

SONIC REBELLIONS

SOUND & SOCIAL JUSTICE

20 22



abstracts & agenda

27 & 28 MAY | UNIVERSITY OF BRIGHTON

A two-day conference including panels & workshops

★
University of Brighton

Centre for Applied
Philosophy, Politics
and Ethics

Wanda Canton

BRIGHTON
FRINGE.

Lowkey

Welcome, Sonic Rebels!

This conference was born of my ongoing thoughts on disruption. In the academy, in social research, in society generally. I have found myself conceptualising major events in the context of sound. The silence of COVID lockdowns. The chants of the Black Lives Matter movement and the repetition of the final words of those who can no longer speak. The changing sounds of our cities and environments and the endless attempts to police who can and cannot be heard.

Sonic Rebellions is supported by the Centre for Applied Philosophy, Politics and Ethics (CAPPE) and I am grateful for the collaboration. CAPPE is a vibrant research enterprise at the University of Brighton, organising a variety of events, a post-graduate led journal, and a weekly reading group. CAPPE continues to build its links all over the world, welcoming international scholars and supporting the career developments of early researchers.

A huge thank you to all the contributors to this conference, without whom this would not be possible. They have been generous with sharing their ideas, time and patience whilst the conference was pulled together, in multiple time zones!

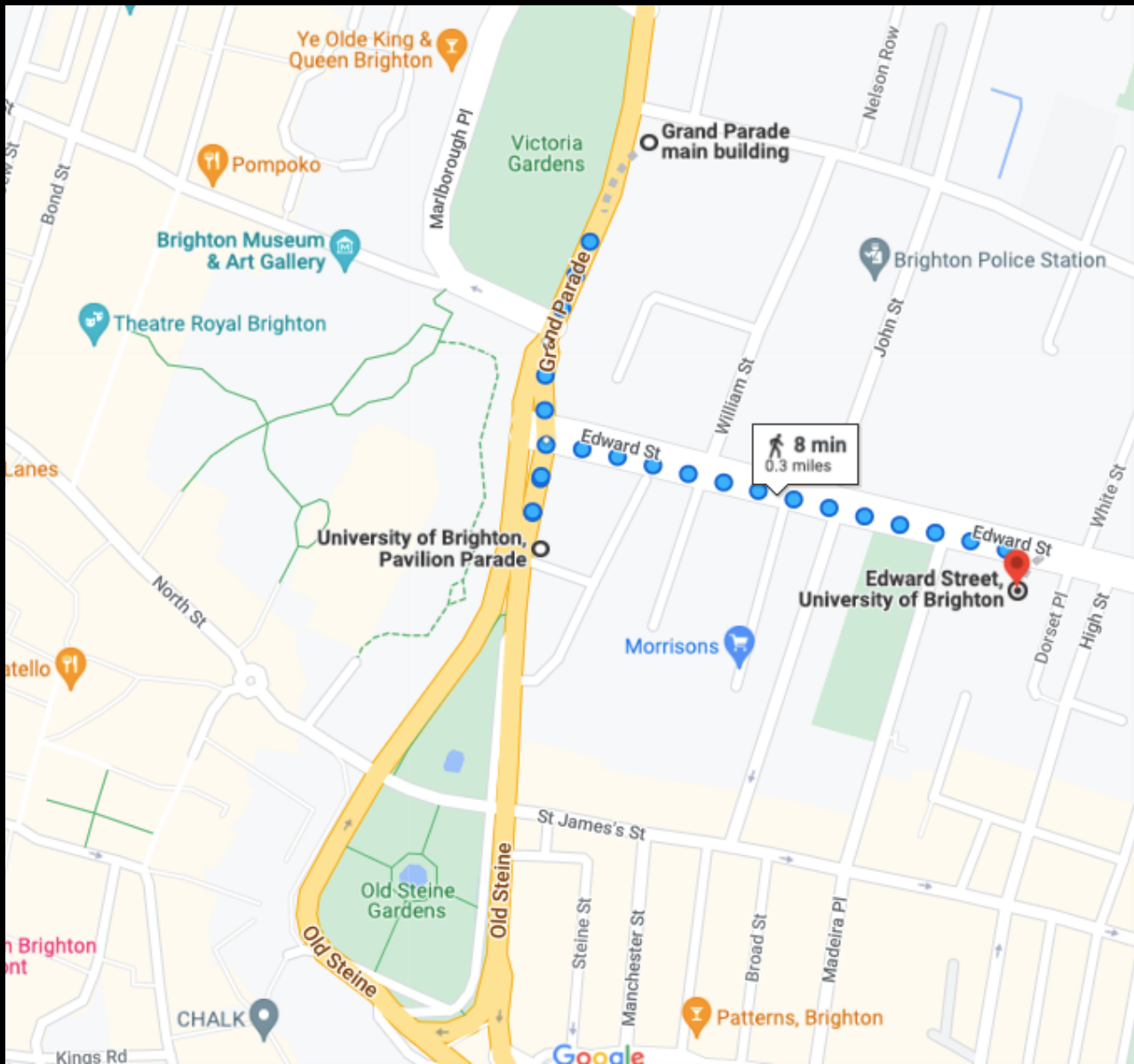
In this document you will find the agenda for the conference, the abstracts of contributors and their email addresses should you wish to send fan mail.

