

# What does a nebula sound like?

February 10 2012, By Nancy Atkinson

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What do things sound like out in the cosmos? Of course, sound waves can't travel through the vacuum of space; however, electromagnetic waves can. These electromagnetic waves can be recorded by devices called spectrographs on many of the world's most powerful telescopes. Astronomer Paul Francis from the Australian National University has used some of these recordings and converted them into sound by reducing their frequency 1.75 trillion times to make them audible, as the original frequencies are too high to be heard by the human ear.

"This allows us to listen to many parts of the universe for the first time," Francis wrote on his website. "We can hear the song of a comet, the chimes of stars being born or dying, the choir of a quasar eating the heart of a galaxy, and much more."

Above, is Francis' recording of a [nebula](#). It is actually a medley of sounds from different nebulae, but our friend César Cantú of the Chilidog Observatory in Monterrey, Mexico, has put together the sounds with images he took of the Rosette Nebula, or NGC2244.

This provides both a visual and audio hint of what a nebula might sound like, if our ears could hear at electromagnetic frequencies. Being able to 'hear' this gives one a feeling akin to being Superman! — as well as offering new insights into our Universe.

Francis also has the sounds of the Sun, quasars, comets, other nebulae, and more. Check out his audio recordings [here](#).

Source: [Universe Today](#)

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