

**mamori  
artlab**



## **Mamori Sound Project**

**6<sup>th</sup> Annual Workshop/Residency for sound artists & composers  
at Mamori Lake (Amazon, Brazil) / October 2011 / 2 weeks**

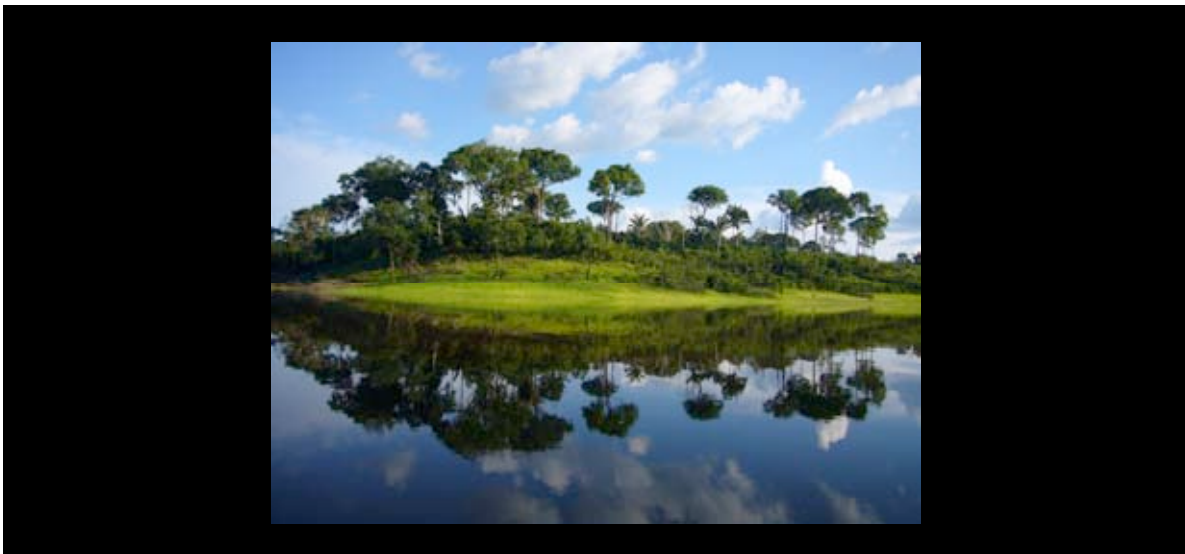
Conceived and directed by Francisco López ([www.franciscolopez.net](http://www.franciscolopez.net))  
Organized by Mamori ArtLab ([www.malab.net](http://www.malab.net))

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## THE WORKSHOP/RESIDENCY:



**Mamori Sound Project** is a 2-week workshop/residency for professional and semi-professional sound artists and composers with previous experience in the area of sound experimentation and field recordings. It takes place at Mamori Lake, in the middle of the Brazilian Amazon, and involves theoretical/discussion presentations, field work and studio work. The workshop/residency has a special focus on creative approaches to the work with field recordings, through an extensive exploration of natural sound environments. It does not have a technical character but is instead conceived and directed towards the development and realization of a collective project of sonic creation with the interaction of all participant artists/composers.



## The activities of the workshop/residency include:

- Introductory theoretical/discussion presentation sessions on field recordings and sound creation, with a historical/philosophical perspective.
- Field trips (both diurnal and nocturnal) for extensive listening and recording of sound environments.
- Collective listening and discussion sessions of the sound materials gathered.
- Sessions of studio work (with laptop) using these materials.
- Development and realization of a sound piece by each participant (or in small groups), as part of the collective project.
- Public presentation of the finished pieces for both the participant artists and members of the local community at Mamori Lake.



All these activities are organized in a daily schedule according to the changing sonic environments of the rainforest. This typically involves many hours of field and studio work but there is also flexibility to allow participants to choose from several schedule options and to have the opportunity to carry out other activities related to the daily life in this environment, such as fishing for food or interacting with the local community.