It is my hope that this is only the beginning, a starting point for more collaborations and discussions in the future. So, I have created a JISC Mailing List which you are welcome to join to keep up to date with the *Sonic Rebellions* journey:
jiscmail.ac.uk/sonicrebellions

In the meantime, I hope you enjoy the conference, wherever you are in the world and whatever your connection to sound and social justice.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Wanda Canton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'W'.



Sallis Benney Lecture Theatre is in the Grand Parade building, University of Brighton, 58-67 Grand Parade, Brighton BN2 0JY

Grand Parade M2 is on the second floor (accessible via lift or stairs) University of Brighton, 58-67 Grand Parade, Brighton BN2 0JY

Pavilion Parade G7 is on the first floor (some steps, side entrance access only) 10-11 Pavilion Parade, Brighton, BN2 1RA

Edward Street 309 is on the top floor (small lift or stairs) 154-155 Edward St, Brighton BN2 0JG

Arriving

Due to limited capacity and health and safety, sessions will be based on first come first served basis.

Please check the time and location for registration. We strongly encourage you to arrive on time to ensure you don't miss out on your preference of sessions and have time to get familiar with the room locations. Speakers with asterisks indicates a workshop following.**

Credits

Conference programme design & production: Wanda Canton
 Photo p1: Lambros Fatsis
 Photo p5: Zettie Venter
 Photo p6: Celeste Cantor-Stephens
 Photo p11: Richard Hughes



Refreshments & Facilities

An all vegetarian/vegan lunch will be provided. This will be served during an hour long lunch break.

There are gender neutral toilets in the Grand Parade building. There are also free water points.

Covid

Please pay attention to Covid guidelines, closer to the time. We encourage attendees to take a test before arriving, and not to attend if you are unwell. We are pleased to be able to host an in-person event and we want to ensure we keep each other safe and comfortable.

Recording

Please be aware that filming, photography and audio recording may be happening throughout the conference to capture the event. Please speak to the photographer/s if you have particular concerns about this.

Hybrid sessions which include one or more speakers joining online are marked on the timetable.

Joining Online

Details TBC

Friday 27th May

**Grand Parade
Sallis Benney**

**Grand Parade
M2**

**Pavilion Parade
G7**

10:00 Registration

**** workshop to follow
i interactive/workshop**

T online/hybrid

11:00-12:00

**Soundsystem Culture
as Black Radical
Epistemology**

p.1

Health

p.2

12:15-13:15

Songs of Freedom

p.3

After Loss**

p.4

**Community &
Inclusion**

p.5

Lunch

14:15-15:15

**Border Spaces &
Sounds of Resistance**

p.6

Democratic Voices

p.7

**Dislocations &
Screams**

p.8

15:30-16:30

**DMSA
New Works**

p.9

Rap

p.10

Music Interrupted

p.11

Saturday 28th May

**Edward Street
309**

09:00 Registration

10:00-10:30

Bristol Hum



p.12

T online/hybrid

** workshop to follow

i interactive/workshop

**Pavilion Parade
G7**

10:30-11:30

Listening**

p.13

Breaks & Ruptures



p.14

11:45-12:45

DIY Anarchy

p.15

**Gentrification Sound
Walk
(off site)**



p.16

Lunch

13:45-14:45

Remembering Sound



p.17

Queering



p.18

15:00-16:00

**Keynote:
Lowkey**

p.19

**After party
Deets coming soon!**

Soundsystem Culture as Black Radical Epistemology

LAMBROS FATSIS

l.fatsis@brighton.ac.uk

In the aftermath of the 2020 #BlackLivesMatter protests, opposition to the violent afterlives of colonialism, the harms of global racial capitalism and the need for radical social change became mainstream. Calls to decolonise ways of thinking about, being in and knowing the social world followed suit – accompanied by pledges to dethrone ideologies, institutions and structures that (re)produce white supremacy. Laudable though they are, such declarations of war against ‘Euromodern’ (Gordon, 2017) mode(l)s of intellectual, scholarly and public life are often conceived in and expressed through the very traditions of thought that are critiqued. Drawing on Black or Afro-diasporic music as radical, decolonial thought in sound, this paper encourages a different approach to scholarship and public social life. Attuning us to soundsystem culture as a ‘rebellion [...] sited in culture’ (Wynter, n.d.:4 11-2), the distinctive bass-heavy and polyrhythmic sonic architecture of reggae soundsystems will be likened to a ‘great revolution of ideas’ (Carpentier, 2001: 29) that is capable of reshaping how we produce, experience and share knowledge, thought and social life in a different and exciting register.

