

ASSOCIATING PLACES: STRATEGIES FOR LIVE, SITE SPECIFIC, SOUND ART PERFORMANCE

APPENDIX TO PHD PRACTICE-BASED THESIS

TANSY SPINKS

**LONDON COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION
UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS LONDON
AUTUMN 2014**

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Sonic Triangle, 2009
Tansy Spinks



UNCHARTED STORIES

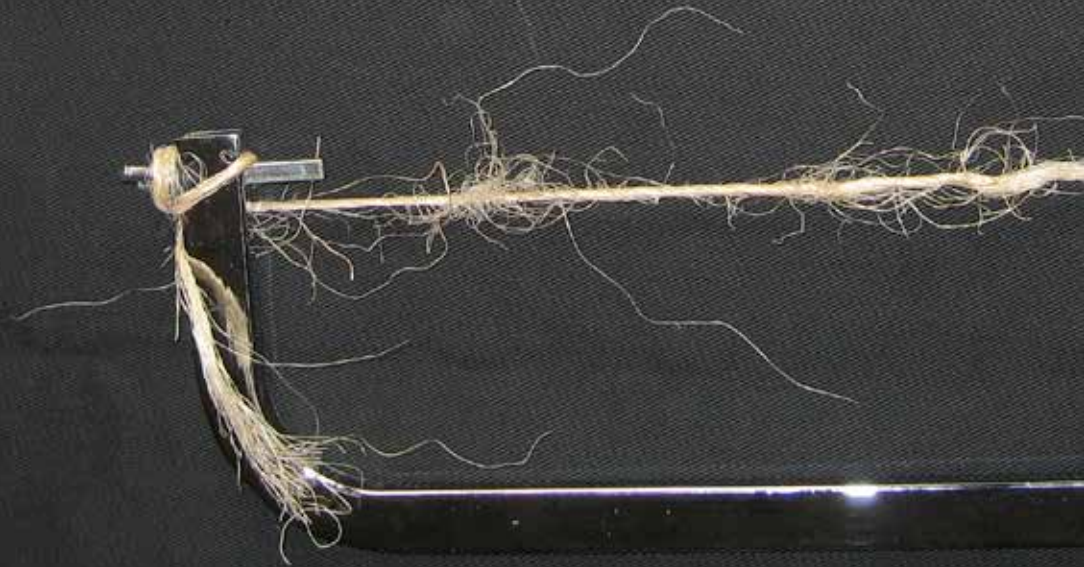
CCW
Camberwell Chelsea Wimbledon

Graduate School Launch Festival
The Triangle Space @ Chelsea College of Art & Design
28 October → 5 November 2009

Private view
6 pm → 9 pm, 29 October
11 am → 6 pm daily or by appointment, except Sunday

www.unchartedstories.wordpress.com
www.arts.ac.uk/research

University of the
Arts, London
Camberwell Chelsea
Wimbledon







SONIC TRIANGLE

DATE

October - November 2009

FREQUENCY AND DURATION

Four performances throughout the week of approximately 8-12 minutes.

LOCATION

Chelsea Triangle Space, Chelsea College of Art, Millbank, SW1.

The building comprises a single storey, right-angled triangle room with internal walls of breezeblock, a grey painted concrete floor and ten feet high ceilings. The performing space, set amid seventeen other exhibitors had a floor area of 3' x 3' x 3' and was delineated with white tape that remained in place throughout.

EVENT

Uncharted Stories, a UAL research group exhibition and conference.

STATED AIM

To 'animate' the space by providing a sound performance for the exhibition reflecting on the histories of the site.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE

The violin was played at the centre of the space,

the performer intermittently operating a laptop running custom built software based on MAX MSP connected via an audio interface to the instrument and a loop station. A large speaker stood in each of the three corners. The improvised sounds were panned around the space at various speeds, divorcing the source of the sound from the performer, drawing attention to the unusual shape of the space and encircling the listeners. The actions, prompted by research into the history of the site made use of, for the first time various devices to activate and layer sounds on the now 'prepared' violin. These included a length of rough twine, pieces of copper and plastic piping and a 2" nail.

The first section set the scene of the site as marshland by the Thames by building up a series of fast trills, (a familiar mimetic trope for suggesting water) with the aid of twine stretched over the frame of a hacksaw in place of a bow. This spanned all five strings simultaneously to give a fuller sound. String that frayed and disintegrated whilst being played seemed to suggest elements of decay and loss that retrospectively reinforced the programme note. Section two was directly inspired by Jeremy Bentham's proposal of audio surveillance for the prison building that had previously occupied the site, (using a system of listening tubes within his plans - this was never installed).

Three looped layers built up using – a section of white plastic plumber's pipe in place of the bow moved rapidly from side to side producing a quiet scuffling sound, a length of string held at both ends making a marching-paced sound, (a brief reference to the parade ground of the Army Medical College that the art school now occupies), a single galvanised nail used to 'pick' at the top end of the strings behind the violin bridge, chosen after research uncovered the story of a c19th prisoner's unsuccessful escape attempt using only a nail.

Section three used two lengths of copper piping and a bouncing action on the violin string. The shorter pipe was used as a stop (like a 'bottleneck' on a guitar). Descending motifs and glissando slides occurred across all the strings using the full range of the instrument. The piece finished when the performer departed from the space, leaving the sound 'unattended', she then returned either to cut the sound completely after a few minutes or to affect a gradual fade.

BRIEF EVALUATION AND RESPONSES

The problems of being in a communal space extended to noise intrusion and the lack of a physical presence in the exhibition when there was no performance. The invited audience mixed with an art school audience but could not include passers-by. However, audience responses included –

"It really helped to have work in the space already as it gave us something to concentrate our focus on whilst being immersed in the sound of the space. It got to the point where it became a performance for the audience and we were putting on the show whilst being accompanied by your instrument... it was really effective.." (MO)

"...as a classical violinist only used to a bow or a finger creating sound on the violin, I was at first shocked then totally fascinated by the sound possibilities such things as a hand 'sword' can make on an electric violin. What you've already heard is still in the present (via the looping and panning) and also part of the new... This left me too mesmerised to think anything but 'where is this sound coming from and where is it going?'... and required me to be constantly moving round the sonic triangle space... catching up with sound only to find more sounds being added like a huge, crazy fugue... a whole new musical sound world and way of musical thinking has been opened up to me..." (EF)

"...I liked the way the materials you used changed along with their associations... liked the trigger of the information sheet... It is always magic when you walk away and again the music is playing by itself so I ask: Where is the music being played? In the instrument, the listener, the sound system, the room?" (DP)

IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS OF THE MATERIAL OF THE SITE

the actual – the acoustic in the concrete room.

the activated – the performer and the objects used to make the sounds.

the associative – all the research-prompted sounds made.

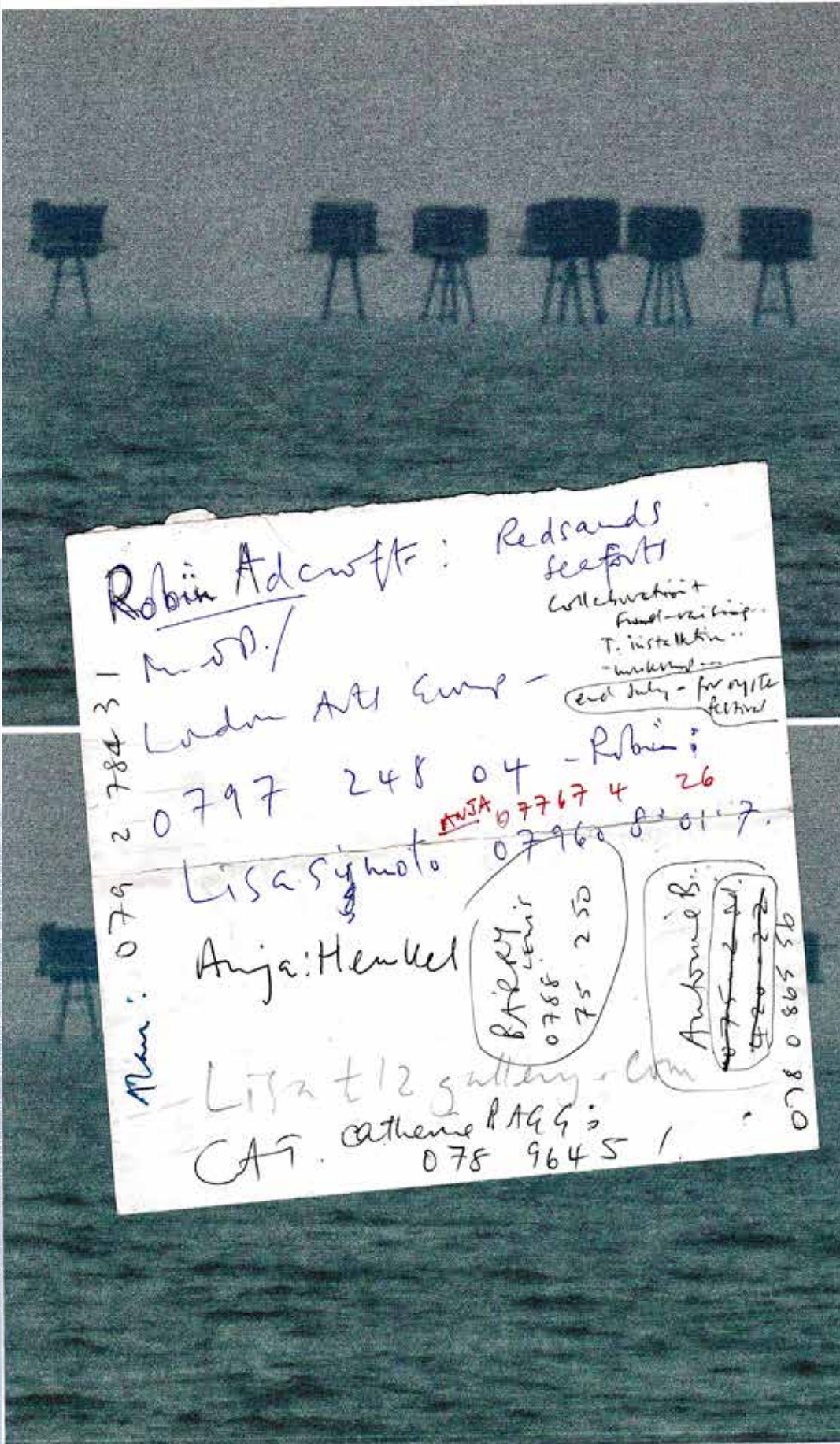
DOCUMENTATION

enclosed DVD Track 1 | **enclosed CD 1** Track 1 | **alternative video and sound file documentation**

<http://tansypinks.com/soundperformance.html>

<http://vimeo.com/18146580>





Robin Adcroft: Redrands
 Seefort
 Collection +
 Fund-raising
 T. iustellin...
 - Wickham...
 end July - for my 12
 feltham

3 - Mrs D./
 2 784 3
 2 0797 248 04 - Robin;
 Lisa Symoto ^{ANSA} 07767 4 26
 0796 8 01 7

Man: 079
 Anja: Henkel
 Lisa + 12 gallery - Com
 CAT. Catharine RAGG;
 078 964 5 /

078 0865 56



+ Antoine . 10.06.10

Sea noise sea

Civron - equipment? (or mix?)

list what's needed - probably sound card & outputs

to mix the space with the sound.

- where do speakers go? all round the intermediate floor? eg 5. small ones.

Playing the fort

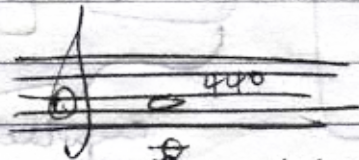
Constructing the piece - what is heard there? samples from the canal to land

Computer + mixed -

X (vibrate the part - bass shakers - like (vibrate on minute) / screens onto the wall (maybe?)

get one. X

two each - activated by signal - via violin + pitch mixer - eg P.O.G - pedal

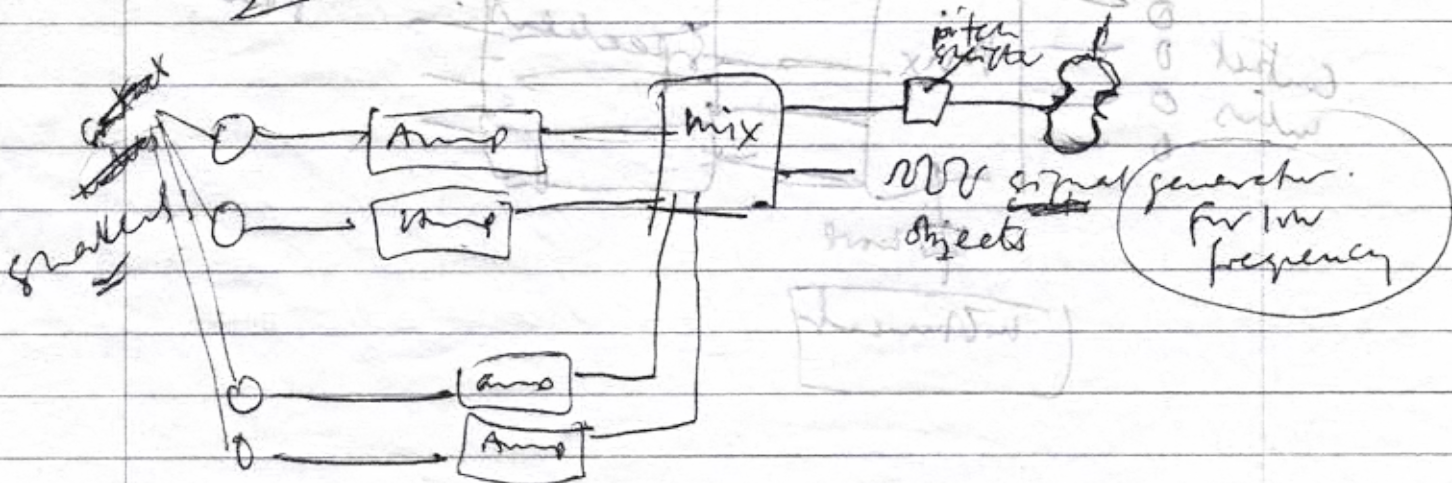


low enough.

what Hz? eg. 100 - maybe de-tune it.



ie to have the notes...









