

Institution: UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS LONDON
Unit of Assessment: 34
Title of case study: Research Centre for Creative Research in Sound Arts Practice (CRiSAP) at the University of the Arts London.
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>The Research Centre for Creative Research in Sound Arts Practice (CRiSAP) works to develop, extend and support the emerging disciplinary field of sound arts, and has played a role in defining, scoping and shaping contemporary sound arts practice. This case study demonstrates impact on the creative community, museums and galleries, and the general public, with work reaching a wide audience and developing a greater recognition and understanding of sound and sound arts.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>CRiSAP explores the complexities of sound as artistic practice and has established and extended new areas of creative and scholarly engagement now accepted as an essential part of contemporary sound arts practice. The work of the Centre was recognised in 2011, when it was awarded the Sir Misha Black Award for Innovation in Design Education. Research is undertaken collaboratively and individually around shared concerns such as sound and the environment, the spoken word, voice and language, writing on sound and sound arts, and development of sound based practice. Underpinning research is illustrated by the part of CRiSAP's overall output undertaken at UAL by Professors Angus Carlyle, Cathy Lane and David Toop; Readers Dr Salome Voegelin and Dr John Wynne and Research Fellow Peter Cusack.</p> <p>Writing on sound and sound arts engages with sound and listening as a distinct form, incorporating ideas from other disciplines including fine art, music, philosophy and anthropology. Work connects the under-theorised domain of critical listening to a reflective transcription that shifts between the scholarly and poetic registers, most notably developed by Toop and Voegelin. Toop's work in this area, including <i>Sinister Resonance: The Mediumship of the Listener</i> (2010) has sought to express the power and experience of sound as a sensory 'mode of knowing'. <i>Listening to Noise and Silence</i> (2010) by Voegelin reflects her research into 'writing sound', incorporating the philosophies of Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger to develop a phenomenologically informed approach to the textual representation of the experience of listening.</p> <p>Research into sound, voice and language takes a number of forms. Lane and Wynne use human utterance as compositional material for concert performance and installation. Wynne's work on endangered languages involves extensive primary fieldwork with ethno-linguists making recordings and utilising them for composition, contributing to the documentation and study of these languages. Both Wynne and Lane compose with oral history recordings, Wynne working with long-term hospital patients and Lane collecting voices around places or themes, sometimes combined with archival material and field recordings. Lane's work on the spoken word in artistic practice analyses the previously relatively under-explored territory of the vocal utterance at the conjunction between sound art, performance art, music, poetry and experimental literature. The resulting publication <i>Playing with Words: the spoken word in artistic practice</i> (2008) and audio compilation (2010) included contributions by Carlyle, Toop, Voegelin and Wynne.</p> <p>The experience of sound in the environment is a key area of engagement. An AHRC and British Council funded project with the Anthropology Department at the University of St Andrews, culminated in the 2006 conference <i>The Body, the Environment, and Human Sound-making</i> (Carlyle, Cusack, Lane, Toop and Wynne). Here Cusack presented his <i>Favourite Sounds</i> project which since 1998 has taken place in cities and towns around the world and produced a complex account of cities' inhabitants' perception of the positive in their acoustic environment. During 2005/06, Cusack and Toop participated in the British Council's <i>Sound and the City</i> project which took place in four Chinese cities and investigated how sound links individuals to place. The</p>

Impact case study (REF3b)

insight that the sound of city spaces might be heard, rather than dismissed as noise, informed the EPSRC project *Positive Soundscapes* (2006–2009) which emphasised the positive role of sound, rather than focusing on negative noise (PI Dr Bill Davies, University of Salford, in collaboration with Carlyle and Cusack, and researchers from Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan and Warwick Universities). Approaches utilised were interdisciplinary with insights from sonic arts, interviews and sound walks as well as laboratory experiments on listeners producing a more nuanced and complete picture of listener response. An outcome of the project edited by Carlyle *Autumn Leaves: Sound and Environment in Artistic Practice* (2007) includes essays by Toop and Voegelin.

