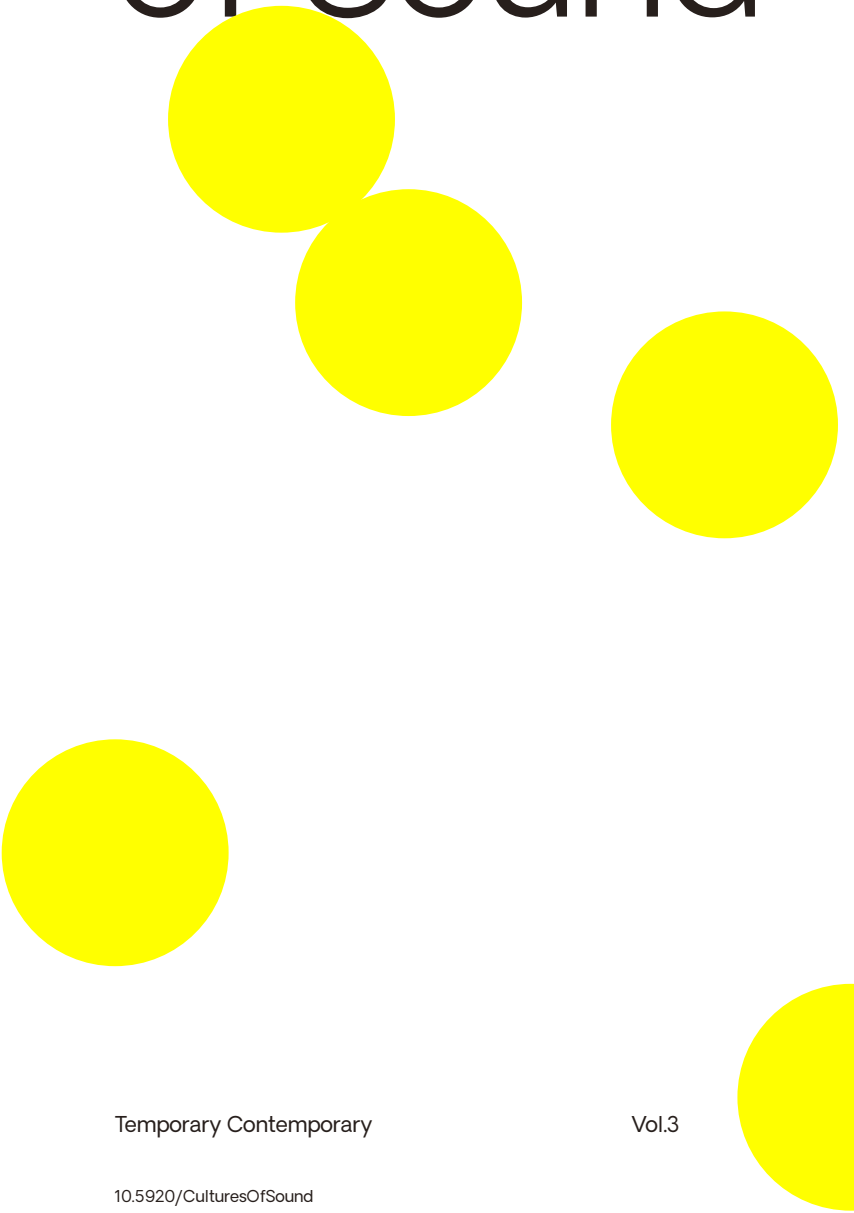
Cultures of Sound



Temporary Contemporary

Vol.3

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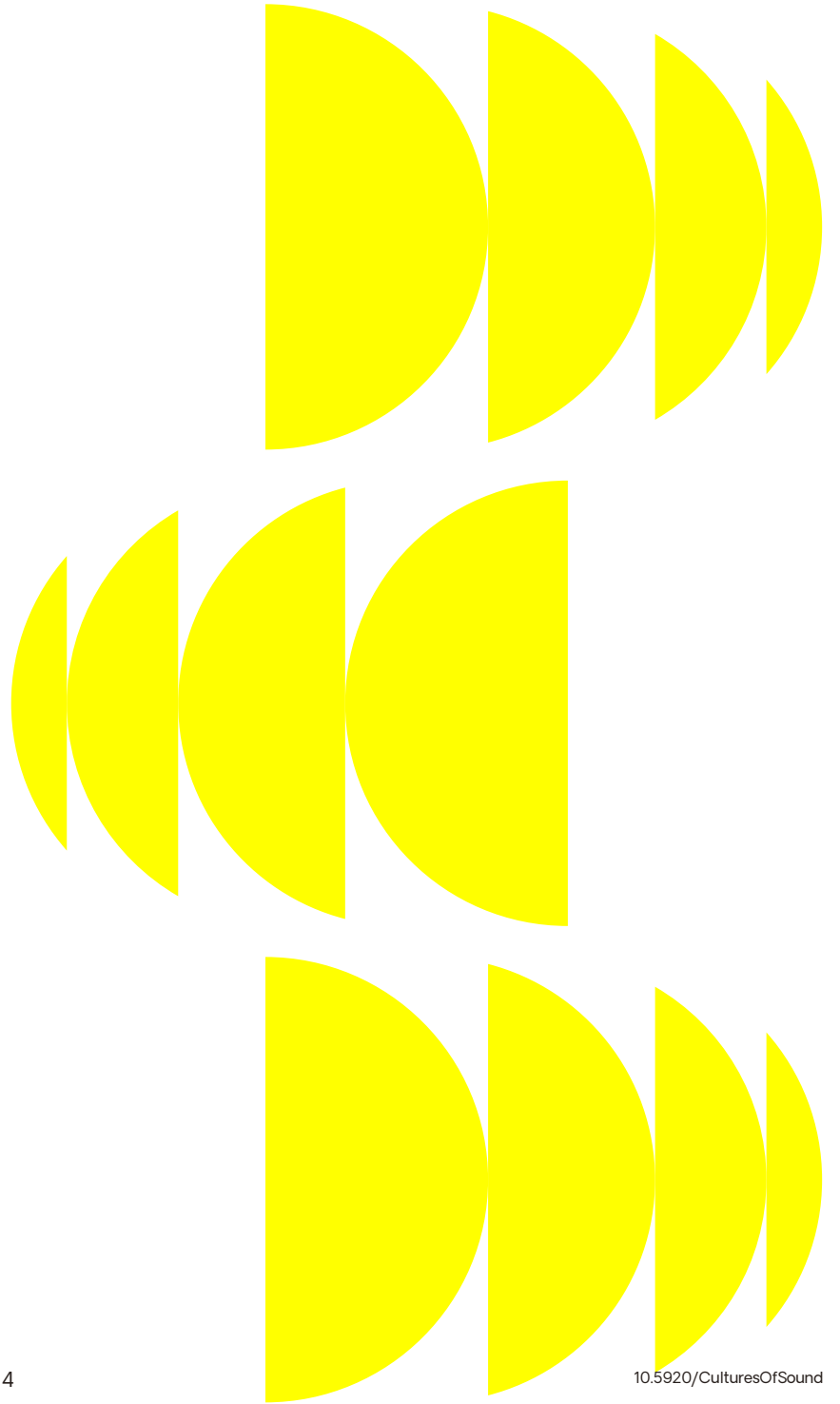

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Introducing Cultures of Sound[1]
Rowan Bailey

To align with Kirklees Year of Music 2023, the School of Arts and Humanities at the University of Huddersfield produced a year-long place-based cultural programme Cultures of Sound. The year 2023 was a celebration of music across towns and villages in Kirklees and provided opportunities for people to listen, play and engage in music.[2] This included learning opportunities for children and young people and a range of activities about careers within the music sector.[3] Kirklees is a district in West Yorkshire that has an extensive portfolio of world class music and music heritage. For example, the place is home to well-established yearly programmes including Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival (HCMF), the Grand Northern Ukele Festival, Marsden Jazz Festival and Kirklees Concert Season (a collaboration between Kirklees Council and Opera North). There are numerous choirs and music groups of all genres performing in local venues. Many arts, cultural and community organisations have gifted parts of their programme to Kirklees Year of Music as showcased through the Creative Kirklees online platform.[4] Key projects celebrating the place-based heritage of Kirklees, include sound system cultures, exhibitions about carnival, music and textiles, through to Arts Council Funded Priority Place projects such as *Prince Re-Imagined* (led by local Bhangra specialist Hardeep Sahota) & Artichoke's *HE(A)RD*, which involved artists, musicians, school children and local residents creating soundscapes across a range of musical genres with the composer Orlando Gough and in the form of 23 giant sheep. The sheep were positioned across Kirklees and slowly travelled to Huddersfield for a grand finale on 16 July 2023. The programme also offered events, webinars, showcases, mentoring and networking opportunities on music, health and wellbeing, learning and the music industry.

The School of Arts and Humanities has been working closely with the Creative Development Team since 2018, with the collaborative project *Temporary Contemporary*; a network of meanwhile spaces (empty retail units in Queensgate Indoor Market and The Piazza) in central Huddersfield. This provided opportunities for creative communities and researchers to develop a range of engagement activities to bring cultural vibrancy to the high street.[5] This work has since led to a broader funded project about place-based cultural development and, in particular, how collaborative and partnership working might be realised through public realm programmes. Our inaugural programme Cultures of Place (21/22) consisted of 27 events across 14 locations in 10 days. It engaged with the theme of place through exhibitions, installations, performances, workshops, podcasts, talks and discussions, and brought academic researchers, postgraduate students, external partners, organisations and communities together to explore different creative and cultural practices in the arts and humanities, including:

visual arts (fine art, illustration, photography), architecture, creative writing, cultural studies, design, English literature, fashion, film, history, media, music, performance and textiles.[6] Cultures of Sound is the second place-based cultural programme curated and produced by the School of Arts and Humanities and is our collective contribution to Kirklees Year of Music.[7]

Knowledge and Cultural Exchange in the Arts and Humanities

The National Centre for Academic and Cultural Exchange (NCACE) is an excellent network offering a range of approaches to knowledge and cultural exchange. They are particularly interested in 'communicating the potential of Knowledge Exchange, in its widest sense, with the arts and culture sector' and supporting Higher Education and the arts and cultural sector to foster collaborations which can create 'positive ecologies and environments' for the arts and humanities.[8] This includes work in skills and capacity development, evidencing what we do and the impacts we may be generating, showcasing good practice and building networks for collaboration. This is a supportive platform and resource for anyone working in the arts and cultural sector and for any academic researcher keen to develop knowledge and cultural exchange opportunities in the public realm.

Our understanding of place-based cultural development in the context of the Centre for Cultural Ecologies in Art, Design and Architecture and more broadly, in the School of Arts and Humanities, is focused on how we might develop relationships with all kinds of communities (academic, arts and cultural sector, creative industries, local authority, third sector, voluntary, community and social enterprise) to better enrich our experiences of learning *through* collaboration (and to do this across the creative and cultural industries as an ecosystem). The potential impacts of cultural development can of course lead to commercial, environmental, social and place-based benefits, increasing opportunities for people and organisations to prosper in nourishing ways.[9] Through culture, we connect and develop new relationships to place.[10] Culture helps us to generate new vibrations, energies and engagements on the high street. The long-term benefits of culture on places, on our learning and on our capabilities as communities to live enriching lives, is why we persist, and advocate and often have to keep arguing about culture's value, function and role in society.

Cultures of Sound is part of a larger project on place-based cultural development in the School of Arts and Humanities.[11] We believe that our public realm working is a key focal point for generating new forms of knowledge and cultural exchange. How do we actively make collaborative opportunities through a cultural programme? It is useful to remember that in an ecology there are many interdependencies at play, particularly when it comes to partnership working. It is important to respect the many different forms of knowledge in an ecology. Some knowledges are more or less audible and

visible than others. There are also knowledges that are not yet formed. Exchanges between different ways of knowing through doing can allow forms of thinking and making to manifest in new ways. This is the energy and focus of our cultural programming. We understand knowledge exchange to be a creative process that brings together academic staff, users of research and wider groups and communities to increase the impact of place-based work *in* collaboration. In this respect, we do see the Cultures of_ programme as a direct way to create new partnerships through cultural processes and forms of making in the public realm. This creative process encourages the sharing of ideas, data and experiences with a view to exploring mutual benefits and increased capacity for embracing positive change (particularly within the arts and cultural sector and in people's lives).

Why Sound?

You may be wondering why we chose to name our programme Cultures of Sound as opposed to Cultures of Music? You may also have a sense that sound and music are not the same. And you would be correct. Although some of the projects within this programme are clearly aligned to music cultures, many overlap to enter all kinds of audiovisual and performative explorations. For me, sound has a specific aesthetic resonance. And when I think about what music and/or sound and/or noise might be, I am inevitably drawn to eighteenth century philosophical aesthetics and to the writings of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel.[12] In the *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art* (1818) Hegel suggests that music, as an art-form, treats sound merely as an end-in-itself. Musical sound consists of 'notes', 'whole tones', 'semi-tones', 'harmony and melody'.[13] Song (*Gesang*) is the tonal, vocal, musical and lyrical sound of the human body. However, in the *Philosophy of Nature* (1817) Hegel describes his ontology of sound as a 'double negation'. He explains that sound is the 'inner vibration of the body with itself'.[14] When we hear sound, we are not hearing something other to ourselves. We are hearing ourselves vibrate. Hegel calls this 'tone'. Noise on the other hand is two bodies encountering each other. When one sounding body vibration is posited next to another body vibration, both bodies become vibrations that disrupt.[15] For Hegel, sound has two parts; noise (*Geraüsh*) (multiple vibrations, multiple frequencies) and tone (*Tönen*) (one frequency). A visual example to explain this is Ernst Chladni's sound plates. In his *Treatise on Acoustics* (1802) noise is visualised as an interference with competing vibrations, where tone is one frequency amongst others. These vibrating interferences are made visible by sprinkling sand on the surface of mechanical plates. In movement they manifest as patterns and shapes. When we consider our experience of sound then, we are encountering both external and internal sensations. Sound is therefore both the form of *hearing* as well as the act of *sounding*. This interrelatedness is inward and outward; we are both receiving and producing sounds all the time and these vibrating frequencies shape us. We can imagine how the 'inner motion' of our vibrating sounding body is always already in contact

with the external change of place (external forces such as energies, collisions and vibrations intra-act with bodies, objects and things). When we reflect on our experiences of sound and music *in* place we become aware of these external forces through our own inner vibrating motion.

In this way the context *for* Cultures of Sound is a special kind of creative frequency that resonates with our vibrating bodies. Our experiences of audiovisual exhibitions, workshops, performances, walks and talks are surround sounds for all kinds of event places, including the Bath House Galleries at Sovereign Design House, Phipps Hall, the Create Lab in the Barbara Hepworth Building, Heritage Quay, Holocaust Centre North, Dai Hall, Huddersfield Town Hall and The Kings Head. Cultures of Sound is an offering to both receive and produce vibrating frequencies, many of which are experiential engagements.

Cultures of Making/Making Place

As with Cultures of Place we have continued to work with two modes of approach: Cultures of Making which refers to specific sound-led approaches to making and Making Place alluding to projects that have explored place, community and/or engagement using sound and music cultures. The synopses presented in this book are clustered around different types of activity or output. This year we have paid particular attention to what these types might bring to place-based cultural development. They are: Live performances/events, workshops, creative research residencies, exhibitions. We have also solicited a selection of written pieces which are interspersed throughout the book. These address different disciplinary engagements with sound and music cultures. There have been over 34 contributions to Cultures of Sound, all offering a unique take on making.

A range of different live events within our programme cross the fields of music and music cultures. We have held a doom metal band concert at Huddersfield Town Hall with pipe organ player David Pipe (Mark Mynett, *Organic Doom*); an artist film screening about Tiller Girls with live musical score by Rob Bentall and in conversation with Dr Charlotte Goldthorpe (Dr Allie Carr and Dr Charlotte Goldthorpe, *They Danced as One*); a collaborative event by Rowland's Leaving (Darren Nixon and Rowland Hill) about communal resource sharing of Instagram videos focused on world building, club culture and process-led work (Lauren Velvick, *100 Videos*); a live concert and masterclass at Phipp's Hall by singer Satnam Galsian, Mina Salama and Professor Chill on climate change informed by cultural influences from Sufi poetry, Coptic Christianity, Arabic music, ancient chant and electronica (Professor Rupert Till, *Electric Sufi*); an evening of performance at the Bath House Galleries, with artists Colin Frank, Hywel Davies, Desmond Clarke, Ángela Hoyos Gómez and Juan Harnandez exploring how different spaces function with a public audience

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(Dr Colin Frank, *Resonant Structures*) and a book launch at The Kings Head pub of the recently published *Tainted Love: From Nina Simone to Kendrick Lamar*. Alex Coles and locally based multimedia artist Savvy aka Asaviour held a conversation and played a selection of songs covered in the book. (Professor Alex Coles, *Tainted Love*). David Milsom's specialism in early music also featured in the programme as part of a live concert performance (Dr David Milsom, *Historical Performance Day*). Robert Lycett and Anthony Stillabower collaborated to produce *Hylas*; a live performance and installation on the dialogue between language and music (Robert Lycett and Anthony Stillabower, *Hylas*). Geoffrey Cox's collaborative project brings together poetry, video, music and sound to form 'videopoems' about a three-acre woodland site at Scammonden, West Yorkshire (Dr Geoffrey Cox, *Tell it to the Trees*). Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival (hcmf//) have continued to play an important role in the contributions to Kirklees Year of Music and Cultures of Sound. All these live events mark some form of collaboration with other creative practitioners or local venues either to create new synergistic forms or engage in meaning-making about existing cultures of practice.

The written contributions to accompany this selection include Professor Nic Clear's *Swans 'Young Gods' and Culturcide's 'Tacky Souvenirs of Pre-Revolutionary America' as Models for a Positive Use of Noise, Negation, Plagiarism and Stupidity within Art Practice Presented Using Various Forms of Writing and Graphic Representation*; a reflection by an architect on sources of music influence in an artistic practice and Lydia Czolacz, who uses Bjork as an example from music culture to think through some of Donna Haraway's ideas about the cyborg (*The Intersubjective Cyborg Extension in Contemporary Music Culture Through Sound and Image*). Both writers show how music and visual culture are intertwined as important resources and sources of influence in the development of a creative practice.

Many of the workshops in Cultures of Sound have engaged members of the public with practices of making, often in relation to sound (as hearing and as sounding). Eddie Dobson wove together sound memories and experiences of workshop participants with sonic artist Mia Windsor, leading to a surround sound immersive piece created by the group (Dr Eddie Dobson, *Building Sound Cultures*). Ryan Gibson invited singers (at all levels) to participate in a workshop on the linguistics of song and to explore identity and authenticity through musical and stylistic expression (Ryan Gibson, *Measuring Identity in the Pop Music Accent*). Leah Stuttard invited communities from Kirklees to a workshop about the music 15th century visionary and writer Margery Kempe might have heard during her pilgrimages across Europe, reaching as far as Jerusalem. The workshop included chanting, following ancient singing traditions across the world (Leah Stuttard, *The Outspoken Pilgrim*). Nik Taylor delivered an interactive workshop/performance, developed in conjunction with Carter's Magical Events where the artists' used their training in 'spooky magic' to communicate and perform the scientific principles of sound generation (Dr Nik Taylor, *What Sounds do Ghosts Make?*).

The artists Supriya Nagarajan, Duncan Chapman and Lucy Nolan conducted a workshop on the nature of intercultural collaboration and the connection of these sound and recording compositions to Indian textile motifs and patterns (Supriya Nagarajan, Duncan Chapman, Lucy Nolan, *Sonic Threads*).

Written contributions include Iona Murphy's analysis of Sylvia Plath's radio poetry readings (Iona Murphy, *BBC Radio Poetry Readings: Sylvia Plath's Unwritten Stanza in 'Nick and the Candlestick'*) and Anna Powell's consideration of intangible heritage through sound (Dr Anna Powell, *Sound as Intangible Cultural Heritage: recalling sonic encounters*).

Alongside live events and workshops, we have concentrated on developing creative research residencies at the Bath House Galleries for short, intensive periods leading to a range of outcomes. As part of a collaboration with AME (a local C.I.C artist-collective organisation supporting experimental art, sound art and music scenes) experimental electronic producer and performer SABIWA spent a week in residence collecting material from the surrounding area to build a three-channel film and immersive landscape (SABIWA, Sonic Palette (*Drifts Along*)). Colin Frank, an improvisational composer, collected sounds from around Sovereign Design House (the electronics, the plumbing, the café, the people) and transformed the material into a quadrophonic sound installation (Dr Colin Frank, *Humming, Vibrating Architecture*). Claire Barber (textile artist) and Gavin Osborn (sound artist) spent a short residency focusing on sounds gathered at London Wetland Centre and NEC Birmingham to develop collaborative approaches between sound and stitch (Dr Claire Barber and Gavin Osborn, *Submerged*). David Vélez's residency and exhibition used listening as a focus for othering and empathic engagements with sound (Dr David Vélez, *The Calder in your bones*).

Written contributions include Jakob Bragg's engagement with music, graphics and the representation of sound (Jakob Bragg, *Graphic and Graphite*) and Henry (D.H.J McPherson) considers improvisation in human and non-human soundings in ecological environments (Dr Henry (D.H.J McPherson), *Environmental Reciprocity in Improvising Practice*).

Finally, the exhibitions curated at the Bath House Galleries and in other spaces across the university campus have created opportunities for members of the public to visit and experience the outcomes and artefacts of artistic research collaborations. Ángela Hoyos Gómez, Juan Hernández Amy Chen and Inês Rebelo worked together to create a sound art installation presenting sonic compositions generated from astrochemical data and processes (Ángela Hoyos Gómez, Juan Hernández, Dr Amy Chen and Inês Rebelo, *St-arts*). Jackson Mouldycliff generated an interactive installation using soundscapes installed within objects that could be directly engaged with by participants (Jackson Mouldycliff, *Five Umbrellas*). Matthew Wright's audiovisual work was first commissioned

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by HCMF (2020) and uses sound from samples from Evan Parker and footage taken from Wright's travels in Mongolia in 2009. The installation was curated at Dai Hall (Matthew Wright, *Locked Hybrids*). Yan Wang Preston (visual artist) and Monty Adkins (composer) collaborated to create a body of work, featuring time-lapse photography, artefacts and soundscapes. The exhibition at the Bath House Galleries showed two complete series of work 'With Love. From an Invader.' and 'Autumn Winter Spring Summer' (Dr Yan Wang Preston and Professor Monty Adkins, *Field Studies*). Simon Connor also exhibited a multi-modal landscape installation about Oden's Gully in the Peak District (Simon Connor, *Oden*). Gareth Hudson's project, commissioned by Artichoke for the Lumiere Festival in Durham, was a synchronised kinetic light display is focused on traditional and experimental choral techniques (Dr Gareth Hudson, *Panta Rhei*). Simon Woolham used the Bath House Galleries as inspiration for drawing and song making, connecting and curating the narratives and histories of site (Dr Simon Woolham, *Drawing/Performing The Bath House Galleries*). Michael Stewart and Hyunkook Lee produced an exhibition based on themes in Stewart's new publication The DOgS. Stewart collaborated with Louis Benoit to produce visual representations in the spirit of the poems and a sound work made by Professor Hyunkook Lee was accessed via QR code to be listened to alongside viewing the artworks and reading the poems (Stewart and Hyunkook Lee, *The DOgS*). The cryptojudaic reading room at the Bath House Gallery focused on new forms of institutionality in apprenticeship to black and indigenous studies. The songwork of the Judaica project (2012) is part of this (Dr Ben Spatz, a *cryptojudaic reading room*).

Finally, David Vélez's writing brings listening practices to bear on experiences of othering in sonic art (Dr David Vélez, *Otherness and Empathy in Sonic Art: The artistic implementation of electroacoustic transduction*).

The synopses that follow provide visual documentation of the projects and descriptions of the place-based research approaches taken. We would like to thank all our collaborators, partners and audiences who have engaged with Cultures of Sound.

Rowan Bailey Research Profile:
Rowan Bailey — University of Huddersfield Research Portal

Endnotes

1 We would like to dedicate Cultures of Sound to Dr Jonathan Lindley, whose research, love and enthusiasm of music and graphics created Sunbird Records in Darwen, East Lancashire. He was and still is very much loved by staff and students in the School of Arts and Humanities at the University of Huddersfield.

2 In addition to Year of Music, WOVEN in Kirklees also delivered its third year as a biennial textile festival between June and July 2023. Our thanks to Natalie Walton, Director of HATCH and WOVEN in Kirklees. Much of our work in this programme has explored the relationship between music and textiles, including the collaborative projects we have developed in partnership with WOVEN.

3 Kirklees Year of Music was funded by Arts Council England, West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Heritage Lottery Fund and Kirklees Council. Years of Culture across West Yorkshire include Bradford (UK City of Culture 2025), Leeds (2023), Calderdale (2024), Wakefield (2024). Kirklees chose to focus on music and textiles as two key themes specific to the place-based heritage and innovation of the district.

4 See Music in Kirklees web platform (Creative Kirklees): https://www.musicinkirklees.co.uk/en-UK

5 Our thanks to Kath Wynne-Hague, whose leadership as Head of Culture and Tourism led to this collaboration and to the vision of a place-based approach to culture, which includes driving music and textiles forward as key areas of specialism in Kirklees. We continue to work with the creative development team (in particular, Richard Smith and Robin Widdowson) and Adele Poppleton, Service Director for Culture and Visitor Economy to deliver on these areas and the cultural strategy for Kirklees, including the Blueprint for the Cultural Heart of Huddersfield. As educators and researchers in a School of Arts and Humanities, we are particularly invested in how place-based cultural development provides learning, knowledge and cultural exchange opportunities in across creative communities. See Rowan Bailey, Nic Clear, Chris Cotton, Kath Davies, Donal Fitzpatrick, Anna Powell and Linda Pittwood, (eds.) *Temporary Contemporary: Creating vibrant spaces to support the conditions for creative and cultural activity* (Huddersfield: University of Huddersfield, 2020), https://unipress.hud.ac.uk/plugins/books/22/.

6 See Rowan Bailey, Claire Booth-Kurpnieks and Lauren Velvick. (eds.) *Cultures of Place*. (Huddersfield: University of Huddersfield Press, 2022), https://doi.org/10.5920/CulturesOfPlace.

7 The Cultures of programme is a University Funded Research project entitled: *Arts and Humanities: Place-based Cultural Development and Delivery through knowledge exchange, public engagement and international collaborations (in the West Yorkshire region and Kirklees district 2022-2026)*. The Principal Investigator is Dr Rowan Bailey and the aim of the project is to support the development of place-based projects in the public realm, with the aim of expanding School wide networks of knowledge exchange, civic engagement with a range of audiences/communities, partnership building and long-term strategic development in the fields of place-based cultural production.

8 The National Centre for Academic and Cultural Exchange is led by The Culture and Capital Exchange (TCCE) and funded by Research England. Its aim is to support the development of knowledge exchange between higher education and the arts and cultural sector: https://ncace.ac.uk/about/

9 The significance of social value in the UK's Industrial Strategy gives equal importance to social, economic and environmental well-being. This includes awareness of the need to address some of the social determinants of health inequalities and the role culture plays in building the capabilities and opportunities for a person. See: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/build-back-better-our-plan-for-growth

10 As researchers in the arts and humanities we are invested in the values of culture and their significance in people's lives; creativity, social equity, thinking, collaboration, nourishment, enthusiasm and drive to make meaning.

11 Many of the contributors to the programme are members of other research centres in the School of Arts and Humanities. Our thanks to the Centre for Research in New Music (CeReNeM) whose staff and postgraduate membership has proactively engaged with Cultures of Sound.

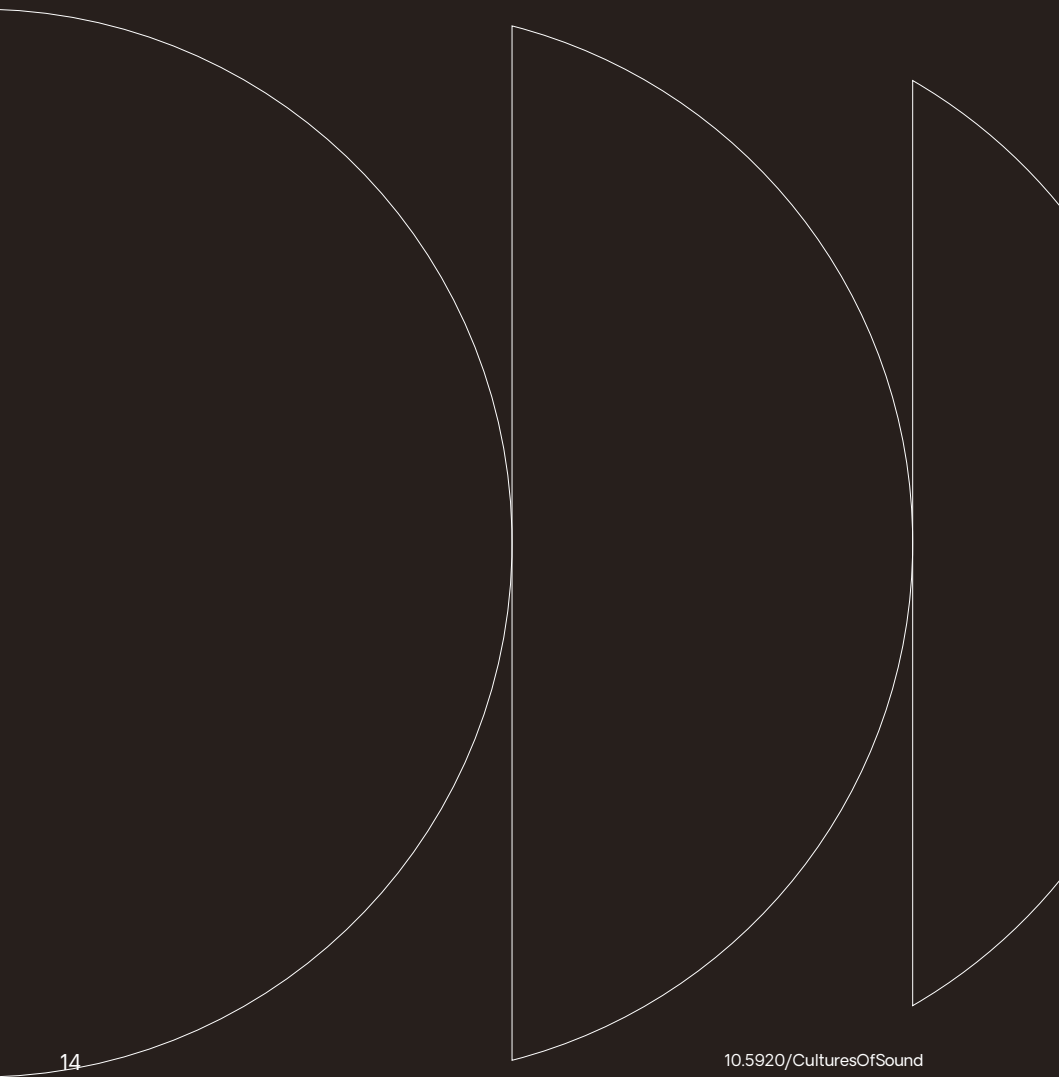
12 Philosophers have sought to investigate the system of the fine arts and navigate the boundary lines between art forms and practices, sometimes exposing the porosities between form and content and sometimes defending a so-called hierarchy of the arts (architecture, sculpture, painting, music, poetry), with ascendency to the purest form and closer proximity to absolute consciousness, the truth, God, the higher realm, etc. This ascendancy grants some art-forms privilege over other more grounded or applied creative practices. We still find these old systems of thinking in our institutions. However, our Cultures of programme seeks to retain an expanded and open field for the arts and humanities and move beyond silos into more collaborative spaces for making culture.

13 Georg, Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Hegel's Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975).

14 Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Philosophy of Nature*, trans. M. J. Petry (New York: Routledge, 1970), §301R and §299. See also Chris Shambaugh, 'Hegel's Philosophy of Sound'. *Hegel Bulletin*, 1-24. Doi:10.1017/hgl.2023.19 and John Sallis, 'Soundings: Hegel on Music', in S. Houlgate and M. Baur (eds.), A Companion to Hegel (West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, 2011).

15 See Hegel, *Philosophy of Nature*, §72, pp.15-17.

Live Events



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Organic Doom
— Mark Mynett

They Danced as One in conversation with Charlotte Goldthorpe
— Allie Carr

Electric Sufi
— Rupert Till, Satnam Galsian, Mina Salama

100 Videos
— Lauren Velvick (with guest artists Rowland's Leaving)

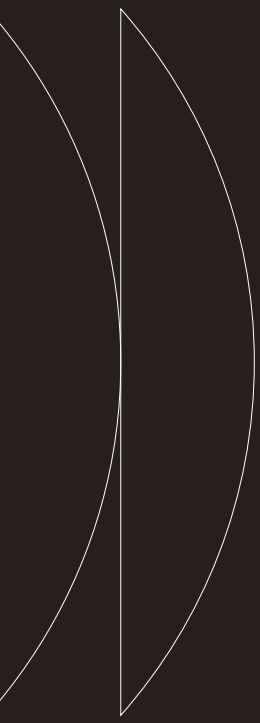
Resonant Structures
— Various artists

Tainted Love
— Alex Coles

Historical Performance Day
— David Milsom

Hylas
— Robert Lycett + Anthony Stillabower

Tell It To The Trees: Opening Up the Arboreal Space
— Geoffrey Cox



Organic Doom

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Organic Doom
Mark Mynett

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: Senior Lecturer in Music Technology and Production.

Fans of heavy metal and organ music enjoyed a unique, unforgettable experience as two doom metal bands joined forces with David Pipe playing the celebrated pipe organ of Huddersfield Town Hall for a live concert. The event was initiated by Dr Mark Mynett from the School of Computing and Engineering and featured the acclaimed atmospheric monastic doom metal band Arð from Northumberland, who performed their acclaimed debut album *Take Up My Bones*.

