Course Description
If we’re being generous, Sound Art is either fifty-three years old, or it’s forty-five. It depends if its birth certificate was issued by Robert Morris’s “Box With The Sound Of Its Own Making” in 1961 or by Alvin Lucier’s “I Am Sitting In A Room” in 1969. There’s more at issue in this particular birth certificate debate than eight years. Morris is an influential visual artist. While Lucier is an experimental composer. If we grant parentage to Morris, then Sound Art is the offspring of the visual arts. On the other hand, if Lucier is (as he’s often called) “the Father of Sound Art,” then Sound Art is music’s baby. We’ll listen, look, and read for clues along the longer arc of experimental sound practice running from Erik Satie’s Vexations (1893) and Luigi Russolo’s Art of Noises (1913), through Pierre Schaeffer’s musique concrète (1948), John Cage’s 4’ 33” (1952) and Steve Reich’s Pendulum Music (1968), to contemporary works by Janet Cardiff, Christian Marclay, and Ultra-Red, among others. In the end, like postmodern King Solomons, we’ll disregard all possessive claims upon the baby, setting it free to spit up its own meanings and messages.

Course Structure
Each three-hour session will consist of lectures and discussions of images, texts, films, objects, video, and audio. Students will be evaluated on the basis of their comprehension of course materials, attendance and preparation, critical engagement with ideas presented in the course, and the ability to synthesize key issues developed throughout the semester.

Course Reader
The course reader is available as a .pdf

Other Sources:
Sites
http://www.ubu.com/sound/
http://www.onelonelypixel.org/soundart.html
http://earwaveevent.org/issue/issueone/
http://earroom.wordpress.com/
Books
http://mitpress.mit.edu/books/sound
http://www.bloomsbury.com/us/audio-culture-9780826416155/
http://mitpress.mit.edu/books/noise-water-meat
http://www.charivaripress.com/soundbyartists.html

Course Policies
All course policies are based on respect and consideration. Students should be cognizant of how their behavior impacts other students and the class as a whole. To that end:

Evaluation
All assignments must be completed in order to receive course credit. Students will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. Attendance
Because we will be thinking as a group, working through ideas and problems, it is crucial that everyone be present. Each student’s perspective is integral to the collective thinking of the class. Therefore full, punctual attendance is required. Five minutes after the start of class, and following breaks, the door will be locked and no one else will be admitted. Students thus locked out will be considered absent.

If there is an emergency, the student should email the instructor as soon as possible. In the case of sickness, doctor’s notes will be required in order to deem an absence “excused.”

Attendance policy for this class follows the SAIC attendance policy which states:

   If a student misses MORE than three classes, whether or not for a reasonable cause, s/he will fail the class, if s/he does not withdraw from the class prior to the deadline for withdrawal with a grade of “W.” Deadline for withdrawal: March 27, 2013. If a student attends FEWER than three classes his/her financial aid, merit scholarship, academic standing, and/or immigration status will be compromised, regardless of an individual faculty member’s modifications of these recommendations.

2. Participation
Learning is an active process. Students are expected to participate in class discussions. You must read the assigned text and/or watch/listen to the assigned media for each session. You must come to the class with a copy of the week’s reading (printed or electronic) and be ready to contribute with questions, critiques, connections, etc. I will expect you to have in front of you a copy of the text with notes and questions written out. This is not an exercise in improvisation. The idea is that we all come to each class with some common reading/watching/listening and some responses and ideas to share. If it becomes apparent that someone is not doing the reading, s/he will receive one warning before being dropped from the class.

3. Class Presentation
Each student will give a fifteen minute presentation on a topic of her or his choosing. This might include a close reading of a particular work, a broader discussion of an artist’s practice,
making a connection between the works of more than one artist, or an analysis of the critical themes and ideas related to a tendency in the history of the sonic arts. Regardless, each presentation must engage with one or more work of sonic art. Each presentation must include media (images, audio, video) and must provide the historical context for the work(s) being discussed. Each presentation will also include a ten minute question and answer session with the class.

4. Writing Assignments
There will be six writing assignments. Each student may submit any of the six assignments during any week of the semester (but may not submit two in any one week). Writing assignments must be submitted in class, in hard copy, and must include the student’s name and the specific reading(s) being discussed (don’t assume I’ll figure it out).

- **Four** 250 - 300 word responses to a given week’s reading(s). You may summarize the key ideas and works of the reading(s), take issue with assertions, compare the works, ideas, or movements to other things we’ve discussed in class. These assignments allow me to see that you are keeping up with the readings and to insure that you are understanding the gist of the texts. These assignments will not be graded or returned.

- **One** 400 - 500 word paper on an artist, work, or topic not on the syllabus (for ideas, see “Other Resources” under “Course Reader”); or A review of a current exhibition or work of sonic art. I will make comments on this assignment and return it within two weeks of receiving it.

- **One** 800 - 1000 word paper which synthesizes the topics and themes of multiple readings, showing influence, historical progression, subversion, with connections made to other contemporaneous factors in culture, history, politics, economics, etc. (not just “compare/contrast”). I will make comments on this assignment and return it within two weeks of receiving it.

