Chapter Zer0: A User Manual

By

Kevin Logan

This is an accompanying component to the thesis:

How to DO(O) Things with Sounds: A Performative (Re)User Manual

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Exegesis of Illustrations

In the body of this *Chapter Zer0: A User Manual* I have included three illustrations which have played a part in a number of my practice outcomes. These are technical diagrams which have been sourced from online US patent applications. As such, they are suitable for inclusion as they are compatible with the analogy of user manual or technical communication document, and the conceptual and aesthetic context herein.

These images have been employed as constituent parts within varied performances or performance-presentations and lecture-events. I have also used the objects that these technical diagrams pertain to as sounding things in various live and recorded scenarios. Additionally, they should be regarded as examples of what I refer to as *obstinate-objects* (an explanation of this term can be found in *Chapter 3.2* of the thesis proper).

Each image works as a visual trigger for a mundane sonic deed. They contextualise actions that might otherwise cause confusion or uncertainty amongst the retrospective audiences, defining them as sound art performances. When integrated into practice outcomes, against the backdrop of live art and/or pedagogic situations, the objective of these graphic images is to both elucidate and rationalise actions that might at first appear anomalous or irrational to the event attendees. I have utilised them both discretely and in combination as parenthesizing devices, and also to link to audio-visual components of performed events. This audio-visual material can be previewed at the website which accompanies this research:

www.howtodothingswithsounds.com

- **Figure 1.**
Interlude: Solo for Plastic Water Bottle (duration variable).

This image is used in response to one of the first experimental implementations of a mundane sounding object within my performance practice. I refer to the noisy crunching and crumpling of a plastic water bottle before and/or during lecture-events. It has become a way of contextualising those events as not only exercises in pedagogy but also as sound performances.[1]

I have used this diagram to either introduce this sounding gesture, to accompany it or like a punchline to contextualise it retrospectively. It is with this image, and the associated action, that I initially came to consider the object as co-performing in an examination of sonic agency.

- **Figure 2.**
Interlude: Solo for Retractable Pen (duration variable).

This has been used in much the same manner as *Figure 1*. Again, as a framing device to stave off the uncertainty and disquiet which might be caused by the unexpected and lengthy clicking of a pen for minutes on end, before or during a presentation. This method of provocative displacement as a critical performative device is further examined in *Chapter 2b* of the thesis along with a related discussion of failure, the comedic, and the *collapsed lecture* (Williamson, 2010).[2]

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[1] This action, in particular, is examined in more detail in *Chapter 2b.4* of the thesis proper.

[2] The idea of the collapsed lecture refers to the essay *The Collapsing Lecture* by Aaron Williamson (2010). It concerns the employment of mishaps and malfunctions in a performed lecture scenario.

- **Figure 3.**
  Interlude: Solo for Child Proof Pill Bottle (duration variable).

As with the previous examples, this image has also been used in collaboration with the sounding of an object. However, unlike the above, a version of this has also been used to orchestrate or conduct an audience activity in workshops and performances. In these scenarios, the participants are given a pill bottle with a tamper-proof lid to use as both a sounding device and an event score, where the bottle has contained a written instruction for participatory act(s).

Figure 1. Interlude: Solo for Plastic Water Bottle (duration variable).[3]
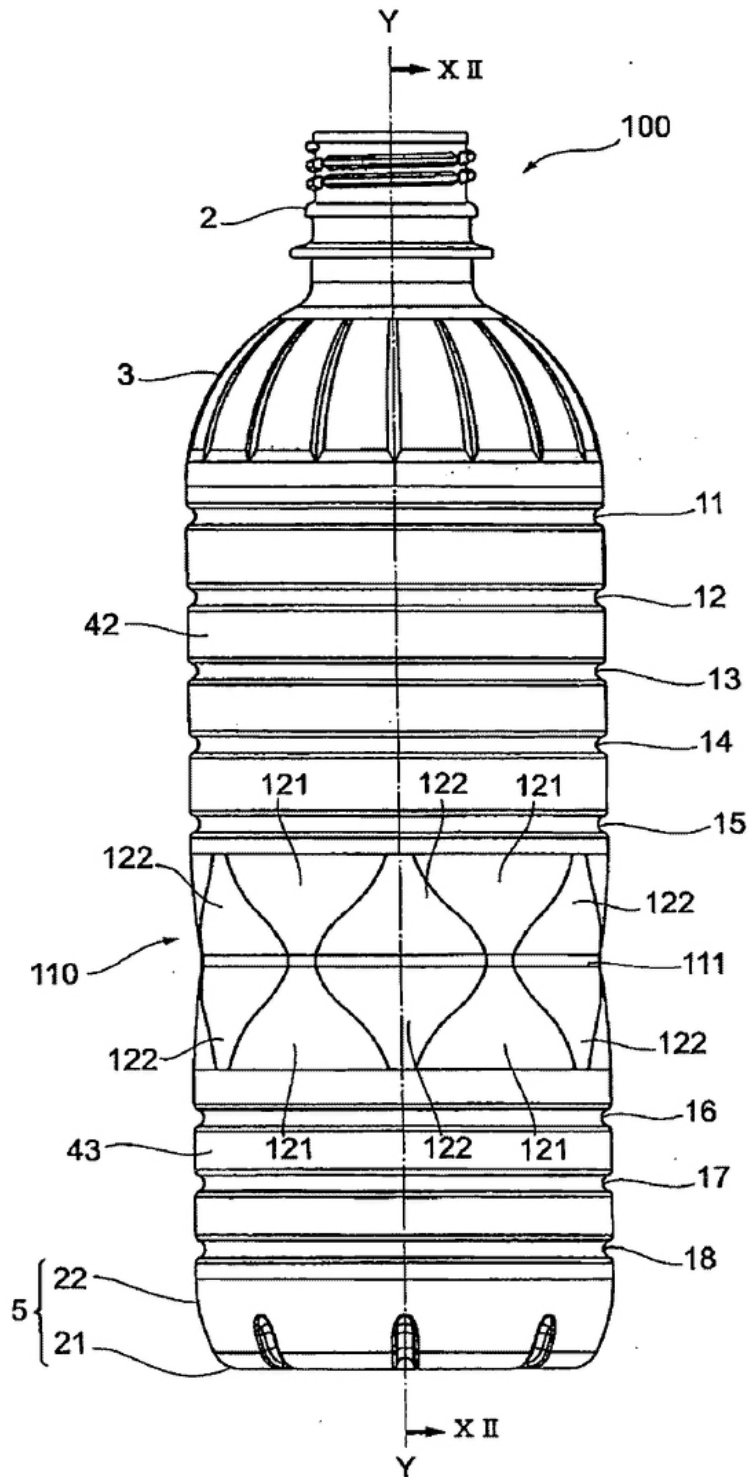
Zer0.0.0: Introduction: How to Write a User Manual.

This pamphlet component of this research is more closely aligned with that of a piece of practice than with written theory. It is intended to act as an outcome that *performs* with the accompanying thesis. In describing the purpose of this supplemental document let me begin with nomenclature. I have designated this *Chapter Zer0*, choosing to title it with the word zero rather than the numeral. This is to signal that it exists somewhat detached from the flow of numerically sequenced chapters that make up the body of the thesis, whilst still belonging to it.[4]

> Knowledge how to do things is a pervasive and central element of everyday life. Yet it raises many difficult questions that must be considered by anyone who aspires to understand human cognition and agency. What is the connection between knowing how to do things and knowing that something is the case? Is knowledge how to act simply a type of ability or disposition to behaviour? Is there an irreducibly practical form of knowledge? How are we to conceive the relation between theory and practice, and between thinking and doing? What is the role of the intellect in intelligent action?
>
> (Bengson and Moffett. 2011. p.vii)

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[4] As the reader will notice there is a playful use of the numeral 0, which acts as a stand-in for the letter 'o'. The paragraphs that make up this chapter use a hybrid classification; this is an intentional obfuscation of the aforementioned textual/numerical divide. This device will be further contextualised elsewhere when I consider performative-writing techniques and their employment of linguistic and *material gestures of de-familiarisation* (Palmer, 2016).

In the preface to the essay collection *Knowing How: Essays on Knowledge, Mind and Action,* from which the above quote is taken, the editors introduce the volume by stating that our lives are, "filled with endeavours and projects, ranging from the mundane to the meaningful, which engage us in myriad activities that we almost invariably know how to do" (Ibid).

The questions raised by Bengson and Moffett concern knowing as an abstraction, in contrast to knowing as an embodied and serviceable thing. I begin with this as it keenly corresponds with the methodological procedures and practical outcomes of this research. In particular, it speaks of the very specific tactic which I deployed by the metaphorical use of an instructional manual in advancing a theory of sonic thinking and related pedagogies.

The function that this printed *add-on* fulfils is predominantly a performative one. It could be considered being both one of *mise en scène* (an arrangement of scenery, props etc.) and also of *mise en place* (the preparation of ingredients). In that, it delineates a space or context within which the thesis *happens*, whilst it also performs a measured prepping action; laying out and introducing parts to be used later. I use these terms as they analogize modes of an active undertaking - of *doing* theory, which is central to this practice-led research project.

In their introduction to *Performative Realism: Interdisciplinary Studies in Art and Media* (2015)*,* Rune Gade and Anne Jerslev speak of the status of performativity as found in reality and the everyday. They refer to the different ways in which the subject of performativity is discussed throughout the volume, in terms of:

Techniques of citation and repetition are employed to achieve
this effect, a laborious theatre of reiteration, because realism, or

the reality effect, is first of all based on recognition on the part of the reader. Transposing this idea of reality as a kind of theatrical prop.

