

Exploration-Collection-Assemblage

Proposal for a Mediation of Place through Sound Creation

Simon Chioini^{a*}, Myriam Boucher^{b°}

^a Faculté de musique, Université de Montréal, QC, Canada

^b Faculté de musique, Université de Montréal, QC, Canada

* Correspondence: simon.chioini@umontreal.ca

° Correspondence: myriam.boucher@umontreal.ca

Abstract

Since the 1970s, ecological thinking has inspired artists and researchers to explore the sonic dimension of experience and our interactions with the environment. In electro-acoustic music and sound art, acoustic ecology has been a precursor to contemporary issues, focusing on the sonic aspect of our relationship to the world. However, some artist-researchers have expanded this field by moving beyond the preservation of natural soundscapes, coining the term 'ecology of sound' and criticizing the notion of soundscape by emphasizing its limitation in relation to the lived experience of landscape. Their work examines the interaction between sound, environment, society, and the individual, highlighting sound's connection with other senses and its social meaning. In this context, this article presents a sound creation and music composition methodology – exploration-collection-assemblage – focused on site specific practices, using the Sound + Place workshops as a case study.

Depuis les années 1970, la pensée écologique inspire artistes et chercheur·e·s à explorer la dimension sonore de l'expérience ainsi que nos interactions avec l'environnement. Dans la musique électroacoustique et l'art sonore, l'écologie sonore a précédé certaines problématiques contemporaines, en se concentrant sur l'aspect sonore de notre relation au monde. Toutefois, certain·e·s artistes-chercheur·e·s ont élargi ce champ en allant au-delà de la préservation des paysages sonores naturels, en introduisant la notion d'écologie du son et en critiquant celle de paysage sonore, en soulignant notamment ses limites face à l'expérience vécue du paysage. Leurs travaux interrogent l'interaction entre le son, l'environnement, la société et les individus, en mettant en lumière les liens du sonore avec

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les autres sens ainsi que sa portée sociale. Dans ce contexte, cet article présente une méthodologie de création sonore et de composition musicale — exploration-collecte-assemblage — centrée sur des pratiques in situ, en s'appuyant sur les ateliers Sound + Lieu comme étude de cas.

Seit den 1970er-Jahren inspiriert ökologisches Denken Künstler_innen und Wissenschaftler_innen dazu, die klangliche Dimension von Erfahrungen sowie unsere Wechselwirkungen mit der Umwelt zu erforschen. In der elektroakustischen Musik und Klangkunst war die Acoustic Ecology ein Vorläufer heutiger Themenstellungen, indem sie den Fokus auf die klangliche Seite unserer Beziehung zur Welt legte. Einige künstlerisch Forschende haben dieses Feld jedoch erweitert, indem sie über den Erhalt natürlicher Klanglandschaften hinausgingen. Sie prägten den Begriff der Ecology of Sound und kritisierten die Vorstellung eines Soundscape, da sie dessen Begrenztheit im Hinblick auf die gelebte Erfahrung von Landschaft betonten. Ihre Arbeiten untersuchen das Zusammenspiel von Klang, Umwelt, Gesellschaft und Individuum und heben dabei die Verbindung des Klangs zu anderen Sinnen sowie seine soziale Bedeutung hervor. In diesem Kontext stellt der vorliegende Beitrag eine Methode der Klanggestaltung und Komposition vor – Exploration–Sammlung–Assemblage – die auf ortsspezifischen Praktiken basiert. Als Fallbeispiel dienen die Workshops Sound + Place.

Keywords

sound art, electroacoustic music, composition, ecology, mediation

Introduction

Since the 1970s, ecological thinking has led many artists and researchers to question the sound dimension of experience and of our interactions with the natural world. For electroacoustic music and sound art, the acoustic ecology movement (Schafer 1977; Truax 1978; Westerkamp 2002) is a precursor to current issues. Today, acoustic ecology remains influential in electroacoustic music and sound art, drawing attention to the sonic register of our relationship to the world. However, some artist-researchers have recently explored contemporary musical practices associated with ecology, thereby expanding their scope beyond a focus on listening and the preservation of natural sound environments. Furthermore, some researchers criticize the notion of soundscape by emphasizing its limitation in relation to the lived experience of landscape (Abram 1996; Ingold 1993, 2021). These reflections integrate a broader definition of sound ecology, one that is more inclusive of the human presence and affirms the primacy of the event over its representation. To distance themselves from early considerations of acoustic ecology, some adopt the term ‘ecology of sound’¹ (Collectif AIMEE 2017; Freychet 2022;

¹ The term proposed in French is *écologie du son*, which should not be confused with ‘acoustic ecology’.