The language for the workshop/residency is English. The director also speaks Spanish and has medium-level knowledge of both Portuguese and French.





**Francisco López**, director of “Mamori Sound Project”, is internationally recognized as one of the major figures of the experimental music and sound art scene. He is also a Ph.D. ecosystem biologist, with more than twenty years of teaching experience in Spain and Latin America.

His experience in the field of sound creation and work with environmental recordings spans over a period of thirty years. His work has been released by more than 200 record labels worldwide and he has been awarded three times with honorary mentions at the competition of Ars Electronica Festival. He has realized hundreds of field recording projects, commissions, live performances, sound installations and workshops, as well as research in entomology and ecosystem dynamics, in 60 countries in the five continents, with a particular emphasis on tropical areas in the Americas, Africa and Australasia. He has been directing and organizing “Mamori Sound Project” since 2005 and he has a detailed sonic knowledge on its surrounding environments.

<http://www.franciscolopez.net>



Since 2008, sound artist **Slavek Kwi** has also participated in Mamori Sound Project as assistant for all aspects of the field work, from the technical to the environmental. Slavek Kwi is a sound artist and composer fascinated by sound-environments, creating complex audio-situations mainly from site specific recordings, resulting in digitally frozen contemplations as multi-channel compositions, sound-installations and works designed for CDs. Interested also in free-music research as part of social investigation and employing the space and any objects it contains as musical instrument. He has extensive experience in field work in wilderness areas all over the world.

<http://www.artificialmemorytrace.com>

## Comments from previous participants:



"The prospect to do what one loves (in this case, sound recordings) in such a magnificent setting, under the watchful ear of someone of the high calibre of Francisco López must rate as one of the most satisfying experiences I have had in a long time. López is the perfect man for this job: absolutely at home in the dense jungle, complete with 20/20 hearing and a reference list of the most astonishing sound works you are likely to hear. I can't recommend this workshop enough for artists seeking a richly authentic and unique creative experience." ----- James Webb (South Africa)