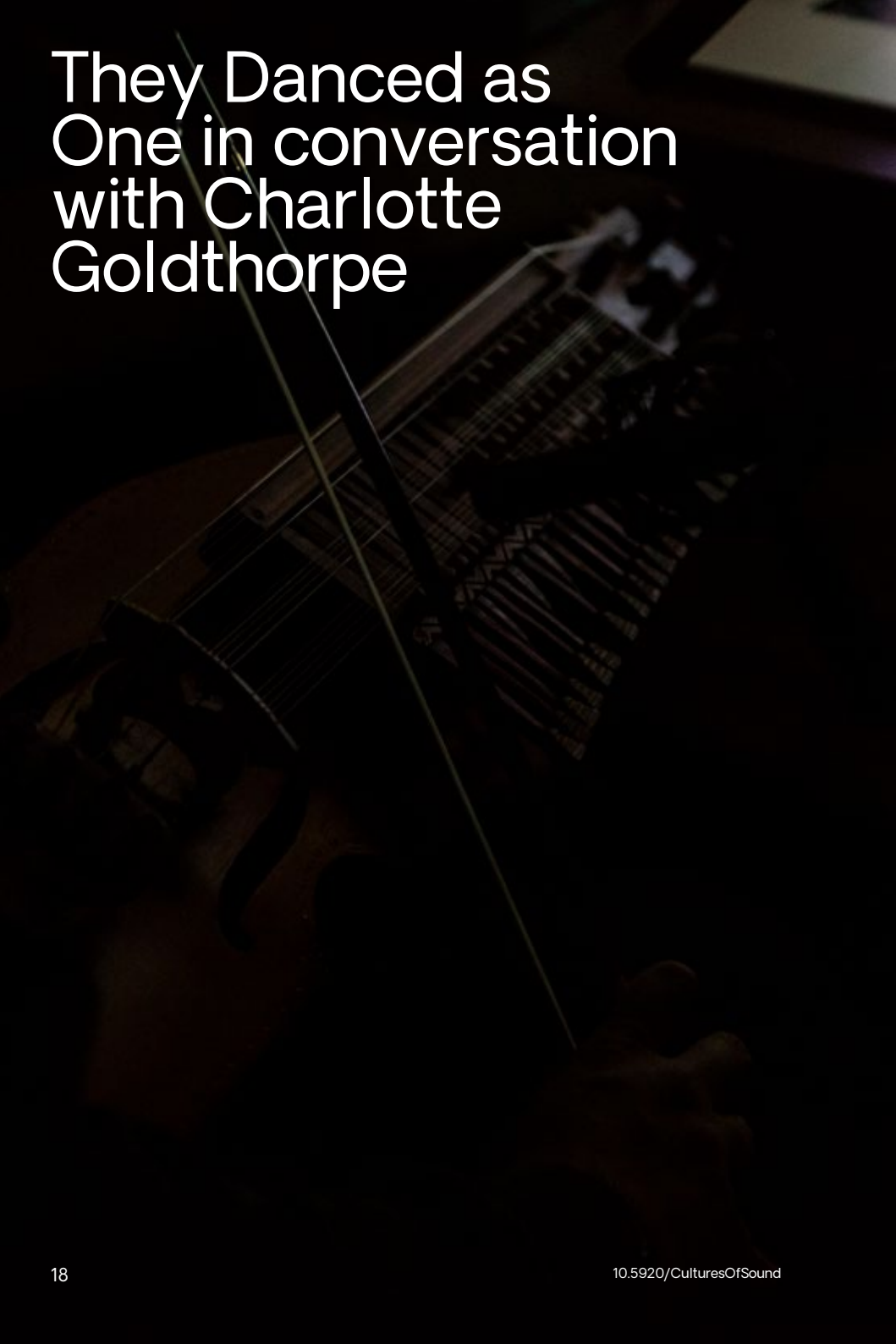
The band's name is taken from an Old English word meaning 'native land' in the dialect of the Anglian Kingdom of Northumbria. The concept behind *Take Up My Bones* revolves around the legendary relics of the famous Northumbrian Saint Cuthbert (634–687) and his followers, who are believed to have carried his remains around the North for a century before settling in Durham. Alongside numerous other brooding symphonic textures, the album features Gregorian chant, piano, and cello. On 12th June, these atmospheric textures were enhanced further by the deep, resonant and majestic sound of the Town Hall's pipe organ, a fitting accompaniment to the band's music.

This one-of-a-kind concert was a rare opportunity for fans to witness the marriage of two seemingly disparate genres of music, supported by the School of Arts & Humanities Music Technology staff and students. The concert drew music enthusiasts from all over the region and even internationally.

Mark Mynett Research Profile:
Mark Mynett — University of Huddersfield Research Portal

Research approach (Cultures of Making): *A live music concert with pipe organ and doom metal.*

They Danced as One in conversation with Charlotte Goldthorpe



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They Danced as One in conversation with Charlotte Goldthorpe

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: Charlotte Goldthorpe, Researcher/ Senior Lecturer, Department of Music & Design Arts.

In 2019 the surviving Tiller Girls, representing many different generations of dancers, met up for a reunion in Blackpool. Alison J Carr went along with Helena Öhman, to record the event and talk to the women. The footage of the event shows glamorous older women, posing, chatting, laughing, negotiating one another, reliving memories, and showing Carr how to pose as a Tiller Girl.

This film situates the embodied experiences of performing, which can be read as the conditions of being a worker in Neoliberal late capitalism. Rob Bentall's live scoring with nyckelharpa and electronics highlight these more radical readings of the work in subtle ways. In her work, Carr takes seriously the overlooked labour and lived realities of women who perform sexiness and glamour: showgirls. The artist also invokes the showgirl as an archetype, a complex web of traits and desires that maybe we all want to step into at times. Hyper-visibility and invisibility. What kind of freedom does visibility give? Or what prohibitions?

Alongside the screening and live score Alison J Carr was in conversation with Charlotte Goldthorpe, drawing on Goldthorpe's recent archival and research in oral histories exploring how sexuality is viewed by ourselves and others as we age. With a particular focus on fetishist communities, this research asks why we assume a kind of 'beige respectability' in older ageing communities?

Charlotte Goldthorpe Research Profile
Charlotte Goldthorpe — University of Huddersfield Research Portal

Alison J Carr is an artist. She is interested in the performance of femininity, theatres as sites of display, what it means to be hyper-visible and invisible, loud and voiceless, powerful and powerless. She studied at the California Institute of the Arts, and returned to Sheffield completing a PhD at Sheffield Hallam University where she had gained her undergraduate degree. Her book, "Viewing Pleasure and Being A Showgirl, How Do I Look?" was published by Routledge.

Rob Bentall is Professor of Music Production at Leeds Conservatoire, and is a composer, performer and researcher working within the electroacoustic music domain. His works, which have been heard across Europe as well as North and South America, hybridise ambient, folk, dance, improvised and experimental music.

Research approach (Cultures of Making): *Documenting hidden narratives and lived experiences of women who perform sexiness and glamour, to interrogate the relationship between the body, performativity, visibility, agency and power, in the context of feminine identities.*

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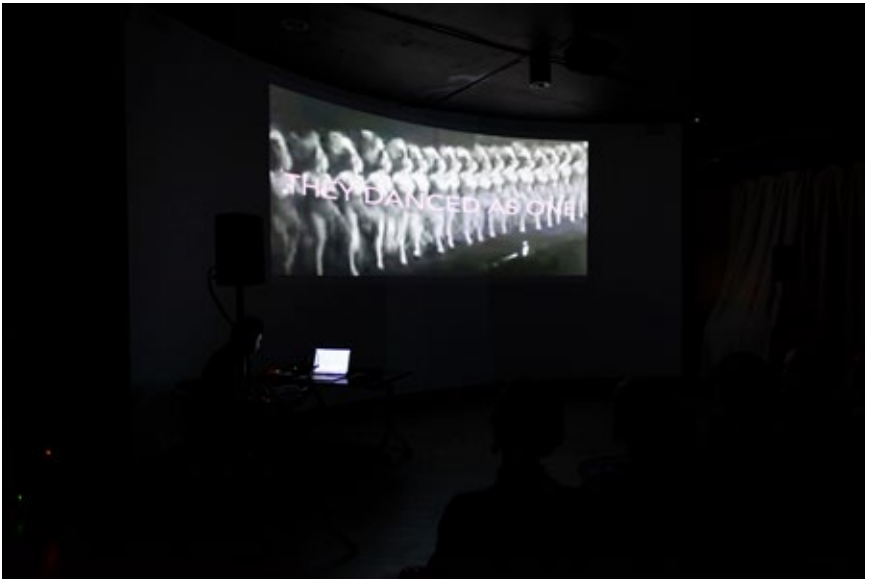
THEY DANCED AS ONE

Electric Sufi

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Electric Sufi
Rupert Till, Satnam Galsian, Mina Salama

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: Rupert Till is Professor Head of the Department of Music and the Design Arts in the School of Art & Humanities.

Electric Sufi is a new project by singer Satnam Galsian, instrumentalist Mina Salama, and producer Professor Chill. It draws on ancient spiritual traditions to create music that aims to inspire audiences to engage with environmental issues. The musicians call on a wide range of influences, including Sufi poetry, Coptic Christianity, Arabic music, ancient chant, and electronica. The scope is to create a syncretic mysticism that focuses on common ground within the ice flows and firestorms of climate change.

On Thursday 16th March 2023, *Electric Sufi* performed a concert at Phipps's Hall for members of the public. This was followed by a masterclass workshop. This was followed by a masterclass workshop for people to participate in.

Rupert Till Research Profile:
Rupert Till — University of Huddersfield Research Portal

Satnam Galsian is a British-Asian vocalist based in Leeds performing music in the Hindustani tradition. Since receiving her degree from Birmingham Conservatoire, Satnam has worked with a variety of artists creatively exploring the interplay between north Indian and western music traditions. This has resulted in her performing nationwide and in Europe with a diverse range of artists. Recently she has lent her incredible vocals to both Radio 4 plays and drum and bass tracks. She currently performs with her band Kinaara and delivers various community-based programs that promote health and wellbeing through music.

Mina Mikhael Salama - Born in Alexandria, Egypt in 1979, Mina Mikhael Salama has a BA in Music Education from the University of Alexandria -Egypt. In 2022 he received a Master of Arts by Research diploma from the University of Huddersfield and has contributed to Masters' and PhD music research projects, some of them as a co-author. Mina Mikhael Salama is a multi-instrumentalist in piano, keyboard, oud, nay, kawala, Armenian duduk, oriental violin, qanun, mandolin, saz, udu drum and nailute. He worked as a nay, piano and keyboard principal player in the "Egyptian Opera House" from 2004 to 2012, and also as Assistant Maestro, a music arranger for music pieces and songs played in the Opera House from 2004 to 2012. He is Music director and vocal coach for choirs such as the Opera Choir and choirs of the Coptic Church. Some of his music pieces have been played on the BBC radio Sheffield & BBC 6. He contributed to "Civilisations" BBC TV program in 2017 and demonstrated the 30,000

years Isturitz Vulture bone flute. He currently works on a research project on ancient Egyptian music at the University of Huddersfield. For more information, please visit: www.minasalama.com

Research approach (Cultures of Making): *Drawing on a wide range of musical influences to explore ways in which audiences engage with environmental issues.*

10.5920/CulturesOfSound

Dog Philosophy: Noise, Negation, Plagiarism and Stupidity within Art Practice

Nic Clear

There is a prevailing consensus that art and culture should be positive, creative, and affirming, that it should reflect the best of a society, especially the values of its liberal elite.[1] This essay will set out a brief analysis of an alternative trajectory by examining the concept of 'kynicism', or 'dog philosophy' questioning principles of authority, conviviality and originality through two recordings from the independent music scene of the 1980's, recordings which were important in shaping my own practice through the application of modes of nihilistic and 'cynical' approaches to creative production.

01: DOG PHILOSOPHY: AGAINST AUTHORITY

1

> *Kynical individuals put an end to the pose of the self-sufficient creative artist (genius), the world thinker (philosopher), the expansive entrepreneur; rather, they consciously let themselves be driven along by what is given. If what drives us is brutal, then so are we. Dada does not look onto an ordered cosmos-*
>
> *Sloterdjik – The Critique of Cynical Reason.*[2]

Peter Sloterdijk's book *The Critique of Cynical Reason*, seeks to outline a form of philosophical discourse through a critique of the liberal ethics of the western philosophic tradition involving what Sloterdijk terms 'Kynicism', or 'dog philosophy'. Kynicism is an intellectual tradition that can be traced back to Diogenes of Sinope that uses concepts of negation to undermine traditional philosophical thought as part of a positive strategy of a lived philosophy embedded in action. The title of the book is itself a philosophical pun, an appropriation of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* subverting the enlightenment tradition. Where rather than identifying a rational idealist basis for aesthetic enquiry, Sloterdijk seeks to argue for a philosophical system based on the irrational, albeit one that is, in its own way, a legitimate response to human activity.

Sloterdijk identifies Dada as the first modern neokynicism, with irrationalism as a central element in its creative strategy, which he describes as 'Dadaistic chaotology'.[3] Dada was born out of a horror and disgust of the carnage of the First World War. Dada responds by lampooning and insulting everything it encounters, even the name itself is deliberately non-sensical and sets itself

against the conventions of previous art movements. The conception that art should embody positive values that emanate from the enlightenment are ridiculed by Dada artists such as George Grosz and Otto Dix, who find that enlightenment reason died in the mud of the trenches. Ultimately, even Sloterdijk's philosophical system comes up against a philosophical paradox: how do you make a rational case for irrationality? Evoking the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, whose work undermines the tradition of coherent discourse by presenting contradiction and paradox not as the enemy of philosophy but as something that is an essential part of its impossible programme, Sloterdijk's conclusion is that we need to develop what he loosely describes as a 'subjective reason', at which point one wonders whether Diogenes would have agreed, or told him to 'piss off'.

O2; DESIGNED TO BE PLAYED AT MAXIMUM VOLUME: AGAINST CONVIVIALITY

> *When You Touch My Things You Spoil Them*
> *When Things Get Dirty I Spit Them Out*
> *I Own This, I Own This*
> *It's Mine, It's Mine*
> *Swans – This Is Mine.*[4]

Is one of the primary functions of art to be entertaining? And what does entertainment mean within the context of an art practice? Importantly, is the role of art to support or challenge the liberal hegemony?

It is easy to forget that the 'liberal arts' are a relatively recent phenomena and that historically the role of arts was explicitly to promote the values of the ruling class. The transformations that occurred under the guise of modernity, specifically abstraction, experimentation, and the establishment of socially engaged art had a profound effect on wider social values and systems, albeit maintaining the order of the status quo by aestheticizing dissent.[5] Early 20th century artists like Antonin Artaud, whose *Theatre of Cruelty* used techniques of alienation and transgression to develop what he considered a more authentic expression of everyday life,[6] and authors such as Georges Bataille, who examined 'baseness' as a mode of cultural production, developed ideas that had a progressively greater influence as the post 1945 liberal hegemony began to dissolve and descend into the turmoil of the 1970's.

Like many of my generation, born in the 1960's, my biggest cultural influences came via the independent music of Punk and New Wave, whose aggressive themes found inspiration in the avant-gardes of previous generations, particularly through the discordant sounds of Dada and Futurism and

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graphics of the Situationist International.[7] However, Punk still followed many conventional rock structures, (verse, chorus, verse, chorus, middle eight, verse, chorus), albeit introduced by a throaty one-two-three-four. Many bands variously labelled New Wave, post-Punk or simply Indie eschewed such familiar structures and sounds veered into more avant-garde territories often embracing non-Western musical styles.

In the early 1980's I was already familiar with the dissonant recordings of bands such as Throbbing Gristle whose Burroughsian approach to experimentation encompassed sampling, distortion and transgressive content exemplified by the ironically titled *'20 Jazz Funk Greats'*;[8] the collaged soundscapes of Cabaret Voltaire's *'Voice of America'*;[9] and the proto-industrial tumult of Einstürzende Neubauten's *'Kollaps'*.[10] Even though the term 'noise' was not yet part of the common parlance of rock criticism, in a positive sense, the number of musicians who were experimenting with extreme sonic forms within rock band structures was rapidly increasing.

In 1984 I came across a review of an EP by an American band 'Swans', formed in 1982 by Michael Gira. It had been made 'single of the week' by the NME, but the review described it in terms that were so at odds with even their often eccentric and deliberately obscurantist selections. Based on this and without ever hearing the music I went out and bought a copy. The record itself did not look out of the ordinary. The cover, designed by Gira, in fact looked highly conventional, even tasteful. The bold modernist design was unlike most of the cover art of their contemporaries which used collage, distinctive typography, or provocative photography to stand out. This EP used a simple sans serif typeface, all in upper case, to denote the name of the band and the titles of the four tracks: 'I Crawled'; 'Raping a Slave'; 'Young God'; 'This is Mine'.[11] Titles more redolent of avant-garde texts and not the subject of popular music. Titles that possibly signalled more extreme content, but the clearest hint that this was not a piece of conventional pop genre music was the text printed in the centre of the sleeve: 'DESIGNED TO BE PLAYED AT MAXIMUM VOLUME'.[12]

Playing the record for the first time was a strange experience, clearly part of me wanted to like the tracks, but this was a sound that resisted liking, and even questioned whether liking is an appropriate response when faced by certain types of art. The four tracks each follow a similar structure and set out an aesthetic that picks from Swans previous EP *'Cop'*.[13] The sound is grinding, the beats set a tempo that underscores the violence of the guitar and the voice. Indeed, one of the most disquieting aspects of Swans sound are Gira's vocals: semi-spoken, growled and often screamed. Short declarative phrases written in the first person, they opine a world of horror and pain alluding violent and sado-masochistic desires reflecting the growing nihilism and disillusionment of a 'lost' generation. This EP, now known as the *'Young God'* EP, and their other recordings from this period represent

an important point in the development of noise as part of an engagement with transgressive themes and an example of a discordant and alienating approach to musical production. Within these early recordings Swans eschew considerations of listening as pleasure and confronts audiences with an alienating visceral barrage of sound.

Swans were part of a group of American bands that took the nihilistic and disaffected stance of punk to an extreme. Alongside bands such as Sonic Youth, Big Black and the Butthole Surfers, they played with the themes of death, boredom, incest, catastrophe, mindless violence and serial killers. The song 'Young God' itself is supposedly written from the perspective of serial killer Ed Gein. Listening to Young Gods now, the shock of the EP's brutality has been tempered by how Swans' sound has become recuperated as part of the lexicon of heavy music. Indeed, to many, Swans now seem a little safe, but then again there are still even more who like to start a song with a good old-fashioned ONE-TWO-THREE-FOUR.

03: PLAGIARISM IS NECESSARY: AGAINST ORIGINALITY

> *You can't start a fire, when your hero says there's nothin' to burn.*
> *This gun's for hire, even if we're just dancin' in the dark.*
> Culturcide / Bruce Springsteen – Bruce !986 [14]

In response to Roland Barthes 'Death of the Author',[15] Michel Foucault develops a concept of the author, or what he calls the 'author function', that is not a single idea of attribution, but a complex series of relationships often marked by discourses of power, legal edict, or marking broader categories of discourse.[16] However, within the arts the concept of authorship still tends to ascribe a unique idea to a particular individual or group. Authorship is tied to the individual creative genius, as authorship guarantees provenance and provenance guarantees authenticity and authenticity guarantees value. Authorship is an economic function.

When Marcel Duchamp drew a moustache on the Mona Lisa for his work LHOOQ,[17] recreating an act performed thirty years earlier by the 'incoherents', this simple act of childish rebellion initiated a practice that would be a mainstay of alternative critical practice within the 20th century. Within Duchamp's Dadaist gesture was a triple blasphemy: first, defacing the great work; second, placing himself on the same level as the genius Di Vinci; and third, undermining the mystery of the work's meaning with the phonetic pun contained within the letters LHOOQ: 'Elle a chaud au cul' ('she has a hot ass'). This form of appropriation can also be seen forty years later in the Situationist tradition of 'detournement'. In 'Detournement as Negation and Prelude' written by Asgar Jorn the practice is defined as 'the reuse of

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pre-existing artistic elements in a new ensemble', but the text goes on to be more explicit about the nature of the practice as embodying both "parody and seriousness".[18]

One night I was working while listening to John Peel's Radio 1 late night show, when he introduced a track by stating that this would probably be the only time he would be able to play it (I was intrigued), then the opening lines of the Bruce Springsteen track 'Dancing In the Dark' started to play (I was confused). Bruce comes in with the first line, and then following this the cause of Peel's concern regarding repeat plays becomes apparent as the next line is overlaid with distorted guitar and another singer shouting their own lyrics (I was delighted). This format is then repeated throughout the song:

> *Bruce: I wake in the morning,*
> *Culturcide: and I record a new LP.*
> *Bruce: I come home in the evening,*
> *Culturcide: 'I go to bed, and everyone likes me'*
> *Bruce: I ain't nothing but tired*
> *Culturcide: Yeah, I'm just tired and bored with myself.*
> *Culturcide: But I'm a working-class hero and it's supposed to be something that I sell.*
> *Culturcide: You can't move the product; you can't move the product without a face*
> *Bruce: This guns for hire, even if were just dancing in the dark.* [19]

The band was 'Culturcide' and the LP from which the track was taken was called *Tacky Souvenirs from Pre-Revolutionary America*.[20] The album includes similar treatments to songs by Beach Boys, David Bowie, Stevie Wonder and Paul MacCartney, and in particular USA for Africa's 'We are the World', which is changed to 'They're not the World' – (They're not the world, They're not the children, They're just bosses and bureaucrats and rock 'n' roll has-beens). Culturcide take supposedly iconic tracks and lampoon mainstream music's smug liberal credentials and self-importance, undermining the notion that commercial music should be treated with any reverence. The cover of the album shows a typical American street scene of strip malls and highway advertising, one makeshift sign in the bottom right of the photograph is written 'CULTURCIDE TACKY SOUVENIRS OF PRE-REVOLUTIONARY AMERICA'. Along with the record is an A4 sheet containing the lyrics of each song, the text is headed using the Comte de Lautremont's famous quote from Maldoror:

> *Plagiarism is necessary progress implies it. It embraces an author's phrase, makes use of his expressions, erases a false idea and replaces it with the right idea.*[21]

They then add:

> *We realise we're not the first to do this. We won't be the last.*[22]

Culturcide was formed by artist Mark Flood, working under the pseudonym of Perry Webb, his use of appropriation is clearly informed by his own knowledge of avant-garde art practice. The title gives the clearest indication that it is consciously part of a kynical heritage that stems from that Dadaist desire to deface and undermine as an example of audio détournement.

Often this type of approach can be used simply for comedic value, and there is an aspect of *'Tacky Souvenirs'* that places it close to what might be considered a novelty record, but what sets this record apart is that it was not produced with the approval or permission of any of the artists, it operates outside of copyright agreements. The album is both fun and stupid, as well as being a critical engagement with the banality of popular music. It also broke every single copyright law imaginable, indeed on the inside sleeve of the record is the statement: 'Home taping is killing the record industry… so keep doing it'.[23] The use of unapproved samples perhaps achieved its height of notoriety with the 'Justified Ancients of Mu Mu' album *'1987 (What the F**k is Going On?)'*, particularly for their sampling of the Beatles and Abba's 'Dancing Queen' with the album being forcibly withdrawn and the unsold copies destroyed.[24]

There is no doubt that the legacies of Dada and punk present a hold over how kynical forms of transgression and rebellion might be situated within contemporary art practice and music, but the evolution of these forms of alternative production suggests that this practice is not stagnating, and new formations constantly arise albeit with similar objectives. Mark Fischer and Simon Reynolds appropriate Jacques Derrida's term 'Hauntology' to describe how the legacy of previous music incarnations reside within current music to 'haunt' them[25], and within this Hauntology can be seen as having both negative and positive implications. Negatively, it implies that innovation is limited, and we are doomed to merely repeat the past, in that art and culture recuperates and reuses previous tropes. Positively, it is an acknowledgement that we work within traditions and lineages from which we can take inspiration, and this can be especially important within the practices of opposition. The tactics of plagiarism, humour and irreverence have been consistent themes in much of my graphical work, and I have often referred to my drawings as 'scatological'. I see the composition of the drawings as analogous to the writing of a song, indeed many of the drawings include accompanying 'lyrics'. These ideas can be seen in the drawings that I have made to accompany this essay, I steal from other sources but in that stealing I use these ideas in my own way. I make work because I enjoy the making of the work, and I would regret it if I didn't, and as Gibby Haynes from the Butthole Surfers once said about regret:

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the funny thing about regret is that it's better to regret.
Something you have done than.
To Regret something that you haven't done.
And by the way, if you see your mom this weekend, will you be sure and
Tell her...
SATAN SATAN SATAN!!!!

Image 1: *Dog Philosophy 01: Dadaistic Chaotology*, Nic Clear (Image by Author)

Image 2: *Dog Philosophy 02: Maximum Volume*, Nic Clear (Image by Author)

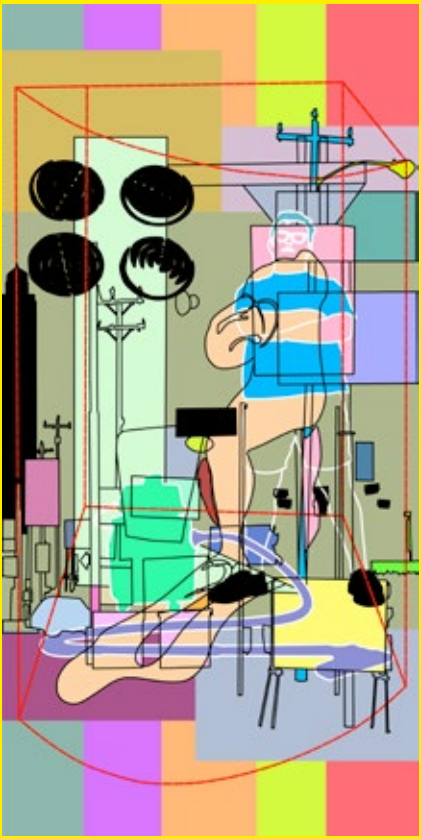

Image 3: Dog Philosophy 03: Tacky Souvenirs, Nic Clear (Image by Author)

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Endnotes

1 See the aim of Arts Council England's 2020-2030 'Let's Create Strategy' to create "a country transformed by culture. Bringing us together, happier, healthier. To excite, inspire, delight. To enrich our lives." (Arts Council England, Let's Create, 2020)

2 Peter Sloterdijk, *Critique of Cynical Reason* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), 394.

3 Sloterdijk, *Critique of Cynical Reason*.

4 "This is Mine", track B2 on Swans, *Young Gods EP*, K.422, 1984

5 T.J. Clarke, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and his Followers*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press,1985)

6 Artaud Antonin, *Collected works of Antonin Artaud*, ed. Victor Corti (London: Calder and Boyars, 1971).

7 Greil Marcus, *Lipstick Traces: A Secret History of the Twentieth Century*. (Boston: Harvard University Press,1989)

8 Throbbing Gristle, *20 Jazz Funk Greats*. Industrial Records, 1979

9 Cabaret Voltaire, *Voice of America*. Rough Trade, 1980

10 Ensturzende Neubauten, *Kollaps*. Zick Zack, 1981

11 Swans, *Young Gods EP*. K.422, 1984

12 Record sleeve in Swans, *Young Gods EP*, K.422, 1984, Vinyl

13 Swans, Cop, 1984

14 "Bruce !986", track A2 on Culturecide, T*acky Souvenirs Of Pre-Revolutionary America*. Self-released, 1986, Vinyl

15 Roland Barthes, "Death of the Author", in *Roland Barthes, Image – Music – Text*, ed. Stephen Heath (London: Harper Collins: 1977)

16 Michel Foucault, "What is an Author", in *Language, Counter-memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews by Michel Foucault* ed. Donald F. Bouchard (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1980)

17 Marcel Duchamp, *L.H.O.O.Q*, 1919

18 Asger Jorn, "Detournement as Negation and Prelude", in *Situationist Anthology*, ed. Ken Knabb (Berkeley, CA: Bureau of Public Secrets, 1959)

19 "Bruce !986", Culturecide

20 Culturecide, Tacky Souvenirs from Pre-Revolutionary America. Self-released, 1986, Vinyl

21 Comte de Lautremont, Maldrador, 1870 quoted in accompanying text to Culturecide, *Tacky Souvenirs from Pre-Revolutionary America*.

22 Culturecide, *Tacky Souvenirs from Pre-Revolutionary America*.

23 Record Sleeve in Culturcide, *Tacky Souvenirs from Pre-Revolutionary America*.

24 Justified Ancients of Mu Mu, 1987 *(What the F**k is Going On?)*. The Sound of Mu(sic), 1987.

25 See Jacques Derrida *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International* (London: Routledge, 1994) in Mark Fischer *Ghosts of My Life: Writings on Depression, Hauntology and Lost Futures* (Winchester: Zero Books,2014) and Simon Reynolds, *Retromania: Pop Culture's Addiction to Its Own Past'*. (London: Faber & Faber, 2011)

List of Illustrations:

Image 1: Nic Clear, *Dog Philosophy 01: Dadaistic Chaotology*. Backlit Digital Print. Image by Author.
Image 2: Nic Clear, *Dog Philosophy 02: Maximum Volume*. Backlit Digital Print. Image by Author.
Image 3: Nic Clear, *Dog Philosophy 03: Tacky Souvenirs*. Backlit Digital Print. Image by Author.

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Discography:

Butthole Surfers (1987) *Sweet Loaf*, on ‘Locust Abortion Technician’, Blast First.
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Nic Clear is an architect, curator, author and the Dean of the School of Arts and Humanities, the University of Huddersfield.

Research Profile:
Nic Clear — University of Huddersfield Research Portal

100 Videos

10.5920/CulturesOfSound

100 Videos
Lauren Velvick (with guest artists Rowland's Leaving)

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: Cultural Programme Manager.

Artist duo Rowland's Leaving (Darren Nixon and Rowland Hill) came together through a shared interest in club culture, world building and the tropes associated with live performance. Publishing a pair of short videos to Instagram every Friday evening for over a year the pair decided to mark the release of videos 99 and 100 with their first live event. They approached Lauren Velvick having attended *Resonant Structures* previously in the Cultures of Sound programme. During the summer, in between academic years, University spaces are often empty and unused which provided the opportunity to stage this experimental event within Sovereign Design House.

100 Videos offers audiences the rare chance to experience a large body of video work all at once and in person. The event hinges on an unusual exchange; each audience member agrees to become a collaborator in the event's creation, surrendering their smartphone on arrival to present one of the 100 videos on a loop for one hour. In this way the event seeks to test the limits of resource sharing, encouraging a temporary offline community to emerge.

100 Videos made its debut on Friday 28th July 2023 at the Bath House Galleries where the artists hung 100 smartphones throughout the gallery space, each playing a looped film on full volume. The resulting audio effect was something similar to walking through a video arcade, whilst the small-scale visuals demanded a more up-close, intimate encounter. To create a sense of pacing and focus during the event, the artists performed a number of live one-minute adaptations of the videos, which occurred spontaneously and unannounced. One audience member commented that these moments felt like "live-action breakouts".

The audience response to the event at the Bath House Galleries was something that will feed into Rowland's Leaving's ongoing project in a number of ways: 'We were so pleased at the ways in which the audience allowed themselves to really fall into and immerse themselves in what was a pretty intense audio/visual experience. The extent to which people engaged in the moment, without the comfort of their phones to retreat into, is something we want to explore further in the future.' A second edition of 100 Videos takes place on Friday 24th November at Longsight Art Space, Manchester.

Included here is an extract from a written response by Alex Mepham (a writer and PhD researcher in Psychology at the University of York) which

evidences how this event compelled an intense engagement, unmediated by the smartphones which have become a ubiquitous part of the contemporary audience experience:

> *'very loud sound dance now now in this damn age now we promise maximum security to ensure harmony invite only no entry smash the vases drop it i dare you hype crowds spattered fantasy let the people dance the standard has been set we are in our utopia this house of mayhem take your time do it right you better stop this basic art envelop me in tender you make me cry tender very tender on all my different levels i'm pure and value for money'*

Research approach (Cultures of Making): *A live experiment which combined the display of video art with a participatory element.*

Images courtesy of Jeremiah Quinn.

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Resonant Structures

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Resonant Structures
Various artists (Colin Frank, Ángela Hoyos Gómez and Juan Hernández, Hywel Davies, Desmond Clarke)

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: Colin Frank is a Research Assistant, Ángela Hoyos Gómez is a PhD candidate.

To celebrate *St-arts* and *Humming, Vibrating Architecture*, lead artists Colin Frank, Ángela Hoyos Gómez and Juan Hernández performed percussive, live-electronic and performance art works. Colin Frank's set began with two acoustic percussion pieces – his award-winning snare drum composition 'Edgework', exploring the drum's edges and gradual processes, and the delicately droning marimba solo 'Purl Ground' by Hywel Davies. He then presented new works on his custom designed electroacoustic instrument, the Tetrahedron, a handheld device containing four joysticks. With this device he presented Desmond Clarke's videogame piece 'TETRAHEDRON', as well as a solo improvisation using the instrument.

Ángela Hoyos Gómez and Juan Hernández performed live versions of their quadraphonic compositions for the collaborative sound art installation project St-arts (Star*ts), also presented within this publication.

The programme included:

Edgework (2023) – Colin Frank
Snare drum
Purl Ground (2003) – Hywel Davies
Marimba
TETRAHEDRON (2023) – Desmond Clarke
Tetrahedron and live visuals
Improvisation (2023) – Colin Frank
Tetrahedron
Es Tela Est Toile Confab / Helium Burning by Ángela Hoyos Gómez & Juan Hernández
[quadraphonic installations - live presentations in the Bath House galleries]

Research approach (Making Place): *An evening of performances, curated in response to work produced during the Cultures of Sound residencies at the Bath House Galleries.*

Tainted Love

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Tainted Love
Alex Coles

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: Former Professor in the Department of Design & The Built Environment.

Titled after Soft Cell's version of the original 1965 Gloria Jones track, *Tainted Love* by Alex Coles is the first book-length inquiry into the subject of the twisted romantic ballad, giving a sense of both its history and contemporary currency. Sometimes extreme, this twist to the conventional romantic ballad spans across gender and generational boundaries to subvert our understanding of both the genre's function and its behaviour. Each chapter of *Tainted Love* takes a deep dive into a single twisted ballad, examining both its inner workings—lyrics, melody, and vocal approach—and its broader cultural resonance.

Featuring an analysis of songs by Kendrick Lamar, Nina Simone, Roxy Music, Joni Mitchell, The Velvet Underground, Frank Sinatra, Soft Cell, Paul McCartney, Charlotte & Serge Gainsbourg, PJ Harvey & Nick Cave, and Little Simz, this book turns on the question: What compels songwriters to compose—and us to listen to—these warped songs?

A launch event for the book took place at the Kings Head Pub on St George's Square, where Alex Coles in conversation with locally-based multimedia artist Savvy aka Asaviour played a selection of the songs covered in the book, which were then discussed in depth. Copies of the book were available to purchase on the night from local record shop Vinyl Tap, along with a selection of the records featured. A further event also took place at Whitechapel Gallery on November 30th, where Alex Coles was once again in conversation with Savvy, alongside special guests Hannah Catherine Jones and Fraser Muggeridge.

Alex Coles is a critic, editor and author of The Transdisciplinary Studio (Sternberg Press, 2012) and the EP (Sternberg Press 2013-).

Savvy (aka Asaviour) is a Huddersfield based musician and producer and creator of the Saving Grace platform.

Research approach (Cultures of Making): *Book of essays exploring the twisted romantic ballad and its complex relationship to culture.*

Historical Performance Day

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Historical Performance Day
David Milsom

Relationship to SAH: Senior Lecturer in Music.

