**1) Let's start with your background. What got you started with field recording?**

I have always been occupied with the oceans and their inhabitants, also of how we treat the planet’s environments, I used to study Science to become a marine biologist, before I studied art in Falmouth and London. In the early nineties, I made a conscious decision to not make any more objects, solid objects which occupy space and tend to turn into garbage. I decided to start using material that did not occupy physical space, but still is a very physical material, as sound is. After some years in the studio, I simply fell asleep, and I decided to go out, back out, into the ocean, into the forests and the mountains to find and record sounds from unknown sources of sound, from both inaccessible areas and from frequencies not audible for us (without changing the way we listen to them, like speeding up or down for example). I am interested in the areas not known, or less investigated, less researched, where questions are still possible to ask, and which should be asked.

**2) You've mentioned a lot about 'blind field recordings'. What does it actually mean?**

**How does it affect your recordings?**

I am concerned with finding unknown sources of sound, sound we do not know is there, or cannot reach with our senses as mentioned above. It is a very concentrated listening process, something which is unknown, unseen, not obvious what it is, like a search through sound, and not through looking at and then listening to. Close your eyes while recording, then follow the sound, and investigate the audible and not the first seen or heard.

It is a different way of recording out in the wild. You can set up your microphone, your recorder to record, leave the place and then come back a couple of hours later, go home with your recordings and get surprised and excited about what you have got. I am working in a different way though a lonely process of intense concentration, monitoring constantly what is there, then move according to what I hear, to get closer, to search, and almost without exception I am surprised and excited about a new creature, or a phenomenon I did not expect, this makes it an endless source of wonder and questioning, and an urge to learn more, through listening, though also through concentrated observations, sometimes also visual close up observations.

**3) Do you have a fixed workflow? Do you spend a lot of time planning, for example?**

I spend a lot of time researching the places I am going to before I go.

I read books and published papers, and I also get in touch with local fishermen, local people and scientists, people who tell stories, and have observed the areas over years, who can give me advice of where to go to find certain species, what are the crucial issues in theses areas, I also study maps of course. After I have been to a place I continue the work and continue discussions with people I have met. Sometimes I also go back to the same place, several times..

Immediately after a recording session I log the recordings and write notes in small notebooks. They are as valuable to me as the recordings themselves. If I am out recording in an underwater environment, I record at different times of day or night, at different depths, closer and further from an active area, close or further away form land, but also above water to get a feeling of the place. The compositions have started already out there in the environment, with the choice of equipment, of space of depth, all different decisions going into what I would call the composition of a piece.

**4) When commissioned on a project, how often do you find yourself changing your ideas when on location? Are you mostly influenced by the material you collect?**

When commissioned to do a certain project, as for example the Stillspotting project for the Guggenheim Museum last year, I was invited to make a live piece from my findings in NYC area, I then made choices where to go, and made preparations how to get to these places before, the final piece was then of course affected by my findings, and it did change my original plan of what I thought I would find… Each place I record will give me surprises, and this will create the piece I will make in the studio later, yes. It is an organic process; sometimes I also go back to the same environment to collect more from it if I feel it is needed for the piece. In the editing process stories that I was told, knowledge I gained from these environments will also influence how I make the final piece.

**5) What are some of the most fascinating recordings you've made, from your perspective?**

First time I heard an underwater beetle was a great one….led me to get an even more sensitive and quiet hydrophone and to get better preamps…

Though all my recording trips have new interesting and fascinating discoveries, hard to mention some in particular.

**6) Any 'happy accidents'?**

I would say almost every time I get surprises, and they are very often good ones, but sometimes quite devastating, like when I last week was recording in Scotland, and the dominant sound on the Flame Shell reef in Kyle of Lochalsh was the seal-scarer sound devices which the salmon farmers have installed under water. They say by this that they have tried everything possible to scare away the seals from their farms. Seals are not stupid, so they do not care about the sound, when they get familiar with it, as they do, and they swim past a salmon farm - they get shot by trigger-happy salmon farmers…(the farmers can use shooting when they have tried everything else.)

**7) You've mentioned your interest in "invisible but audible soundscapes" while referring to oceans and rivers. What do you find most challenging and rewarding with such recordings?**

I mean the invisible but audible “landscapes”, how fish, mammals and crustaceans of the oceans orientate themselves according to the soundscapes they hear and sense with their bodies; also the electromagnetic field, currents, temperature changes, pressure, salinity, all provide information of a landscape that is not visual. We cannot photograph this information, at least not with an ordinary camera, but we can record it by other means.

**8) While field recordings can be natural and organic, they are still influenced by decisions made by the recordist. Do you find yourself falling into patterns which you could identify as your style?**

I guess I have my techniques; for example that I always hold cables in my hands, and listen carefully and move the cables up and down in the water column vertically. My way of recording is a very lonely and extremely concentrated activity, which might be saying something about my style of recording, but it always develops, with more and more sensitive equipment, with more and more attention to the preamps, for example, I recently tried a Sonosax preamp that was miles better than the Sound Devices preamps for the stuff I do, so it develops and the only way of developing is by being out there, in the environment, and adjust your equipment according to what you want to achieve.

**9) Who/what are you most influenced and inspired by?**

Being out there, meeting creatures, being in the different environment, listening to local knowledge and people that have observed for years, the real observation, not calculated by statistics on a computer, also other artists, scientists and friends - too many to mention by name.

**10) If you were marooned on an island (which obviously would be a sonic treasure chest), what would your survival field recording kit be like?**

If you mean what equipment I would preferably have out there, I would need to be able to charge batteries from the environment, without batteries there are no recordings… enough space on my hard drive and CF cards, and a Sound Devices recorder (because they can take some difficult environments in terms of wet, cold and heat), Sennheiser headphones (also because they take a lot of rough conditions), My Sound Field microphone for above water, minimum 2 Reson 4032 hydrophones, and my small DPA 4060s, and of course my Petterssons D1000X for recording ultrasound. There are bats almost everywhere.:) Back up cables and batteries, preferably also backup recorder and mics/hydrophones… Not to forget warm clothes and rain protection, fresh water and food… and a boat.