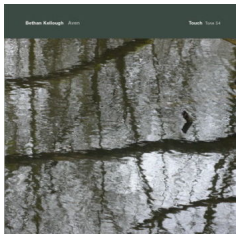


Brainwashed - Bethan Kellough, "Aven"

Written by Touch

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The word "Aven" refers to an underground shaft that leads upward from the roof of a cave passage.

Bethan Kellough creates sound worlds that weave together instrumental materials, sound design and ambisonic field recordings. Her composition "Aven" is based on a recording made in Iceland in 2015, which features the booming sound of underground geothermal activity escaping to the surface through a small shaft. "Looking down into the darkness, there was a sense that a whole world existed in an unknown space beneath. The sound world of *Aven* is a journey through such an imagined environment."

The composition is driven by this sonic encounter, but enters the imagined worlds beneath through the instrumental material developed throughout the work. These melodic passages predominantly feature violin, which Bethan has played since childhood exploring traditional Scottish music, rock violin, free improvisation and classical studies. The field recordings used in *Aven*

were made in Iceland during the Wildeye sound recording workshop with Chris Watson and Jez Riley French, and in South Africa during the Sonic Mmabolela residency with Francisco Lopez and James Webb. Each of the recordings explore a world of sound beneath a surface, reflecting upon the initial recording environment at the geothermal site. In South Africa, an approaching storm was heralded by wind blowing through bushes in the savanna, underneath which was hidden a Soundfield microphone. A contact microphone on a fence in South Iceland revealed the tones of the wind contained inside the wires, and in an Icelandic nature reserve the wind was also captured by microphones buried underneath a layer of grass – a miniature world sheltered by the strands of dry straw.

More information can be found [here](#).