Friday 27th May
Sallis Benney
Lecture Theatre
11:00



Health

MERSHEN PILLAY

m.pillay@massey.ac.nz

Socio-Sonic Hearing Healthcare

Sound, hearing, and (dis)ability intersect with capitalism in mining, manufacturing, construction, and other occupational sectors. Positioned as noise, employers manage sound via hearing healthcare programmes. These programmes comply with occupational health and safety legislation. Occupational health laws rarely recognise informal sector workers like street market traders. Hearing vulnerabilities and resilience goes beyond only sound, interfacing a quagmire of ototoxic agents like vehicle fumes (carbon dioxide) as part of human multisensory interactions. These complexities are intertwined with how sound (music, urban 'noise', etc.) is referenced to control workers and the environment. South African music street traders serve as a case to illuminate the onto-epistemological axes of healthcare knowledge about workers' ears, hearing, and sound. Importantly, hearing health care professionals (like Audiologists) engage the science of Empire to position 'sound' as 'noise', manufacturing occupational and social injustices. Using a decolonising, critical science several theoretical-methodological aspects are presented that (i) humanise sound mapping of urban soundscapes; (ii) address health care equity of workers' communication (speech/hearing), and (iii) reclaim 'sound' within hearing healthcare professions. Music and street traders' livelihoods serve to theoretically (and methodologically) position global worker-employer/state-citizen relations in what is positioned as socio-sonic hearing healthcare.

ISAC IONUȚ

ionut.isac@academia-cj.ro

Is it the Sound of the Voice of Guilt? „We cannot do it any more...!": Anonymous medical Confessions during the SARS-COV2 Pandemic in Romania

Perhaps one of the most striking messages suggesting an anomaly in the management system of the pandemic was the confession of several Romanian doctors and nurses: „We cannot do it any more...!” - meaning to kill their SARS-COV2 hospitalized patients, as they further disclosed. Their emotional distress messages, fragmented now and then by outbursts of moans and crying, were broadcast at national televisions, thus inciting a large collective feeling of irritation and indignation. In our opinion, those helpless calls coming from the anonymity of specialists held responsible for protecting our lives composed the strange sound that broke out throughout the big noisy official propaganda, in whose terms everything was going according to plan. The first reaction of the authorities was to strongly reject the verisimilitude of such messages of despair; subsequently, to inflict punishments on those who launched them. According to our knowledge, no serious investigation of the case has been made until today. This induces reasonable doubt, in order to make a pleading for moral justice, both for some who found the strength to confess what they allegedly did by compulsion as well as for those who passed away in silence, unable to determine the others' guilt.

Songs of Freedom: Collaborative Digital Mixtaping as a Radical Social Practice of Solidarity, Care and Rebellion

RÉMY-PAULIN TWAHIRWA

R.Twahirwa@lse.ac.uk

In the age of social media, music listening platforms like Spotify or Apple Music, the art of the mixtape has been reduced to the random and eclectic arrangement of the playlist. Yet for those who have experienced the age of the cassette, the mixtape represented an artefact conceived in the spirit of solidarity, care and rebellion against the capitalist music industry. It was an art of sabotage, evasion and imagination of an 'album' that wouldn't exist without the mixtape artist.

On 21 February 2022, two University and College Union(UCU) strikers, Shaimaa Abdelkarim (Law, UCU Birmingham) and Rémy-Paulin Twahirwa (Sociology, UCU LSE) invited comrades, colleagues, and the general public to join in an online teach-out titled, 'Songs of Freedom: A teach-out'. Prior to the session, the two co-facilitators invited people to add songs that inspire their practices of freedom, strike and rebellion to a collaborative playlist. During the teach-out, participants discussed their 'songs of freedom' by questioning how those songs relate to past, present and future scenes of rebellion. The collaborative playlist (songs of freedom) was then shared on Twitter for other strikers to use during their actions—enacting a sense of support and solidarity that crosses time, space and language. In this workshop, participants will reflect collectively on the tools used during this teach-out (Spotify, Jamboard and Zoom), their radical potential, and how centring sounds, soundmakers and collaborative soundmaking (or collaborative digital mixtaping, in this case), and groove and dance can help bridge sociologies from both the margins and the centre by decentring knowledge that reflects a certain form of fetishization of data, number, graphs and figures that disciplines our knowledge (McKittrick, 2021) and radical imagination.

In this workshop, participants will be invited to collaboratively create a mixtape that will speak about their dreams/projects of freedom, solidarity, and rebellion. The 'finished' mixtape will be considered an 'artefact' that articulates visions of liberation for and with participants. Participants are asked to bring their headphones for a 'creative writing' activity, where they will engage with the artefact to reflect (individually and collectively) on the question: "How does freedom sound to you?".



After loss**

TAHERA AZIZ

azizta@lsbu.ac.uk

Immersive Audio Storytelling: Countering Racism through Stephen Lawrence's Story

The murder of George Floyd by police officer Derek Chauvin and the Black Lives Matter protests that erupted on the streets globally have highlighted the issue of police brutality and racial injustice in the USA. While George Floyd's murder coalesced awareness of structural racism, the Stephen Lawrence case and official public inquiry into the police handling of his murder (Macpherson Report, 1999), marked a watershed in race relations in Britain, foregrounding institutional racism. This paper explores the potential of Stephen Lawrence's story, revisited through immersive audio, to engage audiences with the complex issue of racism and stimulate dialogue about tackling racial inequality. It interrogates the capacity of sound to offer alternative perspectives on the media and socio-political debates associated with the case, and to give a wider context for understanding racism as it is experienced today. Focusing on the artwork [re]locate*, the paper reflects on the interplay between the conceptual framework underpinning the artwork, the approach to creating the immersive story, and the use of specific sound recording and spatial compositional techniques in its unique design. Drawing on audience feedback on their experience of the artwork, it considers the role that art and audio storytelling can play in challenging contemporary racism and effecting social change.

*[re]locate is an immersive multi-speaker audio installation derived from earlier AHRC-funded research, and created with funding from the Arts Council of England. The installation places audience members at the bus stop on the night of Stephen's murder, recounting events from a number of different perspectives.

EDWARD MARTIN

E.j.martin@sms.ed.ac.uk

Music, Interrupted - A Sonification Approach to Communicating Loss

Many emotive data sets communicate narratives of loss, such as human-caused biodiversity collapse. Communicating data around these narratives is important, as behavioural change is required for positive change. However, scientific data often fails to emotionally engage, precluding action to redress these issues. Sound is vividly emotional - familiar popular music possesses powerful emotional connections for many people. Sonification (the representation of data using sound) can engage audiences with data in different and surprising ways compared to more traditional visualisation. Here, a new sonification method is proposed by which the emotive power of familiar popular music can be leveraged to communicate narratives of loss. Though the example data set deals with human-caused biodiversity collapse, the method is easily generalisable to similar data sets with narratives of loss to create emotionally engaging data sonifications.

Community & Inclusion

JULIA ECKHARDT

Julia.Eckhardt@vub.ac.be

What is Good Music? Judgement between uniqueness and multitude

Quality is a powerful term in the musical field that creates exclusion via binary ideas of 'good' vs 'bad'. Its authority is anchored in the unclear definition of its parameters, which are implicit and changing, forcing music into a framework of assessment which is associated to the visual. Here arises a paradox, because this framework is not congruent to the primarily corporeal, emotive, and transient agency of music. In recent years serious efforts have been made to make the musical field more inclusive, but is still using a binary model of quality assessment. My research aims to replace this model, and ground quality assessment in a model of uniqueness within the multitude, rather than assuming binary opposites. This idea draws from the political philosophy of Hannah Arendt, and feminist thinkers who build on her notions of unicity, natality, communality, the spectators and politics, primarily Adriana Cavarero, Chiara Bottici and Lauren Fournier. This talk starts from a musical work in which women spontaneously put in words why specific musics speak to them. I'm picking up certain keywords and link them to listening practices and connected social function of musical styles.

ZETTIE VENTER

VenterEP@ufs.ac.za

Community djembe drumming to explore pedagogical refrain in science education.

As a science educator interested in arts-based methods in research, I believe that educators and educational researchers alike should engage with pedagogy as transformative practice. Djembe community drumming circles, as collaborative arts-based method of research, gifts us with tools to explore micro-social occurrences and correspondingly deepen our collaborative understanding regarding more complex issues such as inclusivity and social justice. By practising djembe drumming as a community, we allow ourselves to access situated subjective somatic knowledges and correspondingly better relate to ourselves, one another as well as the more-than-human. Adopting the post-qualitative perspective in research, I am curious to find novel ways of knowing. As such I noticed that the ideas of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari can be used as tools to, through arts-based methods, further explore and describe novel ways of knowing. I am specifically curious about the idea of refrain and how this idea, translated by djembe community drumming circles and entangled with other arts-based methods, may deepen our collaborative understanding of teaching and learning in science. Our awareness may deepen to find pedagogical refrain in science, connecting knowledges different from what we imagined - immeasurable qualitative patterns of purposeful relations towards inclusivity and social justice.

Border Spaces & Sounds of Resistance

CELESTE CANTOR-STEPHENS

celeste@cantorstephens.com

National borders are constructed phenomena, far from the 'naturally-occurring' geographic boundaries we often imagine. Rather than lines on a map, they can extend over vast expanses, where 'rules', laws and rights often disappear. This presentation considers the practice and roles of sound- and music-making by people who find themselves in such spaces: travelling, crossing frontiers, trapped at border camps, and inhabiting systems of subjugation and hardship (such as the British Hostile Environment). The act of border-crossing can itself be an exceptionally demanding form of rebellion. This paper asks: how do practices of sound- and music-making contribute to protest, resistance and resilience within such circumstances?

Supported by ideas from thinkers such as Etienne Balibar, Carl Schmitt and Chowra Makaremi, this presentation will include learnings, concepts and sounds from my previous work, conducted largely at border camps in northern France. It will also be shaped by a current, ongoing project, involving further collaboration with displaced people, exploration of music-making at border spaces, and the application of this as a means of seeking change and social justice.

Friday 27th May
Sallis Benney
Lecture Theatre
14:15



Democratic Voices

STEPHEN WILFORD

Stw31@cam.ac.uk

'Remove Them All!': Sounds of Protest in the Algerian Hirak Movement

In February 2019 widespread anti-government protests took place throughout cities across Algeria. These coalesced into *Hirak*, a political movement calling for democracy and greater social equality, with millions of Algerians joining the protests over the subsequent months. Inevitably, music and sound have become integral to *Hirak*. This paper focuses upon two case studies: a vocal utterance on a live news report from the streets of Algiers, and the circulation of protest songs that have moved from the football terrace to the street, and then online and into the concert hall.

I examine the spaces in which music and sound emerge and are performed, thinking through the ways in which social inequalities and political censorship have served to foreground particular voices within postcolonial Algeria, while obfuscating others. How, I ask, have music and sound been employed to negotiate and reify hegemonic power structures and to challenge political regimes and ideologies?

I explore the ways in which music and sound have shaped *Hirak*, with particular focus upon the negotiation of public and private space through sonic practices of dissent and interrogate the ways in which the human voice has challenged long-standing hegemonies and imagined a new Algerian society for the twenty-first century.

KATHRYN ZACHAREK

k.zacharek1@uni.brighton.ac.uk

The Laughable 'High-Value' Man

The *Good Bro Bad Bro* podcast is an example of content created by 'alpha male' hosts, with the core aim of assisting men to improve their romantic and social lives. Controversies that have arisen from this show include anti-black comments regarding beauty standards as well as claiming that women need to learn to cook and clean properly.

Toxic male podcasts are usually met with some backlash online, yet collective frustration bubbled over to become an international Tik Tok trend. Starting with a video posted by Elsa Lakew, it sparked a craze with women taking to the app, deepening voices, and offering their impersonations. Primarily, these videos are seen as humorous thus causing us to laugh, however, they also provide important social commentary.

People of Colour (POC) and female creators utilise humour to articulate their experiences, with Tik Tok becoming the fastest growing community of DIY content creators. In such cases, where the people laughing are more oppressed than those they are laughing at, solidarity can bring with it a sense of empowerment. The sound of collective laughter has the potential to be employed as a means for the marginalised to reclaim power while engendering crucial dialogues.

Dislocations & Screams

CHARIKLEIA (HARA) TOPA

Charikleia.topa@cssd.ac.uk

Acousmatic sound and resistance: dismantling neoliberal oppression

This paper examines the 2010 headphone theatre production *Cinemascope* by Blitz Theatre Group. It utilizes notions found in music theory [acousmatic sound: sound whose source or cause is not seen (Brian Kane, 2014)], film theory [acousmètre: Chion's cinematic figure of acousmatised sound (Michel Chion, 1994, 1998, 1999)] and post-Lacanian psychoanalysis [ventriloquism: the idea that the voice pertains to the wrong body or does not fit the body that supposedly emanates from (Mladen Dolar, 2006)]. Through them, it explores the ways in which the acousmétric voices and the ventriloquist bodies of performers both exemplify and resist the impasse created by the neoliberal mode of operation of perpetual crises (Hardt and Negri, 2017). It contests the omnipotence and omniscience of the notion of the acousmètre, to problematise notions of authority and power. It additionally investigates the ways the dislocated voices and the ventriloquist bodies of the performers internalise the impasse only to breach and corrupt it through a state of 'deadness.' Finally, this paper approaches social justice through the lens of resistance and suggests that acousmaticity can be employed as a theatrical tactic of resistance to the establishment of perpetual neoliberal crises.

JISHNU GUHA-MAJUMDAR

jguham@gmail.com

"An Infinite Scream Passing Through Nature": Vulnerability and Interspecies Aurality

In the western tradition of political philosophy, perhaps the ur-capacity that signals humanist belonging is the capacity for speech. Work across the humanities, from feminist theory to black studies to animal studies, has criticized the logocentric dimensions of speech and instead offered more nuanced accounts of expression through narrative, embodied vocalization, and relational forms of speech. I argue that, though valuable, even these approaches can misapprehend the character of violence and cut off analysis connecting contemporary crises like eco-genocide and white supremacist violence. Reading Fred Moten, Jacques Derrida, and Simone Weil together, I instead suggest an approach that attends to creaturely screams. The scream, as used in this paper, is not simply a species of vocalization but the site where the voice reaches its limit, straining at the space of indistinction between inspired speech and sonic matter. Attending to the cries of afflicted beings is not a matter of empathy but of becoming unsettled, in which, as Cora Diamond puts it, there is the possibility of being brought up short by another's expectation. The scream, then, is neither exclusively human nor personal but the violation of an impersonal expectation that courses through but exceeds "individual" beings.

DMSA New Works

AUDIO VISUAL INSTALLATIONS

The Digital Music and Sound Arts course at University of Brighton has been a unique centre for sonic research and creation since 1989. As part of Sonic Rebellions we will be presenting 5 new works from current students:

Ben Hampshire
Jolie Mc Callum
Josie Hooper
Hattie Emmins
Talyn Sandu



Rap

BALJIT KAUR

B.Kaure@sussex.ac.uk

Sound and Social (In)Justice in the Neoliberal Youth Club.

This paper draws on my ethnographic research on young people engaging in music production at an east London youth club. It specifically foregrounds young people's raps; rap being one of the most popular poetic forms in the world today (Bramwell and Butterworth 2020) and the main focus of my research. Rap studies have long been discussed in relation to two discourses: keeping it real and making it. The former is more closely aligned with social commentary on negative social conditions and the 'every night, everyday' violence that particularly young men in this study experience on the streets. However, in the context of late capitalism and the neoliberal youth club, this paper will demonstrate that the power of young people's stories is often negated by the prioritisation of the youth club's own record label, partnerships with big corporate brands like Apple and a plethora of events that only further perpetuate competition, entrepreneurialism and individual success in order to make it. This paper will therefore highlight the perpetual tension between the depoliticization of youth work and the collective fight for systemic change and social justice.

WANDA CANTON

w.canton@brighton.ac.uk

In Defence of Drill: Rap & Abolition

UK Drill, a contemporary and growing rap genre, has been described as 'demonic' and poisonous (Maraike, 2018; Clark, 2018). It has been outright blamed for causing knife violence and glorifying gangs, its videos can be misogynistic and depict harrowing violence or abuse. 'Drillers' have been subject to numerous restrictive orders which prohibit the production, distribution, and performance of music. So, why should we defend it? From the perspective of decoloniality and abolitionist politics, defending Drill is a willingness to *listen*, even if we do not like what we hear. Music, and in particular, rap music, has a place in decolonial philosophies and social research more generally, but it continues to be marginalised. To some degree, the archetypes of blackness as aggressive and immoral are reproduced by both the production and prohibition of Drill.

Deconstruction, uncertainty, reflection, and collaboration are all central to abolitionist practice but also to music. I find complexities in the defence of Drill as I explore how to defend it without veering towards an infantilisation of artists as helpless reactionaries, or needing enlightenment. I argue that perhaps the real, and chaotic task, is to reflect on ourselves. Abolitionism is more than challenging carceral politics, it requires deconstructing the cop in our own head.

Music Interrupted

EDWARD MARTIN

E.j.martin@sms.ed.ac.uk

Many emotive data sets communicate narratives of loss, such as human-caused biodiversity collapse. Communicating data around these narratives is important, as behavioural change is required for positive change. However, scientific data often fails to emotionally engage, precluding action to redress these issues.

Sound is vividly emotional - familiar popular music possesses powerful emotional connections for many people. Sonification (the representation of data using sound) can engage audiences with data in different and surprising ways compared to more traditional visualisation. Here, a new sonification method is proposed by which the emotive power of familiar popular music can be leveraged to communicate narratives of loss. Though the example data set deals with human-caused biodiversity collapse, the method is easily generalisable to similar data sets with narratives of loss to create emotionally engaging data sonifications.

This workshop will share the algorithmic methods by which similar works can be produced. Participants will be walked through the process, which takes as input a data set and a pop music wave audio file, and outputs a sonification audio file as output. Code will be shared via a Jupyter Notebook.

Friday 27th May
Pavilion Parade G7
15:30

The Bristol Hum

RICHARD HUGHES

richard.hughes17@bathspa.ac.uk

A practical experiential workshop, humming whilst considering one's own role as an individual as part of a larger collective. The Bristol Hum was a phenomena experienced for years in Bristol - a subsonic hum that was never explained. When the Policing Bill was put forward, I wanted to protest in a way that reflected the solemn feelings I felt. At demonstrations, samba bands often play giving the occasion a party-like feeling. I felt that this was unsatisfactory.

The offer is simple: with attention focused on the group and the event's purpose, hum a long note, any note. When that note is over, hum another note or pause. The note can be dissonant or consonant - there is no right or wrong, just add to the sound of the collective. A group of people doing this, produces a constant, but constantly changing sound with each new note changing the harmonic shape of the total sound.

On this occasion, I perceived the sound of a group humming being the sound of righteous indignation. I have since run humming events focusing on ideas of the individual as part of the collective, which quickly crosses into ideas of social justice.

Saturday 28th May
Edward Street 309
10:00



Listening**

BETHAN PROSSER

b.prosser2@brighton.ac.uk

Title: Listening-with: finding sonically and socially just ways to listen

How can we use listening to explore social in/justices? How can a commitment to social justice inform our approach to listening? Sitting at the intersection of theory, method and practice, this paper will explore these questions by sharing findings from a doctoral research project. Investigating residential experiences of urban seaside gentrification and displacement injustices, this project developed a socio-sonic-mobile methodology that was responsive to fluctuating lockdown restrictions during 2020. Residents on the UK south coast undertook remotely-guided listening walks and listening-at-home activities, capturing their observations and reflections in a variety of media before exploring their changing sense of place in elicitation interviews. A commitment to a participatory ethos supported and enabled a diverse range of listening experiences and practices alongside generating multifarious sound material. This plurality is significant. It speaks to a growing body of work in sound studies that interrogates issues of power and oppression and pushes back against universalising and potentially exclusionary tendencies in sound methods and conceptions of listening (Chaves & Aragao 2021; Drever, 2019; Friedner & Helmreich, 2016; Robinson, 2021). Putting listening findings into dialogue with this literature, I will build an argument for 'listening-with' as a form of participatory listening that is motivated and informed by a feminist and anti-colonial social justice approach.

RACHEL WILSON

r.wilson10@uni.brighton.ac.uk

Listening as Care: Sounding Towards a Socio-Ecological Justice

Listening and sounding play crucial roles as relational ways of knowing for all living systems. However, listening as care is often human-centred within existing contexts of social justice. Exploring collective relations and entanglements beyond the anthropic enables the pursuit of socio-ecologically equitable futures. This paper asks how might we utilise the intimate, embodied perspectives and practices provided by the sonic to extend social justice conceptualisations. We can explore how care is currently exercised through listening and sounding by considering historical and present examples from political dimensions to welfare concerns. The paper then speculates on how we might expand the notion of social justice to become a socio-ecological justice where 'listening as care' encompasses intersectional sustainability discourses for just futures.

Breaks & Ruptures

CALEB MADDEN

c.madden2@brighton.ac.uk

You're talking about things that I haven't done yet: Sonic Temporal Technologies as Methods for Breaking Time

2 minutes 29 seconds into the 1992 darkside jungle track 'Terminator' by Rufige Kru, in the uncanny climbing tone of a breakbeat that remains locked to a tempo, we hear the (then) germinal digital audio technique of time-stretching: a breaking of the link between temporality and pitch, and the sound of the future as it unfolds backwards into the present.

As sonic researchers, we can listen to these era-defining musical ruptures as *metonymic heuristics*: affective portents of forthcoming societal transition. In this instance, Terminator comes back from the future, breaking the linear, enlightenment temporality of pre-millennial Britain with the multi-temporal space-time of the global internet. Yet rather than revisit cultural issues covered in a wealth of commentary on 90's underground sonic practices (Fisher, Eshun, Reynolds et al), by placing recent contributions from Moten (fugitivity) and Ikonidou (sonic fictioning) into an encounter with the contemporary art practice of Black Quantum Futurism, this lineage is drawn upon to underline the powerful theoretic tools available when we use sound and modalities of listening to inform and advance a strain of critical thought that unsettles fatalistic and colonial time constructs.

NICHOLAS TORRETTA

Nicholas.torretta@umu.se

What is decolonial Music? Capoeira songs as alternative storylines to an Eurocentric defined history.

From the moment of European colonization of the world, the Western worldview and consequently the modern storyline has imposed itself as the singular history of the world (Dussel, 1977; Mignolo, 2012; Vazquez, 2017). The imposition of this single history, that has Europe as the departure point, is seen in various fronts of human cultural production. Nevertheless, the imposition of this single-sided view of humanity has always been accompanied by resistance movements. One example of a decolonial cultural movement is the Afro-Brazilian martial art of Capoeira, a fight disguised as a dance that helped the enslaved to fight for their freedom and start free societies parallel to the European colonial administration (Cruz, 2006; Cunha, 2013; Rêgo, 1968). In capoeira, the music has become the way of safeguarding the stories of the fight for freedom, and up to today, still plays an important role in telling the story of Brazil through a non-Eurocentric lens. In this paper we look at the storylines told by traditional Capoeira songs in how they oppose the history line that is told in formal education and open up to ask: what else, beyond telling of alternative stories can decolonial music be?

DIY Anarchy

MARKUS HETHEIER

markus.hetheier@stu.mmu.ac.uk

Between Anarchy and Participation. DIY Culture in the Electronic Music Scene in Manchester.

DIY culture can be a means of resistance within the music industry operating between the poles of opposing its economic structures, which I refer to as anarchy, and operating within these, which I refer to as participation. However, research has shown that DIY culture tends to become instrumentalised by government bodies and music businesses leading to an increased tension between the poles of anarchy and participation. In order to counteract this instrumentalisation, I seek to identify a more resilient and sustainable strategy for DIY artists to monetise their practice without compromising their artistic integrity. My research question therefore is how DIY musicians can develop stronger yet authentic business models to become resilient against corporate music business and as a result more sustainable. I choose a qualitative approach to methodology, including literature on DIY culture and music businesses, using Manchester based DIY electronic music label Cong Burnas a case study and incorporating interviews with label owner John Howes and music industry expert Tony Rigg, offering both DIY and commercial perspectives. My findings will provide suggestions for a more resilient and sustainable strategy for DIY musicians while considering the implications this has for redefining DIY culture in the context of neoliberalism.

ELIZABETH VELDON

40504952@live.napier.ac.uk

Towards an Anti-Capitalist Music: An exploration of unpaid labour in artist/ audience relationships

Normative practices within audience/artist relationships rely upon the unpaid labour of audience members. For example, the conceptual piece 'Untitled (Portrait of Ross in LA)' (González-Torres, 1991) involves active engagement from the audience for the premise to be realised. The nature of the artist/audience relationship, which replicates the structural inequalities inherent within capitalism, cements these inequalities and creates unearned hierarchies which can and should be brought into question when considering social justice in the arts. I have been investigating the use of audience-led improvisation to subvert these issues. This has taken the form a series of non-exploitative improvisations which collapsed the hierarchy between artist and audiences by allowing audiences to become active partners in the improvisation through the utilisation of real time communication.

This presentation will present the findings of this research and show, by drawing on the work of thinkers such as Bourriard and Horkheimer, and through the application of Marxist and anarchist theory, that the unpaid labour and forced subservience of audience members problematises the production and dissemination of art. I will show that by abolishing these practices we encourage critical engagement from audiences and moves towards artist and musical forms that foreground issues of social justice and liberation.

Gentrification Sound Walk

BETHAN PROSSER

b.prosser2@brighton.ac.uk

Soundwalks are a longstanding and classic sound method, considered a 'spatio-temporal, embodied, situated, multi-sensory and mobile practice' (Behrendt, 2018:252). Revived interest in sonic methods has stimulated a diversity of formats and applications for academic and practice-based purposes. However recent anti-colonial and Deaf studies critiques have also pointed to some questionable assumptions underpinning its early formation based on a particular Western epistemology (Chaves & Aragao 2021; Friedner & Helmreich, 2016; Robinson, 2021).