Solomos et al. 2016). The ecology of sound, based on the ecosophy of Félix Guattari (1989), examines sound in its relationship to the environment, to society and the individual. It highlights the interaction of sound with other senses, the properties of the places where it is produced and the social meanings it evokes. As a result, reflection on sound composition and creation invites us to rethink our relationship to the environment, to others and to our inner self. More specifically, it focuses on how we resonate with specific places. In that regard, the present article proposes a sound and music composition methodology in which the artistic process is rooted in the mediation of specific places. It aims to examine our relationship with the environment and to refine a new sense of attention by using sound as a medium of presence and deeper connection.

This methodology, referred to as *exploration-collection-assemblage*, is founded on the development of a relationship with a given place, with the other, and through one's own subjectivity. Based on the experiments carried out as part of the *Sound + Place*² workshops, we hypothesize that participatory and specific place composition methodologies can create musical experiences that establish a link between a given place, artists and an audience. One of the aims is to reweave sensitive links to rediscover the courage, involvement and solidarity needed to change our lives and take action to care for the planet. Finally, possible applications for this methodology will be suggested, both within the domain of the arts and for the public.

Theoretical framework

Socio-ecological transition: new relational approaches

According to many thinkers, the current climate crisis invites us to rethink our relationships with nature and with the other-than-human, a crucial process in the pursuit of an egalitarian world, respectful of all living things. It is clear today that our lifestyles are at the root of many of the planet's disturbances, a fact made explicit by the annual environmental reports of the major climate organizations. This is why some authors refer to the Anthropocene (Groth and Schulze 2020), the Capitalocene (Bourriaud 2021) or the Plantationocene (Haraway 2015) to describe the current era, a period in which human activities are producing global changes, attributed more specifically to Western capitalist and colonial society. But when scientific observation calls for a change in our lifestyles, it is the very essence of our relationship with nature that may be called into question. At present, this relationship is still often based on a nature-culture dichotomy, placing humans in a position of domination over their environment. As French sociologist Bruno Latour points out:

In the Western tradition, most definitions of humanity in effect emphasize how much it distinguishes itself from nature. This is often expressed through the concepts of 'culture', 'society', or 'civilization'. Therefore, whenever one seeks to 'bring humans closer to nature', one is hindered by the objection that humans are primarily, or additionally,

² The original appellation is in French: *Son + Lieu*.

cultural beings who must escape from or, at the very least, distinguish themselves from nature³. (Latour 2015, 24)

The critical perspectives on modernity that philosophy offers demonstrate how science has based its knowledge and politics on a relationship of dominance over nature. This relationship is part of a nature-culture dualism that has yet to be deconstructed (Hara-way 1988; Latour 2010). Among contemporary issues, climate change stands out as a complex example of a problem requiring a plural approach. In this sense, the philosopher of science Isabelle Stengers evokes the challenge of a political ecology: “The idea, to put it succinctly, of a public, collective production of knowledge relating to situations that no particular expertise alone can suffice to define, and which require the active, objectifying, propositional and legitimate presence of all those who are ‘concerned’⁴” (Stengers 2007, 54). In a world where relationships with the more-than-human must be rebuilt, the presence of otherness, whatever its nature, needs to be considered. The motives for slowing down and resisting the ideals of universal progress and the common good serve to welcome the presence of the other, both human and more-than-human, into this discourse.

