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The Noise Within the Silence

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A Graduate Project (Non-thesis)

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## **Abstract**

The Noise Within the Silence: A reflection on the implications of hearing differently, and an attempt to transmit what words fail to articulate.

Mariana Rocha De Alba

This graduate project (non-thesis) document presents the analysis and process behind the production of the film *The Noise Within the Silence* (2025). This research-creation film explores the emotional and perceptual challenges I have faced due to living with sudden sensorineural hearing loss (SSNHL) and tinnitus through a sensory cinematic experience. Using visual techniques, such as long exposure video, overlays, superimposition, digital animation, and 5.1 surround sound design, the film aims to provide an embodied representation of how it feels to live with SSNHL and tinnitus, with the goal of offering an alternative understanding of these conditions.

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## **Introduction**

When I was about 12, I suffered from sudden sensorineural hearing loss (SSNHL), accompanied by a persistent ringing in my right ear, known as tinnitus. At first, I mistakenly thought it was just a simple case of a plugged ear, a temporary nuisance that would clear up by the next morning. But when it didn't, a few days later, my parents took me to see a doctor. After a brief examination, he diagnosed it as a clogged ear, recommending we wait it out and suggested some mouth exercises to relieve the pressure in my ear. He misdiagnosed me.

A week went by, but neither did my hearing return nor did the ringing fade. I started to get scared, and I could see that my parents were too. They made some calls to family and friends to see if anyone knew of a good doctor who could offer a second opinion. A month later, the second doctor I saw conducted the audiometry test and finally identified the problem. However, by then, it was too late to reverse the damage. It turns out that with sudden sensorineural hearing loss, you have about a week to reverse the damage ("Sudden Deafness").

I remember that when I took the audiometry test, I immediately sensed that something was seriously wrong. I couldn't recognize many of the words the woman administering the test was saying, and seeing her shake her head every time I answered incorrectly didn't help. Both the doctor and my parents asked me to explain what I was experiencing, but perhaps due to the shock, stress, helplessness, and pressure I felt, it was incredibly difficult for me to find the words to describe my situation.

After ruling out other more easily identifiable causes of hearing loss through a series of evaluations – including pure-tone audiometry, tympanometry, and imaging studies – I was diagnosed with sudden sensorineural hearing loss (SSNHL). SSNHL is a term used to refer to “a sudden onset, usually unilateral, of cochlear hearing impairment of differing extents including complete deafness [...] for which an underlying cause is not identifiable”(Schlee et al. 32). It is characterized by a loss of more than 30 dB across three contiguous frequencies in a pure-tone audiogram occurring within a 72 hour period (Lee et al.). Prompt diagnosis and treatment improve recovery chances, while delays beyond two to four weeks reduce the likelihood of reversing permanent loss (“Sudden Deafness”). In my case, it was already too late, and learning that there might have been a solution weighed on me for a long time.

Not everyone with SSNHL experiences tinnitus<sup>1</sup>(Lee et al.), but for me, it appeared alongside my hearing loss, becoming an inseparable part of my condition. Sleeping became a struggle; I barely slept in the first few days. Locating where sounds came from felt impossible – not just because my hearing had faded but because the relentless ringing of tinnitus constantly distracted me. Some sounds would just go unnoticed by me until someone pointed them out. Back then, I felt lost and scared. I just wanted to be “normal”, and for many years, I avoided talking about my SSNHL.

Later on, I tried to find films, videos, or other examples that would help me convey what I was going through, but I couldn't find anything that resembled my situation. In film, deafness and tinnitus are often depicted without nuance and without them being important

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<sup>1</sup> “the conscious perception of phantom sounds in the absence of corresponding external auditory signals” (Lee et al.).



aspects of the character's story or identity. A character's deafness is often indicated by the absence of sound. Tinnitus, on the other hand, is neither commonly presented as a stand-alone, chronic condition nor in combination with deafness. More commonly, it appears in explosion scenes, represented by a ringing sound that lasts for a few seconds before disappearing.

For example, in *All Quiet on the Western Front* (Berger, 2022), there is an explosion and Paul, the main character, ends up buried underground. A high-pitched whistling fills the silence, and the sounds of war fade in but are muffled; only his breathing, as he regains consciousness, is distinguishable. Paul fully recovers his hearing, without tinnitus, once he is dug out (27:20-28:23). In *Children of Men* (Cuarón, 2006), Julian is shot in the throat through the car windshield. A high-pitched whistling fills the soundscape, not because she hears it, but to heighten the tension and reflect the shock of those around her. Other sounds become muffled, except for a few, like the breaking of the glass where the bullet entered, which amplifies the scene's intensity. As Julian dies, the whistling fades with her (28:17-29:08).

However, such depictions have never seemed sufficient to me since, in my experience, what I perceive as tinnitus is much more complex. What I hear consists of a variety of sounds, constantly varying in intensity. At times, seeing these depictions in the movies made me hesitate, questioning whether what I was experiencing was normal or if there was a deeper problem behind what I identified as tinnitus.

Sometime later, I found a video in which several people explain, through sound, what their tinnitus sounds like.<sup>2</sup> These testimonies helped me understand that there was nothing wrong with me and that everyone perceives tinnitus differently. This is why easy access to these videos and similar content is so important – it gives people like me a way to share our experiences with others. It also reassures us that we are not alone, diversifies our understanding of both SSNHL and tinnitus, helps us stay better informed, and provides us with better tools to process and cope with our condition.

Since the onset of my SSNHL and tinnitus, I have learned to pay twice as much attention to my surroundings. Some things are still difficult, like when people whisper or speak to me in a very noisy environment. Sometimes, I feel disoriented and out of place, as if I am watching everything from afar. But over time, I have picked up tricks that help me get through the day without having to tell people about my condition.

This thesis film explores the impact of my personal experience with SSNHL and tinnitus, reflecting on the challenges and emotional effects of living with these conditions, and how cinema might offer a language to communicate what words fail. It asks: How can cinema generate an understanding of what it feels like to live with hearing loss? How can hearing loss experience be recreated? How can altered perceptions of hearing be translated into visuals? I experiment with long-exposure videos and overlays in an attempt to recreate my own representation of SSNHL and tinnitus. I also interweave these manipulated images with unaltered footage to create a contrast between the different stages portrayed in the

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<sup>2</sup> The original video, *What Tinnitus Sounds Like*, uploaded by the British Tinnitus Association, is no longer available. However, similar tinnitus sound simulations can be found at “What Does Tinnitus Sound Like?” at *The Tinnitus & Hearing Clinic*, <https://www.thetinnitusclinic.co.uk/about-tinnitus/tinnitus-sounds/>

film, as well as to distinguish between the real world and my inner world. In terms of sound design, I work with 5.1 surround sound to bring a sense of space and depth to the film's sound mix. This allows me to recreate with greater fidelity and immersiveness the experience of living with SSNHL and tinnitus.