<div align="right">(Gade and Jerslev. 2005. p.11)</div>

I re-purpose this expression of intent by Gade and Jerslev as it closely mirrors my own. I also consider *techniques of citation and repetition as a kind of prop,* and additionally as a kind of actant. It is in this respect that this *Chapter Zer0* takes on the role of nonanthropocenrtic performer within the written element of the research outcome, and as such, it brackets and lays bare the material conditions of the thesis that it accompanies. This is echoed in the use of object-oriented philosophies and new materialist thinking as tools for analysis in the thesis.

By using this pamphlet as a form of performative-writing or score, it then points to the thesis proper, which itself contains examples of performative-writing and text/event/deed scores within my practice (a full examination of these terms is in the thesis). It is of the utmost importance that the reader recognises the embeddedness of interdependence, reticulation and re-articulation in both the form and content of this hypothesis for sounding practices.

To re-apply the wording of Bengson and Moffett, it is these very *endeavours* and *projects* that make up the speculative engagement with the agency of sonic performativity that is contextualised by this pamphlet. The very deliberate performative double gesture that is enacted by taking this section *to one side* and positioning it obliquely to the thesis proper is comparable with the relationship between the *knowing-how* and the *knowing-why* that is accentuated in the opening quote. It corresponds with the circumstances generated when the *intellect* and *intelligent action* come into play, with and/or against each other. The performative thinking

practice that this research makes use of employs displacement and contingency. Such embodied knowledge production and dissemination are crucial to an agential understanding of the sonic.

I regard this present chapter to be necessary to communicate to the reader the crucial interplay between theory and practice within this research. It *occurs* as an actant, mediating between the thesis proper and the practice. In wrong-footing the thesis by postponing it with this *Chapter Zer0* I use both a procedural uncertainty and engage a performative understanding of discursive practices. This is comparable to non-representational ways of understanding in which modes of perception are not subject-based (Thrift, 2007). This purposeful manoeuvring will be further explored throughout the body of the thesis and re-connected with the palpable outcomes of the research.

For the sake of clarity, I should state that henceforth within this *Chapter Zer0* when I refer to the *user manual*, it is in reference to how it exists generically. Whereas, when I speak of the *User Manual*, this alludes to the very particular application of it as a discursive and critical device employed in performing the thesis. In the following pages I will examine and further expound on this *play-off* between user manual and User Manual.

The user manual as it is generally understood provides practical solutions; it is driven by the necessity to find a way of doing something, designed to be an instrument, the sole purpose of which is to disseminate *know-how*. As such, when experimentally applied to the outcomes of practice-led research in sound arts, it cannot help but operate as a critical appraisal of how embodied practices and intersubjective experiences are related; it is in this rift between intent and realisation that it then becomes a User Manual.

As form, concept and structural device within this research, this User Manual obliges the reader to both physically (in handling its artefactual presence), and metaphorically, engage with interruption and displacement as a way of reflecting on sonic practice; and as such, it forces an element of embodiment. By giving the reader differing positions from which to discern, albeit somewhat symbolically, I am augmenting the performance/performative methodology that is the premise of this research argument.

Zer0.1.0: Words and Deeds: A Thinking-Sounding Non-Chapter.

A significant element of the critical context in which this research is situated is appropriated from ideas of performativity. I will examine in due course this concept of performativity as it has mutated, been manipulated, and some might say mutilated, since the philosopher of language J. L. Austin first introduced it, in *How to Do Things with Words* (1962). My particular commandeering of Austin's performative combines and advances this practical, theoretical and academic re-purposing of it.

In 1955, Austin delivered a series of *William James Lectures* at Harvard University regarding his philosophical works relating to speech act theory, or put simply, what language does. These lectures were combined with notes from his early Oxford lectures entitled *Words and Deeds* (1952-54) and published under the title *How to Do Things with Words* (1962).

The analytical cornerstone laid down by Austin's work is reflected in my methodology, how I have chosen to reflexively *do* research that in its fundamental state asks questions concerning what the sonic *does* in a sound arts setting.

This is not confined merely to being a continuation of thinking through sound, or as it has been referred to as "thinking with our ears" (Bull. 2003. p.3) but has led me to examine the varied notions of sonic epistemology.[5]

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[5] This phrase *thinking with our ears* refers to the aspiration to democratise the senses, which is very much a consequence of what Joachim Ernst Berendt termed *ear-thinking* (1988). Undoubtedly this is desirable, yet this emphasis may also have the obverse effect. This move within sound studies unintentionally acts, "to reinscribe this sensory and critical hierarchy by focusing on or essentialising difference" (Home-Cook. 2015. p.9).

Zer0.1.1: How |haʊ|

> Adverb *[usu. interrogative adverb]*
>
> 1. In what way or manner; by what means: *how does it work? | he did not know how he ought to behave | [with infinitive]: He showed me how to adjust the focus*.
>
>   (Apple Inc. Dictionary application. Version 2.2.1. © 2005–2015)

Above is a standard dictionary definition of the word *how*. It is here that the impetus for the consideration of the User Manual as a device to accommodate the thesis propositions can be found. It is this *way or manner* that acts as both a methodology of inquiry and a procedural practice, to focus on performance and the contestation that the term *performative* unavoidably engages.

Yet, this *how* only procures information and does not offer anything in return. It is often conflated with why. So much so that in the first chapter of Trevor Wishart's seminal book *On Sonic Art*, entitled *What Is Sonic Art?* Wishart states that "[t]his book is not about *how* to do it, though I will be discussing at some stage new techniques such as frequency modulation synthesis, cross-synthesis and model-building. Rather it is about *why"* (Wishart.1985. p.3).

It seems that this distinction is so important to the author that it is even pre-empted, although it is somewhat challenged, in the editor's introduction:

> Also - notwithstanding a forthright statement on the very first page that the book is about the 'why' and not the 'how' of sonic art - there are clear insights into methods and means which will help attain these aims.
>
> (Emmerson in, Wishart.1985. p. ix)

Wishart's book is well stocked with diagrams, drawings and technical information. It is accompanied by a CD that contains hundreds of numerically ordered examples of various sounds that illustrate points made throughout the body of his text. Wishart's opus is a user manual in spite of his declaration. I do not intend to disparage this book in using it as an example, I choose it merely as it demonstrates an epistemological denial that is pertinent here. Whilst Wishart states that he is not constructing a *how to do*, there is a definite instructional tone to his treatise. It is such sophistry as this that I hope to unpick in employing a *User Manual-that-is-not-a-user manual*.

In the thesis title, I expand the how with a proposition, making it a *how-to*, the implication shifts to a sharing of procedural knowledge exercised in the performance of a task or deed. It is the questionable power relationship of top-down pedagogy inherent in the how that the performing of a *how-to* seeks to interrogate and perhaps challenge. It is as an exposition of doing that the ability-denoting *how-to* clauses have become a trope within this research.[6]

As it exists here, this *how-to* is an intervention, a performative articulation. This *Chapter Zer0* traces the developing of the idea to construct a thesis along the lines of a user manual and also recounts the decision to abandon it as a strict design. This *User Manual-that-is-not-a-user manual* should be seen a mode of performative-writing, a form of *sous rature*, a writing under erasure. Sous rature is a term applied to

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[6] Distinctions between *knowing-how* and *knowing-that* feature heavily in the work of the ordinary language philosopher Gilbert Ryle. Ryle is probably better known for his coining of the phrase *ghost in the machine*, in his book *The Concept of Mind* (1949). Ryle is a forerunner of J.L. Austin and is considered to link the earlier work of Ludwig Wittgenstein to the latter's development of the theory of speech acts, and in turn, performativity.

Jacques Derrida's expansion of Martin Heidegger's writing device.[7] Put simply, both Heidegger's and Derrida's terms acknowledge the inaccuracy of a particular word by crossing it out. As with other ways to do writing on-and-off the page, this is both a literary practice and a strategic philosophical tool. With this in mind, I would define the User Manual as a *styling* under erasure. In spite of its absence as a user manual proper, the User Manual in all its multiplicities, is a proposition, a critical imperative and a conceptual writing device.

The *User Manual-that-is-not-a-user manual* can be perceived as a tactical falseness. The use of a *falseness* as a container, a vehicle to move or *travel a concept* along is a tried and tested device of the avant-garde (Mieke Bal, 2002). So, the double gesture of the User Manual is not an unfamiliar ploy; in fact, such playful duplicity can be observed in a great many contemporary art practices. It is the trademark component of such definitive and canonical works as the Duchamp assisted readymade *With Hidden Noise*, originally realised in 1916. Another oft-cited example would be the Robert Morris piece, *Box with the Sound of Its Own Making* (1961).[8]

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[7] Derrida takes this concept further by extending this idea of sous rature, he does so by placing the *word* under erasure to all words. I will interrogate this idea further in my thesis *Chapter 2b* which examines performative-writing techniques.

[8] *With Hidden Noise* was a collaborative exercise, in which Duchamp instructed his friend Walter Arensberg to dismantle the piece and place a small object inside the ball of twine, and not inform him or anyone else what it was. What rattles inside when it is shaken remains a mystery to this day. As a result, this piece is designed not merely to be viewed, but for action and audition.

