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THE SPACE BETWEEN

TIME, MEMORY AND TRANSCENDENCE IN AUDIO-PHOTOGRAPHIC ART

Hali Santamas

A commentary accompanying the creative portfolio submitted to the University of Huddersfield
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

October, 2015

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Subtitle: Time, memory and transcendence in audio-photographic art
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THE SPACE BETWEEN

TIME, MEMORY AND TRANSCENDENCE IN

AUDIO-PHOTOGRAPHIC ART

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Abstract

This portfolio and commentary documents an approach to audiovisual composition that utilises sound and photographic images in an effort to create immersive, affective art which I call audio-photographic art. When presented in an immersive context, I contend that the temporal dissonance between still image and sound opens up a *space between* the materials. I draw upon Gernot Böhme's writings on the aesthetic of 'atmosphere', as well as the theoretical writings of Roland Barthes, Paul Ricoeur and Eleni Ikoniadou among others to illustrate how this experience is constituted. This *space between* is an affective conceptual space in which the participant enters into a relationship with the materials of the piece, transcending their usual perception of time as they are immersed in the internal times of the artwork, their own memories and atmosphere. Through the use of maximal aesthetics and atmosphere as compositional tool, these themes are explored and developed throughout the creative portfolio. In the written submission I study the practical and theoretical concerns of the *space between* from three perspectives: 'The Temporal Space', 'The Memorial Space' and 'The Atmospheric Space'.

List of Submitted Works

Waves (2013) *48 minutes, 12 images.*

Book with digital photographic prints on paper, 28.6 x 22.2cm.

Fixed audio on CD containing:

1. 'Waves', 14.16.
2. 'Snow', 9.02.
3. 'Threads', 6.23.
4. 'Rooftop', 6.01.
5. 'Windows', 5.00.
6. 'Sea', 7.12.

Swell (2014) *24 minutes (audio), 31 minutes (video).*

Projected fixed video loop, fixed audio loop, wedge speakers, prisms, acrylic.

City Colours (2014) *3 hours 30 minutes (original audio), 5 digital images.*

Projected digital photographic images, audio playback patch, wedge speakers, prisms, acrylic.

Escapism (2015) *1 hour 31 minutes (original audio), 6 digital images.*

Digital photographic images on widescreen televisions, audio playback patch, headphones, black cloth.

INTRODUCTION

This commentary has been written to accompany a portfolio of audiovisual creative work completed between 2012 and 2015. In it I will consider how my creative work uses photography and phonography to open up a conceptual space, what that space constitutes and the possibilities that arise. As a result of this space, the project is a collection of works that aim to place the memories and experience of the audience at their centre. It is a body of work in which I have attempted to create the conditions in which the participants may transcend their perception of time. Taking inspiration from artists such as Idris Kahn, Swans, Mark Rothko, Phil Niblock and Mount Eerie I have attempted to create abstracted works which use thick layers of sound and image to create an immersive environment. The abstract nature of the work leaves interpretation of these pieces open to the participant's experience. This body of work is informed by the phenomenological and aesthetic studies of Roland Barthes, Gilles Deleuze, Paul Ricoeur, Eleni Ikoniadou, Gernot Böhme, Michel Foucault, Stella Baraklianou and Joanna Demers. Using theory as a tool in the development of my portfolio I have attempted to create engaging, immersive works of art that use sound and still image in a concentrated and unique way. This commentary will look at how my creative work attempts to fulfil these aims.

Origins and Context

The beginning of this project can be traced back to the first time I saw/heard *The Fragile* by Nine Inch Nails (1999). Although it is presented as an album of music, for me David Carson's distinct visual aesthetic across the artwork was just as striking as the sound (Meggs and Carson, 1999). Both elements seem to work in tandem to create a whole that is more than the sum of its

parts, triggering memories and evoking complex atmospheres. I would get lost in this new world I created for myself in the space between the sounds and images, shifting between memories, colours, sounds and shapes, which eventually all blurred into one. My perception and experience of time fluctuated according to the focus of my mind at any given moment. It is this effect that I wished to recreate, specifically honing in on the parts I found most affective. My formative and deeply personal experience of *The Fragile* (Nine Inch Nails, 1999) taken to its logical extreme has led to a portfolio of audiovisual work in which I manipulate and abstract the frequencies of sound and light in digital recorded time. In the portfolio I have aimed to treat sound and photography as equals and use the materials to evoke the atmospheres of memory. This creates the conditions in which the listener/viewer may have their own personal experience which transcends their usual perception of time.

Using sound and photography elements in a single artwork is not a new practice and I drew a lot of aesthetic inspiration from works I discovered both before and during the period in which I was creating my portfolio. Whilst there are many artists using sound and photography, they are often framed as sound artists, prioritising sound as the art object – sound *with* photography. Three more prominent examples are Taylor Deupree, Nine Inch Nails, and Mount Eerie. All three artists have created works which include both sound and photography, each slightly different to the other. All of these works have influenced my own aesthetic to some extent despite being several steps away in the way they are audio-visually composed.