The lack of nuanced portrayals of deafness and tinnitus in film presents an opportunity to explore the varied perceptions of these conditions and their emotional impact on individuals who live with them. While science offers a partial understanding of SSNHL and tinnitus, both their exact causes and effects remain elusive (Schlee et al. 393). Much of our understanding of how symptoms like tinnitus are experienced comes from individuals themselves, since “no objective biomarker has been established, neither for the existence of tinnitus nor for the degree of suffering” (Schlee et al. 19). While science has yet to answer all the hypotheses surrounding the topics, cinema has the ability to open a space to try to interpret and translate, through sound and image, the inner world of those experiencing it. Cinema can provide insight into the emotional and psychological experiences of people living with these conditions, especially when logic and science can't.

## **The research process behind the film**

### ***Winter 2023***

During the winter term, I find myself reflecting on whether I truly want to open up and share a film about my SSNHL and tinnitus with the public. The community at Concordia University plays a crucial role in making me feel that I can share something so personal in a safe and supportive environment. As I work on the sketches *If a Home Could Speak, What*

*Would It Say About the Person Who Lives in It?* (2023) and *Portrait of the Indigenous Peoples in Mexican Cinema* (2023), I develop new skills and experiment with techniques, such as the listening and layering methods that I mention in the following section. Although these explorations are not directly connected to my thesis film, they ultimately give me the confidence to move forward with *The Noise Within the Silence*.

While I create both sketches as independent explorations, they share the central idea of using sound as the main narrative thread, accompanied by images that do not directly correspond to the sounds being heard.

In the sketch, *If a Home Could Speak, What Would It Say About the Person Who Lives in It?* (2023), I explore the passage of time inside an apartment, following its transformation from morning to night. Through sounds and noises, I reveal the atmosphere of the space. A human presence is sensed but never seen; only small details hint at the personality of its inhabitant.



Image 1. 2. 3. 4. Stills from *If a Home Could Speak, What Would It Say About the Person Who Lives in It?* (2023)

Through this sketch, I develop strategies for attentively listening to the sounds that shape my environment throughout the day, analyzing how they weave into a narrative that adds depth and meaning to my thesis film. This exploration of passing time carries over

into my thesis film, from 05:52 to 09:22<sup>3</sup>, where the shifting sounds of the outside world – morning birds, distant traffic, the hush of the evening – trace the rhythm of the day. An open window frames the changing atmosphere, allowing time to unfold through both sound and image.

My second sketch, *Portrait of the Indigenous Peoples in Mexican Cinema*, aims to highlight how Indigenous communities have been represented in Mexican films over the decades. Using audio excerpts taken from popular films released in the 1940s, 50s, 60s, and 70s, I juxtapose sound with photographs of Mexican Indigenous peoples, both sourced from found footage archives. Each photograph is paired with one appropriated audio from a film excerpt, and as the audio progresses, the image slowly fades.

Using After Effects, I build multiple layers to create a gradual disintegration effect, symbolizing how the false depictions in these films erode and distort the representation of Mexican Indigenous peoples, reinforcing harmful stereotypes. The base layer holds the original photograph, while the next two to three layers mask specific sections of faces within the photographs, and introduce special effects



Image 5. & 6. Stills from *Portrait of the Indigenous Peoples in Mexican Cinema* (2023)

and blurring to heighten the illusion of disintegration. A final layer deepens the effect, making the entire image appear as if it is slowly corroding.

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<sup>3</sup> The link to my thesis film, *The Noise Within the Silence* (2025), is provided in the “Annex – Links to my films” section. This section also includes links to the rest of the audiovisual work mentioned throughout this text.

At the time, I was already drawn to working with layers that, when combined, convey a sense of loss – hinting at an unfolding event while remaining elusive and unfocused. This marks my first exploration of distorting the image through digital layering techniques, ultimately laying the foundation for the overexposed scenes in my thesis film.

### *Spring 2023*

In developing my thesis film, *The Noise Within the Silence*, I explore not only films but also the work of sound artists, musicians, and intermedia artists. My goal is to familiarize myself with the different styles, techniques, and approaches that others use to sonically and visually represent tinnitus, hearing loss, SSNHL, or a combination of these conditions.

I first watched *Sound of Metal* (Marder, 2019) when it was released in Mexico. From the very beginning, I knew I wanted to consider this film in the development of future work, as it is the first I have seen that represents deafness with such truthfulness and intimacy. It captures the emotional state of someone experiencing hearing loss, following the protagonist through the various stages he endures until he reaches a place of acceptance and resilience in light of his new reality.

The film also offers insight into how those around him react, showing how their responses add to his internal conflict. In terms of sound design, it is noteworthy how the film juxtaposes the “real” world versus the world of deafness. While sound in the “real” world remains clear, there is always at least one sound element that hints at what is about to happen or what has already been lost. The sound of cicadas exemplifies this dual function, which can be interpreted as both emotional chaos and tinnitus.

From 01:01:53 to 01:02:13, a three-shot montage pauses the narrative and marks the passage of time between scenes. The first shot presents a low-angle view of a tree against the sky as the wind gently rustles its leaves. The second shot widens to reveal trees and underbrush, where the wind's presence intensifies, now joined by the rhythmic hum of cicadas. The third shot cuts to the sky, where the wind, cicadas, and distant birds blend into the ambient soundscape, gradually softening into a subdued tranquility. As this atmosphere builds, the resonance of a chordophone instrument emerges, guiding the transition into the next scene. The ongoing presence of wind, cicadas, and birds in the film's sound design translates the character's tinnitus from the internal to the external world.

Another compelling aspect is how Ruben's inner world is often reflected when he is indoors, whereas the "real" world takes over when he is outside. These subtle details are particularly significant to me, as they serve as a reference for experimenting with different sound perspectives in my film.

From 57:25 to 59:24, Ruben enters a room with a desk and chair facing two large windows. He closes the door and sits down. On the desk, there's a notebook and a pen – a reminder of an earlier scene where he was instructed to write in it every morning. Despite being indoors, the sounds of cicadas, birds, and wind remain present, matching the inner turmoil Ruben is experiencing. He hits the desk and wall, shouts, and laughs sarcastically, heightening the tension of the scene. These sounds punctuate his frustration and helplessness, exposing the raw intensity of his internal battle. Here, what is heard becomes more important than what is seen. The environmental sound tends to dominate, which "dismantles our reliance on the verbal or the linguistic to ground our understanding of what

is happening in the narrative, and instead encourages (or rather insists upon) an embodied, phenomenological, engagement with the sensuality of the scene” (Lovatt 62).

Later, in the scene from 01:07:36 to 01:08:03, Ruben returns to the room for the third time. By now, a shift has occurred. As he sits quietly, the sound of birds singing takes over, filling the space with a newfound serenity. This auditory transition mirrors Ruben’s growing acceptance of his reality. The once chaotic soundscape now gives way to calm, reinforcing his inner peace.

Watching *Sound of Metal* (Marder, 2019) fundamentally shaped how I think about conveying tinnitus and SSNHL through sound design –not as isolated internal phenomena, but as conditions that can be translated, externalized, and emotionally contextualized through the sonic textures of the surrounding world.

