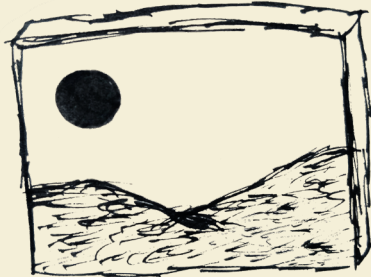
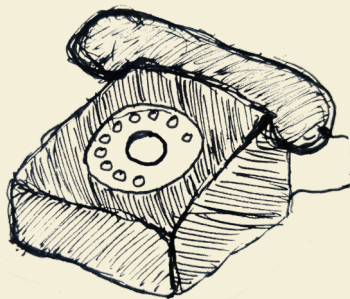
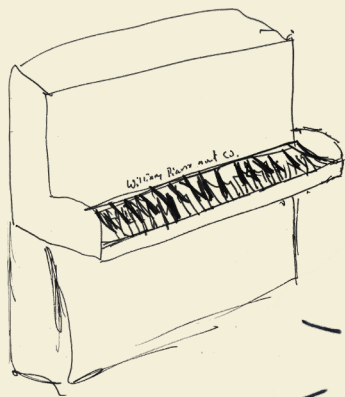


A Room Made up of Various Parts;
a box inside a box,
Simplistic depiction,
Pivouettes recorded,
Joy bubbles on the other end,
a sentence in two windows,
fumbling for the keys
and hitting chords along the way
a tangle of wires
and everything else which is of
equal importance and never the same.
(tautologically speaking)



Ira
Goldman

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A Room Made up of Various Parts; a box inside a box, simplistic depiction, pirouettes recorded, Joybubbles on the other end, a sentence in two windows, fumbling for the keys and hitting cords along the way, a tangle of wires and everything else which is all of equal importance and never the same (tautologically speaking)

Synopsis

Part retrospective, part studio, part bedroom; 'A Room Made up of Various Parts...' exists as an installation exhibition of objects in multitudes, placed within a room of some importance. All of these objects are significant, both to the artist and to the project (ideally one and the same), and some of them make sound too. These sounds, while composed by the artist, are indeterminate in presentation, their sequence and placement in time controlled mechanically. As such they will never repeat in amalgamation, randomly and indefinitely combining anew into a collage of sounds, made out of many individual collages of sounds, they themselves made out of collages, down to the bit. The room is to be explored; be curious and ask the question (a phone is ringing). They worked in this space, and now the space recalls a ghost of them, in a number of ways, aurally and visually and trapped inside a piano, once again, ideally, one and the same. The work was made for (and in some roundabout sense, by) Joybubbles and Ferrari, as well as myself.

Artist Statement

My installation 'A Room Made up of Various Parts...' is a work that utilises sound as a way of deepening a space through sonification. My hope in this is that the work can become an engaging environment in which one would be inclined to spend time listening and exploring. As presented the installation consists of 5 individual sound works and a variety of other objects, all of which have been either created by or are owned by me.

This statement describes the concepts and techniques that apply to the work as a whole. Detailed descriptions of the concepts and techniques relating to the individual works have been provided in the wider documentation.

The earliest, and arguably most important of these concepts, is that of the space as a record of myself. This concept manifests itself in a number of ways. On the most basic level the installation was initially designed as an exhibition of my work produced through my third year, and more broadly over my whole time on the course. I developed this idea in the early planning stages of the project, as I wasn't yet totally sure exactly what I wanted to do, and therefore didn't feel ready to limit myself to a specific methodology, concept, or form. I felt that I still had so many areas of art I wanted to explore while studying an art degree, both visual and sound based, so I developed an idea that would have unbounded potential to work with and include whatever forms, techniques, and concepts. In a way, the contents (and concurrently concepts and techniques) of the project merely followed where I went artistically. This explains why the work contains such a variety of interconnecting concepts.

The idea behind the exhibition initially took inspiration from the 1938 Surrealist Exhibition in Paris, a show that in many ways could be considered a pioneering work of installation art. I wanted the representation of myself to go further than simply the objects in the room having been made by me. It was important the space itself, as an

installation, embodied me in its design and ways of working, just as the 1938 Exhibition embodied Surrealism not just in the objects, but in the curation of these objects and the surrounding space. By spending extended periods of time in the room over the course of three months, slowly curating it until everything was in place, I have attempted to imbue my own 'artistic spirit' into the composition of the room itself. As such, I'd like the work to be seen as a snapshot of me at this point in time. The work could continue indefinitely in the space, if it were possible. Objects and works would come and go and slowly change as I myself changed within the space. The installation is a reflection of myself projected into a whole room.

The next concept I developed was in relation to the presentation of the sound works. Three of the works in the room were always designed to play into the space, meaning that the overall sound environment of the installation would be a combination of these works. They are set up in such a way that by moving around the space, one can directly affect the 'mix' of these works, and by focussing on one, they can almost isolate the work and listen closely into it, unobstructed by the other sounds. My intention is to encourage natural interaction with the work, which will in turn improve the viewer's engagement with the installation, and sound art as a whole.

The final major concept of the overall installation is the randomisation of sound elements. Every sound piece in the room is fed audio by a unique Max patch, each of which has a folder of audio files made for the work. These patches randomly select and play a file, crossfading into the next randomly selected file as the last one comes to an end. This creates a continuous stream of sound for each work that carries on indefinitely, completely randomised. By configuring each piece to work in this way, I have ensured that the overall sound environment in the space will never repeat, as these patches are unsynchronised, resulting in an installation that is constantly changing. What this brings to the work is endless scope for combinations of sounds in a way that is totally out of my control. At times, sounds line up in a beautiful,

unintentional way to create a moment of harmony that will never repeat, and sometimes things will clash in an ugly way. To me these are all valid and wonderful things, and my hope is that it gives the project an element of 'revisitability' - one could return to the installation over and over and theoretically gain completely new insights and ideas into the project each and every time.

Introduction

As the writings I have put together for this documentation are relatively sprawling, I felt that writing a short introduction would be useful to give an overview of what I am presenting. For the most part the documentation contains pieces of writing that I produced on various subjects related to the work. These writings are generally informal, mostly being written as streams of consciousness that I have retroactively edited (somewhat) for clarity. This documentation is organised into three 'categories' of writings. Though not perfect, I believe they were the best way of sorting and presenting my thoughts for the project, and I hope that as a whole the documentation is clear and understandable.

Firstly, I have written explanations of the various elements in the installation. Most significantly these discuss the different sound elements, however other parts of the room that I have deemed worth analysis/explanation have also been included to give conceptual background on as much of the project as possible.

Next, is a series of writings that cover various conceptual issues within the work. Within these explanations, I also go over inspirations that are linked to the respective conceptual issues.

Last is the project diary, which compiles notes that I wrote during the development and production of the project to show the journey the work took through the year-and-a-bit it took to make. These are presented alongside additional notes and images to contextualise the various things I wrote at the time.

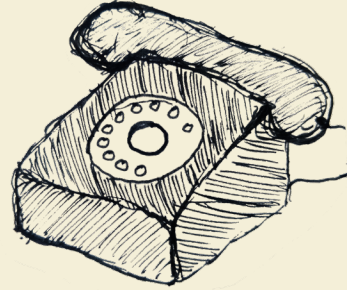
I hope that overall this documentation gives you a good idea of what I was intending to achieve with the work, how I went about doing so, the reasons I did so, and how I personally feel regarding the 'final' product. It's been a wonderful project to make, and I hope you enjoy both experiencing and reading about it.

ike

Sound Works

Telephone

The idea for the use of the telephone as a sound object goes back to March 2020, the projects very earliest stages of development, before I really had any real idea what I wanted to produce for both my final project and my dissertation. The first idea I had for the project was an installation containing a few telephones, maybe five or six all containing different pieces of audio that could be listened to through the handset by the listener. At the time this was just a loose idea that I threw out in my first meeting, but the idea of the phone as a sound object stayed in my head, regardless of the initial idea's legitimacy as a project.



This idea lay mostly dormant in my head (save for a few drawings) until a few months later, when I began to develop the idea of a half-installation half-exhibition work containing multiple sound pieces. One of my initial concerns with the project was the idea of multiple works playing into the same space simultaneously, therefore the telephone became an ideal candidate for the installation, being audible only to whoever held it to their ear.

The sound content of the telephone went through a few stages of development over the course of the project production. Initially the idea was that any voice speaking into the telephone would be ran through a computer and modified in some way, before being played back into the speaker's ear. This was inspired by playing around with a laptop monitoring the audio of a space through delays, which creates a sort of live echo in the room.

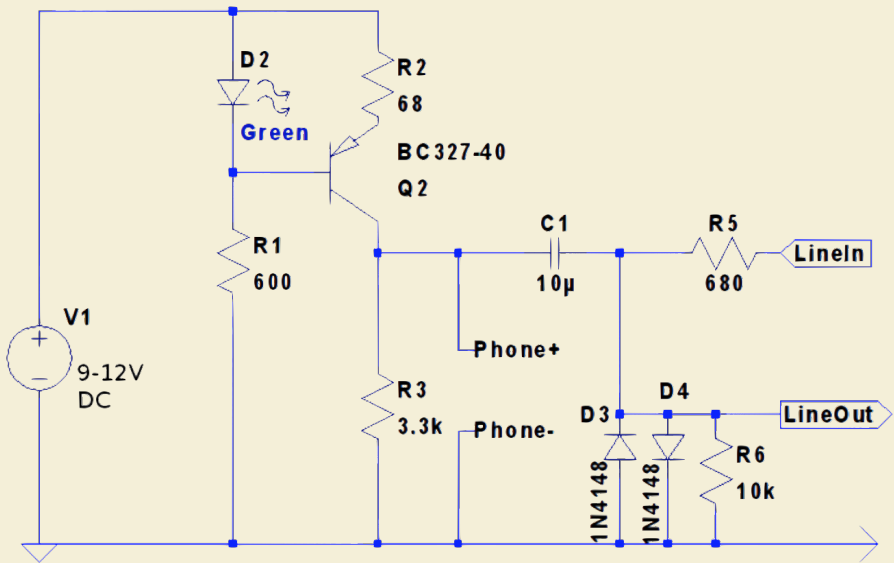
For a while this was the base idea for the telephone, until I saw a YouTube video about the mid-twentieth century culture of 'telephone phreaking', which involved using simulated dial tones for a number of

uses, such as the avoidance of long-distance call charges, and hacking computers. Before seeing this video, I had never really considered the significance of dial tones in early telephone systems, and I was inspired to use dial tones in the project.

In the end I created a sound collage using a single dial tone pitched around to harmonise with itself. Because of the nature of the dial tone different harmonies create strange phasing and textures in the sound. I had the idea to work in this way after I was holding a phone to my ear and decided to sing into the phone. By harmonising with the tone in various ways I created similar textural effects, which inspired the eventual sound collage. Whilst the use of the phone as a voice modulator gradually fell away, I decided to leave in the monitoring of the voice as a subtle aspect, there's only yourself down the phone, in reality. My decision to reel back on this idea came from a couple of reasons both artful and practical, but most significantly I realised that few people would actually speak into the phone while in a sound art installation, due to the inherent etiquette that people generally abide to in art-filled situations.

To execute the work, I needed to modify a telephone such that the signal from the microphone could be taken to an audio input, and the speaker could be injected with a signal from an audio output. Initially I did this by simply bypassing the phones circuitry and taking the wires instead to audio jacks. While this worked for the speaker, I struggled to make the microphone work, and even the speaker lacked the traditional 'phone sound' that I wanted to achieve, as it was no longer using the phones circuitry. It was clear that I needed the phone to function as though it was plugged into a real phone line, so I set about finding a way to do so. I eventually found an article containing a circuit

diagram for this precise function, and when I built the circuit it worked exactly as I had hoped.



