse cursor. The multi-part interactive film and sound projection is based on an extensive archive of 'Noise & Beauty': of recordings of ephemeral, interfering radio waves in between radio stations, of 'audio dust', of static and noise, which the artist has been compiling since 1987 — until today.

21.

/ error /, 2020

Interactive film and sound projection

at <http://www.staubrauschen.de/re-play/error/>

Only for a small moment in time, at the end of the first pandemic year of Covid-19, in times of 'home office' and 'social distancing', of sluggish screen work and accelerated digitalization, of video conferences, online lectures and virtual meetings avoiding all personal contact or physical closeness, in times of temporary setups and breakdowns, of server overload, of transmission errors and time delays, of broken personal links and denied accesses to shared files, Timo Kahlen's interactive net art work '/ error /' (2020) marked a critical reflection of our current use of new 'online' media: focussing on the susceptibility to errors and to technological failure, and on our personal isolation and loss of control. It was a subtle (and short-lived) generative work of art that could be seen and heard and 'touched' only with the mouse cursor (our dominant tool in these times of remote contact) and was, in fact: as frustrating and as difficult to grasp as reality itself.

The conceptual, time-specific work 'error' (2020) could be seen only for one day: on December 31, 2020 — before the end of browser support for Flash on January 1, 2021 made it unreadable forever, invisible and inaudible like all of Timo Kahlen's other works of net art. Four weeks later, all works created by using the Flash program had virtually disappeared from the web. An offline version of '/error/' was presented to the Center for Art and Media (ZKM) in Karlsruhe, but on the internet itself it left a blank space, an absence.

Not found

This should not happen. Error 404.

media archaeological artefacts  
Objekte der Medienarchäologie

Timo Kahlen  
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