

---

## Soundscape Research in France

---

**Author: Justin Winkler**

The Soundscape Newsletter, Number 04., September, 1992

Although a lot of soundscape research and design has been done in France by various institutions for more than a decade astonishingly little is known about this in the English speaking part of the world - partially, no doubt, because of language barriers. Here are some examples of French Institutions involved in Soundscape Research:

1. CRESSON, "Centre de Recherche sur l'Espace Sonore" (Research Centre for Sonic Space) was founded by sociologist and musicologist Jean-Francois Augoyard. Hard scientific work has been done by him and his collaborators. A few recent publications may indicate the spheres of interest of the CRESSON crew. In 1989 Pascal Amphoux and Martine Leroux published an in-depth study titled "Le bruit, la plainte, et le voisin"(Noise, Complaints and Neighbours). Last year Amphoux (et al.) issued a trilingual study on the acoustic quality of public spaces: "Aux ecoutesde la ville" (Listening to the City). The mentioned publications do not have English abstracts, whereas the proceedings of the symposium "La qualification sonore des espaces urbains" (The Qualification of Sound in Urban Spaces -published in Architecture and Behaviour 7 (1), 1991,Lausanne) do so and are highly recommended reading. CRESSON, Ecole d'Architecture de Grenoble, BP 2636, F-38100 Grenoble, France.
2. The LAMU, "Laboratoire Acoustique et Musique Urbaines" (Laboratory for Urban Sound and Music) at the Ecole d'Architecture Paris La Villette takes a different approach to issues of sound/soundscape in the city. Its president Geronimo Padron Lopez is an architect, its director Pierre Marietan a composer. A cornerstone of the LAMU activities is the development of a low-cost housing project at the outskirts of Paris, where the impact of pulsating noise from a major highway as well as the sounds of the new neighbourhood itself had to be taken into consideration. The building which should become an example of humanistic architecture is still under construction. LAMU, Ecole d'Architecture Paris La Villette, 144 rue de Flandres, F-75019 Paris, France.
3. ESPACES NOUVEAUX has been in existence since 1984. It was founded by music critic and former director of France-Musique Louis Dandrel and is funded by national research programmes. It serves as a kind of soundscape "think-tank" and has been active in acoustic design projects involving architectural and outdoor urban acoustics. Its main performances were soundscape simulation projects, including products like the "amphibonic chair" and the "audiosphere". It also organized "Urbasonic 88", a four-day acoustic design of a public square in downtown Hong Kong. Espaces Nouveaux, 56 Bd. Davout, F-75020 Paris, France.