Upon this I began to experiment with the phone, and when I played my music through it, I thought that it sounded really fantastic. This gave me the idea to add a second telephone to play songs I had recorded throughout the year, returning back (somewhat) to my very initial concept of a multiple telephone installation. I liked the inclusion of these songs, as while not a part of my sound art practice (I had been very careful through the course to split these two parts of my practice), they are very significant to me, so it felt important to include them.

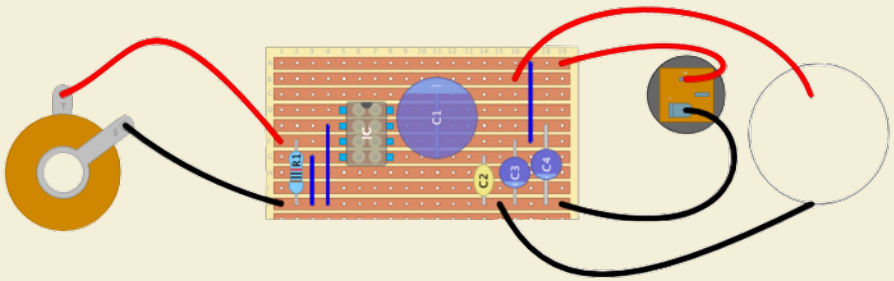
For me the telephone represents an object of mystery, it invites interaction without being on the nose or unsubtle. To want to pick up a telephone is a natural response, and I wanted this curiosity to be rewarded with an answer. One of my core ideas in making the installation was that the sound of the space should act not on its own,

or for its own sake, but to deepen the environment, to make the space as a whole more engaging. This is what I hope to achieve when the viewer picks up the handset of a seemingly inconspicuous phone, and is rewarded with a whole new sound element added to the space.

Sound Painting

I initially designed the sound painting as a way to link my sound practice and my visual practice in a very clear way within the space. Additionally, I wanted to hide all of the sound sources in the room as best as I could, so that the sounds just emanated around the space, as opposed to clearly coming out of speakers which are instantly recognisable, and somewhat unappealing visually. The painting worked for this perfectly, as I already knew I would have a number of paintings in the space, and a canvas would perfectly hide some small speakers.

As I clearly wouldn't have a huge amount of space behind the canvas, I knew that I'd need to use some very small speakers, and that the amp to drive these speakers would also need to be very small. Through some research I decided that using a simple LM386 amp circuit would suffice, as I didn't need the sound quality to be really hi-fi due to the nature of the piece. Also, this amp circuit is designed for 8 Ohm speakers, and I knew I could get some very thin speakers with this impedance that would definitely fit.



circuit I designed for the LM386 amplifier

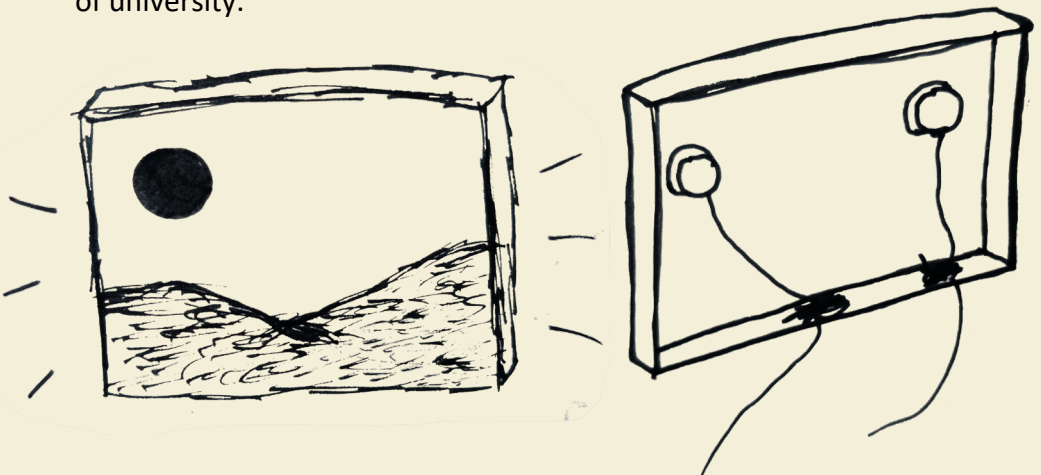
Once I had built and tested this circuit, I assembled another two, as I wanted the painting to have three speakers inside it which could all have different audio, allowing me to place sounds within the painting, and pan sounds between the speakers. To install the speakers, I attached them to a piece of cardboard, and then attached this cardboard to the painting as a backboard. This both held the speakers in the right place in relation to the painting, and also sealed the back of

the canvas frame so that the sound came only through the canvas as opposed to escaping out of the sides.

I knew that the painting would be a landscape of sorts quite early on, and I knew that I wanted the sound to parallel this, therefore I began collecting field recordings of different parts of nature on various walks I took around both East Sussex and South Wales. I also knew that due to the nature of the painting itself, and perhaps more specifically my painting skills, I didn't want the sound to be too precise. My painting skills are technically quite lacking, but I believe I am able to just about portray what I wish to in a manner that I like, so I wanted the sound to do the same, act as a simplistic, almost childish depiction of a nature soundscape.

All of these nature recordings were placed into different Max patch to randomise the play order, using one for each speaker in the painting. This results in a constantly shifting forever unique soundscape.

I especially appreciated the creation process of this work as oil painting was an area I had previously never explored. One of my earliest reasons for producing the installation in the manner in which I did was to allow me the freedom to explore all areas of art, and I was especially interested in trying out techniques and mediums I was unfamiliar with, and felt I hadn't had a chance to try through the rest of university.



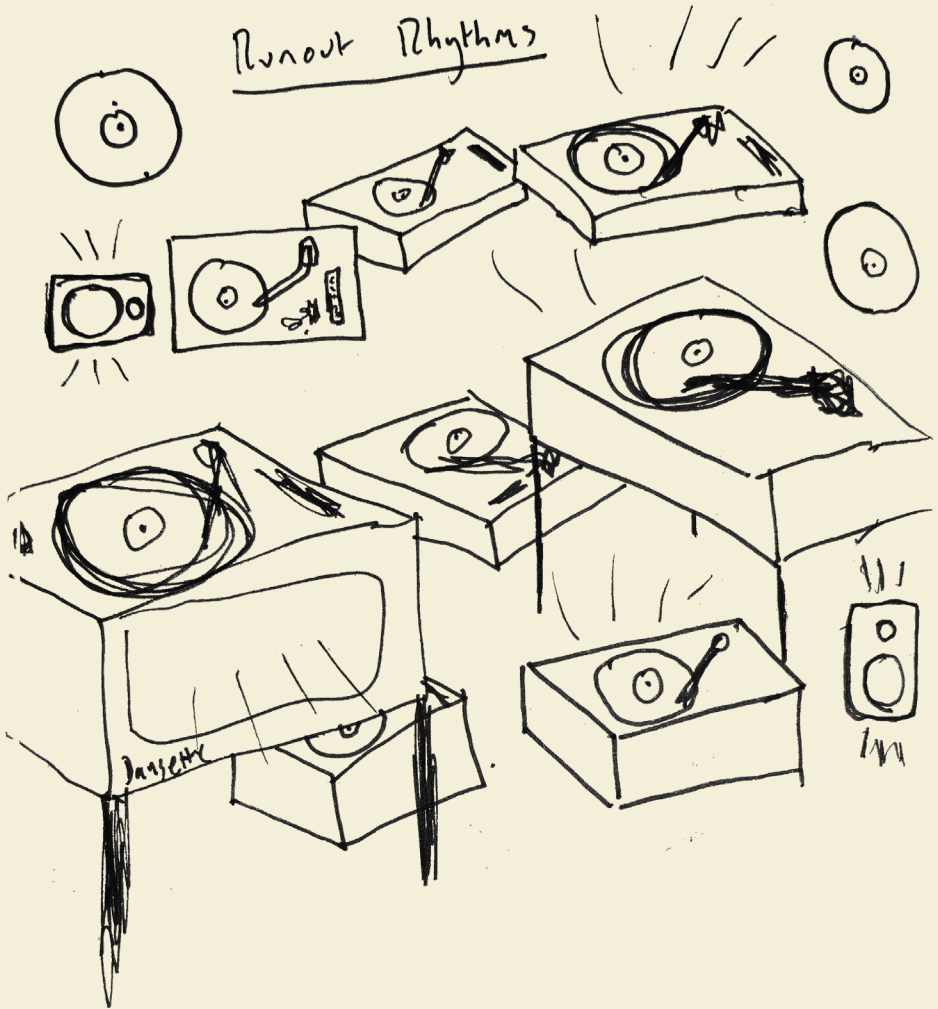
Turntables

The turntable piece is an adaptable sound installation which can be set up with two or more turntables, each extra turntable adding further complexity to the piece. It works by each turntable playing the runout groove of a record, which will of course loop indefinitely. Through the course of this loop the turntable will amplify the various crackles and pops which may be caused by dirt or scratches in the record, as well as a consistent singular pop each time the loop re-joins itself. By altering the speed of each turntable, you essentially alter the length of each loop, meaning that with multiple turntables all at different speeds, the various loops will constantly be moving around each other, endlessly shifting around. This results in a variety of rhythms slowly phasing in and out of time, and the more turntables that are used, the less predictable they become.

This was a work I originally produced in my first year as a recorded piece entitled 'Runout Rhythms', primarily inspired by Steve Reich's tape phasing works. While I was happy with this, I felt that the nature of the work lent itself to installation, as it is a piece that sounds indefinitely and constantly different, never repeating itself exactly. I also specifically wanted to recreate works I had produced earlier on in the course, as one of my early ideas for the installation was that it acted as a sort of retrospective exhibition of my time on the course. While eventually most of the works I made were specifically for the installation, I was happy that I could include the turntables as a nod to my earlier practice modules, as they really helped me (slowly) shape my practice into what I am presenting with this installation.

The work also once again embodies the transience, or randomness which pops up through the installation. It acts as a constantly shifting subtle backdrop to the more conspicuous elements of the space, while also acting as a significant visual element of the room. If the room is supposed to embody myself, then records are a somewhat essential element to include, as record collecting/playing is one of my longest running hobbies and passions.

In addition to this, the turntables eventually helped me to solve the longest running 'gap' in the project, which was the sound element of (what eventually became) the model speaker installation.



Model Speaker

This work was another that took a very long time to form, with a number of different concepts for the piece coming and going over time until it reached where it finally rested. The very first idea I had for the work was a bird house containing a speaker. This was inspired by something called a 'swift box' which my mother had installed right outside my window in Manchester. This was a birdhouse on the wall which had a speaker playing the chirps of the swift (, and the idea was that the birdcalls would encourage real swifts to go and nest there. While I was in Manchester over lockdown I heard this frequently through the day, and it inspired me to make a similar project.

At first, I planned that the work would be very similar to the swift box, with the box playing bird sounds. While I liked this idea it seemed somewhat meaningless, so I started to consider why the swift box was interesting to me. The swift is a bird which almost never lands, with most swifts sleeping while in flight. Only breeding birds sleep in nests, therefore the availability of these boxes is essential for the swift populations. I think for me the idea of using sound to encourage nesting, to help slow the decline of a species, was a really beautiful and ingenious use of sound, which is why I was so inspired by it, but it was clear that simply replicating the swift box wasn't the right path.



Over the next few months I went through a number of ideas, keeping the bird house as my general structure, but going around various concepts for the sound elements. This continued until April, at which point I began to move stuff into the space and started setting up the installation. When I had set up the turntables, I started playing different records on them at the same time, messing with the play rate of each to try to collage together some cool sounds. It sounded so good that I just decided to record what I was doing with my zoom recorder placed in the room. Upon listening back to these recordings, I decided that they had to be used somewhere in the space as I was

really happy with how they sounded, and I realised that they were actually the perfect fit for this as-yet unformed part of the installation. I suppose, on reflection, that these recordings were mostly inspired by the sound collaging heard in Music Promenade by Luc Ferrari, and Max Neuhaus' Public Supply works.