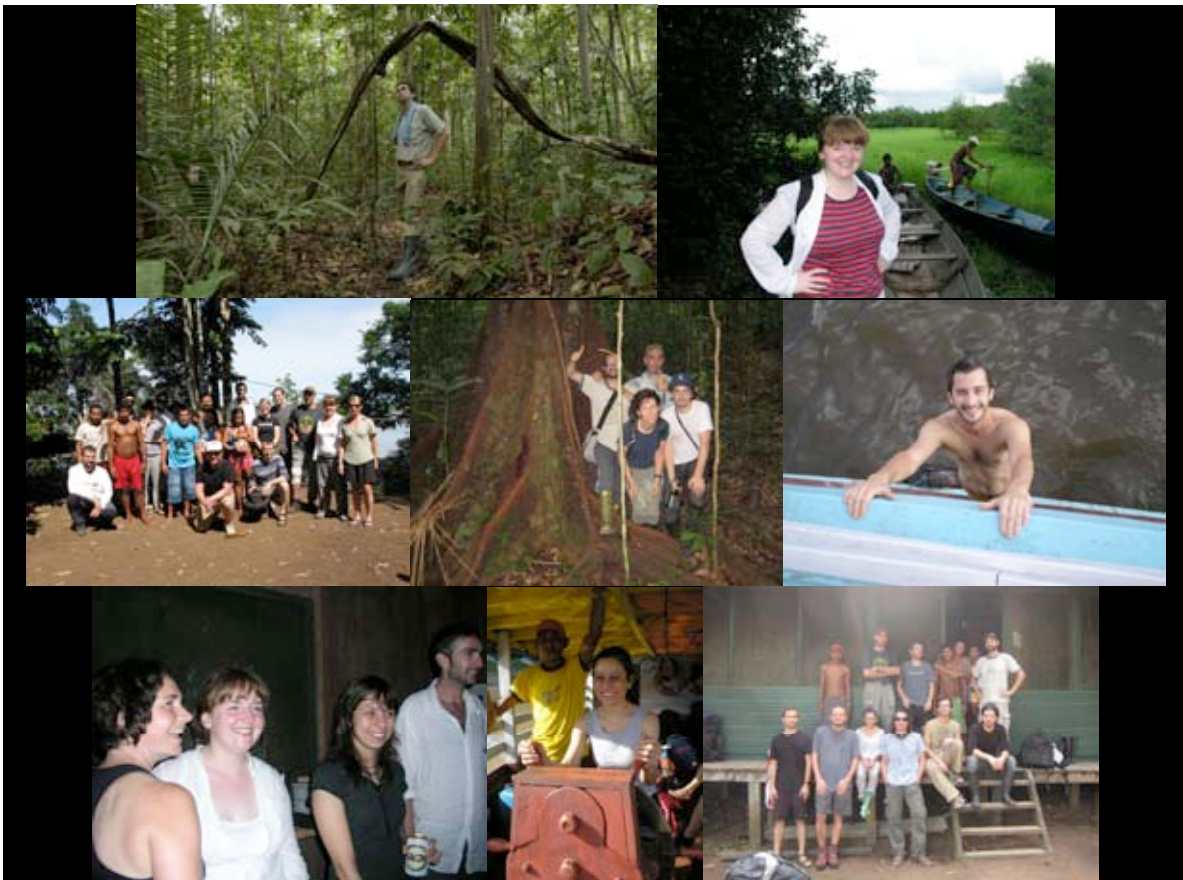
"The chance to immerse oneself in some of the world's most powerful natural sound environments, under the guidance of one of the world's leading composer/theorists of environmental sound is a rare and valuable opportunity for anyone, whether sound artist, field recordist or acoustic ecologist. My experience at Mamori has changed the way that I work and the way that I listen, and has left me with a rich collection of sounds that will no doubt continue to serve as raw material and inspiration for years to come." ----- David Drury (Canada)

"I can't say it enough how I greatly enjoyed my stay at Mamori. It is one of the most beautiful things I've ever done and I'm very grateful to all the organizers and participants. For me personally it was very interesting because this workshop was very condensed and focused on sound. Everything was so well organised in a very friendly atmosphere. I liked very much the combination lecture - field recording - studiowork - final presentation. It's a very good working formula. The knowledge and patience of

Jerson [local guide] in conjunction with the great ears of Francisco were an invaluable asset for finding the great spots for the field recordings. I would highly recommend this to anyone who wants to experience new sound worlds!" ----- Arneoudt Jacobs (Belgium)

"The experience at Mamori Lake was a whole catharsis and transformation, the extent of which I could only fully realize upon return home. I'd deeply recommend it to anyone interested in sound and, of course, also in the amazing ecosystem of the Amazonian rainforest. I sincerely believe this was one of the most beautiful experiences of my life, and a particularly intense one!" ----- Ruben García (Spain)

"I had a great time participating in the workshop. It was consistently provocative and intense, with plenty of opportunities to challenge ideas, equipment, strategies, etc. The schedule suggested was particularly well organized, with much freedom for everyone to explore things if they felt the desire. A wonderful memory." ----- Matt Shoemaker (USA)



"The Mamori Sound lab residency was one of the most intensely beautiful and amazing experiences that I have ever had. The listening experience in the jungle is a most unique auditory experience, it is rich, tremendously layered and complex, incomparable to other auditory experiences that I had had. It changed my approach to the practice of sound art. Lastly, the intense generosity of Francisco's character as well as his knowledge of the jungle allowed me to undertake an experience that I could not have possibly done alone. I highly recommend this workshop, IT IS A MUST!" -----  
- Farahnaz Hatam (Iran)