SEAFORT

DATE

June 24th 2010

FREQUENCY AND DURATION

One brief preparatory visit, (postponed six times) and two hours for the performance including installation and de-installation of equipment.

LOCATION

Redsands Seaforts, Shivering Sands, eight nautical miles off the North Kent Coast. The structure is one of seven anti-aircraft gun forts standing on sandbanks in open water at the mouth of the Thames estuary. The setting for the performance was the open, circular platform at the top of the semi-derelict, three-storey construction. The platform has a concrete base surrounded by rusty metal panelling walls four feet high. Built by Guy Maunsell in 1942, the ingenious tripod design was an innovative one, the appearance from a distance giving the impression of a collection of old box movie cameras on tripods, standing with their feet in the ocean.

EVENT

Under the auspices of the Whitstable Biennale Fringe, 2010, curated by Kate Phillimore.

STATED AIM

“To reach a remote site and make live sounds related

to the site and to use the site itself as material. The performer will be activating sounds for live recordings and use an electric violin to layer sound within the derelict fort. Ideally this will ‘give to the location a voice’ through found vibrations and activated acoustics. Sounding the fort with a violin, walking around the space to discover what it has to reveal from the hidden secrets of the inside to the immensity of the sea outside...”

Summary of aim, by co-performer, Antoine Bertin

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE

The structure was chosen as a response to the biennale call out to make use of an ‘off-site’ location, in or near Whitstable. It as an abandoned place of defence yet itself vulnerable to decay and for the potential sonic properties of the iron structure.

BRIEF EVALUATION AND RESPONSES

There was an urgency to the performance due to the excessive heat, the swiftly turning tide and the risk of being stranded. The improvised sounds commenced with the use of very long loops made by ‘activating’ objects found on site. The violin was brought in later using long, slow bow strokes, (partly inspired by Tony Conrad’s essay *Lyssophobia: on Four Violins*, of 1964). This seemed to create an atmosphere of contemplative listening, to the seafort and the open water.

The on site audience consisted of who was there – two performers, two seafort volunteers (one operating the petrol driven generator, a former pirate radio operator) the video operator Nick Rampley and two fishermen in a boat below.

"I loved when you started playing the violin on top of the structure of fort sound, (kind of the fort's spectre, we would have reanimated). You played in a minimalist way, as if not to take over the place. I thought this intervention was very cinematographic, blowing emotions onto the images without disturbing the scene. In the end I think this is how I like to remember the performance, as a live, cinema sequence/documentary about the location."

Extract of the response from the co-performer.

EXTRACT FROM ARTIST'S PROJECT FILE

It was quite apparent once out on the fort what an extremely hazardous place it would have been for the general public as audience – no fresh water, no WC, the panic of those with vertigo climbing the vertical ladders, the likelihood of falling through the decrepit floors into the sea and the issue of public liability. As it was, we had two hours to ourselves in one of the most extraordinary environments I have ever encountered, where we made and harnessed some beautiful on-site sounds (the metals, the bell sounding on the buoy, the gulls, the slapping water, the pylon) then left, just as swiftly, packing up and lowering the equipment down in a tarpaulin with a pulley to the waiting rigid inflatable boat.

IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS OF THE MATERIAL OF THE SITE

the actual – the sea – waves slapping against the structure, creaking metal, slight breeze, seagulls, distant engines, the bell on the buoy sounding, distant drone of the generator.

the activated – the rusty metal ordnance cupboard with rasping hinges, the radio pylon, salt-crusted found objects –whitened animal bones rattling in a

ceramic insulation bowl, the first use of contact microphones, use of knuckles and a drum kit brush, the instrument subsequently brought in.

the associative – mimicry of wind sounds on the instrument, the melancholy of the bell, rhythms developing that became redolent perhaps of anti-aircraft gunfire, the rotten decay of the structure, the decay of the performed sounds – by no means a conclusive list. One poetic response to the documentation of the event perhaps best captures the event –

*Once the first-line staunch
Of rumbling craft
With town bound bombs
Low – scudding
the river mouth
For homes curtailed
In blitz - black fear,
These hulks stand together
In strength still,
Seeing out time
And now, for one day only,
Being in time
With their own rhythms
A majesty of form
Ringing eerie
To the drawn bow
And mid sea hum.
An elemental pulse
Is pried and coaxed
To speak again
To gull and wave.*

Extract from Sound Defence by David Morris, written after viewing the Seaforts documentation.

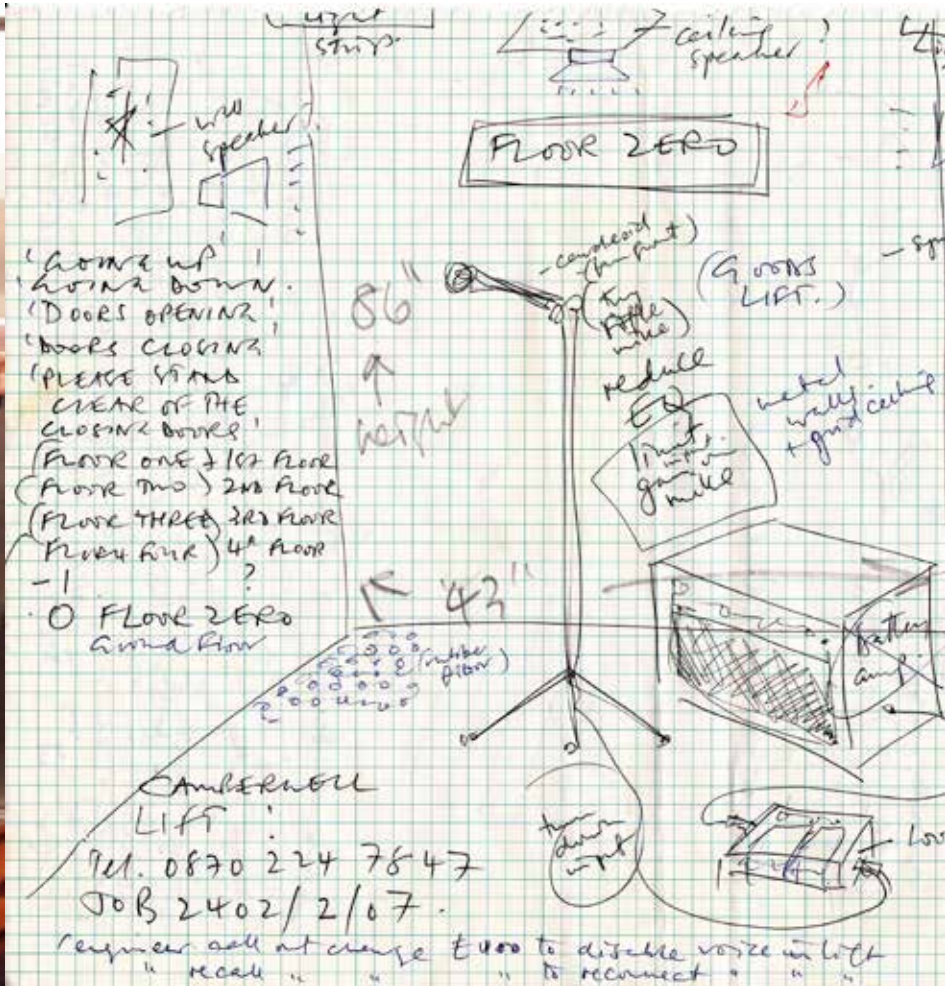
DOCUMENTATION

enclosed DVD Track 2 | **enclosed CD 1** Tracks 4&5
alternative video and sound file documentation

<http://tansypinks.com/soundperformance.html>

<http://vimeo.com/17884661>











FLOOR ZERO

[I AM STANDING IN A LIFT]

DATE

February 2011

FREQUENCY AND DURATION

February 8th from 6pm onwards, February 26th on-going lift flights between 1pm and 3.30pm.

LOCATION

Camberwell College of Art goods lift, Peckham Road, London SE5.

EVENT

Part of the *Elusive* photography exhibition and symposium in Camberwell Space curated by Martin Newth and Sian Bonnell.

STATED AIM

To provide a sound-based intervention in an everyday space.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE

In a goods lift, a microphone recorded the woman's voice intoning – *going up, going down, doors closing, doors opening, floor one, floor six, floor zero*. A small amplifier relayed the looping sounds back into the working lift which the performer operated.

BRIEF EVALUATION AND RESPONSES

A variety of users and audiences took part, some

complicit in what was occurring, others simply using the lift. Each 'flight' journey was unique, looping the building up sounds differently. Some found this confusion of layers oppressively claustrophobic.

One occupant observed that it was interesting how, on stepping into the lift and first hearing the voice, there was a direct proportional relationship between the size of the space (small) and the acoustic component (a single voice) within it. Once this was amplified and built up the sound became bigger than the space. This both intrigued and disconcerted her.

REVIEW

"In the corridor next to Elusive was a queue. As Roman Ondak's Tate acquisition Good Feelings in Good Times shows, we Brits love a good queue. We always seem to assume the end of it will hold wonders. Since it was a queue for the lift we assumed the wonders were in another floor. Not so, the wonder was the lift itself. As sets of people crammed into the lift we were trapped in Tansy Spinks' live sound piece. At first we couldn't see what the extensive recording apparatus in with us was for, but soon enough we felt a claustrophobic nausea as the lift voice 'First Floor, Going Up, Second Floor...' etc. gradually looped and layered to become a cacophony of sound that disorientated and, combined with the movement of the lift, nauseated.

"When at one point the doors opened and we saw a man from the first floor get in smiling (ah! I found you!) I realised all sense of time and space were gone. This moment was artful, derivative of Alvin Lucier's I Am Sitting In A Room or Gilbert and George's Gordon's Makes Us Drunk, but with a physical dimension all its own. The art was the feeling in the stomach, located in the whole body, not just the eyes and ears. An unusual feeling, adoring an art work yet blessedly relieved when you could finally walk away from it. The best works were those which the poster could not capture, could not reproduce, those which will stay in our memories, no souvenir required."

Review of Floor Zero by Rebecca Collins, 16.02.11
<http://www.trebuchet-magazine.com/>

IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS OF THE MATERIAL OF THE SITE

the actual – the voice in the lift, the beep of the control panel, the sound of sliding doors, the acoustic of the space.

the activated – the voice was activated by being recorded many times over and played back into the lift.

the associative – the association is self-referencing drawing also on the seminal work by Alvin Lucier, *I am Sitting in a Room*, 1969 .

EXTRACT FROM ARTIST'S PROJECT FILE

The lift occupies a prominent location, just off the main foyer within this South London art school. It is essentially a metal chamber, with particular visual

and acoustic properties, serving as a functional means of transit or vertical transport between levels in a building. The space is an enclosed one, an institutional space, a very controlled space (remote voice, automatic doors, hidden mechanisms, LED displays inside and out) and one that has to be 'obeyed'. The user undertakes a tacit contract with the machine trusting that it will function efficiently in delivering the occupant to the correct destination. Once enclosed and enfolded within the space of the lift, there is no longer a choice but to wait. The space is one of limbo, avoided glances, watch-checking, hair smoothing and a sense of killing time. No longer does the exertion of stair climbing occupy the limbs but the enforced inertia within the lift brings the attention to the embodied sensation of standing, sometimes in unnatural proximity to complete strangers. One is very aware that, 'I am standing in a lift.'

A number of 'flights' took place during the Symposium, involving between 2 and 6 people at a time (a sign states a maximum of 16 persons permitted), spending around 5 or 6 minutes in the lift. It took a full 10 minutes for the build up of disintegrating voices to mask the instructions completely. Few stayed for the full effect however.