To present these turntable sessions I cut up the full-length recordings into smaller parts, sometimes picking out specific parts I liked, and sometimes selecting random areas. I used both methods as I wanted to have some chance to self-curate, yet I also didn't want to have total control over this process. In doing so I can present a consciously curated selection while retaining a certain level of honesty regarding the recordings. These cut up files were then loaded into a Max patch which when triggered randomly assembles them into an endless stream of audio reconstructed from my original recordings.

One of the very last developments in the project was the decision to place this speaker inside a very small and simple card model of the installation itself. In this model I recreated the 3 major things I produced sound with in my time there, the piano, the turntables, and the sound painting.

By playing back these recordings made in the room, out of a miniature version of the room itself, I paralleled the use of the swift call in the swift box. The model represents the state of the room as a studio, containing only these sound producing mechanisms that I used to make almost all the sounds heard in the installation. Just as the swift recordings emulate the life that once filled the swift box, the recordings of me in the space simulate my life that was in the studio through the development of the project. While it is now a taxidermied room, frozen in time, these recordings seek to reinvigorate it, to replicate it's in-use state, a ghost of me flying out of a small card box.

Piano

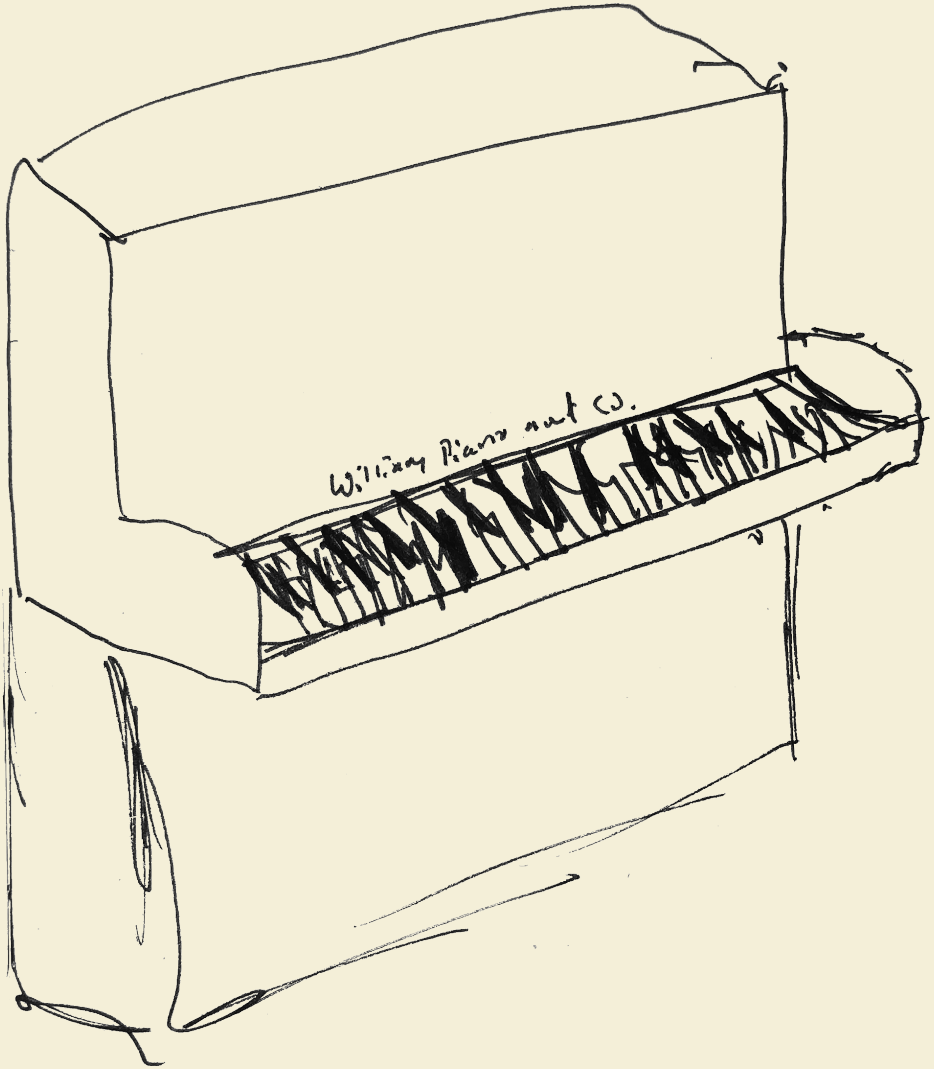
The piano has always been a really significant part of the room for me, being the reason I initially began to spend so much time in the space back in first year. Because of this it felt important to make use of it, as a way of referring back to my hours spent in there through the prior years on the course. However, I struggled to conceive a way to integrate this into my concept, as I wanted to avoid as much harmonic material as possible to avoid sound clashing, and a piano is inherently harmonic in nature.

The idea lay dormant while I set up the installation, though I still, as I always have, regularly played the piano as respite from the other areas of work I was doing. Over the time setting up the installation I ended up writing quite a significant number of new songs on the piano, songs I actually felt very strongly about as some of the best music I believe I have written, and so I began thinking of different ways to include the music in the show.

Around this time, I was reminded by Stephen Mallinder of a sort of prototype-installation I had set up with Joe Gilling during the P7 module of second year, in which we used a speaker inside the piano to resonate certain strings without making any physical contact. This gave me the idea to again place a speaker inside the piano, albeit a much smaller speaker this time, to play very rudimentary recordings of myself playing the songs, sounding much like they did as I was writing them in the room. To avoid these sounds clashing with the rest of the room I played them at a very low level, such that they were only really audible when one placed their ear right up to the piano, working physically like the telephone works, and conceptually like the model speaker, a sort of ghost of my time spent working in the space.

Through this I was again able to include the other side of my sound practice, my pop music, in the installation as a subtle note, not taking away or covering up the rest of the work, but there for people to hear if they chose to seek it out. Like the other works, these piano songs are

put into a max patch that randomises the order in which they are played back, producing an endless, randomly sequenced stream of songs.



Other Objects

Paintings

As previously stated regarding the sound painting, one of the core original ideas of the project was to explore areas of art I hadn't previously had a chance to. Throughout my life I'd always wanted to 'do art', but I had also always told myself I was incapable of it, probably due to a lack of what I deemed 'good' drawing skills in my childhood. I maintained this outlook on art, specifically visual art, for a disturbing length of time, though through my time at university studying on an art course, the feeling very slowly lifted. I started doing drawings again sometime in first year, but it was through second year leading up to the first lockdown that it became a major part of my practice.

It was during this lockdown that I developed my concept for the installation, and this new excitement about being finally able to make visual art was one of the things that informed my concept. The idea that I could work in any form and have it become a part of my final project was an intensely exciting idea to me, having limited myself from all non-sound-based practices for so many years. It was around this same time of conceptual development that I found a box of watercolour pencils that I had owned as a child. These pencils were, in line with my previous statement regarding my childhood, completely unused. I played with them a little in Manchester, and when I came back to Brighton, I brought them with me.

Through summer 2020, I was visiting family in London frequently, and as such I started to go to art galleries often. I went to as many free ones as I could yet found myself returning to a couple over and over, most frequently the Tate Modern. While I really enjoyed a large number of the works in the Tate Moderns collection, there were two paintings in the gallery that I became somewhat obsessed with, which I can probably credit for the reason I decided to start painting.

The first of these was one of Claude Monet's Water-Lilies, this specific one simply titled 'Water-Lilies After 1916'. The painting is very large, being placed in its own little side room away from other works. Seeing the work was something of a shock to me. I had seen it before, having visited the gallery a number of times in the past, but for some reason upon this visit, having been starved of seeing art for so many months, it really hit me hard. Every time I went to the gallery I'd get stuck in front of the painting, trying to leave but somehow subconsciously walking out in such a way that I'd loop back round and stand dumbfounded for even longer.



What really blows my mind about the image is how the centre of the painting is essentially just an abstract blur, and yet somehow the dotted solid elements frame this colour blur in such a way that it becomes totally clear what we are looking at. I really like Monet's work in general, he's one of my favourite impressionists, but this work specifically stood out to me on a different level to his other pieces. The moment I realised that what I was looking at was a blue and purple and pink sky reflected in the water is probably the closest I've ever felt to having what people describe as an epiphany. I would probably also say that it is the most beautiful painting that I have ever seen face to face. It is this colour blur of a sky that I tried to draw inspiration from in

my own paintings, deriving from it my starting point for the backgrounds in my images.



Shown above is the other work in the gallery that really stunned me and proved quite influential upon my painting; Wassily Kandinsky's 'Swinging'. This work had a similar effect upon to as the Water-Lilies did, I was somewhat stopped in my tracks and unable to leave, wandering around the area but continually returning to study the work. In the case of Kandinsky's work, I think it was the composition that really grabbed me. At this point in time I was more into the impressionist/post-impressionist stuff like Monet and Seurat, works that were representational but in a beautifully subverted way, yet this Kandinsky work was an abstract piece that stunned me. As previously stated, I've never been great at drawing, by which I really mean I am

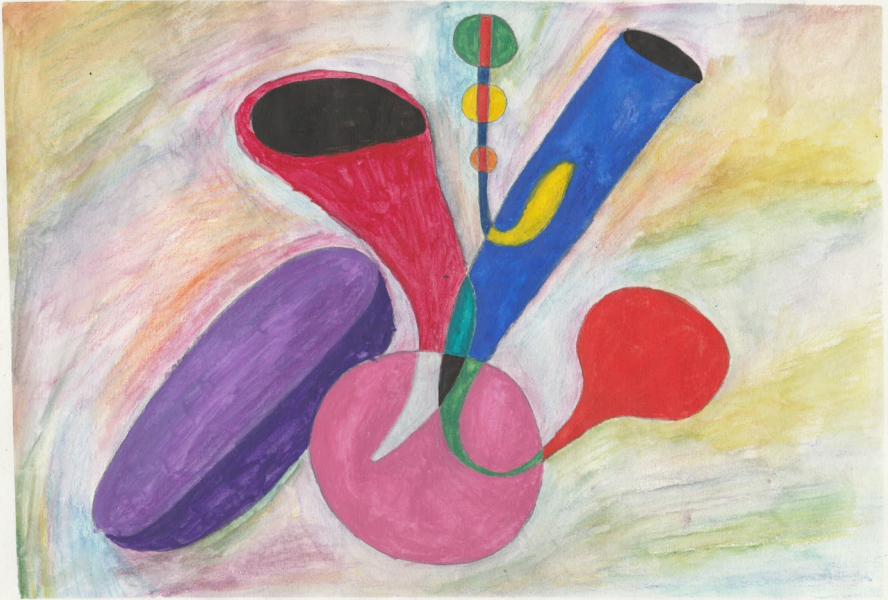
unable to successfully represent something from real life in a drawing. As such, this painting became a really big influence as I began to attempt more non-representational work. Primarily this influenced the structure in my images, both compositionally and chromatically. I believe that the above painting demonstrates the influence of both works best. Though, of course, far simpler than either work, the shapes and block colour choices in this design were definitely inspired by the Kandinsky work, and while my colour choices are far lighter, the background was influenced by the blur of colours produced by Monet in his Water-Lilies.