**Differently-abled Students**
Any students with exceptional needs or concerns (including 'invisible' difficulties such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, or psychiatric complications) are encouraged to make an appointment with the professor to discuss these issues by the end of the second week of the term so that appropriate accommodations can be arranged. Students with known or suspected disabilities, such as a Reading/Writing Disorder, ADD/ADHD, and/or a mental health or chronic physical condition who think they would benefit from assistance or accommodations should first contact the Disability and Learning Resource Center (DLRC) at http://www.saic.edu/lifeatsaic/wellnesscenter/disabilityandlearningresourcecenter/ or by phone at 312.499.4278. DLRC staff will review your disability documentation and work with you to determine reasonable accommodations. They will then provide you with a letter outlining the approved accommodations for you to deliver to all of your instructors. This letter must be presented before any accommodations will be implemented. You should contact the DLRC as early in the semester as possible. The DLRC is located on the 13th floor of 116 S. Michigan Ave.

**Gadgets**
**Laptops:** Students will be allowed to use laptops for taking notes. Any student discovered using their laptop for any other reason during class time will not be allowed to bring their laptop for the remainder of the semester. There is no appeal process.
Phones: The classroom is a phone-free zone: no phones may be used for any purpose during class time. This is a zero-tolerance policy. If you use a gadget in class, you will be asked to leave and you will be marked absent that day. (See the attendance policy above.)

Falling Asleep
I know it can be hard to stay awake. But it’s harder to be the one talking when someone else falls asleep. If you fall asleep in class, I will wake you up. If you fall asleep a second time, I will take away your chair and you will be forced to stand until the next break or the end of class (whichever comes first). If you fall asleep a third time, you will be asked to leave and you will be marked absent that day. (See the attendance policy above.)

Plagiarism
The School of the Art Institute of Chicago prohibits “dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the School” (Students’ Rights and Responsibilities, Student Handbook). Plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft. One plagiarizes when one presents another’s work as one’s own, even if one does not intend to. Please note: I’m really good at recognizing text that’s been lifted from another source. Don’t test my skills on this one.

The penalty for plagiarizing may include a reduced grade in this course, failing the course, as well as loss of some types of financial aid (for example, a No Credit in a course can lead to a loss of the Presidential Scholarship), and repeat offenses can lead to expulsion from the School. To find out more about plagiarism and how to avoid it, you can (1) go to http://www.artic.edu/webspaces/portal/library/plagiarism_packet.pdf; or (2) read about it in the Student Handbook (page 85) under the section “Academic Misconduct.”

English Language Help For International Students
SAIC’S English for International Students office provides dedicated tutors for graduate international students, to help with readings, writing, speaking, and listening in art history classes. More information, including how to make tutoring appointments, can be found here: http://www.saic.edu/academics/departments/libarts/englishforinternationalstudents/#grad_tutoring

Office Hours
By appointment only: TBA. To make an appointment, please email me at least 48 hours in advance.
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<tr>
<th><strong>Week 1</strong></th>
<th><strong>Introduction</strong> + Case Study: Luigi Russolo makes a racket. (1913)</th>
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<td><strong>Noises</strong></td>
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<th><strong>Week 2</strong></th>
<th>John Cage does nothing. (1952)</th>
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<td><strong>Silences</strong></td>
<td>Reading: John Cage, selections from <em>Silence</em> (1961) &amp; browse Craig Dworkin, “Unheard Music” (2009)</td>
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<th><strong>Week 3</strong></th>
<th>Pierre Schaeffer slices and dices. (1948) Luc Ferrari does almost nothing. (1970)</th>
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<th><strong>Week 4</strong></th>
<th>La Monte Young tests our patience. (1960) Robert Morris makes a box. (1921) George Brecht polishes a fiddle. (1962) Terry Riley is no good. (1967)</th>
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<td><strong>Source</strong></td>
<td>Reading: Selections from <em>Source: Music of the Avant-Garde, 1966 - 1973</em></td>
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<th><strong>Week 6</strong></th>
<th>Max Neuhaus walks. (1966)</th>
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<th><strong>Week 7</strong></th>
<th>Alvin Lucier sits. (1969)</th>
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<td><strong>Sitting At Home</strong></td>
<td>Reading: Alvin Lucier, Selected Texts and Scores (1965 – 79)</td>
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<td><strong>Sound By Artists (Art By Musicians)</strong></td>
<td>Reading: No reading this week. We will watch (and discuss) Dan Graham’s <em>Rock My Religion</em>.</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Technology</td>
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<td><strong>Christina Kubisch dons headphones. Yasunao Tone scratches a disc. (1985)</strong></td>
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<th>Week 10</th>
<th>Sound Artists</th>
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<th>Week 11</th>
<th>Conceptual Sonics</th>
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<td>Reading: Seth Kim-Cohen, excerpt from In The Blink of an Ear on Jarrod Fowler and Marina Rosenfeld (2009)</td>
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<th>Week 12</th>
<th>Expanded Sonic Field</th>
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<td>Reading: Oswald “Bettered by the Borrower” &amp; Dana Ward on Corey Arcangel from SFMoMA site</td>
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<th>Week 13</th>
<th>Militant Sound</th>
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<th>Week 14</th>
<th>Wrap Up</th>
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