Development of new creative work and curatorship **extending and developing sound practice** often draws on and extends the themes outlined above. Examples include Carlyle's curation of *Sound Escapes* (2009) and Cusack's *Soundscapes Sequencer* outcomes of *Positive Soundscapes* (2006–2009); Lane's composition *Tweed* on the audio compilation for *Playing with Words* (2010); Wynne's *Transplant* (with Tim Wainwright), an installation combining voices of hospital patients with environmental recordings (2008) and his installation *Anspayaxw* (2010), resulting from work on endangered languages. Wynne's AHRC project *Bouncing off the Walls* (2010), produced his *Installation of 300 speakers, Pianola and vacuum cleaner*, which used sound and sculptural assemblage to explore and define architectural space and to investigate the borders between sound and music. Outcomes of Toop's research into the impact of digital technology on improvised music performance and sonic arts (first explored during his 2004–2007 AHRC Fellowship) include *Unknown Devices*, a performance group of free improvisers utilising digital technology; *Flat Time/Sounding* (2010), a score of texts and visual elements resulting in a two-hour improvised performance; and *Star-shaped Biscuit* (2012), an opera for three singers, five multi-instrumentalists and digital sound composition, developed over four years.

3. References to the research

Key outputs indicative of the overall body of research and related awards are listed below:

1. Carlyle, A. (2009) *Sound Escapes* [Exhibition] co-curated with Irene Revell. London: SPACE Gallery. 25 July–15 August 2009. Listed in REF2.
2. Cusack, P. (2012). *Berlin Sonic Places* [Project]. Includes 8-channel installation, 5 February–26 May 2012. Events: *Soundscape Simulation*, *Berlin Favourite Sounds* and *Sonic Glimpses 2022* (2012). CD: *Berlin Favourite Sounds* (2013). Various locations in Berlin: Tonspur Berlin, Schlossplatz; Aedes Campus; Rummelsburg; Tempelhof Airfield. Listed in REF2.
3. Lane, C. (2010) *Playing with Words: An audio compilation* [Audio CD]. Gruenrekorder. Listed in REF2.
4. Toop, D. (2010) *Sinister Resonance: The Mediumship of the Listener*. London: Continuum. [Authored book]. Listed in REF2.
5. Toop, D. (2012) *Star-shaped Biscuit* [Composition]. Opera first performed at Aldeburgh Music 15 September 2012. Supported by a Jerwood Opera Writing Fellowship. Listed in REF2.
6. Voegelin, S. (2010) *Listening to Noise and Silence: towards a philosophy of sound art* [Authored book]. London: Continuum. Listed in REF2.
7. Wynne, J. (2010) *Anspayaxw* [Artefact]. Installation. Vancouver: Museum of Anthropology as part of Border Zones, 23 January –12 September 2010. Listed in REF2.
8. Wynne, J. (2009) *Installation for 300 speakers, Pianola and vacuum cleaner* [Artefact]. London: Gallery One, Beaconsfield. 9 September – 18 October, 2009. Listed in REF2.

- UAL, PI: Lane, C. *Playing with Words* (01/2009 – 03/2010) £15,773. AHRC.
- UAL, PI: Wynne, J. *Bouncing off the walls* (06/2009 – 05/2010) £22,154. AHRC.
- University of Salford, PI: Davies, W. with Carlyle, A. (UAL), Hume, K.I. (Manchester Metropolitan), Plack, C.J. (University of Manchester), Cusack, P. (UAL), Adams, M. (University of Salford), Jennings, P. (University of Warwick). *Positive Soundscapes* (10/2006 –10/2009) £993,955. EPSRC.
- UAL, PI: Toop, D. Fellowship *Sound Body* (05/2004 – 04/2007) £148,000. AHRC.

4. Details of the impact

The Centre promotes dialogue, debate and creative activity through new innovative work and ideas, exhibitions, curation and publications. Work reaches a wide audience and plays a role in developing a greater recognition and understanding of sound and sound arts, opening up new contexts for public involvement and appreciation. Beneficiaries include museums and galleries, the creative community and the general public. The significance and reach of impact is demonstrated through media coverage, collaborations with prestigious institutions, high profile exhibitions, performances and commissions, support from funding bodies, and awards.