### ***Fall 2023***

During the fall, I produce the first version of *Whispering Ear*, which later becomes part of the section “Dissecting my SSNHL and tinnitus” in *The Noise Within the Silence*.

I begin by formulating my key research questions: What sounds best represent my tinnitus and its layers? How do I perceive SSNHL? With these guiding questions in mind, I delve into research with a clearer objective.

I am particularly drawn to projects, writings, and works created by authors living with these conditions, including Daniel Fishkin, Henry M. Seiden, Sophie Woolley, and Adriana Llabrés. Their personal perspectives provide me with a unique insight into how they translate their experiences into artistic forms. In particular, their testimonials – where



they describe their feelings, interactions with others, and daily experiences – are crucial in helping me feel more comfortable with the idea of making a film about a deeply personal subject that I have never shared with anyone outside my family.

Recreating the sounds that inhabit my ear becomes one of the biggest challenges of this project. Daniel Fishkin, a composer living with tinnitus and dedicated to researching hearing damage, plays a pivotal role in the development and final version of my tinnitus recreation. In his sound installation, *Composing the Tinnitus Suites* (2014), Fishkin doesn't aim to replicate his own tinnitus; instead, he creates various interpretations of it using a complex instrumental system, mainly crafted from wood and strings. He places this system on the floor and experiments with it, adjusting the hardware and electronics in different configurations, allowing him to generate different versions of tinnitus (Fishkin, 2014). "Some people wonder whether the sounds of the instrument resemble the ringing in my own ears. The phantom of tinnitus <sup>4</sup> is not acoustic, and thus it resists acoustic representation"(Fishkin, 6).

Fishkin emphasizes how tinnitus severed his connection with people, and it is through his work that he attempts to restore this connection(7). This becomes evident when the audience approaches him to discuss their own experiences with hearing damage; even those who are not interested in experimental music reach out to him because his work resonates with them (7). "This project is a way of creating an aesthetic and cultural strategy for dealing with this encroaching increase in volume" (7).

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<sup>4</sup> Fishkin's phrase "*the phantom of tinnitus*" refers to the conscious perception of sound in the absence of any external auditory source. It is called a "*phantom*" because the sound of tinnitus is perceptible only to the person experiencing it. See Schlee, et al. 123 to read more about this topic.

This process helps me realize that recreating my tinnitus doesn't need to be perfect. While it should represent the sound I experience, there is room for experimentation as long as I maintain its authenticity. I have the freedom to choose how I want to represent it, whether through instruments, objects, or other sounds.

I begin by recording sounds produced by strings, metal, and glass objects, drawn to their resonance and texture. Inspired by Daniel Fishkin's approach, I experiment with strings and explore ways to evoke tinnitus rather than replicate it exactly. I want to do something similar, so I capture the sounds of various objects, hoping to find the right combination. Some of my experiments seem promising, yet something feels off; none quite meet my expectations.

I decide to go back to the basics and ask myself again: What is the first thing that comes to mind when I try to describe my tinnitus? I realize it is deeply tied to nature – the rustling of wind through trees, the wind itself, the rush of a waterfall, the flow of a river, and the sounds of crickets and cicadas. These sounds feel closer to my experience. I expand my approach by incorporating artificial sources of air, capturing the sound of air conditioners and exhaust fans.

Through the idea of a journey, I begin shaping a piece where sounds from nature gradually emerge, illustrating how my SSNHL and tinnitus sound. It is important to clarify that, from my experience, each sound I introduce – like a river's flow or wind rustling through leaves – represents only a fragment, a single layer, of my overall perception of tinnitus. That is why I guide the viewer along a sonic path composed of different sounds,

culminating in a moment where I select and blend certain layers to create a version of what I perceive as my tinnitus.

As this audiovisual research unfolds, I also write the text I want to incorporate into this section. This text is directly tied to the sound and aims to guide the audience through my perception of SSNHL and tinnitus. At the same time, I immerse myself in a variety of readings, including informative texts, letters, reflections, and poems. The most significant is a poem by Henry M. Seiden.

In his poem *Tinnitus* (1994), Henry M. Seiden describes what tinnitus is like in a very natural way. I particularly appreciate his use of simple, relatable language, as if he is sharing his experience with someone he trusts.

Seiden writes:

It's like a ringing in the ears,  
a whistling, a kind of whisper – a sighing, a rising sound  
then falling,  
like the ocean when you hear it in a seashell, except  
without the shell. (lines 1-5)

This poem is key in shaping how I approach the description of my SSNHL and tinnitus, helping set the overall tone for the rest of the film.

It is like  
the rushing water of a stream,  
roaring,  
wanting to be noticed.

The murmur of leaves  
on a windy afternoon.

Or crickets and cicadas,  
chirping and chorusing at night.

*Image 7. A screenshot of a section of the text I'm currently working on. I borrow the words 'it is like' that Seiden uses in his poem to illustrate his tinnitus and create my own version.*

One of my objectives is to determine whether the text induces a phenomenon where people's "inner speech" as they read the text to themselves merges with the sound composition. This question is inspired by Michael Snow's *So Is This* (1982), an experimental film where words appear one by one on a black background at different rhythms,

gradually forming sentences. In a darkened

If I listen closely,  
there is also  
a hissing sound,  
a never ending buzzing.

As if my ear  
was trying to tell me something,  
grabbing my attention,  
or whispering a secret  
that I never reach to understand.

*Image 8. A screenshot of a section of the text I'm currently working on. I incorporate the 'I' to make the words feel personal.*

room, in complete silence, the film draws the viewer into a trance-like state, making the words feel personal, as if they are coming from within. I aim to create something similar because, at this moment, I want the viewers to immerse themselves as much as possible in my tinnitus, perceiving it as if it were their own.

When SSNHL and tinnitus became part of my day-to-day life, I began to experience the world differently. Simple things, like identifying where sounds and noises come from, no longer came naturally. Now, it takes a conscious effort to stay aware of what is happening around me. My relationship with the space around me and with social interactions is disrupted. To avoid losing “information” about what is going on around me, I have to remain constantly alert. This becomes especially challenging in noisy environments.

Like me, I want the audience to make a conscious effort to stay aware of what is happening in the film, with sound being the primary driver of that awareness.



My intention is to ensure that the *Image 9. 10. 11. & 12. Stills from Whispering Ear (2023)*

sound captures the audience's attention first, followed by the text, and then the image. Throughout the film, sound and text dominate the viewer's attention. As a result, I am faced with two options: either use a black background or an image that is less visually complex. I choose the latter, because I want to refer, in a very abstract way, to the process in which sound is generated.

I decide to explore, through visuals, how sound is generated, focusing on how sound waves move and how vibrations travel through the auditory system to create sound. Rather than recreating specific sound waves, I aim to hint at their dynamic activity. The visual aspect of this piece emerges from a sequence of effects applied to various filmed bodies of water. Using After Effects, I craft an abstract wave effect that vibrates and shifts in response to the accompanying audio. Additionally, many of the sounds in the composition are recorded from liquid sources, echoing the cochlea in the ear, which is filled with liquid and plays a crucial role in the auditory system.