As its title indicates, Morris's *Box with the Sound of Its Own Making* consists of an unadorned wooden cube, accompanied by a recording of the sounds produced during its construction. Lasting for three-and-a-half hours, the audio component of the piece presents the art object as a time-consuming and perhaps even tedious endeavour. In so doing, the piece also combines the resulting artwork with the process of artmaking, transferring the focus from one to the other.

There is also a profusion of intangible conceptual and text-based works that exist oxymoronically; indeed, a non-existent-existence might well be the very definition of the conceptual turn from formalism. A suitable example here would be the *No Manifesto* manifesto penned by the dancer, choreographer and filmmaker Yvonne Rainer, 1965.[9]

By positioning this *Chapter Zer0* as a guide to the thesis, a thesis that both acts as a set of instructions for discerning sonic agency, whilst also interrogating the very concept of such a document, I am contributing to this lineage. A lineage which continues to develop with contemporary critical theory and art production. One such example would be the project and associated publication, *Manual for the Construction of a Sound as a Device to Elaborate Social Connection* (LaBelle et al, 2010).[10]   So, in

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[9] Rainer's *No Manifesto* is made up of thirteen one-line statements. The full manifesto can be found in the *Introduction* to the thesis proper. It was intended to reduce dance to its essential elements and provoke a break from historical cliché. Rainer is notable for introducing the concept of *task* to choreography, "[s]uch task-based movement sought to counteract the prevailing conventions of dramatic modernist dance by aligning itself with *found* motions, rather than refined, spectacular phrases that only a talented professional could possibly execute" (Bryan-Wilson. 2012. p.62).

[10] *Surface Tension Supplement No. 4 - Manual for the Construction of a Sound as a Device*, was:

> Organized as a temporary working group, the Manual project set out to explore sound and auditory experience as platforms for social meeting, urban intervention and environmental investigation. Developed in collaboration with Atelier Nord and the Ultima festival and staged in Oslo in 2009, the project brought together six artists from around Europe engaged in experimental media practices. The project functioned as a series of process-oriented field studies of the city, involving locational research, performative actions and public discussion. Such an approach aimed to use sound as a process of temporal and social exchange. The works involved supplemented objective perspectives with face-to-face interactions, secret interventions, and transmissions so as to bring forward amplifications of city life.

> (Errantbodies. Online. 2017)

many respects the User Manual that is not fully realised, is a well-trodden conceptual device, a textbook contrivance so to speak; yet, ironically to use the term textbook implies the conforming or corresponding to an established standard or type.

Such established standards that make up this contextual backdrop are also reflected in the analyses of the individual and its social *self* as constructed through a performative process. The performance of the self as posited by the sociologist Ervin Goffman, in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1956/1969), and gender performativity as described by the philosopher Judith Butler in such works as, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990), are but two such examples.[11] They both take up the gauntlet of performativity from Austin's *How to…,* and re-purpose it for their very specific ideas and ideals. Both of these works have reached canonical status, and as such, to an extent defined their field and extended a certain orthodoxy. In this respect, they might be considered to act as meta-performatives, as uber-speech acts.

My *how-to-text* and the *doing* that it ultimately identifies is fully conscious of these broader applications of performativity. Although the systematic style of a guide or handbook suggests the itemization of hard facts and pragmatics. I am, in fact, actually using it as a vehicle to thrust together what are considered to be opposing *turns* in contemporary theory. This methodology is a process of both pulling apart entangled theoretical fields, while simultaneously forcing other discordant disciplinary parameters together. As such, this engagement with the User

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[11] Goffman uses the imagery of the theatre in order to portray the importance of human social interaction. He suggests that the best way to understand human action is by seeing people as actors on a social stage. Butler extends this in focusing on gender as an improvised and performed state.

Manual is in effect a stratagem to dispute, or at least critically appraise, the very non-speculation that the fixed form of the user manual implies.

As I have already stated, *How to…* suggests the most basic guidance used to communicate the way in which something should be done, performed or achieved. *How to Do Things With…* has been a recurring rubric in both the titles and the procedures of many of the practical and written elements that have made up this research project. The genesis of this being an analysis of the associated concepts of performativity.

Performance and performativity are the subject matter of *Chapters 2(x2), 2a* and *2b.* In anticipation of this, I would mention as an aside that Austin's *How to…* text was published posthumously and was, to a greater or lesser degree, *re-constructed* by third parties. All in all, Austin's writing has become a *manual* for all subsequent readings of performativity (see for example, Derrida 1971; Butler 1993; Hantelmann 2010). It can itself be considered a textual approximation of liveness, being a transcribed after-the-event. In this respect, when considering the foundation of this canonical work, it can be seen as self-problematising. The contested utterance, performing or *doing* of the concepts in Austin's work seem to be paramount in its eventual dissemination. As such, this further goes to reinforce the importance of the rift or rupture that is inherent in the use of *falseness as a container*. I have already identified this as a device in the examples above, and as a critical tool in this User Manual of sonic performativity. To quote from the editor's preface to Austin's collected lectures:

> [I]t is equally certain that Austin as a matter, of course, elaborated on the bare text of his notes when lecturing…[T]hese lectures as printed do not exactly reproduce Austin's written notes…[T]he

notes were interpreted and supplemented in the light of remaining portions of the 1952-4 notes already mentioned. A further check was then possible by comparison with notes taken both in America and in England by those who attended the lectures, with the B.B.C. lecture on 'Performative Utterances' and a tape recording of a lecture entitled 'Performatives' delivered at Gothenberg in October 1959.

(Urmson. 1962. p.vii)

Austin's *How to Do Things with Words* has been parodied, appropriated and reused in numerous articles, texts and publications from a diverse field of disciplines. My use of this as a trope for generating both methodology and practice outputs began with the submission of the performance-paper, *How to Do Things with Sound Studies* for the *2nd European Sound Studies Association* conference in February 2014. I will unpack a number of these *How to Do Things With…* works, episodically throughout this thesis. For now, however, I will detail some of the consequences of Austin's *How to…* that I find most pertinent, reverberating as they have through this research.

The forthcoming *Zer0.2* sections contain some texts that directly reference Austin's seminal work through a pastiching or re-wording of its title. I do not present these in chronological order of their publication, but rather in the order in which I have engaged with them. These, what I will call *how-to-texts*, have been chosen for their reapplication of Austin's title in an endeavour to make use of his concept of performativity outside of its original field of linguistics.

The examples that follow are not intended as a complete or absolute survey of such re-workings of Austian theory. However, the significance of the ones that I cite is that each individual text has taken a very particular

account of performativity. Which I, in turn, am able to make use of in the construction of a discrete performative materialism of the sonic.[12]

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[12] There are works which at first glance might appear to be primed for inclusion in my appraisal of *how-to-texts* which I allow for in this *Chapter Zer0*. Here I am thinking of such as the article *How to Do Things with Performance Art* by Edward Scheer, which appeared in the journal *Performance Research* (Vol.19. 2014). In this Scheer examines notions of the performative in relation to Performance Art by looking at the work of the Australian performance artist Mike Parr.

However, for my purposes, which is an alignment of the sonic with the performative rather than with the idiom of Performance Art per se, Scheer's essay offers little in terms of re-usable material.

Figure 2. Interlude: Solo for Retractable Pen (duration variable).[13]
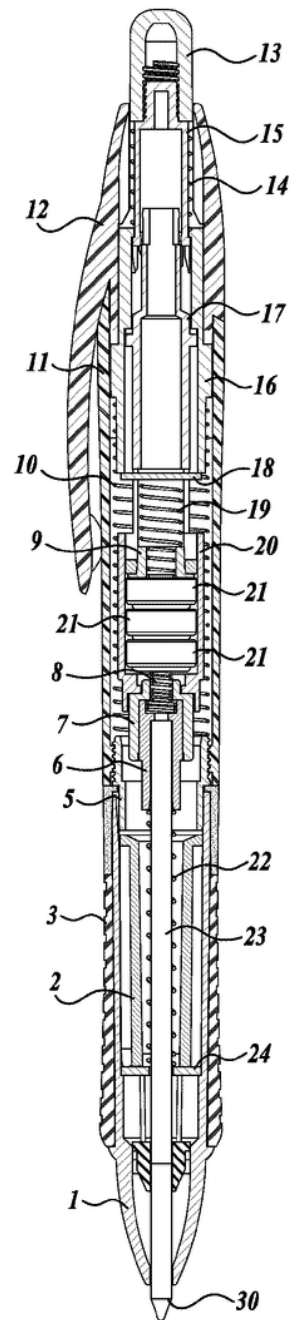
Zer0.2.0: How to Do Things with Art: The Meaning of Art's Performativity.

The first and one of the better-known publications that takes from Austin's concepts and uses his title as a prototype to build on is, *How to Do Things with Art: The Meaning of Art's Performativity* by Dorothea von Hantelmann (2010). In this work, the art historian Hantelmann develops a far-reaching analytical approach to contemporary art, at the heart of which lies the question of art and its relevance to society. Hantelmann uses Austin's work on the agency of language to interrogate how art becomes politically or socially significant.

In the introductory chapter entitled *The Societal Efficacy of Art*, Hantelmann speaks of the restrictions that criticism as a cultural practice may impose on the production of art. She refers to artists such as Tino Segal and Jeff Koons, asking can works by these and other artists she considers to be of a similar vein, oppose reality whilst being non-critical. She establishes the objective of her work by stating that, "[t]aken as a whole, *How to Do Things with Art* can be understood as either a theoretical elaboration of this question, or as a manual for artists—and I hope the book will be both" (Hantelmann. 2010. p.17).

