Articulating the Dancefloor

Examining site, interaction and participation in club culture through interdisciplinary creative practice.

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ABSTRACT

This folio of creative works is comprised of a set of installations and fixed-media audio works composed between January 2017 and December 2019. The works in the folio take inspiration from a variety of ideas in club cultures and visual arts that are hybridised to form my approach to creative practice. The motivation behind the creative work is to closely examine the similarities between club culture and the visual arts, particularly in relation to notions of site, interaction and participation. The resulting works employ a variety of materials and disciplines in their creation, including techniques from artistic practices and material gathered from participants, collaborators and sources of personal inspiration in music and the visual arts. The submitted work aims to create work that is not *for* the club, but *about* the club, through the lens of my own embodied experiences and those of participants in club spaces and club culture.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as references. I am the sole composer of the creative work presented in this folio, except for in the four *Excercises on Détournement*, that use the work of other artists as collage. These works are credited throughout the commentary and reference list. All collaborators and contributors in the process of producing the creative work have been credited.

1. Aims

After a short introduction outlining some overarching ideas that are constant throughout the submitted work, this commentary will embark on a detailed discussion of each piece of submitted work. The discussion of the creative work is separated into two parts: installation and fixed-media audio. These discussions are designed around the primary research aims of this work which are as follows:

- To produce work that hybridises ideas, materials and influences from club cultures and the visual arts into a single creative practice;

- To create original cross-disciplinary work that contributes to a field of composition that uses club culture as a site of critical investigation, making work *about* the club, rather than *for* the club;

- To develop a creative practice that focuses on working with a variety of participants and collaborators, and personal musical and visual influences, integrating their perspectives into my work;

- To critically comment on the relationship between participants in club culture and the spaces they inhabit through creative work.

2. Introduction

The work submitted in this folio is produced with the object of developing a personal creative practice that draws on ideas from club and visual cultures to generate inspiration, and develop material and structure. The work particularly considers people and spaces in these cultures as material generating. The process of gathering material and generating inspiration with regard to people and space presents not only a consideration of people inside club spaces, but also spaces that people occupy before and after the night out as sites of critical investigation. The accompanying commentary discusses my approach to using these ideas in the planning and research around the submitted work, as well as in the production stages, highlighting my practical strategies, and how I have structured work and realised concepts.

A theme that has been critical to my understanding of club cultures and that has influenced the material in the submitted creative work is the way that club spaces and participants interact, both physically and socially. The notion of liminality has been key to this understanding, where a clubgoer will move from their everyday into the club space. This is typically discussed in terms of the entrance to the club itself as a limen that separates the inside space of the club and the outside world.[1] However, throughout this folio I have thought about liminality as existing transitionally and ambiguously as well as in participants' memory, both inside and outside physical club spaces. For me, liminality exists in the space where clubgoers begin to construct identities, memories and narratives, which is not always punctuated by the four walls of the club. For this reason, I will regularly refer to the *inside* and *outside* spaces of the club. These spaces are ones where I have gathered material, either by visiting these spaces with participants or discussing memories and perspectives of these spaces with participants. Critically, the inspiration and material here come from club culture rather

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[1] See Silvia Rief, *Club Cultures: Boundaries, Identities and Otherness.* (London: Routledge, 2013), Brigitte Biehl-Missal, "Filling the Empty Space" *Cuture and Organisation*, 25, no.1 (2016), 7-8.

than club music. While sounds associated with club music are present in some of the work, they represent one of many influences that I have used to represent the *inside* and *outside* spaces.

The approach to gathering material in the *inside* and *outside* spaces has been influenced by work and theory in visual cultures. In terms of constructing spaces in the compositions, I explored notions of site-specificity, particularly those introduced by Miwon Kwon and James Meyer, who look at the symbolic nature of site that exists outside of the physical site itself.[2] In this vein, I looked to signifiers of the *inside* and *outside* spaces I was visiting, as well as the people that occupied those spaces, that I could combine to produce new, abstract constructions and collages of sites. This idea takes influence from Daniele Balit, who proposes that sound-based site-specific works tend towards the construction of imagined spaces.[3] The constructed sites in the submitted work present an approach to the mediation between recorded and synthetic sounds. The sites are imagined and constructed using field recordings, voice recordings, interviews and foley recordings that are both heavily processed and left in their raw form, alongside synthetic sounds. In turn, the wide range of material in the submitted work is both recognisable and abstract, encouraging engagement from the visitor or listener.

Throughout this folio a strong sense of agency is created for the listener or visitor in terms of their relationship with sounds, objects or characters in the works. This notion comes from the agency that can be seen both in club spaces and the physical art installation, where participants construct their own experiences in real-time and can come and go as they like. Primarily this derives from the idea presented in Nicholas Bourriaud's *Relational Aesthetics* that it is visitors who inform the content of a work.[4] In the submitted work, spaces are constructed, both sonically and physically, within which interaction is a crucial compositional device. The listener or visitor can come and go as they like and

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[2] Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another* (Massachussets, MIT Press: 2002), 11-31. James Meyer, 'The Functional Site, or, The Transformation of Site Specificity' in *Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art* ed. Erika Suderburg (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 2000). 24.

[3] Daniele Balit, 'From Ear to Site: On Discreet Sound', *Leonardo Music Journal*, 23 (2013), 62.

[4] See Nicholas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics* (Dijon: Les Presses du réel, 2002).

enter at any point without compromising their experience, interacting with sounds, spaces, and characters.

The approach to gathering material in the *inside* and *outside* spaces takes some inspiration from ethnographic methods. The approach that I took is not dissimilar to that of Fiona Buckland in *Impossible Dance*. Rather than actively approaching and interviewing participants in nightclubs or intrusively observing, Buckland positioned herself as a participant, building an intimate relationship with the club space and its participants in order to effectively observe them.[5] A similar approach can be seen throughout the submitted work, particularly in *City Symphony*, where it was important that my relationship with participants was not intrusive in the way that some ethnographic work can be.[6] In many cases, the Situationist technique of the *dérive*, the passing through the urban environment to unveil its attributes, is one that I use to make the connection between ethnography and my creative practice.[7] Practising *dérives* has involved participant-led walks where I can gather material, through casual, recorded conversation, on both particular spaces and participants' experiences of those spaces.[8]

The varied and interdisciplinary approach taken in the submitted work requires an understanding of hybridity, a constant theme throughout this folio that is handled in a variety of ways: hybridity of material, hybridity of form, hybridity of synthetic and acoustic sound and hybridity of influence. When approaching the production of these works, I was confronted with a mass of ideas and influences, as well as a wealth of collected material that I wanted to include in the individual works, posing the question of how this material could coherently fit into singular works. Jeremy Mayall proposes that hybrid music relies on the equal integration of different genres into coherent

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[5] See Fiona Buckland, *Impossible Dance: club culture and queer world-making* (Middletown, Conneticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2002)..

[6] See Raymond M. Lee, *Unobtrusive Methods in Social Research* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2000), 1-8. (Lee 2000).

[7] Raymond Spiteri, 'From Unitary Urbanism to the Society of the Spectacle: The situationist aesthetic revolution' in *Aesthetic Revolutions and Twentieth Century Avant-Garde Movements*, ed. Aleš Erjavec (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2015): 185.

[8] See chapters 3.3 and 4.2.

works as an intricate and complex process, due to the fact that different genres do not blend easily.[9]

This definition works in the sense of the submitted works' musical influences, but as stated above, hybridity in this folio exists across media and forms. For this reason, the material predominantly reflects on Frank Camilleri's notion of the 'hybridity continuum', seeing hybridity as a process of material 'coming together', 'becoming together' and 'becoming'.[10] In the submitted work, I gather and select materials, influences and concepts from club and visual cultures at the start of the process (coming together), begin to weave them together into a singular work (becoming together) and finally reach a point at which the differing and contrasting material becomes a work in itself (becoming).

Nicholas Bourriaud's *Postproduction* is an existing theory of form that has influenced my approach to hybridity and this folio more generally. The text uses words like 'remix' and the DJing practice of collaging and recontextualising records as an example, facilitating my consideration of the explicit connections between club culture and visual arts.[11] *Postproduction* proposes the role of the artist as that of the remixer of culture, using existing forms and integrating them into new work. The work presented in this folio remixes and edits embodied experiences and a variety of influences surrounding club and visual culture into single, new works. It uses existing material, and re-forms ideas, hybridising them into a work that functions on its own as an amalgamation of forms. Critically, it sets out to respond to Bourriaud's call to consider culture as a 'toolbox': club and visual culture in the case of this folio.[12] By considering club culture as a 'toolbox' and remixing it as a creative practice, the submitted work is *about,* rather than *for,* the club. The work takes my own embodied experiences and memories intertwined with club culture and spaces, a wide approach to music listening and creation, as well as those of participants, and synthesises them into a unified practice.

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[9] Jeremy Mayall, 'Cross Genre Hybridity in Composition: A Systematic Method', *Organised Sound*, 21, no.1 (2016), 31.
[10] Frank Camilleri, 'A Hybridity Continuum', *Performance Research*, 25:4, 17-20.
[11] See Nicholas Bourriaud, *Postproduction* (New York: Lucas & Steinberg, 2002).
[12] Ibid, 94.

The practice of appropriation is also framed in the form of détournement: 'the integration of present or past artistic productions into a superior construction of a milieu'.[13]

The submitted work exists in two primary forms: installation and fixed-media audio. Installation is used to develop my understanding of visual arts practices, notions of non-linearity in the submitted work, and to consider my practice of working with participants in physical spaces. This has informed the fixed-media audio works, which create non-linear sonic spaces, punctuated with gestures and dialogues that the listener can enter and leave as they wish, picking sounds and information out as they wish.

The following sections present each piece individually in detail. I examine the intricacies and processes behind individual pieces and reveal information in them that may not be immediately clear to the viewer or listener.

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[13] Ken Knabb, *Situationist International Anthology* (Berkeley, California: Bureau of Public Secrets, 1981), 61-62. See chapter 4.3.

3. Installation

The three installations presented in this portfolio presnt an exploration of my approach to site, interaction and participation. Installation appeals to me as a practitioner as a medium where the viewer is invited into a space and may experience any variety of stimuli during the time they spend in it. It is theatrical, viewer-based and is, to an extent, ambiguous in terms of material and genre.[14] These characteristics have been important in the production of the submitted fixed-media audio works. Both the installation and fixed-media audio work share spatial, non-linear, audience-centred characteristics.