After completing the first version of *Whispering Ear*, I find myself drawn to explore the following aspects:

### Visual Style and Rhythm

This point is crucial because I want the visual aspect to directly reflect how I experience the world through sound in my everyday life. My goal is for it to act as a sort of translator, illustrating how sound looks and feels when represented visually. In terms of rhythm, I make it a priority to give the audience enough time to fully immerse themselves in the soundscapes I present. I want them to feel the arrival of sounds, to notice when they fade as louder ones take over, mirroring the dynamic shifts I experience. Just as sound shapes my perception of the world around me, I want the visual style of this film to reflect the auditory landscape, creating a harmonious balance where both elements enhance and complement each other.

### Storyline

I structure the storyline around my journey with SSNHL and tinnitus – beginning with normal life, then the onset of the problem (SSNHL + tinnitus), followed by communication and orientation challenges, and finally, reaching a stage of adaptation and learning to live with it.

From a sound perspective, I want to incorporate moments of communication with someone else – whispers, and words spoken but not fully understood. My SSNHL becomes most evident in these interactions or in environments with significant background noise. When someone speaks to me, my ability to hear and understand

varies depending on the surroundings. There are moments when people speak softly or whisper – I can hear the sound, but I often can't distinguish the words.

In addition to sonically representing my tinnitus, I decide to incorporate a narrative voice that acts as a guide, offering a direct connection to how everything unfolds. This voice not only alludes to my feelings and emotions but also guides the viewer through different moments in the film. My goal is for it to feel like an integral part of the narrative, rather than a separate element. This voice may take different forms – such as text, as a voice-over, or as a combination of both – which I will explore further later.

### ***Winter 2024***

During the winter term, I have the opportunity to experiment with 5.1 surround sound for a different project. While I am currently unsure about working with surround audio, my experimentation with it leads me to no longer rule it out. However, I still plan to explore the Visualization Studio at Concordia University, designed for immersive (360 degree) sound, and work with the SPAT editing tool.

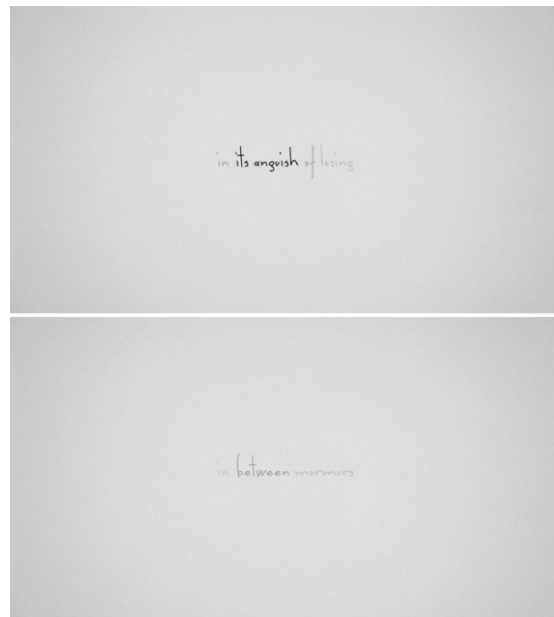
### ***Summer 2024 (Part I)***

I create a second version of *Whispering Ear*. In terms of sound, the only notable change is that I allow certain sounds more space, giving the audience time to absorb both what they are hearing and reading simultaneously. Visually, however, everything transforms. The concept is inspired by my experiments with vellum paper layered over printed text to create

a blurry effect<sup>5</sup>. The more layers of vellum there are, the harder it becomes to read the text. My approach is to place each phrase or word over or under multiple layers, resulting in an effect where, for instance, a word that appears blurred might evoke the sensation of a whisper or a word lost in a noisy moment within the film. The text now appears one word at a time, subtly guiding the rhythm of reading as each phrase unfolds on screen. Initially, I consider using stop motion to achieve this effect, but ultimately, I opt for a digital approach. This choice grants me more flexibility to make adjustments. As I continue to evolve as a filmmaker, incorporating digital effects has become an integral part of my creative process.

I take a photograph of a piece of vellum paper placed over a brightly lit screen, capturing its unique texture. Using Photoshop, I transform this photograph into a transparent digital layer that replicates the original vellum texture. Finally, I use After Effects to recreate the stop-motion effect, bringing the image to life.

Once I complete the editing of this second version, I bring it to the Visualization



*Image 13. & 14. Stills from Whispering Ear – second version (2024)*

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<sup>5</sup> As I begin thinking about which physical materials might help me achieve this blurred effect, I'm reminded of the invitations people used to send out when I was younger –for parties or special events. Vellum paper was especially popular, often printed with a word or image on the translucent layer, with additional details placed behind it. These invitations played with transparency and layering in a subtle, tactile way, and that visual memory now inspires my own experiments.



Studio, which is equipped with a 27-speaker Immersive Audio System (SPAT Revolution) and a 16:3 Planar LCD display, to begin experimenting with the audio in this space.

Since sound plays a key role in my film, and one of my main goals is to immerse the viewer in my experience with tinnitus and SSNHL, this seems like a great opportunity to explore this tool. Additionally, I want to learn how to handle a technology that filmmakers don't often get to explore.

As I experiment in this space, I notice that the arrangement of the 27 speakers, from floor to ceiling, and the room's acoustics enhance my perception of audio while editing. Because my hearing loss is in my right ear, I often struggle to distinguish sounds coming from that side. However, in this setup, the speakers are positioned closer together, which makes the directionality and clarity of sound more distinguishable to me. This allows me to work without constantly turning my head to verify how things sound on the right side of the studio.

I also realize that editing with SPAT Revolution and Reaper requires time and a lot of patience. All sound material must be imported directly into Reaper, meaning I can't work in Pro Tools or Audition. While this isn't necessarily an issue, it is something I need to consider for future post-production planning, especially since I want sound and image editing to progress in parallel. I also notice that SPAT occasionally experiences bugs, requiring a reboot or adjustments to function properly.

The 16:3 Planar LCD display works best with darker images, as whites are not pure white. Its unique aspect ratio allows for creative flexibility with different display templates. I could arrange three image blocks in 16:9, experiment with their appearance and

disappearance, or establish a fixed central image block while manipulating the side images. These possibilities open up multiple visual approaches I am still considering.

Although the main project is designed to be presented in a space like the Visualization Studio –or similar environment – I realize that committing to this format would limit the film’s screening options. To ensure broader accessibility, I decide to approach image editing as if it were a mono-channel film. The sound doesn’t undergo any significant changes at this stage, giving me time to decide whether I want to use the Visualization Studio. Later, I can make the necessary spatial adjustments using SPAT and Reaper. This approach allows me to create two versions of the film, making it adaptable to different screening environments if I choose to take this path.

### ***Summer (Part II) - Fall 2024***

While working on the second version of *Whispering Ear*, I define the five different sections that will compose the film. I make a list of locations where I will film and another for the sounds I need to record. Since the end of winter 2023, I have been actively recording and curating my own archive of urban and natural sounds. This process brings me to a point where only a few more specific sounds are missing. Now that I have a clear vision of the film’s narrative, I can pinpoint exactly what is needed to complete the sound design.

