

Hanna Tuulikki: Love (Warbler Remix)



Performance photo by Matt Rowe



Installation photos by Thierry Bal

## LOVE (WARBLER REMIX)

Installation: Radio broadcast on FM and shortwave, handheld radios with headphones, stereo composition (21 mins 41 secs) mixed with live sound from sited microphones, visual score giclée on canvas, 2025

Live performance, 35 mins, 2025

Commissioned for Folkestone Triennial, Hanna Tuulikki's *Love (Warbler Remix)* is a place-responsive sound work for radio that takes a bird's-eye view of the Kent coastline to expand and remix cultural understandings of 'territory' and 'migration' through an aperture of love.

*Love (Warbler Remix)* is inspired by the way in which Folkestone and the wider Kentish coast are part of a route over which animals, birds, and humans alike have long travelled. This once included the Marsh Warbler, a small migrating bird that breeds in Northern Europe, before making its passage via the Mediterranean, the Balkans and the Middle East, to winter in East and South Africa. Until recently, a breeding population was concentrated in Kent, and though they can still be found across the channel in northern France, they are now rarely seen in the UK.

This remarkable bird recounts its migratory path through its music, composing its song entirely from mimicry of other species' songs and calls, sampling and remixing European and African birds into rapid, complex sequences. Tuulikki worked closely with sound recordist Geoff Sample alongside ornithologists to analyse the song of an individual in a short recording, identifying 90% of its mimicry, revealing 64 species in just 7 minutes. The Marsh Warbler is Nature's original DJ!

It is generally thought that birds sing to attract a mate and in defence of territory, yet such utilitarian explanations fall short of accounting for the sheer complexity of the Marsh Warbler's song, or for why it sings not only on its breeding grounds, but along its migratory routes and wintering sites. Perhaps our ideas of natural selection and territory are so deeply entangled with human language of competition, aggression, borders, defence, and ownership, that our understanding is limited by our own preoccupations.

A guiding question for Tuulikki emerged: "*By listening-with Marsh Warbler, how might we shift our human understanding of migration as anomalous and disruptive, to reimagine it as a process central to all life on earth?*"



Performance photo by Matt Rowe

As a companion ritual invocation for the Marsh Warbler's return to Kent, on the opening day of Folkestone Triennial, Tuulikki performed a series of solo vocal improvisations in the guise of a Love Warbler, animating the acoustic of the Lade Pits' listening ears.

*"Tuulikki tweets into the mirrors for 45 minutes at the top of her lungs, eliciting responses from nearby birds... It's bizarre, astonishing, and could only be art."* – Sean Burns, Frieze

The Kent coastline, with its proximity to the continent, is not only a gateway for migrating beings, but also a place deeply entwined with practices and technologies of territorial defence, remnants of which can be seen dotted along the coast. At the Lade Pits of Dungeness, on RSPB-reclaimed land, giant concrete sound mirrors, once used as a military warning system, now stand as monuments to the physicality of sound. Tuulikki asks, *"What if through these parabolic 'listening ears' we overheard an avian love song to migration? How might this offer a counter narrative to the stories we are told?"*

She begins with imagining a fictional human-avian being – a 'Love Warbler' (*Homoacrocephalus amor cantorix*) – which has returned to breed in the rewilded reedbeds of the Lade Pits. *Love (Warbler Remix)* brings to life its song. Created from a sample bank of traditional love songs collected from 27 musicians along its flyway, the piece adopts the Marsh Warbler's polyvocal song-structure to remix these into multilingual, multispecies music. This is then combined with live ambient sounds from 'open mics' sited at the Lade Pits sound mirrors.