Music at the University of Huddersfield, and prior institutions before its formation, has a long and proud history. It has attained real levels of excellence (given recent expression by the REF2021 result, with music coming 5th, way ahead of celebrated institutions such as conservatoires and older established universities including Oxford and Cambridge).

At the heart have been two poles around which this has been built:

Training musicians for tomorrow's world, and a wide range of destinations

Educating musicians for tomorrow's world, and a wide range of destinations

In the latter case, as regards historical western art-music, the university is at the cutting edge of historical performance scholarship, embodied in a wide range of PGR projects with staff, VRFs, and emeritus members leading the world into such diverse topics as the viol in England, nineteenth-century violin performing practices, acoustic recording technologies and practices, researching hermeneutic links between theology and Bach's compositional practices and styles, Handel's operatic endeavours in London, the violin classes of the Brussels conservatoire, and much more.

But this is not inward academia. It takes flight in the act of performance – communicating cultures of sound, time, space and perceptions – with wider audiences, with students, and with the general public. This kind of work can change the way we perform music of past cultures of sound, by making us aware of new possibilities through a more detailed and active awareness of the past.

For Cultures of Sound in collaboration with the University of Huddersfield's ongoing concert series a series of performances were programmed within one day, inviting audiences and members of the public to interact with aspects of western art-music with which they are unlikely to be familiar. The concerts are contextualised by an accessible talk be the performers discussing the research basis of the work shown, displaying and advertising how, at Huddersfield, training and educating tomorrow's students for an increasingly competitive world means knowing how to master technical skills to a high level, as well as being highly knowledgeable about a wide range of instruments, settings, approaches and practices. Audiences interacted with performers, asked questions, and otherwise engaged with artists in a way that is rarely encountered at typical formal concerts. At many institutions, such 'historical performance' is closed off as a fringe

pursuit whilst most train musicians in an entirely normative and somewhat outdated 'standard' way of thinking about music in performance. Here we are more radical and challenge audiences and students alike to explore the future through better awareness of evidence-based ways of playing music of the past. Whilst this may sound dry and academic, the results could not be less so – and vibrant and distinctive approaches to our now old musical traditions helps to breathe new and innovative life into well-known works, as well as introducing us to new ones.

David Milsom research profile:
David Milsom — University of Huddersfield Research Portal

Research approach (Cultures of Making): *Showcasing the school's cutting edge research into historical Western Music with public concerts from leading ensembles.*

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Hylas

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Hylas
Robert Lycett + Anthony Stillabower

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: Rob Lycett is a Senior Lecturer, Department of Design & The Built Environment, and Anthony Stillabower is a PhD Candidate, Department of Music and Design Arts.

This first iteration of *Hylas* is a live performance and installation developed in 2023 by Rob Lycett (UK) and Anthony Stillabower (USA) presented at Dai Hall, The Piazza, Huddersfield, accompanied by the audio 'more than content to spend eternity amongst the beautiful they occasionally thought they heard their own names being called out', by Stillabower.

Hylas is a dialogue between language and music. In this first dialogue between the artists, they point towards George Berkeley (1685-1753) and his book *Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous*,[1] which considers the nature of material substance:

> *"... silence ... I was afraid to look ... a new experience ... so it shall cease ... unknown uniformities ... replay the tape ... living somewhere with space ... in the faraway song ... it's table lands ... drawing of a tree ... think of me tomorrow ... of body limits ... at the limit ... the blood poured from her ... the age of twenty-seven ..."*[2]

Hylas is an ongoing collaboration, and each iteration will be a work in progress.

Rob Lycett Research Profile:
Rob Lycett — University of Huddersfield Research Portal

Anthony Stillabower is a PhD Candidate in composition and music technology with the Centre for Research in New Music (CeReNeM).

Research approach (Cultures of Making): *Collaborating across subject areas on shared aesthetic interests to create multimedia outputs.*

1 George Berkley, *Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous*, 1713.

2 Extract from the poem 'Hylas', performed by Rob Lycett, Dai Hall, Huddersfield, 30th November 2023.

Tell It To The Trees

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Tell It To The Trees: Opening Up the Arboreal Space

Geoffrey Cox

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: Senior Lecturer, Department of Music & Design Arts.

Tell It To The Trees is a collaborative project bringing together poetry, video, music and sound design to form 'videopoems': a synthesis of the spoken word and audiovisual materials in which each can inform and enhance the other. Commissioned poets have written poems inspired by their visit to a small, three-acre woodland site at Scammonden, West Yorkshire, planted in winter 2005-6 by voluntary tree planting group, Colne Valley Tree Society (CVTS). Founded in 1964, Geoff Cox has been a member of the Society since 1997 and had a major hand in planting the trees at 'SC5a', the CVTS catalogue name for the site.

The initial inspiration for the project came in May 2021 when Cox returned with a small group to the site for the first time since it was planted, to remove the old plastic tree guards, and was surprised at how well the trees had grown, some oaks reaching nearly 30 feet in height. One newer group member, who had not planted the site, remarked that it had a special feel which Cox agreed with, and in that moment the idea for the project began to grow.

After an initial visit, the invited poets were subsequently filmed performing their poems in the woodland. The videos were combined as a 30-minute film, with original music for a trio of alto flute (doubling piccolo), bass clarinet and viola, recorded on site as well as in the studio. Though in some cases the poems' relationship to the woodland is quite abstracted, the themes of tree planting, a slowly maturing young oak woodland and the mini bio-diverse world it is engendering, as well as the need for such places and spaces for ours' and the planet's well-being, underpin the project. The music was written to reflect the arboreal space by using a transcription of the lilting and distinctive song of the willow warbler as its basis; a song that can be heard all around Scammonden in spring. Willow warblers, a migratory bird that arrives each year in early spring from sub-Saharan Africa, prefer young woodland and have proliferated in the area as a result of tree planting, mostly by CVTS.

The overall aim of *Tell It To The Trees* is to ensure diversity of poetry, performance, presence and engagement through the poets invited to contribute, and through the combination and juxtaposition of their words with musical evocation. The title is taken from one of the poems and is appropriate since whatever the poems' content, through the filming process that features detail of the sights and sounds of the woodland through the seasons, all poets do indeed tell their poems to the trees.

As well as including poets from all nations that make up the UK, ensuring diversity of speaking voice timbres and accents, a key factor is a desire to metaphorically open up such countryside spaces, particularly to people of colour. The poetry composed does not directly comment on 'diversity', but the voices heard, and differing people seen in the intimate sylvan setting, are the primary key to this 'opening up' objective.

Geoffrey Cox Research Profile:
Geoff Cox — University of Huddersfield Research Portal

Research approach (Making Place): *A site specific collaborative response through poetry, video, music and sound design.*

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The Intersubjective Cyborg Extension in Contemporary Music Culture

Lydia Czolacz

2

Introduction

This essay poses a theoretical solution to reshaping the objectifying and gender-specific readings of contemporary artworks by developing the Intersubjective Cyborg Extension. The theory is cumulatively composed through observing theoretical approaches to man's new extensions,[1] becoming the 'Other,'[2] and intersubjectivity.[3] The approach is later applied to contemporary musician Björk, to demonstrate how the theory can be located and applied to popular music culture through a combination of sound and image.

The Extension of Man

In 1964 Marshall McLuhan published his seminal work, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. He began to think beyond the limitations of human senses and analyse the interplay between media, reality and the sensorium whilst considering the impact of technology on human biology. The argument lies within transcendence and how through digital media, the sensorium can be categorised into acoustic and visual space. Acoustic space is in a "tribal state", its most undiluted and raw form, "boundless, directionless, horizonless, the dark of the mind, the world of emotion, primordial intuition, terror".[4] Whilst visual space remains a linear perception, an alienation from its tribal form that represents rational thought and collectivism. The popularisation of non-literary digital media, such as radio or television, was believed by McLuhan, to re-tribalise Western culture into acoustic space offering a restoration of sensory balance.

He also proposes that the central nervous system can coordinate the senses, and whatever begins to threaten the sensorium and its function is contained or cut off "even to the total removal of the offending organ".[5] He compares the amplification and extension of new media and technologies to "collective surgery carried out on the social body with complete disregard for antiseptics".[6] To omit the cure, one must contemplate the need for an operation whilst also considering the impact of infection on the body as a whole, for it is not one area that is most affected but the entire human system that has changed. Each impact of any new media or technology alters human biology with a particular focus on the senses and behavioural instincts. These extensions can be influenced by current affairs, which are in turn conditional

upon the social, political and economic structures at a given time through which stereotypical attitudes are formulated. Due to the new focus on the senses and heightened instincts, society seeks a method of control or, better still, total prevention. An example of control can be seen in the traditional stereotyping of gender roles that dominate the potential readings and understanding of a creative work. McLuhan acknowledges one individual who may be able to provide such immunity: the artist. The artist is seen as a "person who invents the means to bridge between biological inheritance and the environments created by technological innovation."[7] Technological innovation in this essay refers to the work of Björk by highlighting how sound and image become harmonious for the artist. This is through new technological processes whereby sound is explored creatively through visual, 3D environments. The artist uses new media to avoid being directed by traditional stereotypes to reconfigure behavioural expectations and liberate the senses through a combination of sound and image.

Published twenty-one years after McLuhan, one might suggest that Donna Haraway's text *A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century* offers a new conversation through the study of biological sciences and cybernetics.[8] I argue that Haraway's manifesto is a literal extension of McLuhan's earlier theorisations of thinking beyond the limitations of the senses. Rather than focusing primarily on literal media influences as extensions, Haraway considers multiple theoretical connections through politics, economic structures and social expectations that contribute to the overall analogy of the cyborg.

The Cyborg

At the centre of Haraway's argument lies a rejection of the traditional feminism of the seventies and eighties, enforced by stereotypical societal expectations of women. She states that "there are grounds for hope… for new kinds of unity across race, gender and class."[9] She dissects the problematic areas into three categories: psychoanalytic, Marxist and feminist.

The psychoanalytic problem lies within the birth of the self, classified as a process of individuation. The problem with this theory, Haraway explains, is that women "are imagined either better or worse off, but all agree they have less selfhood, weaker individuation, more fusion to the oral",[10] and women are ruled by the reproductive politics. Marxist humanism is too reliant upon a Western self and therefore relies on its historical realities to frame stereotypical attitudes towards women. Finally, the most pivotal to the framing of the cyborg is feminism. Haraway argues that the state of being female is a socially, scientifically led construct in contested sexual scientific discourses and other social practices.[11]

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Therefore, the cyborg becomes an all-encompassing mythological ideal and is Haraway's fluid concept to attack historical and scientifically led constructions of societal roles. It is a fitting analogy to separate itself from the constraints of societal and technological classifications with no origin story: a genderless, other-worldly being that does not conform to expectation by blurring traditional boundaries and pitting oppositional dualities against each other, all whilst striving for an ultimate sense of unity and becoming "the other".

After combining McLuhan and Haraway's theorisations I develop the Cyborg Extension that understands the need to extend the self through creativity to develop a new unity by seeking otherness. To position these conversations within a feminist, and graphic context, there needs to be an understanding of the relationship between the artist and the self. For this reason, I also consider intersubjectivity as explored by Amelia Jones in *Body/Art Performing the Subject*,[12] in order to position Björk as an example of an artist who successfully becomes the other through sound and image.

Intersubjectivity

Jones highlights a significant shift in subjective experience. She suggests that "performative self-exposures" position an artist as both author and object in a way that represents "the subject as intersubjective."[13] Intersubjectivity obsolesces cultural values by unveiling an artist's body that may not perform as expected, often directed by an out-of-date, stereotypical thought. Here, the artist becomes immunised to traditional narratives by subverting human expectations, thus, becoming "the other." An artist's body can be present in the performance but is re-veiled through subverting stereotypical, behavioural expectations and embellished by new technologies. With this in mind, the artist, the performance, and the finalised artworks can all be considered extensions of the self, literally and metaphorically.

The Intersubjective Cyborg Extension in Contemporary Music Culture: Björk

There are many similarities between the Intersubjective Cyborg Extension and contemporary musicians who seek to extend their bodies through creative outputs associated with their live/video musical performances. The association of music videos to the representation of gender(s) makes this a topical and timely conversation. This piece of writing views music videos as one component of a musician(s) extension that provide a platform for influencing behaviours. They are viewed as technologies of gender, as

discussed by Aaron Liu-Rosenbaum in the article Weaving 'Eroticism, Cosmology and Politics' in Early Female Technopop: Three Discourses with the Informatics of Domination.[14] Björk is discussed with a focus on how new intersubjective extensions and performative realities are explored in music videos and how this extends to accompanying promotional imagery in which she becomes "the other".

Björk utilises metaphorical and visual cyborg references in her music and avant-garde styling. There is also interest in her commissioning and collaborations with art and design agency M/M Paris, who, since the late 1990s, have been pivotal to showcasing her artistic expression in promotional material ranging from the swan cover of Vespertine in 2003 to artwork for Biophilia in 2011. M/M Paris feature in the *Uncanny: Surrealism and Graphic Design* exhibition curated by Rick Poynor in 2010, further showcasing Björk's willingness to directly engage with artistic histories and play with visual references through a graphic practice discourse. For this reason, I analyse the music video 'All is Full of Love' (1999) and the promotional imagery for her album *Fossora* (2022).

The music video for 'All is Full of Love' reconfigures the heterosexual, objectifying male gaze and presents viewers with an otherworldly eroticism. The video traverses a same-sex cyborg relationship and Björk confronts the psychoanalytic problem of reproductive politics by creating a hybridity of gender. As suggested by Lochhead, practitioners frame a visual experience by utilising specific signifiers that define gender. For example, the front of the cyborg is smooth with perfectly sculpted hips and breasts, a body that can be described as "the Beautiful… smooth, curvy, delicate, clean", that are signifiers of femininity. These aspects are contrasted against the back of the cyborg, which is unveiled when the CyBjörk reveals the complicated connections and dense wiring, underneath the smooth surface that are signifiers of masculinity: "the Sublime… jagged, heavy, hard."[15] Due to the use of oppositional visual imagery, the CyBjörk further references Haraway's manifesto and the psychoanalytic problem of gender binaries. Although the cyborg appears to have breasts that are solid and smooth, they do not function in the way traditional society would expect them to. The juxtaposition of harder textures against a typically softer part of the body, and the total removal of the nipple, render the breasts useless in the traditional and outdated ideologies of motherhood. Thus, "cyborg replication is uncoupled from organic reproduction."[16] By removing McLuhan's "offending organ",[17] which is any signifier relating to the influence of a narrative based upon a historically led gender context, the mind is led through a narrative that is directed by the unknown: the CyBjörk(s). Björk presciently delves into the realm of cybernetic 'othering' but they are not entirely robotic, as Björk's human face is merged into the face of the cyborgs creating an uncanny oppositional pair. I argue that *All is Full of Love* is evidence of Björk's personal process of individuation through the extension of the music video. This is enhanced by Björk's ability to switch the subject (herself) to object (the

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CyBjörk), exploring the notion of intersubjectivity as she becomes her own muse and eliminates the boundaries of patriarchal tradition and hierarchy.

I also consider the promotional imagery for Björk's 2022 album *Fossora* (Figure 1). Central to the image is an otherworldly yet recognisable Björk, crouched amongst various alien-looking plants that autonomously veer in different directions. Björk herself is adorned in an all-in-one outfit and is crouched with her body and head tilting towards the camera. Her neck, hand and feet are embellished with metal-like components that are contrasted against the smoother all-in-one outfit, further associating with Haraway's cyborg, bridging into concepts of becoming "the other". The coral are brightly lit in comparison to the rest of the image, suggesting there is importance in their unnatural and futuristic presence, whereby smooth and soft petals become jagged and spongey. An effect made possible by the capabilities of advanced graphic practice, 3D models and software(s), that alter sensory perceptions of the viewer. There is grounding in the rocks and greenery that solidify the foundation of the image, but this is contrasted against the coral and Björk's hair that defy earthly physics. Much like 'All is Full of Love', through the extension of promotional imagery for *Fossora*, the viewer becomes witness to her personal process of individuation.

Figure 1: Björk *Fossora* album cover (Reproduced with permission of One Little Independent Records)

Björk authenticates the notion of the Intersubjective Cyborg Extension through literal and metaphorical extensions of the self. Due to the

advancements in new technology, Björk becomes immunised to the effects of labelling (as a sole musician) within the music industry and utilises this immunisation to question what it means to be female within contemporary society. She exemplifies an ability to successfully merge and collaborate with a myriad of interdisciplinary practices, including music, video, art, graphic practice, and culture, that embed themselves within Haraway's unification of becoming "the other". Despite this, I argue that this process is different for each individual, as each experience relies upon personal values and associated feelings one wishes to address at the time of creation. Björk utilises the ideology of the cyborg to evoke dream-like, futuristic ideologies and explores an alternate reality away from preconceived expectations. The cyborg becomes a metaphor for an embodiment of femininity where object becomes the subject, where artistic freedom through creative play allows a practitioner to become one's own muse.

The convergence of Haraway's concept of the cyborg, McLuhan's extension of man, and Jones' exploration of intersubjectivity serves to deconstruct the conventional notion of the artist as a self-made entity, revealing that identity is intricately moulded and constituted by technologies of otherness. Björk exemplifies this transformation through her profound embrace of music technology. By adopting Haraway's cyborg framework, I acknowledge that Björk's creative identity transcends the limitations of a singular human self; it's a symbiotic fusion of human and machine, where technology is an extension of her artistic expression. McLuhan's idea of technological extensions further accentuates this relationship, as Björk employs an array of digital tools, from electronic synthesisers to innovative sound-processing software in order to extend her musical capabilities and transcend traditional boundaries. Meanwhile, Jones' intersubjectivity underscores that Björk's artistic identity is inherently interwoven with her interactions with technology and her audience. Her music and immersive multimedia experiences are not solitary endeavours but collaborative dialogues with her fans and the ever-evolving digital landscape. In this multifaceted tapestry, Björk's identity as an artist is reshaped, decentralising the notion of self-making and invites us to witness the emergence of a new kind of creative identity—one inextricably linked to the transformative power of technology and intersubjective connections.

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Endnotes

1 Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (London: Routledge, 1964)

2 Donna Haraway, *A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2016)

3 Amelia Jones, *Body/Art Performing the Subject* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1998)

4 McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, 48

5 McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, 43

6 McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, 46

7 Marshall McLuhan, *Laws of Media* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 98

8 Haraway, *A Cyborg Manifesto*

9 Haraway, *A Cyborg Manifesto*, 54

10 Haraway, *A Cyborg Manifesto*, 59

11 Haraway, *A Cyborg Manifesto*, 16

12 Jones, *Body/Art Performing the Subject*.

13 Jones, *Body/Art Performing the Subject*, 10

14 Aaron Liu-Rosenbaum, ""Weaving "eroticism, cosmology, and politics" in early female technopop: Three discourses with the informatics of domination," *Popular Music and Society* 41, no.1, (2018), 16

15 Judith Lochhead, "The Sublime, the Ineffable, and Other Dangerous Aesthetics," *Women & Music* 12, no.1 (2008), 64

16 Haraway, *A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century*, 6

17 McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, 46

Figures

Figure 1: BBjörk, Fossora [album cover]. 2022. (n.d.). Bjork.com. https://shop.bjork.com/product/fossora/. Reproduced with permission from One Little Independent Records.

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Lydia Czolacz is a graphic practitioner who explores the interdisciplinary relationship between Graphic Design and Art. Her practice explores unconscious methodologies leading to the creation of Surreal environments whilst embarking on a personal journey to combine my imagination with contemporary digital software. She also has an interest in how graphic practice further reveals and uncovers notions of the self, and how this extends the body of a practitioner through a performance of making/doing.

Research Profile:
Lydia Czolacz — University of Huddersfield Research Portal

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Workshops

Building Cultures of Sound
— Eddie Dobson

The Pop Music Accent
— Ryan Gibson

The Outspoken Pilgrim
— Leah Stuttard

Electricity, Sound and Textiles
— Amy Chen & Eddie Dobson

What Sounds do Ghosts Make?
— Nik Taylor

Sonic Threads
— Supriya Nagarajan, Lucy Nolan and Duncan Chapman

Building Cultures of Sound

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Building Cultures of Sound
Eddie Dobson

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: Principal Enterprise Fellow in Music Technology at The University of Huddersfield.

This project was designed to weave together the sound memories and experiences of participants, with the guidance of sonic artist and educator Mia Windsor. Through a process of listening, recording, and composing, two original surround sound immersive pieces were created collectively by the group.

Across three afternoon workshops on the 5th, 12th & 19th of March 2023, participants immersed themselves in techniques for really listening to sound, experimenting with methods for doing basic audio recording, audio editing, and learning how to compose a soundscape. No prior sound design experience was needed. The focus of the collaboration and workshops was led entirely by the participants' experiences and ideas while gaining skills to aid their future sonic arts practices.

Through these *Building Cultures of Sound* workshops, Mia delivered various deep listening exercises with participants, to reflect on and explore the potential of their everyday sound environments while familiarising themselves with audio editing fundamentals in a digital audio workstation. The collective has maintained contact through a WhatsApp group, building a sound community that has subsequently met to explore the full Huddersfield Immersive Sound System. The group remains engaged with sound and interested in future practice.

Each composer submitted their sound and their own programme notes, which are available to read online. Using their compositions, Mia and Eddie co-curated two installations in the Sovereign Design House. One for the Toast House Cafe, which served to intervene in the busy public space and entice visitors to the second installation on the floor below, in the Bath House Galleries. Here, the composers wanted to create a distraction free space for deep listening, in the spirit of the overall project approach.

To connect with the community, email: e.d.dobson@hud.ac.uk

Eddie Dobson Research Profile:
Eddie Dobson — University of Huddersfield Research Portal

Research approach (Making Place): *Developing a sound community with participants to generate a collaborative immersive sound piece through skills-sharing workshops and experimentation with digital techniques and processes of audio recording, editing, and composition.*

The Pop Music Accent

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The Pop Music Accent

Ryan Gibson

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: PhD candidate at the University of Huddersfield.

'Measuring Identity in the Pop Music Accent' was an interactive workshop that took place at the University of Huddersfield. Members of the public were invited to take part in a linguistics experiment designed to analyse and investigate how singers from the local area change the way they pronounce words when singing.

Participants were asked to learn and perform five brief songs they had never heard before, using only karaoke-style music videos and sheet music. A free-form discussion followed, that explored notions of personal identity and authenticity during which participants were asked – *is it appropriate for UK singers to use American pronunciation when singing?*

PhD candidate Ryan Gibson then went away to acoustically analyse these recordings. It was found that some styles of music (such as rock and soul) appear to elicit an American-style accent, whereas others tend to elicit styles closer to the singers' speaking voice (acoustic and indie).

These results were then presented in an online talk, 'Genre vs Geography: The indexicalities of Popular Music', during which it was revealed that while the singer-participants felt it was important to be authentic, using their own native accent isn't necessarily part of the equation, despite accent being a salient element of their identity. The singers agreed it was appropriate to modify the way you sound for the *sake of the song*.

While the singer-participants had strong local identities and a sense of heritage and authenticity, the act of performing revealed the linguistic translocal connections that are interwoven with the communities of practice (singers and fans) associated with those styles of music historically imported from the USA. As if to reflect the way in which music spaces nowadays are increasingly virtual (rather than geographically confined), the online talk drew an international audience.

In this sense, Cultures of Sound was the ideal opportunity to both test a novel research method and engage with pop music fans on a subject that had perhaps never been considered in any depth before.

Research approach (Cultures of Making): *Drawing from Linguistics and Musicology research to investigate how which singers from the local area change the way they pronounce words when singing.*

Volunteering Futures

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Volunteering Futures
Laura Mateescu & Colin Frank

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: Laura Mateescu - PhD candidate in Photography/ Dr Colin Frank - Research Assistant, Department of Communication & Humanities, School of Arts and Humanities.

For the Kirklees Year of Music 'Volunteering Futures' programme, to materialise two creative qualitative evaluations, Laura Mateescu and Dr Colin Frank co-developed with volunteers a sound composition and video piece exploring volunteers' experiences. Through participatory research and ethnographic methods of data collection, the collaboration relied on open conversations, documentary footage, and field recordings to highlight and amplify the voices and experiences of volunteers, informing the creative work.

A filmmaking and sound recording workshop was held with volunteers, as a skills-sharing process to engage participants in producing first-hand visual and audio material to be embedded in the final creative outputs. Alongside, volunteers were invited to participate in interviews and discussions about their experiences, to identify significant elements of the volunteering process.

The outcomes consist of a musical piece in the form of a soundscape and a video narrative, emerging from the experience of volunteering (e.g. shuffling sound from handing out tickets, the clatter of setting up musical equipment, or otherwise). The soundscape is organised around recurring themes discussed with the volunteers, so that multiple perspectives are combined and contrasted in immediate succession.

The video narrative of the lived experiences discussed by the volunteers bring to the surface stories linked to volunteering, lending in this way voice and visibility by considering the nuances of their aspirations and lived experiences, in relation to evaluation questions.

The two outputs complement each other by bringing into focus the testimonies of volunteers, amplifying the volunteers' collective voice through video and sound. An exhibition of the work was held at Lawrence Batley theatre.

Research approach (Cultures of Making): *Creative evaluations - participatory sound and video project that highlights the lived experiences of volunteers.*

The Outspoken Pilgrim

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The Outspoken Pilgrim

Leah Stuttard

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: PhD candidate in Musicology, Department of Music and Design Arts.

My research looks at how musicians today and over the past 60 years or so have dealt with the wealth of Western European Art Music material preserved in notation from the Middle Ages. I consider how they add themselves creatively into the historical sounds they are aiming to recreate. One reason why I have been consistently drawn to medieval music is the way in which I discover and rediscover my own roots within it. Some of my interviewees and the musicians who I talk to more informally have also mentioned this as a motivation for their engagement with such ancient music. This connection to my roots has an effect on my wellbeing that I find to be extremely positive. Cultures of Sound gave me an opportunity to share medieval music in a modern way, exploring how it can be a tool for connection and wellbeing, mirroring my research's focus on how medieval materials are still being put to relevant use in the twenty-first century.

The focus of my Cultures of Sound project was Margery Kempe (born in 1373), a visionary and pilgrim who is responsible for the first autobiography written in English. Her book reveals her to be resolute, brave, emotional and maybe a little hard to like. She lived in a world in which women were rarely free in a way we would understand now, and were often relatively powerless. Her story can be read as one of defiance and courage, but she was also living very much within the limits of religious obedience; constantly seeking reassurance from holy people and places that the visions she experienced were from God, not the devil. This uncertainty is a driving force behind her journeys and is no doubt also responsible for the creation of her book.

I have found Kempe's candid and straightforward retelling of her own life moving and intriguing. I too am a pilgrim, drawn to the simplicity of putting one foot in front of another as a way towards healing and reassurance, and another way to connect to our roots out in nature. My emotions, like Kempe's, have also been dismissed or considered inappropriate. I have experienced mental health difficulties, fears about my sexuality, and horrible intrusive thoughts, just like Kempe. I wanted to understand her world through singing and through playing my fifteenth-century harp; through music in a way that I am uniquely able, and that brings me joy. I wanted to share her life story with others in performance, raising awareness of a woman who has been overlooked and disdained, often vilified more than praised. Seeking out sacred music from her time and from the places she knew and visited meant discovering a repertoire that was new to me.

One particular focus was a body of poems and songs associated with Kempe's home of East Anglia: medieval carols, which are a rather neglected and unknown body of cultural work, and the earliest written polyphonic repertoire to have a sacred vernacular text. Not only are carols of local significance for Kempe, but they were also participatory, involving men and women singing together and with solo verses always followed by choruses that everyone sang together: "Sing we now all and some" goes the refrain in one of them. This was perfect for my aim to include others in my music making, so that I could share the positive effects of singing with other people. The benefits of singing together have been documented, but I also know from personal experience that the connections I feel as I sing and the flow state I often encounter help to provide me with respite from difficult thoughts, in turn maintaining and encouraging resilience.

Walking is another tool that I have found to be very beneficial for my own wellbeing at points of stress in my life. The rhythmic motion, time spent in nature, and sense of achievement when I am walking over long distances all help to cleanse my spirit and mind of negativity. I chose to lead a mini pilgrimage as a supported pilot activity to test how this might work with groups and to build my own confidence. We stopped to sing together in an underpass with a lovely acoustic as people walked by, and then again in the bandstand in Greenhead Park. We then went on to Gledholt woods, a small oasis of nature within the town where we could hear the sounds of birds, rain falling, leaves rustling and water trickling. Paying attention to these kinds of things, even in the middle of an urban environment, quiets the 'monkey mind' with its demands and criticisms. I talked about my pilgrimage experience and the things that I've noticed help me, like stopping and listening, singing rhythmic mantras as I walk and simply being in and with nature.

By making my work more participatory in this way, the activities I proposed for Cultures of Sound have brought together several aspects of my practice, enabling me to share my passion for pilgrimage and medieval music. These subjects don't have to be presented in an esoteric way or restricted to academic discussion. And Kempe's book doesn't have to be restricted to people interested in medieval literature or religion. She can teach us about history, yes, but also about inward listening, strength in the face of uncertainty and how to have the courage of your convictions.

Leah Stuttard is a PhD Candidate in Musicology, her doctoral research is investigating the creative input of musicians working with medieval music today. She has played the medieval harp for over 20 years and completed six different pilgrimages on foot to Canterbury, Walsingham via Bury St Edmunds and Norwich, Monte Sant'Angelo and Santiago de Compostela.

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Research approach (Cultures of Making): *Drawing on Musicology PhD research to explore how ancient practices of walking and singing intersect with identity, autobiography and wellbeing in a contemporary context*.

Electricity, Sound and Textiles

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Electricity, Sound and Textiles
Amy Chen & Eddie Dobson

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: Amy Chen was a Lecturer in the Department of Fashion and Textiles, and Eddie Dobson is Principal Enterprise Fellow in Music Technology at The University of Huddersfield.

Electricity, Sound, and Textiles is a project situated at the intersection of sound, textiles and electricity. It encouraged experimental explorations with participants where some of the leading questions behind this initiative reflected upon how textiles can be used to generate or control sound. Participants were encouraged to consider electricity as material, ideating possibilities for hands-on electronic sound creation.

On April 27th, participants joined Dr Amy Chen and Dr Eddie Dobson in a workshop to experiment with textiles and electronics, to generate and control sounds in unusual ways. They probed sounds created through textile craft and controlled them through electronic textile techniques. As part of their material exploration, participants had the opportunity to also learn how to use a Micro:bit microcontroller and how to create a contact microphone.

The workshop took place at Dai Hall and the works created during the day were later exhibited alongside the Cultures of Sound Collective 'Sound Installation Premiere', and the *Submerged: natural dyes and stitched sounds* residency at the Bath House Galleries, Sovereign Design House. Delivered in partnership with Yorkshire Sound Women Network Huddersfield Makers, this workshop was intended for women and people of minority genders.

Eddie Dobson Research Profile:
Eddie Dobson — University of Huddersfield Research Portal

Research approach (Cultures of Making): *Participatory workshop with women and minority genders to explore the intersection and materiality of sound, textiles and electricity.*

What Sounds do Ghosts Make?

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What Sounds do Ghosts Make?
Nik Taylor

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: School Director of Teaching and Learning.

For Cultures of Sound, Nik Taylor adapts a workshop that was previously delivered at National Science Week 2021 into *What Sounds do Ghosts Make?* This is an interactive workshop and performance, developed in conjunction with Carter's Magical Events, where the artists will use their training in 'spooky magic' to communicate and perform the scientific principles of sound generation and quirks of psychology behind how we hear. This event took place at Huddersfield Art Gallery during Autumn half term, and the artists expanded its scope by involving colleagues in music. This workshop and performance were one the few Cultures of Sound events that is specifically geared towards children and young people.

Nik Taylor Research Profile:
Nik Taylor — University of Huddersfield Research Portal

Ashton Carter has been professionally entertaining audiences for over eleven years and following frequent requests for private shows it was a natural step to blend together his love of stage magic with his interest in the paranormal, the spooky and the downright weird to create unique and personal events. Mixing his time between performing and researching the paranormal, Ashton blends storytelling with magic and theatre to transport audiences into a world where strange things can happen

Research approach (Cultures of Making): *Communicating the scientific principles of sound through research interests in magic and performance.*

Sonic Threads

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Sonic Threads
Supriya Nagarajan, Lucy Nolan and Duncan Chapman

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: Invited by Prof Monty Adkins.

As part of Cultures of Sound, Sonic Threads presented *VASTRA* (Vastra means fabric in Sanskrit) at Heritage Quay, including a workshop for students and the public to explore intercultural exchange across creative mediums. The artists were invited by Prof. Monty Adkins, and their work reinforces the School of Arts & Humanities' intention to support interdisciplinarity and encourage collaboration across subject areas.

Sonic Threads is an exciting duo comprising of South Indian Carnatic vocals (Supriya Nagarajan) and improvisatory harp (Lucy Nolan). For this performance, they collaborate with guest artist Duncan Chapman on sounds and field recordings to explore and weave musical motifs inspired by textiles from India, including Calico and Kanchipuram. The textiles' weave and weft directly impact the musical phrases and melodies, and the combination provides for a heady Indo-jazz experience. The recently formed duo are inspired by the spiritual nature of renowned harpist Alice Coltrane.

Supriya Nagarajan has a unique voice in the British music scene and creates concept driven immersive music productions that push boundaries and encourage thought. She has performed across the world in various venues and festivals like the Harpa in Reykjavik, Royal Albert Hall, WOMAD, QEH Southbank Centre, Casa Da Musica and the Zee Jaipur Litfest music stage. Her works like Lullaby Sonic Cradle, Sound of Tea and Bollywood Jazz project have won critical acclaim and earned her a niche reputation in the UK and beyond.

Supriya is regularly supported by PRS Foundation, Jerwood Foundation and Arts Council England. Her music is a blend of her South Indian classical traditions and Western contemporary styles, and she has released albums under the Manasamitra label, Tokuroku and Come Play With Me.

Duncan Chapman: composer / musician based in Lincolnshire. Recent projects include online live events, a residency at EMS in Stockholm, curating a concert for the Aural Diversity project and performances (with Supriya) at the Jaipur Literature Festival in India. Current projects include online performances with Comb Filter and Humbox and an album of marimba and live electronic pieces with Simon Limbrick.