Deupree's *Faint* (2012) was released in two editions. The special edition came with several photographs printed on card in a box with the CD. Deupree's sounds and images are created with similar compositional concerns, 'Isolation, time, stillness... with an inherent silence, and quiet' (www.headphonecommute.com, n.d.). Both sounds and images are abstract in *Faint*, the

images themselves are abstracted in colour and form through the use of a homemade 35mm camera (www.12k.com, n.d.). The aesthetics of *Faint* are much closer to mine than either Nine Inch Nails or Mount Eerie. Repetition and abstraction of form and colour in the aural/visual materials are all aesthetic qualities shared with the majority of my work.



Faint (Deupree, 2012). Image from: (www.wajobu.com, 2012)

Nine Inch Nails' *Ghosts I-IV* (2007) was the first album I came across which uses photography in a significant way. The album itself is a collection of improvisations and photographs based on an imagined 'place or setting or situation' (ninofficial, 2008). Unlike Deupree or Mount Eerie's work, the photographs are taken by photographers who were not involved with the sound, responding separately to the same brief. These photographs are mostly representational and often not only show space/place but also the instruments and areas of the studio during the production of the album. In the two special editions created in collaboration with Artist In Residence the photographs are presented in a photo book that comes as a single package with the CD. Each photograph is paired with a song inspired by the same dream. This album was my

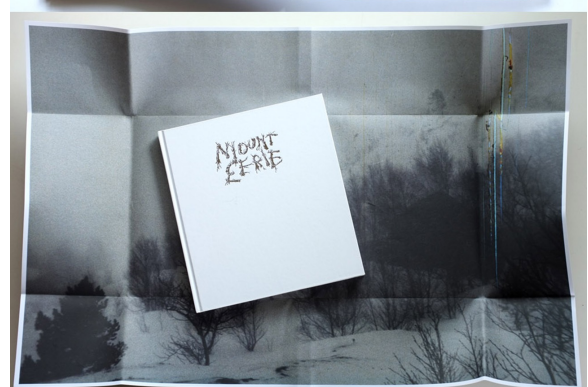
primary inspiration for the presentation of *Waves*. In both cases the piece is presented as a CD of noisy songs contained within a representational photo book with each track having its own corresponding photography. Just as with *Waves*, *Ghosts I - IV* is far more conservative in its approach to processing, abstraction and form than my later work, staying within more common structures and styles influenced by popular music.



Both *Faint* and *Ghosts I - IV* share an approach which privileges music as the primary art object. This is demonstrated by the standard edition releases not containing any or all of the photographs. It shows that the photographs are more of an addition to enhance the enjoyment or understanding of the sound as opposed to an integral part of the art product itself.



Mount Eerie is unique amongst the three by being the only artist to release one definitive version of his album *Pts. 6 & 7* (2007). The album itself (right) is presented on picture disc inside a photography book. Each photograph is untitled and without description filling a full page. Mount



Mount Eerie's *Pts. 6 & 7* (2007). Image from: (www.pwilverumandsun.com, n.d.)

Eerie is a project by Phil Elverum, an attempt to capture the sense of place he feels in his home town of Anacortes and the surrounding area. The audiovisual *Pts. 6 & 7* (Mount Eerie, 2007) album is a continuation of this concept. On the album's online supplement Elverum describes it:

It is not a documentary book about all the exotic places I've been. It's not even a narrative myth story. It's an arrangement of colors and shapes that are intended to get at this idea of "Mount Eerie" I keep excavating. (Elverum, n.d.)

This has the most in common with the ideas behind my work as Elverum sees the photographs not as images of objects but of 'colors and shapes'. This approach is borne out in his use of expired film and old cameras, which distort the colour profile of the images to give the impression that the images are removed from reality into abstraction (Stosuy, 2009). What is clear from the online supplement is that Elverum does not see the location of the space depicted in the photographs as important but rather the sense of place that they attempt to capture (Elverum, n.d.). Our work shares this focus on place and as an extension, atmosphere, but I aim to do more than that. In my own pieces, for the most part, I have attempted to capture the spaces that occupy my memory as well as place. This is due to the more specific nature of the way I deal with memories, using their location and space in the creation of atmosphere and sense of place.

Drawing on the work of Nine Inch Nails, Mount Eerie and Taylor Deupree amongst others, over the course of the PhD I have created a portfolio that tackles some of the issues that arise from the way these artists have used sound and image. I began with *Waves*, an album of songs and photographs presented as a photo book and audio CD which drew heavily on *Ghosts I-IV*. Each piece on the album was meant to explore one of four aspects of the relationship between

sound and image that I had identified through a previous project (Santamas, 2012): atmosphere, memory, idea and a more literal direct relationship using the images as scores.

Identifying the problems inherent in the aesthetics of *Waves* and my discovery of Mount Eerie lead me to develop my approach and further consolidate my work as audiovisual rather than audio and visual. To do this I created *City Colours*, an immersive installation where the sounds and images were more abstracted and experimented with a theoretically infinite temporal form. It was particularly inspired by the way Elverum approached his photography as colours, shapes and atmospheres (Stosuy, 2015).

The more coherent audiovisual approach developed in *City Colours* and used thereafter is at the heart of the major difference between my own work and other works which use sound and photography. I have endeavoured to create pieces where the sound and image are not presented as supplementary to the other but instead are equals with the intention of creating an audiovisual experience united as one piece of conceptually and aesthetically coherent art.

