

24 Sleepwalker Archives

Vol.3: Sound as a Distorter of Reality

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https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/s2658490_curating-2024-2025sem2/wp-content/uploads/sites/11170/2025/03/4.m4a

The third activity is a 5-day continuous activity, we will be divided into two groups of activities, through the form of “recording – playback – recording – playback” to build a multi-level sound superposition formed by the “real sound field”. The central question Sleepwalkers hopes to discuss through this event is “when technology is no longer a limitation, how do we face the reality of being mixed?” .

Each day, one participant in the group would use a recording device to continuously record the sounds around him (including the sounds he made) for one minute, and four participants in addition to the first participant would play the previous participant’s recording at the same time, and repeat the operation for five days to get the final audio.

In this activity, I no longer simply listen to the sound, but participate in the generation and distortion of the sound. The five of us would talk to each other and guess the source of the sound in the audio, and after several days of mixing and recording, the sound in the audio became indistinguishable. The first person’s clear recording of the wind around him as he walked along the road, the sounds of leaves rubbing against each other, and the sounds of cars moving on the road were gradually blurred, mixed with the sounds from the kitchen, the park, and other environments. Even though I was involved in the generation of this audio, I can no longer identify the sounds coming from me. I came to understand the central issue

of the event. Can a sound be defined as real when it is superimposed? If so, where does its sense of reality come from? Take the audio we generated for example. If I think it's real, then maybe it gets its authenticity from the sound of a car horn, or some birds. But I don't think the audio can still be called "real," even though the clips it contains are all real.

We often say that "hearing is false", and the real sound can be sampled, played back, edited and synthesized indefinitely. Is the so-called "auditory memory" sometimes just an individual's highly selective acceptance of the sound of the external environment, and then reconstruction of the heard sound according to the facts that he believes?