Lucy Nolan: Graduating from Oxford University and the Royal Northern College of music with Distinctions in postgraduate degrees, Lucy was the recipient of a number of prizes and a finalist in the RNCM's Gold Medal weekend. She has been a guest artist on BBC radio 3 and performed new music at the Hong Kong World Harp Congress, The Royal Albert Hall, TUSK festival, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, Lambeth Palace, Jaipur Literature Festival and Hull City of Culture

Research approach (Cultures of Making): *Using audiovisual practices to further intercultural collaboration.*

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The Auditory Experience of Listening to Poets Reading their Poetry: A Comparison of Sylvia Plath's Published and Unpublished Stanzas in her British Council Poetry Reading of 'Nick and the Candlestick'

Iona Murphy

3

Sylvia Plath was born in Massachusetts in October 1932 and died in London in February 1963, producing a significant amount of poetry and prose throughout her life. Plath first moved to England in 1956 when she received a Fullbright Scholarship to study at Cambridge University. Before her death, Plath had her second poetry collection, *Ariel*, completed. It was published posthumously. In 1962 and 1963, Plath gave radio recordings of some of these poems before they were published. Plath also gave readings for various producers, notably the BBC and the British Council. On the 30th October 1962, Plath did a poetry reading and interview with Peter Orr for the British Council, she read a series of her poems: 'Ariel,' 'Poppies in October,' 'The Applicant,' 'Lady Lazarus,' 'A Secret,' 'Cut,' 'Stopped Dead,' 'Nick and the Candlestick,' 'Medusa,' 'Purdah,' A Birthday Present,' 'Amnesiac,' 'Daddy,' and 'Fever 103°.'

The focal point of this discussion is Plath's reading of 'Nick and the Candlestick' for the British Council, still available on vinyl, exploring the extra unpublished stanzas she added into her reading. Looking through the available drafts of 'Nick and the Candlestick' held by the Smith College Archives, there is sporadic evidence of these additional spoken stanzas. The latest dated evidence of these stanzas is in a typescript—held by the Smith College Archives—from 24th October 1962. It is unclear as to when she decided to remove these stanzas from the poem; the current edition of Plath's *Collected Poems* dates 'Nick and the Candlestick' as 29th October 1962, the day before her British Council reading.[1] However, the completed poem does not include the stanzas she read the next day.

This essay explores the differences between the published and unpublished stanzas in the spoken word version of 'Nick and the Candlestick', discussing how this reading captures the importance of hearing poets reading their own poetry. Plath's own understanding of her writing process helps enlighten the significance of her reading of 'Nick and the Candlestick' and her decision to omit stanzas from the final draft of the poem. Ultimately, poets know their own writing process better than anyone else, thus their reading style adds new lenses of exploration to a poem. Even when just reading Plath's poetry, she creatively explores sound through written poetic form. Plath's radio performances push the boundaries of experiments in sound by reinvigorating the way poetry can be engaged with. The auditory experience

of hearing poetry allows a wider audience to be reached, thus making a stereotypically inaccessible form more accessible. Hearing poets reading their poetry increases engagement with poetic form and enhances new ways of understanding the meaning of a poem.

The British Council Interview with Peter Orr

Following her reading of her poems, Peter Orr conducts a fifteen-minute interview with Plath which is influential when considering Plath's reading of 'Nick and the Candlestick.' The significance of this interview is twofold: Plath discusses her new poetic writing techniques and her excitement about the new wave of reading poetry for radio. Nerys Williams suggests that Plath had a "sensitivity to the process of radio listening" thus her choices of poems to read and interview responses are carefully crafted to fit the intended audience.[2]

In her interview with Orr, Plath discussed her changing relationship with spoken word poetry, suggesting that she began to use speaking as a technique for writing:

> I have found myself having to read them aloud to myself, saying them to myself. Now this is something I didn't do with my first book *The Colossus*. I can't read any of the poems out loud now, I didn't write them to be read aloud. They, in fact, quite privately, bore me. Now these ones that I have just read, these ones which are very recent, I've got to say them. I speak them to myself. I think that in my own writing development is quite a new thing with me, and whatever lucidity they may have comes from the fact that I say them to myself, I say them aloud.[3]

Plath acknowledged that the poetry which eventually forms her Ariel poems was meant to be read aloud. Thus, it is significant that she added extra stanzas to 'Nick and the Candlestick' which are not published, only read aloud.

The extra stanzas Plath read in 'Nick and the Candlestick' are increasingly significant when considering Plath's excitement about the developments in the poetry scene which saw poetry readings and vinyl production boom. Orr asks Plath if she believes that a component of a good poem means being able to read it out loud, to which Plath responds "this development of recording poems, of speaking poems at readings, of having records of poets, I think this is a wonderful thing. I'm very excited by it."[4] Reading and listening to poetry are two different experiences; Plath felt that lines were meant to be read out loud, thus the inclusion and removal of these lines in the written and spoken version of the poem is important. In the following

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section, I will explore how the sound of the unpublished stanzas alters the meaning of the poem in her reading.

'Nick and the Candlestick'

Plath wrote her poem 'Nick and the Candlestick' on the 24th October 1962 and performed it for the British Council six days later. 'Nick and the Candlestick' is a poem about the birth of Plath's son Nicholas Hughes, born 17th January 1962, and the bond between mother and son. The extra stanzas added to Plath's reading of 'Nick and the Candlestick' for the British Council are transcribed here. It is up to interpretation where the stanza breaks lie, particularly given Plath's use of enjambment, meaning that the sentence continues from one line of poetry to the next without break. Judging by the rest of the published poem, she includes six new stanzas of three lines each:

> The brass Atlas you inherited
> is hefting his milk pillar,
> kneels head bent, a panther head on a panther pelt
>
> Gnawing his forehead.
> Each incisor a wide, bright horn.
> The panther mane squirming,
>
> A million gold worms down his back.
> A bearded Greek.
> Under the gold bowl of his navel,
>
> where his phallus and balls should be,
> a panther claw,
> I leave you the mystery.
>
> It is not the firmament that makes him look so sick,
> this philosopher.
> Maybe it's the panther jaw, the beastly lobotomy.
>
> The mirror floats us
> at one candle power, we smile and stare,
> That's you! That's me![5]

The distinction between the published and unpublished stanzas of 'Nick and the Candlestick' is made clear in Plath's reading. Throughout the poem there is enjambment between the stanzas, making it challenging to know where one stanza ends and the next begins. Hearing poets reading their own poetry adds to an understanding of the poem, evident in the enjambment in 'Nick and the Candlestick'. When reading the poem, the flow is disturbed

through the tercet form as, despite the enjambement between stanzas, there is a feeling of disconnect between each one. However, when listening to Plath read the poem aloud, there is an interconnectedness between each stanza as she does not pause for stanza breaks. Said interconnectedness suggests the various images used to describe the mother-child bond are intertwined, thus capturing the complex nature of motherhood.

Between the final line of the published version of the poem and the first line of the unpublished version of the poem there is a two-and-a-half second pause. Whilst this may seem minor, within the context of the poem's enjambement said pause is a noticeable length of time. The length of the pause differentiates between the published and unpublished versions of the poem, suggesting that they could be two separate poems on the experience of having a new-born son.

The question of continuity comes down to Plath's performance of the poem. Her use of enjambment between stanzas in both the published and unpublished sections of the poem reflect an element of continuity between both sections.Plath uses plosive alliteration in both sections of the poem. Primarily, in the published section of the poem plosive alliteration is used to convey juxtaposing violent imagery. The first line of the poem reads "I am a miner. The light burns blue."[6] Hearing the plosive alliteration of "burns blue" places emphasis on the passion directed towards the child, given that blue flames are the hottest in temperature. In stanza nine Plath uses more plosive alliteration; the harsh alliterative emphasis in the phrase "blood blooms" is suggestive of the bond between mother and son through the violence of childbirth.[7] Plath places emphasis on the 'b' sounds in both words, alongside the long vowel digraph sound in "bloom," depicting a juxtaposition between violence and beauty.

In the unpublished section of the poem, Plath changes trajectory using plosive alliteration with the 'p' sound in "panther pelt".[8] This more violent imagery mirrors how Plath writes about Ted Hughes as a stalking panther in her poem 'Pursuit.' "Pelt" is suggestive of stripped skin, capturing the animalistic violence in the birth of a male child. Parent and child become separate entities in a violent manner at the start of the unpublished section, but by the end of the section when the speaker holds up the baby to the mirror and says "That's you! That's me!" their separateness is peaceful.[9] Plath's plosive alliteration draws attention to a violence which is tended to by the poem's close.

Although there is a continuity in the alliterative techniques between the published and unpublished stanzas of the poem, the graphic harshness of the alliteration in Plath's word choices differs between both sections. Listening to Plath read the poem aloud emphasises the differences between her language choices. Plath refers to the child's "phallus and balls" which is more explicit than the published stanzas.[10] In the published version of the

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poem Plath's description of the baby's body is more metaphorical, the baby is primarily an "embryo", whereas in the unpublished section the body has human features, explicitly sexed as male.

In the penultimate stanza of the unpublished section, Plath uses violent medicalised language when she refers to "the beastly lobotomy", which does not appear in the published version of the poem.[11] A lobotomy is a procedure where an incision is made to the prefrontal lobe to 'cure' mental illnesses. In *The Bell Jar,* Plath makes reference to a psychiatric hospital patient Valerie who had a lobotomy which made her docile.[12] This is not the only reference Plath makes to mental health procedures; she made reference to treatment in short stories 'Tongues of Stone' and 'Johnny Panic and the Bible of Dreams'. Plath's references to mental illness in her poetry become explicit in 'The Stones,' written in 1959. In her *Ariel* poems, Plath's confidence to refer to mental health treatment increased, explicit in this stanza referencing lobotomies. Plath's experiences with childbirth and motherhood are similar to post-natal depression, thus the image of a lobotomy suggests the mental toll raising a child has on mothers. Alexander Beam notes that "nationwide, doctors lobotomized twice as many women as men" thus Plath's imagery is a political comment on the treatment of women within a patriarchal society.[13] The imagery of a lobotomy is a socio-political comment from Plath, capturing that motherhood is not the beautiful experience that traditional poetry makes it out to be, instead Plath paints a realistic portrait of the struggles of mothering. Plath's decision to omit this image from the written poem is curious, and ultimately comes down to her representation of psychiatry in her fiction generally. When Plath writes about psychiatry in her fiction, she uses it as a narrative technique to critique the foundations of the psychiatric system. This poem is not about psychiatry, thus Plath does not have the space to critique the procedure as she can in longer texts like *The Bell Jar*. Perhaps her decision to omit the image comes down to it being out of place in comparison to her other references to psychiatry across her oeuvre. Hearing Plath reading the poem aloud draws more attention to the differing language between the two sections as "the beastly lobotomy" is a shocking line that catches listeners off guard, particularly in the 1960s when the reality of lobotomies was looming.

The unpublished stanzas appear to align more closely with autobiographical feelings Plath held towards Nicholas and is apparent in the slight changes to Plath's reading style. There is a change of tone in the unpublished stanzas where Plath moves towards more personal descriptions of Nicholas. In the first letter Plath wrote to her mother following Nick's birth, Plath writes "he did look grim & cross at first" with a "calm & steady" temperament.[14] In another letter, Plath calls Nicholas "peaceful, quiet and dark."[15] In the unpublished section of 'Nick and the Candlestick,' the baby is referred to as "this philosopher" which is comparable to the temperament Plath describes in her letters.[16] When reading the line "A bearded Greek", Plath takes a considerable pause before and after the line, drawing attention to

its importance.[17] In this moment, Plath moves from a general depiction of mothering and children to a more explicit description of Nicholas as a calm statue-like figure.

Comparing the final published stanza to the final stanza of the spoken word stanza is curious when hearing Plath's word emphasis and annunciation. The final stanza of the published poem reads:

> You are the one
> Solid the spaces lean on, envious.
> You are the baby in the barn.[18]

Both the final published stanza and the unpublished final stanza are read as if they were conclusions to the poem given the difference in Plath's annunciation in comparison to the preceding lines. The final stanza in this performance reads:

> The mirror floats us
> At one candle power, we smile and stare,
> That's you! That's me![19]

There is a difference in tone between "you are the baby in the barn" and "That's you! That's me!" Plath reads "you are the baby in the barn" with a quick pace but places an elongation on the vowel in "baby." Her emphasis is on the identity of the baby. The final two lines in the unpublished final stanza differ in their enunciation: Plath elongates the vowels in "smile" and "stare" whereas the final line is read with a short and sharp tone, feeling matter of fact that the mother and child have separate identities. Plath's enunciation in the final line of each version gives a different message. The published version places emphasis on the baby, whereas the unpublished version places emphasis on the separate identities between mother and baby. Hearing Plath's word emphasis alters the final message of the poem; the final published poem focuses on the role of the baby in the mother's life rather than the two beings as separate entities.

Conclusion

Ultimately, it cannot be known why Plath did not publish the six additional stanzas to 'Nick and the Candlestick.' By listening to Plath reading her own poetry, we can get a sense of her linguistic intentions. Plath uses reading aloud to convey the poem's flow in a way which reading in one's head does not capture, using pauses to highlight important lines and direct the listeners attention. The significance of alliteration comes through more clearly when hearing the poem read aloud, as the violence of childbirth and the passion

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the speaker directs towards her child are more evident. Plath's interview with Peter Orr displays her excitement about the new wave of reading poetry aloud for radio, thus her intentions when reading 'Nick and the Candlestick' are to situate herself within the growing broadcasting market. Plath herself appeared to believe that reading poems aloud enhanced meaning, being bored by her older poems which are less focused on vocal sounds. With her later poetry, Plath aims to convey the enhancement of poems through sound.

There is still a demand to hear Plath reading her own poetry, even sixty years after her death. In the twenty-first century there are a multitude of ways to hear Plath's voice, from streaming services such as Spotify and YouTube, to vinyl, CDs, cassettes, archives, and public events such as the 2023 Southbank exhibition. Their popularity is striking; as of June 2023, Plath reading 'Nick and the Candlestick' has 10,698 streams on Spotify. The power of hearing Plath's performance voice brings us closer to her personhood; hearing her laugh or stumble during her interview with Peter Orr humanises a poet who is often dehumanised in popular culture through mythologisation. Through her reading of 'Nick and the Candlestick' Plath conveys an increased rawness to the poem, which cannot be achieved through reading the poem in one's head or hearing someone else reading it aloud. Tonality, enjambement, and enunciation are essential to explore when analysing Plath's poetry, one of the best ways to do so is by listening to her read her own poetry.

Endnotes

1 Sylvia Plath, *Collected Poems* (London: Faber & Faber, 1981), 240-242.

2 Nerys Williams, "Sylvia Plath's 'Three Women': Producing a Poetics of Listening at the BBC" in *The Bloomsbury Handbook to Sylvia Plath*, edited by Anita Helle, Amanda Golden, and Maeve O'Brien (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2022), 265.

3 Plath, "Interview with Peter Orr," (00:08:53—00:09:29).

4 Plath, "Interview with Peter Orr," (00:09:38-00:09:48).

5 Sylvia Plath, "Nick and the Candlestick," recorded October 1962, 3B track 3 on *Credo 3:Plath*, 1975, vinyl LP. (00:01:34—00:02:25).

6 Plath, "Nick and the Candlestick," (00:00:03—00:00:07).

7 Plath, "Nick and the Candlestick," (00:01:01—00:01:02).

8 Plath, "Nick and the Candlestick," (00:01:43—00:01:44).

9 Plath, "Nick and the Candlestick," (00:02:21—00:02:25)

10 See Plath, "Nick and the Candlestick," (00:02:00—00:02:02) and Plath, "Nick and the Candlestick," (00:02:02—00:02:03).

11 Plath, "Nick and the Candlestick," (00:02:13—00:02:14).

12 Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar* (London: Faber & Faber, 2001), 185

13 Alexander Beam, *Gracefully Insane: Life and Death Inside America's Premier Mental Hospital* (USA: PublicAffairs, 2011), 87.

14 Sylvia Plath, *Letters of Sylvia Plath Volume II: 1956 – 1963*. (United Kingdom: Faber & Faber, 2018), 715.

15 Plath, *Letters*, 742

16 Plath, "Nick and the Candlestick," (00:02:09-00:02:10).

17 Plath, "Nick and the Candlestick," (00:01:55—00:01:57).

18 Plath, "Nick and the Candlestick," (00:01:31—00:01:34).

19 Plath, "Nick and the Candlestick," (00:02:16—00:02:25).

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Williams, Nerys. "Sylvia Plath's 'Three Women': Producing a Poetics of Listening at the BBC" in *The Bloomsbury Handbook to Sylvia Plath*, edited by Anita Helle, Amanda Golden, and Maeve O'Brien, 255-266, London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2022.

Iona Murphy is a Lecturer at The University of Huddersfield. Her PhD research explored the representation of body dysmorphia and ableism in Sylvia Plath's The Bell Jar, 'Johnny Panic and the Bible of Dreams,' and 'Tongues of Stone.' Her research areas of interest are modern American female poetry, Queer Theory, and Disability Studies. She is an Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

concréte aberration, Guillaume Dujat. Dai Hall as part of Sonic Palette, 2023

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Sound as Intangible Cultural Heritage: recalling sonic encounters

Anna Powell

4

Introduction- Sound as Intangible Cultural Heritage

The term 'cultural heritage' is constantly evolving. As technologies develop and impact our inter-human and human-environmental relationships, so too do our experiences and understanding of what it means to participate in, preserve and interpret cultural experiences. UNESCO emphasises that: "Cultural heritage does not end at monuments and collections of objects. It also includes [...] oral traditions [...] social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe".[1] Many of these examples of cultural heritage can be classified as 'intangible' – a fragile but significant category of cultural heritage whose importance lies not only in, 'the cultural manifestation itself', but also in 'the wealth of knowledge and skills that is transmitted through it from one generation to the next'.[2]

This chapter addresses the role of sound within discourses on intangible cultural heritage (ICH), exploring the complexities of this particular type of cultural heritage in relation to its collection and preservation for future generations. It addresses these questions primarily through an exploration of what is referred to here as the 'sonic encounter', examining, amongst other things, the significance of experiential context in relation to how these sound encounters are collected, accessed and interpreted.

Sometimes referred to as 'living heritage' and described as 'a source of human creativity', ICH consists of the cultural practices of communities as well as the outcomes of those practices, that is, it refers to processes and actions as much as objects and artefacts. As such, it is a facet of cultural heritage that represents and connects people in unique and significant ways.[3] A UNESCO convention in 2003 was held with the aim of exploring ways of safeguarding and successfully communicating – or as they describe it, 'transmitting' – living heritage, and led to a ten-year mapping project entitled *Dive Into Intangible Cultural Heritage*, in which thousands of examples of ICH were collated and turned into an interactive, visual 'constellation' (see figs. 1&2).[4] Within the map exist diverse categories including 'song', 'weaving', 'coffee', 'carnivals', 'rivers', 'idiophones' and 'fire'; categories which, while seemingly arbitrary, reveal strong relationships between people, nature and the built environment. As well as demonstrating the range and nuanced interconnectedness of ICH examples from across the world, this map can also be seen to reveal the significance of the experiential and temporal in relation to many of these cultural practices and processes. Integral in the shaping

of identity and people's sense of place, ICH is something that happens *in time* and, often, which manifests as an experience.

Figure 1: A Constellation of Living Heritage, by UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage 1992-2023, © UNESCO.

Figure 2: A Constellation of Living Heritage, by UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage 1992-2023 (highlighted on 'Heritage of Dede Qorqud/ Korkyt Ata/ Dede Korkut, epic culture, folk tales and music'), © UNESCO.

The experiential nature of ICH is especially evident when it comes to sound, a significant category of ICH which has countless sub-categories. As noted by Dirk Spennermann and Murry Parker, these categories include the environmental sounds that accompany human existence as "by-products of people's activities", as well as those sounds which are intentionally generated as a part of the functioning of human society and its cultural pursuits.[5] Sound presents particular challenges within the context of the temporal and experiential when considering how instances of sonic ICH are captured and communicated, that is, how they are preserved for, and transmitted to future generations. Philosopher Arthur Harold Prichard notes that, "any sound has some duration", going on to question whether, in light of this, we can ever really hear a sound:

> for to hear is to hear at a moment, and what we apprehend by way of hearing…can only exist at the moment of hearing and…the sound said to be heard is over at the time of hearing therefore, it seems, it is impossible to hear a sound.[6]

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While this chapter is not a phenomenological enquiry into our potential inability to ever hear/experience sound in the moment it happens, and, arguably, Prichard's suggestion could equally be applied to our perceptions and experiences of any live event or action be it sound-based or otherwise, his ideas do underline the speed at which sonic experiences recede rapidly from the present moment, making them particularly elusive examples of cultural heritage. His ideas also foreground our unstable relationship with and shifting perceptions of time, and remind us of the disparity between the slowness that is necessary for much of the creativity that underpins ICH, and the fast-paced, multi-networked world within which these creative cultural practices occur and are experienced today.

Recording and collecting sound- the temporal and experiential

Over a number of decades, the British Library's Sound Archive has worked to collect over 6.5 million recordings of sound dating back to the 1800s, that might otherwise have risked becoming forgotten. When it began as the British Institute of Recorded Sound in 1955, its democratic policy was to "be omnivorous"; its governors stating: "We cannot tell just what will interest posterity" and the result being that all recordings that were brought forward were accepted into the archive.[7] Its collection today aims, perhaps a little more selectively, to "document the context of a specific time, and the attitudes, opinions and language of the people who created the material". These "fragments of knowledge about the world [...] document wisdom passed down through generations, the marvels of the natural world and evidence of human flourishing and brutality". They include everything from "a budding musician listening rapturously to arrangements of the masters'", to "a researcher poring over hours of radio broadcasts", to "children [...] horrified at the accounts of concentration camp survivors".[8]

Where recordings of sound are concerned, knowing what to collect and what to discard might be regarded as even more complex a problem than the preservation of objects, buildings or artefacts. With tangible objects, groups of people can decide collaboratively that something is of visual, historical or other significance and should be protected and made available for future generations. When it comes to sounds, this reliance on subjective choice is further problematised by their temporality; their ephemeral-experiential nature. While similarities exist, collecting sounds arguably works in quite a different way from how objects are collected. Sounds, like objects, often make their way into archives retrospectively or even by happenstance. However, due to their intangible and ephemeral nature, unless decisions are made in advance about which sonic activities should be recorded, they risk being lost forever. It seems fair to say that much of what might have been classified as sound heritage is not recorded for posterity – perhaps, because it may

not, in the moment, have been appropriate to do so, or simply because the occurrence is not anticipated. The type of cultural heritage in question is significant here, with informal sonic occurrences, such as everyday sounds, being more likely to be lost to history than more formal ones, such as large-scale, organised sonic events such as orchestral performances.

The British Library explains that on its website where recordings can be played and listened to at will, each recording's 'archival quality' is purposely retained. That is, each recording has not been altered from the original and the listener might "hear the characteristic crackle of records or hissing of cassettes" on these recordings, but is this enough to mitigate the problem of how to accurately recall the true experience of a sonic encounter?[9] Should this even be the aim of sound archives?

This issue of how we are able to accurately recall past experiences could, however, be argued of all objects and artefacts which exist in archival or museum collections. This is an idea Kevin Walsh explores when he discusses the often 'neatly packaged', sometimes sterile and usually, in his view, false version of a past that can be encountered through collections. Walsh takes this argument further to examine the possibility that the heritage we are able to access through collections is, in fact, somewhat fabricated. He explains this by suggesting that museums present "a superficial, unquestioning portrayal of the past which ultimately separates people from an understanding of their economic, political and cultural present." Through his sceptical outlook on the role of archives and museums, Walsh compares heritage collections to commodities within what he calls "leisure tourism", claiming that people can make choices about what they value as heritage based only on the market-defined parameters of these "heritage commodities".[10]

Who decides what constitutes sound heritage?

Making decisions about what constitutes and should thus be preserved as an example of cultural heritage is a complicated and potentially contentious issue. The problematic nature of ICH in this respect has been observed by Lauren Istvandity, who states, "only some forms [of ICH] are recognised by the 2003 UNESCO convention", adding that, "rather than protect[ing] intangible traditions, such attitudes can further entrench the precarious existence of significant cultural histories".[11] She draws on the example of stories and sayings being recognised as examples of ICH, where a language in itself is not.[12] Istvandity adds that languages and ethnomusicology are at particular risk, since "indigenous forms of communication and expression are easily endangered through the loss of oral traditions".[13] As with all kinds of heritage collection, the issue of epistemic responsibility pervades the question of how we decide what to preserve and what to discard.[14] What

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we decide to collect, record and preserve for future generations necessarily determines "who has a voice and who doesn't", and it is problematic to make curatorial decisions which might , intentionally or unintentionally, be "privileging one kind of knowledge as the only kind of knowledge".[15]

Yet another issue facing the existence and effective functioning of this particular type of ICH has been addressed by the British Library's 'Save Our Sounds' project which ran from 2017-2023 and whose aim was to preserve the nation's sound heritage. In this case, however, the precariousness was identified as being the result of sonic heritage being "under threat, both from physical degradation, and as the means of playing them disappear from production".[16]

Despite these challenges, sound archives such as that at the British Library endeavour to continue a democratic and inclusive representation of cultural heritage through their collections. Today, as well as collecting historic sounds, The British Library Sound Archive actively records current activities such as live events and news broadcasts to ensure "the voice of everyday people are not forgotten". In his article 'Protecting Contemporary Cultural Soundscapes as Intangible Cultural Heritage', Pinar Yelmi describes his understanding of the importance of everyday sounds and attempts to define a difference between various kinds of soundscape, describing these everyday sounds, which he deems to be of particular cultural importance, as examples of 'cultural soundscapes'. He notes:

> The term on which I will focus here, ***cultural soundscape***, [...] signifies the totality of the sonic values of characteristic daily traditions in either urban or rural areas. For example, the call to prayer, the cries of street vendors, and the beeps of the toll gates in the subway may be characteristic acoustic values of a city, whereas the noises of children playing in the street may be those of a small village.[17]

Both examples highlight the significance of the quotidian aspect of sound-as-heritage, and it is interesting to note the extent to which archivists are concerned with collecting these commonplace sounds. They once again raise the question, however, of how these collections are delimited. What are the parameters for including or rejecting sound recordings as archival material, and how do these parameters compare with those that exist for other types of cultural heritage?

In the text *Soundscapes of the Urban Past: Staged Sound as Mediated Cultural Heritage*, Karin Bijsterveld explores ways in which the sonic heritage to which we have access might provide only a mediated recollection of past events, not unlike Walsh. However, she also explores the idea that our knowledge of past soundscapes, "transient and intangible as they are", is necessarily dependent, and to a great extent, on the historical texts in

which these soundscapes and their personal significance is described by individuals. Further, she explains how our memories of sounds permeate our interpretation and understanding of soundscapes or, as Bijsterveld describes it, our experience of sound heritage is "nourished by the soundtracks the makers of radio plays and films created for their productions".[18] This does not, however, make them ineffective as a way of learning about the past as noted when she explains, "it is this mediated cultural heritage of sound that presents us with a unique chance to study the dramatization of urban sound over time, and thus to understand the varying and changing representations of urban identities", representations which act as markers of cultural shifts and variations in urban identities.[19]

Bijsterveld's ideas about sound and memory, or 'echoic memory', namely the ways in which our previous experiences of sound and our recollections of these experiences impact the way we perceive subsequent sounds, has also been explored by artist Ain Bailey. In her 2008 residency entitled *Sonic Stories*, Bailey investigated the concept of the 'sonic autobiography' and the interface between memory and music, to explore the role that sounds play in identity formation. In this work she drew on Istvandity's idea of what she calls the 'lifetime soundtrack', a coined term which refers to "the metaphorical canon of music that accompanies personal life experience".[20] Sonic Stories underlined the importance not only of how we tell and retell the narratives which matter to us and shape our individual and collective identities, but also the importance of listening, and the ways in which listening can reveal different understandings.

In Bailey's *Sonic Stories*, participants were encouraged to enter into 'deep listening' sessions in which memories of times, places and events were shared using sonic communication that went beyond spoken language. These sessions created what has been described as "a transitional space for mourning, resting, healing and dreaming collectively". These are practices which, arguably, are the basis of all our encounters with, and recollections of, heritage, in whatever form it might take.[21] As such, *Sonic Stories* might be seen to teach us important lessons about the ways we use sound heritage and the significance it has on people's lives today, underlining the role that sound archives play, not only as preservers of a cultural past, but as valuable tools for how we understand and navigate our daily lives in the present.

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Endnotes

1 "What is Intangible Cultural Heritage?", UNESCO, accessed August 17 2023, https://ich.unesco.org/en/what-is-intangible-heritage-00003.

2 "What is Intangible Cultural Heritage?", UNESCO, accessed August 17 2023, https://ich.unesco.org/en/what-is-intangible-heritage-00003.

3 "Invitation to Dive Into Intangible Cultural Heritage", UNESCO, accessed August 17, 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kuTSC9TB5Ds.

4 "Invitation to Dive Into Intangible Cultural Heritage", UNESCO, accessed August 17 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kuTSC9TB5Ds.

5 Dirk H. R. Spennermann and Murray Parker, "Hitting the "Pause Button": what does covid 19 tell us about the future of heritage sounds?", Noise Mapping, Vol. 7 No. 2 (November 2020), 265-275.

6 Harold Arthur Pritchard, "The Apprehension of Time", in Knowledge and Perception, ed. By H.A. Pritchard (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), 47-51.

7 "History of The British Library's Sound Archive", British Library Learning, published April 30, 2021.

8 "History of The British Library's Sound Archive", British Library Learning, published April 30, 2021.

9 British Library Sound Archive, "About Us", accessed July 15 2023, https://sounds.bl.uk/about-us#:~:text=For%20that%20reason%20the%20audio,used%20to%20on%20commercial%20recordings.

10 He uses as an example country house visiting which, he suggests, has always been founded on 'the appreciation and reverence of power articulated through the display of conspicuous inheritance'; what he calls 'the auratic gaze', rather than necessarily being an accurate representation of socio-historical activity. Kevin Walsh, "Heritage Reconsidered", in The Representation of the Past: museums and heritage in the post-modern world, ed. By Kevin Walsh (London: Routledge, 1992),119 (116-147).

11 Lauren Istvandity and Zelmarie Cantillon, "The precarity of memory, heritage and history in remembering popular music's past", in Remembering Popular Music's Past: Memory-Heritage-History, ed. by Lauren Istvandity, Sarah Baker and Zelmarie Cantillon (London: Anthem Press, 2019), 2.

12 Lauren Istvandity and Zelmarie Cantillon, "The precarity of memory, heritage and history in remembering popular music's past", in Remembering Popular Music's Past: Memory-Heritage-History, ed. by Lauren Istvandity, Sarah Baker and Zelmarie Cantillon (London: Anthem Press, 2019), 2.

13 Lauren Istvandity and Zelmarie Cantillon, "The precarity of memory, heritage and history in remembering popular music's past", in Remembering Popular Music's Past: Memory-Heritage-History, ed. by Lauren Istvandity, Sarah Baker and Zelmarie Cantillon (London: Anthem Press, 2019), 2.

14 Andreas Pantazatos, "Epistemic Injustice and Cultural Heritage", in The Routledge Handbook to Epistemic Injustice, ed. by J. I Kidd, J. Medina and G. Pollhaus (London: Routledge, 2017) 1-3.

15 Andreas Pantazatos, "Epistemic Injustice and Cultural Heritage", in The Routledge Handbook to Epistemic Injustice, ed. by J. I Kidd, J. Medina and G. Pollhaus (London: Routledge, 2017) 1-3.

16 "Save our Sounds was the British Library's programme to preserve the nation's sound heritage", British Library, published July 27 2023, https://www.bl.uk/projects/save-our-sounds.

17 Pinar Yelmi , "Protecting contemporary cultural soundscapes as intangible cultural heritage: sounds of Istanbul", International Journal of Heritage Studies, Vol. 22, No. 4 (2016), 302-311, https://doi.org/10.1080/13527258.2016.1138237.

18 Karin Bijsterveld, "Introduction", in Soundscapes of the Urban Past: Staged Sound as Mediated Cultural Heritage, ed. by Karin Bijsterveld, (Transcript Verlag, 2013), 1-29.

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20 Serpentine Galleries, Ain Bailey, accessed 11th July 2023, https://www.serpentinegalleries.org/whats-on/ain-bailey/.

21 Serpentine Galleries, Ain Bailey, accessed 11th July 2023, https://www.serpentinegalleries.org/whats-on/ain-bailey/.

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Figure 1: A Constellation of Living Heritage, UNESCO, accessed 10th August 2023, https://ich.unesco.org/dive/constellation/

Figure 2: A Constellation of Living Heritage, UNESCO, accessed 10th August 2023, https://ich.unesco.org/dive/constellation/

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Dr Anna Powell is a Researcher and Senior Lecturer in Art and Design Theory at the University of Huddersfield. Her research explores different approaches to the ‘artistic encounter’: broadly, in the ways in which audiences are able to access and understand contemporary art. She is currently working on a co-edited publication entitled *The Routledge International Handbook on Heritage and Creative Practice*, which builds on the previous publication, *Contemporary Art in Heritage Spaces*, edited by Nick Cass, Gill Park and Anna Powell. The book aims to interrogate creativity as a tool for a critical engagement with heritage, providing a comprehensive study of ways in which heritage and creative practice intersect in research and in practice, in a transnational context. It includes creative writing, theatrical performance, video games and audio walks as well as more collaborative approaches and co-production.