As we can see, here Hantelmann affirms her intention with a direct reference to the concept of a manual. Unlike Wishart in *On Sonic Art* (1985), Hantelmann wishes to instruct the reader *how-to* rather than pursue a rhetorical *why*. Hantelmann's *how-to* is not just a practical knowing (epistemological), but a *how-to* of the properties of an art object (ontological). We might consider this to be akin to an onto-epistemological understanding of *How to Do Things with Art*.[14]

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[14] I will examine this term, in particular as it is ascribed to the work of Karen Barad, in more detail in *Chapter 2b* of the thesis proper.

Zer0.2.1: How to Do Things with Art: (II)

The next *how-to-text* shares the same re-purposing of Austin's title with Hantelmann's aforementioned publication. I refer to the article *How To Do Things with Art* by Scott R. Stroud (2006), which as we see precedes Hantelmann's book by four years. This paper seemingly aligns itself with the concept of art object as actant, that is to say, it states that art does things. In this respect, it may be considered a precursor to Hantelmann's work, and in many ways this text is a closer reading of Austin's speech act theory; as such it is less imaginative, being a reading rather than a re-interpreting.

Stroud's article, unfortunately, circumvents Hantelmann's small 'p' political application of the performative and instead shifts the focus to a not-so-small 'p' pedagogical application of the performative. This emphasis towards the performative as epistemological tool should, one would think, be a worthy addition to the litany of *how-to-texts*. After all, a performative pedagogy, as I shall detail elsewhere, is pertinent to this research practice. However, Stroud soon diverts into what I find troublesome territory.

I do not want to get waylaid with details regarding this particular paper, but, it is my opinion that what initially is an interesting analysis of the art object using Austin's speech act theory, soon becomes bogged down in stereotypical orientalism. Stroud's paper uses the idea of the *koan*, a paradoxical anecdote used in Zen Buddhism, to exemplify what he considers to be the strengths of Austin's work. In his appraisal of Austin's speech act theory, he draws on the work of Jürgen Habermas.[15]

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[15] Jürgen Habermas is a sociologist and philosopher whose work focuses mainly on the foundations of social theory and epistemology, democracy and the rule of law.

Stroud references Habermas's typology of action as laid out in *The Theory of Communicative Action* (Habermas, 1981). Put briefly, in Habermas's action theory, three types of action exist, *communicative action*, *strategic action* and *instrumental action*. Although Stroud considers the first two in his analysis he discounts the third. The first two are ascribed to human-to-human interaction, *instrumental action*, however, describes a human agent's interaction with the non-agential world. It is this disregard for anything other than the performativity of the self which I find most interesting as it pertains to (and provokes) my examination of non-human performativity via new materialisms and object-oriented philosophies. One aspect of the user manual/User Manual which is relevant here, is that as an implementation it mediates between the self and the thing; and, as such, may be comparable to the event score (see thesis *Chapter 1.5*). Stroud paradoxically speaks of the agency of the art object, whilst dismissing the element of Habermas's action theory that might shed light on such agency.

Stroud regards Austin's performative in the context of teaching or transmitting an understanding, albeit an understanding of spiritual enlightenment. For this reason, I consider Stroud to be in the pro-manual camp. As such, this *how-to-text* is a useful addition even if only for the purposes of a benchmark or *quasi-control group*, highlighting what I hold to exemplify a poorly applied appropriation of Austin's canonical work.

Zer0.2.2: How to Do Things with Alien Phenomenology

A more recent example is Ian Bogost's *How to Do Things with Videogames* (2011). As one would expect there are a number of cursory references to the work of Austin throughout this text.[16] This published *how-to-text* is not itself pertinent enough to feature in this research proper. However, what is more significant, and the reason that this adaption of Austin's title is worthy of inclusion here, is the publication by Bogost that immediately follows this one. I refer to his *Alien Phenomenology, or What it's Like to be a Thing* (2012). It is with this that he secures his reputation as one of the better-known exponents of object-oriented ontology (OOO), and one of the most energetic members of this rather heterogeneous school of thought. There are elements within this particular work that resonate with this research and are applicable to both this discussion of the User Manual and to a number of sections found in the thesis proper.

It is in this latter work that Bogost puts forward his idea of *carpentry.* In a dedicated chapter of the same name*,* Bogost explains, "I give the name *carpentry* to this practice of constructing artefacts as a philosophical practice […] MAKING THINGS […] Making things is hard" (Bogost. 2012. p.92). Bogost's carpentry is a *how-to-text* of sorts, it is a perspective on creative work that asks philosophical questions, advocating that matter be brought into play for philosophical use. What I believe Bogost to be signifying with this upper/lowercase repetition of *making things*, is that the challenge of creating outcomes, which in turn create or have agency, is a

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[16] Bogost is Professor of Interactive Computing at the Georgia Institute of Technology, he is a video game designer and philosopher. Much of his work explores video games as interactive, immersive experiences that can do more than merely entertain. In the context of this *Chapter Zer0*, it should also be noted that in his book *How to Do Things with Videogames*, manuals are mentioned on a handful of occasions in regards the printed or online instructions for game-play.

performing of philosophy. In this chapter, Bogost seems to prioritise doing and making over thinking and writing. Although, Bogost's argument is finally that writing is not enough by itself, and that doing must accompany writing. It is this that I most enthusiastically take from his reading of OOO. Furthermore, in regards the push-and-pull of dialectical reflexivity between writing and doing, Bogost has this to say:

> The experiences of things can be characterised only by tracing the exhaust of their effects on the surrounding world and speculating about the coupling between that black noise and the experiences internal to an object. Language is one tool we can use to describe this relationship, but it is *only* one tool, and we ought not feel limited by it.
>
> (Ibid. p.100)

It is also in this text that Bogost speaks of the litany as philosophical tool. He discusses what he and other object-oriented philosophers have called the practice of *ontography* (Bogost, 2012; Harman, 2012).[17] Put simply, ontography is a process of inventorying or cataloguing. I consider this recourse to litany to be comparable to the practices of detailing specifications and requirements, a format found in user manuals and instructional texts.

I will revisit Bogost's carpentry, and the ontographic device of OOO again in the thesis proper as it shares both a methodological and aesthetic

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[17] Bogost combines his expertise as a games designer with that of object-oriented philosopher in his application of what he refers to as "software carpentry" (Ibid. p.96). One such tool he calls his *Latour Litanizer*, it is an algorithm which generates random litanies based on randomized selections of Wikipedia pages.

manner and intent with a key component of the procedures that I use; that being those of repetition, reiteration and re-staging.

Zer0.2.3: How to Do Things with and without Words

This brings me to yet another re-performed *How to Do Things…* I use *re-performing* as I consider the manipulation and hybridization of Austin's original title to be a performing of a performative. This being Chantal Pontbriand's *PER/FORM: How to Do Things with(out) Words* (2014), which was produced as a catalogue and essay collection accompanying the exhibition of the same name at CA2M Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo in Madrid, March 22–September 21, of the same year.[18]

The book assembles works by thirty artists. These contributions include musical scores, drawings, documents and photographs. These individual offerings work as a whole to generate new perspectives on the subject of performance/performativity through different theoretical assertions. Such a diverse collection of materials could be analogized to the user manual as it exists as an inventory of texts that seek to expand or make sense of endeavour(s). The relationship that the written direction has to the deed or action that it calls attention to is comparable to the contrivance of this *Chapter Zer0*.

In regards the essays in the aforementioned collection, two indicators can be found that the publishers might wish to instruct their readers. This is suggested by their doubled use of a *how-to* clause in the promotional copy, which reads:

> Performativity explores the in-between space when bodies or objects are left to perform. [T]hese different factors enhance performance over materiality or object making. Per/Form

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[18] Chantal Pontbriand is a curator and art critic, who founded *Parachute* contemporary art magazine in 1975. She was also head of Exhibition Research and Development at Tate Modern in London in 2010 and has numerous exhibitions and publications to her name.

investigates the process of this enhancement—how to work through form, and how to let form speak for itself.

<div align="right">(Sternberg Press. Online. 2016)</div>

The "how to work through form, [and] let form speak for itself" (Ibid.) which this publication cites as its primary investigation shares a common ground with my research aims. *How to DO(O) Things with Sounds* posits an understanding of sound art practice that foregrounds a sonic thinking. As I argue in the main body of the thesis – and which this pseudo manual situates through a process of performative repositioning – sound is capable of doing its own epistemology.

Zer0.2.4: How to Do Things with Sound

The next addition to this litany of *How-to's* is Cindy Patton's article *How To Do Things With Sound* which originally appeared in a 1999 volume of the journal *Cultural Studies*, and was published online in 2010, which is where I eventually came across it in 2016. I make a point of detailing its provenance here as significantly, after using many deviations of the title *How To Do Things With Sounds* for a variety of research outcomes since 2013, it was not until some three years later that I uncovered this paper. Patton is a sociologist and historian whose research specialises in the history of the AIDS epidemic, is a case in point of a researcher not in the field of linguistics taking Austin's concept of performativity and reapplying it.

As Patton's article focuses on the consequences of gendered constructs, it would not be unreasonable to consider it in a similar vein to Judith Butler's applications of performativity (Butler, 1990; 1993; 1997). However, Patton is somewhat critical of her peers in that she finds fault with "recent work in gender/queer theory" stating that, "[t]his work has failed to examine the role of 'sound' in Austin's theory, with important consequences for our understanding of the basis of such an 'ordinary' communicative event" (Patton. 1999. p.466).

