

sound mapping

these are the sounds I have recorded all mashed together with a few additional contrasting sounds

I have been enjoying jarring, abrasive sounds, and contrasting sounds, and muddying, obscuring sounds. I have found it interesting how Schafer's research places value judgements on different sounds, and how that links to research on accent I have read, how aesthetic judgements are more strongly linked to associations with the region the accent comes from than being purely aesthetic. To take that angle it is arguable that some sounds are judged more on negative associations with their source. The sounds of a noisy city are functional sounds of work and transport, with proleterian connotations.

additionally, making note of our conversation in tutorial, how success in a city is associated with sounds NOT of the city – nature in parks, not being able to hear your neighbours or the street. The house I live in, the plumbing has issues and makes lots of noise, and you can always hear people shouting or stamping about. it is interesting which sounds are romanticised and which are considered vulgar – why is hearing your neighbours not a comforting and familiar reminder of human presence

it is also interesting how we choose to control sound and experience – sound proofing, parks as zones of natural sound, noise cancelling earphones. how sound is controlled and used functionally – alarms to wake you from slumber, or to remind you to check the oven

I have been exploring pure sound, and the mental environments it creates, and how editing it changes the mental environments. The rhythm, contrast, pacing, pitch, volume all working to create pictures in the brain, when you are not

given something to look at, what images do you create purely from a sound stimulus. I have used the sound from one of my previous outcomes, which contains a lot of repetitive stabbing noises, and the sounds of activity, and doing things. The second track is from the soundwalk, and contains more passive ambient sounds.

These are both doctored recordings of real sound, with the intention of provoking different mental simulations. To further this idea, I have been exploring synthesised sound. My flatmate Charlie loves his video games, in which sound is a key component in creating a convincing and immersive experience. I have recorded and slightly adulterated an audio clip of one of his recent games, and put it in series with the other three audio tracks. This series aims to take the listener through the realms of active, man made sound, natural ambient sound, and synthetic man made sound that aims to replicate natural ambient sound, all being edited to subvert elements of their original context and associations.

By way of a more resolved piece of work, following the line of thought about invasive and undesirable sounds, I filmed some training of the University weightlifting team, and then exported it as a sound file and cut it to the peaks on the waveform, and adulterated it slightly on audacity. This gives a supercut of all the clattering and banging and scraping sounds that are jarring to the ear, and a natural byproduct of activity.