"It was really a great experience to be far away from civilization and just focusing on the sound of nature. Really great and unpredictable sounds, some you can't believe they are animals, some very electronic. It gave me lot of musical ideas just by listening to the complexity and composition of the sounds in nature. It really gives you another way of seeing upon time in music, I think. It was a very well organized workshop, very well balanced between recording sessions, studio time, lectures and discussions." ----- Olof Dreijer (Sweden)

"Being so disconnected from the civilization (web and phone) is something barely impossible in our daily life. It is possible with the Mamori Lab, and this is so relaxing and help to reconnect with our deep inside. BTW, in the same order of idea, listening to all those sounds from the forest without that background noise of our "(post) modern" life, emphasis the sounds of the forest themselves, and help to experience a kind of Yoga related to the listening act. Francisco Lopez helped so much in that direction and kept us aware of the world of the forest with his extensive knowledge of the wildlife and its habitat. I learned so much by the group experience with all this people from around the world and different background, surely a must do to shift definitively your vision of sound." ----- Luca Forcucci (Italy)

"Mamori was wild, rich and wonderful. I continue to mine the stores of images and audio for creative work. What a powerful experience that was. Thank you for running such a magnificent program." ----- Perri Lynch (USA)

"Mamori Lake is a place filled with mythical creatures that rarely showed their face but always made themselves heard. The recorded and the real sat parallel so that while I scratched my insect bites and ran out of sweat, I remained intoxicated by the cacophonies of sound. It was so noisy and so rich and at times completely overwhelming and exhausting. It was a fantastic opportunity to immerse my self in such an incredible sonic landscape and work with a bunch of people who cared about sound as much as I did. I learnt a lot from all the other Mamorians and I'm so grateful for the opportunity to have been a part of this year's workshop." ----- Camilla Hannan (Australia)

"Thanks again for the wonderful experience, I gained so much from it and I'm so glad that I took part. We were looked after so well by Francisco and the rest of the Mamori team, and it was a wonderful break from everyday life to concentrate and think deeply about our art. Plus it was an added bonus to meet so many interesting like-minded people." ----- Hilary Mullaney (Ireland)

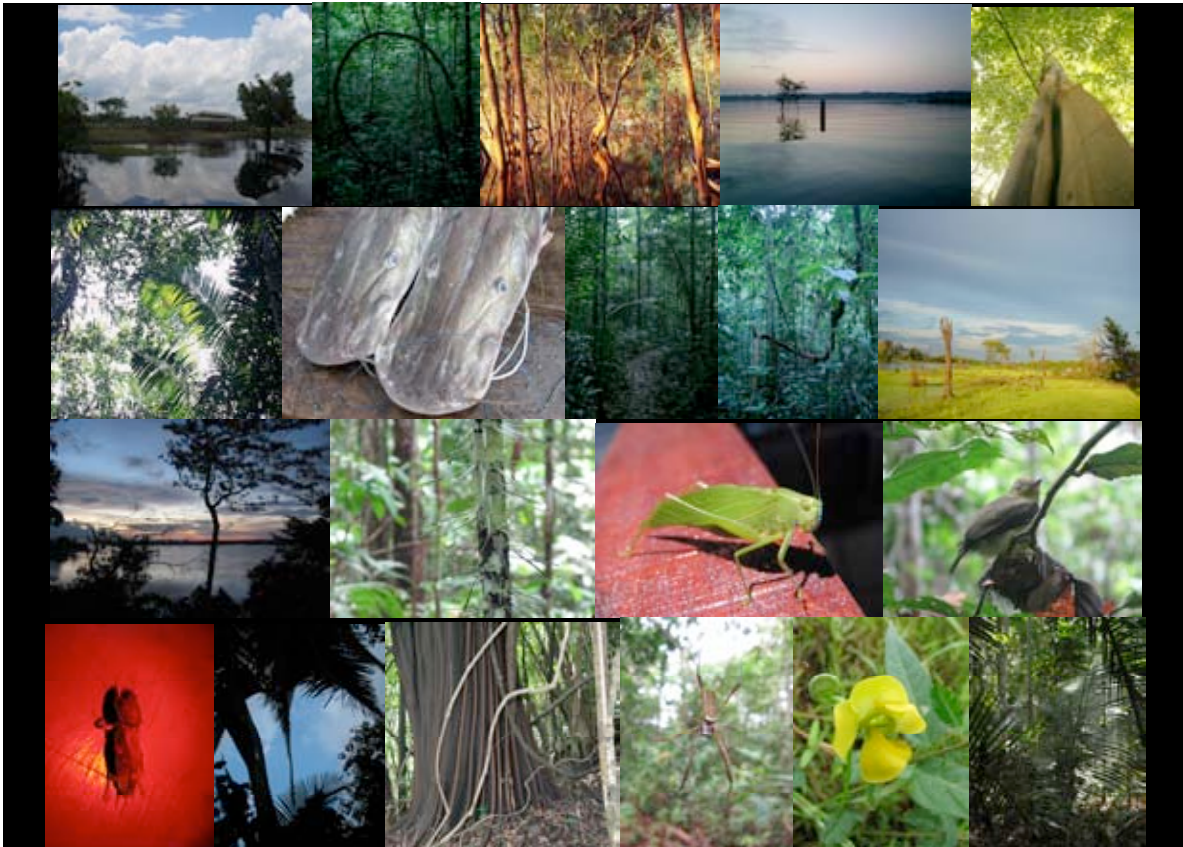
"Physical exercise. Sleep deprivation. Magic of the place. Sense of time and biorhythms. Dangers might feel sexy in some cases. Intensity. Best way ever to loose some of the too-many-kilos owed to the sedentary way of life of us sound artists." ----  
-- Marc Behrens (Germany)