3.1 Temporary Autonomous Zones (TAZ)

> '"…successful raids on consensus reality, breakthroughs into more intense and more abundant life", fleeting moments where fantasies are made real and freedom of expression rules before external reality intervenes. "Let us admit" Bey demands, "that we have attended parties where for one brief night, a republic of gratified desires was attained. Shall we not confess that the politics of that night have more reality and force for us than those of, say, the entire US government?"'[15]

- Matthew Collin, *Altered States,* 5

TAZ is the first installation and performance I produced for this folio. It was realised as a temporary live club event in the Exhibition Space and 3Sixty in the Ron Cooke Hub, University of York in November 2017. The piece was originally conceived for five DJs and five performers, based around

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[14] See Claire Bishop, *Installation Art*: *A critical history* (London: Tate, 2005): 6-8. Catherine Elwes, *Installation and the Moving Image* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015). Sherri Irvin, 'Installation art and Performance: A shared ontology' in *Art and Abstract Objects,* ed. Christy Mag Uidhir (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). Nicolas De Oliveira, Nicola Oxley and Michael Petry, *Installation Art in the New Millennium: The Empire of the Senses* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2003). Julie H. Reiss, *From Margin to Center*: *The spaces of installation art* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999). Jonathan Vickery, 'Installation Art', *Arti History* 29, no.5 (2006), 957-63.

[15] See Matthew Collin, *Altered State: The Story of Ecstasy Culture and Acid House* (London: Serpent's Tail 1998), 5.

Hakim Bey's notion of the Temporary Autonomous Zone and its common reference within club culture, particularly that of Berlin.[16] As is consistent with the rest of the submitted work, the piece is a collage of ideas, influences and approaches that present a perspective on the relationship between club and visual culture. In particular, the work considers the relationships and oppositions of literal dance and social choreographies, learned behaviours as choreographies, in nightclub spaces and the relationships between DJs, participants and the physical space. Like much of the submitted work, *TAZ* also takes influence from visual cultures, specifically, the notion of constructing new sites from a combination of existing ones (site-specificity) and the idea that sociability in real-time might constitute the material of a work (relational aesthetics).[17] The work is influenced by the notion of an 'architecture of enabling'; the construction of a space that can catalyse or influence particular social activities or behaviours.[18]

3.1.1 Design

Two spaces at the University of York's Ron Cooke Hub were used for *TAZ.* The first was the club space, located in the building's Exhibition Space. The room contained a sound system, a DJ table with two CDJs, two vinyl turntables and a four-channel mixer, a projector (for the projection of visuals produced by Lynette Quek and Liam Maloney as part of Liam's "Queer" set), and lighting (two strobe lights and a UV cannon).[19] The room, which is usually used as a gallery exhibition space was completely blacked out, transforming it into a temporary club space, based on spaces that I had

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[16] See Tobias Rapp, *Berlin, Techno und der EasyJetset* (Berlin: Suhrkamp Verlag AG), 2012. Matthew Collin, *Rave On*, (London: Serpent's Tail), 2018. Collin, *Altered States*. Felix Denk and Sven von Thulen, *Der Klang der Familie*: *Berlin, Techno and the Fall of the Wall* (Norderstedt: Books on Demand, 2014). Ulrich Gutmair, *Die Ersten Tage von Berlin: Der Sound der Wende* (Stuttgart: Tropen, 2013) Kindle Edition.

[17] See Chapter 2.

[18] Brigitte Biehl-Missal and Dirk von Lehn, 'Four-to-the-floor: The techno discourse and aesthetic work in Berlin', *Society* 53, no.6 (2016), 610.

[19] It is important to note that Quek was invited by Maloney to collaborate on his set. Quek's visuals were included throughout the event and were a welcome addition to the installation, but I would like to emphasise that these were entirely her and Maloney's addition and I would not wish to claim any conceptual or creative credit for these.

visited, intensified through visual and sonic cues. This jarring choice of space was intended to

highlight the space's existence outside of the everyday as a reconstruction of an imagined *inside*

space to promote social interaction. Various visual cues were used to connect this imagined space to

club spaces I had visited, such as strobe lighting, a powerful sound system and the inclusion of

features like a bar and DJ booth.

The second space was an installation space, designed to be introspective in contrast to the

highly sociable space of the club room. The installation was set up in the Ron Cooke Hub's 3Sixty

space; an immersive 360-degree audio-visual environment with projection surfaces on each wall and

speakers behind them. On each of the screens was a strobe effect, controlled by participants using a

MIDI controller placed in the centre of the room. This was accompanied by an ambient soundscape

that is slow moving, and acts in contrast to the main club room and the visuals that accompany it.[20]

There is still reference in the music to the intensity of the main space through the strobe effect and

soundscape in the installation. This can be heard in the high frequency repeated hi-hat that is

gradually introduced at 13'45". The function of this second room was to represent the moments of

respite that clubs offer within the intense physical environment of the club space. It is removed and

quiet, but still visually and experientially intense, never quite allowing participants to take themselves

out of the temporary autonomous zone of the club. The space came from personal experiences and

the experiences of participants in Europe's club scene, who I have spoken to over the past years, of

spaces like gardens or chillout rooms that exist outside the intensity of main club spaces but are still

more intense spaces than those of the everyday.

3.1.2 Performers

The five performers were asked to choose from three themes upon which to develop a character:

Hierarchy, Queer and Excess. On choosing their character, they were given a document containing

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[20] This soundscape can be heard in the submitted file *McNeill Adams_108006276_TAZ Installation Audio.wav*

cultural references and instructions on constructing the character (included in the submitted work), influenced by the text scores used by Fluxus artists.[21] [22] The document also contains elements of two types of text scores outlined by Virginia Anderson: instruction scores that provide direct instructions to performers; and allusive scores that provide a more conceptual description of a work.[23] Hierarchy, Queer and Excess are prevalent in the club spaces that I have experienced and generally act in contrast to participants' everyday experiences and performances. In collaboration with dramaturge Chloe Christian, performers were asked to generate a character profile through the production of a diary and a notebook that served as a visual memory aid. In October 2017, Christian and I ran two day-long workshops with the five performers, predominantly led by Christian, as well as a number of one-on-one conversations and short interviews. These workshops enabled the performers to present and further develop their character and to work on how their character might perform through physical dance and social choreographies in the inside space of the club. On the day of the performance, the characters were positioned around the space and were instructed to improvise on their character, interacting with participants and encouraging them to mimic their choreographies.

The idea behind this came from a notion based on my own experiences and an idea introduced to me by Isabel Lewis, that nightclub spaces are built through participation and social choreographies, both in terms of literal dances and behaviours learned through experience or expressed as an immediate response to other participants.[24] The performers in *TAZ* functioned as catalysts for social interaction. They were instructed not to be forceful in the way that they performed, but rather use their bodies and behaviours subtly to entice visitors into participation, based on the notion that participation will produce a stimulating experience amongst performers as

[21] Virginia Anderson, "The beginning of happiness: Approaching scores in graphic and text notation" in *Sound & score: essays on sound, score and notation,* ed. P. de Assis, W. Brooks and K. Cossens (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2013), 132.
[22] This can be found in file *McNeill Adams_108006276_TAZ - Peromers Score.pdf*
[23] Anderson, 'The beginning of happiness', 132-133.
[24] Isabel Lewis, interviewed by author, online, April 21 2017.

long as they feel comfortable and confident in that performance.[25] Visitors were invited to come and go at their own will and interact in any way that they liked.

The performers in *TAZ* gave exaggerated performances of identities that participants might perform in nightclubs, based on the three themes that they were given, and assisted in encouraging performance amongst participants.[26] There are two instances where this was particularly pertinent in the performance. At one point in the second installation room, a performer was lying on the floor and invited a participant to join them. According to the performer's account, the two lay there for around half an hour, talking about their absorption in the music. Another instance came in the main room where a performer began to dance with a 'wet floor' sign. After a short amount of time, two participants joined without prompting. These two instances were extreme forms of participants' actions and, for the most part, the piece looked and felt like any other club night, but in a more temporary setting. This was the desired effect of the work. It was intended that participants should not be aware of the fact that they were in a performance. These instances can be seen in the video that accompanies the work.[27] On reflection, while these instances were interesting, both Christian and I agreed that some of the performances were perhaps overexaggerated. Future iterations of the work would require a more subtle approach to the performance that sits more in line with Lewis' notion of hosting and a more realistic iteration of the club space.

3.1.3 DJs

The DJs were provided with the same themes as the performers upon which to perform. All DJs were provided with information describing the concept, the meaning of their theme and what was expected of them on the night.[28] However, it was made clear in this information that the DJs had

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[25] Adam Alston, "Audience Participation and Neoliberal Value: Risk, Agency and Responsibility in Immersive Theatre", *Performance Research: On Value* 18, no.12 (2013). 128-138
[26] It is important to note here that this was not an experiment and accounts of behaviours came from observation on the night and from discussions with performers and participants after the event.
[27] See p.17.
[28] See *McNeill Adams_108006276_TAZ - DJ Score.pdf. McNeill Adams_108006276_TAZ - Perfomers Score.pdf*

freedom to interpret the theme as they chose. Unlike the performers, the DJs were assigned themes based on their experiences, identities as artists and their understanding of club spaces.[29] Therefore, some basic biographical detail is required to understand their selection.

London DJ Kaiwa (known as Bearfoot at the time) was chosen to perform *Hierarchy*, due to his tendency towards subversive techniques in his production and DJ sets. His was genre hybrid and included artists and composers including Danny L Harle, Beethoven and Minor Science. Liam Thomas Maloney was chosen to perform *Queer*, because of his extensive knowledge of the queer contexts of American and European club music as both a DJ and researcher. Maloney opted to perform records that are central to the queer clubbing experience that could be defined as classics, such as Cheryl Lynn's *To Be Real* and Robyn's *Dancing on my Own.* The third DJ was Quip, whose experience of the UK rave scene and dance music on the heavier end of the club music spectrum suited the theme of *Excess*. Quip performed a live set of original material, drawing on the experiences mentioned above. The three themed performances were bookended by an opening set performed by me under the moniker Oren and a closing set performed by Tim Wright.

