Sound is inseparable from its spatial dimensions. Soundscape studies will address global and marginalized sonic landscapes with perspectives from diverse fields of study including science, linguistics, performance and installation art, broadcasting, musicology, film, and cartography. This class builds on skills developed in IML 328: Sonic Media Art and further explores the ways users engage with media and how technology is an essential component in sound experiences. This course will expand on listening techniques as a critical approach to sound's cultural, political, and aesthetic dimensions. Students will gain a broad range of perspectives towards sonic modalities and contexts through theory and production of sound.

Sound has been explored by listeners for thousands of years, but human relationships to sound has drastically changed with mediated sound technologies that range from transmissions and archives – to immersive, interactive, and virtual sound experiences. Sound theories and screenings will give an overview of global, historical, contemporary, and lesser-known works and practices that will give insight into acoustic ecologies, psychoacoustics, transmissions and broadcasting, interference, simulations, image/sound relations, site-specificity, sound mapping, psychogeography, soundwalks, installation, and interactive media design. Technical methods in soundscape design will incorporate field recordings, digital arranging and mixing, multi-track recorders, vocal recording, sampling technologies, and multi-channel amplification methods for installation and presentation. Students will be encouraged to follow their own interests while conceptualizing and producing sound-based media works, and will leave this class with the ability to produce sophisticated immersive sound experiences.

Studio soundscape projects will include a multi-channel sound installation, a research-based project on acoustic ecologies, and a radio program or virtual soundwalk.

Questions? email: Kim Zumpfe (zumpfe@usc.edu)