I aim to capture the sounds that define and enrich the soundscape of Mexico. These are the sounds I grew up with – the ones that connect me to home and take me back in time, evoking significant moments shared with my loved ones. Just as these memories remain in the past, so does my ability to hear clearly. I will never hear as I once did, but when these sounds reach me, they offer a sense of comfort. And when they are loud enough, beyond

bringing back memories, sometimes they blend with my tinnitus, creating an illusion – if only for a few moments – that everything is as it once was.

Some of these sounds include the whistle of the cart vendor selling sweet potatoes in the street, the organ grinders passing through the streets playing various melodies, and the unmistakable call of the scrap dealer announcing the purchase of appliances, mattresses, and other used items.

During the second part of the summer, I travel to Mexico. While here, I redefine the sequence of events I want to follow in the film. I begin with the major part of image shooting and sound recording, capturing both ambient and voice recordings. As I review the recorded material, I start categorizing it. Along the way, I begin editing a rough initial assembly to ensure I'm on the right track.

My first stop in Mexico is CDMX, where I spend five days filming all the footage needed for the sections “The day everything changed” and the window scene in “Today in the in-between”, as well as recording sound. My next stop is Querétaro, where I live when I'm in Mexico. While I'm here, I continue refining the script, focusing on the words and sentences that will appear on the screen and those I will be narrating throughout the film. I go through the first set of footage filmed and recorded in CDMX, while continuing to shoot the remaining material. As I shoot, I review and pre-select what I want to keep. I begin assembling a rough cut, following the sequence of events outlined in the script. At first, I decide to edit the five distinct sections separately, and as I complete them, I bring them all together.

These are the five different sections, each accompanied by its corresponding research process:

## 1. The womb

*The beginning of everything. Out of darkness comes life and, eventually, the emergence of sound.*

I couldn't stop thinking about how the fundamental role of hearing in people's lives is often overlooked and difficult to fully comprehend, especially when one hasn't faced challenges related to it. Not long after, I came across Walter Murch who, in *Film: Stretching Sound To Help the Mind See* (2000), mentions that we start hearing around four and a half months after conception, highlighting that hearing is the first of our senses to develop, making it the Queen of the senses. But then sight comes along and takes over, becoming the King, while sound falls into the shadows (Murch, 2000)<sup>6</sup>. From my perspective, this only holds true if both senses are functioning correctly. When living with SSNHL and tinnitus, you realize how much sound is taken for granted – and this fact becomes impossible to ignore for the rest of your life. Even with perfect sight, our interaction with the surroundings, other people, and even ourselves is profoundly affected by sound. All of this led me to the desire to highlight the significance and crucial role that sound plays in our lives, starting from the very beginning of our existence. Building on these insights – and my earlier experiments developing a narrative voice in *Whispering ear*, I began writing voiceover to be performed

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<sup>6</sup> Murch refers to sound as the “Queen of the senses” because it is the first to develop in the womb, surrounding us in an immersive and nurturing sonic world before any other sense is active. However, at birth, when the other senses ignite, sight emerges as the most dominant – claiming the throne as “King” with confidence and immediacy. Meanwhile, sound steps back into the shadows, continuing to do its job from the margins.

in a whisper. I choose to whisper because it places the listener in an internal world. My goal is for my voice to serve, at first, as an invisible consciousness – blending with the surrounding sounds rather than standing out.

The idea is clear – I want to create an interpretation of the womb. The question is how to visually bring it to life. I consider various approaches, from playing with lights and fabrics to using water and inks. However, I realize this abstraction needed a deeper personal meaning. I chose flowers because they are a recurring element in my life and embody the personalities of the women in my family.

I opt to work with four different types of flowers. Three are variations of dahlias, known in Mexico as *lengua de serpiente* (snake’s tongue) and considered the national flower. Additionally, I incorporate snapdragons during the moments when sound appears.



Image 16. Picture of the flowers.

For this segment, I set the camera to a slow shutter speed to capture the intimate world where life and sound begins to form. The womb is a sensory-rich space, and I want to create a sense of motion to represent the rhythmic sounds that fill it. Some shots remain exactly as filmed, while others are overlaid – particularly in moments where the sound of wind chimes and singing bowls marks the emergence of sound. The world that I’m creating



Image 17. Stills from *The Noise Within the Silence* (2025). This is the result I get when filming with a slow shutter speed.

begins in darkness and is illuminated by the arrival of sound. The silhouettes and blurred shapes captured by the slow shutter speed create the meditative and emotional atmosphere I aim for. The motion blur also allows me to achieve smoother transitions between shots and seamless blending, contributing to the visual style I envision for this scene.

The sound design consists of elements like wind chimes, singing bowls, heartbeats, water, and sounds created with pads or software. My aim is to create a magical, intimate atmosphere where the wonder of sound's appearance is gradually revealed. The unpredictable tones of the wind chimes mirror the magical emergence and discovery of sound, accompanying visuals that reference how sound begins to appear during human development in the womb. Meanwhile, the resonant vibrations of the singing bowls evoke a sense of calm and connection. From 00:52 to 01:37, wind chimes disrupt the initial calm with their bright, chaotic presence. They evoke the shock and disorientation of hearing a sound for the very first time, as if the sense of hearing had never existed before. Gradually, the resonance of singing bowls builds a meditative harmony, allowing the calm to return once the sound becomes familiar.

The rhythmic pulse of heartbeats grounds the listener, symbolizing the intimate presence of life – whether from my mother or from my own arrival into the world. The sound of water, an element that appears throughout my thesis film, evokes the womb's protective environment and represents the medium from which sound must travel to reach the unborn child. The ethereal textures of the software-generated sounds add layers of mystery and wonder. Together, these elements blend to form an atmosphere that feels both personal and otherworldly.

I choose to start with the scene in the womb because this is where the sense of sound first enters our lives – even before sight – and establishes our connection with the outside world. It marks the starting point that highlights the importance of the sense of hearing in a person's life. I want the film to open in this intimate and abstract world, introducing the main topic without immediately revealing the problem. The visual abstraction aims to unconsciously lead the audience to place the sense of sight in the background and prioritize the sense of hearing, in an attempt to “listen to the sonorous forms, without any aim other than that of hearing them better, in order to be able to describe them through an analysis of the content of our perceptions” (Schaeffer qtd. in Lovatt 65). This serves to gradually immerse the viewer in the auditory experience that lies at the heart of the film.

## 2. Reliving the Past: The Last Night

*Journey to the past. An allusion is made to the night when everything changes.*

I know I want to have a moment where I travel back in time to when I was a child, in order to establish the point at which everything changed for me. The places where I grew up are not an option for filming, so this section is a recreation, filmed in my family's home, using items from my memorabilia collection that represent what it was like when I was growing up. Close-ups of toys, fabrics, and traditional Mexican objects appear in this section. The shots start out of focus, mirroring the way memories surface – blurred at first, then

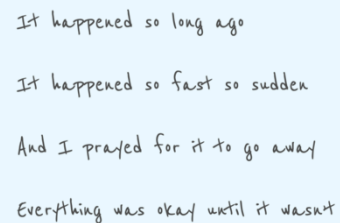


Image 18. Stills from *The Noise Within the Silence* (2025).

gradually coming into clarity. The idea is for the audience to become aware that the film is about someone, but without knowing who it is.