Concurrently, the question of environmental perception, brought to light by anthropologists and ecologists, provides an insight into the lived experience of our relationship with nature. Authors such as Tim Ingold and David Abram draw on the foundations of phenomenology to describe our interactions with the world in a sensitive, situated mode. The notions of intersubjectivity, empathy, reciprocity and participation provide an evocative vocabulary for designing works that seek to create shared relationships with the environment. In his book *The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-Than-Human World*, Abram explains:

It may be that the new ‘environmental ethic’ toward which so many environmental philosophers aspire – an ethic that would lead us to respect and heed not only the lives of our fellow humans, but also the life and well-being of the rest of nature – will primarily come into existence not through the logical elucidation of new philosophical principles and legislative structures, but through a renewed attentiveness to this perceptual dimension that underlies all our logics, through a rejuvenation of our carnal, sensorial empathy with the living land that sustains us. (Abram 1996, 50)

Abram’s sensory register provides a foundation for our relationship to the world, provided we pay attention to it. In this regard, our perspective on materiality itself needs to be reconsidered. In *Vibrant Matter*, political scientist Jane Bennett describes the

³ Original text: “Dans la tradition occidentale, en effet, la plupart des définitions de l’humain soulignent à quel point il se distingue de la nature. C’est ce que l’on veut exprimer, le plus souvent, par la notion de ‘culture’, de ‘société’ ou de ‘civilisation’. Par conséquent, à chaque fois que l’on voudra ‘rapprocher l’humain de la nature’, on va s’en trouver empêché par l’objection que l’humain est avant tout, ou qu’il est aussi, un être culturel qui doit échapper à ou, en tout cas, se distinguer de la nature.”

⁴ Original text: “l’idée, pour parler vite, d’une production publique, collective de savoirs autour de situations qu’aucune expertise particulière ne peut suffire à définir, et qui demandent la présence légitime active, objectivante, proposante, de tous ceux qui sont ‘concernés’”.

agency of matter, whether organic or inorganic, animate or inanimate, particularly when it comes to assemblages:

Assemblages are ad hoc groupings of diverse elements, of vibrant materials of sorts ... Assemblages are not governed by any central head ... The effects generated by an assemblage are, rather, emergent properties, emergent in that their ability to make something happen [...] is distinct from the sum of the vital force of each materiality considered alone. (Bennett 2010, 23-25)

In this systemic description, matter is regarded not as inert and utilitarian, but rather as capable of affecting its environment and the course of time. These assemblages are manifest in the processes by which animate and inanimate domains interact and influence each other across multiple temporalities – temporalities that frequently extend beyond quotidian life: meteorological, geological, cosmological, and so on. For her part, anthropologist Anna Tsing offers a compelling exposition of the concept of assemblage, in which entities are interwoven in a complex web of relationships:

Thinking through assemblage urges us to ask: How do gatherings sometimes become ‘happenings’, that is, greater than the sum of their parts? If history without progress is indeterminate and multidirectional, might assemblages show us its possibilities? (Tsing 2015, 23)

One answer is contamination. We are contaminated by our encounters; they change who we are as we make way for others. As contamination changes world-making projects, mutual worlds – and new directions – may emerge. (ibid., 27)

The relational and situational methodology presented in this article is characterized by the central themes of assemblages, encounters with otherness, and emergence. This approach is congruent with the concept of fostering or reinforcing intimate connections with our environments. Engaging with our surroundings can then be regarded as a form of actively participating in assemblage. In this process, sound, listening, and performance serve as mediating factors.

The humanities, in their manifold forms, possess the capacity to interrogate our relationship with the world and underscore the potential for humans to reimagine their relationship with their environment. A relational approach is thus put forward, grounded in the sensitive experience that the arts can express. In this respect, music and sound creation offer a distinct framework, as evidenced by research on the ecology of sound.

Ecology of sound: the specificity of sound in the sensory landscape

In recent years, a growing body of researchers and artists, including Roberto Barbanti, Pascale Critton, Augustino Di Scipio, Guillaume Loizillon, and Makis Solomos, have examined contemporary musical practices in relation to the environment. These endeavors have extended the current discourse beyond preservationist thinking, characterized by the conservation of sound environments, or narrative thinking, exemplified by the presentation of scientific data or facts through artistic mediums. Their work represents a continuation of the historical contribution of the acoustic ecology movement,

which laid the foundation for the study of soundscapes. To distinguish themselves from these earlier considerations, which focused more on the representation and aesthetics of nature, these authors adopt the term ‘ecology of sound’. This distinction marks a conceptual shift, whereby sound is perceived not as a mode of representation, but as an event inherent to the experience of the landscape.