3.1.4 *TAZ* Video

Included in the submitted work is a video featuring footage from the performance of *TAZ* in November 2017, a second performance in November 2019, and footage that I have taken over the past years of club spaces that inspired the production of the piece. Initially, the footage from the two *TAZ* performances was intended as a process of documentation, representing some of the social interactions in the performance space. On review of the footage, this was insufficient for documentation of the work, as it was either of a low quality due to the dark space or did not quite capture the minutiae of the performances between performers and participants. However, I did

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[29] All the DJs booked were friends, colleagues or artists that I know well.

begin to notice similarities between the video documentation and the footage that I had been taking

from club spaces on my phone.

Rather than dismissing both sets of footage as archival, I found that their presentation as a

work in themselves highlighted the similarities between the 'false' space that I had created and the

'real' spaces of the clubs that I had been visiting. In this sense, the *TAZ* video functions as a work in

itself. The *TAZ* event was an artistic gesture, and this video represents a further work that has

emerged from it.

The video sets the two separate sets of footage and situation next to one another. On a

surface level, there are similarities in the visual aspects of the work: strobe lights, silhouettes of

bodies in dark rooms and social interactions between participants. Throughout the video however,

these similarities become distorted. There are unusual moments such as a group of individuals

crowded around a floor cleaning sign or visitors lying on the floor in the installation space. The

differences between the two sets of footage are blurred by their positioning with one another and

their striking similarities. It is the intention of this video that these strange moments become more

apparent as the video goes on. This allows the viewer to construct their own narrative of what is

going on, rather than giving visual clues that may be too explicit.

3.1.5 Discussion

In *TAZ,* the majority of the material was generated by participants and performers, much like other

works in this folio. The creative approach to the work involved placing ideas from performers and DJs

throughout the event to encourage new content to be created by participants. For me, the work was

a process of curation: constructing a space and situation within which participants could experience

and generate a wide range of material. This comes from the notion of postproduction; the remixing

of a culture to produce work in a new context.[30]   Once the content has been curated, the rest of the

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[30] See p.10

event is improvised and unpredictable, relying on the performers', DJs' and participants' approach to interaction, creative decisions and behaviour. This deliberately takes some control away from me as the artist. Through curating material, DJs provide the sonic backdrop for the performance of participants and thus the performance of other identities through dance and social interaction in the space that is in opposition to their everyday.

      TAZ is also influenced by the idea presented by Bourriaud in *Relational Aesthetics* that social interaction and intersubjectivity can act as the material of a work.[31] The work sets up a space for interaction to happen and much of the material of the work is generated by the performers, DJs and participants in the space and their interactions with one another. In *TAZ*, these interactions were dialogical, as well as in the form of dance between participants. This is where the second significant influence, Isabel Lewis' *Occasions* comes in, where performers are positioned around a space, performing improvised electronic music and dances, communicating and often socialising with participants, offering them food and drink.[32] Lewis and the performers acts as a host for the evening, in her own words, seducing visitors to perform in various ways that the artist sees appropriate.[33] Her general practice is also linked to the club, with the artist regularly DJing and performing in clubs in Berlin and attending parties across the city.[34] Although *Occasions* is not necessarily about clubs or club culture, Lewis' consideration and appreciation of the social aspects of club cultures is present in her work.[35] I first experienced *Occasions* at the Tate Modern in April 2017, and was struck by how comfortable participants felt in the space to interact with performers and with one another. The ease with which Lewis and the performers achieved participation was something that I wanted to echo in *TAZ*. The uncomfortable feeling that often comes with participation, that has been likened to a

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[31] Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 37 & 38.
[32] This comes from my experience of the work when it was exhibited at the Tate Modern as part of their Ten Days Six Nights series on 24 March 2017
[33] Lewis, interviewed by author.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.

nightmare where the participant is on stage but does not know the lines to the play, is not present in Lewis' work.[36]

TAZ was my first exploration into producing installation. It allowed me to consolidate an approach to my creative work where a participant or listener might enter a space and pick out information or stimuli, constructing their own experiences, a common thread throughout the submitted work. It also developed my consideration of the curatorial aspect of my work and a practice of postproduction. Most critically, the work allowed me to begin considering the commonalities between club spaces and visual arts practices and how that applied to my own creative practice.

3.2 Freeport

Freeport is a brief deviation from my use of club cultures as inspiration and subject matter, focusing primarily on developing an understanding of my practice of producing installation and work in a physical space. As with the submitted fixed-media audio work, it was intended that visitors or listeners would be able to enter the work at any time and to construct their own experience during their time within the space, rather than experiencing it on a linear basis. The production of Freeport allowed me to further clarify and conceptualise this non-linear approach to creative work and brought clarity to the compositional process.

Freeport engages a wide audience with the concept of freeports: large tax-free storage spaces that exist outside the jurisdiction of any country.[37] I focus on art freeports: spaces where large amounts of valuable artworks are stored tax free.[38] Art freeports are exclusive sites, and, in the

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[36] Sophie Nield, 'Backpages: The rise of the character named spectator', Contemporary Theatre Review 18(4), 2008, 535.
[37] Stefan Heidenreich, "Freeportism as Style and Ideology: Post-Internet and Speculative Realism, Part I." e-flux 71, 2016. Online, accessed May 1 2018. https://www.e-flux.com/journal/71/60521/freeportism-as-style-and-ideology-post-internet-and-speculative-realism-part-i/
[38] Ibid.

words of Stefan Heidenreich, are an 'anti-theatron' where art is held as an asset and not exhibited for public view.[39]

Freeport responds to the idea of art freeports by seeking to reveal hidden value in the everyday. The work engaged participants from a wide range of backgrounds to consider objects that they found valuable due to their everyday nature. Conceptually, this functions to encourage participants to contemplate value and items they hold valuable, specifically through their engagement in a work of art, subverting the premise that is set by freeports where some art exists solely as a commodity and is housed in secure, inaccessible spaces.

Participants in *Freeport* were engaged without selective process through an open call, from which those who wished to participate were invited to do so. Each participant was sent a document that contained instructions on how they were expected to engage with the project. The document included contextual and background information on freeports and information on their role as a participant.[40] To provide an understanding of the conceptual considerations surrounding value and the secrecy of freeports, the score provided participants with examples of physical and cultural manifestations of the concept of value: hidden spaces, objects or artefacts.[41] This was to aid them in the next step of the process and to allow them to transfer their newly learned knowledge of the freeport into the context of their own creative output.

In response to this document, participants were instructed to creatively document an item they believed had personal value to them because of its hidden or secretive nature. This object could be anything and could be documented in any way that the participant thought would best demonstrate the item: the item itself, a photograph, video, sound recording, piece of prose, a sketch, or any other way that they wished to document the object. At the centre of this process was the idea that the participant should be awarded ownership over the curation and documentation of their contribution. Accompanying this item, they were also asked to contribute a short description of the

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[39] Ibid.
[40] This can be found in the file *McNeill Adams_108006276_Freeport Participants' Score.pdf*
[41] Please see the Freeport supporting document for this information.

object's value to them as a sound recording or piece of text. During the process participants were also invited to talk to one another and to me as the facilitator of the project to clarify any misunderstandings or to discuss the project's content. When they had collected the documentation of their item, they then submitted it to the project for exhibition.

Due to the open nature of participation in the project, the descriptive and instructive element in this document was kept straightforward and precise. Participants were given freedom over and encouragement with the creative aspect of documenting their item. Although some participants considered themselves artistic to some extent as professional, semi-professional or amateur artists, many did not. Those who did not self-identify as artistic indicated that they were uncomfortable with the idea of being creative and with notions of cultural value throughout our personal conversations. For this reason, it was important to build a personal relationship with all participants and to assist them throughout the process, building comfort and confidence.

Once all the submissions were received, they were put together in the Backroom space in London's Copeland Park Gallery & Bussey Building. Within the space, each submission was positioned carefully, accompanied by a soundscape. The soundscape is an ambient pad loop that is 47'20", featuring originally composed material as well as audio submissions from the open call.[42] This composed and curated material forms the sonic background to the piece, echoing an imagined, clinical and industrial soundscape to put the viewers in the space of a freeport, forming the sonic site of the work.

The notion of an imagined space is critical to all of the works in this folio. *Freeport* is a particularly pertinent example of my approach to constructing imagined spaces from real spaces. On putting together this project, I was interested in visiting a freeport myself. However, on discussing this idea with a friend who was working with an art dealer at the time, I discovered the spaces are completely closed off to those who do not own works in them and are very difficult to arrange visits

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[42] See *McNeill Adams_108006276_Freeport Installation Loop.wav.*

to. As part of this conversation, the same friend went on to describe a visit to view a work of art. On entering, they were asked to wait in a foyer before being invited to enter what might be described as an airlock; an empty space between the foyer and the viewing space. He was left alone in what he described as completely blank, empty room. After some time, another door opened on the other side of the room, leading to another blank space, this time with the work of art that he had come to view hanging on the wall. This cold but overwhelming space is what I aimed to produce both in the soundscape and the physical space that I created in *Freeport*.

Digital and physical submissions were positioned through the room, and their textual and audio descriptions positioned elsewhere in the space, disjointed from the corresponding submission. Visitors were encouraged to engage with the space and the presented material, creating their own narratives through the fractured nature of the work's organisation. Visitors were also encouraged to engage with one another and with me as the artist in the space. These engagements included discussions about the work's concept, content and processes, and served to make sure the visitors felt comfortable to interact with me, other visitors and the material within the space. While the space was physical, the engagement and discussion within the space between me and visitors formed an integral part of the work, as well as the engagement between me and participants in the gathering of the material, taking influence from relational practices.

While the influence of relational practices were a significant source of influence in the work, I do not claim that this is a relational work or a work of relational aesthetics. Instead, these theories inspired the composition of the work and my understanding of their practical application. There were multiple points of interaction and conversation throughout the work, between me and participants, me and visitors, and visitors and visitors. The final product was the mediation of all of these elements: original composition, others' material and its curation in the work as a practice of postproduction, and the interaction between different parties.

3.2.1 Photograph Booklet

As with *TAZ*, *Freeport* was complex to document. There were a variety of submissions, conversations and communication during the process of gathering material, as well as multiple avenues of conversation and moments throughout the exhibition of the work that were impossible to document. Instead, I took a set of photos of the exhibition, which, alongside by the submitted soundscape, exist as a work in themselves, contributing to the artistic approach. This is what I have submitted in the folio of creative work alongside the process described in this commentary.[43]

3.3 City Symphony

City Symphony is an audio work based on a set of daytime *dérives* with a group of participants around areas of London and Berlin that participants considered central to their experience of the city's nightlife. The imperative of the piece was to further understand the *inside* and *outside* spaces of London and Berlin's nightlife through the lens of participants, rather than exclusively from my own perspective. During these participant-led *dérives*, we had a loosely themed conversation surrounding their experiences of their respective city's nightlife, and particular locations that were central to their process of going out that included club spaces and spaces that occupied their time before and after. The *dérives* were primarily conducted during the day and at times when participants would not typically be in club spaces.

