

RADIO BREAK



Radio Break is not just an exhibition: it is a set of discrete embodied experiences in locales throughout Los Angeles. The project's twelve artworks are presented through low-power radio transmissions and live performances that unfold in neighborhoods from East Los Angeles to Downtown to Hollywood, culminating in the Mid-Wilshire District. The audience is not only invited to attend the public broadcasts of these works, which may employ spoken word, narrative, ambient sound, or music, but also to travel to each of the broadcast sites using a different mode of transportation—the Metro, cycling (during CicLAVia), walking, or driving. Some of the artists selected for *Radio Break* have worked with sound in their practices, while others are primarily visual artists who were intrigued by the opportunity to experiment with radio. Their diverse contributions are contextualized by the curatorial team's online essays and interviews, which explore the histories, politics, and phenomenology of radio.

The preparation for *Radio Break* occurred as part of a four-semester practicum at the University of Southern California Roski School. The first two semesters, aimed at providing a theoretical, historical, and practical framework for the exhibition, included *Curatorial Practice and the Public Realm: The City as Platform*, taught by Joshua Decker, followed by my own course, *Interventions: Art in the Public Sphere* that investigated various forms of interventions in art-making, exhibitions, and public projects in institutional and public spaces. During the final two semesters, students developed their curatorial concept for the content and context of this project. Their goal was to organize an exhibition that was experiential, not visual, with multiple modes of engagement in the public sphere rather than a traditional exhibition venue. In presenting works transmitted via radio, they were able to utilize an accessible, democratic medium as a space for artistic production.

The sprawling urban metropolis is the platform for *Radio Break*, while its audience consists of individuals who specifically seek out the works in a particular destination as well as a general public who may happen to experience them while passing by a given site. Ultimately, whether they are experienced while wending through the ubiquitous L.A. traffic, riding public transportation, or simply walking around, these works are a restorative remedy to the distracting soundtrack of urban space. As musician Elvis Costello has aptly written:

"Radio is a sound salvation," particularly here in the City of Angels.

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