As a field of study, the ecology of sound is based on philosopher Félix Guattari’s notion of ecosophy. In his essay *The Three Ecologies* (1989), the thinker demonstrates the importance of bringing together the environmental, social and subjective dimensions of our relationship to the world, in order to respond to contemporary issues such as the predicted ecological imbalances. Consequently, scholars in the field of the ecology of sound seek to delineate the auditory dimension in its relationship to the environment, the collective, and the individual. In these terms, thinking about the ecology of sound requires us to consider the complete relationship of sound to its environment, its cultural context and subjectivity. Sound is displayed in the entirety of what it awakens in perception, in interaction with the other senses, with the location of its dissemination, through its codes and social meanings and through what it evokes in the imagination. From this emerges a web of relationships to be redefined, which art in general can express in its ability to convey an experience at odds with the everyday (Lacey 2020). In this sense, the composer Augustino Di Scipio advocates a situational and relational approach to practice, as opposed to the creation of hermetic cultural objects: “The critical perspectives recalled here point, on the whole, to the need to move from an art of recording, manipulation and representation, to an art of participation, events and presences”⁵ (Di Scipio 2017, 64). Indeed, art has the capacity to offer moments of engagement in the present, wherein the relationship with place is imprinted on individual experience.

The ecology of sound thus departs from the approaches of acoustic ecology artists in terms of listening, by investigating practices that more closely involve the active role of humans in their environment. Reflecting on musical creation in this sense means reconsidering our relationship to the environment, and thus studying our relationship to space, landscape and territory. Moreover, conventional forms of presentation are themselves being revisited to make artistic creation a form of direct engagement. Compositional processes are then envisaged in a variety of creative environments, including urban, industrial, commercial and natural contexts. This approach aims to re-examine our relationship with the environments that surround us in a sensitive, situated mode, making music and sound creation a mediation between artists, audiences and places. It raises the question of understanding different ways of paying attention to our surroundings and to otherness, starting from sound’s privileged relationship to space and as a medium of presence.

⁵ Original text: “Les perspectives critiques rappelées ici signalent, dans l’ensemble, la nécessité de passer d’un art d’enregistrement, de manipulation et de représentation, à un art de participation, d’événements et de présences.”

The sonic dimension of landscape

Two of Ingold's essays evoke the role of sound in our relationship to the world, and in what will be referred to here as landscape. First, *The Temporality of the Landscape* defines landscape as the world as it is known to its occupants: "In short, landscape is the world as it is known to those who dwell therein, who inhabit its places and journey along the paths connecting them" (1993, 156). According to the author, a symbolic representation of the landscape conveys a limited version of its experience. In *Four Objections to the Concept of Soundscape*, Ingold then challenges the assumed materiality of the soundscape as conceived through the medium of recording (2021, 168-171). By isolating the act of listening, particularly through recording techniques, sound is decontextualized and dissociated from the experience. Consequently, Ingold proposes a definition of sound as the medium of listening, as opposed to its object, and advocates for a multisensory approach that acknowledges the interaction of the senses in perception. The landscape is not static; rather, it is a dynamic and evolving environment that is co-created and influenced by its occupants and participants. Its temporality does not follow a chronological order, but an interweaving of interdependent rhythms (geological, seasonal, meteorological, human and others). In this sense, the development of a relationship with the landscape can be considered a form of participation in its arrangement. Although the recorded soundscape accentuates the aural dimension of our environment, it only partially restores its full experientiality, which requires active immersion in the landscape. According to this conception, the landscape, or more generally the environment, is perceived as constituted by relationships and activities. In the context of the climate crisis, Ingold's observation is of significant relevance: "Humans are not only shapers of the land's surface; they are rather entangled in it, and their life constitutes an ecological and geological whole with the Earth and its other-than-human inhabitants" (Gruppuso and Whitehouse 2020, 595). The notion of environmental awareness may be enhanced through direct engagement with the processes that constitute the environment itself. The subject of this commitment lies not in the image of nature, but in its perpetual becoming: an event.

Like Ingold, composer François Bonnet and Gérard Pelé focus on the detachment produced by the symbolic dimension of the recorded soundscape, disembodied in relation to a lived experience (Bonnet and Pelé 2016). To contextualize their argument, it is necessary to recall Murray Schafer's proposal of the term 'schizophony'. This word was suggested to describe the loss of causality of sound when listening to a recording (Schafer 1977). For Bonnet and Pelé, "to accept schizophony is, in a way, to acknowledge the autonomy of auditory experience, to assume the notion of soundscape as a separate, independent element"⁶ (2016, 9). Thus, the soundscape can only be an inadequate reproduction of the lived experience, as it does not account for all its interrelated dimensions.

In other words, the sound dimension cannot easily be detached from our perception of the environment without reifying the landscape. Rather, Ingold proposes that we

⁶ Original text: "accepter la schizophonie, c'est d'une certaine manière prendre acte de l'autonomie de l'expérience auditive, c'est assumer la notion de soundscape, en tant qu'élément séparé, indépendant."

consider sound as the medium that affirms the presence of the other alongside us. After all, isn't sound the carrier wave of distant movement? Is it not the vibration produced by the other, whatever its nature? In this sense, listening has the particularity of opening us up to the multiple presences surrounding us, beyond origin and distance. Acting and producing sound, detecting diverse presences in listening, are part of our very intimate connection with the world around us, and play a role in building a relationship with the landscape.

Proposed methodology: exploration-collection-assemblage

The methodology proposed here is rooted in the observation that the human relationship with the world needs re-definition. A potential avenue for achieving this could be found in our intimate, sensitive experience of the world, which is founded upon perception. Art has the capacity to influence this experience through its access to the sensitive register. Music and sound creation, through listening and the medium of sound, offer the potential to open to otherness and to assert one's presence in the landscape. In this paradigm, creation is conceived as an ongoing process, rather than an end in itself. Thinking about musical creation in these terms means re-evaluating our traditional practices. To that end, the proposed idea is to directly move this process to within different environments, or specific places, with the objective of transforming creation into an act of participation: an event, an assemblage.

Through experience in the field, this connection has taken the form of a flexible methodology that can be adapted to a variety of contexts. In its simplicity, it reminds us that building new relationships is a matter of putting things into action, and that art easily plays this mediating role. The proposed method is composed of three phases – exploration, collection, and assemblage – for establishing relationships through sound creation. It consists of an ephemeral, spontaneous creative process centered on the interactions between the site, its constituents and the participants.

Exploration: walking as reconnaissance

Exploring and discovering a relationship with a place means first and foremost stepping inside it. The tradition of sound walks, originating with pioneers such as Hildegard Westerkamp, provides a strategy for exploring a place through guided listening. This activity asks participants to concentrate on their listening, in order to better grasp the relationship between sound and place. Walking can take many forms, from guided listening to augmented experience with a soundtrack added through headphones. Variations on the theme of walking are a field of study in themselves, offering multiple strategies for deepening creative strategies within an ecology of sound (Biserna 2022a, 2022b). As we walk, our attention shifts from one point to another. Perspectives constantly change, revealing new viewing angles and listening points in the surrounding environment. The exploration stage thus constitutes a form of reconnaissance, not with a view to appropriation, but in the sense given by the philosopher Baptiste Morizot (2023): a recognition of our relations to the more-than-human, an orientation, discovery, perception and appreciation of the places in which we invest our attention. The

exploration stage thus passes through two phases: the experience of an atmosphere, and orientation through walking.

The atmosphere is at the forefront of exploration, as it lies at the basis of our perception of a place: “Perception is basically the manner in which one is bodily present for something or someone or one’s bodily state in an environment. The primary ‘object’ of perception is atmospheres.” (Böhme 1993, 125). Above all, to penetrate a place means to penetrate its atmosphere. From the outset, the deep forest doesn’t offer the same atmosphere as the wasteland. The atmosphere, or *ambiance* – indivisible, immediate, omnipresent and diffuse (Thibaud 2002) – simultaneously affects all the senses. From then on, the whole body is engaged in the experience of place through its multisensory openness (Kazig and Masson 2015). Capturing the *ambiance* of a place and the way it affects us enables us to engage with it, to better describe the transformation established between first impressions and final perception.

Collection: matter and sensations

Traditionally, matter is considered a resource made available to the artist. In the proposed methodology, *collection* is intended more as a form of resonance with the site. What elements draw our attention? How does the site transform the way we move? What temporalities are intertwined? By individually and collectively selecting the components that come to their attention, participants gradually define the relationship that unites them with a specific place. Without appropriating these elements, it is more a question of activating them, of making these materials and impressions speak in an ephemeral assemblage. Following the exploration stage, the *collection* phase then includes concrete materials such as found objects or captured elements (video recordings, photographs, sound recordings). On a subjective level, it also implies impressions, feelings, noted down and drawn, captured in gestures and formulated in a general conception of space.

Assemblage: manifestation of a relationship

The final phase, called *assemblage*, is the manifestation of the relationship. The bringing together of materials and sensitive postures, derived from the collection phase, is the first step in the process of sharing experiences of the place and articulating individual and collective human relationships with the environment. This act of sharing marks the intersubjective part of the experience and validates a perception that is both sensual and affective, unified by the multiple perspectives owned by the individuals. The sound dimension is privileged, given the distinctive role of sound in perception⁷. To achieve this, the assemblage relies on sound performance, and sound implementation or installation. This can take many forms, since the assemblage is spontaneous and ephemeral. Gathering found objects, amplifying musical gestures, or broadcasting a recording in an improvised sound system are all part of what comes closer to a creative intervention

⁷ It is worth noting how sound, as a vibrational phenomenon, engages both haptic and auditory perception. In this sense, soundmaking is intrinsically tied to movement and embodied presence.

in place. This action brings the participants and the site together, in what will have marked their experience.

The proposed exploration-collection-assemblage methodology thus seeks to establish a concrete relational process, putting practice at the forefront of an encounter. It provides interaction tools both for artists and the public, who can use this experience to re-examine their relation to the environment and the places that surround them. Ultimately, this methodology can be integrated into a large-scale creative musical approach, as well as into a process of mediation through music and sound creation. The subsequent case study exemplifies the implementation of the approach within a workshop setting.

Case study: *Sound + Place* co-creation workshops

The *Sound + Place* co-creation workshop series was initiated with the aim of extending the methodology of exploration-collection-assemblage to a site-specific context and spontaneous co-creation. A total of ten workshops were held between October 2023 and May 2024⁸. The workshops were presented as creative and collaborative exploration sessions in various urban environments in Montreal (Quebec, Canada), through which particular attention was given to found sounds, images, objects, gestures and sensations, with the aim of realizing spontaneous and collective creative experiences. Lasting approximately three hours, they followed a malleable order, often combining a brief presentation and contextualization, a sound walk, a period of exploration and material collection, the sharing of discoveries and assemblage into a documented ephemeral work. Emphasis was placed on the project's experimental and collaborative process.

The call for participation went out to artist networks: digital music students at the Université de Montréal and members of the Eastern Bloc artist-run center. It was aimed at anyone wishing to take part in a collective artistic creation activity related to ecology and the environment. A basic knowledge of audiovisual recording techniques was recommended, but not mandatory. In all, sixteen people took part in various workshops at least once. Most had an advanced knowledge of sound art, but a few came from other artistic disciplines, such as dance, performance arts and visual arts.

