

# Audio arts collective with Acra ties makes aural magic

**R**ECENTLY, we were fortunate to attend a concert by master Moroccan musician Hassan Hakmoun. During the performance, the shamanistic sintirist recounted one of the most profound lessons passed down to him by his mystic mentors: music isn't only found in the sounds transmitted by musical instruments. It's in the air all around us, all the time, in everything from the twittering spring birds to our car's clacking windshield wipers to that annoying noise the dishwasher makes when we turn it on in the morning.

Something tells us the Brooklyn-born transmission arts collective free103point9 would find much to agree with in Hakmoun's musical philosophy. Profiled in the *Freeman* last month, the organization's work includes "experimental practices in radio art, video art, light sculpture and installation and performance utilizing the wireless spectrum."

While these artists' collages of found sounds – sometimes called *musique concrete* – aren't music



*per se*, to be listened to as one would, say, Bach or The Beatles, they are valid as such nonetheless. When absorbed with an open consciousness and a minimum of preconceptions, they create a sublimely magical environment and reveal whole new planes of discovery. Which is, really, what the best "traditional" music does, anyway.

The free103point9 group maintains the 30-acre Wave Farm in Acra as an annex to its Brooklyn gallery, alternating between the sites for exhibitions, workshops and other events featuring its artists' experimental audio creations and live broadcasts. Many of the pieces conceived by artists affiliated with the collective are streamed on the group's Web site or recorded for release on its Dispatch Series CDs.

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**ARTISTS:** Various

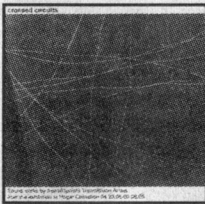
**Peter Aaron**



**ALBUM:** "Tune(In)) The Kitchen" (free103point9)

**T**HE organization's "Tune(In))" events are happenings designed for a virtually silent environment in

which listeners wear individual headsets to experience various live performances in a host space



rather than hear the works as amplified sound. This compilation rounds up pieces made for one such event at longstanding New York art site The Kitchen. "Thrum (Kitchen Mix)," by the

duo Radio Guitar (Peggy Ahwesh and Barbara Ess, both of whom teach at Bard College in Annandale-on-Hudson), is one of the highlights. In the work, the pair lays out a thick wash of barely controlled static bisected by ambient voices and half-tuned-in foreign radio stations. Sonic Youth fans will want to check out Damian Catera's "deComposition Tune (In)) Thurston," in which guitarist Thurston Moore's already chaotic live performance gets further manipulated by Catera's on-site sampling and remixing.

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**ARTISTS:** Various  
**ALBUM:** "Crossed Circuits" (free103point9)

**T**HE 27th release in the series, "Crossed Circuits" documents a 2005 exhibition at Brooklyn's Hogar Collection gallery. Tom Roe, free103point9's program director, opens the disc with "March Steps," a piece built around the sound of (we think) whistling winter wind, distant metallic banging and a tea kettle that's about to explode. The elements

are introduced in exactly that order to create an unsettling, layered tension that reaches its boiling point just as the track ends.

Matt Mikas' "Divination #8" weaves snippets of pompous, "inspiring" speeches by past and present U.S. politicians with the disturbingly hypnotic voice of some mad-scientist guru making proclamations on the flawed nature of mankind. Although a rather scary reflection of our fundamentalism-driven world, it's also pretty damn funny, an all-too accurate satire of the immoral Captain Ahab's that con their way into power.

Visit free103point9 on the Web at [www.free103point9.org](http://www.free103point9.org).

*The Freeman seeks CDs by local artists or artists appearing locally for review. Please send all CDs (please no CD-Rs or demo CDs) to Daily Freeman c/o Preview, 79 Hurley Avenue, Kingston, NY 12401.*

