

How is Nature in “Reflections on Art From The Site Lines of Nature” at
Catwalk Art Residency Event, September 17, 2016

Petra Klusmeyer, *How is Nature*, garage studio, 51 4x2.25” cards (graphite on paper)
with box (original size reproduction, photo print), audio (via QR code).

The title of this work in progress is not a question—rather, *How is Nature*, is to be read as an open proposition, a journey into thinking sound as an aesthetic experience; to expand the limits of the sonic arts through the intervention and entanglement of other materials, other media, other concepts. Petra graduated with a MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and holds a position as Art Researcher of Sound Studies at the University of the Arts in Bremen (Germany). She is currently in the process of completing her PhD in artistic research and philosophy at Utrecht University (Netherlands).

The works on paper and field recordings were developed during Petra’s recent stay at Catwalk Art Residency and will continue to resonate in an upcoming chapter of her doctoral thesis that seeks to problematize the notion of Nature. The term nature, especially with a capital N, bears various sentiments; here we may think of Henry David Thoreau and his musings: “Nature makes no noise. The howling storm, the rustling leaf, the pattering rain are no disturbances, there is an essential and unexplored harmony in them. Why is that thought flows with so deep and sparkling a current when the sound of distant music strikes the ear?”¹ Though that said, this project subscribes to a realism, also new materialism, which diverges from any form of romanticism (e.g., American Transcendentalism). And precisely because of the pursuit of the ‘real’—not the ideal—it seems only apt to have been embedded in an environment, such as the Catskills (a quasi-Walden, if you will), to engage in the sonic ecology of the grounds and the region—to cultivate contemplation, listening, and the type of experimentation addressed in *How is Nature*. Petra invites you to scrutinize the miniature landscape(s) and see—that is, listen for the unexpected, the experience of the unknown known.

¹ Henry David Thoreau, *Journal* (1837), Vol. 1 (New York, Houghton Mifflin, 1906), 12