Using the techniques developed in *City Colours*, in *Swell* I tested slow movement in both the sound and image to see if I could create the conditions for an experience with similar effects to the audio-photographic work that had come before. Then finally, returning to audio-photographic art with my piece *Escapism*, I decided to create a more personal and small-scale experience using a smaller selection of materials with shorter durations in a space just large enough for one person. The sound is presented on headphones and the images on portrait widescreen televisions. For me *Escapism* is the summation of the most successful parts of the previous pieces. It is my approach to audio-photographic art in its most concentrated form.

THE SPACE BETWEEN

From my early experiences of audiovisual art there has often been an element of transcendence, an engagement with the work which allows me to become part of the piece as its sound and light wash over me. This effect seemed to be borne out of a certain kind of active engagement with the work before I became immersed in it and a sense of ego and the temporal were lost. I believe it is possible to create conditions which encourage participants to engage in this 'active' way. It is in the fractious aesthetics of audio-photographic art that I have developed a methodology which aims to make this kind of 'active' engagement the default way to experience the work.

There is a 'space' in audio-photographic art. It opens up in the perception of audio-photographic works between the sound and image, stasis and movement. The clash of multiple temporalities, multiple within times (the time felt in the materials), open up this *space between* the materials, making it possible for the participant to transcend their usual perception of time and become immersed in a seemingly infinite, affective temporality.

The affective experience of the *space between* is not just a temporal one but is inherently memorial and atmospheric, borne out of an immanent relationship between the materials of recorded time and the participant. The participant's moods and memories inform their perception of the piece as the atmosphere of the piece affects their moods and interpretation of memories. The atmospheric and memorial relationship between piece and participant fills the space between, making its immersive experience unique to each person.

The *space between* is particular to works perceived as audio-photographic art, that is works in which the sound and still image are perceived with equal importance. For me, the *space between* is not opened up in the work sound artists who use image as a starting point for sound works such as Richard Chartier and Taylor Deupree's interpretation of Hiroshi Sugimoto's seascapes *Specification.Fifteen* (2006). The most developed example of this approach is found in the work of Jez Riley French whose photographic scores in '*if you so wish...*' (2014) are, by their nature as scores, prompts for the creation of sound – sound as outcome and end goal (Riley French, n.d.). Here the photography is part of an exploration of compositional process rather than the possibilities of an audio-photographic affect. The images and sounds are not united by a common goal or outcome to create an audiovisual affect. Nor is the *space between* opened up by the movement of sound and video in audiovisual practice. The slow movement and crashing sound of Bill Viola's installations such as *Tristan's Ascension* (2005) don't allow the participant the temporal space to contemplate the links between their own memories and the piece. Any transcendent space opened up by movement cannot be filled in quite the same way with memory which in turn limits the interpretation of atmospheres. In movement there is less of an interactive relationship between participant and piece, the piece taking a more dominant role by not allowing the same level of interpretation according to memory. For this reason my own video piece *Swell* does not open up the *space between*.

It is the *space between* which makes my work different from other audio-visual artists with its focus on fractious temporalities, transcendence and immanent relationships with participants. In this chapter I will show how it manifests itself by examining it from three different perspectives. The *space between* as temporal space, as memorial space and as atmospheric space. Through these approaches I will show how my portfolio has created and utilised the *space between* to fulfil the

aims of each piece and how this may translate from conceptual space into actual audience experience.

The Temporal Space

Some of the most profound experiences of art I have ever had are ones in which my perception of time has changed. In these instances I am submerged in time, it washes over me like the tide, pushing me one way then pulling me another. My body becomes part of its expansions and contractions, more sensitive to feeling and affect. I believe that the friction between the contrasting temporalities of audio-photographic art is an entry point to this immersive, affective state. Using the theories of Roland Barthes, Jonathan Kramer, Paul Ricoeur and Eleni Ikoniadou, I will show how the simultaneous stasis and movement through time in my work opens up a temporal space between the audio and the visual. In order to understand what this *space between* constitutes and how it manifests itself, a more in depth look at the way time works in phonography and photography is necessary.

In his phenomenological study of photography *Camera Lucida* (2000), Roland Barthes claimed that the photograph is a ‘defeat of time’, capturing a single moment, trapping it inside a frame, its pure essence or noeme as ‘that-has-been’. Barthes goes on to explain the temporal difference between static and moving images:

What founds the nature of Photography is the pose. The physical duration of this pose is of little consequence; even in the interval of a millionth of a second ... there has still been a pose, for the pose is not, here, the attitude of the target or even a technique of the Operator, but the term of an “intention” of reading: looking at a photograph, I inevitably include in my scrutiny the thought of that instant, however brief, in which a real thing happened to be motionless in front of the eye. I project the present photograph’s immobility upon the past

shot, and it is this arrest which constitutes the pose. This explains why the Photograph's noeme deteriorates when this Photograph is animated and becomes cinema: in the Photograph, something has posed in front of the tiny hole and has remained there forever (that is my feeling); but in cinema, something has passed in front of this same tiny hole: the pose is swept away and denied by the continuous series of images: it is a different phenomenology, and therefore a different art which begins here, though derived from the first one. (Barthes, 2000, p.78)

Barthes' analysis highlights a key difference between the perception of photography and the moving image; the distinction between his use of 'pose' and 'passing' is in movement through time. Here Barthes draws a temporal distinction between the mediums rather than a spatial one. This can also then be applied to the temporal difference between the 'passing' of sound through time and the 'pose' of the photograph. Where the recorded light of the photograph repeats infinitely through time within a spatial frame, sound moves from one point in time to another. This leads to a fundamentally different phenomenological experience of each medium.