The work was also key in developing my approach to conversation and dialogue throughout this folio. *City Symphony* is one of a handful of works where I worked with participants and engaged them with an idea and in conversation to gather others' perspectives on the ideas that I was interested in. Although I have constructed and curated these works, it has been important throughout the creative work to represent the voices that I have worked with and express their ideas alongside my own. Originally, the work was intended as a looped headphone piece that could be

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[43] See *McNeill Adams_108006276_Freeport Photograph Booklet.pdf.*

entered and left at any time, as if the listener was dropping in on these somewhat personal conversations. *City Symphony* was originally to be presented as a stereo audio installation and to be exhibited as a headphone installation at BETWEENNESS festival at the University of Leeds on 2-3 May 2020. The exhibition was cancelled due to the impact of Covid-19, but the work still functions as a headphone piece, as intended.

In the initial stages of the process, five participants were identified: three in Berlin and two in London. All participants had some relationship with the nightlife of either or both cities but were also critical of the city's nightlife spaces and cultures. For example, one German participant, who can be heard in the work speaking German, was born and raised in Berlin and took a sceptical approach to the city's night culture techno-tourism.[44] At the same time, two other participants can be heard reciting the positives of techno-tourism and its benefits to the city.

During the *dérives*, I recorded the conversations between me and participants, asking open questions surrounding their relationship with nightlife of the city, their approach to nightlife tourism and exclusivity and their ideas of how ritual and space work in the club cultures of their respective cities. Although the topic for these conversations was pre-determined, the conversations themselves were free, and questions improvised depending on participants' responses. The audio from these recordings was collated and constructed into a cohesive narrative based on these questions. First, there is an introduction to participants from 0'00"-3'55" before a discussion surrounding their relationship to the city and its nightlife from 3'55"-12'01". A discussion surrounding ex- and inclusivity, intersubjectivity and techno-tourism follows from 12'01"-21'51" before ending on participants' reflections of their personal rituals and space. These audio recordings are superimposed over field recordings of spaces that were mentioned during the *dérives* that were particularly pertinent to participants' experiences of nightlife in their city.

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[44] See Rapp, *Lost and Found.*

The work is presented as a documentary piece, proposing a narrative without a single narrator. Instead, participants' words and ideas are constructed to produce a narrative structure. This is influenced by and not dissimilar to the narrative structures of Maja Classen's 2006 film about Berlin club culture *Don't Forget to Go Home (Feiern)* and Felix Denk and Sven von Thülen's comprehensive commentary on the same subject *Der Klang der Familie: Berlin, Techno and the Fall of the Wall.*[45]

During the work's composition, I was sensitive to the language and accents in the recordings. There are a number of moments where this is clear. Primarily, one of the conversations was conducted in German and no translation is included in the documentation of the work. This recording is particularly intimate. While the rest of the recordings were recorded around a variety of locations, this recording was recorded in the kitchen of the participant. It felt true to the participant's approach, as well as my relationship with the participant to keep this text in German rather than translating or recording a new version. The kitchen also has a certain sound and reverberation that I found unique when editing the piece. If the listener does not understand the language, that is less important than the intention that they feel as though they are stepping into the participant's space and listening to them. The decision not to translate is also relevant to Berlin's club scene, which is somewhat protective of German-speaking participants, often wary of English-speaking tourists.[46] However, there is a tension in the city between the high numbers of English speakers, or those that speak it as a common language, and German speakers. This is highlighted as it is put into contrast with the English-speaking Frankie and Hannah, one of whom speaks in an English accent and the other in a German accent.

This city-specific approach also became clear in the language of all the participants. Each one speaks of specific spaces or uses terminology that only those familiar with the city might be

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[45] See Denk and Von Thulen, *Der Klang der Familie. Don't Forgot to Go Home (Feiern)*, directed by Maja Classen (HFF Konrad Wolf, 2006), film.
[46] Interestingly, the idea of the Berlin nightlife community favouring German language speakers comes up with this participant from around 16'57".

accustomed to. For example, there is a moment where two participants talk about 'getting a stamp' on Saturday night (22'06"), a preparation ritual very specific to Berlin's 24-hour weekend party culture. Another example comes when one of the London participants keeps referring to 'south' and 'south-east', a very London-specific reference to South and South-East London.

In *City Symphony*, there are also two moments of linguistic interest that are not intentional but are certainly a convenient accident in the context of the piece. The first comes in the field recordings that constitute the background to the piece, over which the interviews are placed. From the beginning onwards, a radio broadcast in Mandarin can be heard next to a hip-hop beat. This came from a field recording in a location in Soho. When I visited the location, this was a sound that particularly caught my attention. On one side of the street was a busker who was breakdancing to hip-hop record on a boombox. On the other side of the street was a protest with banners in Mandarin and the radio broadcast that can be heard playing alongside. While the inclusion of the Chinese language was not deliberate, the juxtaposition of context was something I found interesting and wanted to capture as a field recording.

The other unintentional linguistic moment in the piece comes at 8'52". One of the London *dérives* was conducted outside the Gowlett Arms in Peckham (itself a significant venue in London's nightlife scene). At one moment, two young boys rode past on bikes and one shouts 'Elijah!' in a London accent. Again, while unintentional, this addition of linguistic interest was certainly a welcome addition within the work.

As with *TAZ* and *Freeport*, *City Symphony* supports the fixed-media audio work. It consolidates my practice of the *dérive* that I continue to develop in a more abstract medium in *Dérives.*[47] It tangibly demonstrates the approach that my interpretation of the practice of *dérive* considers, creating a conversational and personal relationship with participants, and giving them

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[47] See chapter 4.2.

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ownership over the work. The process of discussion gathers participants' perspectives on the notion

of the *inside* and *outside* club spaces in their particular cities.

Once again, the notion of site is prominent in the piece and particularly the idea that a

symbolic site can be built out of the construction of a variety of spaces.[48] In reconstructing

individuals' experiences in relation to location-specific *inside* and *outside* spaces in London and Berlin,

a new site is made where a listener can drop into conversations and, in turn, construct their own

narratives. At times, there is ambiguity around which spaces participants are speaking about. Rather

than encouraging listeners to guess what the narrative at a certain point might be, it is intended that

they draw on their own experiences to construct the new site of conversation. The field recordings in

the background are constructed of recordings of sites in both London and Berlin, combining the

languages, spaces and sonic identities of both, and constructing a new, unified site made of the voices

and experiences of others.

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[48] See p.8.

4. Fixed-Media Audio Works

The fixed-media works submitted in this folio consist of 10 works presented in three EPs produced between January 2017 and December 2019. Each work demonstrates the variety of influences on this folio, my own and participants' embodied experiences of club cultures, and a consideration of practices in the visual arts. The works employ various ways of gathering materials, as described in the commentary on each piece. They are also representative of my approach to using hybridity to synchronise a wide range of influence and non-linearity to produce pieces that reflect the installation.

Two Dancers is a collection of works that explores notions of physical and social interaction in the *inside* space of the club, based on observation and the construction of a collage of experiences in club spaces. In the second EP that I present, *Dérives,* I use the *dérive* to consider movement, interaction, and the curation of experience in the *outside* space of the club in particular locations. The final EP introduces four exercises using the situationist technique of détournement to further explore my practice of appropriation and integrating others' material in my own work. All three present an approach to the hybridity continuum of coming together, becoming together, and becoming.[49]

4.1 Two Dancers

Two Dancers is a set of three works composed between September 2018 and July 2019. The works present a collage of observations of intersubjectivity in club spaces. The first of these observations involved an experience in a London nightclub in which I observed a man and woman dancing together. Throughout the dance, neither broke eye contact with the other. At the same time, both participants appeared inebriated and their bodies struggled to keep in time with the music. Their eye contact grounded the performance amidst the chaos of their physical bodies. The resulting dance was a combination of literal dance and socially choreographed behaviour, with their bodies reacting to

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[49] See pp. 9-10.

the music and their visual communication acting as a social and venereal performance. It was

uncomfortable to watch, yet intimate and expressive. After this observation, I began to note the

minutiae of social dances in the inside space of the club, both amongst individuals and as part of

larger, collective dances, observing, noting and documenting their mechanics to utilise as creative

material.

The approach to gathering material is of note in this piece in its application of the

ethnographic approach adopted by Buckland mentioned in Chapter 1.[50] This non-intrusive approach

is effective in that it does not disrupt the movements and choreographies and avoids forced

performances in participants. Instead, the resulting work is a personal and artistic reflection and

representation of the variety of moments that I noted when preparing for the work's composition.

In preparing for this work and throughout the compositional process, I paid close attention to

the representation of spoken communication as well as physical communication, primarily through

dance. This physical, dance-based communication is critical in the composition of these works. The

sounds used in the work intend to represent the movement of bodies and their communication with

one another in space. I will give specific references to where this can be heard in the following

discussion on each individual piece.[51] As a general point however, the works in *Two Dancers* are

concurrent with the work throughout this folio that build an imagined space in their soundscape,

positioning moments, actions, references and ideas as sonic gestures within that space.

The integration of a variety of influences into the work is also important and a mention of

these influences in this commentary will allow for a greater understanding of the works. Each work

employs sounds, effects and materials that are associated with club, experimental, electronic,

electroacoustic, and acoustic music that has informed the submitted work's aesthetic. The hybridity

of concept and genre represents my own analysis of existing work as well as a relationship with the

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[50] See p. 9
[51] See pp. 31-35..

media-hybrid visual works that I consistently refer back to in my work's production and presentation. Again, I will discuss specific influences in more detail in relation to each individual work.

4.1.1 Two Dancers 1

Two Dancers 1 was composed using inspiration from the instance described above of the two observed dancers. This instance was one of many that I observed that was a type of physical (rather than verbal) conversation between two participants. For this reason, many of the sounds that are included in the work are highly physical. The inspiration for this work came when thinking about the conversations and dances that I had observed and reducing them to minimal forms. Most notably, the low frequency notes heard in *Two Dancers 1* from 0'07" onwards, panned hard left and right, are antiphonal in texture and produce an example of the representation of observed verbal and embodied communication between participants. The sound was specifically produced to almost reflect the idea of the sound of a ripple through the body. The work submitted in this folio is very much influenced by dance and, in the process of producing these works, I imagined how certain embodied movements might translate into sound, and how that might translate back into the body of the listener.

