Editorial: Socially engaged sound practices, part 2

The first special issue on socially engaged sound practices (*Organised Sound* 26/2) contributed to this growing area of research in distinct ways. It featured scholarly accounts by those *doing* socially engaged sound practices, with such accounts moving towards more inherently (self-)critical sound practices and study of such works. It included a diversity in interpretations of 'sociality', addressing distinct areas and eras of sound practices when doing so. The articles diversify the conversation on the topic by decentralising theoretical approaches to the subject matter and by including a wider variety of voices, experiences, sounding bodies and attitudes to listening. Together, the issue looked to move the conversation beyond dominant hierarchies and towards greater inclusivity, intersectionality, decolonisation and into the more-than-human register – all through creative sonic forms, at a scale larger than the individual.

This second issue builds and expands upon this work, as well as moving into several further key areas. There is a certain emphasis by authors here on overcoming the unhelpful binaries of professional/non-professional (or 'amateur') regarding participation in collaborative sound arts practices, and in relation to non-hierarchical educational approaches. Other articles dig further into collective listener engagement and audience reception of (participative) work, and present theoretical standpoints that move beyond a music/sound art divide. Artist-authors and practice-researchers describe bespoke sociotechnological applications and advances in distributed online approaches. It is also perhaps notable for the number of papers with three or more authors, and with more than half the issue written collaboratively. This, of course, returns to the overarching themes linking issues 26/2 and 28/1 overall – the social, engagement, collaboration in sound, and of listening to and resonating with ideas and sonic experiences beyond one's own positionality.

Erik Deluca and Elana Hausknecht approach socially engaged sound arts practices with open questions of authorship, identity, representation and remediation through a mixture of analytical and theoretical approaches. They draw on work by similarly socially engaged educator-facilitators Pauline Oliveros and Paulo Freire, whose ideas frame accounts of the authors' own work and experiences. These auto-ethnographic accounts become an invitation for readers to consider the enactment of sound art as an open-ended dialogic event – an interweaving of sound, listening and learning – and further, to 'witness some possibilities of dialogue in-process' with critical consciousness.

Vadim Keylin also explores the creative agency of participatory sound art works. Through two ethnographic case studies, his article examines the facilitation and execution of participants' creativity, questioning how this intersects with the proposing artist's agency and the work's materiality. In dissociating sound-making from music, the author observes that participatory sound art 'liberates its audiences from the culturally entrenched protocols of aesthetic judgement, revealing its underlying ableism and exclusivism'. Distinct opportunities to participate through vocalising offered in the case studies are found to allow 'horizontal and altruistic ways of exercising creativity, beyond the egocentrism of self-expression'.

Through interviews with ten sound arts practitioners, Nicole Robson, Nick Bryan-Kinns and Andrew McPherson dig further into issues surrounding the production and reception of audience engagement with sound arts practices and confront the challenges in understanding and articulating such experience and their effects. The authors look to characterise the process-situated artistic practices as 'mediatory, in the sense that they act in between site and audience experience and are guided by the non-human agencies of settings and material things'.

Martin Ullrich and Sebastian Trump provide a theoretical expansion of such a sociality of sound, extending towards non-human animals and post-human artificial intelligences. Drawing on Haraway and Latour, their theoretical considerations aim to be a departure point for an 'increasingly interdisciplinary assessment of more-than-human actors in socially engaged sound practices'. The authors argue that the creative agency of non-human actors in sonic collaborations through concepts of pluralistic co-evolutionary principles 'can enrich the development of evolutionary algorithms and contribute to more diverse and more complex social interactions'.

Simon Fox's article also expands the notion of collaboration beyond other humans to include materials, ideas and both non- and post-human entities. His manifesto for the 'New Amateur' draws on anarchist

ethics and concepts to democratise artistic potential and 'seek out and realise new possibilities both in terms of who will create sound and what they will create'.

Eric Lemmon offers a semiotic analysis of distinct characteristics for co-production within participatory musics, moving towards a theory of personal aesthetic preference. The article continues that the structure of interaction in such participatory work can be usefully conceptualised 'as a constituted public with an internal politics' and may 'serve as a future focal point for social and cultural investigation'.

In further discussion of music equally accessible to non-professional participants, Ivan Simurra, Marcello Messina, Luzilei Aliel and Damián Keller present 'examples of creativity support strategies that would not be considered "musical" by twentieth-century hegemonic compositional narratives'. A proposal of 'Radical Creative Semantic Anchoring' strategies are shown to expand the use of semantics for music-making with a focus on timbre, and 'promoting a shift within musical interaction from a fixation with the sonic outcome to the crafting of meaningful musical experiences that lie beyond the aural'.

Arian Bagheri Pour Fallah describes a methodological convergence of musics from the electroacoustic and concert-hall traditions, constructed through notions of 'networks' and 'reciprocity' seen through sociological lenses. The implications for the concept of musical community as a material art practice are considered as *récit music* – a form proposed by the author – involving decentralisation of composers and 'enabling creative employment of the impasses introduced in the information age'.

G. Douglas Barrett's theorisation of music 'after sound' is a key text underpinning a self-reflective and dialogically written work by Aaron Moorehouse, Harry Matthews and Oogoo Maia. The trio 'collectively explore the implications of Barrett's writing for the conception, formation and evaluation of their own socially engaged compositional practices'. The conversations reconsider what could feasibly come 'after sound' for socially engaged composers whose works are already explicitly located at the intersections of musical and non-musical fields, and whether for compositional practices to become more effective it would be beneficial 'to further shed our artistic and musical self-identifications'.

Moving towards more technologically inclined approaches, Marta Rizzonelli, Jin Hyun Kim, Pascal Staudt and Marcello Lussana present work combining sound design, computer interaction design and a human-centred research focus. Their observations found during social interaction in performance produce sonification of bodily motor function behaviours, via their interface *Sentire*. Through empirical study of arts-based practice, they argue that coordination represents 'a crucial basic mechanism of social interaction', before extrapolating their findings towards healthcare purposes, for further therapeutic and wellbeing applications.

Toshihisa Tsuruoka, Brian Ellis and Leo Chang present work that enables socially engaged co-composition, through creative repurposing of live streaming technology, including a discussion of the technical implications and analysing two distinct implementations of this remote online musical collaboration scenario (one real-time, one installation). The author-designers reflect on how such socially distanced participatory practice – which became ever more apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic – distinctly differs from 'traditional' music-making, where all who join will share one experience – in that here 'exists no one final piece to be interpreted'.

Two further off-theme, but nonetheless related, articles bring these this second issue to a close. Oded Ben-Tal explores the continuum of human-computer musical composition and performance relationships in relation to works for live interactive electronics. Through case studies including the author-composer's own, they propose an analysis of such relationships as complex systems, placing 'the human-computer interaction within a wider set of relationships at play in the performance as well as during the composition/design process that gave birth to this complex system'.

Nicolas Bernier, Guillaume Boutard, Caroline Traube, Estelle Schorpp, Laurent Bellemare and Victor Drouin-Trempe present together an aesthetic consideration of the sine wave, surveying a set of sine wave-based works to produce a set of principles, which in turn offer the creation of a typological framework 'towards a better understanding of the artistic approaches guiding the use of the sine wave in music and sound art'.

Tullis Rennie
tullis.rennie@city.ac.uk