## MAMORI LAKE:

**Mamori Lake** is one of the myriad lakes in the Amazon river. The closest city is Manaus, capital of the Brazilian state of Amazonia. The trip from Manaus to Mamori Lake is about 3-4 hours, depending on the season and the transportation, which can be directly by medium-sized boat or via a combination of minivan and small boats.



The ecosystem of Mamori Lake is a lowland tropical rainforest with lush vegetation and abundant wildlife, including an astonishing variety of insects, fish and amphibians, birdlife, river dolphins, crocodiles, howler monkeys, etc.





Average annual temperature is about 25°C, with very little seasonal variation. Days are typically hot and sunny (with maxima of about 30-35°C), cooling down if there is rain. Nights can be comparatively fresh, with a minimum temperature of about 15-20°C. Humidity is very high (around 80-90%). The dry season goes from August to December. During this season rain is occasional, but not rare, and is typically short and abundant. During the rainy season (January to July) there is very frequent and intense rain, almost every day. Daylight is from about 6:00AM to 6:00PM, with almost no variation between seasons.

There is a small local community in Mamori Lake, scattered in small family properties around the lake, as well as a central comunal area. They live mostly on the local resources of the area, with fishing as one of their main activities. All people hired by Mamori ArtLab belong to this community and one of the main aims of the organization is to keep a constant feedback interaction with them. To this effect, Mamori ArtLab occasionally organizes educational activities with the community, public presentations of the results of the workshops, and even a soccer game (that the Brazilians invariably win).



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## LOGISTICS / WHAT TO BRING:



For the realization of the workshop/residency, Mamori ArtLab, the hosting organization, owns a wooden lodge on a private property by the edge of Mamori Lake, with a small boat dock. The lodge has double rooms with beds (equipped with mosquito nets), fans, and shower/toilet, as well as a large dining/studio room with tables, chairs and hammocks. It is equipped with a water tower reservoir, an electrical system with 110V power sockets, and a hut-covered, outdoor kitchen. For the workshop/residency, there is also a small, but efficient monitoring speaker system.