In *Two Dancers 1*, the imagined physical space is built gradually and constantly, highlighting its perennial presence, but leaving it as secondary to the depiction of interaction between the two imagined dancers. The high-frequency sine pitches heard at the beginning present an unidentifiable, characterless space. This space is expanded at 0'49", with the addition of an auto-panned noise tone and expansive reverb. Throughout the piece, increasing numbers of high frequency sine tones are incorporated, using a modulated echo and reverb with a long reverberation time to broaden the sonic space they imply. During the middle section, starting at 2'00"', I introduce percussive sounds using sampled materials such as metal, glass and wood. The use of these sounds produces a literal reference to material space, connecting the imagined dances to the sonic environment.

Two Dancers 1 takes an experimental approach to various musical styles, incorporating

influences from experimental electronic music that I have perceived in the scope of club music.

Notably, Teresa Winter's *Apostrophising the Cunt* and Felicia Atkinson's *Adaptation Assez Facile*

inform the sonic identity of the first piece in the series. Their sparse analogue textures and percussive

inflections can be heard throughout the work. Other works like Visible Cloaks, Yoshio Ojima & Satsuki

Shibano's *Toi* and Helena Gough's *Grau* offer further insight into the sound worlds that inspired the

piece.

4.1.2 Two Dancers 2

Two Dancers 1 and *Two Dancers 2* share many similarities in approach conceptually. However, there

are some differences in techniques and ideas. Spatially, the piece aimed to reflect the dark,

somewhat industrial aesthetic of the spaces that I visited throughout the preparation for this set of

works. To me, this space demanded representation in resonant metallic tones. While experimenting

during the composition of *Two Dancers,* I noticed that when the output gain was turned up to full, the

spring in the Vermona Retroverb Lancet became especially sensitive when the metal casing was

knocked. At times, this resulted in some feedback in the device. This is the sound that can be heard

for the first 1'30" the piece. The resulting sound is essentially a drone, punctuated by metallic hits

when I would deliberately interact with the Lancet. This opening section is the product of a lengthy

session where material from the effects unit was recorded, and then edited more precisely into the

structure of the piece.

Throughout the work's composition, mix and master I used multiple filters and EQs to attain a

wide frequency range in the composed material. This is particularly clear from 1'33" onwards, using a

high pass filter on rich reverberation to achieve a glass-like tone in the higher frequencies. From

2'38" onwards, this space in the frequency spectrum is further accentuated by the use of a high

frequency ticking sound, achieved by slicing short sections of audio from the Lancet recording and

adding a resonant high pass filter to accentuate the higher frequencies. These sliced audio sections

are not looped but disjointed and positioned sporadically within the arrangement. They are set against sounds that were achieved using a similar technique but using a low-pass instead of high-pass filter, providing the low-end rumble that can also be heard from around the same point. These gestures create a sense of expansive space in the composition and punctuate the work, existing in a similar form of dialogue to *Two Dancers 1.*

Two Dancers 2 constructs an imagined industrial space reminiscent of the work of artists like Monolake and Dedekind Cut. In both artists' work there is a strong link to club cultures, each regularly performing in club contexts. There is also a clear creative imperative in *Two Dancers 2* to produce a hybrid of the contrasting styles of popular and experimental work. This is apparent in the sound worlds of tracks like *Held* by Malibu and Lorenzo Senni's *Untitled Three*, both of which influenced the production of this folio of creative work.

4.1.3 Two Dancers 3

Two Dancers 3 takes a similar approach to the other works in this series. However, there is a more literal approach to the notion of communication. While in *Two Dancers 1* and *2*, the communication that I chose to replicate in the sound was embodied in the form of dance, *Two Dancers 3* replicates this dialogue through the use of the voice, as well as in sounds that are more physical. The vocal communication reflected in this work is represented by four improvised and autotuned vocals, panned across the stereo field and heard from the beginning of the work and throughout the piece. The more embodied type of communication that is reflected in the other two works comes in at 1'16" with slightly modulating melodic bass sound. Again, this section is an edited version of a recorded improvisation which was then integrated into the work. The sound itself came from some experimentation with the Moog Mother 32 semi-modular synthesiser. I discovered that if I increased the attack and reduced the decay on the envelope generator and continued to keep the keys

compressed as I played the melody, the envelope would regenerate, creating the modulation in that line. This is an effect that I also used in *London000*.[52]

As with the rest of the works in this set, and indeed folio, these gestural, communicative and embodied sounds are set within an imagined space. In *Two Dancers 3,* the high frequency, glass-like sounds that can be heard throughout echo characteristics of the space I had set out to create, similar to those heard in *Two Dancers 2*. I expand this approach to creating space from 3'19", where I have added a reverb to the Moog bass melody. The reverberation time was set to around 4 seconds, pitched up by a fifth and then a number of octaves to give it an expansive character, before putting the wet reverb signal through a high-pass filter. The space this reflects is reminiscent of the spaces in which I observed these interactions between participants: cavernous and sonically reflective club spaces. However, the spaces are still, and the resulting effect is spectral, with the movements and conversations that are being echoed pinpointed within the space. In this section, I have also used field recordings, which I then positioned within the imagined space. With these field recordings, I left a microphone in my workspace with the gain turned up high and continued to work. The microphone would pick up all of my movements, as well as the ambient noise floor of the space in London that I was working in. I would edit these recordings and use an EQ to remove frequencies below around 8kHz, boosting at around 16kHz for a shimmering effect. I then put these through a reverb with a long reverberation time. The movements in the room (mouse clicks, creaks of the chair, typing, writing, moving things around my desk, breaths or sighs) produced randomised and unpredictable gestures, while the ambient noise floor picked up as a result of the high gain produced an ambient background to the work. In turn, this produced an extra layer to the approach to space building in the work. Like the bass reverb, this can be heard from 3'19".

This popular/experimental music relationship explored in *Two Dancers 2* is clear in *Two Dancers 3*. It is reminiscent of works such as Varg2TM's *Red Line II (127 Sätra C) (feat. Yung Lean)*,

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[52] See p. 39.

FLORA's *Spira*, KYO's *Universal Audio* and KhalilH20P's *Redde Hinanden*. These works utilise a combination of experimental production techniques, ambient sound worlds and stylistic characteristics of Pop music, with features such as autotuned vocals, sustained soft pads and field recordings, and the appropriation of Pop-style basslines.

4.2 Dérives

The three *Dérives* are the sonic representations of a set of *dérives* through Basel, Berlin and London between 2017 and 2019. They are based on a set of unplanned walks alone and with participants in the *outside* spaces around the city. In particular, I aimed to focus on the sonic identities of each individual city that I had personally experienced during these *dérives*, as well as those projected onto the spaces by the participants. The works are not necessarily explicit recounts of these experiences, but rather a collection of memories, ideas and sonic interjections. As I will go on to discuss in relation to each individual piece, they are also not necessarily real reflections of the cities themselves and are highly subjective, often perceived from a nostalgic and personal viewpoint. This viewpoint means that the works are not always narrative or indeed accurate reconstructions of the *dérives*. Instead, they are the accumulation of notes, media, and memories. The practice of the *dérive* was chosen to channel these collected experiences and consolidate them into a singular work, following on from the previously discussed notions of the hybrid.[53] The hybridity in this work reflects not only the work and ideas that influenced it, but also the hybridity of the input of a variety of participants and its integration into a singular work, similar to the approach in the submitted works of installation.

The approach to creating space in these works is once again critical to the composition. Cityscapes and *outside* spaces are created, and particular sounds or ideas occupy those spaces in the submitted work. Again, there is an element of the atemporal aspects of an installation in the works of

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[53] See pp. 9-10.

dérive. A sonic space is created within which the listener can enter and pick out certain ideas and begin to construct their own narratives or meanings from these ideas.

4.2.1 Basel 8/04

Basel 8/04 is based on *dérives* conducted in Basel. Basel is the city that I am least familiar with of the three cities explored in this set. Although the work is based on my experience of Basel, the listener's interpretation of the work and the sounds heard does not have to be specific to that city. The material and representation of the outside space is ambiguous; in a way it is not specific to the city of Basel at all, but rather my own embodied experiences and those of the participants in the *dérives* that I took. The *dérives* were conducted over a weekend spent negotiating the city and its nightlife with locals who I had recently met, presenting an outsider's participation, navigating the unfamiliar urban space, guided by local friends and fellow participants. My experiences of Basel's club culture were punctuated by returning to peoples' houses and fractured conversations with strangers.

The navigation of the city is represented sonically by an ambiguous space through the sporadically pitch-shifted, noise-heavy pad that is heard from the beginning of the work through to 5'00". There are, however, two more specific sounds that relate to the habitual nature of this particular *dérive*: the fractured text to speech sample from 0'16"-2'34" and the sample of someone entering a flat from 2'39-5'00". The fractured speech is a text-to-speech sample of snippets of reconstructed conversations. These conversations are based on memories and fragments of speech that I had with participants, some of which may have been fictionalised or idealised in the compositional process. It is representative of common experiences of these spaces, where temporary friendships and relationships emerge and conversations are had that will inevitably be forgotten, altered and idealised in the following days.

The work also seeks to employ familiar sounds that represent the notion of the *outside* space that is so present in this folio. A particular example can be heard in the field recording of somebody coming home from 2'44". Moments like this seek to provide very specific and recognisable

references to the listener, juxtaposed against the somewhat synthetic background of the imagined

space. Structurally, however, the positioning of this field recording is unexpected. It is the moment

of coming home which is, at least in narratives around club culture, an ending point. In *Basel 8/04*,

the moment comes around a third of the way into the piece, with the climax coming right at the end

of the work. This is another demonstration of a non-linear approach. It suggests that the piece is a

construction of memories, rather than a linear narrative, which the listener can enter at any point.