DOCUMENTATION

enclosed DVD Track 3 | **enclosed CD 2** Track 2 | **alternative video and sound file documentation**
<http://tansypinks.com/soundperformance.html>
<http://vimeo.com/45501050>

SILENT ZONE

silent zone,

site and sound,

response :

*interesting work. just a little noisy
for me.*



SOUNDS:

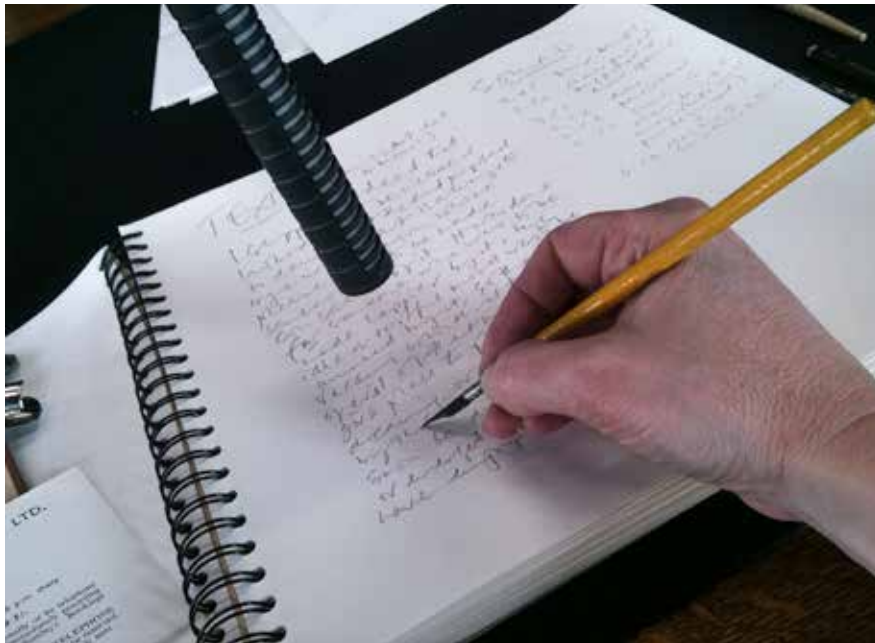
→ ~~(mostly) portable~~ ^{steps with person in 47th}

... of the
s, therefore, is
of the essential
A, and few things
to the pleasure
an that. There are,
edge, gifted people
who have no other
of restlessness, and
some cause in their
did them unhappy.
enough: it is the
within the late
makes them helpless
and citizens.

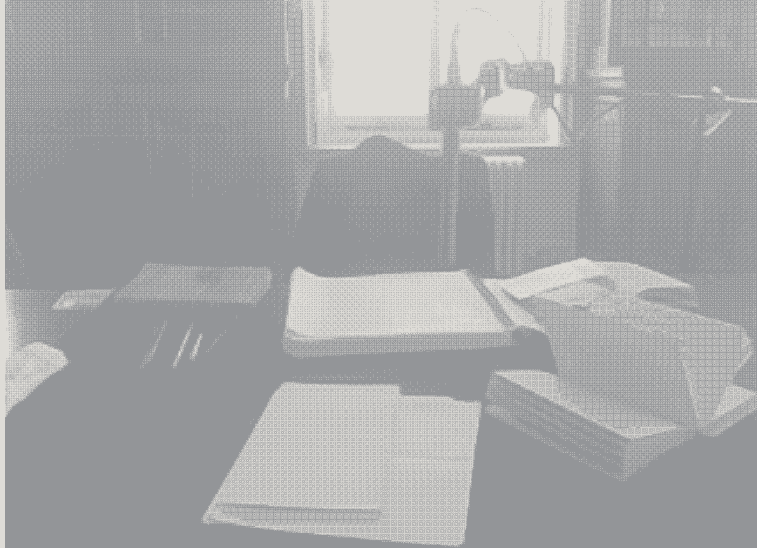
...ing, and I suppose you
o, that this is a work
function for art to
question next comes,
we do we obtain it? I
stated that the practice
added to the labour of
though I believe in the love

- 4.15. Door.
- 4.16. Car - part
- 4.20 Door.
- 4.21 Door - w.c. bang/creak.
- 4.22. Door bangs
- 4.23 Lowing - rattling.
- 4.23 - Noisy old motorbike.
- 4.24 - page turning
- 4.25 Door + squeak
- 4.27. Door - w.c. bang + creak
- 4.28 Car passes - speeding
- 4.29 Page is turned
- 4.29 - Car passes - leisurely...
- 4.30. Door bangs
- 4.30 Dryer in w.c. (is switched on again!)

...to far, to its fair







SILENT ZONE

DATE

March 1st 2012

FREQUENCY AND DURATION

Six hours in total between 12am and 6.30pm.

LOCATION

The Old Library, Chelsea College of Art, Atterbury Road, London SW1, a double height space of 15m x 10m, lined with bookcases, built in the early 20th century.

EVENT

Part of *Contested Sites/ Sights* UAL/ CCW TrAIN PhD one-day conference. Also part of the exhibition in the library, *Still*.

STATED AIM

To interrupt a working, non-gallery, college space with a live, site specific performed sound work.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE

The performer used two significant art education texts from the library collection and acted as a kind of scribe, copying them out whilst recording the sound of writing. This was then played back into the space whilst the library was in use. Any additional sounds that could be heard during the performance were

documented for six hours in a written 'sounds heard' log. One sample entry reads –
Heard (p.4 of 18 pages of the log):

12.58 pm someone shifts position

1.00 pm lorry passes

1.01 pm siren (two tone) in distance

Whilst writing out the text –

*"...this explains why [all men] have always, with more or less of toil, cherished and practised art."
(William Morris)*

BRIEF EVALUATION AND RESPONSES

Although the directional microphone was visible, the amplifiers were hidden on a balcony thus confusing sound and source. The performance became durational and the occupants of the library unwittingly complicit in the event. One or two users found it too intrusive. *Beyond the Bookshelves*, May 2012, followed on as part two of the involvement with the same site and saw all the items used in the creation of the work (including documentary video evidence of the event), shown back in the space and housed in a library vitrine as a 'new' art work. A catalogue lent gravitas to this implied passing on of knowledge.

IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS OF THE MATERIAL OF THE SITE

the actual – sounds documented in the ‘sounds heard’ log as an inventory of listening.

the activated – pen on paper, close-recorded, looped and layered.

the associative – the two chosen texts

The Mystery of Life and Its Arts, 1868 by John Ruskin, (Sesame and Lilies, Three Lectures by John Ruskin, George Allen, Charing Cross Road, 1900)
The Aims of Art, 1887, an essay by William Morris, (William Morris, Stories in Prose, Stories in Verse, Shorter Poems, Lectures and Essays, ed. G.D.H. Cole, Nonesuch Press, Bloomsbury 1944), and the sense of a continuum of scholarship and reflection.

EXTRACT FROM ARTIST’S PROJECT FILE RESPONSE QUESTIONNAIRE

Q *Did the sound of writing come over - what did it make you think /think of?*

A *“It did come over and beautifully I thought... it made me think of the ‘labour’ involved in writing and the embodied quality of it- possibly diminished as we type and use tips of fingers ...and it sounded harsh and scratchy so it made me reflect on the difficulties of the creative process, especially as linked with writing - i.e reflective writing about art practice...”*

Q *How did it affect your sense of listening both within the space and beyond it?*

A *“It made me more aware of the lack of silence in our lives..” IN*

“I found Silent Zone very enjoyable, surprisingly entertaining for such a minimal intervention. As a librarian, the interaction of paper and bodies within the spaces of the library is rather central to my daily environment. I went into the Old College Library with previous knowledge of the project but still found myself relishing the experience of sitting in this grand old space, appropriated by the library [as a silent study area] and by the artist, listening to the amplified and manipulated sound of pages being turned,

written on, scratched, folded, etc – the subtle soundtrack for an epic film lasting the whole day.” GGM

RESPONSE

*Late, I realised the performance had begun with me unwittingly a part,
 a fine nib was already scratching the surface of the ledger
 the hiss just audible on its way to the mix
 the artist is installed quiet at the focal point as if invigilating but absorbed in her own work,
 for now, a copyist,
 head oscillating from page left to right,
 pausing, just to finger a misplaced hair
 or, beneath the microphone
 rattle a cluster of pencils
 to catch the slight clatter
 and leaving us to add here and there
 a careful cough,
 a moment of keyboard chatter,
 the click of a pen top removed between the teeth,
 the dull thud of a knee on the oak desk underside,
 a sudden muffled move of chair leg
 the crisp turning of good paper.
 Even by the Old Library standard
 we are careful with our noise;
 our job, we think is to hear its pattern
 and contain its work within,
 to lend ourselves to the process,
 adding something just discernible,
 marking time in this oasis beyond
 the other world, where the old doors squeal,
 and screaming gulls take their squabble
 to the river.*

DM – from the poem, Private View

DOCUMENTATION

enclosed DVD Track 4 | No CD Track available

alternative video and sound file documentation

<http://tansypinks.com/soundperformance.html>

<http://vimeo.com/45501051>

Notes on Cunniff's Rooms

19.02.13

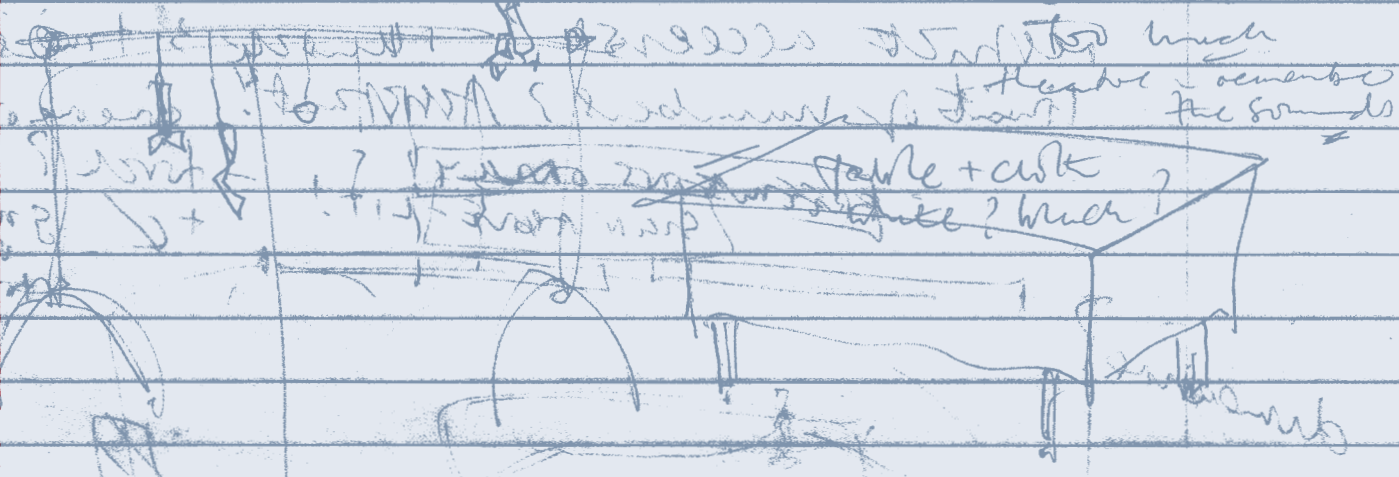
Stages + 11 in the front of the room is 3

under - needs to be a certain size?

Number of people capacity - 100 people

Should not be too high? provide support

Should be as low as possible - "stage lights" candles - ?



what about: what sort of technology? (pedestal issues?)
to the Riley bench stop (Peter and others)

backwards working? wire at all? maybe speaking
T.S. reverse top? play? when the initial
subliminal wires? not
page 1000

structured gradually - not layered
+ structured with elements as per level?
+ temp. to be per - reduce the role of facilitator?
non-verbal / aching / quite deliberate

How to make it... slowly, deliberately
Very symmetrically + reverse rather than
Hanging blackboards
at back, planning





Sonic Ritual (equivalent),

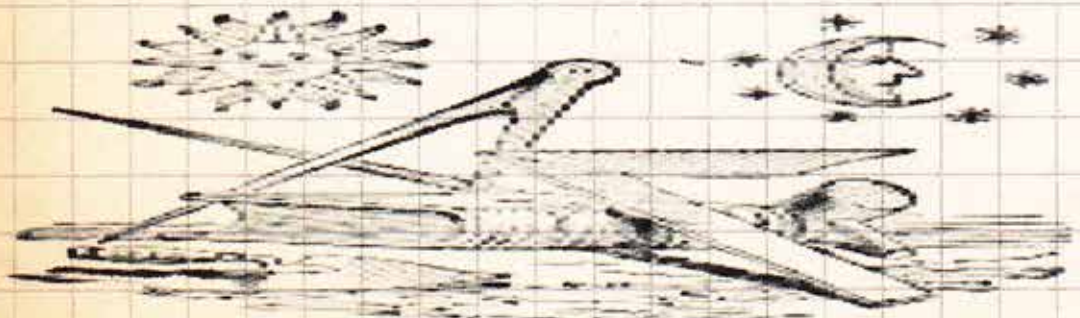
a sound performance devised for *Revealing Secrets*, part of the *Engaging Tactics, Engaging Sociology*, British Sociology Association annual conference, April 3rd 2013. Sound performances at 11.30-12, 1.30-2.00, 4.00-4.30 on the fourth floor, Norfolk Room at the Grand Connaught Rooms, 61-65 Great Queen Street, Covent Garden, London, WC2B 5DA.

The sound performance will play with ideas about secret spaces, rituals and symbolism, using objects and the sounds they make, through microphones, live loops and loudspeakers.