Food mainly consists of a fresh daily catch of Amazonian fish, from piranhas to tucunaré, the latter very appreciated in the area for its flavor. There is also occasional chicken and beef, as well as tropical vegetables and fruits. Rice, beans and tapioca flour are the most common local complements to the diet. With some limitations in the produce available in the area we can nevertheless provide a vegetarian diet.

All transportation from/to Manaus is organized with locally-hired boat and minivan transports. Although there are a few trails in the area, the main local transportation system is by small engine-powered boats or canoes. Mamori ArtLab hires an experienced local guide/boatman that is available 24-hours for all field recording trips and any other logistic needs (including going along for a fishing experience). There is also a cook, some occasional maintenance workers, and a Mamori ArtLab logistics manager.

Like most tropical rainforest environments, Mamori Lake is home to a large number of wildlife species, some of which might be hazardous. Both piranhas and crocodiles are abundant in the waters of Mamori. However, like all wild creatures, they do not attack humans unless they are badly disturbed, and there has never been such an event in Mamori ArtLab. As is common in the whole Amazon basin, there are poisonous snakes in the area, but they are very rarely seen or encountered. Insect bites are more a daily thing one gets used to live with than a real danger. Although not abundant, there is malaria in the Mamori region, and thus medical prophylaxis and prevention against mosquito bites are important and recommended. Brazilian health authorities also recommend proper vaccination for hepatitis, yellow fever and typhus. They might ask foreigners for an international vaccination certificate upon arrival at Manaus airport.



**Here is a list of necessary or useful things to bring to Mamori:**

[most common things, such as sunblock, soap or batteries can be easily find and bought in Manaus, prior to the trip to Mamori Lake]

- Sound recording gear: Participants should bring their own portable field recording gear. Field recording trips (which are made in group – see note 1 below) typically produce about 1-2 hours of recorded material, which has to be considered in terms of batteries and memory cards. Because of the high humidity it is highly recommended to keep all recording gear inside water-proof bags. We haven't experienced any humidity-related problems for a very wide range of the typical digital recording devices used today. However, we do have experienced problems with most condenser microphones (humidity condensation producing noise), while this never happened with electric ones (like the ones in Zoom devices). It is thus highly recommended to bring contact cleaner and/or "Detox-it" for cleaning cables and connectors (see note 2 below).

[Note 1: Although there are opportunities for all modes of recording, a typical recording trip consists of: taking a small boat, disembarking in different areas, finding a nearby interesting spot from the point of view of sound, leaving the equipment there recording for a relatively long period of time (typically from half an hour to an hour) while we wait somewhere else, and then collecting the equipment. This strategy prevents interferences in the recordings among the different people in the group, and, even more importantly, serves to capture all the animal sounds that would otherwise be silent with human presence around. Considering this, a light / small tripod might be useful. Also, if you wish, you can bring additional recording equipment for the waiting periods in a different place.]