Patton uses pornography and the sound design of pornographic cinema as her study material. Her research may be somewhat at odds with my thesis concerns, as her analysis of sound and the performative focuses on sound as an extra-verbal communication. But, her paper is an important addition to the post-Austian readings of performativity, and one of the few which rethinks Austin sonically.

There are others who are writing in and around sound studies that refer to Austin, but these, like Patton, tend to do so solely in relation to

phonetics and vocal sounding rather than to the sonic per se; which is a natural, if not a slightly obvious extension of Austin's speech act theory (Sophie Mayer, 2016; Christof Migone, 2012).[19]

A few exceptions can be found that bring Austin's analysis to bear on non-linguistic sonic realms. Some such examples include: Virginia Anderson's application of theories of the performative utterance in respects the musical score. This can be found in her essay, *The Beginning of Happiness: Approaching Scores in Graphic and Text Notation* (Anderson, 2013).[20] There is also the blink-and-you'll-miss-it mention of Austin by James Lastra, in his *Sound technology and the American cinema: Perception, representation, modernity* (2000).[21]

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[19] Such examples being: Firstly, the fleeting mention of Austin in Sophie Mayer's online essay *Thinking about Sound on Film | Sound and Music*, in which she cites Austin in reference to "[t]he uncertain nature of speech in Western culture" (Mayer, 2016). And secondly, in *Sonic Somatic: Performances of the Unsound Body* (2012), in which Christof Migone refers to John Cage's oft-quoted Zen influenced remark regarding his own practice, "I Have nothing to say and I am saying it" (Cage.1961. p.51), as "a kind of short-circuit Austian performative" (Migone, 2012, p.7-8). Migone also draws on Austin and the linguist and semiotician, Ferdinand de Saussure when he speaks of the stutter (Ibid. p.133).

[20] Anderson applies Austin's concept of *happy* or *unhappy* performatives to her analysis of experimental music performances. She bases her case studies around the Scratch Orchestra's *Nature Study Notes*, which is a collection of 152 written instructions or scores that was published as a booklet by Cornelius Cardew in 1969. These scores are referred to as *rites* and were used in many of the early Scratch Orchestra concerts.

[21] There is a brief reference to Austin, via a Derridean rereading, in James Lastra's aforementioned study of the development of representational technologies, including photography, phonography, and the cinema. However, it does not directly refer to the sonic as such. Or rather, it does, in fact, refer to the repetition of an event that happens to be sound. Lastra convolutes speech and more general sounds in his analysis of early film recording techniques, juxtaposing these with the job done by intertitles in silent film. He uses Derrida's analysis of writings "characteristic *iterability,* which marks writing as *repeatable*" (Lastra. 2010. p.148), to suggest that a certain type of generic recording techniques renders such sound, "legible beyond the original context, a

Zer0.2.4.b: How Sounds Do Things with You

This *how-to-text* is I feel inadequate to be designated a fully registered appropriation or re-working of Austin's title, *How To Do Things With Words.* Unlike the others I make use of here as a means to examine the *how-to* of a user manual, this example is not a re-purposing of Austin's title, but rather a re-consideration in relation to the subject, to the *you*. By this, I mean that there is a shifting of emphasis, the doer here is the sound rather than the sounder. This presupposes a necessary shifting of pecking order; a flattening of ontological hierarchies, which I will further consider in the light of object-oriented and materialist philosophies in the thesis proper.

It is for this reason that this is a liminal listing. Acting as a *B-side* to *Zer0.2.4*, this performs as a transitional or intervening entry, an intra-inventory. It follows on in part from the last entry, in that it returns to a publication detailed in the footnotes of that section. This being Christof Migone's *Sonic Somatic: Performances of the Unsound Body* (2012), and

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permanent record of an ephemeral event, and therefore in some sense more like writing than like speech" (Ibid. p.149). Lastra analogizes recording with writing, stating that:

> The signature, in order to function as a signature, requires the notion of a fully present intention. The idiosyncrasies of the mark are what stamp this form of writing as historical, as happening once and happening at a specific time. Yet no signature could function if it were not, as Derrida has pointed out vis-a-vis J. L. Austin's argument in *How to Do Things with Words*, something like a citation. Your *unique* signature is only valid through its comparison with some (obviously repeatable) model—it functions as unique only through its being verified as a copy.
>
> (Ibid. p.150)

Here, Lastra does not actually utilise Austin's legacy of performativity in the analysis of a sonic doing but uses Derrida to apply the idea of recording technologies as a re-writing. Lastra's *sound-event* is in actual fact a *recording-event*.

in particular, the recourse to Austin made in reference to a certain intractability.

In true User Manual fashion, here there is an almost hypertextual self-referencing. Yet, in contrast to this first allusion, I feel here it warrants consideration more than as mere marginalia. Migone calls on Austin's theory of the performative in the context of vocal rendering. Furthermore, in considering subjects and subjective encounters, Migone coins the term "solipsistic performatives" (Ibid. p.123), using it in an interrogation of how the stutter *acts* disruptively on language. Austin is pursued to a point that I feel elevates this specific citation beyond those which I previously relegated to supporting footnotes.

Rather than just re-interpreting Austin's speech act theory as a literal vocalisation, an application of *the sounding of the word*, Migone seems to shift the emphasis about a pivotal *doing*. He suggests that:

The text seems to have swallowed the author whole, if it is not written at all, have the words written themselves? Perhaps, Austin's How to Do Things With Words has become How Words Do Things With You. In the variation on the original title, the you is named, in the original it is assumed, the you is the agent, the subject which does the how of the book. In the reversal, agency shifts, words become actors, they acquire a certain magical, animistic power.

(Ibid. p.124)

By offering this alternative, Migone proffers an obverse reading that I consider to be more aligned with a *wording of the sound*, than a sounding of the word. Hence, this application of Austin demonstrates an agency that seems more inclined to my own. I take Migone's switch trick, his sleight of

hand, and ruminate on the shifted accent in Austin's title. I regard this modest re-wording to embody a principle concern in reference to my practice. The question, *How Sounds Do Things with You,* is an important transmutation of my thesis title. It identifies a significant tool for speculation and appraisal in the detailing of the various performed outcomes of this research. The noteworthiness being the transfer of agency from the doer to the deed, or sonic-event.

This contrasting of the *You* and the *I*, this playing fast and loose with agential accent (not in the sense of pronunciation, but in the pronunciation of the sense), is in Migone's words, tantamount to "moments where, despite systematic resistance by the surroundings, the object declares its existence" (Ibid. p.123). It is not too much of a tall order to follow this to an ill-logical conclusion, bringing us to a pathologised Austian theory, whereby, the *You* and the *I* might be applied to the other-than-human agent. The sonic-event then declares its existence with or without our consent. The stutter, which is the subject of Migone's consideration, is, after all, a continued repetition of sound. A sounding that affirms itself in spite of listening practices, protocols or mandates.

Zer0.2.5: How to Aestheticize with a Hammer [22]

Lastly, I come to the most recent encounter with a *how-to-text* that I shall cite in this *Chapter Zer0*. This is not strictly a re-working of Austin's examination of linguistics and philosophy of language, or of its subsequent diversification by other disciplinary fields. But, there are elements here that I regard as pertinent to the discussions to come. As such, this final example performs more as a placeholder. I would ask the reader to make note of it as it will be reanimated in the thesis proper where I will scrutinise the term *deed* within the theory of a Deed-Oriented Ontology of the sonic.

The content that motivates this entry was first brought to my attention in a keynote speech by the music theorist and Associate Professor at Yale University, Brian Kane. This was given at the *Sound Art Matters* conference at Aarhus Institute of Advanced Studies, Denmark, in June 2016. The title of Kane's presentation at this event was simply, *Twilight of the Sound Object*. However, in my endeavours to find a documented or fully transcribed version of this paper I since discovered that it (or a very similar earlier version) previously went by the lengthier title; *Twilight of the Sound Object, or, How to Aestheticize with a Hammer* (2013). This expanded title incorporates the prescribed *how-to*, with its all-important hint at edification.[23]

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[22] The reference to the hammer also alludes to Heidegger's tool analysis which I examine in more detail in thesis *Chapter 3*.

[23] I have found two such incidences of this extended title used by Kane. Firstly, at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and secondly, at New York University Music Department.
(see-http://www.saic.edu/academics/departments/sound/newsandevents/briane-kane.html; and, http://nyuinthestudio.blogspot.co.uk/p/blog-page_27.html).

The subject of this keynote was the compositions and theories of Pierre Schaeffer, the 'inventor' of musique concrète. Kane addressed a basic tenet of these theories, that of the sound object (objet sonore). In his presentation Kane questioned whether the sound object can not only be heard as pure sound, detached from its actual source, but also examined the movements, gestures and haptic communication of the composer in relation to the sound works. In his keynote, and discussions that followed throughout the conference, Kane spoke of his use of the term *kinetics* in his attempt to tackle the issues of agency and physicality in sound-making (Kane, 2016).