There are a number of musical influences that can be heard in *Basel 8/04* that are either

specifically referenced in the work or have influenced the overall way that certain sounds are

hybridised with others. Notably, the work was where I first began to explore text-to-speech as a

compositional tool to homogenise participants and allow for listeners to project their own experience

onto their experience of the work. This idea was directly influenced by artists like Varg^{2TM}, who

frequently uses text-to-speech as in *This Wretched Light*, as well as Aisha Devi's *Time is the Illusion of*

Solidity and Croatian Amor's *Eden 1.1* and *Eden 1.2.* The final euphoric trance-like section is a specific

reference to PC Music artists. This came from one of the *dérives* in Basel where I ended up at a

participant's home, listening to PC Music on repeat late into the evening. The section references

work like EasyFun's *Monopoly*, A.G. Cook's *Beautiful* and, most notably, Life Sim's *I.D.L,* all of which

were played a number of times throughout the evening. The integration of these works into *Basel*

8/04 demonstrates the approach to hybridity throughout the submitted work.[54]

4.2.2 Berlin17

The conceptual and compositional approach in producing *Berlin17* was similar to that in *Basel 8/04*.

However, I am more familiar with Berlin as a former resident and regular visitor and have a network

of regular participants in the city's club culture. Again, the piece is based on a number of *dérives*

conducted both alone and with other participants, creating a more subjective overview of the city and

[54] See pp. 9-10.

producing sonic representations of the experiences of a number of individuals. Sonic identifiers represent the *dérives* and experiences to produce an imagined reconstruction of the city's landscape alongside more specific sonic references. Where *Berlin17* differs is in the more vivid approach to recreating some of the city's spaces. While *Basel 8/04* was conducted over a weekend, *Berlin17* is built of a large number of *dérives* that I took between 2017 and 2019

One *dérive* was conducted along the Landwehrkanal in Kreuzkölln.[55] The location is where participants in the city's club scene often ease themselves out of the intensity of the club into the everyday. The space has a particular sonic identity, with trees lining the canal and barges passing through at regular intervals, sonified through the analogue noise sounds mimicking water and wind from the start of the piece. More generally, the piece is punctuated by sounds typical of the acid techno genre, using a Roland 303 style bass (although achieved using Korg's Volca Bass) first heard at 0'44". This genre of techno is synonymous with a number of Berlin's clubs and events with more musically intense booking policies such as Herrensauna, Säule (Berghain's Thursday night events), Pornceptual and Grießmühle.[56] The passage from 3'48" to 5'58" uses a low-pass filtered techno track (composed by me) that sits in the background of the work. This is another instance of the recreation of spaces experienced during the *dérive* that I see as site-specific to Berlin. In the *outside* space these sounds exist in the proximity of the nightclubs where participants will queue or congregate before and after their experience in the club, and a very distant, low frequency hum can be heard coming from inside, accompanied by the rattling windows of the former industrial spaces they often inhabit. This phenomenon is not necessarily specific to Berlin clubs, however from Friday night to the early hours of Monday morning, it is a sound that frequently occupies the city's soundscape. During the *dérives*, it was a characteristic that was constantly present, even if the *dérive* did not deliberately begin, end or pass outside club spaces.

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[55] A portmanteau of Berlin's Kreuzberg and Neukölln neighbourhoods.
[56] A pertinent example can be seen in Herrensauna resident MCMLXXXV's 2018 Boiler Room set at Tresor: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Ee1TWHoCRM

Once again, the structure of the work should not necessarily be seen as linear and is constructed from a variety of personal and participants' memories of club sites. There is also a text-to-speech vocal at the start of the work, as with *Basel 8/04*, that contains snippets (or at least imagined snippets) of conversations had during the *dérives* around these spaces. An imagined space is created and accentuated with detail. Structure and direction are still features of the piece. However, rather than using these directional moments to structure the work temporally, they are used to direct the listener towards particular gestures and changes in space throughout the work.

I have described *Berlin17*'s frame of reference in terms of the acid techno often heard in Berlin clubs. There are some specific references that assist in understanding this genre, such as 999999999's *000000003*, Anetha's *Acid Train*, Parallx's *Tuathal*, or Thomas P. Heckmann's *Acid Breaks.*

4.2.3 London000

London000 differs from the other two pieces in this collection in terms of its abstract handling of sonic material, with fewer specific sonic references. It is based on *dérives* of the *outside* space predominantly after events in London around a time that the city is typically empty. There is a stillness that exists in contrast to the intensity of the everyday. In a similar way that participants engage in the *dérive* around spaces such as the Landwehrkanal in Berlin, participants in London's nightlife often seek this calm time to cross the limen back from the club space to the everyday. However, in London, this space is harder to access. With some participants, there was a sense of anxiety in leaving spaces so late (or early) that they might encounter people going about their everyday life, creating a dissonance between the two.

The notion of positioning personal memories and those of participants into the composed landscape is particularly important in *London000.* Nostalgic elements are common throughout *Dérives*, with the cityscape of London depicted as a space of calm, while the reality may be completely different. There is a sense of afterglow in the works that reflects perhaps a nostalgic, rather than

realistic view of the city. This is inspired by the work of Burial in two ways. The first comes from the

artist's car radio test, where, once he thinks a track is nearly complete, he will drive around London

and play the record on his car stereo. If it works in this context then it is ready for release.[57]

London000 shares this similar nostalgic connection to the city, perhaps functioning as a personal

experience that I intend to reflect onto the listener. The second more specific reference to Burial is in

his track *In McDonalds*, an ambient excursion that features synthesised pads, Burial's signature pirate

radio crackle and an a cappella from Aaliyah's upbeat R&B record, *I Refuse.*[58] The work connects with

one of the *dérives* that I took in preparing for this piece, where I walked past the McDonald's on

Brixton Hill, which was teeming with Brixton's post-club crowd: loud, rowdy and chaotic.

Nonetheless, the memory that I have of the *dérive* was one of calm that is reflected in *London000*,

and one that is similar to the picture of London created by Burial in *In McDonalds.*

The piece evokes the inner-city landscape that travelling home from nightclub spaces in the

city involves. The sub bass drone heard throughout the first section of the piece echoes the constant

and unique hum of the London Underground, while the sound world from 3'55" represents a contrast

to the city's perceived uninterrupted motion through moments of calm that can be observed during

the early hours. There are references to the industrial landscape that many of London's club spaces

occupy and their seeming stillness from the outside, referenced in sounds such as the metallic LFO

through a spring reverb that can be heard from 1'33" onwards.

The direct references to other work in *London000* are less explicit, as the work is more

abstract and reflective. There are some references towards the general sound world in the harmonic

and gestural work of composers of avant-garde experimental and electronic music such as Kaija

Saariaho's *Emilie Suite* and *Plutôt Melodique, Toccata and Fugue* and *Baroque (Second Interlude)* from

Pierre Schaeffer's *La Trièdre Fertile*. The work also references more contemporary artists working in

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[57] Alessio Kolioulis, 'Borderlands: Dub Techno's Hauntological Politics of Acoustic Ecology', *Dancecult: Journal of Electronic Dance Music Culture* 7, no.2 (2015), 67.
[58] Ibid, 66.

electronic music like Mutierend's *Sol 5352*, New Tendencies' debut album *Missed Month*, Caterina

Barbieri's *How to Decode and Illusion,* and the chopped up, close-miked vocals of Felicia Atkinson's

Adaptation Assez Facile, a reference to which can be heard from 3'55".

4.3 Exercises on Détournement

These pieces propose responses to the situationist practice of détournement as well as an alternative

approach to themes of postproduction that run throughout this work.[59] The works are presented as a

set of exercises, as they are a set of pieces where I am exploring the possibilities of détournement

exclusively using others' work, rather than producing new material. These exercises were the only

pieces that were produced linearly. They present a clear trajectory of my thinking about integrating

the practice of détournement throughout my work. While these pieces were written one after

another, they still influenced how I was thinking about composing the other submitted work and my

overarching approach to the production of this folio.

Understanding the role of postproduction and détournement in both edit cultures and

contemporary visual arts is critical to understanding the approaches and overarching influences in

these exercises. A continuation of sonic appropriation can be seen in contemporary club cultures,

stemming from edits and bootlegs in DJ cultures. Margie Borschke defines DJ edits as re-worked

compositions of existing works, typically without the permission of the copyright holder, to produce

more dancefloor-appropriate versions of tracks.[60] Traditionally, these were produced by and

circulated around House, Disco, and New York Garage DJs, using precisely edited tapes to create new

versions of existing tracks that better suited their needs.[61] A notable example is Larry Levan's edit of

Carl Bean's *I Was Born This Way*. While disco edits are still prominent in club music, new forms of

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[59] See pp. 10-11.
[60] Margie Borschke, 'Disco edits and their discontents: The persistence of the analog in a digital era', *New Media & Society* 13, no.6 (2011), 931.
[61] Ibid. 931-932.

edits and bootlegs have emerged in recent years that can be understood through the lens of détournement. These new forms incorporate a strong sense of hybridity and sonic collage.

There are also artists and labels producing and releasing edits and bootlegs that explore more experimental territories in their composition. Examples include the edits/bootlegs of boygirl's artist community, including artists like AYA, Michael C. Brailey and Jennifer Walton, who produce re-works of well-known pieces of popular music through the lens of experimental, club-oriented music. This form of experimentalism in edit, bootleg and DJ culture through détournement can be extended to specific performances, extended compositions and mixes from artists working throughout experimental club music genres.

Lorenzo Senni's mixes and performances use Trance build-ups, playing them until just before they drop, before mixing in a new build-up. These are sporadically interspersed with the deployment of CO2 cannons, an effect regularly found in club music events. Another similar example can be found in the work of Robin Buckley, whose artist name is rkss. Their work focuses on the adoption of sounds from commercially available sample packs combined with popular and EDM tracks to produce sonic collages.[62]   Again, Buckley is recycling forms and structures in their compositional practice.[63]

Before moving on to a detailed commentary of each individual study, I will touch upon Cécile B. Evans, a digital artist whose practice has influenced mine, and one who has heavily influenced the submitted work. Evans' work uses existing characters, narratives, sounds and visual material alongside her own or collaborators' creations. Her work presents a wide range of cultural, social and political influences, similar to those I present throughout this folio, that function as material and basis for the artist's eclectic style. In her 2014 work *Hyperlinks or it didn't Happen*, Evans explores the

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[62] rkss artist talk at Artificial Hells, Grow Tottenham, 20 June 2019.
[63] In Buckley's artist talk at Artificial Hell, they noted that the reason they began to compose this work was after a performance at a club night, where the promoter who had booked them had not researched their style as a DJ. On this realisation, Buckley began to play well known pop and EDM tracks that, although outside of their typical repertoire, were presented in the artist's unique aesthetic. It was this set that influenced Buckley's current performances as rkss. These *détournement* exercises came out of a very a similar situation, although I began composing them prior to the Artificial Hells event.

concept of grief and its dissemination and archiving in digital culture.[64] The work is narrated by the

character "PHIL", a digital reconstruction of actor Philip Seymour Hoffman. His animated rendering

appears as the protagonist in the film, clearly separated from PHIL's voice, that bears no resemblance

to the original actor's voice. Grant Bollmer and Katherine Guinness describe the work as 'curated',

with Evans selecting and arranging material from a multitude of online and readily available sources,

including Wikipedia articles, YouTube videos and Reddit.[65] Through the mediation of familiar digital

images and narratives, the work provides both a critical perspective on digital cultures and a

successful rendering of a hybrid and eclectic style.