Where Barthes conceives of the photograph as an arrest of a time, Jonathan Kramer conceives of music as a creator of time through a succession of events.

... time itself can (be made to) move, or refuse to move, in more than one "direction": Not an objective time out there, beyond ourselves, but the very personal time created within us as we listen deeply to music. (Kramer, 1988, p.6)

For Kramer, the time music creates is not just a singular time but multiple forms of temporality able to create a number of different temporal effects through movement. This creation of temporality is separate to the measured time in which the piece takes place but occurs simultaneously to it within the music (Kramer, 1988). If photography is time repeated then phonography therefore can be seen as time reconstituted.

One way of framing the way the viewer/listener experiences art through time is through the concept of narrative. Narrative is key to understanding the different aesthetic and perceptual concerns of the photograph when combined with music. The relationship between narrative and time however, is not as simple as it initially seems. Paul Ricoeur proposed a theory on narrative and time in his essay 'Narrative Time' (1980) where he claims that all narrative occurs through time. In it he explores narrative time in relation to written plot. Using Heidegger's *Being and Time* (2010) as the basis for his analysis, Ricoeur identifies two ways in which the time of the narrative is public - interacting with its audience. The first is the time within the narrative, an abstract 'within-time' in which the audience is swept up: the internal time of the literature. The time is presented historically but the audience is subject to their 'thrownness' in the story, i.e. going with the flow of the writing. Time expands and contracts according to the importance the plot ascribes to each event as opposed to experiencing time in a clear equal historic timeline as it is represented. The second level is the historicity of narrative. The placing of the narrative within the external time of the audience, the 'real' time as they read. This historicity is not just how the narrative fits into the personal histories of the readers but how it informs their future.

These two aspects of public time are linked by the 'configuration' of the plot, the recollection of events in order to understand a plot. This then,

... establishes human action not only within time ... but within memory. Memory, accordingly, *repeats* the course of events according to an order that is the counterpart of time as "stretching-along" between a beginning and an end. (Ricoeur, 1980, p.180)

This approach to narrative time can be used as a framework to begin to look at the complex way in which time works in audio-photographic art. In aural and visual objects within time is the time felt by the participant as they are swept up in the materials. Their attention ascribes importance to certain sounds or images as it moves between them, driving the ever changing temporal expansions and contractions experienced in within time. Each piece in the portfolio contains multiple aural and visual objects. Each of these can be seen as the equivalent of a sub-plot occurring simultaneously, made up of events. These events and sub-plots constitute the overall piece or plot. As the listener/viewer takes in the materials of the piece, each element is held in their memory, experiencing past (the piece already seen/heard), present (the piece being experienced) and future (the anticipation and potential) at once. Through this configurational time, the temporal experience of the piece is transitive, between historicity and the internal time of the materials. The configurational time does not just bring together historicity and the internal time of the work, its 'within' time, but also the two contrasting temporalities of sound and still image into the perception of the audiences.

As a narrative is put together between still image and sound, the temporal make up of the piece becomes a complex web of shifting temporal planes. The body is held by dense drones slowly dissolving into repeating waves of colours and shapes and back again, each colliding with the other, informing, conflicting, autonomous and yet part of a whole. The within time of each fragment of recorded time inherent in its presentation; light repeating within a spatial frame or sound moving within a temporal frame. Through the flux in temporality, audio-photographic pieces also operate on a new level of time beyond the internal time and historicity of the materials, that of rhythmic time.

In her analysis of *Stimuline* (Clauss & Pook, 2008) Eleni Ikoniadou identifies how time in digital installation art can have an affective rhythmic temporality (2012). *Stimuline* is a digital installation where rhythmic sounds are tapped out on the participants' bodies, their bodies becoming resonators. Ikoniadou posits that its time occurs on two levels, the chronological, felt through the awareness of the physical tapping of the body and a more abstract, spectral time felt through 'a layer of non-conscious affect'. The latter of which causes a variety of effects in perception including bodily apparitions, transformation of the external space and access to an 'inner space' (Ikoniadou, 2012). This spectral non-conscious affect is triggered through a seemingly limitless, patternless maximal repetition of rhythmic taps and of coded 'microscopic movements that are not fully given in spatiotemporal actuality' (Ikoniadou, 2012).

The two layers of time in *Stimuline* are perceived to come together through a 'temporal inter-rhythmicity', a rhythmic time that weaves together chronological and spectral time through a dreamlike state (Ikoniadou, 2012). Time overwhelms the participant, their body becomes part of the installation's whole, another resonator in a web of code. As the participant becomes a part of the piece, time is experienced as past, present and future all at once, memories from the past and potential futures coming together in a single instant; here the body is 'Non-reacting, non-perceiving but enduring the reality of time', motionless in the dreamlike state (Ikoniadou, 2012).

I have experienced the dreamlike state that Ikoniadou identifies in *Stimuline* in many different pieces of art. One instance that particularly stands out is seeing My Bloody Valentine extend the noise section of 'You Made Me Realise' in a live performance at The Roundhouse in 2008 for well over twenty minutes (My Bloody Valentine, 1991). The affective experience was characterised by its repetition and its extremity. Strobe lights on and around the stage flashed

near constantly, sometimes in regular rhythms, sometimes in more unpredictable formations. At times, short sped up videos of no more than a few seconds in length were looped over several minutes each, the same snapshots of time repeated over and over in fast forward. The sound was a visceral wall of barely changing guitar and cymbal noise, played so loud that it could be felt in every part of my body, through the floor and through the air. The repetition of the videos and strobes in combination with the gut shaking volume of the sound swallowed me up and I became part of the constellation of rhythmic sound and light, overwhelmed by time. It was experiences like this which encouraged me to pursue temporal transcendence in my work and explore the temporal possibilities of audio-photographic art.

Audio-photographic art can, like digital installation, create the same dreamlike temporal effect. In my own audio-photographic art such as *City Colours* or *Escapism* rhythmic time is present in the repetitive maximalism of sound and still images, however, there is an added temporal layer in the within time of the work. In its very make up the audio-photographic work is not one of a linear measurable time but a complex web of multiple temporalities connected in perception by rhythm. It is a web of stasis and movement, each material repeating a different piece of the past. These temporalities are brought together simultaneously by Ricoeur's configurational time, combining the captured movement and stasis of the within times of the components and historicity of the participants (1980). The tiny movements in perception of these different temporalities create a rhythmic time of their own in addition to that of the coded make up of the pieces. This temporal friction between stasis and movement and the multitude of tiny rhythmic movements in perception it generates can create an entry point to the dreamlike state as the participant is overwhelmed by time. It is a rhythm that is grounded in the within times of its origins, the 'pose' of photography and the 'passing' of recorded sound, simultaneously static,

repeating ad infinitum whilst also shifting and changing, the two times not opposed but existing in tandem in the dreamlike state.

The incorporation of simultaneous multiple temporalities heightens the intensity of the dreamlike time through its further reiteration of past, present and future at once. Furthermore, audio-photographic rhythmic time encompasses the phenomenological effects of recorded time, the '*that-has-been*', this-will-be and this-is-being of phonography and photography. The stillness that allows us to linger, no matter how briefly on the tiny details of a frame of time trapped in stasis or the movement of the reconstitution of the past, creating new interpretations of lived experience. This is not only an entry point to the dreamlike state of past, present and future but also includes the memorial properties of the audio-photographic materials. This establishes an affective temporality which is not just a product of the piece's aesthetics but is borne out of a relationship between the aesthetics of the piece and the perceptions of the participant. It is a rhythmic time that cannot exist without both the piece and the participant and will be unique to each person who experiences it.

The configuration of audio-photographic rhythmic time in the perception of the participant is what opens up the *space between*. It is not just a figurative space but one that exists within the aesthetics of the work. For Ikoniadou, digital rhythmic time exists between the 'double reality of time' (chronological time and spectral time) in *Stimuline*. Ikoniadou writes that:

The dreamlike states (or precognition), connecting perception and world, suggest that there are gaps or breaks in the succession of actual movements, images and spaces, as they appear through the senses. Rhythmic/direct/middle time resides in these discrepancies. (Ikoniadou, 2012, p.271)

It is therefore the gaps between the simultaneous within times of photography and phonography where audio-photographic rhythmic time exists. The audio-photographic piece then works not just on the level of the actuality of the materials presented but also in the space between the materials. This *space between* is where affective time and memory come together in the dreamlike state.

This unique temporality is why *City Colours* and *Escapism* open up the *space between* and for me, *Swell* does not. Rhythmic audio-photographic time flows out of the gaps between the materials encompassing not just the affect of the dreamlike state but the memorial affect of recorded time too. For me any transcendent affect in moving image comes from its materials, not from a space between them. For example, in Phil Niblock's live performances, a non syncretic combination of loud drones and repetitive excerpts of his film *The Movement of People Working* (2003), the sound and image, though not directly synchronising are bound by movement, ensuring that there is no space between the materials that can be filled with memory in the same way.

The temporality of audio-photographic art is not borne out of a succession of events or infinite repetition but a complex structure of interweaving temporalities brought together by the participant's mental configuration of the piece. It is a time rooted in the simultaneous rhythmic perception of phonography and photography. The rhythmic perception and dissonance between these temporalities opens up a *space between* the materials in which time is felt as affect. This *space between* is inherent in audio-photographic art, it is an affective temporal structure which acts as the starting point from which to explore the possibilities of this medium.