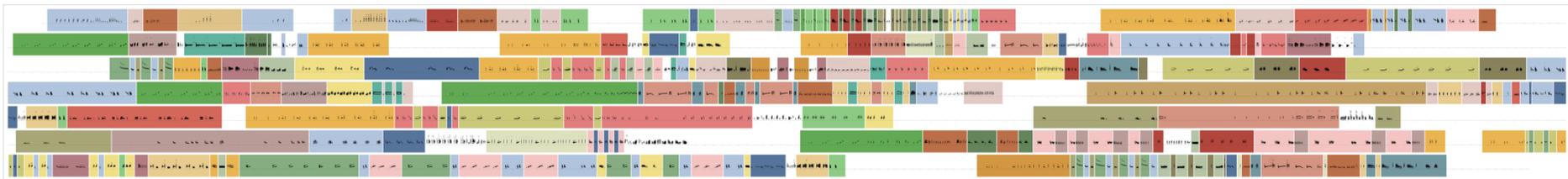
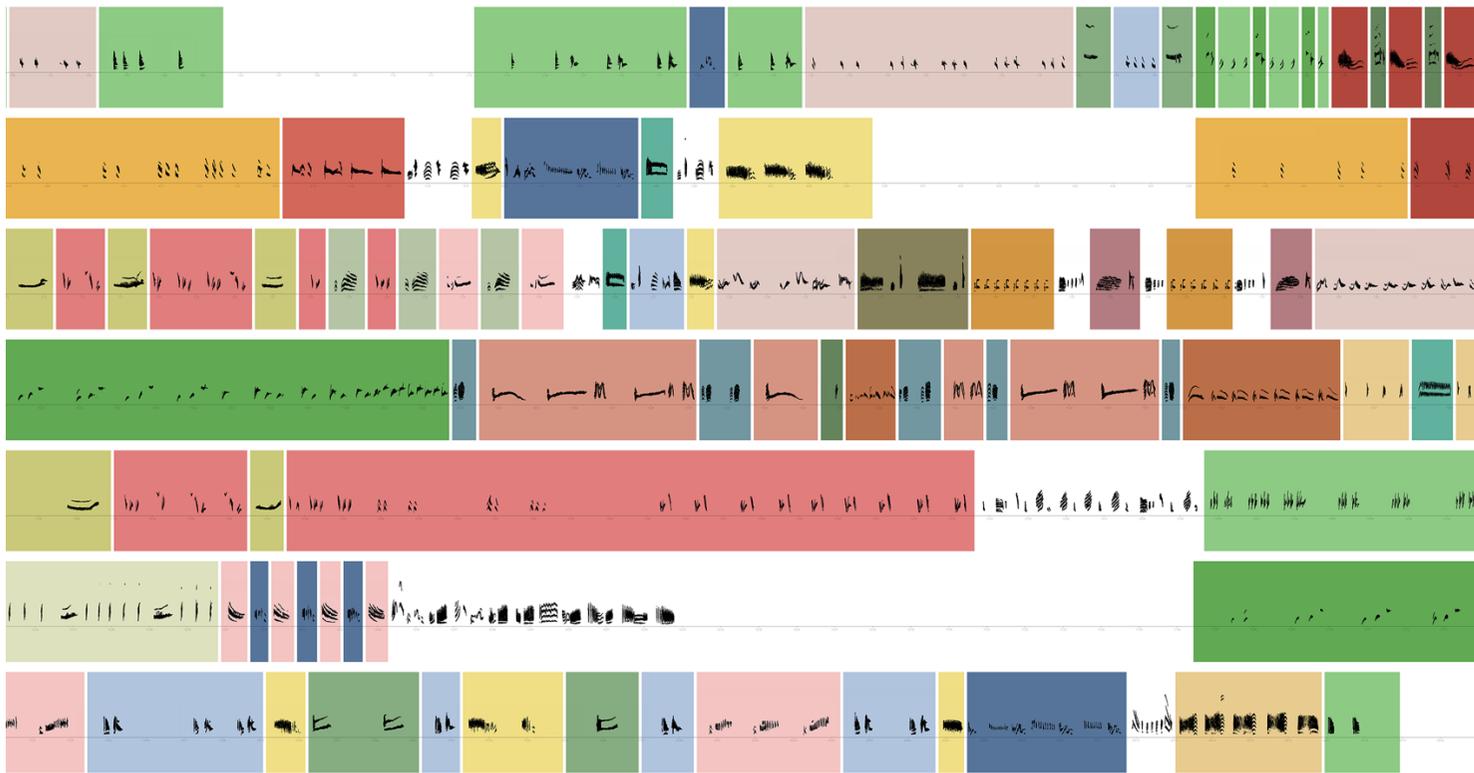
The resulting sound work is broadcast on FM radio into a 'listening station' housed within a former military site in Folkestone overlooking the Channel. The sound is accessed via handheld radios with closed-ear headphones, and pinned to the walls, a sonogram-inspired visual score mapping the song territories and corresponding bird mimicry offers insight into the world of the warbler, alongside love song lyrics in their original languages and poetic translations. Across the duration of the Triennial, it is further broadcast on shortwave radio to places along the migration path, connecting with communities across continents.

Listen to a mix of the radio work recorded 5pm, 25 July 2025 (best listened to on closed ear headphones): <https://on.soundcloud.com/Yzn1PeTo6gyWLmls7R>

Connecting Kent with the geographic route over which many beings have long travelled, Tuulikki's timely work speaks to contemporary environmental and humanitarian concerns.

*"A successful sound work... Imagine Holger Czukay making a hybrid of Messiaen and Steve Reich. Very pleasing."* – John Quin, The Quietus

*"...a richly layered piece, strong in both research and imagination, which celebrates migration and subverts the region's many coastal defences with a radio broadcast from the sound mirrors at Dungeness."* – Mark Sheerin, the Arts Desk



Top: visual score details; Bottom: full visual score

## LOVE (WARBLER REMIX)

### Exhibition history:

2025 Folkestone Triennial

### Performance history:

2023 Folkestone Triennial

### Credits:

Artist and composer: Hanna Tuulikki

Field recording, ornithologist, lead Marsh Warbler mimicry analysis: Geoff Sample

Love song vocalists: Hanna Tuulikki (British Isles), Guillaume Maupin (France), Daria Occhini (Switzerland), Rocco Zecca (Italy), Katarina Juvančič (Slovenia), Dunja Knebl (Croatia), Selma Droce (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Sabri Ayberk Hocaoğlu (Montenegro), Antigona (Gashi) Altıntaş (Albania), Filis Sinanoska (North Macedonia), Velichka Chausheva (Bulgaria), Zoe Katsilerou (Greece), Sumru Ağıryürüyen (Turkey), Mahmoud Olabi (Syria), Petra El Hawi (Lebanon), Hanan Wakeem (Palestine), Hind Hamed (Jordan), Saleh Al-Rabeea (Saudi Arabia), Habat Zerezghi (Eritrea), Tasew Wendim (Ethiopia), Mzee Tendere Mwangi (Malindi, Kenya), Salma Faraji (Tanzania), Yobu Maligwa (Malawi), Wezi (Zambia), Matchume Zango (Mozambique), Phineas Magwati (Zimbabwe), Lungiswa Plaatjies (South Africa)

Additional Marsh Warbler mimicry analysis contributors: Françoise Dowsett-Lemaire, Magnus Wadstein, John Fanshawe, Terry Stevenson, Gerard Grant, Jimu Katengu, Samuel Chihana

Open live microphones sited at Lade Pits Sound Mirrors, RSPB Dungeness

Audio mixing: Kim Moore

Audio mastering: Sam Annand

Coding: Iain McClenaghan

Open microphone streambox design: Grant Smith

Audio web host: Locustream ([locusonus.org](http://locusonus.org))

FM transmitter hosting: National Coastwatch Institution Folkestone

Shortwave radio transmission: Encompass (Woofferton Transmitter)

Production design and technical manager: Nick Millar

Installation build: Form and Matter

Costume fabricator: Lydia Honeybone

Project manager: Ellie Beedham

Studio assistant: Yue Zhang Gu

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