Like a memory, we don't see the full picture of the night my sudden hearing loss begins – only glimpses. In this section, I use the technique of overlaying images to visually reflect the fragmented, non-linear, and subjective nature of memory. I intend to convey that, even though I know what happened – or, rather, what changed that night (as reflected in the text that accompanies the image) – the memory of it is elusive.

This is the only scene where I opt for a more melodic sound design, composed of airy instruments, to evoke a sense of nostalgia while keeping it subtle. Up until this point, everything has been loud and clear, as SSNHL and tinnitus have not yet been introduced. Instead of using voice-over, I choose to have the text appear on the screen, making it the central element that guides the direction of the scene.



It happened so long ago  
It happened so fast so sudden  
And I prayed for it to go away  
Everything was okay until it wasn't

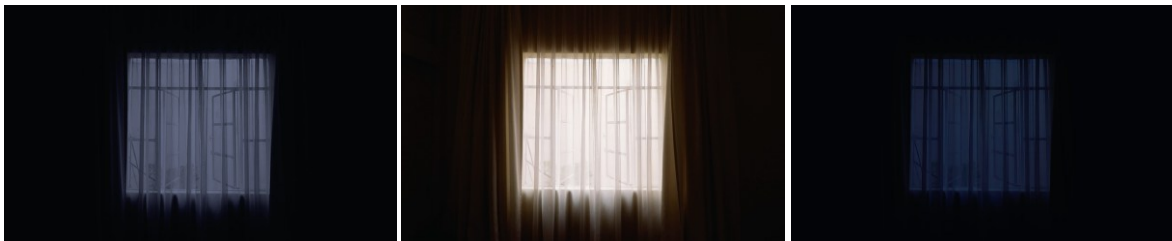
Image 19. A screenshot of a section of the text I'm currently working on.

### 3. The day everything changed

*The next day, nothing is the same. From early morning until late at night, we listen to different sounds that fill the daily life of Mexico City. As the day progresses, everything starts to sound muffled. This is where SSNHL is first introduced, though without tinnitus.*



We observe an open window, captured from an angle that creates a sense of distance. My intention is to convey a feeling of reserve toward the sounds coming from the outside, since this is the day when nothing remains the same. From early morning until late at night, we witness the passage of time. In terms of ambient sound, my goal is primarily to capture the real sounds that define this space and, in some cases, to do so at the specific times when the actions occur. To achieve this, I carry a notebook in which I record both the characteristic sounds of each sound file and the times at which they were recorded.



*Image 20. Stills from The Noise Within the Silence (2025). From early morning until late at night.*

We listen to different sounds that can be found in the daily life of Mexico City – birds, an organ grinder, church bells, cars, and more. Gradually, everything begins to sound muffled. Here, only the SSNHL is introduced. The sound of my voice fluctuates between being clear and muffled, sometimes heard only on the left side and muffled on the right. Other times, it blends with the external sounds coming through the window, conveying the disorientation and fragmentation of my perception. The sound design is meant to immerse the audience in my struggle, enhancing the emotional depth of the experience.

And I had gained something,  
which at the time I didn't know how to describe,  
a ringing,  
a whisper,  
a feeling of fullness,  
all inside my ear

*Image 20. A screenshot of a section from the text I'm narrating in "The day everything changed".*

I then begin to read extensively about tinnitus. To keep nourishing my writing and sound design, I seek out works written from deaf or hard-of-hearing perspectives. *The Walrus* (2011) by Sophie Woolley pulls me in, helping me recognize and connect with experiences that have become second nature to me but might feel disruptive to a hearing person. Woolley notes, “It’s easy to forget that hearing people can be disturbed by the noises I make, even though I can’t always hear them myself” (22). The composition of sounds – wind chimes, high-pitched whistles from the urban landscape, airy tones from nature, and the persistent hum of my tinnitus – forms the pattern and rhythm that shape the texture of how it feels<sup>7</sup> to be me. This soundscape might go unnoticed or feel natural to those who, like me, live with similar conditions. But for a hearing person, the sharp high frequencies, the reverberating echoes of my tinnitus, and the inability to distinguish every word I say may push them out of their comfort zone, pulling them into a fraction of the struggle I navigate every day.

This section is filmed in my grandparent’s home, a place I spent much of my time until my twenties. It is a place where I feel at home, a place I knew when I could hear clearly, and a place I know so intimately that I can represent it sonically.

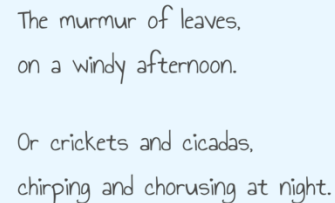
#### **4. Dissecting my SSNHL and tinnitus**

*This section gradually illustrates both my SSNHL and tinnitus until they merge into a single experience.*

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<sup>7</sup> See Lovatt to read more about how “particular sounds, [...] act as mnemonic triggers”(64), and how the materiality of sound – especially its rhythms, tones and timbres – can evoke memory not through representation, but through the affective power of sound design that might capture a sense of how it feels to remember (64).

The second version of *Whispering Ear* has evolved into the section “Dissecting my SSNHL and tinnitus”, with one of the most significant changes being a deeper focus on how I perceive the outside world. To establish a more intentional rhythm, I remove certain phrases from the text, preventing oversaturation and giving the audience more time to absorb the soundscape while allowing space for personal interpretation. At times, only the text appears; in others, only my voice is heard; and in some moments, both elements intertwine. There are also instances where the audio becomes unclear, sometimes fading in and out – intentionally mirroring my experience with SSNHL.



The murmur of leaves,  
on a windy afternoon.

Or crickets and cicadas,  
chirping and chorusing at night.

Image 21. A screenshot of a section from the text I'm narrating in “Dissecting my SSNHL and tinnitus”.

In this segment, we hear a range of sounds and noises originating from water, wind, air conditioners, wind chimes, singing bowls, and human voices, among many others. Some of these sounds have been distorted using software programs like PaulXStrech<sup>8</sup>.

At the beginning, I aim to incorporate a segment or series of moments featuring conversations between my grandmother and me. In these conversations, I reveal that she too suffers from hearing loss. The goal is to bring this shared experience into the film as a complementary layer to my own journey. However, in the end, I decide to keep the focus on myself and include only a brief a section where my grandmother and I are laughing and talking.<sup>9</sup> This brings me back to Soppie Wolley when she talks about her loved one and

<sup>8</sup> PaulXStrech is an advanced time-stretching audio software. For more information, see <https://sonosaurus.com/paulxstretch/>

<sup>9</sup> See *The Noise Within the Silence* (2025) from 17:05 to 18:40.

how the “general effect of hearing his speech but not knowing what it means [...] destroys me. I know what I was before” (23). This moment is not just about hearing how it is to carry a conversation but also about how it feels to lose something as meaningful as an interaction with a loved one. Specifically, when my grandmother speaks, I edit her voice to sound muted and slightly reverberant, making it impossible to distinguish what is being said. The sound that should remain in the background pushes forward as the music from the organ grinder floods the scene and swallows the conversation. By doing this, I heighten the listener’s awareness. The absence of clear speech is felt through the body, while the eyes search for clues in the image on the screen, trying to fill in what the ears can’t. Finding no answer, “the boundaries between body and world may feel indistinct” (Marks qtd. in Lovatt 66), and in that moment, the listener feels something – getting a glimpse into my world through the use of haptic sound<sup>10</sup>.