Maximalism and Transcendental Aesthetics

My favourite art envelopes me: the overwhelming size, deep reds and blacks and complex texture of Mark Rothko's *Seagram Murals* (1958); the large multi-layered photographs that tend towards abstraction of Idris Khan's *Every... Bernd and Hilla Becher Prison Type Gas Holders* (2004); and the thick slow shifting harmonies of Phill Niblock's *Touch Five* (2013), played at such volume that the sound physically shakes my body. Each of these pieces completely immerse me. An atmospheric, seemingly infinite audiovisual world unfolds both internally and externally. I seem to transcend time, left with the contents of my memories and imagination. These transcendent experiences are rare but their effects are long lasting.¹ The atmosphere and memories they evoke becoming forever associated with the works in my mind. Each subsequent experience of the art triggering a brief shadow of the atmosphere I felt and the memories that came with it.

What triggers the immersed, transcendent state is highly subjective however, when I have had these visceral experiences or been close to them, the aesthetics of the artists often share particular characteristics. Repetition, a sense of slow movement or stasis, layers of detail and minimal variation in source material; these characteristics necessitate a different way of looking and listening, a long form of experiencing the artworks. In this long form experience detail becomes key, the textures and complex but subtle layers of colour in the *Seagram Murals*, the slow shifting interwoven harmonics of Niblock (2013) and the seemingly endless layered repetition of Kahn (2004). Each piece draws me in, my perception flitting between looking/listening and a more abstract plane, losing myself to memories, imagination and raw emotion. This is the dreamlike time that Ikoniadou identifies in *A Rhythmic Time for the Digital* (2012).

¹ These experiences are dependent on the ever changing intersection of my state of mind and the atmospheres of the artwork.

By using photography and sound I am attempting to open up the *space between* and trigger an audiovisual experience that is equivalent to, or goes beyond those that have influenced much of my work up to the present day. I create my art in the hope that, at a basic level, it can affect the people that interact with it whether the interaction is seeing, listening and analysing or something more visceral, intuitive and bodily.

In music, the pieces which engender this type of experience have been theorised by Joanna Demers in her book *Listening Through The Noise* (2010). Here Demers identifies them as ‘maximal music’, a music so visceral and affective that through its ‘liminal qualities’ it enters the physical world and becomes object. She describes maximal music as,

... pieces that seem to change their surrounding environments and, especially, our own bodies. They are powerful, exerting their will to alter the way we listen. Their long durations and loud volumes test our limits of concentration and, in some cases, our tolerance for pain. These pieces confine their materials to drones, noises, and repetitive rhythmic patterns and often studiously avoid any other types of sounds that might distract from these elements. (Demers, 2010, p.92)

She goes on to explain that ‘one aspect they all share is a quality of excess, something appreciable only after long stretches of time’ or ‘perceived long durations’ (Demers, 2010). In each of these genres the excess manifests itself in a number of ways, an excess of noise, an excess of drones, an excess of volume, an excess of time, an excess of repetition. Demers identifies important features of many maximal sound objects, ‘stasis’ and ‘negative beauty’. The former being exemplified best in drone and dub techno, the long washes of slowly shifting sound and/or repetitive rhythms creating the feeling of stasis despite their constant movement whilst the latter is represented in noise and shoegaze music, specifically the combination of noise, tonality and consonance with the ‘negative pleasure’ (Kant, 2000, p.129) and sense of the sublime that it

inspires. Here Demers uses the Kantian notion of the sublime and its resultant ‘negative pleasure’,

... a pleasure that arises only indirectly, being generated, namely, by the feeling of a momentary inhibition of the vital powers and the immediately following and all the more powerful outpouring of them (Kant, 2000, pp.128 - 129)

In his writing on the sublime, Kant claims that it,

is to be found in a formless object insofar as limitlessness is represented in it, or at its instance, and yet it is also thought as a totality. (Kant, 2000, p.128)

The limitlessness in this case is represented by excesses in maximal objects. The perception of an excess of noise and time and the transgressions that they perpetuate can be experienced as limitlessness, pushing maximal sound objects into the realms of the sublime rather than the beautiful. Demers shows how the surpassing of limits into limitlessness is closely tied to Georges Bataille’s concept of transgression. In *Eroticism* (1962), Bataille discusses the nature of transgression and claims that for it to occur, the boundaries or taboo it breaks must be observed therefore preserving the transgression as transgressive. For maximal sound objects to reach the limitlessness of the sublime, their usual aesthetic boundaries including fixed time and tonality must be both observed and perceived to be broken to experience the transgression therein qualifying their seeming limitlessness.

In the aural materials of my work I have used maximal techniques so that participants may access this transcendent temporality, what Ikoniadou refers to as the dreamlike state. Throughout all my pieces I have used excessive distortion, stacking multiple instances of the same or slightly different distortions, comb filters and EQs to completely distort the referent. I

have also extensively used extreme delays, long reverbs and convolution to create slow moving or static drones throughout. These techniques were used in relatively conservative ways in *Waves* but characterise all my work in the portfolio and become increasingly sophisticated as the research period progressed.

Demers' analysis of maximal music goes some way to understanding the conditions in which the shifts in perception I have experienced can happen. However, I believe it can be taken further and applied to image when reframed with temporality at its centre. Whether 'stasis' or 'negative beauty', both sides of maximal sound objects are heavily temporal experiences that change the way in which the listener perceives time. In maximal sound works such as Niblock's 'FeedCorn Ear' (2013) it is possible to get lost in an apparent infinity of experience through stasis or the limitlessness of sublimity and transgression.