The Norfolk Room, although part of the Grand Connaught Rooms building is a space reserved solely for private Masonic functions – except today. The room directly abuts the commanding art deco Freemasons Masonic Peace Hall and its imposing doors are firmly double locked and shuttered on the Mason's side...

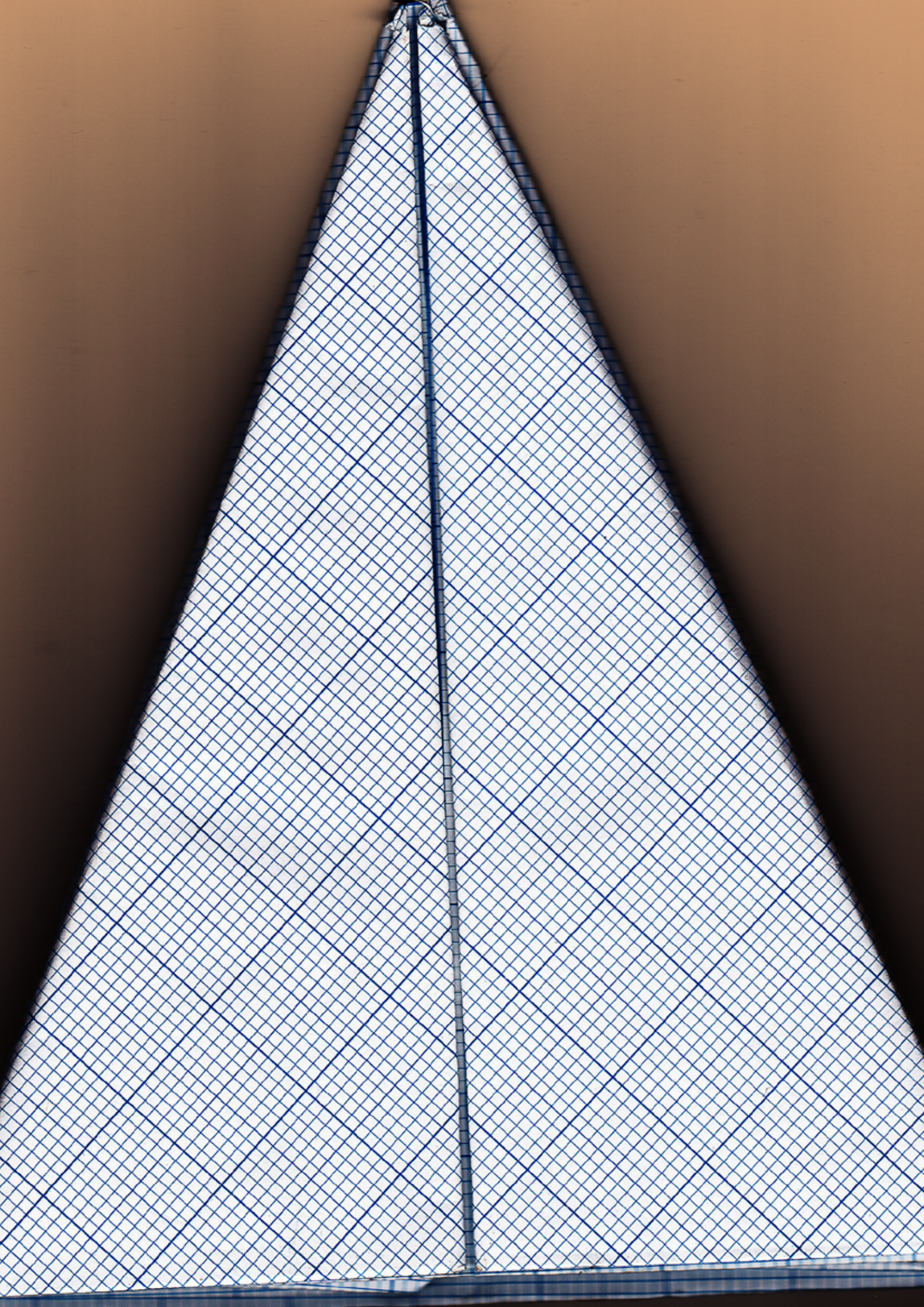
Since women cannot be present at a Masonic ceremony I can only guess at how such rituals might be performed, making do instead with glimpsed rituals filmed clandestinely by others and posted on Youtube. Similarly, although I can view the ceremonial objects and paraphernalia in the Masons' Hall library and the shop whilst picking up on snatches of information given out during a brief tour of the lodge building, the rest is just hearsay and innuendo, distrust and suspicion, anecdotes about shadowy groups of men carrying strangely shaped briefcases, of secretive handshakes and private dinners. My version can only be a guessed at equivalent of what goes on behind these very, closed doors.

The sound performance will play with ideas about secret ritual, using objects and the sounds they make. I have had to make do with a series of equivalent objects acquired from attics, charity shops and on ebay. They are versions of the symbolic objects which might be used in ceremonies – a setsquare, ruler, mason's trowel, metal ceremonial goblets, a candlestick, a bell, a skirrett, a gavel. Combined with small microphones the objects are given a voice through amplification. Metaphor and ritual are suggested as the sounds are gradually layered.



Brief biography:

Tansy Spinks studied Fine Art with a BA from Leeds Polytechnic and an MA in Photography from the Royal College of Art and has an LGSM. She has exhibited widely both at home and internationally and her photographic works are in the Fine Art Museum in Houston, Texas and the National Museum of Media in Bradford. Many of her images have been used by major publishers for book covers. She is currently combining Lecturing in Fine Art at Middlesex University and in Illustration at Camberwell College of Art with part time PhD study involving live, site-specific, associative sound performance, based in CRISAP at LCC, University of the Arts, London. More at www.tansyspinks.com





SONIC RITUAL

DATE

April 3rd 2012

FREQUENCY AND DURATION

Three performances of between 10 to 14 minutes throughout the day.

LOCATION

The Masons' Room in the Grand Connaught Rooms, Covent Garden, beside the Grand Masonic Lodge.

EVENT

Devised for the British Sociology Association annual conference, as part of the one day stream run by Goldsmiths' Visual Sociology department: Live Sociology, *Revealing Secrets, Engaging Tactics*. Commissioned by Christian von Wissel.

STATED AIM

To devise a live, site specific intervention responding to an aspect of the Grand Connaught Rooms and to 'reveal a secret' about the space sonically.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE

Two performers in semi-darkness stood behind a table draped with a cloth, 'playing' a piece of string, a metal goblet, a suspended set square, a gavel, spoons... the audience could sit and listen or come and go as they pleased. Assisted by Greta Pistaceci.

BRIEF EVALUATION AND RESPONSES

"...loved the concept, especially in relation to the theme and to the building (and in retrospect I wished that we'd done more to make this 'secret' public, in the event) - in that you were taking the mystical, ritualistic objects and letting them 'speak'. Your piece kept a sense of the secrecy of these rituals, the clandestine air, and the sense of the arcane. It was nice on the video to be able to see exactly how the sounds were made - but in the actual performance I think the darkness worked really well to bring about a sense of the obscure, highlighting that we don't really know what goes on so we have to use our hearing, rather than the visual which we more often rely on.

"Musically/sonically, I particularly liked the ostinato of the plucked string that kept the piece together and above which the other 'instruments' riffed. I think I remember in the live performance there were also some louder and more grating sounds?? - which I thought was appropriate in a sense to point out that these exclusive, ritual practices are not safe, easy and nice - but have the potential to be dark and unpleasant (or at least, exclusive in problematic ways). Overall I found it a hugely atmospheric and evocative piece, as well as somewhat meditative and soothing - a wonderful contrast to the rest of the conference which was very noisy

and busy and talk-y - and I was thrilled to have your piece as part of the day."

Anna Bull, Goldsmiths research student.

IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS OF THE MATERIAL OF THE SITE

the actual – the carpeted room muffling the acoustic.

the activated – all the objects brought in as equivalents to suggest a clandestine ritual, each given a 'voice' by being activated.

the associative – the history of the building as the site of a Masonic Lodge harbouring 'secret' activities.

EXTRACT FROM ARTIST'S PROJECT FILE

Inventory

- Book – *Freemasons for Dummies*, 2nd edition by Christopher Hodapp, (Past Master, Knight Templar), John Wiley and Sons, USA, 2013 (from Amazon)
- One bricklayer's trowel (from DIY box)
- Ball of string (as a skerritt) and pencil
- Two metal goblets (from charity shop)
- Two aluminium alloy roofers set squares (from ebay)
- One steel Maun Safety ruler (UAL shop, Camberwell)
- 1 small brass bell (broken handle)
- 1 child's mallet (from old toy box)
- Two brass candlesticks (from charity box)
- One egg timer (from own kitchen)
- Set of compasses (left behind by daughter 1)
- One large origami pyramid made of graph paper (made especially for the performance by daughter 1 from youtube 'how to make an origami pyramid')
- Torch (to illuminate 'Freemasons only' sign)
- Georgian silver serving spoon and fork (dated 1825, inherited from great, great-grandmother through

mitochondrial (mother's) line

- Two marimba beaters (belong to daughter 2)
- Rolls of fishing wire, masking tape, black gaffer tape, white gaffer tape, sheet of white blue-tac
- A two Fender speaker kit with central control panel, leads and power cable (borrowed from Morley College)
- One Tannoy amplified speaker (the other failed to pick up the signal, both borrowed from Middlesex University), two xlr cables
- Behringer 12 input (4 xlr) Xenyx1204 mixing desk, cable (from Middlesex)
- Boss Loop station and power source
- Two JTS vocal mikes and mike stands and two xlr cables, jack-to-jack (borrowed from Soul Intent)
- One Cold Gold audio contact microphone with crocodile clip and transducer
- One Jez Riley French contact microphone with — transducer
- (One rifle microphone and lead, from Middlesex, not used)
- Three kettle power leads
- Six sheets of black cartridge (to black out the window)
- One bedside lamp (from daughter's room), to illuminate mason's door
- Two, four socket extension leads (supplied by venue)
- One six-foot trestle table and white tablecloth with turned corners (supplied by venue)
- One room screen divider (supplied by venue)

DOCUMENTATION

enclosed DVD Track 5 | No CD track

alternative video and sound file documentation

<http://www.tansyspinks.com/soundperformance.html>

<http://vimeo.com/70094978>



worshipful Master, Author, Candidate, Conductor

THE LABORATORY OF SONIC POSSIBILITIES



ACTS RE-ACTS FESTIVAL

The Laboratory of Sonic Possibilities: Iris Garrelfs & Tansy Spinks

An interactive performance at Wimbledon Space, Wimbledon College of Arts, London, 18/3/14

“minimalism’s site specificity can be said to begin in sculpture, yet reveal itself in performance” Jane Collins on Michael Fried’s comment in 1968 (2010:103)

Do objects sound the way they look? Do they tell us something about a place?

This Acts Re-acts residency has given us a chance to explore the relationship between site, objects and scores as maps to soundings. We engaged with each others’ ways of thinking and working, reflecting aspects of the locality.

Please step into the space, experiment with the sounds and ‘live scores’ as you walk around the room.

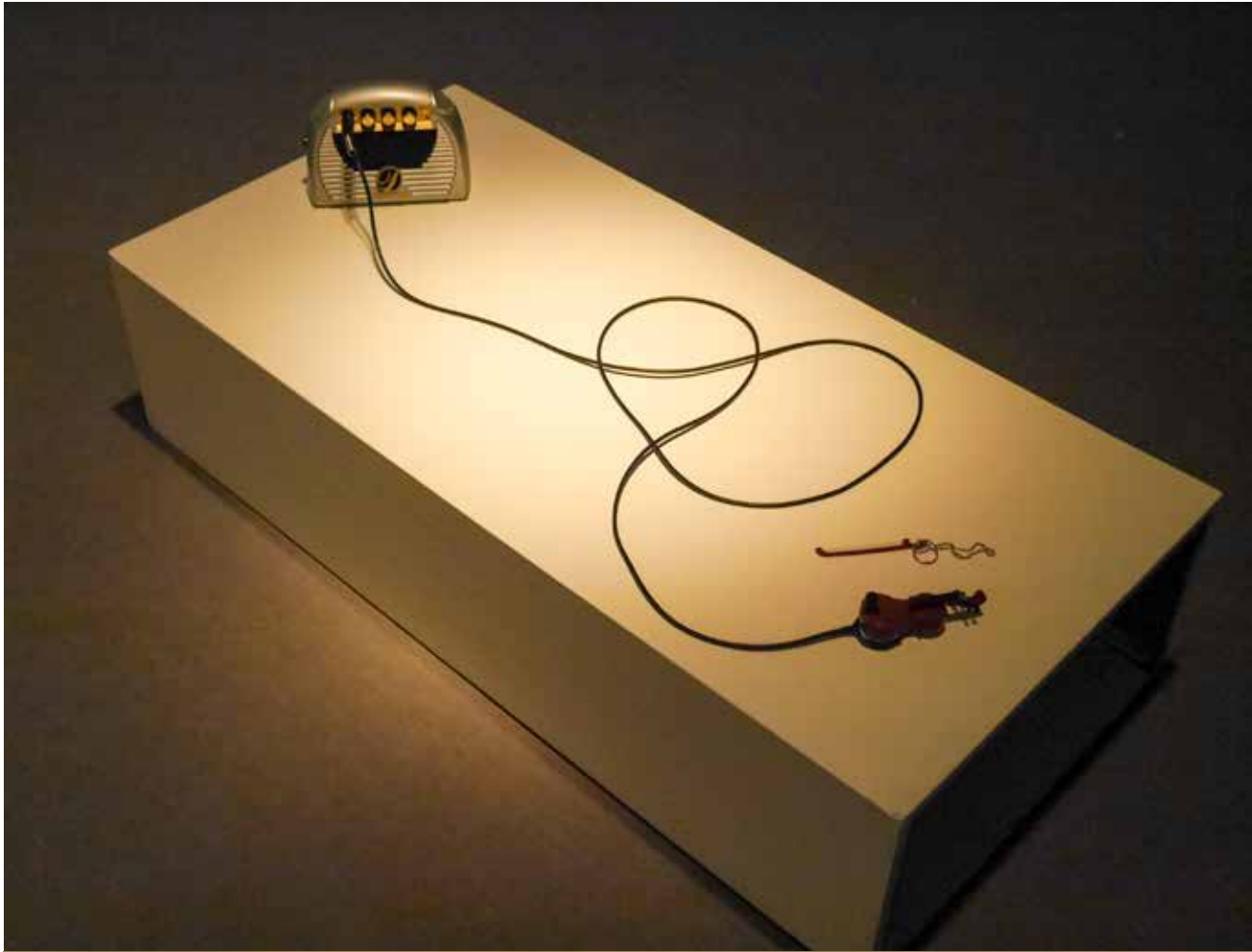
In the space:

