Review – LOM Website - https://lom.audio/

I initially encountered the name of Jonáš Gruska in Nicolas Collins' seminal book *Handmade Electronic Music*, which I reviewed for the Interdisciplinary Practice 4 module. Gruska is a Slovakian musician, sound artist, field recordist and electronics explorer based in Bratislava.

LOM is a record label and manufacturer of electronic instruments and accessories. It was established in 2011 by sound artists and musicians Jonáš Gruska, Or.lock and Angakok Thoth. Specialising in experimental Eastern European artists, they have released 30 albums of music, sound art and field recordings.

LOM audio is the manufacturing branch of the business focussing on experimental hardware and software instruments. I became aware of the company through a breadcrumb trail of YouTube journeying. I discovered electromagnetic listening and the Elektrosluch device that LOM make and sell. They also manufacture a range of sensitive and contact microphones for field recordists, musicians, and sound designers.

LOM space is part of their building in Bratislava which they use as a sound laboratory. They also host exhibitions, lectures, workshops, and quiet concerts.

LOM is a fascinating community of people who are exploring innovative and challenging areas of sound. I found the whole discovery to be profoundly exciting and influential.

The pages

The LOM website was designed in 2011 and as such has a slightly outdated appearance. The colour scheme is black on white with photographs providing a colourful relief from the overall plain styling.

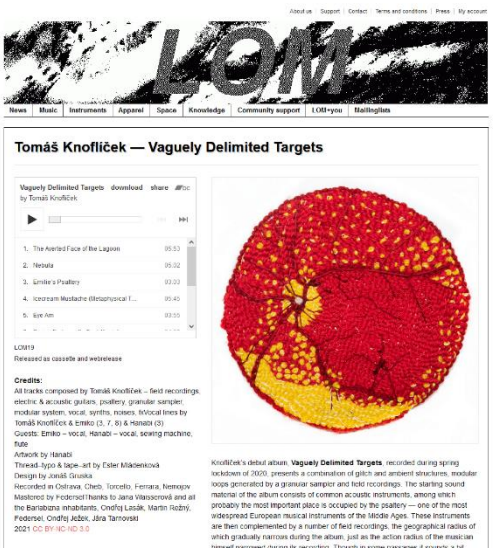
Most of the pages follow a consist style, however, two pages adopt a different layout (Space and Knowledge) and the online shop section features another stylistic approach.

Navigating the site can be confusing because of these differences, as there is a lack of consistent navigation across the whole site. Some pages don't include the main website navigation buttons, so you have to use the browser's back button. In terms of web accessibility, I would give the site a score of 8 out of 10. There are many improvements that could be made to improve accessibility for users with visual and cognitive impairment.

Home – (https://lom.audio/)

The Home page advertises recent releases by the record label.

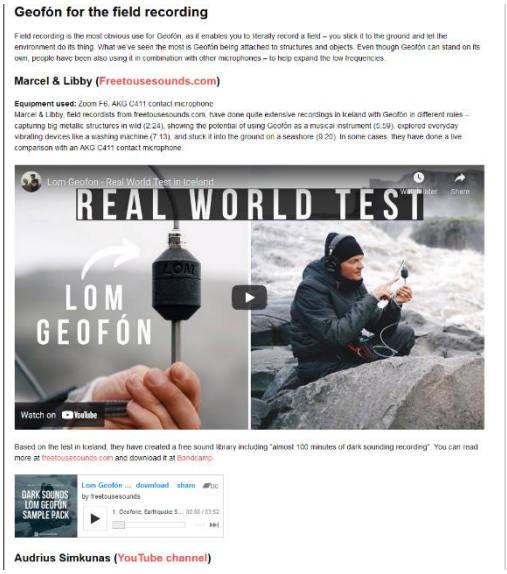
A nice addition is the music player box which allows you to play and download each track on the featured album. There is a good amount of information on the music and the artist and an external link to a review of the album.



News – (https://lom.audio/category/news/)

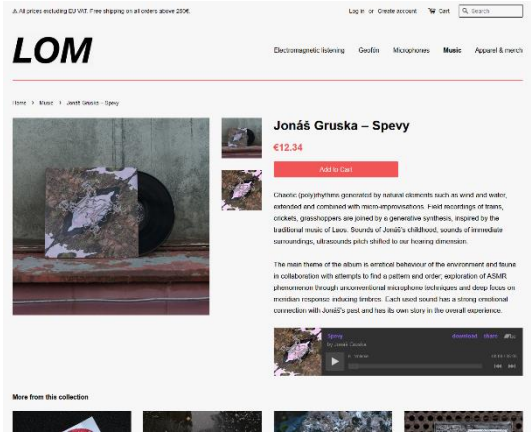
The news page currently features LOM audio's Geofón contact microphone. The page consists of reviews, short articles and videos of different field recordists utilising the LOM Geofón for a variety of purposes in a range of different locations.

The artists have used the contact microphone to record the sounds of all manner of structures and environments, from abandoned water towers, bridges, and vent shafts to old vehicles and even the Eiffel Tower.