Research Profile:
Anna Powell — University of Huddersfield Research Portal

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Residencies

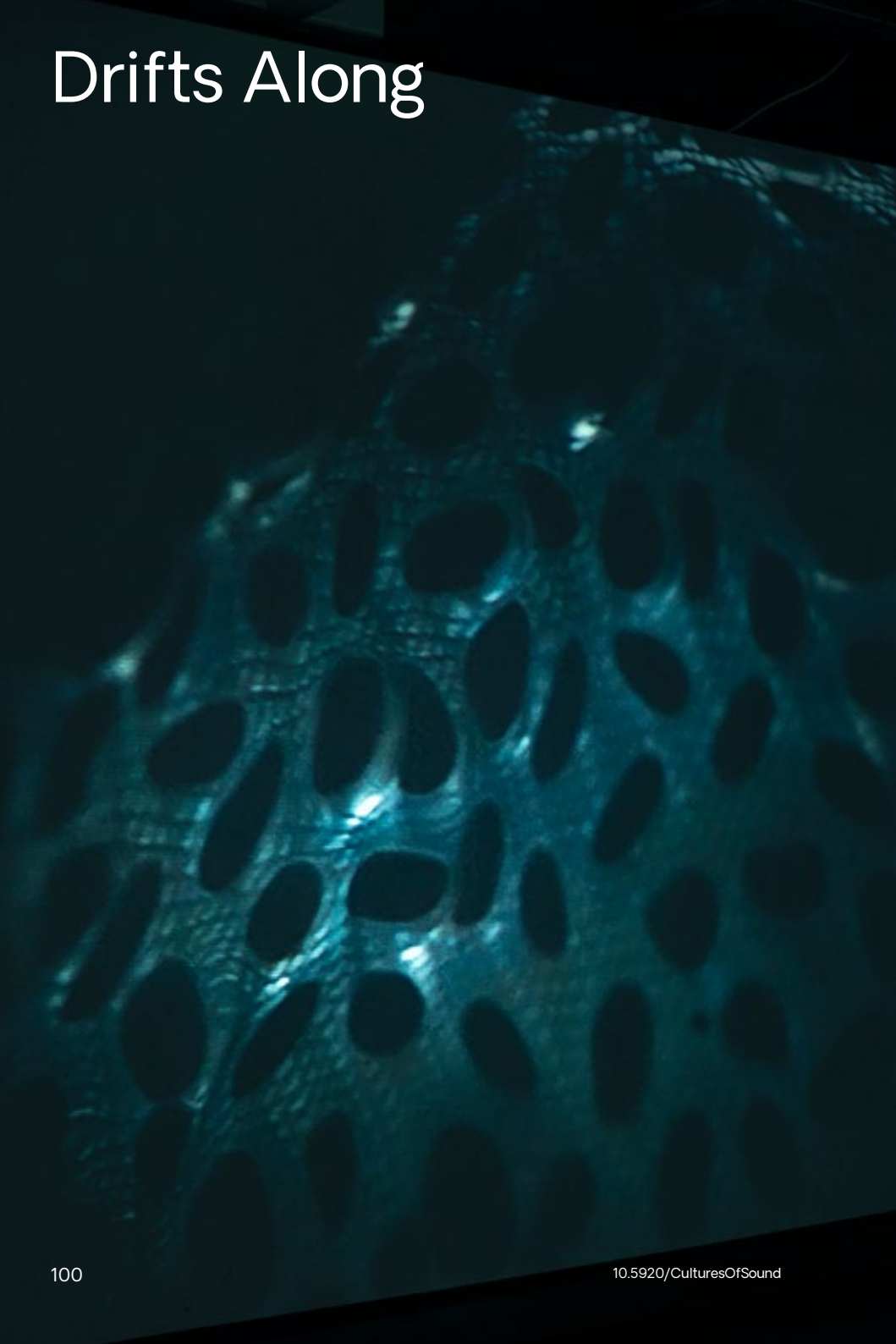
Drifts Along
— SABIWA

Humming, Vibrating Architecture
— Colin Frank

Submerged: natural dyes & stitched sounds
— Claire Barber & Gavin Osborn

The Calder in your bones
— David Vélez

Drifts Along



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Drifts Along
SABIWA

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: Guest artist invited by partner organisation ame (art music experiment), founded by School of Arts and Humanities students and graduates.

For this new audiovisual installation by SABIWA at the Bath House Galleries, the artist spent a week in residence, collecting material from the surrounding area to build a three-channel film and immersive soundscape. SABIWA's practice deals with the porosity of bodies and spaces, partly inspired by personal experiences of physical exertion and the changes to how one experiences time and the self during injury, sickness and recovery. *Drifts Along* explores what SABIWA refers to as the 'micro space'; a personal reality derived from past experiences, where the artistic process investigates a poetic relationship between this perceived reality and belief.

Drifts Along was a collage, created from the artist's previous work and new material. In turn, this material was taken forward into future work in other places. Coincidentally, during SABIWA's week in residence, the artist was able to document the momentous spectacle of Huddersfield Technical College being demolished. As such, the work is both rooted in time and place but also creates an opportunity for a wider reflection on the cycles of destruction and regeneration that our environments, whether local or global, are subject to.

The work was presented across multiple intersecting screens, with the equipment and workings visible as the visitor's attention was drawn around the space to different points during the installation's thirty-minute cycle. Contrasting vantage points were invoked, sometimes seeming to be inside a body or underwater, and other times floating above; sometimes microscopic, sometimes massive. Through SABIWA's careful editing and composition, these viewpoints were eventually synthesised into one shifting, undulating whole. Beanbags were provided for visitors to be physically comfortable while they experienced the work, and subtle works on paper were dotted around the space to be discovered amidst the light and sound.

Through public cultural programmes, the arts and humanities research taking place across our subject areas can interact with, and feed into the grass roots cultural activity taking place in Huddersfield and the wider Kirklees area. As an organisation, ame are nationally recognised for their support of contemporary classical, sound art and improvisational practices, with a programme of performances and exhibitions that brings highly regarded practitioners to Huddersfield audiences.

SABIWA is an experimental electronic producer and performer from Taiwan, residing in Berlin. She produces, records and dissects sounds and images

from natural and synthetic sources, making them interact with complex textures and abstract patterns, also using her voice processed as a guiding path in her compositions.

Research approach (Cultures of Making): *Drawing on personal experience to visually explore the relationship between body and space, time and self.*

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Humming, Vibrating Architecture

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Listening to a Building's Background Noise: Amplifying Machine Drones in the Generative Sound Installation *Humming, Vibrating Architecture*

Colin Frank

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: PhD graduate in Music/ Research Assistant, Department of Communication & Humanities.

Refocusing a Building

The sound installation *Humming, Vibrating Architecture* listened to the background noise distributed throughout the interior of one of the University of Huddersfield's campus buildings, the Sovereign Design House. The building itself is quite unusual; a former bathhouse for workers of a nearby foundry, it was renovated to host a café on the upper floor and gallery space on the lower floor. The space itself is rich with sound, from the intermittent buzz of the espresso machine to the chatter of café visitors to the abrupt sound of the windows automatically opening and closing so that the building's temperature is mitigated. Besides these very evident sounds, there is also a plethora of sounds hidden away within the building's lower-floor plant rooms: drones, hums, buzzes, hissing, clunks, and more, all emanating from the machines which keep the building running. For my installation *Humming, Vibrating Architecture*, I wanted to make these background noises evident, to give focus to the electrical, gas, water, and air systems that are integral for keeping a modern public building running.

As I have argued elsewhere,[1] continuous hums and machine noises are fundamental to forming urban spaces' aural architecture,[2] as they affect how people experience and respond to those spaces. Despite that machine noises form the backdrop of urban settings, they are not given much attention. Humans prefer to focus on intentional sounds – those which contain meaning – rather than obfuscating masking sounds. But by intentionally listening to masking sounds, we can reorientate ourselves within spaces.[3] Using field recording approaches, focus can be given to the background noise, both encouraging us to reimagine the environments we live in and to experience the aesthetic qualities of noise and drones. These were my intentions when creating *Humming, Vibrating Architecture*, along with taking up a similar goal as Jordan Lacey: to use sound installation as a means for uncovering a building's voice.[4] In drawing from Blesser and Salter's argument that spaces have voices,[5] Lacey argues that "A pantheistic perspective of architectural spaces suggests buildings, like its human inhabitants, are imbued with living essence",[6] and that through intentional soundscape design, a building's incidental soundscape can be elevated so that this essence emerges. Whereas Lacey's methodology emphasises "recording, editing and reintroduction of on-site sounds",[7] thereby incorporating synthetic sounds and electronically transforming his recordings, I preferred a less mediated approach, using only amplification, temporal rearrangement, and spatial relocation of sounds. I attempted a literal presentation of the building, leaving the artwork open to contain unpredictable sounds left in their raw

states. Hidden sides of the building's voice were brought out from the plant rooms into the gallery space, relocating and combining the system sounds to refocus attention on the building's background noise. I wanted those visiting the installation to reorientate themselves to the Sovereign Design House, to focus on its masking sounds as a means for hearing the building's voice.

Continually Recording and Playing Back the Building's Drones

The installation setup consisted of six microphones installed in the four plant rooms of the building's lower floor. These side rooms, ordinarily only accessible by the university's estates personnel, contain the systems that operate the building, including the heating, ventilation and air conditioning system; the water supply and plumbing systems; and the electrical systems, such as the internet switchboard. When installing, I was given access to these plant rooms to set up the microphones, focusing the microphones onto the most interesting sounds I noticed coming from each machine (figure 1-2). While these sounds were rather quiet and unassuming, with close micing techniques, the rich details of each drone could be amplified. I only had around four hours access to these plant rooms before the estates team needed to lock them up; so for the duration of the installation the microphones were placed where I had initially positioned them. Since the building's systems turn off and on over long durations—hours or even whole days, influenced by the day/night cycle, weather conditions, and the opening hours of the building—my initial positioning of the microphones would only capture a snapshot of the system sounds based on what I heard during the afternoon I installed them. Even if some systems' sounds were partially or not completely picked up, the microphones did capture many systems switching on-off, slowly changing state, and performing other audible processes.

Figures 1-2: Microphones installed in the Bathhouse plant rooms.

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The six microphones were fed into a Max patch set to record on an on/off cycle randomised between twenty-three minutes and eighty minutes. The patch would continue recording throughout the day and night, from two days before the installation publicly opened to the day it closed (recordings made from April 18th through April 27th, 2023). By the close of the installation, 105 recordings were made, each starting and ending at different times of day and night.

The installation itself comprised of continuous playback of the recordings, chosen at random from the accumulating bank of recordings. The six recorded channels – each linked to one of the microphones – were randomly distributed across a quadrophonic speaker array. Four recordings were always playing back, overlapping to maintain continuous sound. As the system continued to produce more recordings, the material available for playback accumulated, meaning that by the end of the installation there was a higher likelihood of hearing recordings from multiple days at once. Each recording would fade in and out, and due to their long durations, this would generate a gradual shift between, and mix of, different sonic states that the building had been in.

To indicate the different sonic snapshots of the Bathhouse which a visitor to the installation was hearing, projected onto the wall was the date and time of each recording (figure 3). Each clock was synchronised with its respective audio recording so that, rather than only indicating each recording's beginning, the clock would show the current time that was being played. To avoid having a display that would change too quickly, the smallest unit to change was a minute. Additionally, to better coincide with the recording, each recording's date and time display was faded in and out, parallel to the recording's amplitude fades.

Figure 3: The date and time of each recording being displayed as part of the installation.

Conclusion

While the installation reproduced the continuous and noisy hum constituting the background systems throughout the Sovereign Design House, moments where irregular sounds emerged from the recordings were also significant. Singular sounds that occurred included loud mechanical clunks, water running through the pipes after a sink or toilet was used, muffled and distant talking, and a bird outside singing in the dawn chorus. Likely many more sounds exist in the hours of recordings which were made, meaning that each visitor to the installation would have experienced different surprise events. By leaving the system to self-generate, sometimes the singular sounds were much louder than the background noise, resulting in jolting moments.[8] But despite there being at times shocking events, the installation overall provided a space for deep listening, whereby standing waves, pulsating drones, and gradually morphing plateaus of noise constituted the soundscape. *Humming, Vibrating Architecture* voiced the Sovereign Design House's particular sonic backdrop, elevating the building's background noise to allow for a refocusing and reimagining of the space's aural architecture. While this work was site-specific, it would be worth replicating the generative sound installation in other buildings, as different operating systems would likely create very different sonic experiences. Through sound installation methodologies, the richness of a building's background noise can be given focus, allowing us to rehear and reimagine the spaces we live in.

Colin Frank is a percussionist, composer, and sound designer who often makes audience interactive installations that include new technologies and found objects. His PhD dissertation at the University of Huddersfield, titled 'Making With Agential Objects: An Autoethnographic Account of Fluidity in Artistic Practice', considered how unconventional instruments and objects influence his creative process. He has performed in festivals including hcmf//, CTM, Electric Spring, and Beast Feast, released music with his duo Brutalust on Crow Versus Crow and Accidental records, and exhibited internationally at Analix Forever (CH) and Salem Art Works (US) amongst others.

Research approach (Making Place): *A site-specific sound intervention in the Sovereign Design House, exploring how through the building's background noise, a refocusing and reimagining of the space's aural architecture can develop.*

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Endnotes

1 Colin Frank, "Posthuman Performances: Giving Attention to Machine Songs in Public Places", *Comparative Media Arts Journal*, no.8 (2020), https://www.sfu.ca/cmajournal/issues/issue-eight--invisibility--escaping-notice-/ColinFrank

2 See Barry Blesser and Linda-Ruth Salter, "Aural Architecture: The Invisible Experience of Space", *Immersed: Sound and architecture, OASE 78*, (2020): 50–63, https://www.oasejournal.nl/en/Issues/78

3 Vanessa Tomlinson, "Intersecting Place, Environment, Sound, and Music," *The Journal of Acoustic Ecology* 17 (2019): 19–26.

4 Jordan Lacey, "Site-Specific Soundscape Design for the Creation of Sonic Architectures and the Emergent Voices of Buildings", *Buildings* 4, no. 1 (January 2014): 1–24, https://doi.org/10.3390/buildings4010001.

5 Barry Blesser and Linda-Ruth Salter, *Spaces Speak, Are You Listening? Experiencing Aural Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2009).

6 Lacey, "Site-Specific Soundscape Design for the Creation of Sonic Architectures and the Emergent Voices of Buildings", 10.

7 Lacey, "Site-Specific Soundscape Design for the Creation of Sonic Architectures and the Emergent Voices of Buildings", 11.

8 In future, I would consider including a compressor in the signal chain to ensure loud irregular noises would not catch anyone off guard.

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Graphic and graphite

Jakob Bragg

> *"some of these remind one of the signs of the zodiac, others of an industrial design or of a microbe culture or of a surrealistic vision or of a childish scribble dotted with spatters of ink."*
> *–Marc Pincherle, Les Nouvelles Littéraires*[1]

5

The translation of an idea, concept, a creative impulse upon a page, the musical score is a transmission object between creator and performer.[2] Containing codes of lines, scribbles, colours, shapes, pictures, and text, the sheer variety of forms this can take is best expressed through John Cage's book *Notations*,[3] and Theresa Sauer's follow up, *Notations 21*.[4] In both, the distinction between stave, image, prose, and graphic is almost entirely eroded, illustrating the sheer variety of signifiers that guide musical realisation and performance. Some early examples are as varied as the expressionist splatters of Roman Haubenstock-Ramati, the introspective poetry of Pauline Oliveros, the highly abstract shapes of Cornelius Cardew, visually striking pictograms of John Cage, and the onomatopoetic *Stripsody* by Cathy Berberian.[5] Each present a radical approach to the way composers transmit musical information and invite exploration, interpretation, and improvisation.

For myself, notation forms a vital tethering between the composer and performer, a link between audiation, exploration, collaboration, and interpretation. As multi-disciplinary artist, composer and dramaturg Tomoko Momiyama puts it, scores are "maps for certain communities to realise their multilayered narratives as music."[6]

I seek a symbiotic relationship with the initial sketch and the final score, one that embraces the initial graphical representation of sound, free from a specific notational model, one raw, expressive, and immediate, capturing a multitude of musical parameters into a coherent and simple rendering. The goal of this blurring between the two is to find a notation that is both personal, invites openness, and is more suited to conveying certain musical figures that other notational models fail at. Anestis Logothetis' personalised and visually striking notation was developed in large part because of these limitations, stating that traditional music notation "represses a great number of gliding and vibrating sounds."[7] As a result, Logothetis created an entire catalogue of signs and symbols that embed states of transitions, of becoming, and of deviation within his notation.

Báthory-Kitsz criticises the marketplace fundamentalism, regression of choice, and crisis in sonic expression within the limitations of traditional

notation, especially with regard to publishing software, calling for a re-building of an advanced notational consciousness.[8] Where some composers have embraced software, using graphic and image editing software to create scores, others, like Logothetis, have adopted a somewhat low-tech solution with a return to pencil (or pen) on paper. Liza Lim describes the act of moving the pencil across the page like playing an instrument, intimate and immediate,[9] whereas Kyong Mee Choi sees her graphic notation practice as a reflection of personal taste, uniqueness, and bringing together her music and art practices.[10]

Like these composers, my aim is to foster a notational practice that embraces my freehand sketching practice, creating something which is personal, complements the collaborative process, and invites a dialogue between prescription and interpretation. The resultant notation is one that is both open, visually abstract and graphical, and detail oriented, prescribing select musical parameters and pushing notational models to the extreme.

*

What follows is a discussion of four excerpts that illustrate my notation practice. These embrace a blurring between sketch and score. Some are the final document for performance, others the initial drawing in which details are excavated from, others are a catalogue of symbols and signs used.

> *"The line takes on further significance: not only shape, ornamentation, feeling, but energy. Life."*
> *–Cesare Belloni, on the art of Morgan O'Hara.*[11]

Figure 1: Sketch from *Through Gates Unseen* for orchestra, Jakob Bragg, 2023.

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Imagined music goes through a filtering of memory, transcription, body, forgetting, re-transcription, translation, into physical (performer) action, and into space. The sketch has an immediacy in capturing an idea. From the rushed and rough scribble, a momentary creative happenstance can be seized. From this, multiple and new versions are made, gradually excavating out more detail, refining gestures, getting a feel for the intended temporal space, and simply playing with musical and graphical material. It is from these sketches that the final score is eventually rendered from.

Figure 1 illustrates exactly this. An excerpt from a larger drawing, this was one of many iterations used in the creation of the orchestral work *Through Gates Unseen* (2023). Here pitch, intensity (dynamics), orchestration, duration, texture, and gesture are all rendered together. The vertical space generally maps pitch with higher pitches further up and lower pitches further down. However, this is not always consistent. The interruptions of the contrabassoon and horns seen in the top middle via dark and compact shading do not necessarily indicate a higher pitch from that of the preceding blocks, but instead indicate a foregrounding of attention and intensity, sitting "above" the previous texture rather than above in pitch. Intensity is generally mapped via shading, with lighter pencil pressure for softer musical figures and greater pencil pressure for louder and more intense musical figures. Notes regarding instrumentation are often scribbled above or below alongside descriptors and the use of specific techniques.

Certain levels of activity and behaviours are emergent within this sketch. A call and response relationship develops between the trapezoidal blocks and a more meandering but narrow line, with a somewhat static subterranean drone layer below. Similarly, an assertive block emerges out of the contrabassoon and horn interruptions (occurring halfway), with a denser layering of activity indicated by a variety of different lines that include those that are narrow and wavy, dark and erratic, light and wispy, pixilated, smudged, continuous, and punctated.

Although less systemised as the highly graphic notation of Anestis Logothetis and Jean-François Laporte,[12] the use of shading and pencil pressure, shapes that almost resemble a spectrogram, curls and swirls, all with very particular musical gestures in mind is not too dissimilar to those developed by these composers. For both Logothetis and Laporte, an extensive inventory is made with explanations over the interpretation of each symbol, wedge, line, shading, figure, and swirl. For my practice, this type of notation is primarily found in the sketching process, although a unified system is rarely consistent across multiple sketches and questions are still emerging as to the integration of these elements into the final score.

"Lines seemed to describe drones and glissandi better than dots."
–Cat Hope[13]

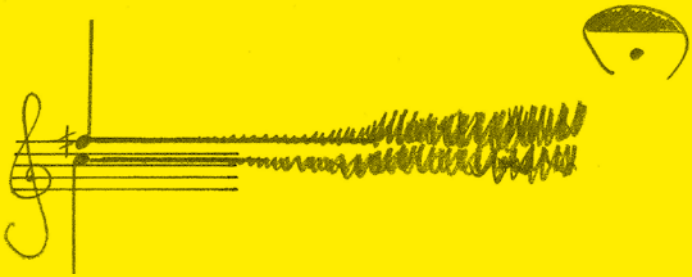

Figure 2: Score excerpt from the 'Cadenza' of *Tor* for two recorders, Jakob Bragg, 2022.

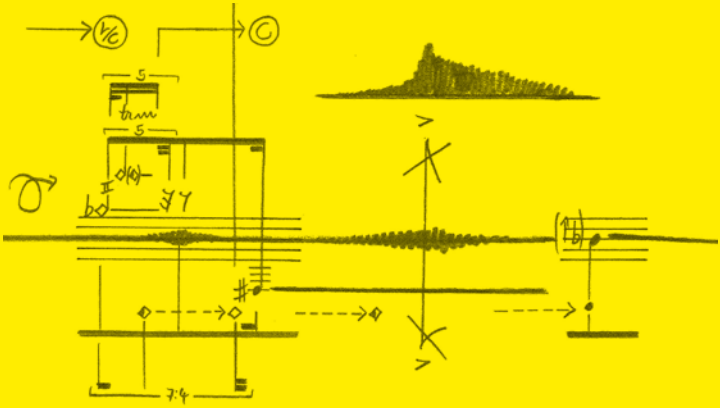

Figure 3: Score excerpt from 'Convergence' from *Tor* for solo cello, Jakob Bragg, 2022.

Tor (2022), written for the ELISION ensemble, marked the gradual integration of more graphic and sketch-based elements into my final scores. The aim is to bring both my compositional and sketching practice closer together, allowing for an amplification of expressive and gestural material and creating a distinct dialogue between more open and prescriptive notations.

Both excerpts from the final score, arguably the most immediate feature of Figure 2 and Figure 3 is the use of a cut-away stave. This folding away of the traditional five-line stave communicates two primary messages. Firstly,

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it indicates a shift from one state to another state, perhaps from stability or more rigid figures (a biproduct of noteheads and rhythmic notation) toward instability and transformative figures as free hand-drawn lines shade, warp and bend. Secondly, it invites a more uninhibited and possibly expressive interpretation of the performer. Durations, volume, timbre, deviations in pitch, and distortion (amongst many other parameters) are all opened up, in contrast to the stave-based notation. Some early examples of the cut-away score include Witold Lutosławski[14] and Krzysztof Penderecki.[15] However a more striking and recent example include the works of Florijan Lörnitzo, where staves and noteheads give way to hand-drawn pictograms, noteheads flying off the page, and familiar notation objects now rendered as striking images (see Figure 4).[16]

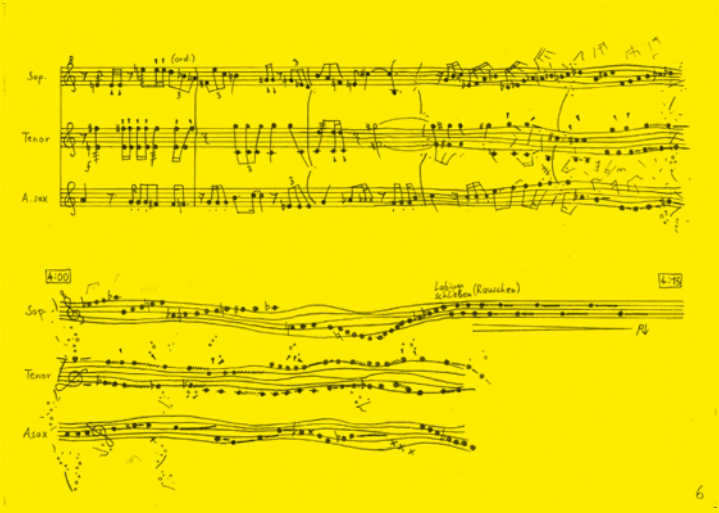

Figure 4: Score excerpt from *...the rest is silence* by Florijan Lörnitzo, 2016.

A dialogue between the alternating presence and absence of the stave can be vital in communicating a significant shift in sonic and interpretive material. Returning to Figure 2, we see the opening figure of the double recorder cadenza. Here, the stave melts away with aggressive and growing erratic lines suggesting a multitude of possibilities including shaking the instrument, air flow manipulations, increases in volume, adding voice, or using an overt physical action, all of which could be used in conjunction.[17] In Figure 3, an excerpt from 'Convergence' for solo cello, a circular bow motion (indicated via a looped arrow) and a developing scratch tone (indicated via shading) is enacted upon an exposed pitch. With the stave cut away, a growing instability is asserted through rough wave-like pencil marking, before settling back into a secure pitch point with the return of the five-line stave. In this small excerpt a multitude of transitions, states of transformation, and manipulation

are all expressed through highly graphical indications. These allow for a more direct mapping of what the performer sees with the required action and resultant sound, allowing for a freedom in both temporal and gestural space as stave, noteheads, beams, and metre are folded away.

It is worth noting that these musical ideas are often the result of close consultation with the performers I'm working with. I very much echo how Bellamy describes collaboration, one that is "by nature a highly personalised experience," ideally one where an "open exchange" can occur between all participants.[18] Here, this manifests through a dialogue of what each artist can bring to a collaboration, a bouncing back and forth of how musical figures are notated, consideration of the performers own artistic practice that could include composition, improvisation, or an engagement in other musical genres, and an openness to exploring each other's own musical voices.

> *"I construct my signs as an information source for sound"*
> *–Anestis Logothetis*[19]

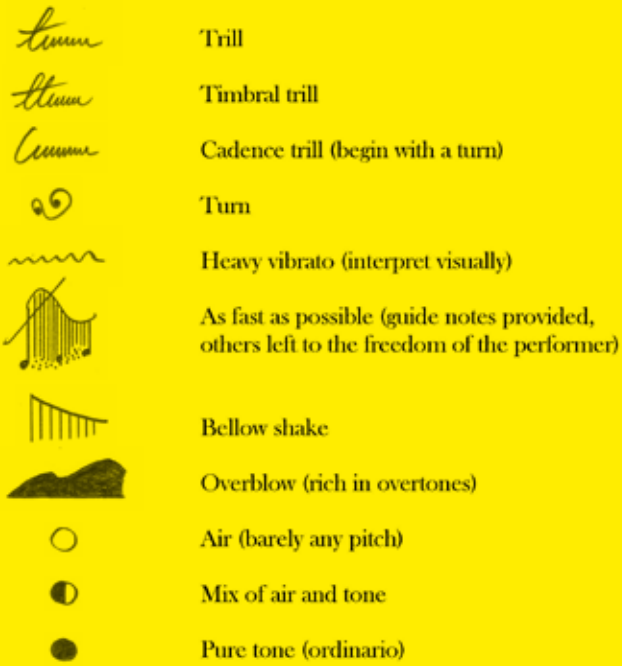

Figure 5: A list of common symbols and signs used within my recent works, Jakob Bragg, 2023.

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Symbols appear to have a certain mythical universality to them. Of course, this is not the case. They are cultural biproducts, immediately recognisable by one, completely alien to another. Western classical notation is much the same. Haynes points out despite the use of the slur common in the modern western notation,[20] the eighteenth-century slur was something else entirely; it was a grace embedded with particulars over dynamics, articulation, and even emphasis.[21] Likewise, novel symbols in contemporary notation, even those in common use since Schoenberg or Cage, evolve to take on new meanings, recycled, transformed, or even abandoned.[22]

Although not always explained, with a desire for free interpretation, symbols and signs are possibly more widely used in experimental practice than ever before, with extensive performance instructions dedicated to the explanation and use of these.[23] Although at the sketching level I often revel in inconsistencies and tautologies of certain symbols and lines, the final score sees a more nuanced and justified approach.

Far from inventing these myself, the symbols in Figure 5 are found throughout contemporary and traditional music with their stylistic quality a biproduct of my own hand. Many of these symbols derive from those used by Liza Lim, Chikako Morishita, and Evan Johnson.[24] Morishita uses shaded diamonds to indicate breathiness of tone in her clarinet works,[25] here I've used circles instead. Lim uses graphical wedge-like shapes to indicate harmonics and overblowing,[26] I've opted for dark shading to increase their prominence. Both Morishita and Lim use a variety of wavy lines for varying speeds of vibrato and trills. Johnson establishes a precise hierarchy of ornaments through vertical placement, beaming, and stems,[27] one I have begun to adopt with upper stem positions indicating a distinct layer of activity to that of lower stems. This is how the "as fast as possible" and bellow shake symbols are used. It is worth noting that these may not have originated with these composers and are instead part of the taxonomy that immediately surrounds my practice.

These musical symbols embrace a more graphical nature, breaking away from the rigidity of traditional notation elements such as noteheads, beams, dynamics, and text. With a vertical laying of dynamics, stave(s), beaming, signs, and auxiliary staves (such as embouchure), a distinct stratum of activity can be achieved. Rarely all engaged at the same time, navigating these score elements allow for shifting modes of interpretation as the performer moves from the placement of a pitch via noteheads, for example, towards manipulation of that pitch via graphical representations of air-quality, certain trills, distortions, vibrato, and glissandi. The visual nature of these elements adds a certain personality to the page but crucially better reflects the type of behaviours of activation, destabilisation, ornamentation, and transformation that are characteristic of my works.

"Everything starts with a dot."
–Wassily Kandinsky[28]

Figure 6: Sketch from *Procession* for accordion and bass clarinet, Jakob Bragg, 2023.

In responding to the quote attributed to Kandinsky above and in examining the sketch in Figure 6, the dot, here more of a splotch, is radically transformed. It runs away with potential musical ideas that could become the parameters of pitch, volume, instrumentation, distortion, speed, timbre, movement around space, distribution of audience members, or even performative state of mind. Mapping any imaginary and creative space requires a considered process of translation. The sketch, map, scribbled word, rough score, short score, recording, improvisation, or catalogue attempt to capture an immediacy of creative impulse. As a composer and artist, I use notation to blend these two practices together, creating a web of symbols, scribbles, and signifiers that both assist in the compositional stage and in the communication and eventual interpretation of my works. Sketching is an invaluable aspect in excavating gestural, timbral, and micro-details while still retaining a sense of the global architecture of the work.It allows for the exploration of musical ideas, free from the limitations of any historic model, opening up possibilities of abstraction and experimentation while the final score sees a refining of detail and embracing of certain historic models paired with personalised hand-drawn notations.hand-drawn notations.

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Endnotes

1 Marc Pincherle, *Les Nouvelles Littéraires*, December 27, 1967, quoted in John Evarts, "The New Musical Notation: A Graphic Art?," *Leonardo* 1, no. 4 (October 1968): 407.

2 The term page and musical score being the most open in definition that can also include digital, video, and interactive forms. See Cat Hope, "The Future is Graphic: Animated Notation for Contemporary Practice," *Organised Sound* 25, no. 2 (08, 2020): 187-197.

3 John Cage, *Notations* (New York: Something Else Press, 1969).

4 Theresa Sauer, *Notations 21* (New York: Mark Batty Publisher, 2009).

5 Cathy Berberian, *Stripsody* (New York: C.F. Peters Corporation, 1966).

6 Tomoko Momiyama, "A silent and invisible pressure: a panel discussion with eight Japanese women composers," Interviewed by Chikako Morishita, *Tempo* 73, no. 209, (2019): 25-39.

7 Claudia Mongini, "Sign and Information: On Anestis Logothetis' Graphical Notations," in *Deleuze and Contemporary Art*, ed. Stephen Zepke and Simon O'Sullivan (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 228.

8 Dennis Báthory-Kitsz, "To Anticipate the Forgetfulness of the Future: Reflections as a Composer and Copyist," in *Notations 21*, ed. Theresa Sauer (New York: Mark Batty Publisher, 2009), 22-25.

9 Liza Lim, and Martina Seeber, "Farewell to Humans: An interview with Liza Lim," in *Divergence Press* (2019), http://divergencepress.net/2019/11/28/farewell-to-humans-an-interview-with-liza-lim/.

10 Kyong Mee Choi in *Notations 21*, ed. Theresa Sauer (New York: Mark Batty Publisher, 2009).

11 Cesare Belloni, "Traces" in *Encyclopedia of Live Transmissions IV: Farm, Laboratory, Office, Site*, ed. Morgan O'Hara (Bergamo: Lubrina Editore, 2006).

12 See Jean-François Laporte, *Le Chant de l'inaudible* (Paris: Babel Scores, 2001).

13 Cat Hope, "Insight: Drawing music," Resonate Magazine, accessed May 29, 2023, https://www.australianmusiccentre.com.au/article/insight-drawing-music.

14 See Witold Lutosławski, *Symphonic Variations* (Krakow: Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne, 1939).

15 See Krzysztof Penderecki, *Anaklasis* (Mainz: Schott Music, 1960).

16 See Florijan Lörnitzo, "rot," YouTube: Florijan Lörnitzo, accessed May 28, 2023, https://youtu.be/wS82l1LbbvM, and Florijan Lörnitzo, "...the rest is silence," YouTube: Florijan Lörnitzo, accessed May 28, 2023, https://youtu.be/jDJ9e2eR0RU.

17 This is essentially what recorder player Ryan Williams does here:

Jakob Bragg, *Tor*, YouTube: CeReNeM, accessed May 29, 2023: https://youtu.be/Z1LILY9Znn0.

18 Mary Bellamy, "Developing instrumental sound resources through collaborative compositional practice," *Journal for New Music and Culture* 10, (2013), https://eprints.hud.ac.uk/id/eprint/18915/.

19 Mongini, "Sign and Information," 227.

20 A slur is a symbol in Western classical music notation that indicates a smooth connection between notes.

21 Bruce Haynes, *The end of early music: A period performer's history of music for the twenty-first century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 107.

22 Consider the variety of different notations used to indicate the sprechstimme technique most famously explored in Arnold Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire* (1912).

23 See the extensive catalogue of custom symbols, fingerings, and vocal sounds in Brian Ferneyhough, *Unity Capsule* (London: Edition Peters, 1975).

24 It is likely that these symbols did not originate with these composers and are instead a part of the taxonomy that immediately surrounds my practice.

25 See Chikako Morishita, *Lizard* (shadow) (self-published, 2011).

26 See Liza Lim, *Machine for contacting the dead* (Milan: Ricordi, 2000).

27 See Evan Johnson, *Apostrophe 2* (pressing down on my sternum) (self-published, 2009).

28 Adams Media, *Words of Art: Inspiring Quotes from the Masters* (London: Adams Media Corporation, 2012).

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Jakob Bragg (b. 1990) is a PhD candidate at the University of Huddersfield. He has developed a compositional practice that engages in unconventional approaches to acoustic instruments, nurtures ongoing artistic relationships, and navigates the exploratory and ritualised. Working primarily with new music specialists in which ideas of virtuosity, ornamentation, multiculturalism, and drama are explored, his works have been performed across Europe, Asia, Australia, and America by artists including ELISION (AU), International Contemporary Ensemble (US), Arditti Quartet (UK), Cikada (NO), Quatuor Tana (FR), Meitar Ensemble (IL), BRON (NL), and orchestras including the London Philharmonic Orchestra (UK), Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra (AU) and Australian Youth Orchestra (AU).

Resonant Structures, Various artists. The Bath House Galleries, 2023

Submerged: natural dyes & stiched sounds

10.5920/CulturesOfSound

Submerged: natural dyes & stitched sounds
Claire Barber (textiles) & Gavin Osborn (sound)

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: Dr Claire Barber, Senior Lecturer in Textile Practice.

A collaborative residency by Claire Barber (textiles) & Gavin Osborn (sound).

The thing, its properties: its feel, smell, colour, sound; the taste of the powder in the air. Dried elderberries have a deep, sweet, concentrated autumnal fruit; buckthorn bark is mud & musk; broom is sweet & grassy, golden rod is grassy & floral; madder is mud, roots, perfumed earth; poplar buds are sweet, resinous, spicy, calming.

Transformations: between the mortar & pestle, things go from rustle, rattle, crunch, crackle into a sift or hiss. In a pan, water comes to a roiling boil, becomes infused with colour, which the submerged fabric also takes up - a colour that will change subtly as the fabric dries.

*

The project takes its starting point from various materials of natural dyeing, making sound recordings of how these buds, berries, barks, flowers & grasses sound when handled, poured, during grinding & after. Recordings were also made of the dyeing process - ground poplar buds infused into boiling water, dyeing a piece of fabric a pale yellow.