For this section, I sit down with my grandmother and start talking with her – not only about the main topic but also about other subjects – to make the conversation flow more naturally. At first, aware of the recording, her responses are thoughtful but lack the emotional connection of our usual spontaneous conversations. I then mention random things I have been doing, which helps her relax and respond more naturally.

Visually, two main moments stand out. The first features me in the middle of a dark environment, while the second consists of a series of scenes illustrating my experience and condition. In the first, the aim is to allude to that moment of stillness in which I concentrate,

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<sup>10</sup> See Lovatt from 64 – 66 for a deeper understanding of haptic sound.

pay attention, and listen to all those sounds that come from within me – sounds that, ultimately, reside in my head.

From 11:45 to 12:35, I animate a pattern in After Effects, shaping it to represent the high-pitched sound of tinnitus resonating from my head. It is that persistent tone, the perception of phantom sounds – the ones that arise when “the brain tries to

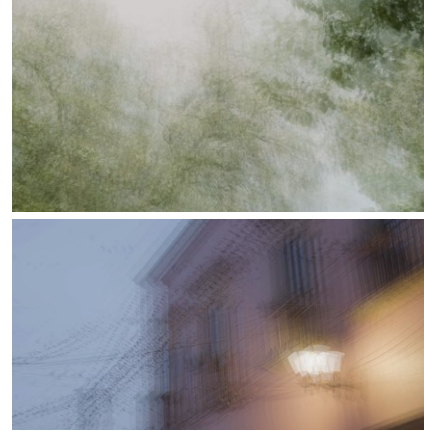


*Image 22. Visual representation of my tinnitus.*

‘fill in’ the missing auditory information from auditory memory when deprived of an external signal”(Noreña and Eggermont, qtd. in Lee et al.). To bring this sensation to life, I make the pattern appear as if it is emerging from my face – a visual echo of the sound that exists only in my mind. The texture is dusty, grainy – unstable, like a signal struggling to take form, shifting unpredictably. Just like my tinnitus, it never stays the same, always evolving, always present.

In the second case, I superimpose multiple video layers in the editing process to visually represent that distortion, those whispers, that feeling of disconnection, confusion, and that “auditory ghost” that I live with on a daily basis.

The superimposition of images consists of an average of 12 to 16 video layers. The decisions regarding scale and position vary with each shot, as factors such as color, light, shadows, and textures determine the final result of each one. As I build the composition, I adjust each layer until I achieve the desired effect. For example, bodies of water and the sky present a particular challenge, as reflective surfaces tend to blur or become



*Image 23. & 24. Using the superimposition technique, I layer 12 to 16 video tracks.*

unrecognizable under the superimposition, even when there are variations in texture, movement, and color.

In *The Noise Withing The Silence* (2025), during the segment from 16:00 to 16:50, I film the river with the rocks to preserve some definition in the image through them. On



*Image 25. An example of how the rocks help preserve some definition in the image.*

the other hand, solid structures like doors, cars, and domes in the urban scenes help maintain a sense of visual depth. The perimeter lines of these architectural elements reinforce the three-dimensionality of the image, making the space feel tangible and dynamic.

What I can't hear clearly is translated into the visual realm, emphasizing that sight alone is not always enough to make sense of my surroundings – whether in spatial terms or within the context of my social interactions.

## 5. Today in the in-between

*A new way of seeing life – neither good nor bad, simply the way I have had to live it.*

In this final segment, we revisit the window introduced in “The day everything changed” but from a different camera angle. Initially, the image maintains the overexposed aesthetic. I enter the frame and approach the window, and as I open it, the image transitions back to its original, non-overexposed state. This shift serves to illustrate that, although my perception of reality has changed, the world itself remains unchanged.

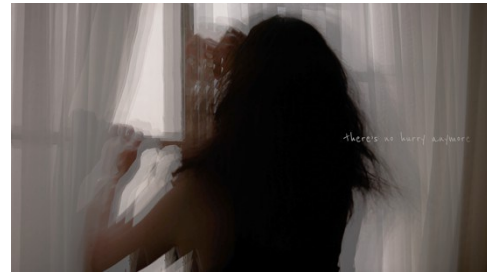


Image 26. I enter the frame and open the window.

As I look out the window, some of the images previously shown reemerge as overlays. Initially, these images are overexposed, but they gradually transition back to their original form, ultimately blending with the window scene before

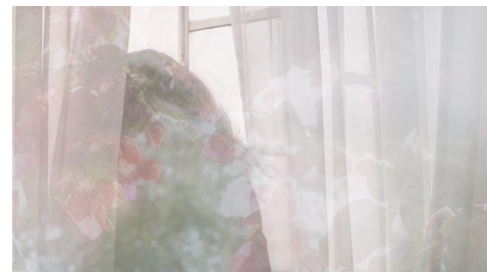
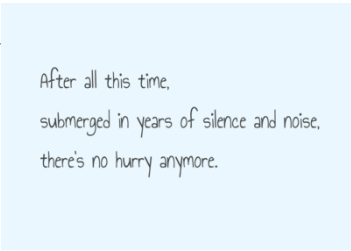


Image 27. Reemergence of previously shown shots.

dissolving into the next overexposed shot. This progression emphasizes my existence and interaction in between these two realities while also symbolizing the effort I invest in making sense of my surroundings – requiring both extra time and energy to truly understand what’s happening around me. Finally, I exit the scene, and the screen cuts to black.

The film ends with a few lines of on-screen text: a final reflection on how, after all this time, there is no longer any hurry to find an answer to why this happened to me. It is now less about what I can or can't hear and more about the way I hear. In terms of sound design, a reverberant yet soothing tinnitus<sup>11</sup> tone emerges, gently vibrating as it expands through the sonic space. Its airy swell grows like a distant echo, while a harmonic resonance gradually unfolds, enriching the texture and depth of the soundscape.

A screenshot of a section from the text in "Today in the in-between". The text is displayed in a light blue box with a white background. The text reads: "After all this time, submerged in years of silence and noise, there's no hurry anymore." The text is centered and uses a simple, sans-serif font.

After all this time,  
submerged in years of silence and noise,  
there's no hurry anymore.

*Image 28. A screenshot of a section from the text in "Today in the in-between".*

During the fall, I complete editing the first four of the five sections in the film, keeping in mind that I still need to refine some elements such as color correction and sound.

### ***Winter 2025***

At the beginning of the winter term, I complete the editing of the fifth and final section of my thesis film, which corresponds to the section "Today in the in-between".

