

## From here to ear

Their song inspired legendary composers such as Messiaen and now it seems that our feathered friends are causing waves in the contemporary music world, too.

A new installation that will be shown at The Curve in the Barbican Art Gallery, London, features 40 zebra finches living in an aviary filled with bass guitars as perches and cymbals as

feeders. As the birds settle on the instruments, strumming the strings and pecking the percussion, a purely aleatoric work is created and amplified to resonate throughout the gallery.

The piece is the brainchild of French artist Céleste Boursier-Mougenot, a composer who uses multi-media platforms to bring both everyday and unusual sounds together, as well as juxtaposing visual and audio effects. In his 2001 work, *Videodrones*, Boursier-Mougenot used surveillance cameras to create a soundscape based on New York street life, and *Harmonichaos*,

created during 2000-06, is an installation of 13 vacuum cleaners with harmonicas attached to each suction nozzle. This new and untitled project sees the bird's performance set against video footage of human hands playing the guitars, with a humming drone produced by the amplification of the video signal.

*Céleste Boursier-Mougenot's latest work is on show from 27 February – 23 May at The Curve in the Barbican Art Gallery. Admission is free*



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