

SONIC TRAILS : LOCKDOWN

Theatres Of Archimagination

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What is the pulse of a city when citizens go silent?
What are the scenes of a city when society recedes?
What qualities and processes remain when everyday activities are abandoned?



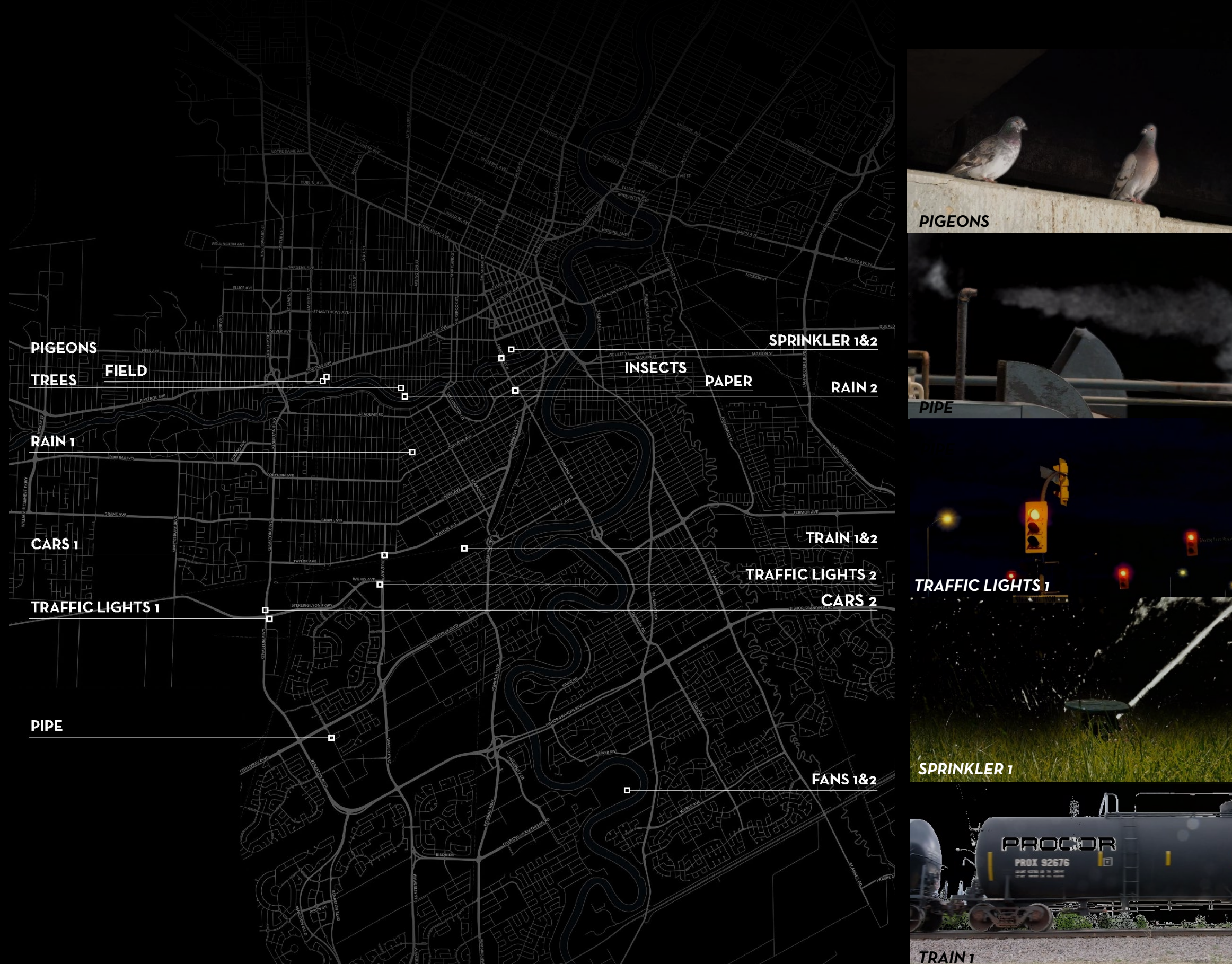
The **Theatres Of Archimagination** Project was a continuation and elaboration of my work as an undergraduate researcher in the summer of 2020, which involved theatrical research and preparing for the Frascari V symposium. The Frascari V *Theatres of Architectural Imagination* Symposium was originally intended to be held in-person at UQAM in Montreal in May 2020, but was postponed due to the COVID 19 pandemic. In May of 2021, the event was held virtually with participants from across the world.

After helping with this event in May, I worked together with Lisa Landrum, Sabba Rezai (another undergraduate researcher) and other University of Manitoba students on a five act *Theatres of Archimagination* exhibition that was part of the Virtual Italian Pavilion at the 2021 Venice Biennale, in collaboration with Arts Letters and Numbers; an experimental, non profit arts, education and publishing organization based in New York State. This exhibition built on the themes of architectural imagination explored in the Frascari V Symposium.