- The plinths act as sounding boards to allow each object to speak using contact microphones. Objects were collected in the area, for example Wimbledon tram stones and twigs from the park.
- On the walls are fragments from local Wimbledon magazines, referring to objects and sounds. They act as a score or triggers for sound-making so do try it yourself or take the CD tour of our efforts.
- The large roll of paper encompasses the objects, working processes and ideas behind the sounds, unfolding as the four days have progressed – a score of a different kind, of process.
- Take one of our objects for listening – a Toynbee cone – and change the way you hear the space, connect with local c19th philanthropist Joseph Toynbee, responsible for many local buildings, such as the village hall and museum. He was a renowned otologist - an expert on the anatomy of the ear, diseases of the ear and listening - with around 2000 ear-dissections to his name...

Please touch and listen.

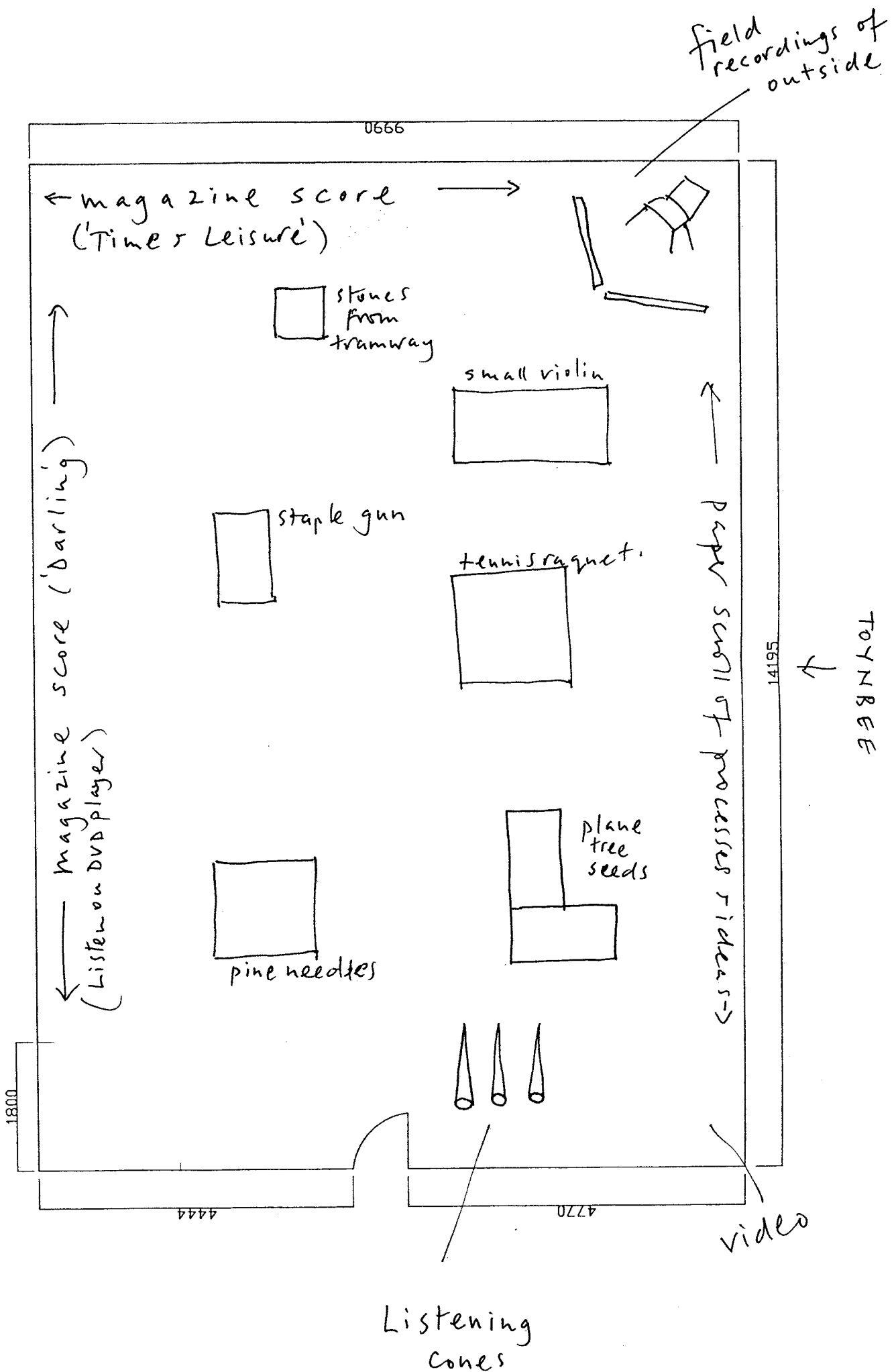
Responses are most welcome.

irisgarrelfs.com
tansyspinks.com

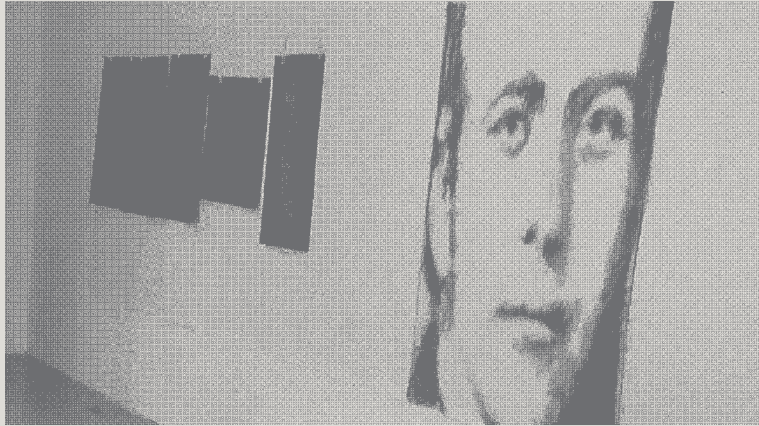




the gallery at Wimbledon College of Art : TANSY SPINKS & IRIS GARRELS, 16.03.14







THE LABORATORY OF SONIC POSSIBILITIES

DATE

March 18th 2014

FREQUENCY AND DURATION

An evening event

LOCATION

Wimbledon Space, Wimbledon College of Art

EVENT

Part of a week's Acts Reacts residency, in collaboration with Iris Garrelfs.

STATED AIM

"We propose a residency of interaction, taking our cue from Fried's assertion that 'minimalism's site specificity can be said to begin in sculpture, yet reveal itself in performance...' and collaborate within Wimbledon Space in using place, objects and sound to explore the voices and connotations of the site and the materiality inherent in its surfaces, dimensions and related objects. Can sonifying the materiality of place and object convey something more than the visual can tell us, and what might this mean for a sound based discipline? Throughout the week, a laboratory of sonic possibilities will emerge: live, recorded,

layered, voiced, played, activated, scored, drawn, blogged... Using objects sourced from the locality and information gleaned about the history and associations of the art school site itself we aim to explore how sound artists might bring a unique perspective to experiencing place and objects in performance."

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE

An interactive installation evolved during which the artists encouraged the sound-activating of locally found objects such as a branch, seed pods, a stapler, a tennis racquet, stones from the tramway. Listening cones inspired by Toynbee were handed out. Field recordings from a local park were played behind a screen, videos were projected of the processes used and sonified 'scores' made from pages of local magazines could be heard on headphones whilst the listener viewed the pages on the walls of the gallery.

BRIEF EVALUATION AND RESPONSES

This project has opened up the practice in a way that has allowed others to get involved. The responses were gratifying – especially from those who showed a child-like excitement about the 'voice' that an everyday object can have.

IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS OF THE MATERIAL OF THE SITE

the actual – the acoustic of the large space and sounds taken from the wider area; park sounds, traffic, birdsong, voices .

the activated – all the many objects used, some heard through contact microphones.

the associative – Joseph Toynbee, a 19th Century ear specialist and philanthropist who lived in

Wimbledon, local tennis references, the improvised 'responses' to sound related elements cut out of a local magazine.

DOCUMENTATION

enclosed DVD Track 6 | No CD track

alternative video and sound file documentation

<http://tansyspinks.com/soundperformance.html>

<http://vimeo.com/91650127>

**FURTHER
SOUND
ARTWORKS**

HENRY'S BALLAD AT HAROLD'S WHARF

DATE

September 2008

FREQUENCY AND DURATION

Five programmed performances.

LOCATION

APT studios, Harold Works, Deptford Creek.

EVENT

Part of the *Concrete Dreams* exhibition curated by Liz Harrison and Fran Cottell.

STATED AIM

To devise a live, site specific sound work

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE

The performer played on a gantry above the creek mimicking the sound of an animal in distress on the violin followed by an extract of a song written by Henry VIII. The audience stood below. Inadvertent audiences went past on the elevated section of the DLR alongside the building.

IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS OF THE MATERIAL OF THE SITE

the actual – Creekside sounds, acoustics of the surrounding buildings.

the activated – the instrument used

mimetically to suggest distressed animals.

the associative – the building as former site of a slaughterhouse serving Henry VIII's palace and one of his songs, *Pastime in Good Company* from the 16th century.

DOCUMENTATION

enclosed DVD Track 7

alternative online video and sound file documentation

<http://tansypinks.com/soundperformance.html>

<http://vimeo.com/17884431>

HOUSE TRACK B,E,D

DATE

March 2009

FREQUENCY AND DURATION

Several recordings of varying lengths: hall, kitchen, sitting room, bedroom, bathroom.

LOCATION

A domestic house in Brockwell Park Gardens, London SE24.

EVENT

Early tests, for performer only.

STATED AIM

To see if I could suggest something of

the nature of each room and its contents through improvised sounds on the violin.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE

Moving around the house, picking up on cues to respond to on the looping violin – a photograph, a memory of recuperation. An amp plays out into the room. The recorder records both the room acoustic and the activations.

BRIEF EVALUATION AND RESPONSES

A series of reflections on where I live with my family. B,E,D reflects on a room where I had recently spent a lot of

time. The sounds aimed to suggest slow, rhythmic breathing.

IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS OF THE MATERIAL OF THE SITE

the actual – the room acoustics, hail on the window, drilling from next door.