In *Hyperlinks or it Didn't Happen*, I observe a number of elements from popular culture that

align with my own practice of postproduction and *détournement*: the image of PHIL, the 'invisible

woman' (based on Ralph Ellison's 1953 novel The Invisible Man) and various YouTube videos and

images of celebrities. More pertinent to these exercises, however, is Evans' recycling of music,

employing vocaloid software and the use of the open-source digital pop star Hatsune Miku to

produce alternative versions of Billy Idol's *Eyes Without a Face* and Alphaville's *Forever Young*

alongside Evans' own version of Kanye West and Paul McCartney's *Only One* featuring in the film's

trailer.[66] The employment of a wide frame of reference and the integration of significant popular

works into critical contexts presents a parallel approach to that which I have taken in these exercises

and continue to employ in my practice of postproduction.

4.3.1 Exercises on Détournement #1: *Car Crash DJ Set*

Composed in February 2019, *Car Crash DJ Set* was conceived after a DJ performance in York where

the promoter imposed a brief on the DJs that was ambiguous and vaguely communicated. The result

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[64] Stephanie Bailey, 'Cecile B. Evans: Seventeen (United Kingdom)', *Artforum International* 53, no.6 (2015), 243.
[65] Grant Bollmer and Katherine Guiness, 'Do You Really Want to Live Forever?: Animism, death, and the trouble of digital images', *Cultural Studies Review*, 24, no.2 (2018), 84.
[66] See "Cécile B. Evans – Hyperlinks", *Seventeen*, Accessed 13 May 2020, http://www.seventeengallery.com/exhibitions/cecile-b-evans-hyperlinks/, for a glossary of the works Evans détourns.

was a two-hour set that constantly changed style due to my attempts to introduce popular music and Pop aesthetics amongst a more experimental style. There were regular changes in tempo, key, style and mood, using techniques such as quick chops, the integration of Pop a cappellas and long blends between two or more tracks to achieve a layering of styles. The attempt to integrate this wide variety of styles, keys and tempi failed and the performance was unsatisfactory for me as performer and for the audience. The result was the idea to consolidate a number of the tracks that I had played using *détournement* into a single, shorter and more carefully curated composition, where I had control over the level of experimentation and exactly how the tracks are used with one another.

The work begins with a sample from the introduction of Mechatok's *Flee*, released in 2018 on the record *All My Time*. Mechatok's work takes an outside perspective on Pop music, with its clean, digital aesthetic and its lack of percussion, and melodic elements providing the piece's rhythmic drive.[67] From here, the piece explores various tracks, selecting exact sounds in the work, repeating, chopping, warping and processing with precision.[68] There is an attention to detail in the use of breakdowns, well-known hooks and euphoric moments, such as long, sub-bass hits, to constantly remind the listener of the cultures from which the work derives. At the same time, in its sound, the piece attempts to demonstrate the chaos of the original performance, with quick chops and a constantly shifting approach to metre.

The editing techniques employed in this piece combine production techniques common to producers of club music with an experimental approach to club and popular music using *détournement*. I take influence from Trevor Wishart, who states that he believes the human ear can recognise repetition sub-consciously almost immediately and, in his own compositions, strives to make sure that sections of recorded audio material are never repeated.[69] For this reason, I have approached repetition in these works carefully, lengthening, shortening, pitch shifting and editing any

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[67] All My Time by Mechatok, *Bandcamp*, March 14, 2018, accessed November 28 2019, https://prestorecords.bandcamp.com/album/all-my-time.
[68] See pp. 57-58.
[69] Trevor Wishart. Composition Seminar. University of York, 19th February 2019.

repeated sections to achieve variety in each reiteration of the samples used. I have a practice producing electronic dance music and looping is a tool that I use frequently. However, in these pieces I wanted to explore ideas that sat outside of my comfort zone and allowed me to approach repetition differently.

4.3.2 Exercises on Détournement #2: *Thank U, Miley*

Thank U, Miley considers the hybridisation of two styles and works that have inspired my own work and which I admire. The work begins with a section that uses samples from Leonard Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*, utilising the complex sound world of Bernstein's original composition and the timbrally rich performance of the BBC Symphony Opera and Chorus.[70] The use of the timbral qualities of particular works and their recordings stems from Kevin Holm-Hudson's analysis of John Oswald's work, in particular his 1993 album *Plexure*. Holm-Hudson argues that it is this record that demonstrates timbre as the most recognisable feature of popular music in the sample era, taking precedent over harmony or melody.[71] Holm-Hudson further states that Oswald's plunderphonic pieces, within which he includes *Plexure*, are innovative due to their presentation of musical fragments in unfamiliar contexts and questioning of the nature of ownership through an atomistic approach to pitch and timbre.[72]

The use of Bernstein's work aims to achieve a subversion of the piece's sound and the context of the work itself. The *Chichester Psalms* is, to a great extent, protected from amateur reproductions by its complexity, rigidity in composition and the narrow scope for its interpretation. It is a complex piece to play, its performance reserved only for skilled groups of musicians. Its use in *Thank U, Miley*

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[70] Leonard Bernstein, 'Chichester Psalms: I. Psalm 108:2: Urah, Hanevel, V'chinor! (Awake, Psaltery and Harp) - Psalm 100: Hariu L'Adonai Kol Haarets (Make a Joyful Noise Unto …)', with Roger Carter, Andrew Castle, Clare Loosley, Lindsay Richardson, Pablo Strong, BBC Symphony Chorus, BBC Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Leonard Slatkin, recorded March 1&2, 2003, on *Bernstein: Kaddish, Chichester Psalms & Missa Brevis*, Chandos Records, 2004, iTunes download, https://music.apple.com/gb/album/bernstein-kaddish-chichester-psalms-missa-brevis/267118588

[71] Kevin Holm-Hudson, 'Quotation and Context: Sampling and John Oswald's Plunderphonics', *Leonardo Music Journal* 7 (1997), 23.

[72] Ibid. 21

through auto-*détournement*, or the applied cut up, destabilises its original meaning and takes it far out of its original context.[73] Instead of remaining loyal to the original composition, timbral and gestural moments are removed from the recording and reformatted into a separate work. Bernstein's work is still recognisable, at least to those who know the original, but its sonic reimagination is jarring. Following this cut-up section is a cover of Miley Cyrus' *We Can't Stop.*

The cover of *We Can't Stop* acts in opposition to the exclusivity of *The Chichester Psalms*. In composing the piece, I was constantly asking questions of ownership, due to the collage and appropriative nature of the work. A search through YouTube revealed an extraordinary number of amateur covers of *We Can't Stop* - too many to watch. These covers range from high quality professional recordings to webcam videos taken from cover artists' bedrooms.

In the cover of *We Can't Stop* in *Thank U, Miley*, there are a number of compositional characteristics taken from this cover culture. The harmonic and melodic material is recognisable from the original work, yet the aesthetic and handling of the material is very different. The work is constructed using the most basic digital tools on Ableton Live 10, including an open source autotune plug-in (Autotuna) and a standard electric keyboard sound, set over the backdrop of a soundscape constructed using sections of material from *Chichester Psalms*. Moreover, the piece employs characteristics of the multiple YouTube covers of *We Can't Stop* that I watched while creating the work. These covers include lyrical errors, the use of a faux-American accent, the attempted smoothing out of mistakes using time stretching, autotune and reverb and the attempt to put a new spin on the work in a style concurrent with amateur online covers.[74] Here, the ambiance of Cyrus' track and sheer volume of material is détourned, along with the work itself.

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[73] See McKenzie Wark, 'Détournement: an abuser's guide', *Angelaki* (2009), 148.
[74] I am not attempting to belittle the amateur musician or provide any critical judgement on those producing these covers as it is unnecessary to both this thesis and the composition. These characteristics purely present musical observations on the versions in question, using them as inspiration for musical creation.

The piece ends with an extract from an interview with Miley Cyrus on *POPSUGAR's* YouTube channel.[75] The extract was particularly chosen as it is Cyrus' call out to Instagram users to be aware that the accounts that they follow are not necessarily real and that they should not believe what they see on them. In the same way, in the cover section of *Thank U, Miley*, the cover attempts to exaggerate production techniques to highlight the work's falseness and its complete disjunction from its original. More pertinently, my perception of this interview and many others like it that I watched when collating this material was that there is a strong sense of falseness and platitude in what the artist is saying. These characteristics are reflected in the work of artists like Ryan Trecartin and Lizzie Fitch, in particular their video installation *Mark Trade*, which served as a reference point and influence in the production of the submitted work. The installation comprises of a video of a character who is filmed across the United States, who continually speaks to the camera with convincingly delivered and faux-aphoristic comments such as: 'Terra non conforma', 'there's a lot less gravity here', 'my favourite colour is hell' and 'this used to be a lake, but I can't get any fucking service anywhere now'.[76]

The final 30 seconds of the piece act as a coda in which a processed field recording is used. In the recording, the sound of an iPhone being locked and thrown onto a soft surface can be heard, accompanied by an exhausted and disappointed sigh. This alludes to the amount of work that was done sifting through the multitude of content online surrounding the works and material used in *Thank U, Miley*. It intends to echo a sort of antidote to the noise of the internet, bringing the piece back into some form of reality – from the synthetic, digital space to a more familiar real space.

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[75] POPSUGAR, 'Our Miley Cyrus Interview: "Stop Believing Instagram,"' YouTube video, 3:30, posted by "POPSUGAR," posted January 29, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=83uNr3Uwu-k.

