

Panel 8
Sound, Text, Aesthetics

**Hearing What Isn't There:
Ekphrasis, Dystopian History, and the Aesthetics of Absence in *Within the Wires***
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Within the Wires is a 2016 podcast presented through a set of fictional audio guide tapes that follow exhibitions of the work of Claudia Atieno, an artist living in a dystopian society, narrated by her friend and contemporary, Roimata Mangakahia. The paper reads season two of the podcast “Museum Audio Tours” as commentary on the ontological, epistemological, and aesthetic articulations of absence. By presenting the listener with a network of fragments and duplications, “Museum Audio Tours” undermines the formation of historical and personal knowledge and accentuates epistemic and ontological uncertainty as fundamental to its dystopian setting, an effect that spills over into the contemporary moment in which the podcast is heard today. The audio guides serve as an expansion of the ekphrastic trope in a genre that traditionally excludes art discourse, while the podcast medium repositions the older form of radio drama in a new media cultural context.

Biography

Daria Feldman is a doctoral student in the Department of English Literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a member of the research group “Passivities: Modes of Feeling, Modes of Knowing” at the Mandel Scholion Research Center. Her research focuses on the themes of art, identity, and voice in contemporary fiction. Through her work, she hopes to explore women’s writing about art as a way to investigate social and individual identity.