Toop joined UAL shortly after his curation of *Sonic Boom* (2000), Hayward Gallery, the first major international exhibition of Sonic Art held in the UK. His publications *Ocean of Sound* (1995), *Exotica* (1999), *Haunted Weather* (2004) and *Sinister Resonance* (2010), two of which were written whilst employed by UAL, are, according to The Guardian, 'visionary tracts', who also named Toop as part of a triumvirate (alongside Jon Savage and Paul Morley) of the 'most influential (defined in this context as "creative people might actually have done things differently because of them") British music writers of the last three or four decades.' *Sinister Resonance* was one of The Independent's Books of the Year, who claim the publication is Toop's 'most illuminating yet'. Toop's contribution to BBC Radio 4's *The Sound of Fear* (2011) drew on insights from *Sinister Resonance* and the publication's theme of 'hearing' paintings was developed by Toop as part of *Sounds of the Gallery* (2009), an audio guide sound installation at the National Gallery, London. Voegelin's *Listening To Noise And Silence* was described in The Wire as 'a challenging treatise on the art of listening', with additional reviews of the publication including Art Monthly and Avant Music News. Her work in this area has resulted in appearances on BBC Radio 4 (2010), at *The Wire Salon* (2010), and as part of *Boxed Tunes* at the ICA (2011). Voegelin was also an adviser to the *Supersonix* Conference and Festival, London (2012).

Wynne's work on language endangerment resulted in *Anspayaxw* (2010) an installation at The Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver. It focused on members of the Gitxsan community and their language, Gitxsanimaax, and was shown as part of *Border Zones: New Art Across Cultures*, which received 115,831 visitors. *The True Language* (a piece made with materials from this project) was commissioned for broadcast on BBC Radio 4 (2012). The 2009 installation *Transplant* (Wynne) was developed during an Arts Council funded residency at Harefield Hospital and received press coverage including a four-star review in The Guardian. An additional outcome of the residency, *Hearts, Lungs and Minds* (2008), commissioned by BBC Radio 3, received the Bronze Award at the Third Coast International Audio Festival. Lane's audio compilation *Playing With Words* (2010) was released by German label Gruenrekorder, and was called 'clear and compelling' by the Canadian journal MusicWorks (2011). *Tweed* (Lane) from *Playing with Words*, was included in *Sound Matters: Exploring Sound through Forms*, a Crafts Council exhibition (2013). Interest in this field is evidenced by *Speaking Out: the spoken word in artistic practice* (2010), a public symposium held at Tate Modern in collaboration with CRiSAP. Events such as this are a key aspect of the Centre's engagement activities and include *In the Field: International Symposium for Field Recording* (2013) with the British Library, and *Her Noise: Feminism and the Sonic* (2012) with Tate Modern and Electra. The British Library's Curator, Natural Sounds, describes CRiSAP as 'leading the way in championing a wider awareness and interest in sound and sound arts.'

Since 2008 Cusack's Favourite Sounds project has resulted in *Favourite Sounds: Prague*; *Favourite Sounds: Southend on Sea*, later exhibited at the Southbank Festival of Britain 60th Anniversary Celebrations; *Favourite Sounds: Birmingham* (2010) commissioned by Midland Arts Centre; and *Berlin Favourite Sounds* (2012/13) part of *Berlin Sonic Places* initiated by Cusack during his residency for the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program. Cusack's project *Sounds from Dangerous Places* developed in parallel with *Favourite Sounds*, examines sound in places of major environmental damage. The resulting double CD and publication, presented findings and recordings from fieldwork in locations including the Caspian oil fields, Azerbaijan, and the Chernobyl exclusion zone, and was one of The Wire's top 50 releases of 2012. *Positive Soundscapes* culminated in the *Sound Escapes* exhibition (2009) at SPACE Gallery, London. Co-curated by Carlyle, it included a work by Cusack, *Soundscapes Sequencer*, the main artistic commission from the research project itself. The show was Critics' Choice in Time Out and

