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*In the beginning  
was listening...*



MUSÉE RÉATTU

Sound Art  
Department

# A museum *that listens?*

## **In the Listening Room**

**\_ 4 July to 4 October**

René Jentet

*Arles, the Bull,*

*the Lions and Wally*

## **At the Listening Balcony**

**\_ 19 May to 5 July**

Bariya

*Delhi Polyphones*

**\_ 6 July to 4 October**

Virginie Thurre

*The Song of the Glaciers #1*

Sound has taken its place among the fine arts, just as photography and video did in their time.

In 2007, a 'sound art department' was created at the Musée Réattu to reflect this development. The first of its kind in France, developed in partnership with the Phonurgia Nova association, its aim is to explore visual and radio-based approaches to sound in an unlimited dialogue with its collections of painting, drawing, sculpture and photography.



## The Listening Room

Level 2 / Salle 26

du 4 juillet au 4 octobre

# René Jentet or the kaleidoscope radio

## *Arles, the Bull, the Lions and Wally*

with Wally Bourdet,  
preceded by an interview  
with the author  
by Guy Erismann

Recorded on 4 July 1970  
INA Collection  
Duration: 1h29

This free-spirited documentary essay was filmed without a pre-written script. The intention was to capture the spirit of Arles on a festive day and to express, on the cusp of the 1970s, a creative boldness and formal freedom that Yann Paranthoën and the writers of the ACR (Atelier de Création Radiophonique) would later champion on France Culture. Born out of a chance encounter – the sort that only a wandering microphone can capture – with 'Wally', the programme marks a milestone in the career of René Jentet, whose successive works, drawing inspiration from filmmaking and screenwriting techniques, would go on to shape the history of radio production in France.

*Once you've awakened  
from your slumber,  
you never stop  
discovering the world*

**René Jentet,**  
1979

*Radio is a wonderful tool  
for comfort and connection...  
Behind every archive recording  
lies a present moment. Unaltered.  
Thousands of such moments,  
ready to let their truth  
be heard once more...*

**Judith Bordas,**  
guest of the Musée Réattu  
for **Night of Listening**  
8 June 2024

### Summary of the work

This is an account of a day spent in Arles by radio producer René Jentet, guided by Wally Bourdet, a nude model for Lucien Clergue and a childhood friend of Christian Lacroix. An encounter as intense as it is unlikely. A conversation that feels almost like a private confide, with the Rhône, the wind and the Arena as witnesses.

Born out of a chance strike by France Culture technicians in Avignon, this programme, recorded one day in July 1970 on the banks of the Rhône, seeks to capture the spirit of the 'party' that takes hold of Arles during the feria. Wandering between the riverbanks and the Arènes, then making its way to Montmajour, it listens intently to a rather secretive city, withdrawn into itself, still marked by memories of the war, in which the young photographer Lucien Clergue (born under the sign of Leo) is still fighting hard to establish photography... What the photographer thought of this essay broadcast by France Culture is not known, nor whether he had the opportunity to listen to it. However, he was known to be sensitive to the evocative power of sound, as well as its ability, shared with photography, to bring a moment back to life, and he chaired the Arles jury for the *Phonurgia Nova Awards* a few years later.

### The author

René Jentet was one of the leading creative figures behind France Culture. In 1953, he joined Radiodiffusion française as a producer. His early work included major radio adaptations, such as Dante's *The Divine Comedy*, Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and Aristophanes' *Peace*. He also produced numerous programmes on flamenco. From the 1970s onwards, he developed his own distinctive style in highly personal programmes broadcast on the Atelier de Création Radiophonique.

*Arles, the Bull, the Lions and Wally* marks a significant milestone in his career. On three occasions, he was awarded the Prix Italia, one of the most prestigious prizes in radio. For *Récit* (in 1972), *Pour quoi ?* (in 1973), and *VIII<sup>e</sup> station souvenirs-bazar* (in 1974). He was forced by management to leave Radio France in 1980. Deeply hurt by the cruel dismissal, he never produced another programme. Created in 1976, *Rouge* remains his masterpiece. Part documentary, part fiction, the narrative, told through fragmented prose, centres on a character who appears to be nearing death. Language seems to have lost its primary function: to facilitate communication between people.

## Two France Culture podcasts to go further

### *René Jentet's Herd of Bulls*

On 18 August 1970, René Jentet travelled to the Camargue to visit the master bull breeder Hubert Yonnet, accompanied by Maité Dubouquet.

### *René Jentet, a life in radio*

A portrait of René Jentet  
by **Christophe Deleu.**

# The Listening Balcony

Level 1 / Loggia

\_ 19 May to 5 July

*Delhi Polyphones*,  
13'08", autoproduction (India)

**Bariya**

*Delhi Polyphones* conjures up a complex urban landscape built from the sounds of the city – sirens, voices, car horns, everyday noises – in a composition of pre-recorded sounds. Between immersive sound, documentary-style field recording and collective performance, the work, which won the field recording category at the 2024 Phonurgia Nova Awards, paints a vivid portrait of the modern city. In this piece, the artists use reverse digital filtering techniques to reveal the city's harmonic markers, which are inaudible to the naked ear.

**Pratyush Pushkar & Riya Raagini** known as Bariya, are a queer duo of transdisciplinary artists and writers from New Delhi, India. They co-founded Bariya Studio, a platform engaged in multifaceted projects: radio broadcasting, collaborative sound art and performative installations, etc.

\_ 6 July to 4 October

*The Song of the Glaciers* - #1. *The Rhône Glacier*,  
narrated by Wendy Delorme  
2x20', autoproduction (Switzerland)

Composition: **Virginie Thurre**,  
mixing: Joell Nicolas (VRVN)

This journey is the auditory expression of a survey of the Valais glaciers undertaken three years ago by the Swiss artist Virginie Thurre. Both alluring and terrifying, the Alpine glaciers first inspired painters in past centuries. Then photographers. The artist sought to express the indomitable force of nature. For Virginie Thurre, they offer the opportunity for a unique immersive experience. When she explores them, she does so with microphones, hydrophones and geophones, using them to investigate crevasses, glacial lakes and streams, crevices and moraines. She is on the lookout for the energy that flows through them and eludes ordinary perception: infrasound vibrations, seismic resonances, and distant acoustic echoes of human activity. The work thus opens a new realm of perception and emotion. The recorder captures the infinitely large and the infinitely small, at a particular moment in time: that of global warming. It reveals a universe in perpetual motion: the bursting of air or gas bubbles released by warming, flows, internal collapses, and multiple bursts and tears. A secret world of tragic beauty.

**The author** is a mountain guide and founder of Échappées (echappees.ch), a collective eco-feminist project offering immersive hikes that combine listening to the alpine landscape with stories of pioneering women, inviting participants to walk, slow down, feel, listen and experience the landscapes in a different way. Trained in sound design with Phonurgia Nova since 2023, her work combines field recording with Alpine memory. A journey to be experienced with closed eyes.

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**RÉATTU:**  
**A PIONEERING MUSEUM**  
the creation of the photography  
department and the establishment  
of a sound art department

**Phonurgia Nova** reveals talents that advance the practice of sound as a medium and as an art form. Based in Arles since 1986, the association supports creators in their professional development and helps promote their work on European radio stations and digital platforms. More than 250 creators attend its sound writing courses every years.

[www.phonurgia.fr](http://www.phonurgia.fr)