The residency itself was not 'about' natural dyeing, but used that process & the physical properties of its materials as a basis to explore relationships between 'things' & their 'thingness'. The sound recordings highlighted certain properties for the textile artist (Claire Barber) to respond to - in this case stitching various kinds of thread into & through a base textile of thick, light, pre-felt. While Claire had prepared some samples pre-residency by stitching to the documentary recordings, during the residency she stitched to a live soundscape created by the sound-artist (Gavin Osborn), where the documentary recordings were layered, looped, & transformed, with this element also informed by a response to both the stitched materials & the process of stitching. The residency was based on this live, continuous feedback of collaborative making during each day. Outcomes included textile work where the stitched pieces evoke both the patterning of the sounds & the physical qualities of the source materials, & recordings of the soundscapes as they were mixed live.

*

In the room, the artists are submerged. The textile artist is submerged in sound: mutable, rhythmic, textured soundscapes made from the

recordings of the dyeing materials. Her stitches are submerged in the ground material, the pre-felt thick enough to take the thread down into its mid-layer. The thread dips in, swims, emerges, dives down again to surface on the other side. Inside the pre-felt, the patterns float, barely visible, hanging suspended until the threads push back into the world.

The sound artist is submerged in the feel of the materials: the crinkle of dried bud skin, textured surface of a bark, the chime of dried berries hitting the mortar... An observer staying long enough would sense the duet emerging between these sounds & the rhythm of the stitch: the pierce, pull, tug, & pierce, the snip of the scissors, the breathing of the stitcher & the dance of her hands & arms.

Scent of ground poplar buds perfumes the space.

Gavin Osborn is a musician & interdisciplinary artist, based in the Northwest. His creative practice moves between work as a flautist-composer specialising in new music (shifting between & blurring acoustic, electroacoustic, composed & improvised forms), collaborations as performer-composer/sound-artist with visual artists, performance artists, writers & dancers, & interdisciplinary projects incorporating text, movement, visual & physical materials & performance into projects that often explore the histories & stories of a particular site, or a particular theme, or both.

Link to Gavin's sound outcomes from this residency, please scan the QR code to listen:

Claire Barber Research Profile:
Claire Barber — University of Huddersfield Research Portal

Research approach (Cultures of Making): *A collaborative exploration of the sonic properties of stitching and embroidery, with a specific focus on natural dyes and the plants they are derived from.*

10.5920/CulturesOfSound

The Calder in your bones

10.5920/CulturesOfSound

The Calder in your bones
David Vélez

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: PhD graduate in Sonic Art and the Acoustics of Food.

The Calder in your bones is a sound installation made with industrial duct, fur and electroacoustic bone transducers. The piece aims to draw attention towards the health of the River Calder, which is the principal fluvial source for farms in the Calderdale and Kirklees boroughs, nourishing the growth of rhubarb, pears, blueberries, potatoes, tomatoes and many other species that feed the community of this region.[1] The Calder was affected by industrial waste for decades, and today is subjected to substantial sewage leaks, making it England's second most polluted river. This problem can be solved if the contaminating water firms take action to sustain the river's well-being, which they are currently failing to do, as researchers and activists emphatically point out.[2] As such this installation also takes an explicitly activist stance.

The form of the installation creates a bodily bonding experience with the river through the vibration of its sounds. Through this immersive sensory experience we can acknowledge water as a nourishing presence inside our bodies, and thus our connectedness with the well-being of our local waterways. Extensive underwater and subterranean recordings were made of the River Calder using a hydrophone and a geophone to emphasise the vibrating biodiversity of the site, including earthworms, snails, slugs, frogs, toads, newts, fishes, and an enormous variety of plants, among other 'sounding species'. The field methodology centred on environments whose acoustics are unfamiliar to our airborne-fixed listening, recognising the river as an 'Otherness' to which we should extend empathy, engaging with care and recognising our interdependency. The use of bone transducers creates a corporeal multi-sensorial experience which is capable of connecting the listener with the river sounds on a deep, foundational level. Fur advances a pleasant experience to touch while establishing tension with the material of the water, as textile factories were pollutants of the Calder during the second half of the 20th century.

In addition to this piece presented as part of Cultures of Sound, the original recordings are published without treatment at archive.org for free public access, aiming to present bioacoustic researchers and activists with relevant material for their investigations, and for the appreciation of anybody interested in these sounds.

David Vélez is a Colombian sound artist whose work focuses on the use of field recordings, dealing with lifeforms, landscapes and objects.

Research approach (Making Place): *Using experimental audiovisual practices to explore the River Calder from a variety of perspectives.*

Endnotes

1 "River History", The Calder and Colne Rivers Trust, visited 04-09-23 https://calderandcolneriverstrust.org/site/river-history

2 Amy Houghton, "Revealed: these are the 20 most polluted rivers in the UK". Time Out. Monday 20th February 2023, https://www.timeout.com/uk/news/revealed-these-are-the-20-most-polluted-rivers-in-the-uk-022023

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Environmental Reciprocity in Improvising Practice

Dougal 'Henry' McPherson

6

1) Improvising Ecologically

> *Acceptance [in improvisation] is the bringing together of [a] state of receptivity with a conscious acknowledgement of the condition of things directly 'as they are'; […] everything carries potential – everything must be brought in.*[1]

Practising improvisation-as-performance, whether in a discipline-specific or supradisciplinary form, develops an agile kind of focus. It fosters a flexibility in navigating shifting levels of awareness and sensitivity to internal and external stimuli, to the complex dynamics of spinning out performance which, "as it unfolds, invents its own way of proceeding".[2] Propelled by an openness to, and acceptance of, emergences as they occur, dedicated practice cultivates an ability to maintain an attentive absorption in the changes of the immediate environment, coupled with a stance Danielle Goldman refers to as being "ready", a kind of embodied preparedness to act responsively and creatively (to move, to sound, to shout, to be still, etc.).[3] These capacities, grounded in the thinking-sensing body, suggest the viability of this practice for thinking and doing ecology in the expanded use employed by Sarco-Thomas, where ecology "[encompasses] a host of awareness practices which foreground the human-environment connection, and the ways in which thoughts, actions and practices affect our understanding of that connection."[4] Improvising ecologically can be thought of as practising spontaneous, embodied, expressive activity that enfolds, and is emergent from, the dynamic material world.

This idea is both an opportunity and a challenge for practitioners immersed in the habitual divisions of anthropocentric and colonial societies. As composer-improviser Anne Bourne suggests, in an exchange with me, "perhaps improvisation, which asks for presence, can teach us we are a part of a natural world."[5] Situating improvising practice away from its ordinary, human-centric localities of the studio, stage, bar, café (etc.), suggests a rich opportunity to explore novel sounds, shapes, and expressions through "making-with" non-human others.[6] At the same time, this requires a reconditioning and *reembodying* of practice in a novel context. It is one thing to orient one's thinking about practice towards ecology – to aspire to it – and quite another to *do* ecological improvisation. Even as she comments that "thinking the subject as a material being, subject to the agencies of the compromised, entangled world, enacts an environmental posthumanism",[7] Stacey Alaimo identifies that posthumanist efforts must encompass *both* the abstracted (re)conceptualisation of the world in which we are materially entangled, enacted in thought and writing, and the eminently practical experience of

living as beings entangled in/with the world. Living the practical side of posthumanism requires an attuning of the sensing body to its own materiality. It follows that a bodily performance practice must also centre this materiality if it is to actualise ecological aspirations. Improvising ecologically demands a concerted effort to *feel*, to sense our entanglement with the more-than-human through the body's sensuous and "most sophisticated technology".[8]

2) Sensing and Language for Porous Bodies

Alaimo's concept of *transcorporeality* recognises organic beings as open, porous systems that participate continuously in exchange with a world that "crosses through them, transforms them, and is transformed by them." "[T]he figure/ground relation between the human and the environment", she writes, "dissolves as the outline of the human is traversed by substantial material interchanges",[9] from the ingestion of microplastics and heavy metal pollutants, to the consumption of capitalist goods. Improvising by a stream in Skipton Woods (North Yorkshire), I am fascinated by how practical, how closely felt, this exchange can be.

Figure 1: *Water, Moss, Leaves, Trees, Soil*. Skipton Woods, October 2022 (Image by Author)

In the cyclical rhythm of respiration, amplified via vocalising and playing my recorder, I participate in a dynamic exchange of air, water, and biotic material (such as fungal and algal spores, microorganisms, and decaying matter) across the membranes of my lungs. The shifting meteorological conditions, particularly ambient temperature and relative humidity, stimulate and heighten interoceptive attention to focus my relationship with my surroundings. The changing chemical and energetic makeup of the air – the weight of water vapour, the sharpness of the cold – draws down into my body from mouth through trachea, and swirls in my nasal cavities as I

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move from the high field, through the moss-blanketed dell, and down to the moving water. The material qualities of this landscape, changing here and now, are permeating my body as I move within it. I feel the air transgress the threshold of my body and, in reciprocation, sonifying respiration, I vibrate it back into my surroundings. The heat of my breath contrasts with the chill of the surrounding air. The vapour from my lungs passes into clouds which blend with the mist above the water, while liquid condenses in the bore of my instrument and falls into the moist soil at my feet.

This is a fundamentally somatic experience, where the interpolation between my human body and the more-than-human 'beyond' is identified and thought-through corporeal sensations. Focusing on the body-li-ness of sounding becomes as a root which grounds the auditory in material experience. Treading lightly on the soft soil, I consider that sonic expressivities emerge, ordinarily, via the body, from the physical interfacing with electronics, instrument or object, or from the touching of vocal membranes. Attuning to the corporeality of sounding is therefore a vehicle by which I can keep myself open to the diversity of sensory inputs present in a place, while understanding myself – feeling myself – in material relation with the world around me. I reflect that this conscious approach to corporeal sounding is a practised thing; it has developed through my work in sonic and kinetic improvisation over years, through my reiterated efforts to maintain a flexible and continuous focus on the emergent here and now. Such focus is one of the demands of improvisation, and also one of its ecological affordances, requiring a concentration upon the state of being present and acting in an immediate time and place. However, I think, recognising oneself as a "tangible, embodied and emplaced" material being,[10] even momentarily, is by no means limited to improvising practice; as renowned pedagogue and improviser Ruth Zaporah comments "to be present" – which, she recognises, "is what improvisation is all about" – you simply "have to be living inside of your body".[11] In other words, everyone could have access to this.

Visceral as it may be, internal sensation is not the only site where the body's participation in "interchanges" can be felt. Tempering the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty with traditional knowledge from diverse indigenous and oral cultures, David Abram rethinks human-to-non-human connection, framing the phenomenon of sensing as a meeting between agencies where the site of interface between the human and the 'other' involves mutual contact; this is true, he proposes, even in the case of the supposedly "distanced" or "non-physical" senses of seeing and hearing.

> *Ordinary seeing [for example] involves the convergence of two views into a single dynamic vision; divergent parts of myself [two eyes] are drawn together by the object, and thus I meet up with myself over there, at that tree or that spider upon which I focus.*[12]

Abram's language paints even "distanced" sensing as a bilateral process. It locates sensing in external entities beyond human organs, ascribing agency to the other (the supposed object of our sensing), and challenging "our conventional assumptions" by foregrounding "the reciprocal nature of direct perception – the fact that to touch is also to feel oneself being touched, that to see is also to feel oneself seen."[13] The mutuality of agency that this language affords propels me further into wondering: how can I shift my thinking to see how this environment acts upon me? How can I feel that its transformations precipitate my own? *As I move with the recorder through the trees, my eye is drawn to the texture of moss and bark, while my ear is snagged by the warning bark of a fox over the low hum of distant traffic. The pitch of the fluid, bubbling stream of partials I am sounding is dragged skywards by the upward trajectory of a blackbird, then the curl of a particular leaf twists my finger and displaces it from its hole. Finally, my flow of breath is stopped by the sudden gust of wind*. In recounting these experiences, I find myself describing my senses and my body as being acted upon by the 'other', affording them, in these instances, a linguistically active position. Mel Y. Chen advocates that words are "a primary site in which the matter of the world takes shape and is affectively informed […]".[14] If words serve as such a vector not just for rethinking but for actively informing direct experience, then perhaps this way of languaging practice can better reflect (in the past) and suggest (in the future) an embodied experience which accounts for the vibrancy and agency of beings other than myself.

3) 'Also Sounding'

> *To directly perceive any phenomenon is to enter into relation with it, to feel oneself in a living interaction with another being. To define the phenomenon as an inert object, to deny the ability of the tree to inform and even instruct one's awareness, is to have turned one's senses away from that phenomenon. It is to ponder the tree from outside of its world, or rather, from outside of the world in which both oneself and the tree are active participants.*[15]

Abram's semantic experiments remind me of the way that improvising colleagues often talk about their connection with the 'other'. Relationships between improviser-improvisation, and improviser-world are frequently described in non-dualistic, non-oppositional terms which evidence a clear sense of mutual interactivity, co-generativity, and at times even felt indistinction. Analysis of interviews with twenty-six improvisers undertaken during my doctoral research, for example, show that the unfolding improvisation is habitually reported and "conceived as an [external] entity which is agential, while at the same time it is apparent that the improviser has agency" within it.[16] Improvisers regularly "[identify] with something other than total active-subjecthood", where there is also often a "conflation

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between the activity of the improviser and the "happening" or unfolding of the improvisation at large".[17] This is reinforced by semantic devices which, much as Abram employs, displace the improviser from a position of linguistic activity ("I am sounding/I sound") to something other ("I am being sounded", or even "sounding is occurring").

> *I find it more interesting to go through a process of noticing how things change from moment to moment, rather than changing things from moment to moment.*[18]

These reports indicate that something inheres in this practice which challenges the conventional assumptions of human-to-non-human boundaries, conducing an experience of interpenetration and indistinction. This phenomenon could well be theorised as a kind of merging of action and awareness symptomatic of a flow state;[19] a kind of synaesthetic linkage resultant from heightened multisensory focus, or equally a form of what Kent de Spain describes as "transpersonal" experience.[20] However, *irrespective* of the means by which it is conceived, the net effect of this commonly reported experience – the thing that lingers after practice – is that it decentralises the making-performing human as the primary active agent, distributing and attributing agency beyond the individual. It points to a more complex and dynamic connection with the living world.

Figure 2: *Tree, Cracking, Birds, Loggers, Ants, Fabric, Whistling*. Norfolk Coast AONB, April 2021 (Image by Author)

Reflecting on the above, it is worth noting that the prominence of sonic experimentation within the culture of free improvised music, in particular, reiteratively opens the ears of audience and performer alike to an expansive array of sounds and, critically, *sounders*. The open sonic and aesthetic space generated by this culture's experimentalism demands that the hum of machines, the shuffling of audience feet, and the smashing of a glass in a venue bar, become enfolded within a holistic soundscape in which the improviser *also* sounds. Improvisers therefore frequently inhabit a performative space in which other sounders (human and non-human) are acknowledged in degrees as participatory.

> *[While improvising], I'm not imposing. I'm kind of sitting, listening, and then following. It looks like I'm inventing [...] but it feels like I'm already playing what's there. And I find I haven't got enough bodies, or arms or legs. Yes, there's so many different sounds out there. I once spent about three hours jamming with rain.*[21]

Thinking improvising activity in terms of this 'also', as co-present with an array of other sounds and other sounders, shifts the hierarchy of playing and listening. Practising 'also sounding' attunes one to a living and vibrant soundscape which is not (and has never been) wholly anthropogenic in nature. To think of the boundaries of improvisation as ending at the human, then, seems wholly incongruous with the fact of our material entanglement with the world. Recognising the improviser as a worldly co-participant – that "we are always already the very substance and the stuff of the world that we are changing"[22] – reveals our sounding (or moving, or laughing, or singing) as subject to and relative to that of countless other beings which inform it, enfold it, and shape its mutations.

4) Towards Empathy

This recognition is, I would propose, a critical threshold for the evolution of cultures of improvisational practice in the 21st century. Working creatively in live improvisation with non-human beings challenges practitioners to recognise these 'others' as collaborators who have an immediately perceived creative agency. A form of empathetic relationship is explicitly accessed through creative play with more-than-humans facilitated in improvisatory artistic encounter.

> *Human beings' love for contact with creative language and thinking creates an important role for the artist as non-human translator.*[23] *Listening to each other, cultivating mirror neurons and empathy, accepting dissonance and difference, is a way out of unequal relationship and governance, towards collective agency and care. To balance listening and receptive perception, which may create space for something new to come through, with experiences of collective creative expression, may provide a complex and exquisite architecture for a lifegiving world.*[24]

It is upon this capacity to facilitate human to non-human connection that I propose ecological improvisation as one (of many) required vectors for change. At a time of global environmental precarity, there is an urgent need to enact sustainable strategies to safeguard our shared world. While technological developments, intergovernmental pledges, protests, community efforts, and grassroots activism are all pragmatic and *visible* contributors to this end, Kuznetski asserts that "awareness through imagination is the ultimate role of the humanities [...] which", she posits "has

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no less potential than the sciences".[25] The ultimate success of ecological improvisation cannot only be the development of personal attentiveness or creative responsiveness in the performative domain, but critical awareness, empathy, and responsibility for the world of which we are a part and from which we have never been separate. Through developing, as Alaimo offers, *both* a conceptual and felt sense of our entanglement with the world – as attested by the sensory capacities of the material body – it is my hope that ecological improvisation can encourage radical empathy with the more-than-human, to play some role in mitigating the "bizarre enormity of the effects of the most minute everyday actions" which have "profoundly altered the planet".[26]

Endnotes

1 McPherson, *More Than One Thing*, 180.

2 Davide Sparti. "On the Edge: A Frame of Analysis for Improvisation", in *The Oxford Handbook of Critical Improvisation Studies*, eds. George E. Lewis and Benjamin Piekut (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2014), 187.

3 Danielle Goldman, *I Want to Be Ready: Improvised Dance as a Practice of Freedom*. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010)

4 Malaika Sarco-Thomas. *Twig Dances: Improvisation Performance as Ecological Practice*. (Thesis, University of Plymouth, 2010), xix.

5 Anne Bourne, interviewed by author, May 2023.

6 Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble*, 58.

7 Stacey Alaimo. "Trans-Corporeality." In *Posthuman Glossary*, eds. Rosi Braidotti and Maria Hlavajova, (London Oxford New York New Delhi Sydney: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), 437.

8 Dance-artist Michael Schumacher, interviewed by author, 2021.

9 Alaimo, "Trans-Corporeality", 435.

10 Stacey Alaimo in Julia Kuznetski (Née Tofantšuk) and Stacy Alaimo, "Transcorporeality: An Interview with Stacy Alaimo", *Ecozon@: European Journal of Literature, Culture and Environment* 11, no. 2 (September 20, 2020): 140.

11 Ruth Zaporah in Nisker, Mudita, Barbara Gates, and Wes Nisker, "The Improvisation of Presence: A Conversation with Ruth Zaporah", *Inquiring Mind* 13, no. 2 (1997), https://inquiringmind.com/article/1302_4_ruth-zaporah/.

12 David Abram, *The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-than-Human World*, (New York: Pantheon books, 1996), 126.

13 Abram, *The Spell of the Sensuous*, 69

14 Mel Y. Chen "Animacies", in *Posthuman Glossary*, eds. Rosi Braidotti and Maria Hlavajova, (London Oxford New York New Delhi Sydney: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), 33.

15 Abram, *The Spell of the Sensuous*, 117.

16 This phenomenon is also documented, within the discipline of qualitative psychology, in Raymond AR MacDonald and Graeme B Wilson. "Musical Choices during Group Free Improvisation: A Qualitative Psychological Investigation." *Psychology of Music 44*, no. 5 (September 2016): 1035.

17 McPherson, "More Than One Thing", 199.

18 Michael Schumacher, interviewed by author, November 2020.

19 Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience (New York: Harper Perennial, 1991).

20 Kent De Spain, *Landscape of the Now: A Topography of Movement Improvisation*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 101.

21 Faradena Afifi (Improviser), interviewed by author, April 2021. Artist information: https://www.cafeoto.co.uk/artists/faradena-afifi/

22 Alaimo in Kuznetski and Alaimo, "Transcorporeality", 139. See also Alaimo, "Thinking as the Stuff of the World." *University of Minnesota Press*, 2017.

23 Dr Maria Sappho (Improviser and Researcher), interviewed by author, May 2023. Artist website: https://www.mariasappho.com

24 Anne Bourne (Composer and Improviser), interviewed by author, May 2023. Artist website: https://www.annebournemusic.com

25 Kuznetski in Kuznetski and Alaimo, "Transcorporeality", 141.

26 Alaimo, "Transcorporeality", 437.

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Figure 1: *Water, Moss, Leaves, Trees, Soil*. Skipton Woods, October 2022, Image by Author
Figure 2: *Tree, Cracking, Birds, Loggers, Ants, Fabric, Whistling*. Norfolk Coast AONB, April 2021, Image by Author

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Dr Dougal 'Henry' McPherson is a musician and interdisciplinary artist working in composition, improvisation, performance, research, and teaching. His creative portfolio includes sound and music for concert, stage, and broadcast, site-specific pieces and gallery installation, experimental improvisation performance in sound and movement, and collaborative intermedia and hybrid-digital art pieces. His current creative interests lie in the intersections of improvisation performance and ecology, knowledge exchange and collaboration with the more-than-human, integrated sound and movement practices, and illustrated notation. He lives and works in East Lancashire.

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Exhibitions

St-arts
— Ángela Hoyos Gómez, Juan Hernández, Dr. Amy Chen, Inês Rebelo

Five Umbrellas
— Jackson Mouldycliff

Locked Hybrids
— Matthew Wright

Field Studies - Land Body Botany
— Yan Wang Preston & Monty Adkins

Oden
— Simon Connor

Panta Rhei
— Gareth Hudson

Drawing/Performing the Bath House Galleries
— Simon Woolham

The DOgS
— Michael Stewart & Hyunkook Lee

a cryptojudaic reading room
— Ben Spatz

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St-arts
Ángela Hoyos Gómez, Juan Hernández, Dr. Amy Chen, Inês Rebelo

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: Ángela Hoyos Gómez is a Music PhD candidate.

The sound art installation project *St-arts (or Star*ts)* positions itself at the intersection of art and science, and comprises two sonic compositions: 'Helium Burning' and 'Es-tela É-Toile Confab'. They were generated from the interpretation of astrochemical data and processes as musical parameters, and from devising an experimental metaphor to work with the voices of three female astrophysicists and science communicators: Dr Julieta Fierro, Dr Catherine Walsh and Teresa Paneque. To create the installation, the composers, Ángela Hoyos Gómez and Juan Hernández, collaborated with artist Inês Rebelo and a researcher in e-textiles and knitted textiles, Dr Amy Chen. Through these collaborative works, visitors were introduced to cosmic sonic blends, synesthetic experiences of micro-macro scales, and unheard conversations threading models and speculative representations of the universe.

The 3 collaborative spaces composing the exhibition were *Star*ts* 'Cluster 1', *Star*ts* 'Cluster 2' and *Star*ts* 'aftermath'.

*Star*ts* 'Cluster 1' was developed from conversations between artist Inês Rebelo, and music researcher Juan Hernández, as a creative mixed media cluster investigating our closest star's present stage and evolution. Reflecting on the Sun's activity in the age of the Anthropocene, Rebelo contributed a series of drawings titled 'Radioastronomy (here comes the Sun)' (2018), and 'Two Suns' (2023) which focuses on the Sun's outer layer, the corona. In conjunction, Hernández created the generative composition 'Helium Burning' (2023), investigating audible mappings of the helium burning stage in a red giant star, a stage our Sun will reach one day.

*Star*ts* 'Cluster 2', 'Es-tela É-toile Confab', is a collaboration between music researcher Ángela Hoyos Gómez, and researcher in e-textiles and knitted textiles, Dr Amy Chen. Through an immersive installation of four sculptural textiles and processed vocal sounds, this formed the first stage of a sonic composition in process, highlighting the presence of women in astronomy.

Chen and Hoyos Gómez placed together the four knitted pieces by considering the location of the four speakers for the quadraphonic composition, aiming to unfold potential paths for visitors to discover the textile artwork in conjunction with the sound.

The concept behind the sonic composition Hoyos Gómez presented in the gallery, entitled 'Es-tela É-toile Confab', is based on the metaphor of an evolving interwoven universe, hinted at by the string theory model, in which strings of different vibrational states interact with each other, forming the basis of material bonds. This metaphor also draws from myths depicting narratives in which female characters such as Neith (Egypt) or the Fates (Greece) are twining the threads of life in connection with universal forces. The sound spatialisation itself, follows the knitted universe metaphor, with two dual sources of processed vocal sounds as sonic yarns, interlaced in time in each of the three sections of the piece. The interlaced figure formed by the pair of dual sound sources moves circularly in the installation space, recalling the shared roundness of planets, rings and stars.

*Star*ts* 'aftermath' was developed in response to the fruitful experience of the collaboration and its reception among the visitors. Hoyos Gómez performed a short sound poem at the opening event, embedding digits of pi, to keep building on the notion of stellar circularity. The team of artists are looking forward to a reprise of the exhibition over a longer period.

Dr Amy Chen is a textile designer-maker and educator. Her practice encompasses textiles and technology in different ways, from her work in e-textiles (interactive textiles that incorporate electronics) to knitting with a hacked vintage knitting machine.

Inês Rebelo is an artist, digital media designer and educator. An astronomical expedition lies at the heart of Rebelo's practice. Working across drawing, painting and installation, her recent works invite us to revisit our closest star in the context of the Anthropocene.

Ángela Hoyos Gómez and Juan Hernández are currently Music PhD candidates at the universities of Huddersfield and Leeds (UK); Hernández is teacher and researcher at Pontificia Universidad Javeriana. They play together in the duo project Ulrica Duo, experimenting with sound – to movement – to colour synaesthesia, and creating scenes in which the morphing presence of the performers sketches cosmic tales.

PhD students Ángela Hoyos Gómez and Juan Hernández were funded by COLCIENCIAS—Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation of Colombia, Government —call for PhD applications 885-2020 Resolution 0071 January 2021 and 860-2019 Resolution 0031 December 2019 respectively.

Research approach (Cultures of Making): *Drawing on astronomy, sound, and textiles research to investigate beginnings in stellar evolution, the bisociation between nucleosynthesis and sound synthesis, and to highlight the presence of women in astronomy, through immersive textiles and processed vocal sounds from talks on stellar evolution.*

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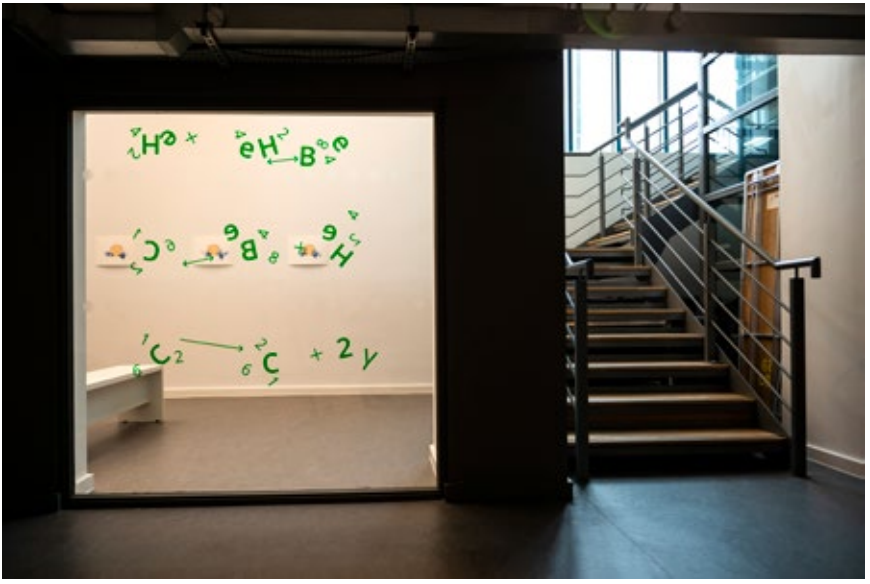

Five Umbrellas

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Five Umbrellas
Jackson Mouldycliff

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: PhD candidate in Music Technology.

Five Umbrellas is an interactive installation by Jackson Mouldycliff, comprising a series of soundscapes installed within objects, that could be directly interacted with by participants. The appearance and form of the installation was led by visitor participation, meaning that the work shifted and changed throughout its duration. A text-based prompt was provided by Mouldycliff as interpretation for visitors.

In *Five Umbrellas*, objects tell stories, even the mundane ones that we don't necessarily consider in our day to day lives. They exist in spite of and alongside us, gathering history, age, and experience, as they are discarded, lost, passed on…

Five Umbrellas sought to bring to light five such stories of objects lost and found, through fragments of gathered information, partially forgotten memories, and found sounds.

With five different characters and narratives; TRAVELLER: CHILD: MOURNER: HEDONIST: PESSIMIST, audiences were invited to take one of the umbrellas, stand beneath the canvas and immerse themselves in the soundscape. Participants could uncover the narrative of the object, experience how one soundscape interacted with the others and the environment, or simply reflect upon their own umbrella memories. How the installation was experienced, and for how long was up to each visitor.

Everyday objects can act as tangible keys that allow us to unlock partially forgotten memories, emotions and experiences. *Five Umbrellas* sought to create an environment that engaged this kind of interaction and enabled the viewer to insert part of their own experience into the constructed narrative of the umbrellas. The 'reality' of the narrative became irrelevant as it was replaced by an amalgamation of what was perceived or understood, and evoked for each participant.

Jackson Mouldycliff is an audiovisual artist, composer, and researcher based in the UK. Jackson's work has been showcased across the UK and abroad including Australia and the US.

Research approach (Making Place): *An interactive soundscape installation using umbrellas as everyday objects to unlock memories, emotions, and experiences.*

Locked Hybrids

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Locked Hybrids
Matthew Wright

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival (hcmf//) is supported by the School of Arts and Humanities.

First commissioned by hcmf// for a live online broadcast as part of the 2020 festival, Locked Hybrids is an audiovisual work that sees composer and producer Matthew Wright remix his album of the same name. Now In August 2023. Locked Hybrids saw its physical premiere as an installation at Dai Hall.

Sound in the work is built entirely from samples of saxophonist Evan Parker, extracted from the album and cast into a continuous 30-minute study of fractured pulse and glitch. This approach is reflected through the use of fractured narrative and jumpcut techniques in the film, constructed from footage taken during Wright's 2009 travels through Mongolia. Together, these elements present an absorbing recontextualisation of Parker's musicianship, warped and transformed as the desert takes its toll:

"In the huge expanse of the Gobi, time feels different: the horizon is always out there in the future, the heat is ever present, and you are reminded of the past distances already travelled."

Matthew Wright is a composer, producer and sound designer based in Kent, UK.

Research approach (Cultures of Making): *A physical premiere of an audiovisual collaborative work.*

Field Studies – Land Body Botany

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Field Studies - Land Body Botany
Yan Wang Preston & Monty Adkins

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: Yan Wang Preston is Senior Lecturer in Photography & Monty Adkins is Professor of Composition.

Yan Wang Preston has conducted careful and exhaustive artistic research around the rhododendron from her perspective as a photographer, and in collaboration with composer Monty Adkins and textile artist Carrie Williams has situated it within post and decolonial narratives, as well as literally within the landscape of West Yorkshire and East Lancashire. Here, visual and auditory responses to the passing of time and the turning of the seasons are manifested through material representations which reference the artists' cultural heritage and complicate their relationship to the categorising impulse of the institution. For the first time Wang Preston produced sculptural objects which contain layers of meaning bound up in her choices around construction and materials, whereas Adkins and Williams brought their distinct artistic and artisanal practices to bear on this body of research.

Field Studies – Land Body Botany comprised two companion series, shown together in full for the first time. Among them, 'With Love. From an Invader.' (2020-21) is an immersive multi-screen projection with an original soundscape, made from Wang Preston's 182 walks to one love-heart-shaped rhododendron bush within one year. 'Autumn Winter Spring Summer' (2020-23) is a set of photographic objects and installations including a six-meter-long handscroll, a series of specially constructed lightboxes and an artist-specimen book, inspired by botanical methods and hybrid identities. The following text was presented alongside the exhibition for audience interpretation.

An Ecology of a Migrant

The rhododendron, a beautiful plant whose dark green leaves, twisted branches and magenta blooms are now a common site throughout Britain's countryside, is also poignant as a symbol of imperial hubris and how attitudes towards migrants can shift swiftly and violently. Britain is a multicultural society in terms of both its human and non-human residents. Yet, often institutions and individuals lack the tolerance of this island's rich soil and temperate weather. Many non-native species, brought by imperial scientists or simply arriving incidentally, contribute to a recombinant ecology that is characteristic of Britain as a post-colonial country. However, a colonial hierarchy persists whereby native species are considered superior to non-native species, as with the rhododendron.

From 17th March 2020 to 16th March 2021, at a frequency of every other day, Wang Preston walked to and photographed one love-heart-shaped Rhododendron Ponticum bush, found on an industrial wasteland at the

outskirts of Burnley in Lancashire, a stone's throw away from her cottage in West Yorkshire. These 182 ritualistic walks, taking at least two hours each, provided time and space for further exploration. The resulting artwork, 'With Love. From an Invader.' (2020-21), is a visual and auditory document that provides evidence of the rhododendron's significance as a keystone species for these non-human inhabitants. In this immersive installation the multi-screen projection and soundscape form an emotive environment for the viewer, journeying through the seasons along with the local plants and animals.

'Autumn Winter Spring Summer' (2020-23) sees Wang Preston moving from observation to action. Focusing her study on a smaller rhododendron shrub around the same height as the artist, she collected all its falling autumnal leaves in 2020, seed capsules and aborted flower buds in the winter of 2020-2021 and fading flowers in the spring and summer of 2021. 'Autumn – Leaves' became a six-meter-long handscroll, depicting overlayed photographs of all the collected leaves touched twice by the artist's hand. The piece is printed on Chinese rice paper and produced by the best traditional craftsmen in Shanghai, a fitting testimony of the rhododendron's multicultural roots.

In 'Winter - Seed Capsules', Wang Preston arranged all the collected seed capsules into a circular shape on a bed of snow in her garden. She then set fire to the seeds while documenting the process on a large-format film camera. Unexpected snowfall re-covered the burnt seeds and completed the work that comprises a sequence of eleven. Within this work, the rage felt by migrant people like Wang Preston when referred to with terms like 'non-native, invasive', along with the persistence of the rhododendrons, and the healing power of nature are simultaneously present.

'Winter – Bud Blast', the third piece in the series, sees Wang Preston meticulously dissecting all seventy-five 'aborted' flower buds, one by one – a process recorded by Adkins. Spending hundreds of hours studying such 'valueless' specimens became a process of deep reflection for the artist on the significance of dissection in both botanical medical settings. Raised in a family of doctors, Wang Preston was made by her father to study western medicine.

