In the beginning, there must have been nothingness...  
   Ever hence we have been faced with that riddle-of-riddles  
   that has shot through our earthly life:  

   *How did it all begin?*  

Preposterous as it may sound to venture an answer, could it be  
that it has been so plainly obvious that we failed to see it?  
   But maybe we have heard it. Maybe it was a sound. Could  
we venture:  

   *It began with a scream-cry.*  

Or, at least it did for those of us who were once babies. Even  
before existence registered on the retina, we heard it out there  
rumbling like muffled thunder somewhere beyond our prenatal  
enclosure. The oscillation between sound and silence might  
then in fact constitute existence as such. One with the other. A  
duet of sorts. This rhythmical tick-tock of sound and silence is  
not only auditory, but is indeed a physical thing. What’s more,  
it is a psychical thing. We feel this vibratory ebb and flow deep  
within ourselves. Might we even say that sound and silence  
shapes our world?  
   Our second installment of *Portable Gray*, then, is very much  
grounded in co-presences.  
   Voices, sounds, music, thoughts, words, images, and  
silences mingling together.  
   Noise nomads all—as the cover declares.  
   In this sound and music edition of *Portable Gray* you will  
find duets, trios, quartets, ensembles, jams sessions and even  
the occasional solo. These constellations of co-presences (or co-  
presenters) manifest in, and emerge from, subjects that range  
from jazz to opera; song writing to rock criticism; sonic images  
to the cacophony of protest; music as anti-psychoanalysis and  
audio pharmacology; choral annunciations to messy political  
speech; sound art and modernist music; films on musicians and  
musicians on canvas; myth and the bottomless archive of the  
haunted present.  
   Perhaps the riddle of where it all began will never be  
satisfyingly answered (at least in any note from this editor), but  
we hope you enjoy these pages as we listen along together.

—ZACHARY CAHILL, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF