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Any Place Whatever: Schizophonic Dislocation and the Sound of Space in General

By Will Schrimshaw

Abstract

Distinct from the tendency for field recording to be understood as a veridical act of documentation—faithfully recording the sonic specificities of a given place—there exists a complementary tendency towards abstraction, emerging from the 'schizophonic' dislocation implicated within phonographic practices. This tendency emphasises the mutability of space in general rather than the identifiable specifics of place. This 'lack' of specificity is understood to expose an underlying productivity or generative capacity only accounted for in a more abstract notion of space. This paper focuses on the extent to which field recording practices are heard to occupy a point of tension between the identifiable fixity of the site-specific and the generative mutability of space in general, a point of tension that is audibly manifest in the work of artists such as Francisco López and Asher Thal-Nir.

Introduction

Within the phonographic practices informing the related yet distinct fields of acoustic ecology, soundscape composition and field recording, we find varying degrees of fidelity to a notion of the site-specific. To attempt a brief and somewhat crude summary, site-specific sound practice seeks to engage the audible peculiarities of a given place, drawing upon, capturing, exciting or distorting found sounds and environments in the production of the work. Brandon LaBelle has described site-specific installation practice as a relationally contingent nexus wherein "sound gets played out, or positioned, in relation to a spatial situation, whether that be found or constructed, actualized or imagined, space is brought into the overall function of the artwork" (LaBelle 2004, p.7). The site-specific here refers to the work's dependencies upon the context of its production and presentation for its meaning and grounding. Opposed to the autonomous sufficiency of the artwork espoused by Modernist perspectives, site-specific practice broadly understands the meaning of an artwork to be produced through a deflection of the listener or viewer's attention away from an isolated consideration of the work-in-itself. Attention is directed towards the spatial or even 'theatrical' context of its production and presentation, a space which includes the observer amidst its various cultural, social, economic, geographical and physical conditions, all of which play a role in shaping the work.¹ In this article it is my intention to draw out some of the productive tensions that exist between the specific and the general, the distinct and the obscure, the 'hi-fi' and 'lo-fi' within broadly site-oriented sound practices.² More specifically, this article will explore the notion that these two poles of sonic spatial experience are inseparably related and that 'they are unequal odd halves' (Deleuze 2004, p.261). Following from this, this article will claim that the movement from the specific to the general can be one from the grounded to the generative, from the identifiable sound of place to the ambiguous, sonorous production of space in general.³ In attributing to the general this generative potential, the 'lo-fi' and obscure need not be thought to lack the differential function ascribed to place within site-specific practice, as these terms name the conditions of place and the specific.

The problematic site

Within the multitude of site-oriented sound practices we can identify numerous problematic and ambiguous relations to the nature of the site. This description of the relation to site as problematic should not be thought to denote negativity—in the sense of something that needs to be fixed—as the term problematic is here used in the Deleuzian sense of something which forces thought and provokes responses or creative 'solutions'. In this context, the problematic is considered to be a generative or productive field of elementary interactions that may at times appear obscure and confused.⁴ The problem of the site within artistic practice denotes an agitative productivity that accounts for the allure of the 'site specific' due to, rather than despite, its contingencies and peculiarities. The agitative nature of this problematic relation is evident in the extent to which the term site-specific has been undergoing extensive critique within artistic practice, as various suffixes to site- seek to describe a more ambiguous, mobile and altogether less 'rooted' relation to the site than the specific may immediately suggest or allow.⁵ Phonographic practice often uncovers, through a necessary degree of abstraction, the otherwise inaudible and unheard peculiarities of place: the auditory objects, events or effects specific to a given location. Specificity, however, appears ill-fitting where it overstates locatedness, fixity or grounding within place, as is evident in the mobility of broadly site-oriented practice and the increasingly nomadic lifestyle of the artist or field-recorder. An

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ISSUE 2 PHOTO CREDIT

Graham Gussin; *I Love It, In Space there Are No Limits, I Love It.*; 2001; Photo courtesy of the artist.

A series of six wall drawings using sound as source material. Sound is put through a software program that translates it into image, producing a kind of audio map or territory, this is then projected onto a given wall and traced, the background for these pieces is an oil based blue ink. The sounds used are words spoken by participants in various pornographic films, the brief sentences becoming the title of the work.

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example of this nomadic mobility can be heard in *Airport Symphony* (2007): a collection of compositions by various artists made from field recordings carried out by Lawrence English at Brisbane Airport. While the locational specificity of the recordings is explicitly named, that which they document and the experience of place to which they refer is utterly generic: a runway, a waiting lounge, a duty-free shop. It is, therefore, with some difficulty that we might recognise this as a site-specific project, insofar as the source material evokes the transitory boredom, aesthetic banality and idle consumerism often associated with airport architecture and air travel. While the source materials we hear are named as being specific to Brisbane Airport they are—with the exception of a few accents—largely generic, evocative of almost any given airport. These globalised spaces are readily considered to lack the character or specificity thought to affirm the locational identity with which site-specific practice is commonly concerned. Yet through various processes of phonographic abstraction sonic matters are mobilized against this banality in the composition of something often beautiful and singular, if unspecific. It is in this sense that this project identifies and makes use of sounds occupying the spaces between the specific, generic and general.

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FEAR OF FLYING (EXCERPT); TAYLOR DEUPREE; FROM *AIRPORT SYMPHONY*, ROOM40, 2007.

UNTITLED # 203 (EXCERPT); FRANCISCO LÓPEZ; FROM *AIRPORT SYMPHONY*, ROOM40, 2007.

Critique of the specific within site-oriented practice can be made particularly strongly in the context of sonic and phonographic practices wherein abstraction and—in many ways a more fundamental—displacement operate as primary methods. The insufficiency of the specific in accounting for the allure of the site starts to reveal itself where we consider that a primary gesture of the phonographer is a scission, or more specifically one of schizophrenic dislocation.⁶ The second aspect of this position takes its cue from a preliminary reductive physicalism according to which sound functions primarily through displacement, through the physical disturbance of a medium and a displacement of matter.⁷ The notions of schizophrenic dislocation and displacement attempt to identify the allure of the site in its ambiguous plasticity. It is this general plasticity that is exploited in phonographic practices not restricted to the documentation, preservation and representation of place. The practices that I wish to discuss in what follows, rather than seeking to hold fast the relationship between sonic signifier and referent, engage with the distortion and composition manifest in phonographic practice. In addition to phonography's capacity for representation, such practices engage the potential for sonorous spatial productions.

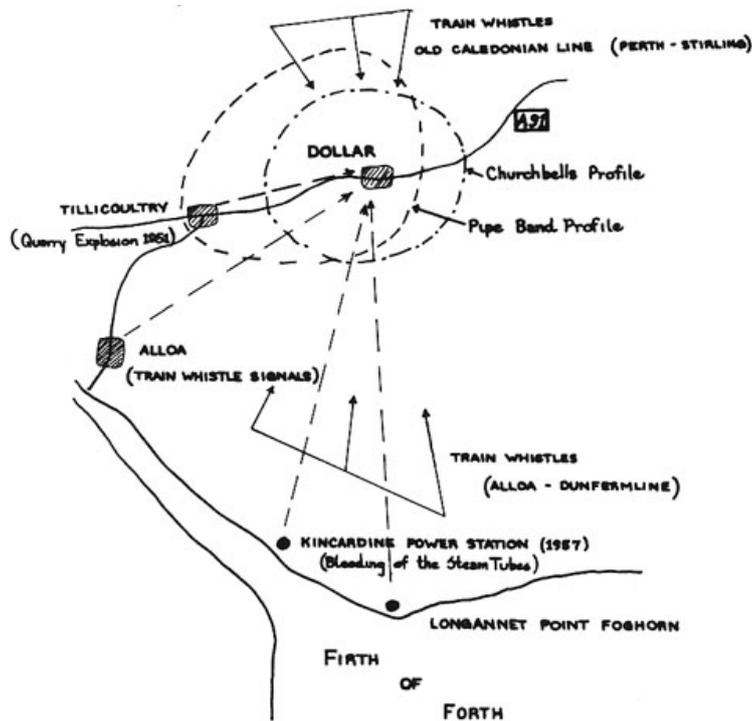
Acknowledgement and exploitation of the necessary abstraction involved in recording and composing with site-specific sound entails a shift from the specific towards the general. This shift need not necessarily be total or unilateral, as what we hear in practices adopting abstract procedures is often an oscillation between place and non-place, between site-specificity and an abstract space-in-general. Here a clarification must be made, as the notion of an abstract space in general, producing a kind of 'non-place' is considered differently to the way this term has been used by Marc Augé (1995). For Augé, non-place describes the proliferation of spatial homogeneity according to the 'global style' of neo-modern architecture under late capitalism.⁸ An example of this is the airport ambiance that forms the subject matter of the aforementioned *Airport Symphony* (2007). The schizophrenic undermining of place to which I refer herein is specifically concerned with energetic matters of spatial production. These abstract signal components are considered anterior to the experience and identity of place. Opposed to the homogeneity of non-place, the shift from the specifics of place to the abstract generality of space addresses a generative potential in sonority that is exposed only where sound is not limited to representation but considered according to a primary displacement or deformation. Put into practice by artists working with the problem of site and sound is the capacity for sound to create, reconfigure and modulate space, presenting an acoustic spatial practice that does not solely entail a documentation of place but a production of space.

We hear the aforementioned oscillation between the specific and the general in the work of Asher Thal-Nir, which makes audible the movement of thought between contextual specificity and a general plasticity of space. The album *Landscape Studies* (2009), for example, manifests Asher's "desire to create recordings which have the unique characteristics of a particular room or space which only exists in the context of that recording", a desire that could hardly be more attuned to the sensibilities of site-specific practice.⁹ This concern for the specifics of place can be contrasted with its immanent ungrounding, as is audible in 'Any Place Whatever' (Asher 2008). In the latter work we hear the identifiable signals of passing traffic through a displaced location that is obscure and ambiguous. The resonant traces of a room remain, but they are strangely bent out of shape and contorted. Signal events echo round an interior, set against ubiquitous background noise that blurs their edges, rendering them confused and indiscrete. The presence of 'background noise' is characteristic of Asher's compositions, ranging from an audible proximity of signal components to a murmur into to which distinct elements decay and from which new ones emerge.

The schizophrenic dislocation performed by Asher through the use of field recordings allows for a recursive nesting of places that tends towards their abstraction: a room, place or site temporarily reconstructed within another by means of electroacoustic architectonics. Both sets of recordings capture or evoke an outside seeping in: *Landscape Studies* draws upon "ideas relating to the intrusion of outside sounds into [Asher's] home environment" and 'Any Place Whatever' manipulates a source of noise that encroaches upon any urban dwelling.¹⁰ In identifying the critical function carried out by this method of composition, it should be noted that the recursive displacements that we hear—and perform—while listening to these recordings do not appear to mourn a loss of specificity, locational immediacy, or immanent authenticity. Auditively tracing the root of these dislocated sounds back through procedural abstractions we find the place whence these compositions 'originate' to be ubiquitous or banal. The traffic which is clearly identifiable in 'Any Place Whatever' is an exemplary signal of the non-places to which Augé refers: that which is wholly unspecific and global in its recurrence. This source flirts with a sense of the homogeneous and banal that I am keen to render distinct from a productive sense of space in general. Asher utilizes abstraction and distortion to extract affective auditory components from what otherwise appears undifferentiated. In these recordings we hear the characteristic resonances of rooms, yet their function is oriented towards the novel production of acoustic space instead of being reducible to a representation of place.

Acoustic ecology and the sound of place

The role of sound in the determination of place—rather than a more abstract notion of space—is of central importance to acoustic ecology. The work of the acoustic ecologist is in part to document and investigate the role of sound in the determination of place and the everyday rhythms of a community.¹¹ Perhaps the most succinct example of this can be seen in the diagrammatical representation of the 'acoustic horizons' of the Scottish town of Dollar presented in *Five Village Soundscapes* (Schafer 1977).



SCOTTISH TOWN OF DOLLAR PRESENTED IN FIVE VILLAGE SOUNDSCAPES

This diagram presents a sound map outlining the various acoustic events and territories that determine the character of Dollar as an "acoustic community" (Schafer 1994, p.215-7; Truax 2001, p.65-9). The sounds listed and arranged on this map underpin a sense of place, variously contributing to an acoustic territory and locational identity. Many of these sounds are what the acoustic ecologist would describe as 'sound marks' (Schafer 1994, p.9-10). Sound marks are components of the broader notion of a soundscape, recurrent sound events considered characteristic of a locale and therefore to be treated with the same care, attention and preservation

as visibly stable landmarks which contribute to local or national identity. The sound-mark constitutes one pole of the spatial experience of sound that I wish to discuss, namely the sound of the particular, well grounded and identifiable. The sound-mark, insofar as it supports a sense of place is taken as an example of site-specific sound.

To prevent this outline from reducing acoustic ecology to acts of documentation and interpretation, it is important to point out that these exercises and the data gathered are intended to inform the production of increasingly 'positive', functional or 'hi-fi' sonic environments. The Schaferian concept of the hi-fi soundscape is an important one, as in its contrast to the antithetical concept of the lo-fi soundscape it will become of importance to the current argument, particularly the attempt to place greater importance upon the indiscrete and confused. For Schafer:

The hi-fi soundscape is one in which discrete sounds can be heard clearly because of low ambient noise level. The country is generally more hi-fi than the city; the night more than the day [...]. In a lo-fi soundscape individual acoustic signals are obscured in an overdense population of sounds. The pellucid sound [...] is masked by broad-band noise. Perspective is lost (Schafer 1994, p.43).

Despite the concern for the production of sound space that is evident within the practice of acoustic ecology, much of the work carried out within this field remains exemplary of site-specific practice. It is this specificity that I intend to problematise herein, insofar as it focuses upon a notion of sound as primarily a contextual and symbolic event rather than a more ambiguous if not autonomous—i.e. Schaefferian—object.¹² This distinction requires that we look elsewhere for alternative and more ambiguous methods of sonorous spatial production, practices that seek out not only the sound of place but the conditions of spatial production.¹³ More specifically, it is the importance of the foreground signal event or the 'hi-fi' soundscape within the ideology of acoustic ecology that requires we look elsewhere. The notion of a productive space in general, distinct from both the specific and the homogeneous, requires a more thorough engagement with the notion of background noise than can be easily gleaned from the practices of Schaferian ecology. The Schaferian branch of acoustic ecology necessarily sets itself apart from the problematics of the audibly confused in identifying the signal components of place. The emphasis placed upon signal discretion, identity and place should be complemented with an account of their undoing, of the blurring of place, signal and identity that accounts for the novel and anomalous production of space. Where too strong an emphasis is placed upon signal definition, place and the preservation of its sound-marks, the difference through which they are produced is obscured. In redressing this issue we should turn to the seemingly contradictory practice of an environmental or ecological audition that takes as its ground the 'lo-fi' and the confused.

Environmental confusion and the non-bucolic broadband world

Contrary to the emphasis placed upon the signal components and soundmarks of a soundscape, the approach taken by artist and composer Francisco López to sonic environments is one 'grounded' within a confusion of the distinct and discrete. López often takes an abstract approach to site-oriented practice, establishing a productive tension between location and schizophonic dislocation. A particularly clear instance of this can be found in the Birmingham Sound Matter (2009) project. Rather than seeking to represent the character or identity of Birmingham through mapping and documenting its soundmarks, the city is taken as a sonic substrate, providing materials for new compositions. López's contribution to this group project opens with a hint of what we might try to identify as traffic noise, horns sounding in tunnels or perhaps ringing church bells. Attempts to pin identities to these sounds are quickly rendered futile as they become increasingly abstract and distorted, with only particular bandwidths of frequencies being extracted for re-composition. Despite this progressive abstraction an ambiguous relationship with the city from which these sounds were originally drawn remains, with Birmingham being named if not audibly identifiable. The relationship to the site of sound established in this instance has little concern for fidelity, whether high or low.

UNTITLED # 225 (EXCERPT); FRANCISCO LÓPEZ; FROM BIRMINGHAM SOUND MATTER, AUDIOBULB, 2009.

Despite its abstract orientation, López's approach to sonic environments is radically inclusive in both its conception of an "acoustic community" and nature in general. In López's work we hear an example of Barry Truax's expansive definition of an "acoustic community" as "any system within which acoustic information is exchanged" (Truax 2001, p.66). For López this system is not restricted to the anthropic or organic, taking into account the 'inert' and base. López presents an extensive and inclusive conception of the soundscape's material contingencies by directing audition towards an expanded notion of the acoustic community that includes weather systems, soil, plants, animals (including humans), machines and so on.

UNTITLED # 200 (EXCERPT); FRANCISCO LÓPEZ; FROM AUDIBLE GEOGRAPHY, ROOM40, 2008.

This move highlights a tendency within López's thought to move from the specific to the general or from the somatic to the dynamic. López's approach to environmental recording attempts to focus attention upon an environment as a whole, upon an audible confusion of bodies that leads to blurred distinctions between the otherwise discrete. This purposive confusion entails a shift from the specific to the general that is audible in the blurring of foreground and background events. Here signal distinction does not hold the privilege that it does within Schaferian ecology, wherein confusion leads towards the emergence of the negatively charged lo-fi soundscape. Contrary to the negative associations that this term has within Schaferian ecology, López presents a conception of nature itself as an ultimately productive lo-fi soundscape. In López's recordings things do, of course, come to the fore, yet this foreground is strictly relative to the position of the listening subject:

Sound-producing animal species appear together with other accompanying biotic and non-biotic components of the sound environment that happened to be there when the recordings were done. In this sense, there is no purposeful a priori distinction of foreground / background, but only their unavoidable arising due to the location of the microphones, as happens with our ears. I'm not claiming objectivism [...] but rather that the 'focus' of my attention was the sound environment as a whole (López 1998).

This productively confused approach to "the sound environment as a whole" is exemplary of a more general tendency to shift from the specific to the general or apparently abstract. While perhaps not as dominant as it is within López's work, this tendency can nonetheless be heard in the work of artists such as Eric La Casa (2011), Jana Winderen (2010), Asher or Russell Haswell (2009). Taking a broad overview we might say that the practice of field recording readily identifies and documents the auditory determinants of place and identity, elements easily associated with site-specific practice. This is often heard in the amplification of peculiar details and their framing through dislocation, setting them apart from the confusion of space in general. López's environmental recordings are exemplary of site-oriented phonographic practice, where emphasis is placed less upon the representation of place and more firmly upon the transmission of productive sonic matters appearing abstract to the ear.

López's chimeric and often polemical coupling of Schaefferian phenomenology and environmental recording can be understood as a critique of the specific within site-oriented sound practice. Specificity is indexical in this instance, binding sound to representation and sacrificing 'sound itself' to the efficacy of the symbolic. What is of concern in such instances is not that sound is drawn out of 'itself' but that the image of the referent remains too rigidly fixed. This referential operation limits affective understandings of sound as the anomalous and confusing is shed in favour of the identifiable. López's work, despite its Schaefferian impetus, never fully sheds referential or indexical operations. It nonetheless audibly manifests a shift of emphasis from specificity to the particular abstraction that is sound-itself, utilised as an a-referential and affective object or event. This progression towards abstraction forces dislocation insofar as the site-specificity of a recording becomes obscure, moving from the sound of place to the excessive obscurity of sound itself. Without fully escaping its emplacement the reproduction of phonographically dislocated sound entails a novel production of space and spatial relations. Movement away from the specific through a practice of abstraction or schizophrenic dislocation uncovers an obscure productivity that is otherwise cancelled out in indexical operations, moving from sound as sign towards the ambiguous spatial productivity of sonic energy in general.

Ungrounding place

In referring to a sense of spatial abstraction and ambiguity, it is my intention to draw upon the critique of site-oriented practices that has claimed the exhaustion of the site-specific and the term's ongoing reconfiguration "to imply not the permanence and immobility of a work but its impermanence and transience" (Kwon 2004, p.4). Furthermore, this impermanence and transience is extended to the site itself and not just the work to which it gives meaning in site-specific practice. In drawing attention towards methods of abstraction and a notion of space in general, an attempt is made to build upon the tendency towards mobility and mutability in site-oriented practice. This tendency is emphasised in relation to a broader field of artistic practice in Miwon Kwon's critical assertion that "site specificity used to imply something grounded" (2004, p.11). The shift from the specific to the general, audible in López's shift from documenting the sounds of individual bodies or locations towards an abstract and confused environment as a whole, accordingly suggests an ungrounding of the site. The equivalence of the specific and the well grounded to which Kwon refers draws upon the sense that "to ground is to determine", that "it is always a claim or an image that requires a ground or appeals to a ground" and that "each well-grounded image or claim is called a representation" (Deleuze 2004, p.341-2). The well grounded and specific attains a fixity allowing it to operate efficiently within a symbolic and indexical order. It is precisely this grounding that the shift towards the abstract and general displaces, seeking to uncover that which "rumbles underneath" (Deleuze 2004, p.344). In this displacement or dislocation the specific is ungrounded, becoming abstract and confused. This ungrounding must, however, be considered distinct from the "spatial undifferentiation" that gives way to the homogeneity that is characteristic of Augé's non-places and identifiable in the source materials of *Airport Symphony* (2007) and Asher's 'Any Place Whatever' (Kwon 2004, p.157).¹⁴

Kwon identifies the importance of a "differential function" that sets place apart from the global and generic, "establishing authenticity of meaning, memory, histories, and identities" (2004, p.157). In this sense the identity of place is determined through a certain resistance to a "global style" or spatial and aesthetic homogeneity. For Kwon, this resistance or "differential function associated with places, which earlier forms of site-specific art tried to exploit and which current incarnations of

site-oriented works seek to reimage, is the hidden attractor in the term “site specificity” (Kwon 2004, p.157). In presenting a concept of dislocative generalisation that functions as the lubricant of spatial productions rather than spatial homogenisation, we must posit a second “hidden attractor” by identifying this differential function as being at work within the productive ungrounding of place. This differential function should not, therefore, be limited to that which we identify as place. Whereas Kwon identifies this differential function as being provided by the resistant and grounded identity of place, an equally productive—and wholly more ambiguous—differential function must be identified within processes of dislocative ungrounding. We must, therefore, locate a productive sense of difference—distinct from that which Kwon associates with the affirmation of identity—within both the ungrounded and a sense of energy in general. In attempting to render this productive sense of the general distinct from homogeneity it is important that we avoid the “external illusion of representation” according to which “groundlessness should lack differences, when in fact it swarms with them” (Deleuze 2004, p.347). The general and ungrounded is not, therefore, to be confused with the homogeneous and undifferentiated. Equally, the abstract sound of schizophonic dislocated space in general should not be thought to lack the potential for spatial productivity. Abstract sonic elements become the agents of productive spatial displacements, constituting the ‘differential function’ of space in general that rumbles beneath the specific. Distinct from undifferentiated homogeneity, the process of abstraction and the sound of space in general draws upon the sense that “energy in general or intensive quantity is the spatium, the theatre of all metamorphosis or difference in itself” (Deleuze 2004, p.301). It is in this sense that generality is not to be associated with homogeneity but rather another pole of differential spatial production, with that which ceaselessly ungrounds and undermines place in the ceaseless production of space.