If this final reference may seem somewhat loosely associated with the chapter subject of instructional text, it is because this example has been chosen with a slightly different purpose in mind. Although Kane's presentation given in the wake of his monograph, *Sound Unseen: Acousmatic Sound in Theory and Practice* (2014), did not touch on concepts of performativity as it is understood from Austinian thinking; it did attest to a *doing and knowing* of sound. Kane undertakes an examination of the *sounding act* by focusing on a Schaefferian reading of first-person phenomenology, "[i]f doing phenomenology is distinct from knowing it, how did Schaeffer's actions compare with his method?" (Kane. 2014. p.18).[24]

It is in this respect that I consider the fractured duality that I attend to throughout this thesis to be well illustrated by this closing how-to. This duality, being a doubleness resulting from the collision of performing practices with concepts that challenge anthropocentricism.

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[24] Schaeffer's first-person phenomenology regards the point-of-audition as experienced subjectively. Therefore, I regard it as predominantly an anthropocentric understanding of the sonic.

Kane's presentation was, after all, a keynote at a conference where the dominant themes were those exploring the materiality and embodied/un-bodied experience of sound. This emphasis courted a particular line of analysis manifest through a number of paper presentations, including my own, which engaged with the potential of a sound studies surveyed through the lens of object-oriented philosophies.[25]

It is in this conceptual negotiation where the anthropocentric reduction which underlies a phenomenological and postphenomenological reading of sound (Ihde, 1995; 2009), comes into conflict with the rejection of human privileging that is noteworthy in object-oriented philosophies.[26] Kane's exhortation of first-person hearing, amidst the collected inquiry into the sounding of things at the aforementioned research conference, provides an ideal circumstance to force a refocus.

This last example in this review of *how-to-text* that I use to contextualise the User Manual trope facilitates a jumping off point. What I

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[25] I refer to my performance-presentation, *How to Do(o) Things with Sounds: Or, Is It the Sounding of Sound Matter that Matters?* Whereby, I sought to put the relational within object-oriented ontology at centre stage within existing sound art theory, creating a thinking that is disposed toward deed and emergence rather than thingness. Further information about this symposium contribution can be found in the *Third Deed* section.

[26] The philosopher Don Ihde coined the term *postphenomenology* and is the driving force behind the movement that bears that name. It refers to a revised form of phenomenology that aims to overcome the limitations of subjectivism. Like Bruno Latour's actor-network theory (ANT), postphenomenology treats subjectivity and objectivity as the product of relations rather than their starting point. However, unlike ANT, postphenomenology is careful to preserve the distinction between human and nonhuman entities.

As a part of its relational approach to technology, postphenomenology probes the question of the non-neutrality of artefacts. Some artefacts are said to be *multistable* in the sense that they possess multiple stabilities or variations. A hammer, for example, can drive nails, serve as a paperweight, or even perform as a murder weapon - to name a just a few of its many stabilities.

consider to be a problematic positioning of Kane's paper within its presentation context, leads me to a consideration of the difficulties that this *Chapter Zer0* simultaneously reflects and creates.

This difficulty may be summed up by a much-simplified binary, that of a subject/object dichotomy, as addressed in the introduction of the thesis proper where I contrast *sounding* and *listening* as oppositional frameworks for apprehending sound arts practice. I would suggest that Kane's first-person listening is ill-disposed to a non-anthropocentric sounding, and as such typifies a certain mute resistance to material and performative knowing.

It is this tension that is the focus of the next section in which I further engage the sentiment expressed in the quote that opened this *Chapter Zer0*. Whereby, questions were posed about the relationship between theory and practice. The concluding sections will consider the sonic-thinking-doing that is experimentally implemented through the détournement of the user manual through this User Manual.[27]

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[27] On the subject of detournement (which will be taken up further in the thesis proper) and in the context of the user manual, it is perhaps worth mentioning here; *A User's Guide to Détournement* by Guy Debord and Gil Wolman (1956). In which they argue that détournement has a double purpose, it must negate the ideological conditions of artistic production. Yet, it must also negate this negation and produce something that has political agency.

Figure 3. Interlude: Solo for Child Proof Pill Bottle (duration variable). [28]
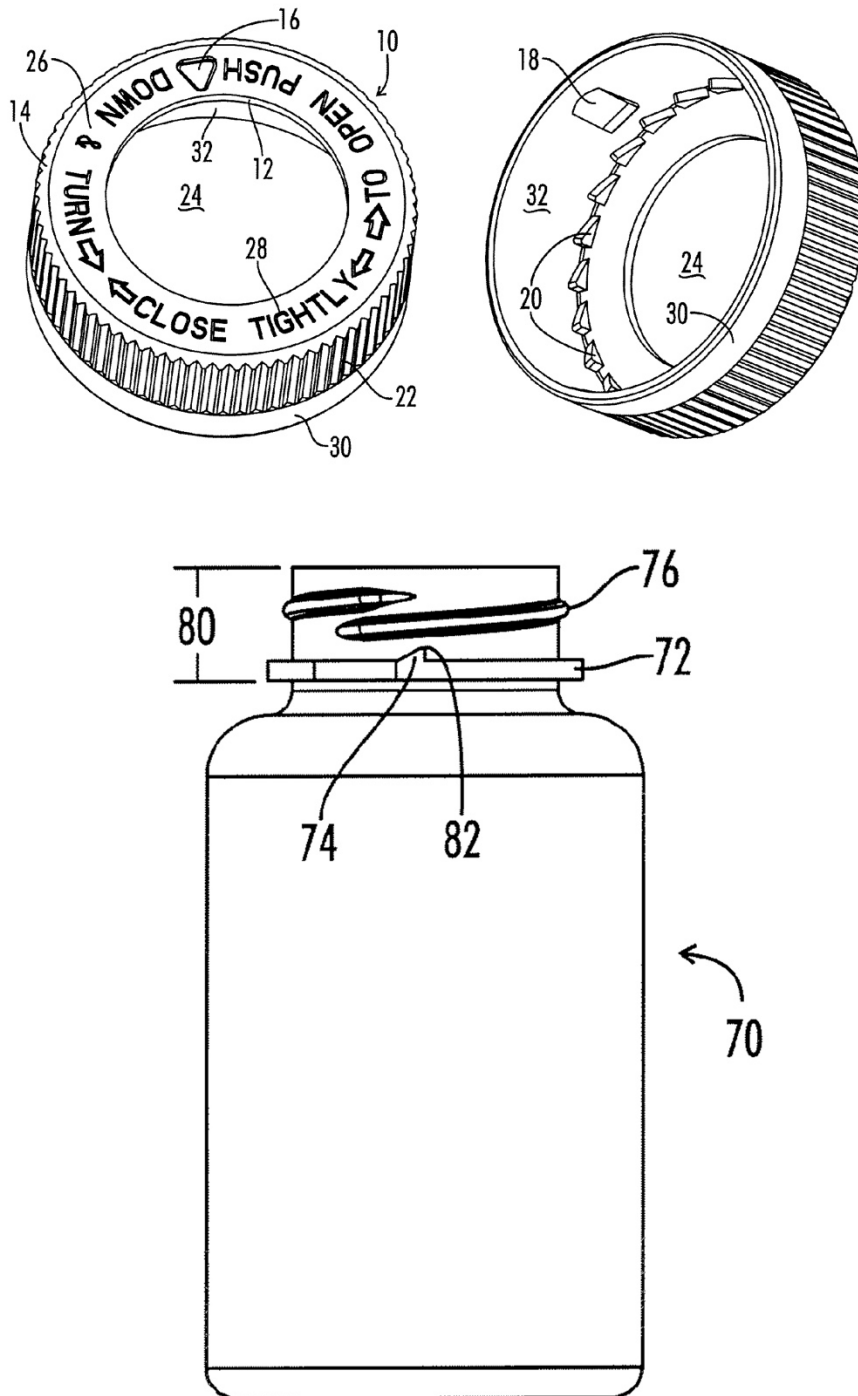
28

Image source - Patent US7111746 – (2006). Shellable child-resistant closure container with positive lock mechanism. [Online] Available at: https://www.google.com/patents/US7111746 [Accessed 15 March. 2015].

Zer0.3.0: Strife a User's Manual: Contingent Methods for Appraising Discordance and Contestation.

The above subtitle is, of course, a reference to what is probably Georges Perec's best-known novel, *Life a User's Manual* published in 1978. The substitution of the word *life* for *strife* is not simply a playful rhyme. As the secondary part of the title implies, here strife alludes to the altercations and conflicting dialogues that take place throughout the chapters of this thesis. I refer to my merging of concepts associated with more contemporary turns in theory which take from new materialism(s) and object-oriented philosophies, with concepts more aligned with the post-structuralist thinking of the mid-to-late twentieth century. Here I speak mainly of the so-called linguistic turn. This earlier thinking is very much embedded in the subjective and anthropocentric, whilst the latter concerns itself with a more objective or non-human analysis. To make use of Henry Bergson's terminology, my analysis combines both the *discrete* and the *continuous* multiplicities of performative sound art practice, drawing attention to the fissures and cracks that this amalgamation creates.[29]

I shall discuss Perec further in *Chapter 2b* of the adjoining document*,* where I examine performative-writing. In particular, concerning my use of a lipogrammatic device (the intentional omission of a letter or letters from a text) in a piece of writing that I consider to have become a cornerstone of the position I now take.[30] Also, I would draw comparisons

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[29] Henry Bergson developed the concept of dual multiplicities in *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness* (1889). For Bergson, multiplicity has two modes, extensive numerical and intensive continuous. The first characterizes space, the second time. The first can be divided without changing its nature; in the second, division implies change of nature. The linguistic and symbolic, text and images can be described as *discrete* multiplicities, whereas sound is *continuous* multiplicities.