This is something that I have experienced with still image. For example, in the case of Rothko's *Seagram Murals*, when viewed standing close to them as the artist intended, their size, depth of detail and repetition of colour through space dominate the vision of the viewer, overwhelming them with its sheer scale and depth, creating the conditions for the viewer to completely lose themselves in its layered world. Idris Khan's *Every... Bernd and Hilla Becher Prison Type Gas Holders* (2004) similarly overwhelms with its thick layers of deep black and repeated lines although its size does not quite match the scale of the *Seagram Murals* it is still large at over two meters high. With both these images their scale and depth of detail mirrors the scale and detail of maximal objects in sound. Furthermore, the contrast of consonance and noise present in the images ensures their transgression. The layers of photographs in Kahn's work act as noise, obscuring any clear single referent but still show the rough outline of the many gas holders whilst Rothko's simple block colour shapes are distorted and covered by multiple layers of paint.

In the visual components of my pieces I have attempted to use techniques which reproduce this kind of visual maximalism. Taking cues from Rothko and Khan, in my post-*Waves* work, I have created complex layered maximal images. Distorting the referents through digital blurring, perspective and colour shifting whilst layering multiple images, repeating them through space and in the case of *Swell*, time as well. Using graduated masks, I have built up the images by fading different elements of layers together to create a depth of detail. This technique was an attempt to create images with seemingly endless shapes and colours that blur together into a single entity to achieve the maximal affect and atmosphere intended.

As is clear from my transcendent experiences of maximal sound and image outside of audio-photographic art, the *space between* is not the only kind of altered state that maximalism can allow people to access. Research on dance music culture has shown similar experiences of temporal transcendence, disembodiment and loss of subjectivity (Till, 2010) (Becker-Blease, 2006). Interviews in both Till and Becker-Blease's studies show that these types of altered states are however far more focussed on the body, repetitive physical movement in the form of dance and the joint experience of the crowd. Personal relationships and feelings of 'connectedness' and 'oneness' become a significant part of the experience which draws comparisons from both authors to spirituality and religion. This is in direct contrast to my very personal, memorial experience of the *space between*, an internal world dependent on individual history and perceptions. I have always felt lost in myself, unaware of those around me rather than feeling any sense of heightened 'connectedness'.

In my work I aim to create a transcendent temporal environment in which the audience can interact with the piece and their own memories, creating their own shifting interpretations of

the material presented to them. The contrasting temporal aesthetics of photography and phonography are key to creating this interactive space between memory and atmosphere in the work. In the portfolio, the *space between* is manifested through the use of both sonic and visual maximal aesthetics that engender an immersive consuming environment.

The Memorial Space

The *space between* in audio-photographic art is inherently a memorial space. Through the materials of recorded time, configurational time and the dreamlike state, memory is constantly affecting the participant, informing their perceptions and emotions as they experience the piece. Audio-photographic art is constructed in the mind according to the piece's aesthetics, participant's memory and the representation of the past in the present that is inherent in its temporality. Drawing on the work of Emily Keightley and Michael Pickering, Roland Barthes and Stella Baraklianou, in this section I will demonstrate how the *space between* is a memorial space, how memory affects audio-photographic art and how audio-photographic art affects memory.

Photography and phonography are not as different as they initially seem. Despite their contrasting temporalities, each has the recording of time at their centre, whether through light or sound. In their paper 'For the Record: popular music and photography as technologies of memory', Keightley and Pickering (2006) explore the similarities between photography and phonography through their use as technologies of memory. When they are interpreted by a viewer or listener, they are perceived through a negotiation of social and personal history, what the referents mean to the viewer and what their broader social meaning may be (Keightley and Pickering, 2006). Keightley and Pickering go on to show how both mediums can have great

emotional impact through their memorial properties despite their contrasting temporalities. In the case of photography Keightley and Pickering claim that most people have a collection of photographs relating to key events in life which in themselves are imbued with emotion as records of a time and place that the owner wishes to remember (2006). Phonography on the other hand is attributed memory and emotion over time, after it is first listened to. Despite not constantly playing during the time of the memories attached to it, phonography can

... recreate for us the texture of a specific experience, including the way that it became assimilated into our own interiority and was felt in a quality that we never quite put into words (and perhaps cannot now). (Keightley and Pickering, 2006, p.153)

This effect is directly linked to the indexical nature of recorded time, the knowledge that the sound or image is something that happened repeating or playing out through time. It is the confrontation of the simultaneous past and present, seeing or hearing the referent in front of you whilst in reality that time has gone forever (Keightley and Pickering, 2006). Keightley and Pickering acknowledge this as the confrontation of our own mortality and is what Barthes identifies as part of the punctum in his phenomenology of photography in *Camera Lucida* (2000).