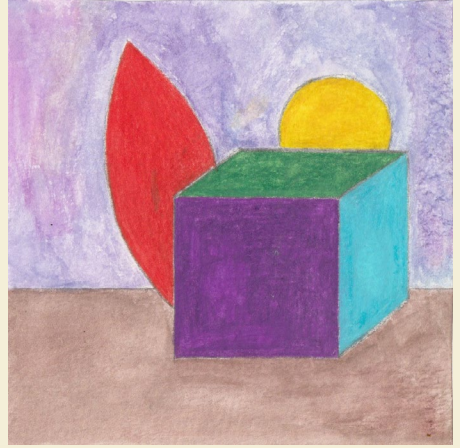


What I drew from both of these paintings and my various visits to the galleries, for the first time, was that visual art could elicit the same level of awe and engagement within me as sound works. Nothing had ever made me feel like The Beach Boys before, and I had never felt anything close to that feeling from any piece of visual art until these trips to London galleries. This awakening to all forms of art as equal elements in my emotion was one of the biggest informing factors in

the final project, as I realised that whilst clearly visuals should not be the main focus of my work, the sound should not either. And that really that whole discussion was moot, because they were all kind of the same thing anyway. This realisation that I had about visual art is a feeling that I would love for other people to have about sound art. I hoped, and still do hope, that I can encourage these feelings by presenting sound and visuals together in the way that I have. Though it is hard to avoid, I don't like to view my installation as having visual elements and aural elements as separate things. Instead I try to see it like so; there are many objects in the space, all of which can be seen. Yet some of these objects also sound, just as they reflect light to produce an image, they also put out waves to produce a sound in our ears. These things are not different or separate, but the same thing coming via two parallel railroads.

I am not an incredibly skilled painter, by any means. But what this experience, and on a wider level the entire project, has made me aware of is that I don't need to be incredibly skilled at something to feel that what I have produced is a successful expression of myself. By producing something in an honest manner, it has this effect regardless of technical ability. I believe in some ways that this is the allure of outsider art, though of course I would never attempt to compare my work to that of the many incredible painters within the outsider tag. What I am happy to say though is that having never really done any painting prior to the project, I am incredibly pleased with where I have got to, with painting actually becoming my favourite non-musical pastime. If one of the core ideas of the work was to be able to try new techniques and forms, then my paintings, while perhaps not winning any awards for most technically proficient, would no doubt win most improved, and I for one am very pleased with both that, and them.





Chess Board

The chess board on the back of the door is set up with an endgame chess problem that Marcel Duchamp printed, along with the caption 'White to Play and Win', in the announcement booklet for the 1943 exhibition, 'Through the Big End of the Opera Glass'. I found this chess board on one of my first trips to the studio when moving my belongings in, and since Duchamp had been such large influence on the project, I thought that to make use of this chess board would be a nice homage to both his obsession with chess, and his readymades.

Though the problem has been deemed by most to have no solution, Duchamp gave a hint as to the potential best move to make. The image was printed reversed on the back of the translucent paper booklet, with a cupid drawn by Duchamp on the flip side. When the image of the cupid was viewed against a light, the chess board shone through the paper and the cupid's arrow pointed a white pawn, implying that this was the ideal move to make. Though not consciously an inspiration, I retroactively realised that this idea of having 'hidden' information was a relatively common theme throughout both Duchamp's work, and my own project. Most clearly this manifests itself in the piano speaker, in that the songs are only audible when one presses their ear into the piano, yet I think that this idea relates on a wider level to my general concepts of focus and perception within the work.



Conceptual

Putting Myself on Exhibition (Art in Life)

From the very initial development stages of the project, I was aware that one of my core ideas for the installation was that it would in some way be a display of myself, or of my own nature. In my first notes regarding the installation concept I wrote that it would be a “macrocosm of my own mind”, kind of like projecting myself outwards into a space, yet I initially wasn’t totally sure how I could achieve this in a manner that was both subtle yet apparent to others.

What became clear when I returned to Brighton after the first lockdown was that my bedroom presented a perfect model for this. It is to me the only place that I ever really feel fully comfortable, and I believe that this is in some way due to a ‘matching’ of the external environment to my internal landscape. My bedroom is far from tidy and doesn’t have much of a sense of organisation. Certain things have their consistent places in my room, such as my television and my Hi-Fi system, yet most other items are in a sort of state of flux, constantly moving, landing, being lost and found and lost again, and falling into their positions, based on my needs and activities at that certain time. As a result, the space is always very full, with any single field of observation occupied by a multitude of seemingly unrelated objects which have made their way there for one reason or another.

I decided that this manner of ‘organisation’ or curation would be the only way for me to lay out the installation. It is my belief that by unconsciously designing the room in this way, the curation of the space ceases to be separate from the creation process and becomes an expression of my art practice in itself. I guess this is an extension of the feeling that I apply artfulness or creativity in most areas of my life, from my somewhat monotonous weekend job to the ways in which I walk around town. This idea is primarily inspired by a David Lynch interview I saw, in which he expresses the concept that creativity is purely the act of ‘catching ideas’, and that everybody exhibits

creativity in different areas of their life, not just in the ways that we typically consider 'art'.¹ He describes this in relation to the context of peoples work lives, how they do their jobs, yet this really applies to most things that are affected by our own thoughts, conscious or unconscious. In line with this idea, it follows that the ways in which I naturally curate a space through living and working in it are also examples of my creative expression, just as much as any painting or song I would produce. To me, artistic expression is the only real way that I can present an unbiased or honest imprint of myself or my thoughts, as it involves an element of unconscious doing; I'm never really thinking or trying when I write music or draw. Therefore, by applying this to the curation of the room, the space itself, the objects within and the way in which they are laid out become truly representative of myself in a creative capacity.

To do this I knew that I'd need to spend a long while working and semi-living in the space, such that things had the time to naturally fall into place; this is a process hard to rush as it inherently relies on the natural usage of the space. In late March I moved a number of my belongings into the studio and began to go in to the studio every day I could for as long as I was allowed. Through much of this early period I was only vaguely working on specific aspects of the project, mainly I played the piano and listened to music, and just tried to get comfortable in the space. This meant that by late April, when the work got really serious, I already had a feel for the space, and in a way the space had a feel for me in that it already was beginning to feel lived in. This process continued thorough the months of work, slowly bringing more things in and embedding them into the space naturally.

I wanted a way to show the link between the space and my bedroom more explicitly, therefore I had the idea to place my television in the space showing a film of my room. Whilst a rather simple idea, I felt that this could act as a sort of portal into my bedroom, working to

¹ D. Lynch, *Meditation, Creativity, Peace*, Documentary, 2012.

imply the concept to the audience without them needing to read any lengthy conceptually writings, such as this document itself is. I've always felt that a large blurb on the wall exposing every concept and idea within a work does something to kill any ideas I myself might have about the work; I'd much rather have these concepts implied and leave it up to the audience to read into them however they wish. These feelings similarly manifest themselves in the synopsis I wrote for the work which, while perhaps coming off as somewhat obtuse, aims to present the concepts and techniques of the work in a subtle manner. I wanted these ideas to be given to the audience in-stylistic-line with the rest of the project, blending into the work's whole unless looked for. If one chose to read into these words, I hope that they could gleam this information from what I wrote, but should the clues be ignored I would be more than glad for said reader/viewer to take from the work whatever they naturally did, isolated from my own ideas. This much larger document itself exists as a record of my own feelings about the work, and should anyone ever wish to read them they are more than welcome, but to enforce them would, in my own opinion, take away from the work.

Additionally, I wanted the objects and works within the space to further add to this goal of putting myself on display. Many of the works reference earlier projects I had made for the course, with some parts being directly lifted such as the turntable piece and a number of the slides shown in the room, taken from the P2 and P7 modules respectively. One of the telephones also includes a number of songs that, while not recorded directly for the course itself, were all made during my time spent at university. All of this plays into one of my early ideas for the exhibition to be a kind of retrospective for my time on the course.

I wished to achieve something similar specifically regarding my time spent in the studio working on the installation. This manifested itself in the sound for the model speaker, which consists of recordings of myself collaging audio from records live in the room, and the piano speaker, which directly plays back recordings of myself playing songs I had written and frequently played in the room. In this way I embed my own experience of the project's development into the work itself, putting my last few months onto display within the piece.

Part Two

I have added on this piece of writing as a second part, or a kind of addendum to the previous words, as while it deals with very similar themes, it was written very late on in the overall documentation process, long after the first part, and as such it presents a somewhat updated view on the topic. It in no way invalidates the first part, but I also didn't feel that it would make sense as a direct continuation, and so I felt that the separation of the two writings, with the addition of this short introduction, was necessary to contextualise the thoughts.

I think that regarding the concept of the space representing, or embodying me in some way, I have on a conscious level only really been considering how this was achieved on either a visual or a conceptual level. What I mean is that while I have discussed how some of the sound elements represent me, this is not about the way in which they actually sound but what they represent as recordings. I wrote that the model speaker represents me in that it is a recording that I made in the space, or that the turntables represent me as they were taken from an earlier project I produced for the course. While I still believe that this is true, these are both contextual facts surrounding the recordings, they do not refer to the actual SOUND of the recordings. These works both represent things that I have done, but I believe that there is something of a disparity between this and the representation of me as a person, as was originally intended.

Regardless, in the last week of the project, it has become clear to me that I have, unconsciously, achieved this on the sound plane too. It hadn't really struck me before, but when listening to the work running through, I feel completely satisfied with it as an aural depiction of myself, or my mind. Though, like I said, this was by no means a conscious effort on my part, I believe this has happened naturally. In the same way that I feel the room has visually come to represent me through my natural living within the space, my creation and design of the sounds has imbued myself in them too. Not just on an individual level, but in the combined sound environment of the space as a whole.

When I listen to the sounds, and more specifically how they combine, I hear something of my own mind, or my own thought processes in them. At any given time, I have a whole variety of 'voices' flinging around my head, not in the sense of hearing voices, but as various sound elements that are bouncing back and forward over and under each other. I think in the way that some people have very strong visual minds, mine is very strongly sound oriented. I had a discussion recently in which I realised that I actually find it very hard to mentally visualise an image or an object, yet I can very clearly recall sounds and music as though I'm playing them back in my head.

Some of these sound elements that I describe are thoughts I am having either consciously or subconsciously, which I guess I hear in the voice of my internal monologue. These 'vocal', or more language-based thoughts combine with other sound elements. Firstly, on the most obvious level, the real-world sounds I am hearing through my ears, sounds of nature or cars or people, but then I am also hearing a constant collage of other sounds; songs, things I have recently heard that I'm thinking over, other people's words, tinnitus, and everything else that is somewhat too strange or confusing for me to accurately describe. The ways in which these things SOUND in my head is somewhat reminiscent of AI music created in the style of real musicians. Things I have heard before over and over recalled in a foggy way.

In the room I hear this same mixture. From the model speaker I hear flashes of songs, wavering around in pitch and speed and sometimes only vaguely recalling the original recordings. From that same speaker I also hear a blur of worldly sounds, they too swaying in the breeze, people, cars, lawn mowers, animals, the sounds of daily life filtered through memory, or perhaps internal recollection. From the painting I get a constant soundscape of nature, something I wish I could hear more frequently out of my window, in place of the people and the cars and the lawn mowers. Then, quietly from the piano comes my own songs, the sounds that no doubt fly through my mind more than any other, but these require more focus, to be worked on not just heard unconsciously like a beach boys song or a song of a friend, I must pay specific attention to these sounds in my head, just like how one must pay specific attention to hear the piano songs in the room. Additionally, the way in which these sounds are randomised in this space is evocative of the unpredictability of my own internal sound landscape; I can rarely predict what songs or sounds or words are going to pop into my head at any given time, sometimes it is calm and sometime too much is going on, seemingly randomly.

These are all retroactive analyses, just like a number of others made throughout this documentation, but I feel this is okay. I set out to make a work that allowed me to do whatever I wanted in the hopes that all these things would eventually recall myself in some way, and consciously or otherwise I believe this is what I have been doing the whole way through. Honestly, it's hard for me to have any idea how other people will feel regarding this, but I can safely say myself that I achieved exactly what I set out to, in my own eyes at least; it is like stepping into my brain in a brain, and I'm going to be sad to dismantle it.