Despite the existence of a general structure for the workshops, there was always a degree of flexibility, in accordance with the needs and suggestions of the group. This open-ended approach enabled each participant to direct the co-creation process according to their own desires and needs, as well as in relation to the elements encountered in the field. In this sense, it made the group an ephemeral autonomous collective. Periods of individual exploration sometimes turned into collective experimentations or rigorous sound recording sessions. Final performances took the form of sound installations, musical performances or action-performances, integrating elements from the field. Some groups engaged in lengthy feedback sessions. On each occasion, the very act

⁸ Documentation of workshop performances can be found on the author's website, Chioini, S. (q.v.). *Ateliers de co-cr  ation Son + Lieu*. S. Chioini. chioini.com/Ateliers (accessed December 28, 2024).

of assembling found elements was an integral part of the performance. Each occasion proved unique, reflecting the places explored and the diversity of the participants' creative approaches.

The experimental dimension of the workshops was facilitated using portable electronic devices. In a way, the workshops served to divert the studio's usual equipment into a field context. Four wireless speakers, a portable battery, a camera, microphones and recorders were always made available. In addition to the equipment brought along by the participants – recorders, sensors, effects pedals, synthesizers and other sounding objects – these technologies made it possible to tackle aspects of electroacoustic composition such as spatialization and sound processing, but in a contextual and spontaneous way.

Most of the locations explored were chosen for their ability to demonstrate a relationship between wilderness and urbanity. For example, the vacant lots, alleyways and railroad sidings of an industrial zone in the Chabanel neighborhood proved particularly suitable for exploration. However, during the exploratory phase, the absence of anthropogenic activity revealed other presences: waste, the distant sounds of transport, wild vegetation, a few birds. By focusing on the surrounding elements, these constituents effectively revealed their singular company. While exploration and collection allowed one to develop an attention to place, direct action in the landscape materialised a relationship in the form of assemblage. The rupture provoked by creation, through installation (ephemeral scenography) or performance (spontaneous ritual), physically manifested this new link. The creative result demonstrated the participatory aspect of the landscape's constitution.

The electronic devices at hand enabled participants to interact rapidly with their environment. The deployment of multiple stand-alone loudspeakers offered the opportunity to deposit sound recordings in the space. Microphones and sensors provided the possibility of amplifying the sound of live manipulations. It was imperative that the equipment available should be easily transportable, installable and operable.

Through the workshops, each participant discovered unique facets of the surroundings and proposed singular ways of interacting with them. In this way, the recognition of space extended to other aspects that might have been overlooked in a solitary exploration. This can potentially be explained by the empathy generated by the presence of others. Sharing one's relationship with a place can create an even greater sense of attachment. Doesn't the presence of others guarantee the authenticity of our experience of the world? Doesn't it reinforce a sense of resonance within our experience? This is what Husserl was already pointing out in the early phases of phenomenology (Abram 2013). In *Une histoire d'empathie*, Jacques Hochmann explains how Husserl first notices that the phenomenological experience of the surrounding world (as intention, as a pure phenomenon of consciousness) always contains something more than perceived:

[...] among the categories of the world around me, some are made up of inanimate objects, others of animalia. Among these animalia which, like me, have a body inhabited by intentions, with limbs that move and touch, eyes that see, there are other humans,

alter egos, realities in flesh and bone, of which I am only the analogue, but whose movements stand out against a background of experience different from my bodily experience. It is this experience of the otherness of the similar which tears me away from solipsism and leads me to what Husserl calls “transcendental intersubjectivity”... And it is this primary intersubjectivity, towards which empathy is only a means of access, which constitutes objectivity, in an agreement of points of view of the world which establishes the certainty of the existence of this world and the possibility of its knowledge⁹. (Hochmann 2012, paragr. 12)

In this way, the *Sound + Place* workshops show a version of an exploration-collection-assemblage approach to which the dimension of sharing is added. Indeed, the structure of the workshops functions like a ritual: sound walk (opening), exploration, collection and sharing (heart), then assemblage (closing). By exploring these places through sound art, an activity usually reserved for the space of cultural institutions, a break is made in our daily lives and in our perception of these environments, and this break marks, in memory, a new relationship.