I then need to decide whether to work with immersive sound in the Visualization Studio or 5.1 surround sound; I ultimately choose to edit in 5.1. The main reason for this choice is that, as I mentioned earlier, films on this subject matter are hard to come by and I want *The Noise Within the Silence* to be flexible and adaptable across different playback formats. I envision a version of the film that can be experienced faithfully by anyone, even on a computer with headphones, and this accessibility is something I want to prioritize.

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<sup>11</sup> If such a sound of tinnitus even exists. But what I mean here is "soothing" in relation to the other representations of tinnitus that I have presented.



Once I begin editing in the surround studio at the university, the process of deciding where to place the sounds is very intuitive. As I watch and listen to the film in short segments, a clear idea of how I want the sound to unfold comes to me almost instinctively. I make the edits, play back what I have done, and adjust where needed before moving forward. After finishing, I review the full film, write down any further adjustments I want to make on a piece of paper, and continue the same process until I have shaped the sound to match the vision I aim for.

While all this is happening, I also focus on making the final corrections related to the visual aspects, such as color correction, adjusting the font size of the text, and adding credits, among others.

Throughout my years in the master's program, I have focused on discovering films that resonate with my own work. Then, in mid-March, I find *Todo el Silencio* (del Río, 2023), a Mexican film in which actress Adriana Llabrés portrays a character living with the same hearing condition she has – otosclerosis – and collaborates on the script with screenwriter Lucía Carreras (Droeven). This collaboration, rooted in Llabrés' personal experience, along with the inclusion of others living with different hearing conditions in the project, allows for the creation of an authentic and respectful narrative that offers a nuanced representation of differently abled bodies (Droeven).

The story centers on Llabrés' character Miriam, a CODA – also known as a Child of Deaf Adults – who works as a Mexican Sign Language teacher and a theater actress. Despite spending her entire life around the Deaf community, Miriam's world begins to unravel when she starts losing her sense of hearing (del Río, 2023).

Although this film comes at the final stages of my thesis, it includes elements that align with my own experiments. One such element is the manipulation of voice volume, creating moments where the dialogue is clear and prominent, and others where it fades. This illustrates how certain things happening around me go unnoticed – not necessarily because they aren't heard, but because they are difficult to distinguish or locate. An example in my film occurs during a conversation with my grandmother, where her words become unintelligible. In *Todo el Silencio* (del Río, 2023), in the scene from 17:28 – 18:18, Miriam is in a script rehearsal and only realizes it is over when she sees the director clapping. Sound enters the scene when Miriam perceives a shift – either when she notices something happening or when someone physically engages with her to get her attention. In the absence of these cues, the sound is muffled, making it impossible to distinguish what is going on.

Both *The Sound of Metal* (Marder, 2019), and *Todo el Silencio* (del Río, 2023), present two very different worlds, yet they offer an interesting point of comparison: it doesn't matter if you work in a field where sound seems essential to your professional and personal life, or if you have spent your entire life surrounded by people with varying degrees of deafness. The internal chaos that comes with losing the sense of hearing is a universal experience. This is one of the strengths of having more stories like these – where different perspectives are presented, and sound mirrors the character's internal world. These narratives allow people to open their eyes to different realities, acknowledging the diverse shades of human experience. Hopefully, through this, we can encourage inclusion and empathy.

## **Final thoughts: The Noise Within the Silence**

*The Noise Within the Silence* is a film where the boundaries between body and world blur, offering a glimpse into my experience of SSNHL and tinnitus. In just 20 minutes, those with a similar condition may find recognition, while hearing people might face discomfort – an unfamiliar dissonance that disrupts their usual perception of sound. But for me, this reality does not end when the film does. There is no pause button, no silence, no way to recover what has been lost. The ghosting sounds of my tinnitus remain, shaping how I navigate the world, how I interact with others, how I listen, and how I feel. What for some might be an unsettling moment, for me, is a lifelong state of being.

Yet, there is still so much to say and countless ways to express it. I want to keep exploring and diving deeper into the themes I didn't fully address or only touched on in this project. In my film, there are almost no people or social interactions. This choice reflects my intention to position myself as a distant observer – a perspective that mirrors how I have sometimes felt since SSNHL and tinnitus became part of my life. From the moment my hearing changed, and even now, especially in noisy environments, it often feels like the world keeps turning while I remain trapped in a bubble, watching everything from afar without being part of it. That is why I chose not to include faces or voices, except for my grandmother's. Her presence, her voice, is an anchor – an echo of something familiar within the silence.

SSNHL and tinnitus are complex experiences, impossible to capture in a single way. There is no right or wrong way to portray them because each representation depends on the perspective and intent of the creator. For a long time, I kept my condition a secret, as if

avoiding the subject could make it less real. Making this film has not only helped me understand myself better but has also lifted a weight I didn't realize I was carrying.

I see this project as the possible beginning of something bigger – the first iteration in a series of personal projects through which I want to continue exploring this subject. But before moving forward in that direction, I needed to understand myself. It hasn't been an easy process. More than once, the fear of exposing something so personal disrupted my creative flow. But like any muscle, vulnerability needs to be exercised. I know I must keep working on it until the discomfort transforms into confidence.

Through this process, I have also discovered the power of connection. One of the most meaningful parts of this journey has been connecting with people who, upon hearing about my project, have shared similar stories with me. This has made me reflect on the role of vulnerability in my artistic practice. I have realized that when I allow myself to open up, I create a space for others to do the same. That has made me think deeply about how sharing a personal story can foster a sense of community and mutual understanding.

I now see why Fishkin says that his practice has allowed him to reconnect with people. There is something profoundly powerful about connecting with those who share a similar reality. For a long time, I carried a deep sense of guilt for feeling the way I did. I would think, "I'm not completely deaf, and it's just a loud noise; there are far worse things happening in the world." And while that is true, it doesn't mean I should dismiss my own experience or feel guilty for sharing it with others.

As a filmmaker, I want to continue exploring and sharing my own visual and sonic aesthetic of SSNHL and tinnitus. Like Fishkin, I hope to contribute to the cultural dialogue

around these topics, offering a perspective that helps expand our collective understanding through different artistic practices.

Looking ahead, I would love to create a platform or website that gathers films exploring hearing loss from different perspectives. When I was younger, I would have loved to find something like that – something that made me feel less alone and that helped me understand what I was going through. Now, I want to do something about it. *The Sound Within The Silence* is just the first step, my small contribution to a journey that is only beginning.

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## **Annex – Links to my films**

*If a Home Could Speak, What Would It Say About the Person Who Lives in It?* -

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*Portrait of the Indigenous Peoples in Mexican Cinema* - <https://f.io/5JAS4BKM>

Password: MEXP\_MR25

*Whispering Ear* (first version) - <https://f.io/sgmQ-UYL> Password: WhisE1\_MR25

*Whispering Ear* (second version) - <https://f.io/AzrlGOtK> Password: Whis2\_MR25

*The Noise Within the Silence* – <https://f.io/f1YmuJzC> Password: TNWTS\_MR25