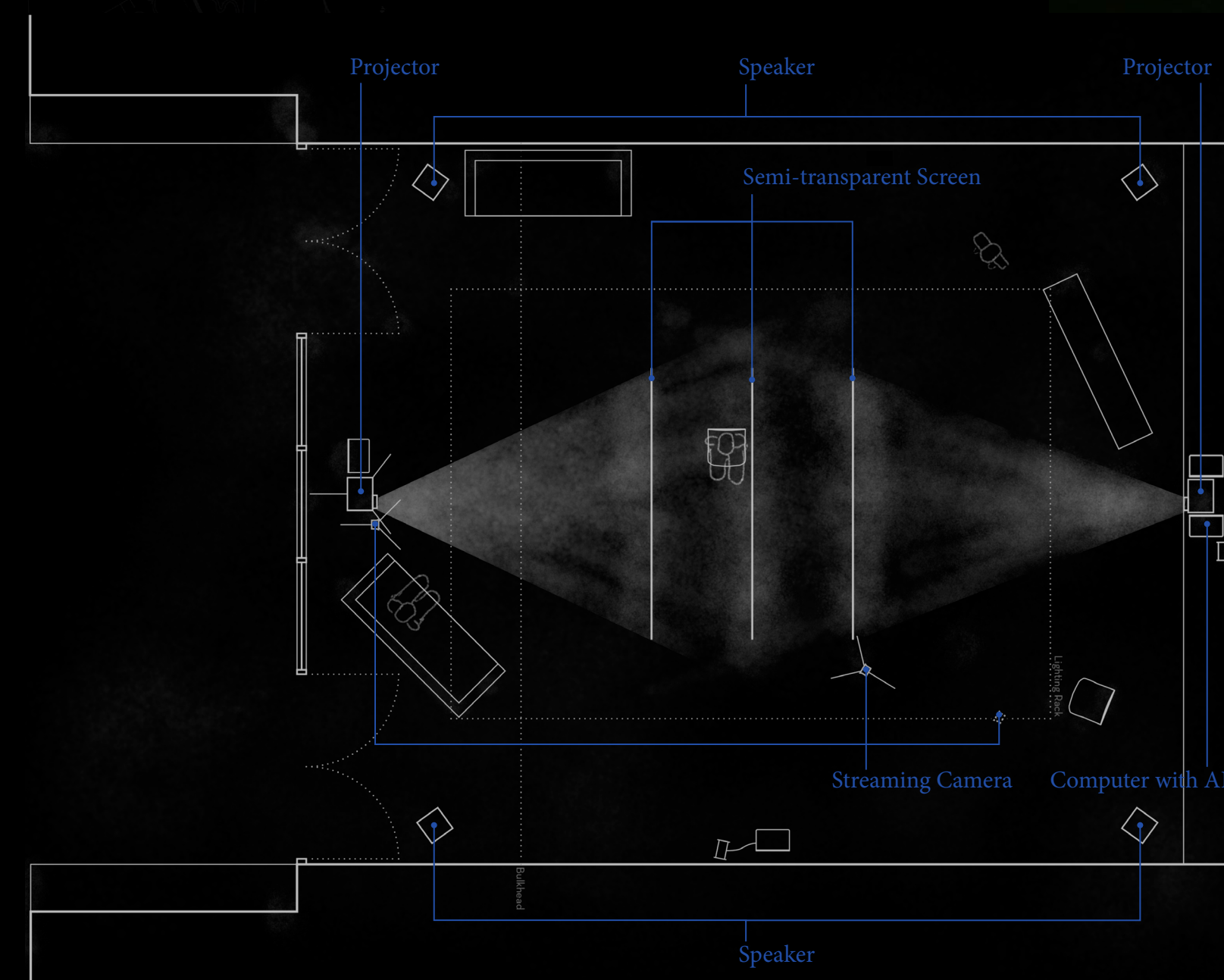
I contributed the work *Sonic Trails: Lockdown* to the *Theatres of Archimagination* exhibition. *Sonic Trails: Lockdown* is an audiovisual installation created in collaboration with composer Örjan Sandred that explored the intersection between architectural and musical experience. Örjan worked on sound design and created the AI algorithm that controls the installation, while I worked on the visuals and the installation's spatial configuration. This work was exhibited in-person at the A2G Gallery at the University of Manitoba, and was simultaneously livestreamed for 101 hours at the Venice Biennale. Below is a description of *Sonic Trails: Lockdown*:

During COVID 19 lockdowns cities lose their most distinctive element: human presence. Nonetheless, other urban qualities, activities and processes remain and come into focus. Trees continue to sway in empty parks, cars pass through desolate streets, animals wander empty spaces.

Sonic Trails: Lockdown projects audio-visual samples of these "lockdown environments" into a space using 2 projectors and 4 loudspeakers. An AI algorithm controls the installation, generating an abstract, musical experience by manipulating architectural qualities of light, sound and space from the audio-visual samples. A patient visitor (or online viewer) discovers motifs, rhythms, and abstract themes that take us beyond what we see or hear. Ultimately, the work unlocks a reciprocity of music and architecture, creating an embodied aesthetic experience that questions our place in the city.



Örjan and I made audio-visual recordings of "lockdown" environments (all of these environments are without human presence) in Winnipeg. These samples were then fed into an AI algorithm developed by Örjan that manipulated them before being projected into the installation.



The installation was setup at the A2G Gallery (right), designed to invite visitors to inhabit the spaces in between the three semi-transparent screens. Three cameras recorded and livestreamed the installation from different angles, allowing people around the world to simultaneously experience the work virtually.

Though focused on absence in a locked-down city, the creative research and installation design aimed to intensify the presence and experience of ambient aural, visual, spatial and social phenomena.

Örjan and I presented our work at the Italian Virtual Pavilion in September, and held a panel discussion with Lisa Landrum and Hans Tutschku (composer and professor at Harvard University).