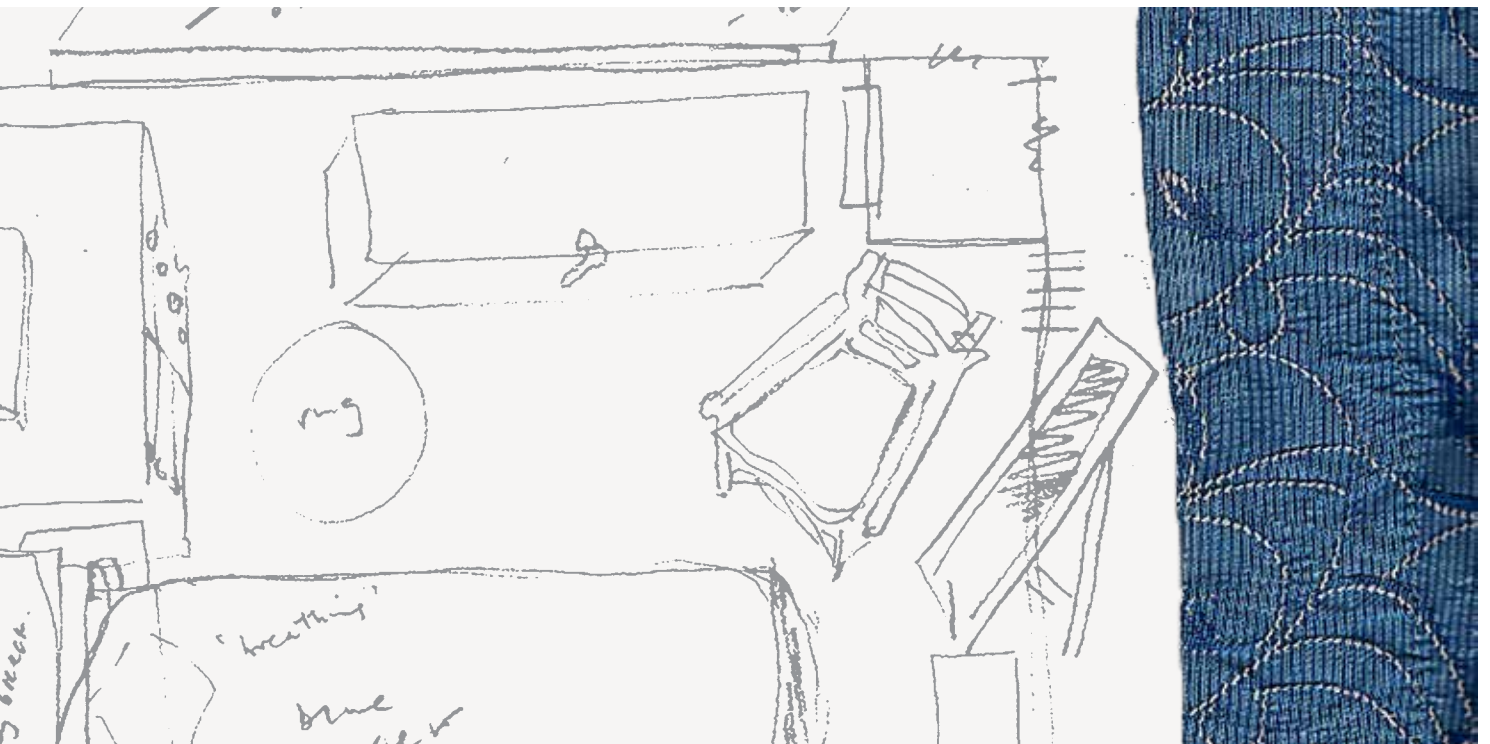
the activated – 'house' sounds: door-bell, front door, kettle, fridge, fan oven, Hoover.

the associative – the references to the occupants and small everyday rituals.

DOCUMENTATION

enclosed CD 1 Track 2





BRIXTON MARKET/ ARCADES



DATE

February 2010

FREQUENCY AND DURATION

Three performances, daytime and evening.

LOCATION

Brixton market arcades, 4th Avenue, a 1950s arcade in a market in South London.

EVENT

commissioned by *Artinavan.co.uk* under the auspices of the urban regeneration group *Spacemakers.org*, to perform after Alan Bissett.

STATED AIM

To perform in a working environment

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE

The performer stood in one of the many arcades playing through a bass amp, improvising mimetically to sounds heard around her and devising a work with rhythms at a walking pace.

BRIEF EVALUATION AND RESPONSE

The sounds made were not led by associative research in this case but by improvisatory responses to the 'found' sounds of the market.

HOOP FOR RELLA



DATE

April 2010

FREQUENCY AND DURATION

One in a programme of live performances.

LOCATION

Beaconsfield, Kennington, London SE11.

EVENT

The RELLA exhibition, devised by Michael Curran and Lucy Gunning.

STATED AIM

invited to respond to the themes of the wider event including clips from the film *Barbarella* concerning time travel, footage of hovering helicopters, women knitting at the guillotine, an angel, volcanic eruptions and to respond to the



Reactions – bemusement, disinterest, tolerance, mild curiosity, one of the young fishmongers asked for violin lessons, another said he could hardly hear his customers’ orders. Three performances were probably enough.

IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS OF THE MATERIAL OF THE SITE

the actual – the acoustic of the vaulted space – working market sounds differed at each time of day.

the activated – the instrument.

the associative – connecting with the place through the sounds made by the people using it and inspired by Benjamin’s

descriptions of the arcade as a weather-proof cabinet of curiosities.

EXTRACT FROM THE ARTIST’S PROJECT FILES

The busy market prides itself on being one of the most varied and multi-cultural places in London. For me it was an exciting place to play and represented a ‘real’ space eliciting unanticipated reactions from those working and from unsuspecting passers by. Voices, cries, banter, clatter, chopping noises (from the Columbian butchers, London fishmonger, Indian vegetable stalls), ghetto blasters, a ‘mind out’ from a fork lift truck driver -

were all inspiration for the sounds created live by the performer, standing on the corner, a loitering flâneur.

DOCUMENTATION

enclosed DVD Track 8
alternative online video and sound file documentation

<http://tansyspinks.com/soundperformance.html>
<http://vimeo.com/95754135>

space itself, originally a Victorian, ragged schoolroom, now a gallery.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE

The method drew on aspects of the building’s former use with a nod to the film images and employed related objects on the live instrument; a hoop, a feather, knitting needle and wool.

BRIEF EVALUATION AND RESPONSE

“Amazing that a feather can be made to make such a loud noise,” (audience feedback).

IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS OF THE MATERIAL OF THE SITE

the actual – the acoustic of the space and

the sounds made by the people.

the activated – the instrument used with objects.

The associative – the history of the building, the connotations of the ‘voices’ of the objects used.

EXTRACT FROM THE ARTIST’S PROJECT FILE

I used ‘open’ tunings determined randomly by twisting the fine tuners on each of the five strings alternately up and down by three twists allowing for unexpected resonances in the conventional open 5th tunings. The structure of the piece attempted to be more episodic in how the material developed, resisting the usual build up of layers and volume, the sounds consequently minimal and more paced with new ideas starting after a

silence. Each object had its own particular characteristic sound. This hoop required an over stated gesture of grasping and pulling, encircling the instrument, the ridges of brown parcel tape wrapped round it catching on the strings causing an unexpectedly percussive sound and producing probably the most interesting sound and sight of all the objects.

DOCUMENTATION

enclosed DVD Track 9 **enclosed CD1** Track 6 | **alternative online video and sound file documentation**

<http://tansyspinks.com/soundperformance.html>
<http://vimeo.com/17918267>

WINDMILL, I, II, III

DATE

October, 2010, 2011, 2012

FREQUENCY AND DURATION

A five hour performance on each occasion.

LOCATION

The roof of the windmill on Wimbledon Common.

EVENT

As part of the national Big Draw, I was invited to play during the drawing sessions devised by Susie Prus.

STATED AIM

to pick up on some aspect of the locality, its history and the connotations of the building.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE

Version I involved the slow deconstruction of the song, *The Windmills of Your Mind* using violin and voice. Version II used references to a folk song 'discovered' by Percy Grainger on Wimbledon Common in 1905. Live recordings of a hand held 'windmill' toy, blown into a remote microphone by members of the passing audience also featured. These sounds were heard in combination with improvisations around the song on violin, autoharp and by Jan Hendrickse on flute and laptop. Version III took three of Paul Klee's drawings with musical titles and used them as 'scores' from which to improvise on the violin (Klee was a violinist). A contemporary dance company led by Fumi Tomioka improvised to the sounds amongst those who were drawing on the common.

BRIEF EVALUATION AND RESPONSES

I had to shift my expected role as timetabled 'art performer' to that of providing background sounds, as an ongoing presence throughout the afternoon. This required longer loops that unfolded slowly over five hours. Reception was varied –

"I wasn't sure about the sound at first as I was in the Rangers' office and it sounded soothing but irritating at the same time. Once I got out of the office to have a look I enjoyed it more but once back in the office it got on my nerves after a bit. Good idea though!"
(Ranger).

Although the entertainment aspect perhaps compromised the intentions for the work, one listener texted me to say: "Keep going, we like it, it's helping us to concentrate."

EXTRACTS FROM THE ARTIST'S PROJECT FILES

Sometimes I would set the sound loops in motion and climb down through the windmill museum to listen in amongst the drawers on the common. I would then climb back up and re-adjust and develop things...

IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS OF THE MATERIAL OF THE SITE

the actual – the open air sounds from all around the common – voices, dogs, horses passing, the wind in the trees and the static sails.

the activated – all the instruments and objects used.

the associative – Respectively, a popular song from the 1960s, an early 20th century folksong, the force of the wind represented as breathing sounds, the drawings of Paul Klee.

DOCUMENTATION

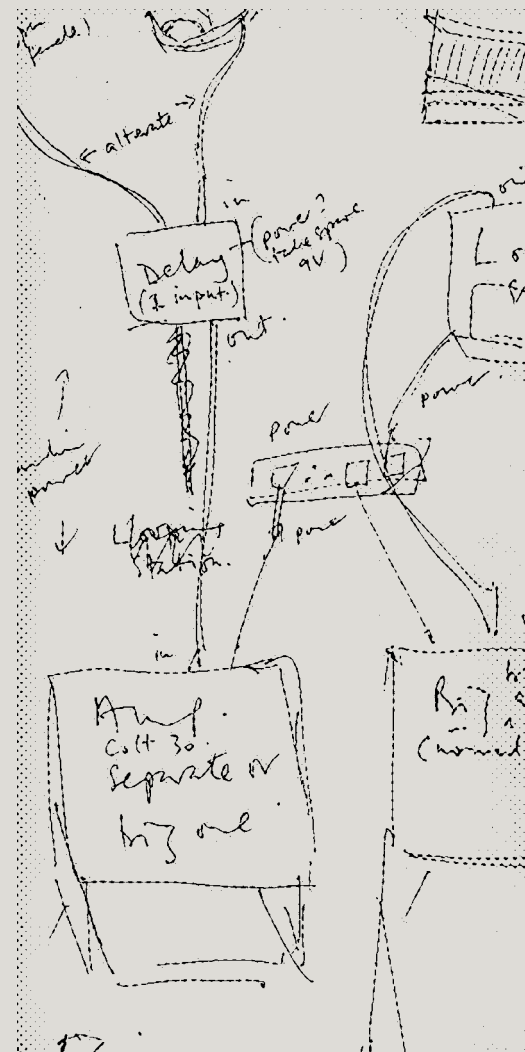
enclosed DVD 2010 version, track 11 |

enclosed CD2 2011 version, track 4 |

alternative online video and sound file documentation

<http://tansyspinks.com/soundperformance.html>

<http://vimeo.com/20874905>





ACTIVATED BALLROOM



DATE

September 2012

FREQUENCY AND DURATION

A one off 'field' recording, indoors.

LOCATION

Whitwell Hall, North Norfolk.

EVENT

Wildeye wildlife sound recording course

TAKE A SPACE, MAKE A SOUND IN IT

DATE

December, 2011

FREQUENCY AND DURATION

7pm & 8pm, each around 12-14 minutes

LOCATION

Morley College refectory, London SE1.

EVENT

Late at Morley as part of *The Engine Room* festival celebrating the life and works of Cornelius Cardew.

STATED AIM

To interpret three of Cardew's *Improvisation Rites* from *Nature Study Notes* in relation to measuring a space with sounds.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE

The performer paced slowly across the room, mapping the dimensions of the

space, 'measuring' each step by playing a single note on an electric violin with objects and using a loop station.

BRIEF EVALUATION AND RESPONSE

"The build up of the sounds was amazing especially when watching people being served their chips and peas in the same sound space... it was a truly visual sound piece..." NC

"I like the idea of a formal (in some respects) piece cutting through an informal, social environment." JW

IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS OF THE MATERIAL OF THE SITE

the actual – the acoustic and sounds of a working canteen, passing traffic and a police siren.

the activated – the extended instrument, using small hoops covered with parcel tape and yellow dusters.

the associative – past activities on the site – this was the very place where Cardew held his Scratch Orchestra improvisation sessions thirty years before.

EXTRACT FROM THE ARTIST'S PROJECT FILE

'Take a space, make a sound in it, make another sound in it, get to know the space', 'play short, loud bursts of sound,' 'play long stretches of sound with little activity,' 'play sounds of whose possibility of production you have doubts...'
Instructions by Michael Chant and Cornelius Cardew, from *Nature Study Notes*, 1969.

DOCUMENTATION

enclosed DVD Track 10 | **enclosed CD 2** Track 1 | **alternative online video and sound file documentation**
<http://tansyspinks.com/soundperformance.html>
<http://vimeo.com/45501052>

with Chris Watson and Jez Riley French.

STATED AIM

To use binaural microphones to record a space and some of the things within it.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE

Sound recording made on location in a faded country house ballroom.

IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS OF THE MATERIAL OF THE SITE

the actual – the acoustic of the almost empty space and objects.

the activated – the wood, metal, fabric.

The associative – what might be suggested about the space in hearing billiard balls, a metal radiator, moquette upholstery, wooden floorboards.

EXTRACT FROM THE ARTIST'S PROJECT FILE

Chris Watson liked the piece and made a surround sound mix for me to use as an installation in another space.

DOCUMENTATION

enclosed CD 2 Track 3

FOUR FULL STOPS

DATE

April, 2013

FREQUENCY AND DURATION

One programmed performance of around 12 minutes.

LOCATION

The Parasol Unit, 14 Wharf Road, London N1.

EVENT

Part of the *Sensingsite* CSM research seminar, devised by Susan Trangmar, Steven Ball, Duncan White.