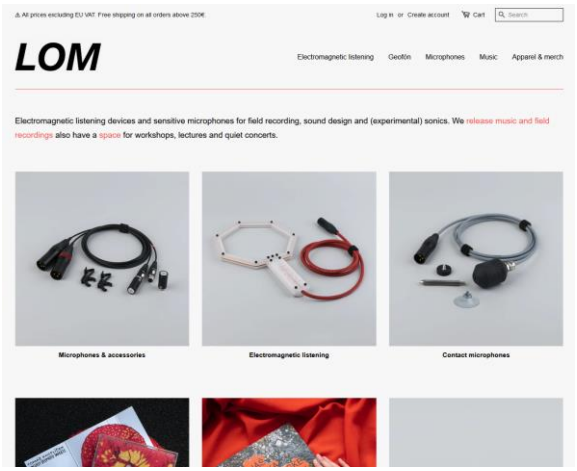
Music – (https://lom.audio/releases/)

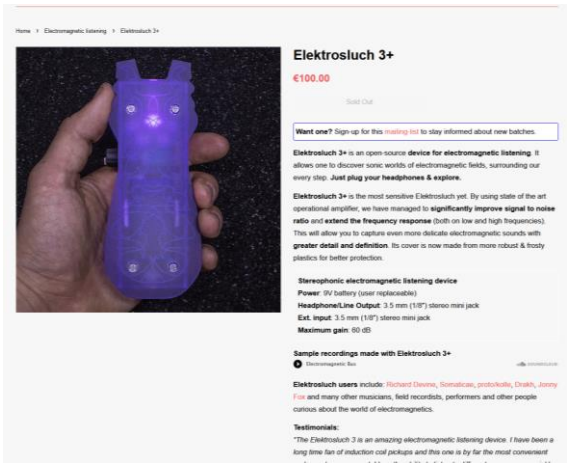
This page provides links to the LOM album releases, including the Fields edition albums of field recordings from various artists. Most albums are available as CD and digital downloads, while a few are available on vinyl and cassette. You can listen to tracks from the albums, view the artwork and read about the projects.



Instruments – (https://store.lom.audio/)

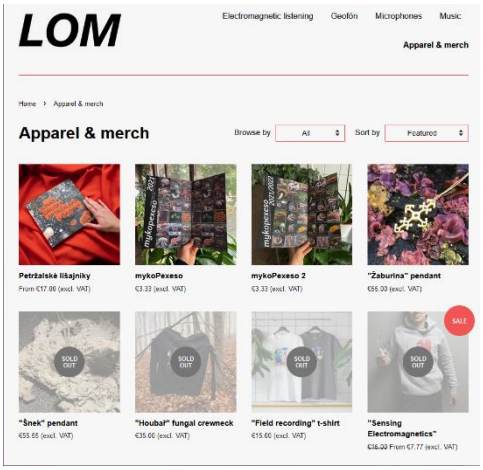
This page is a separate store page which allows you to buy the various products made by LOM. It has a slightly different appearance to the main LOM webpages but functions perfectly well using a standard on-line shop plug-in to provide the features. Most items are sold out but joining the mailing list will enable you to be notified when the next batches of products are available for sale.





Apparel – (https://store.lom.audio/collections/apparel)

LOM sell clothing and merchandise on this page. The colour photos add to the general appearance of the page, but most items are sold out at the moment.

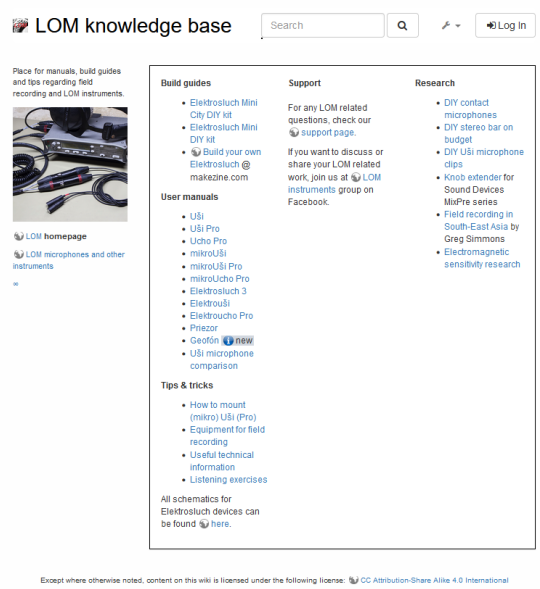


Space – (https://space.lom.audio/)

This page promotes LOM space, the sound laboratory in Bratislava. There are no upcoming events listed, but you can find information on past events, exhibitions and workshops and more detail about the space itself. There are links to a Facebook page which contains many posts about activities at the space. Unfortunately, the COVID pandemic Is having a large impact on the activities of LOM space, but I expect they will be able to continue as the new year develops.

Knowledge – (https://knowledge.lom.audio/)

The LOM knowledge base copies the format of the LOM Space page with the main box containing links to a wide variety of resources. They offer User manuals and build guides for some of their products. There is a short Tips & Tricks section offering useful advice to field recordists and an interesting Research section. There is a link to a GitHub project for the Elektrosluch which contains all the information you need from layout diagrams to circuit schematics, to enable you to build your own version. I found this to be a valuable source of information that enhanced my own work tremendously.



Community support – (https://lom.audio/community-support/)

This page provides links to various organisations supported by LOM, from environmental protection organisations to groups supporting Romani communities and homeless people in Bratislava.

LOM+you – (https://lom.audio/plusyou/)

The altruism of LOM is further displayed on this page. LOM+you aims to support artists, field recordists, journalists and students by supplying equipment for projects. There is a long list of supported artists which reveals some fascinating work from a variety of Eastern European artists.

Mailinglists – (https://lom.audio/mailinglists/)

This page enables you to subscribe to a few mailing lists relevant to LOM activities and field recording.

The LOM website has been a mine of information and inspiration, from introducing me to sound artists and musicians I might never have found, to offering the Elektrosluch as an open-source project, engaging my interests in electronic circuitry and technology and opening up a wider area of exploration in field recording. It also provided a steppingstone to my research into electromagnetic sensitivity and other environmental and health issues surrounding EMF proliferation. It is very likely that my "***the sound behind the silence"*** project would not exist without the inspiration of LOM and their work.

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