Future applications

In the light of the proposed methodology, it is worth noting several perspectives for future applications. Firstly, it is important to observe that the presented workshops were mainly aimed at artists who were well versed in sound creation and digital production methods. As a result, the exploration-collection-assemblage process was able to focus directly on interactions with the site, without the need for an introduction to recording techniques or the use of amplification. A future application which brings together a non-initiated public should include a tutoring stage and more sustained supervision of the group, in order to enable the activity. It would be interesting to observe the potential effect of this approach on such a group. Would the novelty of the sound experience have a greater potential to affect them?

Secondly, what effect might the exploration-collection-assemblage approach have on the artists involved in the activities? Considering the traditional frameworks of musical creation, it seems safe to assume that the methodology employed will open new fields of creation rooted in a relational and situational approach, with various outcomes for different artists. According to the participatory nature of this approach, it would also be interesting to organize experiences in more crowded locations, such as a downtown area, a rural place, or a shopping center. This would allow for the study of the

⁹ Original text: “Or, parmi les catégories du monde qui m’entoure, certaines sont formées d’objets inanimés, d’autres d’animalia. Parmi ces animalia qui disposent, comme moi, d’un corps habité d’intentions, avec des membres qui se meuvent et qui touchent, des yeux qui voient, il y a les autres humains, les alter ego, des réalités en chair et en os, dont je ne suis que l’analogon, mais dont les mouvements se détachent sur un fond d’expérience différent de mon expérience corporelle. C’est cette expérience de l’altérité du semblable qui m’arrache au solipsisme et me conduit à ce que Husserl appelle ‘l’intersubjectivité transcendante’... Et c’est cette intersubjectivité première, vers laquelle l’empathie n’est qu’un moyen d’accès, qui constitue l’objectivité, dans un accord de points de vue sur le monde qui fonde la certitude de l’existence de ce monde et la possibilité de sa connaissance.”

intertwining of participants and the audience – the members of which are also participating to the constitution of a place. In any case, the main interest of the approach potentially lies in its capacity to create new relationships – with the place, between people, within our distinct subjectivities. By creating a shared experience of exploration, manifested in a performance, participants create the collective narrative of their encounters. For the uninitiated, it may be the discovery of an unsuspected, sensitive world. For musician-artists, it opens the way to new participatory practices. In this sense, this methodology fits into the sphere of mediation, turning it into a form of collective creation.

Conclusion

We can conclude that the proposed exploration-collection-assemblage methodology seeks to initiate a public, comprising professional and non-professional artists alike, into the relational dimensions of sound creation. This approach aims to establish a committed link between the artist and his or her environment, while bringing people together around the act of creation and encouraging their participation in this exchange ecosystem. The simplicity of this approach has the potential to extend into everyday life, to rethink our ways of existing, exploring, sharing and participating. For the arts, the socio-ecological crisis is perhaps a reminder of the need for collective expression. Music offers us the capacity to resonate, to live a shared experience through sound. By taking a step in this direction, we can create together, and guide the current transition towards a creative process of openness and rediscovery.

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Authors' Biographies

Simon Chioini is a composer and sound artist. His research-creation project integrates sound composition within an interdisciplinary framework. His research explores the relationships between sound, the environment and social dynamics. Drawing inspiration from philosophy, geography and anthropology, his work aims to expand the understanding of sound composition through ecological and relational perspectives. In the context of the current climate crisis, Chioini's practice challenges the traditional divide between nature and culture by examining how sound art can serve as a tool for mediating and transforming the relationships between the two. His methodology combines theoretical research with site-specific creative practices, often incorporating performative and participatory elements.

Myriam Boucher. Sound and video composer, and professor in digital/audiovisual music composition at the Université de Montréal (CA), Myriam Boucher merges the organic and the synthetic in her mesmerizing videomusic installations, immersive projects and audiovisual performances. Her sensitive and polymorphic work explores the intimate dialogue between music, sound and image, transforming everyday landscapes into fantastical, living phenomena. Her research-creation activities integrate musical composition, improvisation, deep listening, sound ecology, site-specific creation and immersive experiences. Her research aims to understand and analyze the mechanisms of perception in audiovisual works and multidisciplinary concerts which integrate sound, music, image and performers, from the perspective that art is a practice capable of transforming reality and generating new forms of sensitive representations.