Marcel Duchamp, and the Role of Sound in the Installation

One of the most significant influences on the overall installation concept was the exhibition design of Marcel Duchamp, specifically his work on the 1938 Surrealist Exhibition in Paris. In this exhibition, instead of presenting the various works in a sterile environment, they were presented in spaces filled with other objects and sounds, and with non-traditional lighting or organisation. As a result of this, the paintings and sculptures ceased to exist as solely discrete works of art, becoming elements in a wider art environment that filled the whole space. In this way, the exhibition could be seen as an early example of installation art, and this idea of the exhibition as installation was really exciting to me.

In my dissertation I looked at how changing the context within which art is presented can have a significant effect on how the art is perceived, and I used this exhibition of one of my more significant examples. By simply changing the space in which the works were presented, Duchamp took the show from a regular exhibition to a spectacle, a multi-sensory event which inherently changed how the art was viewed, both on a physical level and on an interpretive level.

Later in the essay I discussed various issues that I feel significantly affect people's perception of sound art in exhibition, looking at how similar contextual changes could help this. This discussion was heavily focused on the ocularcentricity of the modern gallery space, the perceptual bias towards visual media that frequently results in sound works being side-lined. I decided to use the Duchamp's exhibition design as a sort of template, using various elements to create a room 'vibe', such that the sound works too became elements in this space. I hoped in this was that the aural and visual elements would meld in a way, with the audience becoming more open to sound works through their embedding in the wider environment. I suppose a really crude and somewhat demeaning analogy for this is like hiding pills in dog's food so that they take them without realising. This is why I felt it so

important to hide the sources of the sound with objects which blended into the space, such as the painting and telephones.

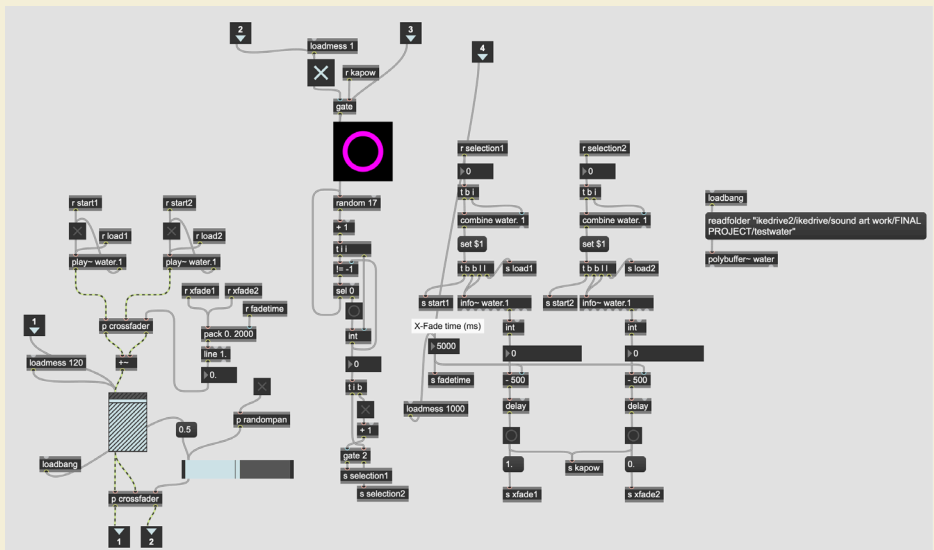
While some of these sound elements are only audible upon interaction, three of them are constantly playing into the space, resulting in an overall sound environment made up of a mixture of these three works. While this is generally avoided in the exhibition of sound works, I felt that conforming to this constant tendency to isolate sound art would prove counter-productive to what I wanted to achieve in the installation. Instead I separated each work out to form a triangle in the space, with one at each corner. By carefully balancing the levels of each work, I managed to create a single sound environment made up of all three, that shifts as one moves around the space.

What I was trying to recreate here was the way art that is viewed in a regular art gallery; when one wants to see a specific painting in a gallery, they move over to that painting and focus their vision on it. This of course does not block out the other works and people in their peripheral vision, but by focussing their perception on that specific painting, they almost filter everything else out automatically. In my installation, by moving over to a specific sound work and focussing in on it, one can shift their perception to that specific work. While this of course doesn't mute the other pieces, one is able to effectively focus in on the works and listen to them almost as though they were isolated. My intention here is to allow people to naturally engage with sound art in such a way that they can directly affect their own perception of the sound environment. I hope that through this, people who are generally less engaged by sound art can relate the practice to their usual methods of viewing art, and they may then become more engaged. What I'm really trying to demonstrate is that there are other, more engaging ways to present sound art than with a pair of headphones, or in isolated rooms far away from the other 'regular' art.

Sound Collage and Randomisation

Two of the most prevalent techniques in the installation are sound collaging and randomisation, both of which frequently cross over each other in my working methods. I used sound collage techniques for the sound painting, model speaker, and telephone works, and randomisation eventually became a part of these works too, in addition to the turntable work in which aspects of randomisation form the core concept of the piece.

To achieve this, I created a Max patch that produces a continuous feed of 'randomised' audio. This patch loads a folder of audio files into a buffer, and when triggered randomly selects and plays back one of these files. Concurrently, the length of the file is calculated, allowing the patch to select and load another audio file into a second play deck, and cross fade into this audio as the first comes to an end. The result of this is a smooth stream of audio which continues infinitely, forever playing back a selection of recordings in a random order.



the max patch that has been reused for each individual work in the installation

I've used this patch in as many parts of the room as possible and in doing so I have assured that the sound environment will almost certainly never repeat itself, as the chances of each individual patch lining up in the same way twice are practically zero. This results in an infinitely original self-generating work. While the same pool of sound recordings is being used over and over, the combinations of sounds will never repeat exactly. My hope in this is that the installation can provide a consistently stimulating experience to the viewer; one could revisit the installation numerous times and hear new configurations of sound every time, giving them a unique experience each time.

Max Neuhaus, Luc Ferrari, and Tautology

Luc Ferrari and Max Neuhaus were my two main influences with regards to these techniques. I had studied Max Neuhaus heavily for my Theory and History of Sound Art module in the months before I began to plan my installation, and one work in particular, 'Public Supply I', became a significant influence. The work was a radio show he produced in 1966, in which he mixed live phone calls from listeners around New York into a frenzied collage of people's lives.¹ On a conscious level, this work heavily influenced the direction I wanted to take my sound practice in, with sound collage becoming my primary focus. However, upon reevaluation, I realised that the work has an inherently random element to it, as Neuhaus was mixing live sounds from callers, without knowledge of what that sound would be. Whether or not this directly influenced me is hard to say, but I thought it was worthy of note anyway.

I also retroactively noticed Neuhaus' influence upon my work in the way that both my telephone and piano pieces work. Both of these require the audience to physically engage with the object in some way to hear the sounds that they produce. This was a technique/concept that I discussed in my essay regarding a number of Neuhaus' works. For example, his Water Whistle installation series, in which the sound

¹ Medien Kunst Netz, Public Supply I, Accessed 14 May 2021, <http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/works/public-supply-i/>

element consisted of underwater whistles that were only audible by the submerging of one's head in the water.² In this way Neuhaus introduced interactivity into the works in a capacity that it directly affected the individual's perception of the work; the way in which they physically interacted with the piece changed how they actually heard and perceived the sounds.

After I had set down the sound collage path, I was recommended the album *Music Promenade* by Luc Ferrari. While Public Supply had given me the initial idea, *Music Promenade* gave me a clear idea of how I wanted my sound collage work to sound. Where Neuhaus' work was frenzied in a chaotic way, *Music Promenade* shifted through moods, all frenzied in nature but moving, with the collaged sound elements always relating to each other in strange but beautiful ways. After listening to this recording a few times, I put it away, and began work on my installation concept.

What eventually developed in my concept was the idea that each work would play separately from the others, unsynchronised. This would mean that the sound elements of the works would never come together in precisely the same way again, the installation would be constantly generating a new combination of sounds from each work, giving potentially endless moments of sound, sometimes beautifully coalescing, and sometimes clashing. Through this project I have had to frequently trust the process, and the idea that everything would come together in the end, and this randomness embodies the same idea, the acceptance that at points things will not work opens up the opportunity for things more wonderful than could ever be composed or planned consciously.

While I knew that this approach, from a sound collaging perspective, was influenced by *Music Promenade*, it wasn't until I came back to it

² *Sculpture Synchronisee*, Max Neuhaus, Water Whistle Series, 70s, Accessed 14 May 2021, <https://sculpture-synchronisee.villa-arson.org/2013/11/08/max-neuhaus-water-whistle-series-70s/>

months later in April of 2021 that I decided to research the background of the work. To my disbelief, and slight awe at the (somewhat ironic) synchronicity of it all, I discovered that the recordings I had heard were merely snippets of an installation Ferrari had set up in the late 60s, in which four independent tape machines would play reels of recordings he had made. This was, much like my own installation, an indefinite piece in which the audio of the unsynchronised tapes would combine into a new, constantly changing coalescence of sounds. This was simultaneously shocking, but also reaffirming, in that my work initially inspired by a recording I knew very little about, had somehow reverse engineered it to reach the same original method of working. I discovered this at a time of somewhat-uncertainty about the concept, and the project as a whole, yet this strange concurrence of concepts gave me a new lease of confidence to go forward with the idea, and really was a heavily contributing factor in me finishing the project in the manner I had originally intended.

While reading Ferrari's own writing about the work, I discovered this snippet which summed up the concept better than I had ever been able to up until that point, or since. It reads, "When one characteristic sequence encounters by chance a slight sound, this one colors that one. On the other hand, when an event sequence encounters another one, they perturb each other, for their good or for their evil. Such is life."³ I also found that Ferrari had named this concept 'tautology', leading to my referencing of the word in the title of the piece.

³ L. Ferrari, Analysis/Thoughts – Music Promenade, Accessed 14 May 2021, <http://lucferrari.com/en/analyses-reflexion/music-promenade/>

A Brief Note on the Unfinished Nature/Transience of the Work

Though certain aspects of the work are imperfect, or not fully executed, this as I see it is inherent to the nature of the project. The installation is a rolling and evolving snapshot of my work and by extension my life, and as such there are aspects of it that are constantly changing, or new ideas that are being added. In an ideal world this installation would not be a temporary set up but a studio of sorts, in which I could work, create, and exhibit both the processes and the results. The space, as it is presented, is a current view of what I am doing (or perhaps what I have done). Parts, in time, would be further worked on, maybe even deemed completed, and some would be removed with new works phasing into their place. What I present is not meant to be a finished, finalised work as such but an example of the process; a way of working and a way of presenting, simultaneously.

I suppose the clearest inspiration in this regard comes from the Merzbauten of Kurt Schwitters. These works, from the research I was able to do on them, quickly became some of my favourite historical examples of installation art (funny, given the length of time by which the works predate the term itself). My love for these works comes down to a few reasons, both aesthetic and conceptual. The most thrilling aspect of them to me is the ever-evolving nature inherent to each incarnation. The works were not set up, and completed, exhibited, and then taken down. They were constantly changing, you either saw it, or you didn't.⁴ Whatever you did happen to see would have been a unique snapshot in time of Schwitters' life and practice, and the next day this would have changed in at least some small way. There is something incredibly exciting about this transience of work, both from the perspective of artist and viewer. For the artist, they are never restrained by what they are doing or have done. Their work is a constant reflection of their life that carries on indefinitely. For the

⁴ MOMA PS1 Blog, In Search of Lost Art: Kurt Schwitters's Merzbau, Accessed 14 May 2021, https://www.moma.org/explore/inside_out/2012/07/09/in-search-of-lost-art-kurt-schwitterss-merzbau/

viewer, this set up presents an endless source of art, one could visit every week and slowly see new things pop up, be developed, and eventually come down and be replaced; they get to see and be a part of the creation processes of these works, and the boundary between artist/viewer is somewhat broken down. This is such a wonderful idea to me, from both perspectives, and it's something that I've really enjoyed somewhat dipping into through the course of this project.