STATED AIM

To respond to the exhibition on site - the work of Iran born Dutch artist, Navid Nuur - as a performance of place.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE

Taking a cue from one work in particular, a much enlarged 'full stop' from Nuur's press release to play four pizzicato full stops, as musical endings or perfect cadences, on the violin, one in front of each

work on the ground floor. The performer wore a radio microphone to allow for movement amongst the audience and looped each cadence.

BRIEF EVALUATION AND RESPONSES

The dislocation of the sound source and the performer as a stretched site was remarked on: "for me you were the site, one that was nomadic but at the same time anchored by the start point." (Mark Peter Wright)

EXTRACTS FROM THE ARTIST'S PROJECT FILES

The site is a large Victorian warehouse in a once industrial part of East London near the Grand Union Canal, now part of an enclave of contemporary gallery spaces. To respond only to the building would have been to ignore the work in the space. I chose to therefore respond to the work - with agreement from the artist asking him, "*what is the sound of a full stop, can it be played?*"

PROGRAMME NOTE

By pacing the space and taking each work in turn as a prompt, the performed sounds play on the many meanings of the word 'dots,' as described by Nuur and as understood by musicians, presenting a layering of resolutions and cadences which act as endings and perhaps new beginnings.

IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS OF THE MATERIAL OF THE SITE

the actual – the acoustic of the space, a clicking slide projector.

the activated – the instrument, a hole puncher (creating negative dots) used with a contact microphone.

the associative – the exhibition, the crossover between visual and aural punctuation.

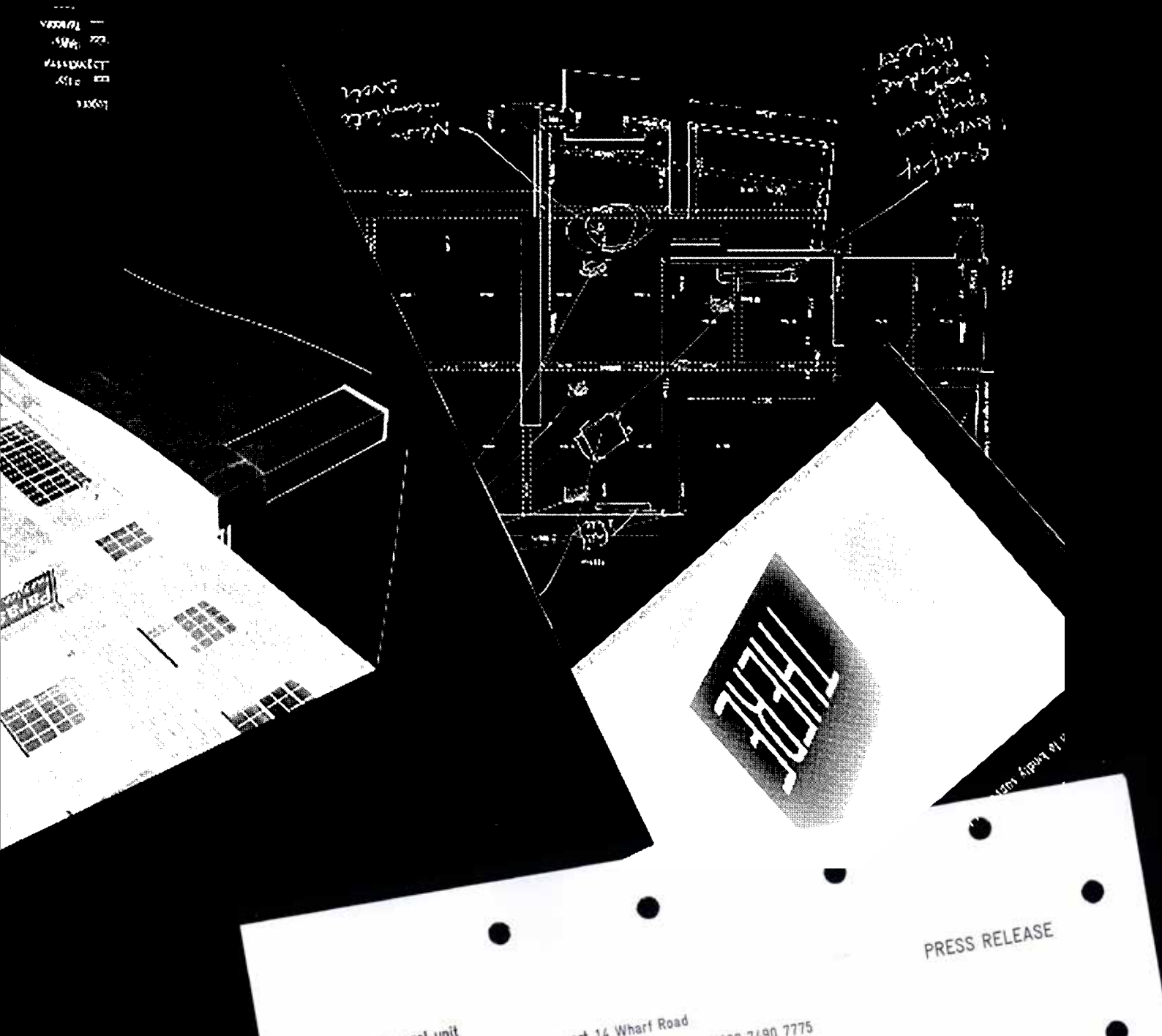
DOCUMENTATION

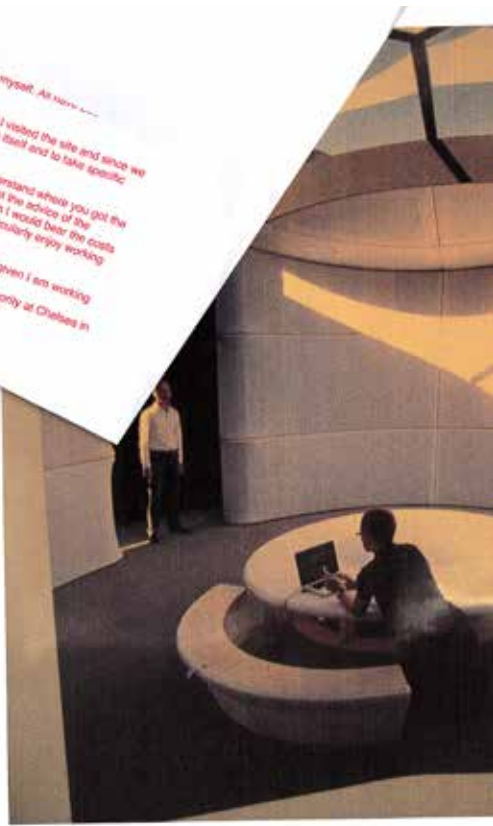
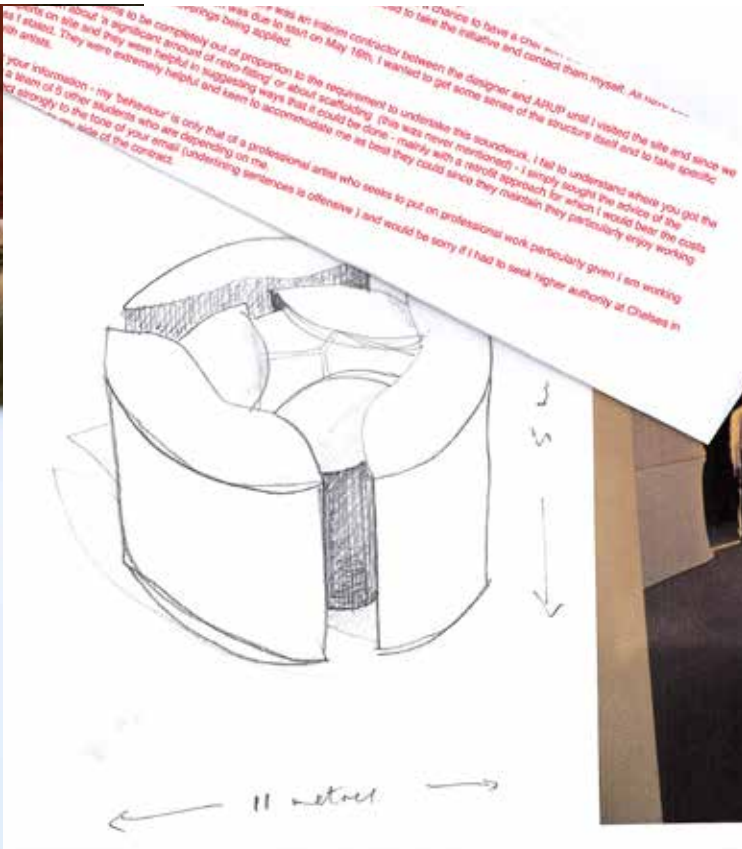
Enclosed DVD Track 12 | Alternative online video and sound file resource

<http://tansyspinks.com/soundperformance.html>

<http://vimeo.com/75872125>







SOUNDING THE PORTAL

DATE

June, 2013

FREQUENCY AND DURATION

Recordings made in situ were played out later as part of the LCC CRISAP programme of sound works.

LOCATION

Purpose built, matt black, multi-channel listening booth or sound portal – Chelsea College of Art Parade Ground, 45 Millbank, London, SW1.

EVENT

Sounding Space event and symposium, organised by UAL and the BE OPEN think tank.

STATED AIM

If the BE OPEN Sound Portal can be considered in effect, a giant speaker that we enter, then what would happen if we inverted its role and gave the structure itself the ability to be a sound-producing device?

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE

Steel cables were stretched across the structure. These were 'played' by the acts of plucking, stroking, scraping, bowing, voice-activating and treating percussively. The sounds resulting from these impromptu performances were recorded by attaching several homemade contact microphones to the cables and feeding the activated, metallic sounds into Ableton Live software. From these site-specific events, sounds were extrapolated, re-edited and diffused to create the tracks played out in the ambi-sonic portal.

BRIEF EVALUATION AND RESPONSE

Designed by bridge builders Arup, the structure functioned for this project as a kind

of instrument to be played. In the portal, listeners stood or lay on a central pod to experience the surround sounds through a nine-channel system with an extra sub woofer. The sounds seemed to become a part of the fabric of the structure.

IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS OF THE MATERIAL OF THE SITE

the actual – two versions – the acoustic of the staircase used at Chelsea and the acoustic of the interior of the portal. The second version of 'the actual' was in the displacement of the recordings – heard once again inside the portal acoustic through its built in speakers.

the activated – the architectural, tensioned steel cables stretched across the space.

the associative – recalling Robert Morris' piece of 1961, *Box with the Sound of its Own Making*, the structure housed and broadcast internally the sound of its own playing, (or being played) – a reflexive association.

EXTRACT FROM THE ARTIST'S PROJECT FILE

There was a tight turnaround between commission and event. My proposal for the portal to act as a 'bridge' (in the musical sense but echoing Arup's principal type of construction) met with considerable resistance from the outset. My attempt to communicate directly with the builders met with disapproval and each new plan had to accommodate all the things that couldn't be done rather than those that could.

A reviewer recognised the dilemma:

"...*Sounding the Portal*, by Tansy Spinks.... unleashes an unholy chorus of groaning, creaking and screeching. Where *Strata* (by Mark Peter Wright, using field recordings) brought the outside inside, *Sounding the Portal* folds the inside back on itself, and in so doing seems

to pull it apart. Squealing and squeaking, the composition has a raw, hand-made quality that rubs against the sleek interior, noisily evoking material fabric in a space whose materiality is deliberately disavowed, black-boxed and whited-out, hidden by smooth architecture and acoustic transparency. The portal begins to feel flimsy. I imagine its fabric being torn open, the space starting to auto-destruct, collapsing in on itself... Ironically, Tansy's original intention was to stretch the cables over the top of the whole structure but the plan was ditched as the portal turned out to be less solid than it looked. Damage would have been caused and the artists were told in no uncertain terms that this was not an option. Tansy also wanted to perform the piece live. This too was ruled out for bureaucratic reasons. Such compromises raise questions about scope for critique within environmental sound art, and other forms of site-based artistic practices. Strata inserted its critique into the operation of the portal, but Tansy's initial ideas were clearly too oppositional. Confronted by the portal's institutional framework, she had to negotiate a more compliant solution." Michael Gallagher, <http://michaelgallagher.co.uk/archives/1573>

Sounding the Portal was a co-production with LCC MA Sound Art students – Emanuele Cendron (especially sound editing), Sunil Chandy, Aurelie Mermod. We were invited to devise works for the portal by CRISAP staff – Angus Carlyle and Cathy Lane. Thanks are also due to portal designer Stephen Philips at ARUP, portal constructors Millimetre and Ormiston Wire.

DOCUMENTATION

enclosed CD 2 Track 5

alternative video and sound file documentation

<http://tansyspinks.com/soundperformance.html>

<http://vimeo.com/98807625> (sound only)

LEEDS! LEEDS! LEEDS!

DATE

August, 2013

FREQUENCY AND DURATION

A forty-five minute recording played out at 5pm.

LOCATION

<http://blipblipblip.co.uk> at East Street Arts, Patrick Studios, Leeds.