Finally, having collected all the fallen flowers from the same rhododendron shrub in the Spring and Summer of 2021, Wang Preston sculpted them to form an elliptical shape reminiscent of the vulva. This references the human-scale of this plant and the artist's growing identification with it, as she explored and dissected her own personal history and how it has been influenced by factors like colonialism and patriarchal values.

A new fabric work by Carrie Williams accompanied the work of Wang Preston and Adkins, specially created for this presentation at the Bath

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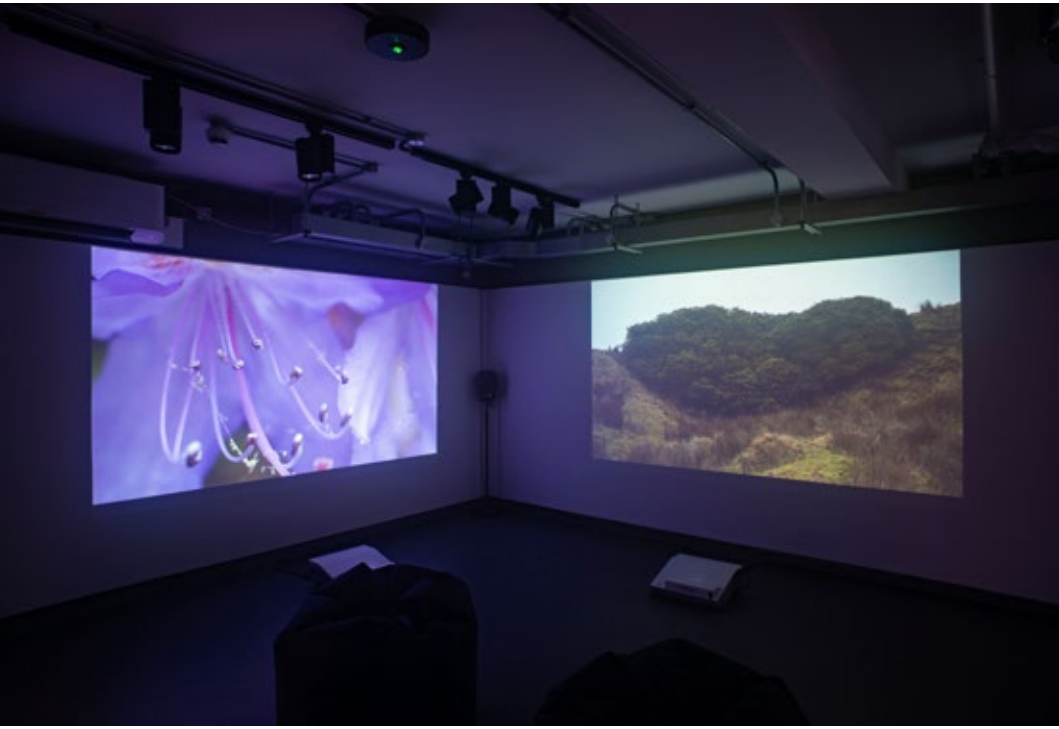
House Galleries, ‘Remnants’ (2023) is constructed from the remains of Yan Wang Preston’s ‘Field Studies’ including seed pods, rhododendron flowers, and leaves. The circular form of the work expands on the symbolism in Preston’s Winter-Seed Capsules whilst also embracing and emphasising the tactility and fragility of the remnants incorporated into the work.

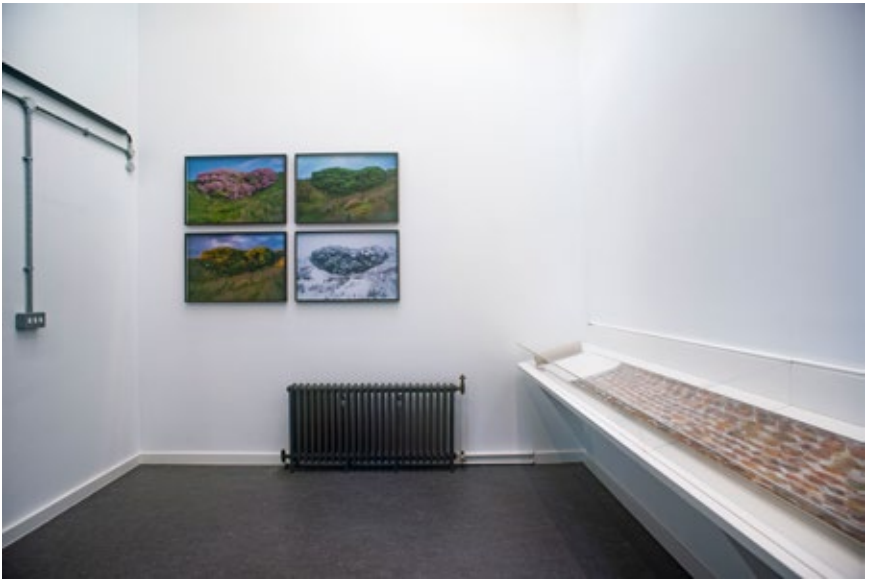
Dr Yan Wang Preston Research Profile:
Yan Preston — University of Huddersfield Research Portal

Professor Monty Adkins Research Profile:
Monty Adkins — University of Huddersfield Research Portal

Carrie Williams is an arts and crafts practitioner based in Marsden, West Yorkshire, specialising in textiles.

Research approach (Cultures of Making): *Collaborating through creative skill to reflect on place-based, sociopolitical and identity-based issues.*





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Otherness and Empathy in Sonic Art: the artistic implementation of electroacoustic transduction

David Vélez

7

Introduction

The advancement of ethnographic and bioacoustic collaboration in sonic arts presents questions concerning difference, Otherness, biases, and empathy in listening, considering practitioners working with others with different sensibilities to sound. Electroacoustic transducers are devices that, in the arts, have welcomed the spectator to listen differently and experience vibration in unfamiliar ways. Electroacoustic tactile and bone transducers and audio exciters transform electric impulses into acoustic vibration, propagating through solid and other materials, including human bones, tree trunks and leaves. Transducers and exciters have applications in acoustics, mechatronic engineering, otorhinolaryngology, prosthetics, and audiology, to mention a few. Among other functions, these devices can convert the surface of objects into pervasive acoustic projectors, propagate acoustic vibration from one solid to another, and operate quietly to the external ear.

Glossary

Listening: the ability to advance learning and communication through the perception of sonic stimuli, a capacity humans share with non-human animals and some plants and fungi species.[1]

Difference: Refers to the differentiated biological and morphological aspects deciding how every individual organism senses sound.

Otherness: Concerns how the subjectivity of the listener approaches difference, which determines how they identify others.

Biases: These are the preconceptions of the auditor, surfacing in encounters with Otherness, which prevent them from establishing communication with others.

Empathy: The ability of the listener to detect and contest their biases to create reciprocating exchanges with their sonic surroundings.

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Relevance and Scope in Listening Culture

Difference in human hearing is the subject of study of the project Aural Diversity led by Andrew Hugill and John Levack Drever, who substantiate this subject: "Aural Diversity arises from the observation that everybody hears differently. The assumption that we all possess a standard, undifferentiated pair of ears underpins most listening scenarios. But this is demonstrably incorrect." [2] The research of Aural Diversity pertains to fields of study that range from the arts and architecture to psychology and neuroscience, to mention just a few, which evidences the scope of interest in the subject. On their website, this project published a comprehensive list of all the sensorineural, conductive, mixed and neurological aspects that determine differences in hearing, indicating that 83 % of the population present "not-normal" hearing, evidencing the pressing importance of enhancing diversity in the study of aurality.[3]

Intersubjectivity, Empathy and Silence

Intersubjectivity is a term incorporated by Salomé Voegelin, which in this article is critical to examine empathy in listening. For her, "the sonic reality is intersubjective in that it does not exist without my being in it and I in turn only exist in my complicity with it."[4] *Complicity* describes the extent of attention that the auditor needs to pay to engage with their listening *intersubjectively*. We can infer that complicity concerns an active involvement and confidentiality, values associated with silence:

> Silence is about listening, listening to small sounds, tiny sounds, quiet and loud sounds out of any context, musical, visual or otherwise. Silent sounds can be loud, as much as noisy sounds can be quiet, but they do not deafen my body to anything but themselves, and instead include me in their production. In silence the visual perspective vanishes into sensorial simultaneity. The sound field is compact but potentially infinite. The tiny sounds are close up and real, to the point of being hyper-real: shiny and sharp, quasi-tangible, heard through the surface of my skin. They do not represent the real but produce a reality all of their own.[5]

Silence surfaces in this article as a paradigm for advancing empathic experiences. It is a silence that is active, attentive, unselfish, generous and accomplice, essential to ensure communication and unconditionally listening to others, demonstrating an interest. In her theories Luce Irigaray studies silence as the principle of interspecies communication and establishes parallels between Hegel's ideas and Buddha's teachings. She suggests that, for Hegel, the philosophical aim is to gather all discourses into one wholeness. For Buddha, she observes, the purpose is to reach silence:

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> Listening to the uniqueness of another existence, and considering its irreducibility with respect to my own, is a way to overcome the dependence on a truth, a discourse, or a master presumed to know the whole. It is to recognize another life as transcendent to my own and to my world, forever unknowable to myself. Thus I listen to this life, letting it be and grow, as to something that I cannot fabricate or master. [6]

Irigaray acknowledges that in modernity, silence is approached with disdain, considering the selflessness and generosity it implies in a culture that favours the ego and centres on individual needs.[7] Silence, she suggests, is culturally associated with "nature and to the women assimilated to nature."[8] Regarding this, Irigaray perceives an ontological connection between women, motherhood and silence, where the latter provides a space for the growth of the developing infant in the womb.[9]

John Cage suggests that we can't hear the same sound twice, highlighting the value of every split-second that builds our listening experience.[10] In Irigaray and Voegelin, the uniqueness of every sound around us is invaluable, an embodiment of the diversity of sensibilities it traverses, hence their invitation to listen empathetically to recognize the transcendence of the other(s) in my encounter with them. In the next section, this paper will examine artworks embodying and articulating concepts navigated here, where we can appreciate how they entangle with elements of contemporary sonic practice. It asks the question:

How do transducers and exciters help sonic artists advance artworks that encourage empathy in listening?

Artworks

Leonel Vásquez: *Cantos Silentes en Cuerpos de Madera (Silent Chants in Wood Bodies)*, 2017.[11]

Leonel Vásquez is a Colombian artist and investigator who works with sound installation, sculpture, and audio recording. He produced *Silent Chants in Wood Bodies* to guide a ceremony in which the Colombian government and the military forces accepted responsibility for the Santo Domingo massacre, [12] which occurred in the Arauca region in 1998, leaving seventeen fatalities.[13] Regarding the work, he comments:

> Silent songs in wood bodies contribute to reconstructing the memory of the communities affected by the armed conflict by incorporating the symbolic language of sound art. This project reflects on a series of symbolic acts in various parts of the country where tree-planting

> ceremonies commemorated the armed conflict's victims. It leads to questioning: if the trees symbolising the victims told us their stories, what sounds would we hear?[14]

The artist indicates he approached the project as a collaboration with the families and friends of the seventeen deceased which was initially challenging as they were reluctant and unable to understand the purpose of remembering such a traumatic experience. Vásquez acknowledges a rewarding follow-up after spending time with them without speaking about the 1998 killing, which encouraged them to voluntarily start sharing sounding objects, songs, recordings and spoken memories to honour the victims. From these memories he created seventeen pieces projected into seventeen growing trees not taller than 150cm at the time of the ceremony. The transducers were located in the tree roots disseminating the acoustic vibration through the branches and leaves. Vásquez indicates that with this technology, he encouraged the audience to place their ears on the surface of the trees to listen attentively and affectionately to the memories embodied in each tree.[15]

In *Silent Chants in Wood Bodies*, the artist incorporates transducers to advance silence as a respectful gesture towards the victims and the families who co-authored the piece. The silence that gave genesis to the creation of this project and the initial doubt, and reserve of the co-authors are present when the artwork emerges imperceptible on first listen. The confidence deposited in the process by the families required reciprocity, and here Vásquez, with the discreet complicity of the trees, helped create a heartfelt tribute recognizing the transcendence of the seventeen victims in their community. The silence the artist addresses in *Silent Chants in Wood Bodies* is intersubjective and political when the listener overcomes their encounter with the opening silence and engages with the families co-authoring the installation in solidarity. Furthermore, we can infer that in each growing tree, the auditor is acknowledging and honouring the hundreds of thousands of victims of the Colombian armed conflict and inevitably hoping for an ending to this horror. In his investigation, where we perceive elements of contemporary ethnography, we distinguish Vásquez incorporating sound to investigate the experiences of the collaborating families and help them alleviate their grief through the curative possibility of community art supported by electroacoustic technologies.

Laurie Anderson: *The Handphone Table*, 1978.[16]

When North American artist Laurie Anderson covered her ears with her hands in frustration while typewriting in an electric machine, she surprisingly could still listen to it quietly humming.[17] Since she was resting her elbows on the table, she perceived the noise through her skull and arm bones, an experience that she later articulated in *The Handphone Table*, presented in

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MoMA in 1978 under the curatorship of Barbara London. Anderson adapts a rectangular wooden table with two transducers at each end, placed in two indentations to facilitate contact with the elbow bones. The vibration spreads through the arms reaching the skull and the inner ear. In the artwork diagram, the artist indicates that the pieces play from a low-frequency tape source connected to an amplifier that feeds the transducers allocated inside the table which is acoustically isolated, making the table appear silent.[18] For this installation, Anderson composed two pieces titled ***Now You in Me Without a Body Move*** and ***And I Remember You in My Bones***, described in a letter on the Eschaton Foundation website:

> We used low frequency sounds because they travel more slowly and predictably and produce less leakage. The songs were scored for Fender Rhodes, acoustic piano, violin and voice. Sounds were panned from side to side and seemed to resonate in a different area-lower and more at the base of the head than with normal headphones. The difference between the pure organ notes and the same notes on the piano, which included ringing overtones and harmonics, became more apparent as the organ was heard in one ear, the piano in the other and then in opposite positions. [19]

In *The Handphone Table*, transducers help Anderson recreate an unusual and corporeal encounter with sound and its strong impression on her. Their enticing dermic and osseous vibration persuades the listener to willingly participate and establish a close encounter with the sensibility that bone-acoustics initially advanced in her. The transducers facilitate the performative role of the visitor, encouraging them to listen empathetically, constructing an intersubjective resonance in which their participation is indispensable. The table is covered by a layer of silence containing a secreted sonic place that the listener only inhabits after closing their ears. When a second visitor joins, the furniture-human complicity expands into a resonant triptych where densities and subjectivities converge. In this piece, the listeners and the heard object interweave, evident when the auditor perceives the sound as emanating from the inside.

Autoethnographic Practice-led Research- David Vélez: *Bones*, 2023.[20]

Bones was created after an invitation to present an artwork in a public building in the town centre of Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, where people unwind, socialise, and work. My idea was to create an installation that could establish harmonic relations with these individuals, aware of how imposing and pervasive public space art can be. I began envisioning an installation that could circumnavigate the bystanders but permeate the perception of the voluntary spectators, which I approached as creating a space within a space using sound. To articulate this idea, I researched the acoustics of the

baby in the womb, finding that after 16 weeks, they sense the presence of their mother through her heartbeat, breathing and digesting sounds, which they can listen to through the mastoid bones of the skull using the spinal cord like an antenna. A few weeks later, the baby can perceive sounds outside the womb, starting with their mother's voice.[21]

I developed *Bones* to evoke our first sonic memories as babies, creating an immersive experience that could provide the listeners with comfort. I conceived two objects, one projecting sound across the mandible and another to the mastoid bones. Following up, I composed a piece for each object using sine waves corresponding to the resonating frequency of human skulls, 35-65 Hz,[22] and tones in the medium and higher spectrum, 500 and 7,500 Hz, at which the cranium is also very sensitive.[23] The pieces also implement waves ranging between 1,000 and 1,400 Hz, the resonant range of teeth.[24] I created the transducing objects by adapting one pair of exciters into a neck pillow and another into an industrial drum modified so the spectator could place their chin. I welcomed the visitors to close their ears using their hands or use the noise-cancelling devices I made available.

In *Bones*, transducers helped to create an experience of intimacy and calmness in an unlikely place, surrounded by individuals going on with their daily activities that can be loud. This artwork allowed me to address the problematic presence of sound art in public spaces, negotiated thanks to the implementation of transducers. The composition integrating the resonant frequencies of the skull bones gave rewarding reactions in the visitors who played with the aperture of their mouth to affect the resonance inside their mouth, and carefully closed their jaws to feel the vibration between upper and lower teeth. It evidenced to me the active and essential role that participants advance when the artworks integrate bone transducers.

Reflections

Transducers and exciters help sonic artists create artworks that encourage empathy in listening when they advance an intersubjective engagement from the spectators, by making their bodies indispensable and their attention vital. These art pieces require the listener to dissociate from what is sonically familiar and welcome a different way to experience and understand the acoustic sensibility of their bodies. These artworks help contest biases that associate listening exclusively to airborne propagation and the outer ear and re-evaluate the appreciation of sound stimuli as external phenomena. These technologies also surface auspiciously to address silence in sonic art, thanks to how they propagate sound through matter, helping artists to develop silent pieces that, after physical contact between auditor and transducer, surface intense, detailed and deep experiences. Considering the importance of studying difference and Otherness in contemporary sonic

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culture, and the implementation of silence and intersubjectivity in contesting listening biases, electroacoustic transduction emerges as propitious to develop a more diverse and empathetic understanding of aurality in the arts.

Endnotes

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5 Voegelin, *Listening to Noise and Silence*, 10.

6 Lucy Irigaray and Michael Marder, *Through Vegetal Being* (New York, Columbia University Press, 2016), 95..

7 Irigaray and Marder, *Through Vegetable Being*, 95.

8 Irigaray and Marder, *Through Vegetable Being*, 95.

9 Irigaray and Marder, *Through Vegetable Being*, 95.

10 Sharon Unrau, *Children's Dance: An exploration through the techniques of Merce Cunningham*. Thesis. Ohio State University. 2000: 112 http://rave.ohiolink.edu/etdc/view?acc_num=osu1488194825668023

11 Leonel Vásquez, *Cantos Silentes en Cuerpos de Madera (Silent Chants in Wood Bodies*), 31st August 2017, (Installation- Living trees, multichannel audio, benches, plant pots, and sound transducers,. Radio Nacional, Colombia, https://www.leonelvasquez.com/obra/cuerpo-para-una-voz-ausente/

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20 David Vélez, Bones, January 2023, (Installation- Neck pillow, industrial drum, arm-chairs and bone transducers), The Media Centre and Making Space, Huddersfield, https://habitatsonoro.wordpress.com/2023/02/13/bones/

21 Grace Lee and Barbara Kisilevsky. “Fetuses Respond to Father’s Voice But Prefer Mother’s Voice after Birth”.*Developmental psychobiology*. 56 (2014). 10.1002/dev.21084.https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/dev.21084

22 Jitwipar Suwangbutra, Rachelle Tobias, Michael S. Gordon “Music of the body: An investigation of skull resonance and its influence on musical preferences”. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* 133, 3366 (2013). https://doi.org/10.1121/1.4805756

23 Bo Håkansson, Anders Brandt, Peder Carlsson and Anders Tjellström. “Resonance frequencies of the human skull in vivo”. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* 95 (1994), 95. 1474-81. 10.1121/1.408535. https://pubs.aip.org/asa/jasa/article/95/3/1474-1481/968869

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David Vélez is a sonic artist investigating the acoustics of horticulture and the sensibility of plants and their ecosystems to sound. His work is interdisciplinary, implementing technologies from bioacoustics, geoacoustics, ethnography and food anthropology to advance ecological and socially engaged projects. David centres his work on musical synthesis, electroacoustic transduction and underground and subaquatic recording.

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Biophilia, David Vélez. The Bath House Galleries, 2023

Oden

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Oden
Simon Connor

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: PhD student in the Department of Music and Design Arts.

Oden, an audiovisual installation, is an immersive exploration of landscape presented in high-definition video and binaural audio. This is a collaborative project between composer/sound artist Simon Connor and filmmaker Andrew Brooks. The work is a study and a reimagination of Odin's Gully, located in the evocative landscape of the Peak District. Between 2016 and 2020, Connor and Brooks gathered material from this unique site during winter, spring, summer and autumn months, filming and field recording using spatial audio techniques. The culmination of this project is presented via large screen video projection and dynamic binaural audio. Audiences may explore the work in their own time and pace, experiencing an immersive and intimate journey of landscape.

The sound of Oden forms part of Connor's practice-based research doctorate at the University of Huddersfield; a holistic combination of field recordings from site, sound design and music. The work blurs sonic elements together into a synergetic relationship, so that they appear to emerge from the same environment. Oden features musical performances from members of the BBC Philharmonic and music department staff members from the University of Salford, these recordings are edited and woven amongst the field recordings. Musical ideas are informed by the environmental sound, using mimetic and algorithmic processes to echo and reinforce its particular features in terms of shape, contour, timbre, texture, spatialisation and rhythm, with musical counterparts. The approach is informed by the idea of the 'integrated soundtrack' which "consciously combine(s) sound design and music into the overall concept and design".[1] These moving parts of environmental sound and music interact, "dovetailing and fusing into one another".[2]

The visual aesthetic of Oden can be typified as a landscape film, "as images of landscape are all we see".[3] It shares similarities with that of ecocinema or slow cinema;[4] encapsulating long takes, a contemplation on the details of nature, and a lack of human protagonists,[5] akin to a moving photograph with sound and music.

The sound of Oden may be experienced via dynamic headtracked binaural audio. A small headtracking unit fixed atop the listener's headphones means that changes in head rotation and position will update the binaural mix, providing increased realism when listening. As argued by Roginska, "when correctly captured, synthesized, and reproduced, binaural signals create a powerful impression of spatial sounds as they appear in the natural listening environment".[6]

This textural combination of sight and sound, presented in an installation environment, is intended to enable a contemplative, and enriched multimodal perception of place. As described by Lucy Fife-Donaldson:

> [...] the world depicted audiovisually engages touch and smell as much as sight and hearing. Sound makes a vital contribution to the evocation of other senses, for example, the sound of wind rustling leaves invites the feel of air on our skin, or the sizzle of food cooking conjures taste.[7]

For more information on Oden, please visit:
https://simonconnor.co.uk/oden

Simon Connor is a musician, composer, sound designer. Alongside lecturing in Music Technology at the University of Salford, he creates music and sound design for film and gallery installations. He is currently undertaking his PhD in immersive soundscapes at the University of Huddersfield in CeReNeM.

Research approach (Making Place): *Using audiovisual practices developed and honed as part of PhD research to explore new ways of representing specific places and sites.*

Images courtesy of Andrew Brooks.

10.5920/CulturesOfSound

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3 Scott MacDonald, *The garden in the machine: A field guide to independent films about place* (University of California Press, 2001), 3.

4 Scott MacDonald, "The Ecocinema Experience", in *Ecocinema Theory and Practice*, eds. Stephen Rust, Salma Monani, and Sean Cubitt (Routledge, 2012)

5 Tiago de Luca,"Natural Views: Animals, Contingency and Death in Carlos Reygada's Japon and Lisandro Alonso's Los Muertos" in *Slow Cinema*, eds. Tiago de Luca and Nuno Barrados Jorge (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 2016), 220.

6 Agnieszka Roginska, "Binaural Audio Through Headphones. In Immersive Sound: The Art and Science of Binaural and Multi-Channel Audio" in *Immersive Sound*, eds. Agnieszka Roginska and Paul Geluso (Routledge, 2017), 92.

7 Lucy Fife-Donaldson, "Feeling and filmmaking: The design and affect of film sound", The New Soundtrack, Volume 7, Issue 1, (2017): 32, https://doi.org/10.3366/sound.2017.0095

Panta Rhei

10.5920/CulturesOfSound

Panta Rhei
Gareth Hudson

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: Lecturer in Moving Image.

Panta Rhei is a new work developed in 2023 that is devoted to the profundity of the human voice and is a celebration of light as a symbol for revelry in the numinous; relating to divinity and religious feeling, or in secular terms; awe and mystery. Using religious and secular choirs, both amateur and professional, the work takes snippets of lyrics and abstracts them using traditional and experimental choral and studio techniques. The results are accompanied by a synchronised kinetic light display, giving visual presence to the ephemerality of the performers' 'sacred' voice.

Panta Rhei premiered at Lumiere Festival, Durham 16-19 November 2023, and as part of Cultures of Sound there was another chance to experience the work. Lumiere Festival first took place in 2009 and is a project by Artichoke, who devised and produced HERD for Kirklees Year of Music. The accompanying images here are stills from 'Everything was Beautiful and nothing hurt: work I' by Gareth Hudson.

Gareth Hudson Research Profile:
Gareth Hudson - University of Huddersfield Research Portral

Research approach (Making Place): *Using audiovisual practices honed through previous practice, developing new work for site-specific presentations that encourage deep sensory and emotional reflection on the profundity in place.*

Drawing/Performing the Bath House Galleries

10.5920/CulturesOfSound

Drawing/Performing the Bath House Galleries

Simon Woolham

Relationship to SAH: Lecturer in Contemporary Art & Illustration.

Drawing/Performing The Bath House Galleries contributes to current debates on the importance of drawing, considering its entanglements with sites of history, as a tool for evolving song making and its role in the creation of narrative. The project posits that this expanded drawing practice can be a connective node between place, body, history, and time.

At the heart of *Drawing/Performing The Bath House Galleries* is the assertion that drawing as an embodied act is both an individual and collective process, and the process in turn enables an exploration and excavation of space through various approaches to drawing and song making, connecting and curating sites' narrative and histories by capturing textures, vistas, traces, movement of history and narrative. These processes are informed by the social geographer Doreen Massey's foundational work in changing our perceptions of space and the importance of space as 'the dimension of things being, existing at the same time: of simultaneity'.[1] Walking, drawing, and making as a physical, mental and aural process is at the core of the work. In uniting the processes for *Drawing/Performing The Bath House Galleries*, time and space interact, are integral, and unfold simultaneously. The strategy of the continually emerging artworks goes some way towards making visible the untapped narratives of spaces and their potential. This is achieved when a stream of consciousness is opened up by engaging the public directly with the artwork and the realms of spaces that are experienced through the drawings; 'walked through'.

The artists' first experience of seeing a brass rubbing being made was of Sir Richard's Tomb by Indiana Jones in *The Last Crusade* from 1989, which is also the year they left secondary school and their artistic 'expedition' began. In this scene the partially flooded tomb is found by Indiana Jones in the catacombs of Venice. He opens up the tomb to discover a shield buried with the knight. Recognising that the inscription on the shield matches the inscription on the Holy Grail tablet, he makes a rubbing of the shield's text. The historical and common practice of the physical, bodily process of brass rubbing is still in use by archaeologists, architects, biologists and even environmentalists, as well as brass plaque lovers. Brass rubbing was originally a largely British enthusiasts' pastime for reproducing monumental brasses – commemorative brass plaques found in churches, where, in some cases, brass plaques are slowly but surely worn away by the rubbing process, and in many cases creating rubbings is banned.

The building of the frottage collage is both a visual and physical experience, involving a bodily act of drawing out and working with the textures of history. Throughout the process of collecting graphite rubbings and constructing

the drawing, the artist simultaneously develops songs, excavated from the qualities of the textures that are being captured, along with the narratives, conversations, and language that comes to the fore through this process. The drawing fragments act as material for a musical score and create a space for performing the songs, in turn exploring the various ecologies and adaptive qualities of environments.

The musical textures, use of tone and speech are an extension to the drawing practice; a performative drawing process. The relationship between environment and walking, song and line, has previously been described by the travel writer Bruce Chatwin in his book *Songlines* (1987).[2] In his research for *Songlines*, Chatwin devoted a period of his life to studying First Nations People, who bring about the existence of a place and their connection to the place by singing and walking through it; creating narrative 'lifelines'. In a previous project, *Depth/Gauge* (2022),[3] it was noted that the historical and archetypal gesture of the canal was to connect places (and therefore people) that had never been connected before. So, using that analogy, the artist wanted to develop a drawing methodology that connected and united histories, or what we might call layers of non-linear and unconnected narrative, through walking and drawing through the past in the present, and imagining futures. It is the becoming, the promise, and the future vision of a site that the artist imagines through the process.

The artworks evolved from a deep engagement with histories along the towpath of Huddersfield Narrow Canal, and the process of collecting graphite rubbings functioned as a way of engaging with the canal's histories and generating layers of narrative around the locale. Another recent project with Drawing Projects UK examined the physical and psychological processes involved with walking and generating the rubbings, positing drawing as a way of being transported to and into a place; it's histories and one's own experiences within it. On the canal, for example, you can swiftly move from witnessing a couple riding a shiny black electric cruiser, representing the leisurely, to those that have dropped out of mainstream society, taking refuge within a tarpaulin stretched across an ex-cargo carrying barge.

The process used here engages with spaces and surfaces through both the physical process of rubbings and the psychological experience of walking into the unknown. The amassed rubbings are then interpreted in relation to what they suggest about the experienced topography. The artist sees the process as akin to cubism; a multifaceted exploration of space and history, looking up, looking down, across and behind, in and out. The process is often instinctive and organic, interpreting the past, present and future visions of a historically and socially significant site.

The practice described here produces vistas of history, forming a theatrical backdrop for defining space which connects its past with the present, highlighting how history and space are not fixed quantities, but rather are

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mediated through individual and collective experience. Furthermore, the pictorial space of the generated drawing acts as a space for interconnectivity and reflection on the histories and spaces represented. 'Towards the unknown' is the amassed artwork for Drawing Projects UK, and is re-amassed for *Drawing/Performing The Bath House Galleries*, heightening the spatial, rhythmic and reflective nature of the walks previously undertaken along with the physical space of the gallery itself alongside the evolved songs which draw on previous iterations of the process to reference canal history, language, signs and future interpretative narrative.

To supplement the physical installation Simon Woolham and L.A.S.H., an Indie/Folk/Goth band based in Macclesfield, performing 'Towards the unknown' constituting an extension of the drawing.

Simon Woolham Research Profile:
Simon Woolham - University of Huddersfield Research Portral

Research approach (Making Place): Using experimental audiovisual practices to explore sites of history from a variety of perspectives.

Endnotes

1 Doreen Massey, *For Space* (SAGE, 2005).

2 Bruce Chatwin, *The Songlines* (Random House, 1998).

3 Simon Woolham and Jodie Matthews, "Depth Gauge" in *Cultures of Place* ed. Rowan Bailey, Claire Booth-Kurpnieks and Lauren Velvick (Huddersfield: University of Huddersfield Press, 2022).

Further links:
Simon Woolham- In Search of the Shortcuts
https://research.hud.ac.uk/media/assets/document/research/ceada/SimonWoolham-InSearchoftheShortcuts-web.pdf
L.A.S.H https://www.instagram.com/l.a.s.h.1/

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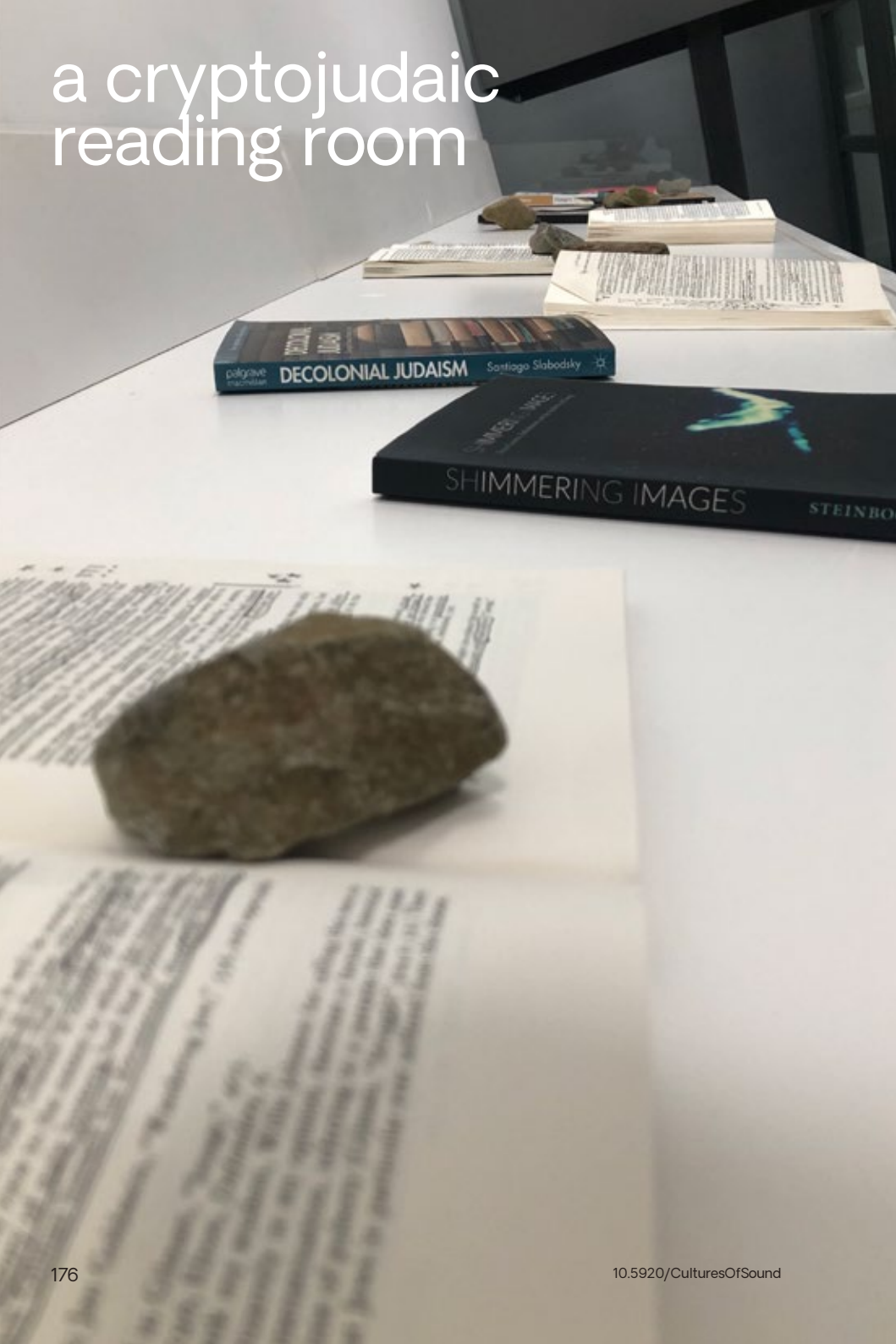
Massey, Doreen. *For Space*. SAGE, 2005.
Chatwin, Bruce. *The Songlines*. Random House, 1998.
Woolham, Simon and Jodie Matthews. "Depth/Gauge". In *Cultures of Place*, edited by Rowan Bailey, Claire Booth-Kurpnieks and Lauren Velvick. Huddersfield: University of Huddersfield Press, 2022.

a cryptojudaic reading room



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a cryptojudaic reading room
Ben Spatz

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: Reader in Media and Performance, Department of Communication & Humanities.