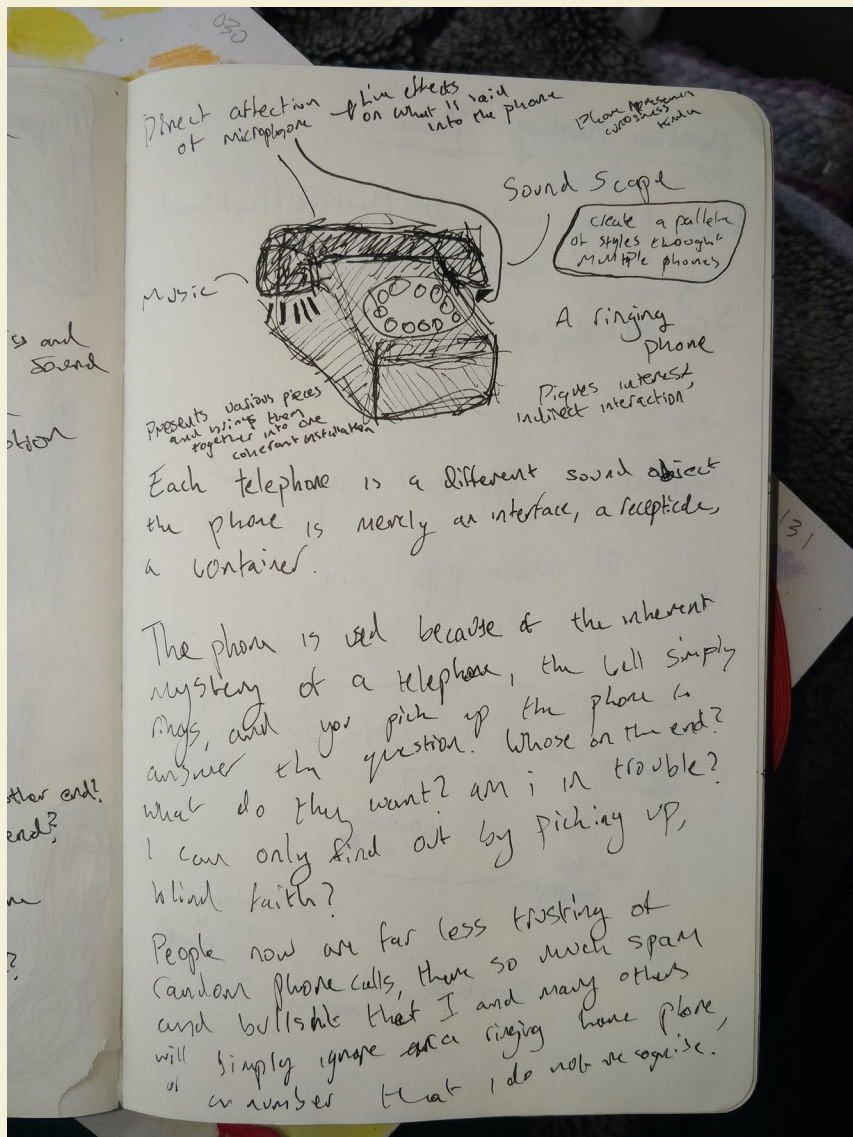
To wrap up, I don't believe this installation is finished, but I also don't believe that I would ever believe such a thing, and I suppose that is just a part of the project too, and as such it is a good thing. However, and quite importantly, that is very much not to say that I am not satisfied with what I have produced. On that note, I can confidently say that I am wonderfully happy, and I just wish it could carry on forever.

Project Diary

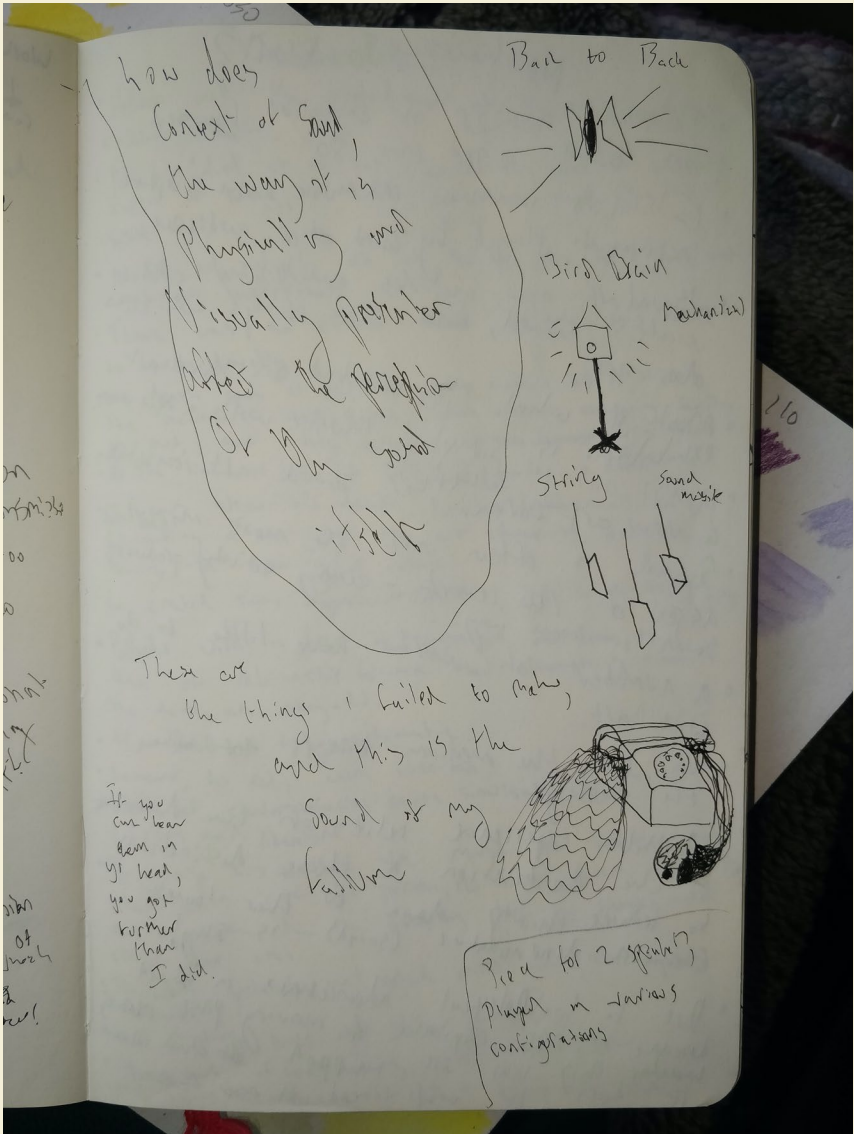
This project diary consists of a mixture of handwritten and digital notes, all presented as originally written. This does mean that some notes contain spelling and grammar errors, but I hope that as a whole they are understandable. I felt uncomfortable editing the notes after the fact; to present them effectively as a project diary it felt necessary to show them exactly as they were written in the moment. As such I have added additional text and images where necessary to contextualise and reflect on entries, or to fill in gaps of time during which I did not write my thoughts so often. The smaller italicised captions refer specifically to the note they written are under, and the larger writings are more general. Some images also contain links to videos. While I do not have exact dates for some entries, I have arranged them as accurately as possible in chronological order. It is worth note that the dates at the top of each digital note are not always accurate. I've done my best to remember what happened as honestly as possible, but it is sometimes hard not to alter our own memories, and it's even harder to recall how these memories were after the fact.

Spring/Summer 2020

The notes begin in late March of 2020, soon after I had returned to my hometown of Manchester in anticipation of the first lockdown which quickly followed my arrival. At this stage the project was still very unformed, though I had some very early ideas. I had already had one meeting with Kersten regarding my dissertation concept, during which we briefly discussed how the dissertation could link to my final project. At this stage I already was aware that I wanted to work with sound objects in some way, and my dissertation ideas were in a similar vein, being centred around interesting methods of sound transmission. In this first meeting I loosely mentioned my early telephone concept (as presented in the first 'diary' entry), which I suppose was really my first idea for a non-standard way of presenting sound via an object, laying the groundwork for the further pieces I developed over the next year.



Entry made after a meeting with Kersten regarding my dissertation. This note shows my early ideas regarding how I could use telephones as sound objects, and gives an insight into my conceptual reasons for doing so.



This note was made after my next meeting with Kersten in April. Interestingly, the circled note at the top of the page is a question that eventually became the basis of my dissertation, yet here I was really posing it more in relation to my ideas about sound objects. I also describe an early idea I had that the project could contain various unfinished works. The drawing of the birdhouse shows the inception of what eventually became the speaker model, as does the following digital note.

25 Apr 2020, 05:23:53

artificial birdsound sound Scape
is this real? Is it beautiful anyway?

swift box next to my window

tape machine inside bird house

does it make an area more desirable even if it's fake

Around the time of this note I began work on my essay for the Theory and History of Sound Art module. This essay was about interactivity in sound art, a subject which I felt strongly about for a number of reasons. In general, I felt (and still feel for the most part) that interactivity is used all too frequently in art as a sort of gimmick that rarely actually adds anything of value to the work itself, or the viewers experience. In the essay I discussed Max Neuhaus' various works as examples of how interactivity can be used in a way that is subtle, yet integral to the work itself and the viewers perception of it. I think that this essay went on to influence my final project in a couple of ways. Most significantly the work of Neuhaus proved very influential upon my sound practice, yet I also believe that these feelings about interactivity went on to affect how I tried to implement interactivity as a subtle element in my project, as with the telephones and the piano speaker.

In May 2020 I researched and wrote an essay about Marcel Duchamp's curation of the 1938 Surrealist Exhibition. As previously discussed, this exhibition proved to be the most influential 'work' I researched, upon both my dissertation and my final project. It was this exhibition that introduced me to the idea of the exhibition as installation, and I believe it was during this period that I wrote the first few paragraphs of the next digital note, which ended up becoming a kind of pin board for ideas between May and September 2020.



Final project

I suggest that I take the piano room as studio 2 as my room to make site specific installation, I design a room within the studio, exhibiting multiple works of mine, and making use of the space in some way (eg piano, xylophone, window?), Have dictaphones with tapes of recordings, sound objects? I would do this unobtrusively by coming up with ideas before hand and booking 2/3 hour slots in studio 2 to try out the ideas, and eventually at the end I would put it all together as a whole.

it's part mini exhibition space, part sound installation (the whole room is the installation), part dream room for my mind/inversion of my mind, a macrocosm of my mind into a room and I can set inside my own head

I figure that usually the room wouldn't be used for the exhibition space anyway so I'm not getting in the way, I'm freeing up space if anything. the room has kinda been a place of idk safety within the whole uni for me. it's a room I can go and just play piano with the door locked and nothing can get in or out and I can just go there and exist and play piano, so it'd be in interesting space for me to work in.

a mannequin which speakers installed which play the sounds of an exhibition space

screens with text moving over itself

a symptom of indecisiveness

a miniature model of the room

BLANK AS OF NOW TAPE SIDE B FAST FORWARD

runout grooves installation

make a sound collage of every day for a month with little day long timelines for each day

LAST EDIT 5 SEPTEMBER 2020, BUT WRITTEN THRU SUMMER 2020

final project

This note contains a number of different ideas for my final project as I continued to add to it over Summer 2020, yet the majority of the ideas were written between May and July 2020. The first three paragraphs were my first transcription of the installation concept, written as the idea was coming to me in May 2020. While certain details changed, this description displays the core concepts and methods that remained throughout the development of the project, and which are still significant elements of the project as it is presented.

After this description are a number of notes regarding more specific ideas I had for the project. While most of these ideas were eventually abandoned (and never really got past the note stage), the idea of a miniature model of the room stuck with me, and was included in the final work along with the runout groove installation I also mentioned here. Also worth note is the mannequin speaker, which came out of an early idea for the work to act as a parody of gallery spaces. I actually recorded sounds for this idea, and while I didn't include it overtly, the ideas I had regarding traditional gallery spaces definitely affected the work in a subtly way.