[30] I refer here to the text entitled, *On the use of the 'p' word in my research. [And, the pop filter as a compositional device].* This was originally conceived and produced in

between the quotidian as exemplified by Perec and theories of *everydayness,* with aspects of new materialism(s) and the varied aesthetic readings of object-oriented philosophies.[31]

However, for now, this use of Perec is more as a re-entry point in further discussing the concept of the thesis as a User Manual. This positing a *thesis-as-quasi-manual* as a discursive compositional device is conditional and dependant on its own materiality. It is a contingent method for appraising discordance, and as such, comparable with the *endeavours and projects* that I take from Bengson and Moffett in the opening of this *Chapter Zer0*. To re-iterate, whilst developing a framework for my thesis I looked at the possible structuring of this document along the lines of a user manual. This was first motivated by investigations around what I consider to be an intrinsic misalignment when theorising-about-doing and in particular when writing-about-sounding. Which is also reflective of much of the thinking that falls under the rubric of new materialism(s) and OOO, which emphasises the philosophical and political force of materiality

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2013 for a planned London College of Communication research publication that was not realized. It was however published in 2014 in the experimental literary Journal *Infinity's Kitchen*, an American print and online publication. This was in the somewhat altered iteration of, *On the use of the '_' word in my research. [And, the _o_ filter as a com_ositional device]*. Further details of this can be found in the main thesis, in particular, *Chapter 2.*

[31] Perec was a member of Oulipo a writing group founded in 1960 by French mathematician Francois de Lionnais and writer Raymond Queneau. Members of which experimented with writing constraints. Perec wrote a novel without using the letter 'e', entitled *La Disparition* (1969). He also wrote the novella *Les Revenentes* (1972), where 'e' was the only vowel. Perec's novel, *Life a User's Manual* is also subject to lists, arrangements of chapters according to Graeco-Latin squares (a way of designing experiments so that the experimental units are grouped in three different ways), and even crossword puzzles.

beyond language and representation.[32] This undertaking to *do-theory-off-the-page*, to unmute text, is a concern that I return to throughout this research. Here in bringing this *Chapter Zer0* to a close, I will discuss the subject of how to un-write the User Manual. In particular, the *strife* in the above subtitle is indicative of the paradoxical and problematic engagement with this trope.

In recent sound studies research, there has been a tendency to foist fixed methodologies and disciplinary definitions on what is a very diverse set of practices. The question of *what* is sound/sonic art is problematic as it only leads one down an ontological cul-de-sac.[33] *How to…*, in contrast, does not solicit a closing-down of disciplinary boundaries. On the contrary, it is through a self-conscious appraisal of the *hows*, that the *whats* and the *whys* might become unravelled; reverse engineered from the activity of doing. In this respect, the *how* which is usually a precursor to action is retrospectively guided by agency. In the case of my research project, this is the agency of sonic practice. As such the contradictory stance taken with/against the format of the instructional document is a pseudo-user manual. Or rather, in line with the work of the philosopher François Laruelle it may be more fitting to call it a non-manual. This presupposes, as does Laruelle's *non-philosophy*, the manual as material for mediation and implementation, rather than an artefact for meditation and

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[32] In regards this misalignment I refer the reader back to Ian Bogost's statement in reference to the limitations of language that I have cited in section *Zer0.2.2*.

[33] In, *The Routledge Companion to Sounding Art* (2016), the second chapter, *Defining Sound Art* by Laura Maus and Marc Leman attempts to do just that. They state that "The goal of this chapter is to define 'sound art' as an art form that is distinguished from compositions, and even from the term 'sounding art'". They go on to claim that, "[b]y providing a definition we believe to contribute to the identification of new art form" (Maus and Leman. 2016. p.27).

consideration. In the spirit of this discursive signalling, I might even suggest the term *user-non-manual* for this *Chapter Zer0*.

Laruelle's concept of non-philosophy or non-standard philosophy proposes the use of philosophy as a material instead of as a form of commentary or as a framing device. John Ó Maoilearca (2012) refers to this non-philosophical orientation as not leading to philosophy becoming art in some reductive merger, or art becoming philosophy, as its mere illustrator, but rather them both standing as equals, both thinking equally, both samples of the real (I will speak in more detail of Laruelle's work in regards performativity in *Chapter 2a* of the thesis proper).[34] I would suggest that the simultaneous positing and un-positing of a user manual via a User Manual for the understanding and subsequent dissemination of an agential theory of sonic practice is such a theoretical double entendre. By framing this thesis with such a performative device, it performs performativity.

The application of this User Manual device was not conceived as a loose metaphor, but rather as an adoption of a meticulous design format, as a way of fusing theory and practice in a text that would also exist as a work. This would pastiche a category of document, book or publication, the purpose of which is to describe or enable a deed. The user manual collaborates and mediates, making an action or actions possible through the sharing of *know-how*. It is most commonly associated with inanimate

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[34] The concept of performativity (taken from speech act theory) is central to the idea of the subject of non-philosophy. Laruelle believes that both philosophy and non-philosophy are performative. In the words of Ray Brassier, "[…] the non-philosophical subject unleashes the radically performative character of theory as well as the rigorously cognitive character of practice. Non-philosophy is at once a theoretical practice and a performative theory" (Brassier. 2003. p.31).

objects, *things* such as electrical consumer goods, or software applications.

In employing the concept of an operator or user manual, I choose *user* over *operator* as the latter may connote manipulator or arranger of a more technical kind. Whereas, the former implies a more vernacular putting into service. This alignment with the *practical* rather than abstract or theoretical was calculated as a suggestion of intent, rather than a mere design or composition formatting.

> **User**: A noun indicating a person who uses or operates something.
> **Manual**: An adjective, relating to or done with the hands. A noun, referring to a book giving instructions or information.
>
> (Dictionary Application 2.2.1. Apple Inc. 2016)

One of the first definitions of a user manual which one encounters in a Google search is this, "a user guide or user's guide, also commonly known as a manual, is a technical communication document intended to give assistance to people using a particular system" (Wikipedia, 2016).[35]

In accordance with the conventions of such a document, the initial plan was to employ appropriate stylistic traits, such as; a written guide, associated images and cross-references in the running text through use

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[35] I justify what might be considered to be a disreputable source for this definition as, firstly, it reflects the quotidian meaning of the term user manual. Secondly, it correlates with the landscape in which many of the theories I shall be working with exist. I refer to the world of speculative realism and object-oriented philosophies, much of which occurs online and in the blogosphere community (see, Adam Kotsko's, *A Dangerous Supplement: Speculative Realism, Academic Blogging, and the Future or Philosophy*. 2013). And lastly, the use of Google search engine on a mobile device has featured as a performance event within my practice (see my *Second Deed* for further detail).

of system-generated numbers. The headings to chapters and sections might playfully use such language and terminology commonly used by such formats as, *Installation Guide*, *Getting Started Guide*, and *How-To Guide*. Shorter paragraphs would assume such heading as *Maintenance Instructions* or *Troubleshooting Instructions*; for when the product does not work as expected. *Regulatory Code Compliance Information* and *Product Technical Specifications* may also appear.

The categorisation, itemisation and tabulation of information which typifies the structural layout of such a document are also of interest to me as it pastiches a certain trend in a particular philosophical analysis. I refer to the theoretical fields that fall within the scope of new materialism(s) and object-oriented philosophies. There is an inclination in the writing by such as Graham Harman and Ian Bogost, both being affiliated with object-oriented ontology (OOO), to use an inventory-style prose as a philosophical device (I have touched on this briefly in section, *Zer0.2.2*).

Harman has adopted the rather untrustworthy appellation of *ontography* for this process of describing and classifying of objects and qualities.[36] Ian Bogost follows suit adopting Harman's usage stating that, *ontography* involves the revelation of object relationships without necessarily offering descriptions or classifications of any kind, "[it] can take the form of a compendium, a record of things juxtaposed to demonstrate their overlap and imply interaction through collocation" (Bogost. 2012. p.38).

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[36] I describe *ontography* as untrustworthy as Harman himself quips that "[a] quick Google search indicates that the word *ontography* has occasionally been proposed in recent decades for serious endeavours. But in none of these cases does the word seem to have caught on; hence it is still up for grabs, and we can borrow [it]…" (Harman. 2011. p.125).

Although there are many other incidences of the list or enumeration as a technique or device, I highlight these as they pre-empt my investigation of a certain *non-human* turn in recent philosophical trends.[37]

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[37] There are of course other such precedents of an inventory-style being used as a philosophical device. Such as *The Foundations of Arithmetic* by Gottlob Frege (1884/2007), which is constructed completely of paragraphs numbered from 1 to 109. It is in paragraph 62 of this document that Frege sets out his *context principle*. I choose this case in point, as it is this *context principle* that is often identified as the origins of the linguistic turn in analytic philosophy (Dummett, M. 1994). The same linguistic turn that develops through ordinary language philosophy into J. L. Austin's theory of the performative.

Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1922), is also pertinent with its hierarchically numbered statements. "It is constructed around seven basic propositions, numbered by the natural numbers 1-7, with all other paragraphs in the text numbered by decimal expansions so that, e.g., paragraph 1.1 is (supposed to be) a further elaboration on proposition 1, 1.22 is an elaboration of 1.2, and so on" (Biletzki, A. and Matar, A. Online. 2014). This work is considered to be a precursor to ordinary language philosophy, and therefore also related to Austin's work.