Where abstraction drives phonography—from the moment of pressing record, if not before—we hear a shift in thinking from site-specific audition to sonic spatial productions. This shift is one from specificity to intensity, from identity to its differential conditions. The background noise associated with lo-fi soundscapes comes to be understood in a productive sense as an individuating difference, drawing audition towards the intensive production of space anterior to the identification of place and its apparently discrete bodies. This transition from the specifics of identification and audile taxonomies to sound in general is mirrored in López’s preference for the notion of sound matter over sound objects. This preference is not only terminological but ontological, placing general energetics ahead of specific identities, dynamic force before somatic consistency.

UNTITLED # 204 (EXCERPT); FRANCISCO LÓPEZ; FROM HB, BASKARU, 2009.

The shift from objects to matter distances practices of nature recording based upon the audible representation of place, individual species or bodies from those aiming to uncover the generative capacity and ambiguous creativity of generalised sonic events. Sound presented in this sense is thought to expose something of the affective capacities implicated within representation: “the richness of this sound matter in nature is astonishing, but to appreciate it in depth we have to face the challenge of profound listening. We have to shift the focus of our attention and understanding from representation to being” (López 1998). This shift “from representation to being” is here equated with a shift from the specifics of representation to the confused conditions of sonorous individuation and an ontologically oriented audition. As an agent of displacement and by way of its susceptibility to schizophonic dislocation, sound may function, to use Deleuze and Guattari’s terminology, as a “cutting edge of deterritorializations” (2004, p.383), or as a kind of lubricant assisting recursive displacements despite its constant specific re-grounding through acts of audition.

Conclusion: Oscillating between space and place

Here we arrive at the opposite pole of spatial experience to that of the site-specific: that which is abstract, obscure and non-specific yet posited as the conditions and productive ungrounding of the distinct, the background noise against which signal appears and from which it must be discerned. At this point it is of particular importance to reaffirm that the generalising notion of sonic displacement or deterritorialization with which this argument is concerned is not to be thought as total, nor a task to be completed. Neither is the process which these terms represent to be thought as simply ‘positive’. This processual deformation, de- and re-composition is wholly ambiguous and to be understood as productive before it is qualified as positive. Territorial or spatial production entails a displacement, an anterior state to be drawn upon, reconfigured and rearranged, and so this productivity may well be considered ‘negative’ from the position of what came before.¹⁵ Positivity and negativity are considered consequential to an otherwise blind and indifferent productivity that operates by way of ungrounding. These related notions of displacement, schizophonic dislocation and deterritorialization name a process of ungrounding that is required of new spatial productions, events and compositions. They must be understood as the peculiar complement or obscure underside to the site-specific, constituting the confused conditions of its production. The process of displacement and dislocation is in this sense figured as occurring between appearances of the specific and identifiable; the background noise of which signals are drawn and into which they dissolve being understood as the medium of their contingency. In its oscillations between the specific and the confused this discussion must be thought to take place between the “nostalgic desire for a retrieval of rooted, place-bound identities on the one hand and the antinostalgic embrace of a nomadic fluidity of subjectivity, identity and spatiality on the other” (Kwon 2004, p.8).¹⁶ Both López and Asher can be heard to maintain a relationship with site within their work, yet in neither instance is the notion of site rigidly fixed to the specific. Instead, both artists’ work invokes a

neither instance is the notion of site rigidly fixed to the specific. Instead, both artists' work invokes a spatial plasticity, evoking an incomplete and unfinished proto-place that is always in the process of being composed or decomposed. The audibly site-specific engages with the grounding of place; the more ambiguous notion of a site of sound in general, audible within the practices mentioned above, performs an ungrounding of place synonymous with the production of space. In this sense a site-oriented sound practice need not necessarily entail specificity, focusing instead upon the ambiguous productivity of the sound of space in general.