22 Mar 2021, 10:17:49

Exhibiting: Inwards/Outwards or, a box that's lying too deep, making up the outside but forming anew, and talking over and over, sense and building and trying to talk over yourself, so look up and one two, you'll know, and you will leave knowing more than you thought

10 JUNE 20

final project

This was my first draft title for the project, written in preparation for the first proposal submitted for the project. I don't quite remember what much of it means, but it started the trend of writing long project titles (partially inspired by Fiona Apple).

In late July I returned to Brighton from Manchester for the Summer. I do not have any relevant notes from this period, as the ideas were just slowly developing in my mind, I wasn't actively working on any of them and as such I wasn't writing about my ideas. I spent a lot of this time with friends working less on my music and art, as over lockdown I had really spent all my time recording music and I needed some time away. However, I did spend a lot of time through the later Summer months in London, and while there I began visiting a few art galleries somewhat obsessively. It was in this period that I got really engrossed in painting, and this gallery obsession hugely deepened my interest in researching and producing art, bouncing me back after my lockdown burnout.

Autumn/Winter 2020

When the third year began my focus mainly shifted to my dissertation, though all my research and pondering regarding the discussed topics were no doubt vital to the development of the final project. Through researching exhibition, in both the sound art and wider art worlds, I was able to distil my own ideas about both exhibition and installation art. This was specifically helpful regarding the exhibition of sound art, as it is a topic that I have a number of very mixed views on, and as such I wished to be as informed as possible before I attempted to produce a sound art exhibition/installation myself. The following two pages of notes were made while I was writing my dissertation, yet the ideas discussed also apply to my final project in many ways, as they deal with problems faced in the exhibition of sound art.

ISSUES which affect
engagement

People are more
used to visual art

Lack of
Visuals

most sound
art with a
visual component
is more instantly
engaging Why?

- Possible lack of visuals
- Time based
- Not what used to
- Headphones - one at a time

Time based - It's rare to come in at the start
of a loop, which puts some people off.
They want to hear it from the start.
This issue is similarly faced by films,
but not by any static/non-linear time based
forms.

Comment, Many
can enter
a film at
once, headphones
restrict this

Solutions?: for linear works which have a
start and an end, introduce a
way to restart the loop.

or: focus on creating non-linear works
in which the point of entry is
meaningless, or the variability is
part of the concept.

Final Project Presentation notes

Description
Method
Context
Interpreting

Sound works

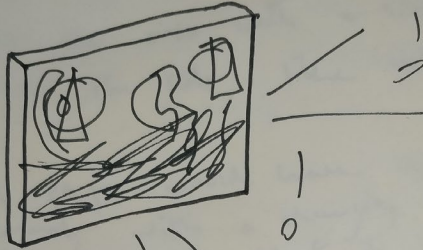
- Physical version of Turntable Piece
- Telephone Music - Input + output! (En/out)
- Possibly something involving piano/oboe/phon - live specific

Overview - Exhibition/Environment for my expression
- A celebration of my various
artistic endeavours thru the 3 yrs
• Explain multiple art forms link
to total art (why i like it) and
how this creates an environment

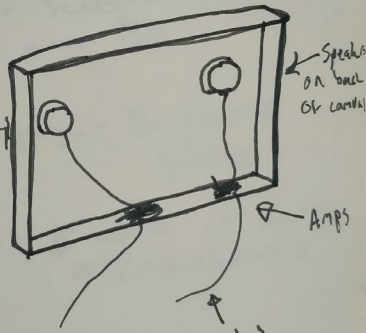
How
explain different sound works with examples

Use first thing I wrote
for Holger

Speaker + Sounding Paintings



Sounds come from behind the canvas the painting themselves sound!



Multiple small speakers can be used to make different areas of the painting sound differently.

Either on the back of the painting?

Whose the

Whose the

230
154

140

Bird House



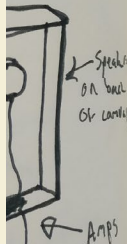
Speaker in the
bird house,
Playing bird sounds
out into the space

Either
on stand
or on a
pedestal table

Card also play other sounds,
recorded from the
balcony. - Possibly whole
day from
recording

Computer
affects
the audio

* Wife speaker to headset
switch so is only
active when picked up.



Speaker
on back
or control

amps

Whose
there?

ble's
running
to
inverter

Whos
There?

5 attached
audio plays
back out to
the listener



4 audio
cords
back in
2 audio
ports
in
computer

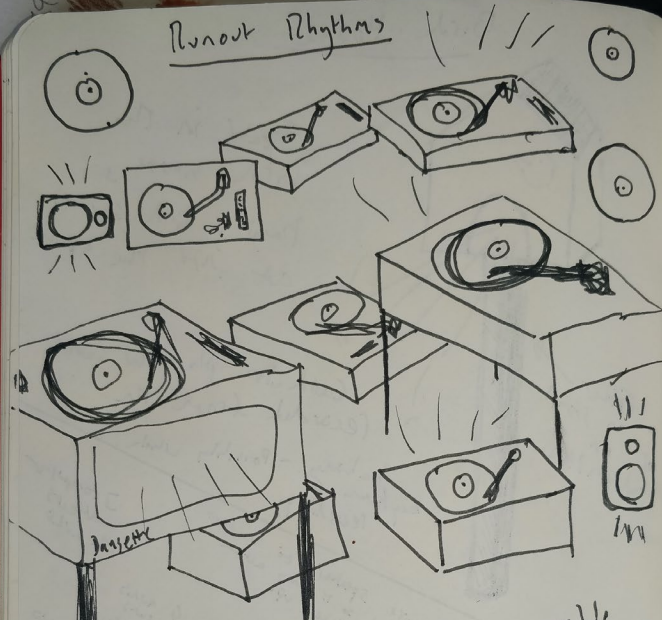
Who's
THERE?

listener
speaks into
tele phone

0,1,2

amp

Record Rhythms



As many record players as possible,
each with slightly altered ~~by~~
play speeds. They all would be
left playing the same or given at
a record, and together they would
create a frenzy or rhythmic
loop which phase in and out and
all around.



007



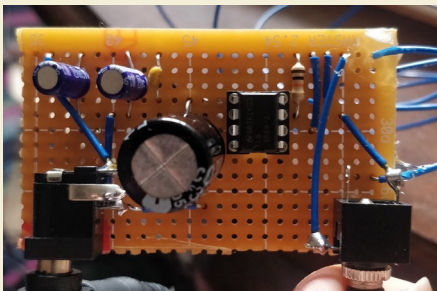
ossible,
By
d be
at
y wheel
Piano
out and

PIANO

Winter/Spring 2021

Around this stage I started to really focus on the project, as other modules were coming to an end and the final project became my final remaining piece of work. At this stage I had settled on my four main sound works for the room, being the sound painting, the telephone, the turntables, and (what was still at this stage) the birdhouse. While the exact roles of each work within the overall space were still somewhat undetermined, I already had a pretty clear idea of the mechanisms by which each individual piece would work, and the concepts for each were pretty well thought out in my head. Whilst I wasn't physically in the space yet, I was also starting to consider more how the overall piece would work conceptually and technically.

I knew that the sound painting and (at that time) the bird house would both need really small speakers to fit inside them, so this was the first thing I began work on. I found a circuit design for a compact LM386 chip amp which could power a very small and thin 8 Ohm speaker that could sit inside the painting just behind the canvas. This circuit was very simple to build and the breadboarded prototype worked immediately. This part of the project actually proved to be one of the least troubling, with the only problem I really faced being the first soldered version of the circuit, which failed due to a mistake I made when designing the layout of the circuit. When installed into the painting it sounded exactly as I had hoped, and the only real change to the system after this point was adding extra amps and speakers such that I could send multiple signals into the painting.



click for video of painting (March 2021)

22 Mar 2021, 10:17:00

I do not intent to use any harmony or tonal recordings, as these would clash with each other in the space

2 MARCH

final project

22 Mar 2021, 10:17:05

using my sound objects to animate a room with sound to create an environment which does not have perceptual bias, therefore the sound element is more powerful.

painting, inspired by outsider art in that I am untrained and find it inspiring; depiction with childlike simplicity, landscape with nature.

phone, object of curiosity; to answer that object produces sound, which satisfies the curiosity in turn. unforced interaction in art (links to my frustrations expressed in max neuhaus essay)

turntables create an ever evolving sound element thru the phasing, this deepens the overall sound environment in its transience

the birdhouse is almost a window of some kind? not quite sure yet.

Maybe the birdhouse should not be a birdhouse. it is a sculpture with the same speaker set up, which takes original inspiration from the swift box. the basis for the sound in this object is the construction sounds (human swift), but that will no doubt develop. Cardboard and painted? Could be quite large. This could take inspiration from human things, architecture, design? To mirror the sound. OR it could be a big house painted in the same manner as the rest, to play on the swift box thing.

2 MARCH

final project

22 Mar 2021, 10:16:55

each element of the room is synchronised. each represents SOMETHING, to its core, eg the painting as naive childish etc. as the overall room work shifts through different places, the different works uphold these representations.

they're almost like characters performing a play or something. as the mood shifts they play their roles in the moods accordingly. the turntables are unchanging, and yet they are the one aspect of the work which will never repeat itself due to its gradually shifting nature

this opens the work up to possible harmonic sections, as these will be synchronised, so i can plan any harmony/dischordance etc.

it is essentially the best way to sonify various objects which i had/would have created regardless, integrating all aspects of my practice into one continuous experience/installation.

perhaps the telephone is not a live audio interface but it simply plays a recorded speech track. this track would also be synchronised with the others, perhaps giving greater clarity to them, revealing some deeper conceptual meaning. this is almost like the audio guides you get in museums and galleries.

god i never even thought about that, galleries will let you put on headphones to hear about the art, this is how essentially unessential sound is in the modern gallery, it can be spoken over to explain to the audience whats really happening.

the phone fulfills this role nicely, as leans into the concept of mystery of the telephone, when the person answers, they get a conceptual answer to the space, an explanation.

3 MARCH

final project

22 Mar 2021, 10:16:44

one thing is a scene, the others are the definers, or signifiers which colour the scene in some way. The final resulting sound environment is a game of chance. It may sound wonderful, things may come together and sing, or it may clash and appear unpleasant, these are all facts of life and it's a chance I'll take. what may be prudent is to record the installation and produce a record à la music promenade which gathers a short selection of the best combinations.

the painting represents the scenes. just as my painting depicts a simplistic version of a landscape, the audio represents simplistic depictions of scenes, scenes from my life. these are entirely unharmonic and unrhythmic, at least in terms of patterns of rhythm or harmony. Of course things like conversation or cooking have inherent melody and rhythm, but it is random and imprecise, and as such will not interfere with any harmony and rhythm in the definer audio, which is then free to be anything, from more abstraction to pure music, and here is where a large amount of material must be produced to enhance the various scenes from my life.

i love the idea that the phasing randomness runs down through the layers of the work, like a fractal; on the outermost level the various individual sound elements live in the space would be indeterminately shifting and combining in new ways constantly and forever. on the next level, the works as individual works could also embody this. the turntables already achieve this as a randomly looping phase piece. In the other works this would have to go a level deeper. in the various pieces used for the other works, the 'signifiers', individual sections could be created using this technique. and then to go another layer, the elements used to produce these sections could have also been created with the phasing technique, slowly building up layers of random looping going (perceptually) infinitely.

the telephone work must also embody this somehow. randomness in the effects used? but its not RANDOMNESS, its just iterations on the themes of the various looping things, combining in new ways. so different effects are created, and then combined in random ways? or there is another sound work inside the phone which somehow embodies it? i'm not sure yet

robert turman, flux

8 MARCH

final project

9 Mar 2021, 11:34:00

upon researching luc ferrari, i have realised that this work that initially inspired my style and direction for the project originated from an installation with a near identical concept to my own, a concept i came up with seemingly independently of the luc ferrari record

8th march

final project

22 Mar 2021, 10:16:37

I was watching a video discussing heating up chips too much when soldering and then exploding, and I had the strangest sense that I had done that exact thing before, and it was really important, when the chips exploded, but then it went away. Like de ja vu but, like more intense and important

10 MARCH

final project

This was a dream that I had. At the time I tagged it with 'final project' so I must have felt it related in some way which is why I have included it.