[76] Hannah Black, '9th Berlin Biennale', *Artforum International* 55, no.1 (2016), 350. Alex Greenberger, 'Tangled Web: Lizzie Fitch and Ryan Trecartin at Andrea Rosen, New York', *ARTnews*, April 8, 2016, accessed March 2019.

4.3.3 Exercises on Détournement #3: *Avant Gardening*

Avant Gardening further presents the exploration of the multiple frames of reference that are applied in this folio of creative work. Specifically, it comes from a background in studying and composing avant-garde works of contemporary classical music. Throughout this time, the work that I was producing employed similar methods, focusing on quotation and homages to various composers. However, this work is a representation of my own bad habits when listening to such works and thinking how they might influence my own work, constantly rewinding and replaying over specific segments of music, usually a few seconds and listening obsessively until I can no longer listen. This process comes from trying to understand what is happening in the music, but by doing so removes the sections of work that I am listening to from their context. My approach to listening is similar to my approach to composing music that might not be seen as linear, but rather a space within which moments and gestures can be extracted. In this sense, this exercise, and indeed the others in this group of works, are highly introspective and self-reflective, at the same time affording listeners an open reading of the work.

The sonic material in the work comes from three works that were prominent in my listening habits at the time of composing: Salvatore Sciarrino's *Fra Sé*, Morton Feldman's *Piano Piece 1952 (Version 2)* and György Kurtág's *Officium breve in memoriam Andreae Szervanszky, Op. 28: XV. Arioso interrotto (di Endre Szervanszky): Larghetto.* Again, there is a recording from a YouTube interview placed into the middle of the track. In this instance the video comes from an interview with artist Cécile B. Evans on Copenhagen gallery's 'Louisiana Channel' entitled *Cécile B. Evans interview: The Virtual is Real.*[77] The chosen segment contains Evans talking about the digital reproduction of famous characters, predominantly in the film industry, for the purposes of finishing a piece of work. She goes on to reference the inclusion of Audrey Hepburn in a Galaxy chocolate advert. There are elements of

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[77] The Louisiana Channel, "Cécile B. Evans: The Virtual is Real," YouTube video, 16:10, posted by 'TheLouisianaChannel,' August 3, 2016, accessed March 12, 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nDe_W11KY4c.

postproduction in what Evans discusses. In the video, she discusses the appropriation of characters

to produce work that is, by nature, completely removed from the characters as individuals. As in

these works of *détournement*, through existing material (in the instances Evans is talking about

existing characters), there is the intention of a preservation of material and indeed a sense of homage

to the artist whose work is used, through the use of recognisable sounds and forms from the original

source material.

4.3.4 Exercises on Détournement #4: *Excuse Me, Are You Oren Sounds?*

This fourth and final exercise on *détournement* questions the copyright implications of the previous

works in this collection. Rather than using works from other artists, all the material is from my own

works as a producer of club music. Since 2012 I have been releasing music under the moniker Oren.

In September 2018 I released a three track EP entitled *Artificial Hells*. The three tracks from this EP

make up the material for this work. I wanted to explore the possibilities of détourning my own work

and understanding how its sonic qualities might lend themselves to a form of sonic collage as in the

other three exercises.

Because the source material is my own, I felt less of a duty towards keeping certain aspects of

the work intact. The source material was seen purely as sonic material that could be manipulated and

warped as I desired. Snippets of audio have short to no attack, providing aggressive and almost

destructive reusage of the original material. The work switches between the ambient soundscapes

heard in the tracks and the highly percussive, digital inflections found in the more dance-oriented

sections of the work. For example, the breakbeat section that is introduced a number of times is

included to invite the listener to dance, but then quickly rescinds. As previously mentioned, there is a

somewhat aggressive approach to removing the attack of many of the samples, making them abrupt

and percussive reminiscent of the work of artists like Mark Fell or Gabór Lazar.

In this work I aim to highlight the limitless possibility of producing original work through

existing material. I completely deconstruct the original tracks before repositioning them in a work

that is wholly different. In the previous exercises, all artists are credited for their inclusion in the works, as in Plunderphonics, yet permissions have not been obtained due to the educational (rather than commercial) purpose of the exercises on the guidance of the University of York music department's ethics advisor. Nevertheless, the intention was to create new work that uses the original pieces in a way that attempts to highlight certain features, and which does not intend to assume any hierarchy between the originals and these collages.

In *Excuse Me, Are You Oren Sounds?*, this consideration did not come into play, exemplified by certain creative choices in the work. The deliberate warping of metre and timbre throughout the more dance-oriented passages deliberately subverts the original compositions' purpose. This is further represented in the structure which continuously switches between percussive, rhythmic sections and loose, ambient passages without discernible metre. This concept of lack of responsibility to the original source material is consolidated in the closing moments of the piece, where a pitched-down recording of my own voice states 'nice!', as if congratulating the original works as well as their re-composition.

5. Conclusion

The work in this folio is a personal creative approach to reflecting site, interaction and participation in club culture. I take a hybrid approach, gathering material from my own embodied experiences, theory in visual cultures, the experiences and input of participants, and from club culture. After this material 'comes together', the compositional process allows the material to 'become together' and, finally, 'become'.[78] The composition of the submitted work has been a process of hybridisation that takes influence from practices of *détournement* and postproduction, synthesising and remixing a variety of influences within club and visual cultures. There is also hybridity in contrasting elements in the work: between material and synthetic sounds; between my own experiences and those of others; and between realistic representations of collaborations with and contributions from participants, and those that are constructed from memory and nostalgia.

The hybrid practice that I have developed explores site, interaction and participation through working with participants in club culture, gathering their perspectives and integrating them into my work. The work also draws on my own experiences of club cultures. By combining them with those of participants, I have explored the 'toolkit' of club culture that I have used critically to construct the creative work in this folio. Influenced by Bourriaud's *Postproduction,* this has allowed me to contribute work that is *about* club culture, rather than *for* the club.

The submitted work exists across media and has encouraged me to explore a non-linear approach, presenting fixed-media audio through the lens of installation: a practice whereby the listener is invited into a space to come and go as they please and within which they can identify a variety of sounds and gestures. This approach is supported by the creation installation work myself to understand this non-linearity in more detail.

There is much room for developing this hybrid practice, particularly in terms of the *inside* and *outside* spaces. The work presented here has focused on sites and people that have been accessible

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[78] See p.10.

to me and that I have chosen to investigate. The compositional process of gathering material and hybridising visual and the club cultures that I have developed for myself will allow me to continue this work in a variety of new spaces, continuing to follow dialogues and trends within club culture. This approach and the resulting work are not static and accessing new spaces and people will further provide material to produce work across media that will develop my compositional language. The development of my compositional technique will also allow for further in-depth interdisciplinary collaboration with participants, and other creative practitioners and researchers. Critically, the investigation into the *inside* and *outside* spaces and the people that inhabit them is one that constantly develops and one where there is always the potential for generating and manipulating new material.

Appendix - List of Works Used in Exercises on Détournement 1-3

Car Crash DJ Set

- Mechatok. 'Flee.' *All My Time.* Presto!?. 2018, Bandcamp download,

  https://prestorecords.bandcamp.com/album/all-my-time.

- BEA1991. 'Big World 4 Lovers.' *Songs of 2K11.* Self released, 2015, iTunes download,

  https://music.apple.com/gb/album/songs-of-2k11/1020306896.

- Loreen. 'Euphoria.' *Heal*. Warner Music Sweden, 2012, iTunes download.

  https://music.apple.com/gb/album/heal/568113928.

- Binary Finary. '1999 (Kaycee's Radio Edit)'. *1999 (Kaycee's Radio Edit) - Single.* EMI Records

  Ltd., 2001. iTunes download. https://music.apple.com/gb/album/1999-kaycees-radio-edit-

  single/723763720.

- FJAAK. 'Drugs'. *Drugs EP*. Seilscheibenpfeiler, 2018. Bandcamp download.

  https://fjaak.bandcamp.com/album/drugs-ep.

- Scintii. 'Mica (Ausschuss Remix)'. Eternal Dragonz, 2017. Bandcamp download.

  https://scintii.bandcamp.com/album/mica-remixes.

Thank U, Miley

- Leonard Bernstein. 'Chichester Psalms: I. Psalm 108:2: Urah, Hanevel, V'chinor! (Awake,

  Psaltery and Harp) - Psalm 100: Hariu L'Adonai Kol Haarets (Make a Joyful Noise Unto …)'.

  with Roger Carter, Andrew Castle, Clare Loosley, Lindsay Richardson, Pablo Strong, BBC

  Symphony Chorus, BBC Symphony Orchestra. Conducted by Leonard Slatkin, recorded March

  1&2, 2003, on *Bernstein: Kaddish, Chichester Psalms & Missa Brevis*. Chandos Records,

  095115117224, 2004, iTunes download. https://music.apple.com/gb/album/bernstein-

  kaddish-chichester-psalms-missa-brevis/267118588

- Miley Cyrus. 'We Can't Stop.' *Bangerz (Deluxe Version).* RCA Records, 2013. Spotify stream. https://open.spotify.com/album/3RDqXDc1bAETps54MSSOW0?si=fuiXzQY1QZSnUH9RXiB2W w.

- 'Our Miley Cyrus Interview: "Stop Believing Instagram"', YouTube video, 3:30, posted by "POPSUGAR", posted January 29, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=83uNr3Uwu-k.

Avant Gardening

- Salvatore Sciarrino. 'Fra Sé'. Marco Fusi, recorded 2017, on *Sciarrino: Complete Works for Violin & Viola.* Chandos Records, 8011570370570, 2017. iTunes download. https://music.apple.com/gb/album/sciarrino-complete-works-for-violin-viola/1225251378.

- Gyorgy Kurtag. 'Officium breve in memoriam Andreae Szervanszky, Op. 28: XV. Arioso interrotto (di Endre Szervanszky): Larghetto'. The Athena String Quartet on *Kurtag: Complete Works for String Quartet*. NEOS Music, 2013, B00DYP40Q9, 2013. iTunes download. https://music.apple.com/gb/album/kurtag-complete-works-for-string-quartet/672950267.

- Murcof x Wagner. 'Piano Piece 1952/Version 2 (Morton Feldman)'. *EP.02*. InFiné, 2017. Bandcamp download. https://infine-rec.bandcamp.com/track/piano-piece-1952-version-2-morton-feldman.

Resource List

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Bean, Carl. *I Was Born This Way (Tom Moulton/Larry Levan/Shep Pettibone Mixes)*. West End Records, 2018, 1977.

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