Another example would be the 33 numbered short paragraphs, 1.1.1 to 6.1.5 that make up the first chapter of *The Non-Philosophy Project: Essays by Francois Laruelle* (2012). The chapter is aptly entitled, *A Summary of Non-Philosophy*. Indeed, there is also the essay by philosopher and filmmaker Arno Bohler, in the collection, *Encounters in Performance Philosophy* (2014). This essay entitled, *Staging Philosophy: Toward a Performance of Immanent Expression* is constructed from short paragraphs ordered numerically, yet each commencing with an ampersand. The three parts that make up this essay are as follows: Part 1: Thinking immanence, &1 to &42; Part 2: Philosophy: the art of thinking, &1 to &37; Part 3: Performing the art of doing philosophy: philosophy on stage, &1 to &36.

Lastly, incidents of a roster or catalogue as compositional style can be found in work by Graham Harman. In his essay collection, *Bells and Whistles: More Speculative Realism* (2013). Here Harman includes an essay from 2011, which is constructed from consecutively numbered sections; it is entitled, *Seventy-Six Thesis on Object-Oriented Philosophy.* And also, in *Immaterialism: Objects and Social Theory* (2016), in which he concludes with a chapter entitled, *Fifteen Provisional Rules of OOO Method.* As the title suggests this is a list of rules in the form of short paragraphs that are necessary to "apply the OOO method in full" (Ibid. p.114). Here Harman's *how-to* has a great deal in common with the user manual, as its prescriptive agenda is very much dependant on the logic of its worldview.

There is also a parallel with a particular reiterative theme of repetition and recurrence that I will explore in more detail in other sections of the thesis.[38]

Likewise, in *Alien Phenomenology, or What it's Like to be a Thing* (2012), Bogost expands on Harman's concept by adding a reference to the philosopher Bruno Latour, who is most renowned for his contribution of actor-network theory to the field of social studies. [39] In doing this Bogost coins the term, *Latour litany*, for the lists of things in writing. In defining this term, he states that "[l]ists, as it happens, appear regularly in Latour's works. They function primarily as provocations, as litanies of surprisingly contrasted curiosities. One doesn't need to look very hard to find examples of these Latour litanies, as I call them" (Ibid). This, in turn, has been redeployed by Harman in, *Bells and Whistles: More Speculative Realism* (2013).

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[38] The first forays into this methodology within my practice can be seen with a project that I developed at the start of my PhD. This is a compendium of short and often fugitive performance video works that exist on the website www.mediatedsonority.co.uk. The site contains 36 works that vary in duration from 36 seconds to 15 minutes (although, the average is between 2 and 4 minutes in length).

[39] Latour's actor-network theory has been influential on both OOO and New Materialism. According to this actants are anything that "…modif[ies] other actors through a series of…" actions (Latour. 2004. p.75).

Zer0.3.1: Conclusion: R/evoking the Manual (A Non-Standard User Manual).

To conclude, as a gesture to re-enact the performative disconnect of this *Chapter Zer0*; and also, to direct the reader back into the body of the thesis proper, I would like to undo the User Manual. Here I perform a *non-redaction*, an expanded *sous rature*. With this *doing* and *undoing*, which is indicative of the double gesture that I spoke of at the outset, I would like to finally revoke the User Manual.

The *endeavours and projects* that I took from the Bengson and Moffett passage continues, as it is through a process of endeavours (as these need not be successful), speculation (as this is not wholly definitive), and contingency (as this encompasses uncertainty), that the projects detailed in the main body of the thesis engage the question, *How to Do Things with Sounds?* And, offer suggestions for *How to Do Things with Sounds.*

I would again call on Laruelle's concept of non-philosophy, or non-standard philosophy, and the performative contradiction that posits that "[p]hilosophy is an affair of movements and becomings, of lines and vectors, of reversals and displacements—it mostly uses transcendence, which comes […] from experience" (Laruelle. 2013b. p.197). In a re-purposing of Laruelle's use of philosophy as a material, I would also suggest that materiality, be it of sound and/or of performance, is itself a philosophy to be employed in and through practice.

Throughout my practice-led research, I have developed mechanisms that have been employed experimentally, involving activities that are generally associated with the lecture format. This format is discussed further in respect of particular practice outcomes and analysed as a research methodology in *Chapter 2b*. It is through this development

as a joint practice outcome and theoretical procedure that I have engaged and applied concepts of relational knowledge sharing, a sonic pedagogy of sorts, in an examination of the agency of sound art practice(s).

I had originally considered designing this *Chapter Zer0* as a *true* user manual for my thesis. After much deliberation, I decided that a strict application of this artificial design, for the entire layout, formatting and content, would be detrimental to the outcome of this research document. As an exploration of the possibilities of the dissemination of sound art theory, this rigid application of a forced aesthetic would be incompatible with my intent. Moreover, I now consider that to attempt to do this entirely on-the-page would lead to a document where form outweighs function.

It may seem futile for me to detail what appears to be an abandoned stage in my thesis development. But, it is this contingent and reflexive procedure, this performing and re-performing of contested concepts, that is at the crux of my mechanisms. It is in this respect that this *Chapter Zer0* performs with a material discursivity within this research, to both *revoke* and *re-evoke* the use of the User Manual as a generative constraint.

In pastiching the user manual, in content if not strictly in form, I analogise the thesis to a document that might be used as a handbook containing specifications on *how-to do* sonic practice-led pedagogies, however speculative and contingent these may be. The user manual/User Manual as a genre of information exchange still casts its conceptual shadow across the pages of the thesis proper. It is as such that it should be understood as a purposeful and playful tactic, an act of prestidigitation.[40]

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[40] I use the term prestidigitation as it refers to a sleight of hand. In addition to this meaning, it describes a conjuring trick performed as entertainment, one which is carried out for an audience who are aware of the deception and are complicit with their own duping.

Through a process of critical review in sections *Zer0.2.0* to *Zer0.2.5*, I have set out to engage one particular legacy of Austin's work. This legacy is the varied repercussions and re-performing(s) of his concepts through the *how-to-text* titles created by practitioners and theorists from a multitude of disciplinary fields. This connects to the thesis *Chapters 2a* and *2b*, where I continue with a more expanded analysis of the performative. Firstly, looking at the dialogues set up by the interplay of performance and the performative. And secondly, how this relates specifically to writing practices. Both of these have been touched on in this pamphlet, and both consider in part the political and social implications of sound art and the sonic-event.

The contingent manoeuvring that I speak of at the outset, is I feel most self-evident in the interdependence that this *Chapter Zer0* has with the main body of the thesis, to which it is appended, and particularly the practice outcomes or *Deeds* that are detailed therein. These *Deeds* often employ collective provocations that are commonly moments *and/or* statements *and/or* gestures of displacement; yet, at odds with this, they also use systematic *and/or* reiterative procedures. The performative actualisation that is tested through this *Chapter Zer0* is indicative of the practice-led research projects that make up this body of my *applied* examinations (or, *Deeds*).[41]

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[41] The term *applied* is problematic in this instance, as *application* might imply the very rigidity that the User/non-User Manual is actively critical of. To apply suggests a formal putting into operation of an established modus operandi. I would like to draw from an essay by Laura Cull Ó Maoilearca (née Cull) regarding this very subject, *Performance as Philosophy: Responding to the Problem of 'Application'* (2012). In her essay, Cull very rightly points out that, "[i]n the light of such connotations, interdisciplinary scholars in general are often at pains to insist that what they are doing does not involve the 'mere application' of ideas taken from one discipline to another, or from theory into practice" (Cull. 2012. p.22).

Cull's paper is too detailed to summarize in a footnote, however, in stating that, "[…] the production of knowledge is arguably only one definition of thinking, or

In forming an overall research aesthetic through highlighting discrepancies and embracing particular elements from what might be considered divergent, and not necessarily well-matched theoretical fields, my practice unpicks and reassembles some of what is perhaps assumed within the burgeoning field of Sound Studies and theories of sound art practice(s). It is this attitude that my pamphlet embodies, as it performs a discourse.

To finish this *Chapter Zer0* as I began, with an appropriated short passage. I will quote Gavin Butt, art historian and editor of *After Criticism: New Responses to Art and Performance,* (2004). I re-purpose this as it is an apt drawing on Austin's performativity to summarise the interdependent antagonism that pamphlet shares with the thesis proper, *How to DO(O) Things with Sounds: A Performative (Re)User Manual.* When speaking of the proclamation of the manifesto (here I substitute it with my User Manual), Butt writes that:

> Gone are the days of the manifesto, of the confident assertion of a model or blueprint for critical activity […] Just as we might understand the performative speech act as a unique and unpredictable affair - one which 'produces or transforms a situation,' one which 'operates' - then we might similarly understand… [this User Manual] …as producing or transforming

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specifically of 'research', to which we might add many others; indeed, rather than applying this definition of thinking to practice (as if it was the same as text-based research), perhaps we might also look to performance itself to produce new ideas of what thinking is" (Ibid. p.25). It is this then that leads me to use the phrase *applied and re-applied* in the above paragraph, as a purposeful provocation.

the very situation of criticism as one constituted in, and as, the very operational procedures of its various undertakings.

(Butt. 2004. p.27)

This allusion to the manifesto as a form of User Manual and vice versa is taken up in the introduction of the thesis proper. It is there that I contextualise my research project by establishing the idea of *No-Listening Manifestos* as a critical framework for a theory of sound art that is founded on sounding, as opposed to listening, practices.

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