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Now they can hear you scream: Scientists reveal sounds of Venus and Mars

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Monday April 02 2012

The sounds of Mars and Venus have been revealed for the first time by scientists.

A team from the University of [Southampton](#) used physics and mathematics to replicate the natural sounds of other worlds from lightning on Venus to whirlwinds on [Mars](#) and ice volcanoes on Saturn's largest [moon](#), Titan.

They have also modelled the effects of different atmospheres, pressures and temperatures on the human voice on Mars, Venus and Titan, and found that on Venus humans would sound like bass Smurfs.

Professor Tim Leighton, of the university's Institute for Sound and Vibration Research, said: "We are confident of our calculations.

"We have been rigorous in our use of physics taking into account atmospheres, pressure and fluid dynamics.

"On Venus, the pitch of your voice would become much deeper. That is because the planet's dense [atmosphere](#) means that the vocal cords vibrate more slowly through this 'gassy soup'.

"However, the speed of sound in the atmosphere on Venus is much faster than it is on [Earth](#), and this tricks the way our brain interprets the size of a speaker (presumably an evolutionary trait that allowed our ancestors to work out whether an animal call in the night was something that was small enough to eat or so big as to be dangerous).

"When we hear a voice from Venus, we think the speaker is small, but with a deep bass voice. On Venus, humans sound like bass Smurfs."

Prof Leighton, who has been working on [the sounds](#) of space for the last ten years and has previously made the sound of a methane waterfall in space, added: "I'm interested in what music would sound like in space.

"If astronauts are based on Mars for several months, they might just take musical instruments along, or build one there. What would they sound like?

"As a scientist, I reckon the most exciting thing to work on is a completely new idea, something that's never been done before."

Despite many years of space exploration, scientists have no evidence of the sound of other planets. While most planetary probes have focused on imaging with cameras and radar and a couple have carried microphones, none of them successfully listened to the sound of another world.

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