This workshop offers participants the opportunity to experience this method for themselves framed by the social justice theme of gentrification. The soundwalk will take us outside the campus buildings, which are immediately surrounded by contested sites of urban regeneration that the university has played a role in. It will be guided by an experienced soundwalk facilitator to help us open our ears to ongoing socio-sonic changes in the neighbourhood within a multisensory approach. To include: deep listening exercise and 20 mins silent listening group walk, 20 mins re-walk capturing observations through visual/audio/written recordings followed by 15 mins group discussion.

Participants with any concerns about listening or walking are encouraged to contact the facilitator in advance to discuss accessibility.

Saturday 28th May

Meeting point:

Edward Street reception

11:45



Remembering sound: using creative methods to explore intimate memories of imprisonment

RACHEL SEOIGHE & CARLY GUEST

r.seoighe@kent.ac.uk & c.guest@mdx.ac.uk

Saturday 28th May
Edward Street 309
13:45

This workshop will introduce our work on the decommissioned Holloway prison, which explores the memories of women as they revisit the building and narrate their experiences. Thinking through themes of space, memory, lived experience and haunting, we are working on a booklet to capture the women's narratives. Sound has been central to these narratives - remembering particular sounds bound up with memories of imprisonment and reflecting on the experience of the space in silence.

In this workshop we will invite participants to use creative methods to represent memories of sound - from their research, intimate and political lives, and experiences. The workshop will be interactive, using various art materials, and will explore the potential of creative methods for research around memory, emotion, resistance and sound. We will consider the challenges of representing memory and the value of foregrounding lived, sensory experience (in our context of abolition feminist work and more broadly).

Queering

JAIME DIAZ

jdiaz@rcs.ac.uk

Toward a Queer Concept of the Score

This presentation will go over the biases in staff-based notation and how they affect non-normative composers. I will go over my piano trio with Aztec death whistle, "congested history", and discuss the Bhagwati spectrum of context dependant to contingent notation styles. Staff-based notation was developed with white male theorist and composers at the helm and although composers falling outside of the white male norm have always managed to find places for themselves in the classical music ecosystem, their works have frequently been marginalized, and they have been denied access to performances, financial supports, and recognition. These inequalities continue to affect composers today, having material effects on underrepresented composers' ability to survive financially. I will trace how western notation subverts my own experience as a queer Mexican and how I've sought to expand the score to make it inclusive of my life experiences and the challenges this makes for performers—yet another symptom of systemic racism whereby I am both encouraged and discouraged to compose simultaneously by economic and socio-political forces.

LUCA SOUDANT

luca.soudant@gmail.com

Trans*formative Thinking Through Sound: Artistic Research in Gender and Sound Beyond the Human

This presentation reflects on an ongoing artistic research practice that deals with non-musical sound, gender, power, spatiality, and human-nonhuman entanglement. Sparked by a sound design for a less crunchy "lady-friendly" crisp, designed for women to take up less acoustic space while enjoying a snack, the presented research inquires the relationship between gender (normativity) and sound at human-nonhuman encounter through making and thinking. Drawing on queer theory, sound studies, and posthumanist feminism, it aims to transcend essentialist, vision-focused, and anthropocentric conceptualisations of gender and, as an insight gained from working with low-frequency sound waves, it reflects on sound as material-philosophically demonstrating human-nonhuman interconnectedness. The latter, as this presentation proposes, may encourage us to horizontalise hierarchies between the human and nonhuman. Finally, this presentation situates thinking through sound as a mode of trans*formative thinking: a process-oriented philosophy that aims to embrace the messy, queer ways of human-nonhuman relationality.

Keynote

LOWKEY

Renowned activist and rapper, Lowkey will be closing our two-day event. An icon in the UK hip-hop scene, Lowkey's music offers political commentary on injustices from Palestine to Grenfell. His appearances have included Fire in the Booth, Glastonbury, BBC and for President Hugo Chavez. He is a long-standing patron for the Palestine Solidarity Campaign and has been involved in a number of campaigns including the Stop the War Coalition. His musical collaborations have included Immortal Technique, Dead Prez, Lupe Fiasco, Maverick Sabre, Mic Righteous, among others. His 2011 album, *Soundtrack to the Struggle II* hit the UK Albums Chart, reaching number 14 in the UK Download Chart and 6 on the UK Hip Hop and R&B Chart. He regularly contributes to national and international media channels as a political commentator and has consistently used his platform to bring attention to global issues of injustice.

Saturday 28th May
Edward Street 309
15:00



Keeping in touch

JISCMAIL.AC.UK/SONICREBELLIONS

Organisers

Wanda Canton

DOCTORAL RESEARCHER
UNIVERSITY OF BRIGHTON
W.CANTON@BRIGHTON.AC.UK
WANDACANTON.CO.UK



University of Brighton

Centre for Applied
Philosophy, Politics
and Ethics

UNIVERSITY OF BRIGHTON
CAPPE@BRIGHTON.AC.UK
[HTTPS://BLOGS.BRIGHTON.AC.UK/CAPPE/](https://blogs.brighton.ac.uk/cappe/)