Impact case study (REF3b)

reviewed in Frieze. An Arts Council report on collaborations between arts institutions and HE *Towards Ecologies of Learning: Enhancing Relations between Arts and Academic* (2010) highlighted *Sound Escapes* as a 'good example' of effective crossover. The compilation album *Autumn Leaves* (2008), part of the 'bibliographic review' of the project, was awarded the Quartz Prize for Electronic Music (compilation category). The installation *Airpressure* (2011), created by Carlyle in collaboration with Dr Rupert Cox (University of Manchester) and Professor Kozo Hiramatsu (Kyoto University), focused on the environment of a farming family whose land is surrounded by Narita International Airport in Japan. Supported by over £50,000 from the Wellcome Trust, it was described as 'spectacularly immersive' by The Guardian. Forty-one thousand people visited *Airpressure* and a film version *Kiatsu* was jury-selected for exhibition at Albuquerque Museum, part of the International Symposium on Electronic Art (2012).

Toop's *Unknown Devices*, shortlisted for the Design Innovation of the Year for The Guardian Innovation Awards (2008), has performed at The Royal Festival Hall (2008) in collaboration with London Sinfonietta and The Royal College of Music, and at Tate Britain (2010), Tate Modern (2010), and The Barbican (2013). *FLAT TIME/sounding* was originally performed at the Whitechapel Gallery in 2010, commission on behalf of the John Latham archive and with financial support from the PRS for Music Foundation. It has since been performed internationally including at the *Just Listen Festival*, Cork (2011); and the ICMC Festival, Perth (2013). *Star-shaped Biscuit* (2012) supported by Toop's fellowship from Aldeburgh Music and the Jerwood Charitable Foundation, premiered as a *Faster Than Sound* production at Aldeburgh Music (2012). The Guardian wrote of the work: 'There are fascinating ideas [...] and much to ponder for anyone seeking to relocate opera to the 21st century.'

Installation for 300 speakers, Pianola and vacuum cleaner became the first work of sound art in the Saatchi collection and the centrepiece of *Newspeak: British Art Now*, the second most visited London exhibition 2010, attracting 557,192 visitors. Press coverage was extensive, and critic Brian Sewell commented that the installation stood out 'as a real work of art' and referred to the way 'these grey, brown and black bits and pieces of our technological lives combine in an odd grace'. Wynne won the 2010 British Composer Award for Sonic Art for this work. Wynne's exploration of site- and situation-specific sound practice can be seen in his sound design for the theatre production, Racine's *Andromache* (2011), with director Graham McLaren for the *Luminato Festival of the Arts* in Toronto. For this Wynne was nominated for a Dora Award for Outstanding Sound Design/Composition by the Toronto Alliance for the Performing Arts alongside the National Theatre's *War Horse*.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

Utilisation by the Museum and Gallery Sector:

1. *Sound Escapes* in Arts Council Report: *Towards Ecologies of Learning: Enhancing Relations between Arts and Academia* (2010). UAL on request.
2. Statement from The Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver. UAL on request.
3. *Sounds of the Gallery* at www.nationalgallery.org.uk/visiting/sounds-of-the-gallery

Impact on the creative community:

4. Guardian interview with Toop at www.theguardian.com/music/2012/mar/23/maggoty-lamb-interviews-david-toop
5. Statement from Curator, Natural Sounds, British Library. UAL on request.
6. *Sounds from Dangerous Places* at <http://yearendlists.com/2012/12/wire-top-50-release-of-2012/>
7. British Composer of the Year: Sonic Art www.britishcomposerawards.com/ceremony_archive.php?y=2010

Impact on wider public:

9. Brian Sewell's *Newspeak* review www.standard.co.uk/goingout/exhibitions/brian-sewell-is-it-me-or-is-newspeak-good-7420137.html and visitor figures for *Newspeak British Art Now* <http://www.saatchigallery.com/portfolio2010/>
10. Review of *Sound of Fear* at <http://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2011/oct/18/sound-of-fear-radio-review>. The programme had 'fine contributors [...] I could listen to musician and writer David Toop for hours on the subject.'