Footnotes

1. Michael Fried famously derided minimalist works for their 'theatrical' inclusion of contextual determination within the meaning of the artwork, an aesthetic system of relational production which he understood to undermine the autonomous consistency of the work (Fried 1967). []
2. The terms 'hi-fi' and 'lo-fi' are taken from the writings of R. Murray Schafer for whom 'the hi-fi soundscape is one in which discrete sounds can be heard clearly because of low ambient noise level [...]'. In a lo-fi soundscape individual acoustic signals are obscured in an overdense population of sounds (1994, p. 43). I will return to this point in more detail later in the essay. []
3. The relationship posited between the terms space and place herein is the inverse of that found in the work of Michel de Certeau, wherein space is considered as a specification or practice of place. Retained, however, is the active sense of space that de Certeau contrasts with the proper stability of place (1988, 117). The reason for this inversion is due to the extent that the term space can be considered to be more abstract than place, as is made evident in the extensive introduction to Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* (2007, 1-67). []
4. The term 'problem' or 'problematic' receives sustained attention throughout Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition* (Deleuze 2004), most notably in chapters III and IV. The most concise, if somewhat condensed, summary of Deleuze's use of this term is given by Alberto Toscano who describes the Deleuzian problem as an 'impersonal field of singularities out of which thought draws its localized solutions' (Toscano 2006, 2). What is of importance here is that in this sense the problem is not thought as strictly conceptual or immaterial, but in an objective sense, as something comprised of real events and elements in the world (Deleuze 2004: 76, 205). []
5. Perhaps the best summary of developments in site-oriented practice can be found in Miwon Kwon's *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (2004). Also see Nick Kaye *Site Specific Art: Performance, Place and Documentation* (2000). []
6. The term schizophonia is taken from the work of R. Murray Schafer. This term is used by Schafer to critically refer to how 'sounds have been torn from their natural sockets and given an amplified and independent existence' (1994, 90). []
7. An overview of 'acoustic physicalism' can be found in Roger Scruton's 'Sounds as Secondary Objects and Pure Events' (Scruton 2009). []
8. On non-places see Augé (2005). On the 'global style' of neo-modern architecture see Hal Foster's *The Art-Architecture Complex* (Foster 2011). []
9. Quote taken from the text accompanying *Landscape Studies* (Asher 2009), available at http://room40.org/store/asher_untitled_landscapes1 and http://room40.org/store/index.php?route=product/product&product_id=163 []
10. Quote taken from the text accompanying *Landscape Studies* (Asher 2009), available at http://room40.org/store/asher_untitled_landscapes1 and http://room40.org/store/index.php?route=product/product&product_id=163. Both recordings can, in this sense, be heard as auditory experiments akin to the rhythm-analytical writing carried out by Henri Lefebvre in 'Seen from the Window' (2006). []
11. A very brief example of this, and of a site-specific sound project, is given by John Levack Drever in his overview of the *Sounding Dartmoor* project (Drever 2007). []
12. An excellent introduction to Pierre Schaeffer's concept of the sound object and its relation to phenomenology can be found in Brian Kane (2007) 'L'objet Sonore Maintenant: Pierre Schaeffer, Sound Objects and the Phenomenological Reduction'. []
13. R. Murray Schafer outlines a notion of sound events as contextually dependent and relational elements, 'to avoid confusion with sound objects, which are laboratory specimens' (Schafer 1994, 71). []
14. Admittedly, the politics of this dislocative generalisation must remain ambiguous insofar as this tendency towards displacement or an undermining of the specifics of place may remain wholly compatible with capitalist nomadism. In this sense, the material productions that I am attempting to locate in a tendency towards dislocation would seem only to lubricate rather than resist capitalism's global extension and homogenisation. While this is true, allegiance with this 'lubricating function' that fuels the undermining of specificity, identity and place must be risked if we are to avoid slipping into stifling nostalgia and romanticism of rootedness. []
15. As stated above, there is unfortunately insufficient space to go into the ambiguous political implications of this concern for displacement. []
16. On the tendency towards nostalgia in identifying and nominating the signal components or primary sounds of place see Drever (2007, 100). []

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Bio

Will Schrimshaw is an artist and researcher from Wakefield based in North Shields. Often working
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