The *cryptojudaic reading room* at the Bath House Gallery launches a new phase in the Judaica project, a line of artistic research led by Ben Spatz. The first decade of the Judaica project (2012–2022) was an open-ended exploration of contemporary diasporic jewish identity through songwork. It adapted a laboratory theatre methodology to the context of university-based artistic research and generated numerous written and audiovisual publications.

cryptojudaica (2023–) marks the shift from an open-ended approach emphasizing diaspora and methodology toward a more focused intention to disentangle jewishness from whiteness and develop new forms of institutionality in apprenticeship to black and indigenous studies. Historically, cryptojews were those forced to undergo conversion who nevertheless continued to practice jewish ways of living in secret. Here the term is used to suggest the complexity of relations between jewishness and whiteness in the present, which may involve a mixture of coerced assimiliation, voluntary complicity, and critical resistance.

Works exhibited:
'reading room (chevruta)', participatory installation with desk, books, worksheets
'@cryptojudaica', 108 randomized Instagram videos on three channels
'Postmemory', three-channel looping video installation
'the human ceremony' single-channel video (7:28)

Credits:
Nazlıhan Eda Erçin, Lab Team (2017)
Agnieszka Mendel, Lab Team (2017)
Caroline Gatt, Lab Guest (2017)
Lxo Cohen, Research Associate (2022-23)

Ben Spatz's Research Profile:
Ben Spatz — University of Huddersfield Research Portal

Research approach (Cultures of Making): *Artistic Research, a continuation of earlier work exploring the complexities of jewishness and whiteness.*

The DOgS

10.5920/CulturesOfSound

The DOgS
Michael Stewart & Hyunkook Lee

Relationship to School of Arts and Humanities: Michael Stewart is The Director of the Yorkshire Film and Television Film School.

Hyunkook Lee (School of Computing and Engineering) is a member of the Centre for Research in New Music and is director of the Centre for Audio and Psychoacoustic Engineering.

The DOgS exhibition is a further exploration of the themes from a poetry book of the same name by Michael Stewart; a book about what humans have done to the world and what we have done to ourselves.

Specifically, it is a book about 'Man's best friends' – their origin-myths, and their place in the world before they were co-opted into human society and ideas of pure breeding and dysgenics. *The DOgS* also imagines a future where dogs develop the power of speech; led by the non-violent UnderDogs and the more radical Der Uberhünd, the animals of the world begin demanding their rights.

For the exhibition, Michael Stewart collaborated with Louis Benoit to produce visual representations in the spirit of the poems. It has been obvious from his early years that Louis has an exceptional drawing ability, and drawing has stayed with him through life; schools and art school never quite suited Louis and a late diagnosis of Autism goes some way to explain why. Art has been a skill he can excel at to express his ideas and humour. Louis has an unusual view on things and considers that his ability to 'think differently' may be interesting to others. Drawing is an intuitive activity for Louis, and his aim is to get that energy and immediacy down on the paper; which is why his tools of choice are the pen and ink. "No going back – just do it!"

Michael came across Louis' work by chance and instantly knew Louis had to be the illustrator for his new book of poems, *The DOgS*. In turn, Louis loved Michael's poetry. Both share an ability to impact, yet enjoy exploring detail. The viewer or reader cannot help but be drawn into their work.

Both also share the love of DOGS.

For this presentation at the Toast House Cafe, Louis's work was accompanied by a soundscape composed by Katia Sochaczewska which was presented through innovative binaural audio developed by Professor Hyunkook Lee. Accessed via a QR code printed on an accompanying postcard, it could be listened to alongside viewing the artworks and reading the poems.

Michael Stewart Research Profile:
Michael Stewart — University of Huddersfield Research Portal

Hyunkook Lee Research Profile:
Hyunkook Lee — University of Huddersfield Research Portal

Research approach (Cultures of Making): *A mixed media and collaborative exhibition through poetry, drawing, and sound, exploring an alternative future with anthropomorphic dogs.*

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Local identities; translocal performances: the Sociolinguistics of Popular Music

Ryan Gibson & Tom Devlin

8

You are standing in a dusty chapel; the pews are full, the incense is burning, and the ancient pipe organ begins to hum, while the congregation rises to their feet. The choir confidently look up from their hymn sheets and their voices join in harmony. What do they sound like in your mind? What kind of voices do you hear?

Now are you in a dingy bar: pint glasses clink, loud voices call out to one another across the room, and then the drums kick in, the bass line thumps, and heavy, distorted guitars reverberate from stacks of Marshal amplifiers. The singer is covered in tattoos and is wearing cool shades (indoors). What kind of voice do you hear now?

There are probably many ways you could aesthetically appraise such voices, contrasting them with words like *gruff, harmonic, screamy, energetic, and pure* (etc). However, there is one way in particular that these voices are likely to differ - a way which would be of interest to linguists. Chances are the singers in these two contexts will have different accents. The choir are likely to be singing in what might be called "RP" – that is, *received pronunciation*, otherwise known as the King's English or BBC English. The rock singer, on the other hand, is likely to be singing with *American* pronunciation.

Now imagine the church choir are from a school in East London and speak with working-class accents in the classroom and at home. Perhaps the rock singer is from Lincoln, or Leeds, or Liverpool, and speaks with a local accent, never having stepped foot in the USA. In both cases, the singers are manipulating their ordinary voices while performing.

It is a question that has interested music journalists, enthusiasts, the general public and singers themselves for a long time – why do (some) people sing differently to the way they speak? Early rock 'n' roll music in the United Kingdom was replete with singers who sounded decidedly American when they stepped behind the microphone. Early stars who donned American voices when singing include Lonnie Donegan ('Rock Island Line'), Cliff Richard ('Let's Twist Again') and Tommy Steele ('Rock with the Caveman'). Commenting on Steele in particular, novelist and journalist Colin MacInnes wrote: "perhaps one day Tommy will sing songs as English as his speaking accent, or his grin. If this should happen, we will hear once again, for the first time since the decline of the Music Halls, song that tell us of our own world".[1]

The question, then, is what motivates singers to do this? Why would a singer from England not "sing songs as English as his speaking accent", as MacInnes comments? Various ideas have been put forward. One common notion is that singers do it to pander to an American audience or break into the American music industry. This is a tempting explanation to settle on, and we can imagine it certainly must be true for some singers. The financial rewards for 'breaking America' can be significant, given it is the single largest English-speaking market for popular music on the planet. Any artist who becomes popular in the United States is seemingly given a ticket to stardom and success. But can this motivation be true for all British singers, or even all non-American singers? What about the young lad who just wants to play in his ramshackle punk-rock band in local pubs and clubs? What about Steve and Helen who go to the karaoke every fortnight? What about *you* when you're belting out your favourite song in the shower, perfectly imitating Beyoncé or Freddie Mercury? It isn't just professional singers with three album record contracts who do this. Everybody is doing it, even in places where (they hope, perhaps) there is no audience to pander to.

In 1983, linguist Peter Trudgill studied the singing style of the Beatles by counting how often they pronounced their 'r's after vowels while singing.[2] One of the main differences between American and British accents is a concept known as rhoticity. Put simply, a 'rhotic' accent, is one that pronounces the 'r' sound in words like *girl* and *car*. Most British accents omit this sound (to the surprise of many British readers of this essay, I'm sure). Trudgill found that the Beatles actually pronounced this sound less over time, from 1963 to 1969. That is, they sounded very American when they first set out, and then became less American over the span of their careers.

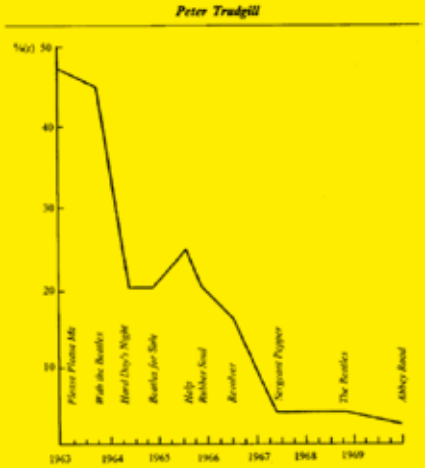

Figure 1: Graph of Rhoticity percentage in Beatles albums from 1963-1969 from Peter Trudgill, *Acts of Conflicting Identity*, 1983.

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Trudgill observed that the shift in pronunciation appeared to coincide with a change in genre. In the early 60's, the Beatles were firmly planted, musically speaking, in the rock 'n' roll genre, whereas by the time of 'Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band' and 'Abbey Road', their songs had become more psychedelic, poetic, incorporating progressive rock styles, synthesizers and stylistic influences from Indian classical music, avant-garde and vaudeville.

Perhaps then, we can look at this another way. Perhaps context is key. Perhaps there is something about choral music that requires 'RP' and something about rock music that requires American pronunciation. Based on this notion of genre-specific singing accents, I designed a study to test if musical styles elicit different pronunciation styles in people who self-identify as singers.

I created five short songs (in five genres: acoustic, indie-rock, synth-pop, hard rock and R&B) using royalty-free music, and lyrics/melody designed by myself, to ensure that the participants in the study had never heard the songs before. This was done to avoid any priming effects of the accent or any other idiosyncratic voice qualities of a previous singer. Put another way, the priming stimulus was limited to the *music only*, i.e. the distorted guitars in the hard rock song, and the syncopated groove/blues chord progression of the R&B song. Then, karaoke-style videos and music notation were created to aid potential participants in learning the songs.

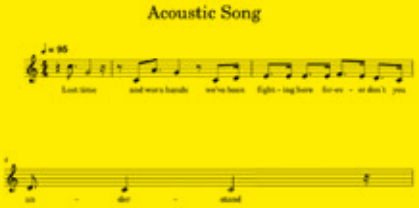

Figure 2: The karaoke-style video, left, and sheet music, right, instruct participants on key, tempo and melody (Images by Author).

The experiment was implemented as a workshop 'Measuring Identity in the Pop Music Accent', which took place in the language laboratories at the University of Huddersfield on 13 March 2023, as part of the Cultures of Sound programme, and an online version of the experiment was distributed to those who could not make it in person.

The participants were asked to learn the songs to their satisfaction and were then recorded singing in the sound booths in the language laboratories. They were then recorded reading the lyrics out loud so that auditory comparisons

could later be made between their speaking and singing styles. The workshop concluded with a free-form discussion where participants were asked about their conception of personal identity and authenticity – and specifically whether it is appropriate for UK singers to use American pronunciation when singing. The participants were encouraged to discuss their experience with each of the five genres being tested, as well as talk about their musical influences in relation to these styles.

Post-workshop, I went away and examined the recorded speaking and singing voices using acoustic analysis software.[3] The participants were then emailed infographics explaining the linguistic variables under analysis, along with a breakdown of how they changed their accent in each different style of music.

Figure 3: The infographic on the left explains the linguistic variables in laymen terms, while the infographic on the right provides a breakdown of the participant's pronunciation style. (Image by Author)

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It was found that each of the participants who contributed to the experiment did show differences in the way they pronounced words, both more broadly (speaking versus singing) and specifically (between each musical style they were exposed to). The workshop thus functioned as an excellent proof of concept, given it not only (tentatively) supported my hypothesis it also showed that the experiment itself worked well and was accessible to participants.

After repeating the experiment with several further singers some trends started to emerge. Hard rock and R&B music near-unanimously elicited highly Americanised pronunciation, whereas acoustic and indie rock music elicited much more British sounding voices (as per the example infographic above). As previously alluded to, rock & roll was an American invention which British singers imitated wholesale, and it seems that the effect is so strong that even singers today consider American pronunciation a key feature of performing the rock genre. Similarly, rhythm 'n' blues originated in the USA, developing out of gospel music performed by African American artists. When non-American artists (or even artists from elsewhere within the USA) started joining in, they imitated these original singers, modifying their accents accordingly.

The experiment performed for Cultures of Sound shows that this effect has potentially gone one-step further now. Singers aren't merely imitating other singers, they are modifying their voices in response to the music itself. So, in the same way that it might be appropriate to speak more formally in an interview, or informally in the pub, it is seemingly considered appropriate to 'sing American' while performing a rock song. We could consider this analogous to an actor modifying their voice to play a Scottish, Irish or South African character (think American Leonardo DiCaprio speaking with a Rhodesian accent in *Blood Diamond*). Singers are individuals who are highly adept at modifying their voices in terms of pitch and it appears this skill may also extend to their chameleon ability to ensure their vocal style is also appropriate to the style of music they're performing.

In discussions with the workshop participants, another trend started to emerge. The singers agreed that it is appropriate to use American pronunciation when singing and agreed that it was not important to sing in their native accent. However, they also agreed that being authentic as a performer was important, and when describing what authenticity meant to them, they used words such as *true, real, roots* and *heritage*, with an emphasis on place and personal experience.

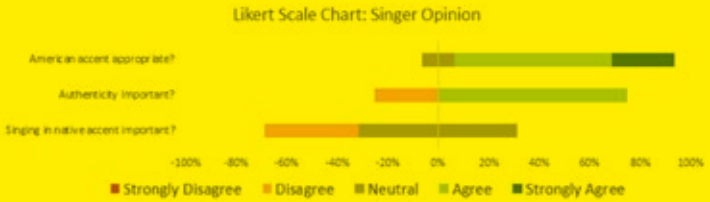

Figure 4: Likert-scale chart showing singer opinion spread of the importance of authenticity and the importance of singing in their native accent. (Figure by Author)

The relationship between accent and identity is well-established in the field of sociolinguistics, so it is perhaps somewhat surprising to encounter this apparent contradiction in values. How can it simultaneously be true that authenticity is important for a singer, but their native accent is not? The answer again surely lies in context. In the domain of music, the essence of what makes an authentic singer is less about being true to one's geographical or social background, and more about embracing an appropriate style for the style of music being performed. As such, in the minds of the singers, no 'betrayal' of their authentic self takes place.

This phenomenon can be observed across a multiplicity of genres. Jamaican Creole is considered a prestigious linguistic resource for reggae performers,[5] African American Vernacular English enjoys prestige in Hip-Hop,[6] and local dialects are thought of as appropriate in acoustic and folk styles[7]. To be an authentic reggae artist, hip-hop artist or folk singer, there are conventions you must follow to become a ratified member of that music scene.

The next steps, then, are to replicate the experiment with more singers, and perhaps future projects could test the effect of different genres and styles. Is there variance within rock & roll? Could there be pronunciation patterns associated with grunge, prog rock, glam metal, or doom metal? Would singers automatically do a Morrissey impression if exposed to music that's composed in the style of the Smiths? Would pronunciation choices be contingent on singers having sufficient exposure to such styles? If pronunciation patterns are indeed associated with genres, perhaps changing pronunciation is one of the ways in which singers can carve out new identities and musical spaces, create new genres, innovate new styles, and push music forward to new frontiers.

This could mean that there are untapped resources out there waiting to be exploited. Local identities come packaged with local accents - unique sounds that are generally pushed to the wayside in favour of the mainstream, Americanised soundscape. The Arctic Monkeys proved it can be done

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while still being financially successful,[8] but there exist many more unique voices in Britain and beyond; accents and dialects that are marginalised or dying. Rather poignantly, Irish singer-songwriter Hozier, famous for 'Take Me To Church' released an album on 18 August 2023 entitled *Unreal Earth*, featuring a song called 'Butchered Tongue' which describes attempts by the British Empire to destroy the Irish Language, along with full songs in Gaelic ('De Selby' and 'To Someone from a Warm Climate').[9] It certainly seems to be the case, then, that music is the one place where people can effectively draw upon linguistic resources to create new, beautiful and exciting forms of expression, and keep dialects and languages relevant and alive in the ears of global audiences.

For a more in-depth breakdown of the results of the workshop, an online talk is available - Genre vs Geography: The indexicalities of Popular Music,[10] which was initially presented in conjunction with Cultures of Sound.

Endnotes

1 Colin MacInnes, *Young England, Half English* (London: Chattus & Windus, 1961), 15.

2 Peter Trudgill, "Acts of Conflicting Identity: The sociolinguistics of British pop-song performance." In *On Dialect: Social and Geographical Perspectives*, ed. Peter Trudgill (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), 141-60.

3 Paul Boersma and David Weenink. *Praat: doing phonetics by computer [Computer program]*. Retrieved: 1 May 2023: http://www.praat.org

4 William Labov, *Sociolinguistic Patterns* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), 1972.

5 Anita Gerfer, "Global reggae and the appropriation of Jamaican Creole," *World Englishes* 37, no. 4 (August 2018): 668-683, https://doi.org/10.1111/weng.12319.

6 Sender Dovchin, Language, *Social Media and Ideologies: Translingual Englishes, Facebook and Authenticities*. (New York: Springer, 2019).

7 Franz Andres Morrissey, "Liverpool to Louisiana in one lyrical line: Style choice in British rock, pop and folk singing," in *Standards and Norms in the English Language*, ed. Miriam A. Locher and Jürg Strässler (New York: De Gruyter Mouton, 2008), 193-216.

8 Joan C. Beal, "You're Not from New York City, You're from Rotherham," *Journal of English Linguistics* 37, no. 4 (September 2009): 223-40. https://doi.org/10.1177/0075424209340014

9 Featured on Hozier's 2023 Album *Unreal Earth*.

10 Ryan Gibson, 'Cultures of Sound Research Talk', Youtube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-R5l0k1GxMs

Ryan Gibson is a PhD student studying linguistics and musicology at the University of Huddersfield.

Tom Devlin Research Profile:
Tom Devlin — University of Huddersfield Research Portal

List of Illustrations:

Figure 1: Rhoticity percentage in Beatles albums from 1963-1969, Created by Peter Trudgill, "Non-prevocalic /r/: the Beatles," in Peter Trudgill, "Acts of Conflicting Identity: The sociolinguistics of British pop-song performance," in *On Dialect: Social and Geographical Perspectives*, ed. Peter Trudgill (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983): 259, fig 20.1.

Figure 2: The karaoke-style video, left, and sheet music, right, instruct participants on key, tempo and melody. By Author.

Figure 3: Infographic explaining the linguistic variables in laymen terms and a breakdown of the participant's pronunciation style. By Author.

Figure 4: Likert-scale chart showing singer opinion spread of the importance of authenticity and the importance of singing in their native accent. By Author.

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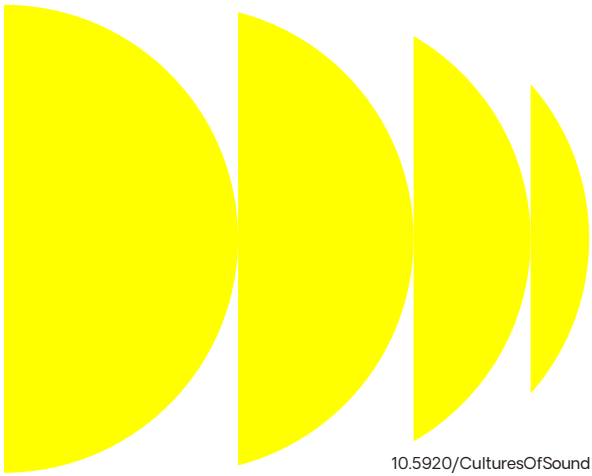
Morrissey, Franz Andres. "Liverpool to Louisiana in one lyrical line: Style choice in British rock, pop and folk singing." In *Standards and Norms in the English Language*, edited by Miriam A. Locher and Jürg Strässler, 193-216. New York: De Gruyter Mouton, 2008.

Trudgill, Peter, ed. *On Dialect: Social and Geographical Perspectives*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983.

Ryan Gibson is PhD candidate in Linguistics at the University of Huddersfield. Combining his research interests in musicology and linguistics, his doctoral research focuses on motivation behind pronunciation shifts in popular music, alongside listener perceptions of and attitudes towards American voices in song.

Dr Tom Devlin is senior lecturer in Sociolinguistics at the University of Huddersfield. His research specialism is sociophonetics, with a particular interest in British accents and dialects. He is the supervisor of this PhD research.



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Introduction to the curatorial research-by-practice approach

Lauren Velvick

In theory it is easy to be open to chance; surely it takes less effort to be carried along with the flow than to be a stick in the mud and to follow the rules. In practice, however, this isn't such a simple equation. Working at the intersection of creative practices, academia, bureaucratic institutions and organic communities means navigating and balancing rules and expectations that might be unspoken, or in conflict with one another. To hold space for chance and the unexpected within this mesh means committing to curatorial principles against the homogenising pressures that we are all subject to, particularly during times of economic and political upheaval. It's also worth noting that 'curatorial' is a contested term, and here it extends far beyond the care of objects and spaces, encompassing not only the administration of open-calls and the production of projects from idea to public presentation, but also essential strands like marketing, monitoring, evaluation and archiving. In this sense, 'curatorial principles' should run through every part of the programme, and this has been an aim with Cultures of Sound. As lead curator of Cultures of Sound, I've tried to encourage members of the academic community within the School of Art & Humanities to think expansively about how they want to present their work, and who they want to invite to experience it. At the same time, in many cases what we've attempted contradicts 'the way things are done', and we've consciously tried to make our work set new precedents rather than follow old ones. In purely practical terms, there is also a hope that those working in disciplines that don't lend themselves as easily to exhibition or performance can be inspired to draw on the skills of those working in audiovisual installation, for example, towards cross and interdisciplinary collaboration.

What/Why/How/Where

After academics from across the school made use of the Temporary Contemporary 'meanwhile' spaces across Huddersfield's Piazza Centre and Queensgate Market in the Summer of 2022 for Cultures of Place, in 2023 the wider Kirklees Year of Music scheme offered the context for another public festival of research. The planned Cultural Heart redevelopment, which would see the Piazza Centre demolished and Queensgate Market repurposed was

in its infancy and access remained uncertain, so it seemed wise to focus on venues and spaces that would be accessible throughout 2023. Shortly before the onset of the Covid-19 crisis, the University of Huddersfield had opened a variety of versatile spaces for use by the School of Arts & Humanities, but the pandemic and subsequent changes prevented us from exploring or using these diverse spaces to their full extent. This is part of the reason why, for the Cultures of Sound programme, I decided to turn the focus of our public research programme back onto the campus – inviting partner organisations to reimagine the site, and encouraging researchers within the University to creatively adapt spaces that are usually used for teaching, study or practise into spaces that can welcome members of the public. The focus of this reimagining and experimentation was Sovereign Design House: originally built in 1955 as purpose-built washing facilities for the workers at the then-adjacent Broadbent Foundry. In 1953 UK legislation had made amenity blocks for iron foundries compulsory, but instead of basic facilities, Thomas Broadbent and Sons produced an attractive Frank Lloyd Wright inspired design reminiscent of earlier pithead baths, using local stone and with a sun terrace on the roof; in 2009 the building was awarded Grade II listing as a rare, if not unique, example of its kind. When I set out to use the basement galleries within Sovereign Design House, now known as 'Bath House Galleries' to distinguish this space from the Toast House Cafe above, I was unaware of this unique and fascinating cultural history. However, by collaborating with local historians and inviting this element of interest into what is ostensibly a contemporary programme has allowed Cultures of Sound to reflect this sense of playful ambition in meeting the requirements of the Year of Music brief, whilst utilising the unique knowledge and skills of our students, researchers and staff.

Welcoming chance and unexpected outcomes

Throughout the conception, design and delivery of the Cultures of Sound programme there have been opportunities to explore fundamental questions around art, culture and the public: what do we mean by 'artist' or 'creative', and how do these roles and designations relate to audiences, participants or passersby? Furthermore, how do the creative practices of the staff members featured in the programme commingle with their pedagogical practices? The projects that have been part of Cultures of Sound have taken various forms: some have been conventional in the context of a university or art gallery, such as the research talk and the temporary exhibition, while others have sat somewhere in between workshop and performance, with installations arising as unplanned outcomes from residencies, coming to fruition in necessarily unpredictable ways. In most of these cases we were inviting members of the public into spaces that either had never been used in that way before, or were hosting academic research projects for the first time. These often produced moments of connection, collaboration and

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complicity that led to unexpected outcomes and avenues of research, in turn transforming the overall trajectory of this programme and the wider Cultures of _ project. With Eddie Dobson's *Building Cultures of Sound* workshop series, a temporary creative community was formed from practitioners at varying levels and experience, communicating through a Whatsapp group to develop a collaborative soundscape that was exhibited in the Toast House Cafe and Bath House Galleries. Those who gained a familiarity with the campus through this project have in turn become regular audience members for other events in the Cultures of Sound programme as well as parts of the wider academic calendar, such as the graduate composer showcase. This highlights how the hurdle of the academic threshold, like the gallery threshold, that puts people off from accessing spaces can be overcome through invitation, familiarity and word of mouth. In a comparably organic way, during our 'pilgrimage' to Greenhead Park and Gledholt Woods as part of Leah Stuttard's *The Outspoken Pilgrim* we encountered and swapped flyers with a number of other community groups making use of these public spaces, who otherwise wouldn't encounter news from the University.

For the first artist residency held in the Bath House Galleries at Sovereign Design House local organisation ame (Art Music Experiment) were invited as a partner, drawing on their national and international connections and commitment to experimental practices to try something with truly unknown outcomes. From my professional background in contemporary art galleries, I am very aware of how much support is required when artists, especially from outside of the UK, are in residency with you. With this in mind I was anxious not to over-promise or run up against bureaucratic difficulties with the artist paying the price. In working with an established but artist-led organisation who had experience with the University as graduates, I was able to manage expectations and create a good environment for the artist, SABIWA. SABIWA, who is Taiwanese and currently based in Berlin, is a music producer who has recently moved into a more visual practice incorporating elements of installation art. During the residency we were able to host her first ever artist talk, and she coincidentally documented the momentous destruction of the old Huddersfield Technical College campus. In contrast with the participatory projects outlined above, work like this serves to situate the programme and Huddersfield more widely within an international cultural community, and the way that the parochial is brought organically into conversation with the global is one of the joys of being able to produce a programme based around the specific interests of diverse individuals. When bookings were coming in slowly for Ryan Gibson's research talk *Genre vs Geography: the indexicalities of popular music*, we decided to hold it online, which enabled an international audience to bring new perspectives to this very locally-grounded research. There have also been projects that have intercultural collaboration as central to their aims, such as *Electric Sufi* held at Phipps Hall in March and *Sonic Threads* held at Heritage Quay in September. In both cases it was important to shape the event marketing around the reality that attendees may never have attended

the campus before and would need to be greeted and directed in order to feel welcome. Links with longstanding organisations like Radio Sangam and Huddersfield Literature Festival, active community leaders like Hardeep Sahota and newly founded organisations like Onward Festival proved vital in reaching interested members of the public. One particularly sweet moment was noticing two young members of the audience for *Electric Sufi* expressing excitement at the comment that one of the musicians, Mina Salaama, played on the soundtrack for Disney's *Aladdin*.

As the year progressed we learnt more about the possibilities of Sovereign Design House as a venue for creative activity. Our experiments in the space became more ambitious, with pre-planned exhibitions and installations serving as a basis for celebratory events like *Resonant Structures*. This programme of contemporary classical compositions and experimental performances complimented Colin Frank's *Humming, Vibrating Architecture* and *St-arts* by Ángela Hoyos Gómez and Amy Chen, featuring Juan Hernández and Inês Rebelo, using spaces throughout the building and making use of its unique features, such as the two storey gallery which can be viewed from above, and low-ceilinged galleries that can be easily blacked-out for intimate audiovisual experiences. This then led on to *100 Videos* which was held over summer outside of term time, and invited guest artists who had previously attended *Resonant Structures* and become enamoured with the possibilities of the space. In this way the resources of the institution can be directed towards experimentation without disrupting its essential functions. By staging events like this as part of a wider ongoing programme it was possible to observe and learn from audience behaviour, knowledge which could then inform curatorial decisions for the substantial exhibitions, drawing on longer-term research projects, that were realised between September and December in the Bath House Galleries and Toast House Cafe. While the majority of Cultures of Sound activities have taken place in and around the University of Huddersfield campus, it must also be noted that events like *Organic Doom* at Huddersfield Town Hall and *Tainted Love* at the King's Head pub enabled us to collaborate on activities that were at first a little confusing for these long-standing local venues, but in both cases proved to be a huge success that can certainly be built on going forward. There is only space here to mention a small selection of the projects that have featured in the Cultures of Sound programme, and it's important to note that each and every one of them has produced important curatorial learning that will benefit all aspects of our programmes going forward. However, for me, the one aspect of the programme's success that means the most has been seeing members of the public who otherwise wouldn't have accessed University facilities and programmes become 'regulars', and it is this embedding of research and cultural programmes into the everyday fabric of Huddersfield that has been a central aim all along.

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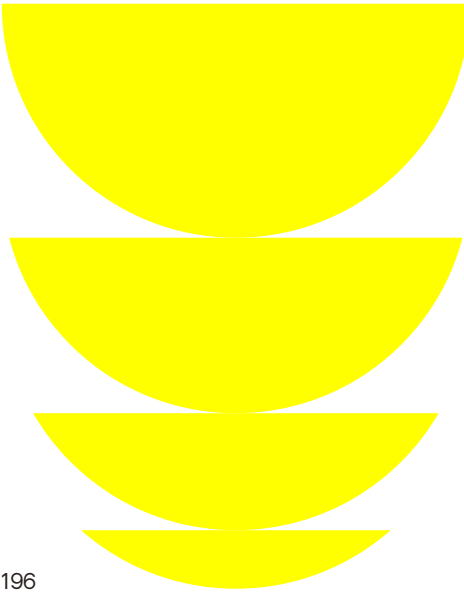
Folusho Oladipo, research talk ‘Women’s Activism in Colonial Southern Nigeria & Historical Silences’, hosted by Holocaust Centre North.



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Postscript
Rowan Bailey

The universe is constantly in motion. All the things around us are not stationary but rather vibrating, resonating and oscillating at various frequencies. Matter is vibration. Some people are more attuned to hearing/feeling the vibrations of the universe than others. This sound is a constant, pulsing note. Known as 'the hum', there have been reports of an invasive low-frequency rumbling or droning audible noise. The World Hum Map and Database Project documents hearings of hums across the globe. Science says that humans cannot hear the hum of the Earth because it ranges between 2.9 and 4.5 Mhz, 10,000 times lower than what humans are capable of hearing. Dr Glen MacPherson (mathematician and educator from British Columbia, Canada) explains that there are four potential competing theories and knowledges for the hum. Firstly, "VLF radio frequencies between 3Hz and 30 kHz are interacting with living tissue and activating the human auditory system in a way that the brain interprets this as sound and sometimes as perceptions of physical vibration".[1] Secondly, the world Hum is caused by the "accumulation of low frequency sound from human activity, such as mining, marine traffic, air traffic, windmill farms, smelters and blast furnaces, factories and the electrical grid",[2] etc. Thirdly, the world Hum is the result of a "terrestrial/geological process", slow moving processes, rather than fast moving ones like earthquakes or volcanoes. Fourthly, the world hum is an "internal body process along the lines of otoacoustic emissions and tinnitus".[3] These scientific explanations offer ways to understand what the cause of the hum is and how its sound is generated.

However, there are other ways of understanding sound that rational knowledge cannot comprehend. For example, OM is a hum that reverberates in our bodies. OM is known as the collective sound of the cosmos, the primordial sound of creation. In Hindu scripture it is described as the original vibration of the universe. It is said that from this vibration all other vibrations are able to manifest. OM is a common mantra for chakra healing. When we chant OM we create a sonorous vibration inside ourselves impacting our parasympathetic nervous system (part of the body's autonomic nervous system). OM consists of three letters, A, U, M, and when repeatedly chanted is shown to increase relaxation and calm. It changes the body's fight or flight response to a rest and digest response. In *Silence: The Power of Quiet in a World Full of Noise* the venerable Zen Buddhist Thich Nhat Hanh explains that there are five true sounds. Firstly, there is the Wonderful Sound; "the sound of the wonders of life that are calling you. This is the sound of the birds, of the rain, and so on".[4] Secondly, there is the Sound of the One Who Observes the World. This is "the sound of listening, the sound of silence".[5]

Thirdly, there is the Brahma Sound. This is the "transcendental sound, *om*, which has a long history in Indian spiritual thought".[6] Fourthly, is the Sound of the Rising Tide. This is the sound "that symbolises the voice of the Buddha. The teaching of the Buddha can clear away misunderstanding, removing affliction, and transform everything".[7] Fifthly, is the Sound that Transcends all Sounds of the World. This is the "sound of impermanence, a reminder not to get caught up in or too attached to particular words or sounds".[8] These five sounds are openings to hearing the 'thundering silence' within yourself; a silence that Thich Nhat Hanh says is the "deepest kind of calling from within yourself. It is your heart calling out to you".[9]

These two approaches to sound are analogous to Hegel's account of the inner motion of our vibrating body and the external change of place (those external forces such as energies, collisions and vibrations that intra-act with bodies, objects and things). Our internal vibration is always in dialogue with external frequencies. We receive and produce our knowing through the continuous ebb and flow of frequencies. By navigating these forms of knowledge with mindfulness and equanimity we can cultivate awareness of our own thinking with others (perhaps through our 'thundering silence'). This is a creative act. Breathing in. Breathing out.

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Endnotes

1 Glen MacPherson, 'Competing Theories'. World Hum Map and Database Project (Word Press Blog) at: https://hummap.wordpress.com/2016/04/22/the-competing-theories/

2 MacPherson, 'Competing Theories', https://hummap.wordpress.com/2016/04/22/the-competing-theories/

3 MacPherson, 'Competing Theories', https://hummap.wordpress.com/2016/04/22/the-competing-theories/

4 Thich Nhat Hanh, *Silence: The Power of Quiet in a World Full of Noise* (London: Ebury Publishing Penguin, 2013), p.10.

5 Thich Nhat Hanh, *Silence*, p.10.

6 Thich Nhat Hanh, *Silence*, p.11.

7 Thich Nhat Hanh, *Silence*, p.11.

8 Thich Nhat Hanh, *Silence*, p.11.

9 Thich Nhat Hanh, *Silence*, p.12.

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A.N.D. Studio	Branding & Design www.and-studio.co.uk
ame	Artistic partner www.amespace.uk
YSWN (Yorkshire Sound Women Network)	Artistic partner www.yorkshiresoundwomen.com
hcmf// (Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival)	Artistic partner www.hcmf.co.uk
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Future Creative	Artistic partner https://tslkirklees.org.uk/volunteering-roles/entry/event-volunteer-future-creative-team-16-24-years-8382/
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Cultures of_ is a changeable programme of arts and humanities research in the public realm. As a programme it is invested in place-based making with external audiences, collaborating partners and creative communities.

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Cultures of Sound is a celebratory showcase of research exhibitions, installations, performances, workshops, talks and discussion about sound. Produced by the School of Arts and Humanities, University of Huddersfield.

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