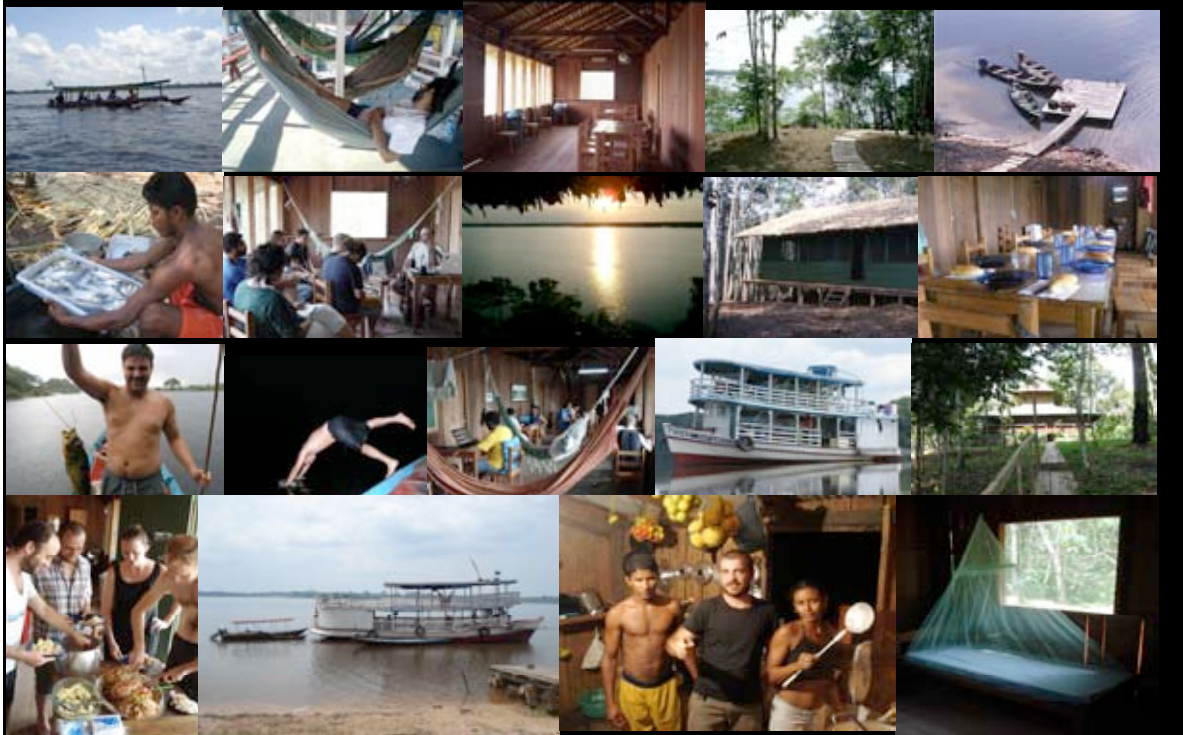
[Note 2: List of previously used equipment NOT affected by humidity (all kept in water-proof bags when not in use): Digital recorders: Sound Devices 702, 722, 744, Sound Devices MixPre,

Tascam DR1, Edirol R09HD, Fostex FR 2LE, Marantz PMD670, Sony PCM D50, Zoom H2 & H4 (although some people won't recommend the last one for other reasons, namely motor noise). External microphones: DPA 4060, 4061, Soundman OKM Binaural, Røde NTG-3 Shotgun Microphone, Sonic Studio DSM-1S/H, Shotgun Audio Technica AT815ST, Aquarian Hydrophones H1a, Bat detector Pettersson Elektronik D 200.

List of previously used equipment affected by humidity (also after being kept in water-proof bags): External microphones: Neumann KM184 stereo pair, Audiotechnica AT897 shotgun, Rode NT5 condensers.]

- Studio equipment: It is absolutely necessary that each participant brings his/her own studio equipment, that is, a laptop computer with audio software that the user knows how to use, as well as headphones and any external hard drives or pendrives you might need. Bring blank CDRs and DVDs for copies and back-ups and don't forget any of your necessary cables. A monitoring speaker system is available at the lodge for group listening sessions.
- Adaptors: Power sockets in the lodge (110V) are valid for European and American plugs, but not for UK, Australia or South Africa plugs, for example. Bring your adaptors, if needed. A small power strip for your plugs is also very helpful.
- Flashlights: Although there is electricity in the lodge, the power lines are not fully reliable and power cuts are not unusual. In addition, we have field recording sessions at night almost every day. A flashlight is thus one of the most-commonly used tools in Mamori. Head flashlights are very practical during field work. Bring plenty of batteries or rechargeable ones with charger.
- Mosquito nets: The lodge is equipped with mosquito nets in the windows and also for the beds and hammocks. When inside the forest, and particularly at night, insects might occasionally be a nuisance. A head net is useful and allows to work more comfortably.
- Clothes: While inside the forest, it is recommended to wear long pants and a long-sleeve shirt, to prevent insect bites and scratches from thorns, etc. For all other situations, shorts and T-shirts are the most comfortable. Bring a bathing suit, since swimming with the piranhas and the dolphins is something we like to do at Mamori Lake. A thin jacket is not a bad idea, as some nights might feel relatively chilly. Since rain is likely to occur, even during the dry season, a light raincoat, poncho or equivalent is recommendable. A small umbrella might also be useful (rain and sun).
- Shoes: For the short hikes inside the forest and along the river banks high rubber boots ("wellingtons") are recommended, for both mud and to prevent insect or snake bites. For all other situations, sandals are perfect.
- Sunblock and hat: During the day, and particularly while on a small boat, it might get quite hot. Sunblock and a hat are very advisable.
- Water-proof bags: The combination of very high humidity, rain and life on small boats makes very recommendable to bring water-proof bags (from small plastic ones to a larger rubber one, like the ones used for canoeing) for all the electronic equipment, and even for books or clothes.
- Medicines: Every participant is responsible for taking proper health travel insurance. There is a standard first-aid kit in the lodge. In the Mamori Lake community there is a paramedic but no clinic or other medical services. Bring all your necessary medication. If any participant suffers any particular illness or disease, he/she should inform the organizers beforehand and bring all proper specialized medication.