22 Mar 2021, 10:16:32

using the noise of the failed amp i have managed to create quite a nice bird sound very easily, so i think with some work i can make a good bird soundscape. this will play out of one speaker in the painting to represent birds and fauna in general. I will also attempt to create one or two more elements to the soundscape using the sounds of the broken amp, in essence the audio evidence of the failed parts of the project become the material for the project itself. the bird speaker will be somewhere in the sky, there could be another speaker in the ground, perhaps with some kind of rumbling or something. there should also be a third speaker, either behind the black sun or the ike-design, and this audio would represent whichever it was behind.

i could even create a max patch which plays each individual aspect separately and looping, but they'd be different lengths so each would be playing independently of another. this would feed into the fractal of phasing work that i have previously considered and written about, and would mean that the painting itself would be in a constant state of new soundscapes being created.

basically i create a bird track, a ground track etc, and then these different environmental elements shift around with eachother.

to achieve this i will really have to design a circuit with three amps in one using the same power supply, shouldn't be hard.

so: we curntelty have the painting working with a single audio source but multiple speakers. the next stage is to set it up to run multiple sound sources at a time. in this new circuit i may plan for the amp itself to be inside the painting too, which would mean laying the large capacitor down on its side. this would take up more circuit space, but nothing too crazy and it should still fit in fine.

I also need to work on more paintings really, so that by april i will have at least one i'm really happy with.

If the painting only required two speakers i could easily set up two amps taking from the left and right of a single cable, essentially giving me a 'stereo' set up in the painting, though i may need more than two. Could try it as a test though.

15 MARCH

final project

22 Mar 2021, 10:16:24

for part of the painting i can make my water symphony!! and the parts of the painting could be inspired by the elements somewhat, gives me a chance to talk about smile. Completing brians unfinished idea of creating a symphony purely out of natural water sounds, somewhat achieved in cool cool water but not in the way i believe he envisioned. i'd like to go to a lake and stream.

18 MARCH

final project

At this time, I believe on the 22nd March, I began to move my things into the studio and spend most days working there on the project. Although only the painting was done, I was soon able to move in the first turntable and set up another speaker, so I could hear multiple works simultaneously and begin testing how they would interact in the space. As a result, my ideas on how the pieces and room worked in relation to each other started to solidify, and the final concept of each piece being completely randomised started to form.



Click image for video showing the room at this stage (March 22nd)

22 Mar 2021, 10:16:16

i suppose one of the main focuses is the curation of space, but it's really the unconscious curation of space that is important to me. i could spend three days trying to arrange a room as though it was my honest arrangement, but it would pale in comparison to a room in which i have spent an extended period of time, slowly arranging the room as and when it is necessary in my experience of using the space. This results in a far more honest, real, logical, and expressive curation, just as it does in the spaces i live my day to day life in.

22 MARCH

final project

26 Mar 2021, 18:36:27

there is kinda a link between the telephone and the turntables, the ringing telephone idea is pretty similar to the runout groove, it's a signal to take the record off but it's being ignored. Because of the way art is viewed I doubt anyone would actually lift the needle, although I hope that people decide to pick up the telephone. Perhaps I still make use of the gallery labels to indicate that it is something with a sound element.

final project

26 Mar 2021, 18:36:27

so if the painting sound uses all my natural sounds unedited, as they are there, a simplistic impression of an environment, the sculpture could use all of these same sounds but affected in as many ways as I'd like. This links the two projects, I always wanted one (the painting) to represent nature while the other (the sculpture) would represent the city, I guess the human made world. If the sculpture sound also just uses the same nature recordings but reconstructed, it almost works as a comment on how all this human built world IS just the natural world reconstructed, which, while not inherently 'unnatural', does make it appear as so to some people. My sound is not unnatural as such, but it reconstructs nature into a new nature that would appear to many unnatural. Every good room needs a ying and a yang

so, currently my painting sound is shaping up to have 3 speakers.

11:45pm 24 march

final project

The next piece I worked on was the telephone. Initially I made the phone work by connecting an audio input and output directly to the phone's circuitry where the signal is sent and received to and from the handset. This worked for the speaker, yet the microphone was not functional, and the sound was somewhat lacking. I realised that this was due to the bypassing of the phone's circuitry, which meant that the speaker didn't have the right 'phone sound', and the microphone wasn't getting powered, therefore it wasn't monitoring through the headset. I eventually overcame this problem by changing my approach, instead using an external circuit which simulated a telephone line. I had some problems getting all the components needed for this circuit, however once acquired it was relatively easy to put together and worked first time. For one reason or another this circuit wasn't functional with the phone I originally intended to use, meaning I had to find another to replace it.



Click image for video of the phone speaker working at this stage



30 Mar 2021, 23:12:31

my sound is not supposed to be the 'main' element of the space just as I believe in most art visuals should not be the main element of the space. Sound art combines sound with spatial elements, and I am doing exactly this, sonifying various objects in a space such that each of these objects exist just as much as sound elements as they do visual elements. By doing this, hopefully, the viewer loses this perceptual bias towards visuals and begins to pay more attention to the sound, without even necessarily realising that they are, they simply begin to pay attention to all elements equally.

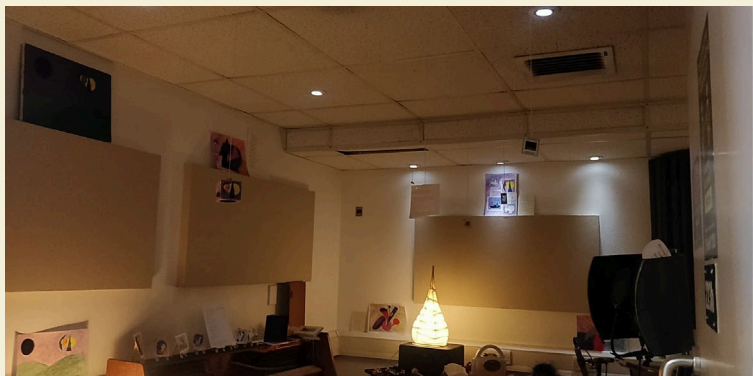
29th march

final project

In the week leading up to the start of April I brought in a lot more things, this time mainly personal objects as opposed to things I was specifically working with at the time. This included paintings, books, pieces of writing, anything I had in my bedroom which I felt would begin to make the room feel more like myself. Also what proved quite significant was the introduction of lamps to the space, which did a huge amount for the feel of the room. Though still clearly a recording studio, it started to recall myself and my own feelings of home and comfort. This was the point at which I began to get a clear vision of how the final work would turn out, visually. Not in a specific sense necessarily, but in a refinement of the broader image I could already see, slowly being whittled down as things moved from imagination to reality in the space.



Click image for short video of room in early April





17 Apr 2021, 17:21:14

okay, so I've just set up the turntables properly, only two so far, but they've opened up the project entirely. Whilst the sound in the painting remains nature sounds, the sound from the sculpture will be taken from recordings of my essentially DJing with the turntables, mainly using sound effects records and suburban serenade. I just recorded my first (zoom65) with wonderful results, and so with many recordings of my playing like this I believe I will have ample material, the sound of the 'sculpture' will be the literal result of my use of the space. And so, the turntables playing the runout groove represent my time having come to an end, the records are over, the installation/residency is done. And yet the fruits of it continue to play out of the sculpture, which will perhaps be a cardboard turntable made by myself? painted and everything. A recreation of what really took place in every form, physically and aurally.

This solves the sculpture for me, which was up til now kind of formless and meaningless, it was there just because and it was waiting for a concept, which I believe this is. Whilst before I did have the nature/human concept for the painting and sculpture, I do not believe this is fully lost, as with the various sound effects records many are field records/nature sounds, but unlike the painting I will be messing with them, playing with the speed and combining them with other disparate things. So it still relates to the painting in its original way, but now it lends meaning to the turntable, linking all three together. The phone remains an odd one out, but I think I like it in that role, it's the mystery, and the answer is a phone line symphony

final project

17 Apr 2021, 17:21:14

I've had lots of ideas for each part of the project, but one of the sole consistencies thru all are the desire to make use of the process in the final sound, to have the process of creating elements of the installation instilled in the sound of the works.

at one stage I wanted to use a failed version of the amp I had made, which created crazy power supply hum sounds, in the sound for the project which used the amplifier.

Now I'm using the sound which has come out of testing the turntable piece, and in doing so I have given new significance and meaning TO the turntable piece

final project

17 Apr 2021, 17:21:14

the transience of a train journey, you get the most incredible individual sights and moments, but they pass by so quickly that you can barely appreciate them, let alone capture them. I suppose this is why I like the idea of an ever evolving piece, with so many unsynchronized elements that one specific combination would never repeat, whilst some moments may sound dull, or even bad, the most incredible things would be conjured up fleetingly, then would pass by, if you were lucky enough to experience it then you were lucky enough to experience it. I try to take images of landscapes on my phone, yes by the time I take the picture the landscape has again changed, or a line of trees has blocked the view, yet i still saw this view, it really happened for just a moment. This is what I want to happen in my installation, beautiful moments of happenstance which can't be recreated, it's a lucky dip of experience.

final project

7 May 2021, 17:23:23

in essence the painting is not so much about nature anymore, but a simplistic depiction of my real life, recordings I have made that capture real things.
The painting must also represent this somehow

the room (speaker sculpture) presents a record of myx purposefully artful actions in the studio.

final project

2 May 2021, 17:53:57

I believe I will have another telephone playing songs that I have made thru the course, the phones answer a question, they are portals, in this case they to my world outside of the course. I always made a point to keep my pop music out of my course work, I wanted to use the course as an opportunity to split out my more experimental desires and my more pop-based desires. While both admittedly bled into each other at points, I believe thru my course experience I managed to distill two distinct styles. While the installation as a whole is a representation of my sound art, and more broadly art as a whole, I felt it important to include a window into this other part of myself, integrally linked to the rest by nature.

final project

3 May 2021, 15:07:32

mal said that they are practice modules for a reason, they are practices for the fianl project. this made me wanna revisit some earlier ideas and include traces of them, which manifested themselves in the turntables, the slides around the room, and the piano speaker.

final project

Diary Endnote

This project diary could in many ways be seen as showing a messy project, the concepts jumped around frequently through their development, and some didn't come together until the very last minute. This though is an honest impression of how I got the installation to its 'final' state. I never wanted or expected myself to have a clear idea of what I was doing, through the project I knew I had to trust both myself and the process, as this was essential for the installation to be an honest representation of myself, which was of the utmost importance to me. This may be somewhat indicative of my work ethic in general, but I think for this project it wasn't just a symptom of myself, but a part of the project. I guess if the project is meant to reflect me, then it makes sense that it would be unorganised and last minute, the project mirrored me almost too well. Maybe I'm anthropomorphising a concept too heavily here though, of course the project mirrors me because every aspect of it came from me. This is probably true of most projects, but I'm glad I was able to actively explore the idea here.

Anyway, I've gone on a tangent, but overall, I guess I'd just like to note that I am rather happy with my project, as much as I can be. Ideally, I'd carry on this project for years, forever, but as a snapshot of myself at this point in time, it satisfies me. I hope that this diary gives some insight into how the work was developed, and how I felt about the work through this process. And most importantly, I hope you like the work itself.

ike