EVENT

'Exhibition' of sounds curated by Hayley Dixon, planned as two 45 minute tracks per evening, equivalent to two halves of a football game.

STATED AIM

To respond to a commission to make a 45 minute sound work about Leeds United

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE

Forty-five separate Leeds United football chants and songs were sung in layers, one starting each minute. Recorded and edited by Emanuel Cendron.

BRIEF EVALUATION AND RESPONSES

Songs associated with a macho culture but sung by a quiet female voice were perceived as ironic but the multitude of layered female voices brought its own discord.

IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS OF THE MATERIAL OF THE SITE

the actual – the voices of the crowd.

the activated – the performer singing the songs in the studio.

the associative – the memory of the roar of the crowd, heard from a distance whilst sitting in my front room as a student.

EXTRACTS FROM THE ARTIST'S PROJECT FILES

This work marks a departure from using a physical site to recreating a memory of a sound, emanating from one site but experienced in another, unannounced and thirty years apart.

DOCUMENTATION

enclosed CD2 Track 6

alternative online video and sound file documentation

<http://tansyspinks.com/soundperformance.html>

<http://vimeo.com/98810940>

ECHO LAKE

DATE

September, 2013

FREQUENCY AND DURATION

one attempt to record, no audience.

LOCATION

Cymbuchan Lake, Snowdonia National Park.

STATED AIM

to recreate through recording, the remembered excitement as a child, of hearing sounds reflecting across a lake backed by a mountain.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE

Performer shouts and sings across the lake.

IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS OF THE MATERIAL OF THE SITE

the actual – the long echo across the expanse of water, the sound of a trickling stream.

the activated – the shout of the voice causing the echo.

the associative – a childhood memory of this phenomenon, and a reference to the theme tune of Dr Who, an episode of which was filmed here in 1983.

EXTRACTS FROM THE ARTIST'S PROJECT FILES

The sound files were so difficult to work with that the recordings had to be heavily edited in order to bring out the isolated echo of the voice humming the theme tune. Over this, the voice calls out the words, 'shout', 'emit', 'echo,' 'listen', 'silence'. Co-singer, Josie Rampley, edit by Emanuele Cendron.

DOCUMENTATION

enclosed CD2 Track 7

UNITED?/ THE
ING ON LEEDS
WHO KNOW NO
S/ THE LEEDS
BOG OFF SONG/
ATE RIDSDALE/
IT/ WHEN THE
/ WHITE FLAG/
BOLD/ HELLO
A COPPER/ WE

1.56 "bolt" x ^{max} + ~~catch~~ + beginning
"buck-od" "efr" - list
2.15 - end.
damp echo? Hiss?
and - higher frequency only -
7 - Dr. Who + Josie. seeking
in section - for long.
He "e", "e", "h", "o", + engr. (same
40 + Dr Who in bity. + J. +
2.50t "dotty", smals + gills *
+ Dr Who and 3.40. +

THE PRACTICE

A CHRONOLOGICAL CATALOGUE OF SOUND ART WORKS, 2008 - 2014

SOUND WORKS

Henry's Ballad at Harold Wharf (September 2008) at APT, Deptford as part of the *Concrete Dreams* exhibition curated by Liz Harrison and Fran Cottell | DVD track 7

House (March 2009) Test work | audio CD1 track 2

Sonic Triangle Chelsea College of Art (November 2009) as part of *Uncharted Stories* exhibition | DVD track 1 | CD1 track 1

Brixton Market/ Arcade (February 2010) three performances for artinavan under the auspices of Spacemakers | DVD track 8

Hoop at Beaconsfield (April, 2010) for *Rella*, curated and commissioned by artists Michael Curran and Lucy Gunning | DVD track 9 | audio CD1 track 6

Feral Glissando 1 and 2 Edinburgh University (May 2010). Hyperlinks – <http://12gatestothecity.com/2010/05/17/experimenting-with-geography/>, and Wolverhampton University (July 2010) Wolves version CD1 track 3

Seafort, or seaNOISEsea (June 2010) at Redsands Seafort off the North Kent coast, as part of the Whitstable Biennale satellite programme | DVD track 2 | audio CD1, tracks 4 & 5.

Reveal (September 2010). Exhibition devised by Brian Lobel at Hyperlink – <http://www.funwithcancerpatients.com>, of photographs, drawings and videos shown at the Pierhouse, Tower Bridge including the Tormented Matter video, now in the Wellcome Collection's Moving Image Library. The video incorporates the LCC studio experiment with MAX patch, Dropped violin | CD1, track 7

Windmill I, II and III (October in 2010/ 2011/ 2012) The middle performance, as part of the *Big Draw*, with live processing in collaboration with Jan Hendricks, 2011 version | DVD track 11 | audio CD2 track 4

Corridor (2010), **Swansong** (2011), **Sound-Off!** (2012, 2013, 2014) Middlesex University performances at Cathill and Hendon for the annual February *Events Day* | No documentation available

Seven Bridges (2011 / 2014), in collaboration with Klega, seen as video shown at the LCC Research in Progress exhibition, 2012, using violin found in a skip. 2014 version – under *extended instrument* | DVD track 13,

Seven Bows (2014) | DVD track 14

Floor Zero (February 2011) in the lift at Camberwell College of Art, as part of the *Elusive* exhibition, curated by Sian Bonnell and Martin Newth | DVD track 3 | audio CD2 track 2

Take a Space, Make a Sound In It (December, 2011) refectory space at Morley College, as part of *The Engine Room*, Cornelius Cardew festival | DVD track 10

Restraint (February 2012) CSM, in the street space, a collaboration with Carali McCall – running as drawing/ drawing with sound, and first use of radio transmitter microphone to enable musician to have movement across a space | No documentation available

Silent Zone (March 2012) Chelsea Old College Library, Chelsea College of Art, as part of the *Contested Sights/Sites* exhibition | DVD track 4

Beyond the Bookshelves (May 2012) exhibition curated by Kate Ross, as part two of the involvement with the same library site. All the items used in the creation of Silent Zone above and documentary evidence of the event were shown back within a library vitrine as a 'new' archive of evidence | No documentation available

Activated Ballroom (September, 2012) sound recording made on a wildlife recording workshop with Chris Watson and Jez Riley French, North Norfolk | audio CD 2, track 3

dsh (December 2012) event at the South London Gallery as part of the laptop ensemble, Unknown Devices with David Toop | No documentation available

Sonic Ritual (April 2013), Grand Connaught Rooms, Masonic Lodge, as part of the Goldsmiths' Visual Sociology department stream, *Engaging Tactics, Revealing Secrets* at the British Sociology Association annual conference | DVD track 5

Four Full Stops (April 2013) The Parasol Unit, for the CSM seminar, *Sensingsite* devised by Susan Trangmar, Steven Ball and Duncan White, responding to the Navid Nuur exhibition | DVD track 12

Sounding the Portal (June 2013) at The Sound Portal, *Sounding Space* symposium Chelsea Parade Ground, assisted by Emanuele Cendron, Sunil Chandy and Aurélie Mermod, edited by Emanuele Cendron | audio CD2 track 5

Leeds! Leeds! Leeds! (August 2013) at <http://blipblipblip.co.uk>, East Street Arts, Patrick Studios, St Mary's Lane, Leeds, a 45 minute soundwork commission curated by Hayley Dixon, dwellerforward.tumblr.com/ edited by Emanuele Cendron | audio CD2 track 6

Echo Lake (September 2013) Snowdonia, for voice and Cym Buchan Lake, with reference to the Dr Who episode filmed there in 1983, edited by Emanuele Cendron | audio CD2 track 7

The Laboratory of Sonic Possibilities (March 2014) interactive installation for the Acts Re-acts festival of performance and residency with collaborator Iris Garrelfs, Wimbledon Space, Wimbledon College of Art, London | DVD track 6.

Improvisation (April 2014) Sound Advice UK Acoustic Sunday event at St. Peter's Church, De Beauvoir, performance by the Mary Ward sound art class. Used an invented metal box instrument with strings and objects, contact microphones and series of small amps. No documentation available

Activations of the Rake (September 2014) performance event at Pitzhanger Manor, responding to Hogarth's Rake's Progress series using objects and pochette | Curated by Marcus Orlandi. No documentation available yet

All video footage edited by Fran Ross

CONFERENCE PAPERS AND PUBLICATIONS

Sound as an Object in Space – Interpreting Space through Sound and Performance (July 2010) given at Wolverhampton University and subsequently published in the online peer reviewed Journal May 2011 – <http://desearch.co.uk>, <http://desearch.co.uk>

Sounds Leaving and Lasting – exploring the work of Max Neuhaus (May 2011) given at Aarhus University, Denmark, in the Aesthetics Department

Proposal for Take a Space, Make a Sound in It (2) as a performance for Tate Modern, Tate Tanks, published in the print-on-demand Impossible Schoolbook, 2012 (p.102) for fiveyears.org viewable at – http://www.fiveyears.org.uk/archive2/pages/164/school_projects/164.1.html

How Site-Specific Sound Artworks Can Act As A Compositional Interface Between Experiencer And Place – Developing Performative Strategies (July 2012), Darmstadt, Dieburg conference paper, published in the Darmstadt conference proceedings, The Global Composition, Conference on Sound, Media and the Environment, edited by Sabine Breitsmeter and Claudia Söller-Eckert Media Campus Dieburg, Hochschule Darmstadt, 2012, ISBN 978-3-00-038817-0, (p.434) – copies from <mailto:theglobalcomposition2012@googlemail.com>

On Process (March 2013) for Susan Pui Lok at ADRI, Middlesex University Art and Design Research Institute, Hendon

Thinking Aurally and Visually about Process published in Iris Garrelfs' online journal, Reflections on Process in Sound, Volume 2 Summer 2013 – <http://irisgarrelfs.com/reflections-on-process-in-sound>

What Constitutes the Research? A reflection on how live site-specific sound work projects have evolved in the practice, from idea to realisation for the LCC PhD publication (submitted April 2013, unpublished)

Sounding the Portal (June 2013) Chelsea College of Art, Sounding Space symposium (<http://www.soundportal.wordpress.com/tansy-spinks/>), paper on the devising of the work heard in the Sound Portal


Figures of Speech (June 2013) in the On Scenography issue of the Performance Research Journal, editors Sodja Lotker and Richard Gough, volume 18, No.3 (p.198) Routledge, Taylor and Francis, Aberystwyth University, UK.

Listen (June 2014) wordless and imageless presentation for the Art and Design Research Institute *snap* symposium at Middlesex University, Hendon.

Author's website - <http://www.tansyspinks.com>

Photographs by the author. Additional photographs provided by Nick Rampley, Idit Nathan, Matthew Whyte, George Meyrick, Christian von Wissel, Graham Evans, Maryclare Foa, Steven Ball, Arup and Wildeye websites. All video footage edited by Fran Ross. Appendix design by james@schein.co.uk.

PRACTICE CONTENTS PAGE

The documentation varies in format - some works only exist as audio files, others give a better sense of the event and place through video. Some are represented by both to allow for a choice in how they can be experienced. Excerpts are given from longer performances. All track numbers cited in the main body of the thesis are shown by the symbol .

ENCLOSED DVD

DVD – HIGH-LIGHTED SOUND WORKS

- Track 1 Sonic Triangle, 2009 (8:47)
- Track 2 Seafort, 2010 (16:38)
- Track 3 Floor Zero, 2011 (3:04)
- Track 4 Silent Zone, 2012 (4:03)
- Track 5 Sonic Ritual, 2013 (5:30)
- Track 6 The Laboratory Of Sonic Possibilities, 2014 (6:43)

DVD – FURTHER WORKS

- Track 7 Henry's Ballad At Harold's Wharf, 2008 (5:54)
- Track 8 Brixton Market/ Arcades, 2010 (1:51)
- Track 9 Hoop, 2010 (12:27)
- Track 10 Take A Space, Make A Sound In It, 2011 (4:21)
- Track 11 Windmill, 2010 (2011, 2012), (6:09)
- Track 12 Four Full Stops, 2013 (4:17)

DVD – EXTENDED INSTRUMENTS

- Track 13 Seven Bridges, 2014 Version (6:50)
- Track 14 Seven Bows, 2014 (6:50)

ENCLOSED CDS ALTERNATIVE DOCUMENTATION AS AUDIO ONLY FILES

CD1

- Track 1 Sonic Triangle, 2009 (13:47)
- Track 2 House, 2009 (5:52)
- Track 3 Feral Glissando 2, Wolves, 2010 (8:10)
- Track 4 Seafort, 2010, Part 1 (17:01)
- Track 5 Seafort, 2010, Part 2 (11:26)
- Track 6 Hoop, 2010 (4:05)
- Track 7 Dropped Violin, 2010, Studio Experiment/ Max Patch (0:29)

CD2

- Track 1 Take A Space, Make A Sound In It, 2011 (13:50)
- Track 2 Floor Zero, 2011 (10:07)
- Track 3 Activated Ballroom, 2012 (9:03)
- Track 4 Windmill, 2012 Version (10:06)
- Track 5 Sounding the Portal, 2013 (5:15)
- Track 6 Leeds, Leeds, Leeds, 2013 (7:40)
- Track 7 Echo Lake, 2013 (3:25)