## SERVICES, RATE AND APPLICATION/REGISTRATION:



### The workshop/residency includes:

- Daily working sessions with field recordings, studio work, and collective theoretical/discussion presentations (total of 8 to 12 hours a day, with optional activities and flexible schedules).
- Full accommodation: 2 nights hotel (arrival/departure) in Manaus (double room, air-conditioned, swimming pool) + 13 nights cabin in private lodge in Mamori (double rooms with beds, mosquito nets, fan and shower/toilet, large dining/studio room with hammocks [which are also an option to sleep for those who prefer them], electrical system with 110V power sockets, monitoring speaker system, kitchen).
- All meals and beverages: including daily catch of fresh Amazonian fish (piranhas, among many others), purified drinkable water fountain, juices, beer and occasional caipirinhas. All meals in Manaus also included for arrival and departure days.
- Transportation from/to the airport in Manaus.
- Transportation to/from Mamori by van and boats (approx. 3-4 hours).
- Daily transportation in Mamori by boat to field recording sites (day and night).
- 2-3 day trip on large double-deck boat to another location in the Mamori region.
- Local guides/boatmen, cook, maintenance workers, and logistics manager.

- **Rates:**

**Workshop/Residency 2-week rate per person:**

**Payment until April 30<sup>th</sup> 2011: 1,900 euros**

**Payment after April 30<sup>th</sup> 2011: 2,100 euros**

(Includes all of the above. Does not include flight to Manaus from participant's departure location nor medical insurance.)

Mamori Sound Project is a non-profit, independently-run project. Each participant artist/composer must seek funding for his/her workshop/residency costs, as well as the flight to Manaus and his/her medical insurance.

- **Application:**

The capacity of the workshop/residency is limited to a small group (currently a maximum of 12 participant artists/composers).

Artists/composers interested need to send an application (only email, no post), consisting of: (i) updated CV, and (ii) examples of their sound work on mp3 or through internet links, to the following address:

E-mail: [franciscolopez@franciscolopez.net](mailto:franciscolopez@franciscolopez.net)

- **Registration:**

The artists/composers selected after the application process will receive a formal invitation letter from the director of Mamori Sound Project to help them in seeking funding support. To join the workshop/residency they will have to pay the fee and fill in a registration form that will be later provided by the organizers.

**Deadline for registrations: June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011**

- **Dates workshop/residency:**

The Mamori Sound Project workshop/residency will take place in:

**October 2011** (second half of October, precise dates to be determined later)

The group needs a minimum of 8 participants for the workshop/residency to take place, and has a maximum capacity of 12 participants.

**Mamori ArtLab** is an organization based in Spain and coordinated by Marcos Ruíz (administration - Spain) and Asier Gogortza (logistics - Spain / Brazil):

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