This shared memorial quality in phonography and photography takes on another level of importance in the context of the temporal structure audio-photographic art. As the materials and their temporalities are intertwined through rhythmic time, the piece incorporates the inherent memorial properties of recorded time, regardless of whether this has as powerful effect as the punctum. This means that the perception of audio-photographic rhythmic time is rooted in memory as much as it is rooted in the temporal aesthetics of its materials, therefore the *space between* is not just a temporal space but one built out of the effects of memory.

The memorial properties of sound and image are precisely why I chose the aural and visual materials I used when I was writing 'Rooftop' on *Waves*. The memories the piece was based on were imbued in the phonography and photography. This is evident in the former through the time and place they capture and in the latter through the repeated listening that occurred through the beginnings of the compositional process over that period. Such concerns are not exclusive to my own creative work and as someone who listens to music on headphones every day, much of my music collection is associated, in my memory at least, with specific times and places, usually around the period I listened to the album or track the most. Sometimes this occurs to the extent that I avoid listening to certain albums such as Ulrich Schnauss' *Goodbye* (2007) because of the intensity of feeling that it would induce. It is no coincidence that *Goodbye* is one of the albums that triggers both aural and visual punctum, through which I sometimes enter the *space between*. My experience of phonography and photography is of the mediums as repositories of memory, my aural and visual experience captured or imbued and in turn evoked through sound and image.

Sarah Sweeney has explored recorded time as memory object in her work with photography, particularly focussing on the duality of the memory digitally recorded and the memory remembered. It often concerns digital erasure or forgetting as a subversion of the photographic image as memory object. For example, in her piece *The Forgetting Machine* (2013), an iPhone is used to capture images which are then obscured and abstracted each time they are viewed, destroying the referent over time so that eventually it becomes unrecognisable (Sweeney, n.d.). This piece, with its increasing abstractness and resultant move away from the specificity of memory has a parallel with my own work. However I take a more positive approach. Sweeney attempts to undermine the memorial properties of captured time through abstraction, just as I

try to undermine the specificity of the referent through abstraction. I take this further by attempting to use the increasing abstraction creatively, not to subvert the memorial properties but to direct them by evoking the atmosphere of the memory. This allows a broader interpretation and the greater possibility of a more personal relationship with the image for any participant if they enter the *space between*.

In *Camera Lucida* (Barthes, 2000) the punctum is an effect contingent on the viewer's personal history, or to use Ricoeur's term, historicity. It is a sudden prick or wound prompted by a detail in the image recognised by the viewer causing them to unexpectedly remember something. As part of this experience the viewer is confronted by the indexical and temporal nature of the photograph, the fact that the referent existed and yet is not necessarily there anymore. This causes a visceral emotional reaction which is difficult to put into words (Barthes, 2000).

Keightley and Pickering extend Barthes' punctum as a means for analysing phonography explaining that:

Barthes's concept of the *punctum* was intended as an analytical tool for interrogating the photographic image but we would suggest that along with the visual *punctum*, there is also the aural *punctum* where music pierces, cuts through and penetrates in such a way as to be indistinct from the experience of it. (Keightley and Pickering, 2006, p.156)

They go on to cite an interview from *Music in Everyday Life* (2000) in which the participant talks about a song on the radio triggering a sudden rush of grief for her recently deceased father. This resonates with my own personal experiences where music has unexpectedly given me a rush of emotion, recreating the 'texture' of a past time.

Keightley and Pickering's analysis of their example however, is brief and simply identifies the effects of punctum in music and does not address the clear difference between an aural and visual punctum. Barthes explains that the visual punctum is reliant on the arrest of the still image, the defining feature of photography, its quality of '*that-has-been*'. He claims that this is denied in cinema by the stream of images not allowing time for the effect of '*that-has-been*' of the memories that the punctum triggers (Barthes, 2000). To take the visual punctum and attach it to phonography is therefore problematic as music is more akin to cinema, its narrative 'passing' within a set temporal frame creating its own time rather than being trapped in repetitive stasis. How then can the effect of the punctum be so strongly felt in sound when the conditions that Barthes identified as necessary, do not appear to be present? For me at least, Barthes' logic holds true for cinema, but not sound.

Ricoeur's configurational time shows that when following a narrative, we put together the whole through a subconscious simultaneous knowledge of past, present and future. The personal and social histories or 'historicality' of the participant and the within time of the piece come together to inform the interpretation of it (Ricoeur, 1980). The past is constantly being repeated in order to interpret the whole and to anticipate the future. Therefore, the quality of '*that-has-been*' is not denied but diminished, still existing within the subconscious whilst preserving the difference of 'passing' ('*that-has-been*' in the subconscious) and 'posing' ('*that-has-been*' in actuality). Through repetition over time a piece of recorded music can become familiar, its direction and changes known to the listener, strengthening the quality of '*that-has-been*' as a sense of the whole becomes more immediately accessible in the mind. Each time the sound is experienced, it is further historicised and placed within the context of the listener's life, their memories accumulating around it with each repeated instance.

In audio-photographic art there is the possibility of a punctum manifesting itself in either of the sound or photography components. In this context, whilst the trigger of the punctum may just be aural or visual (or the combination of both), its memorial effects become a product of a temporal relationship between sound, image and participant. According to Barthes, the visual punctum 'fills the whole picture' (2000, p.45). Likewise, the punctum in audio-photographic art fills the artwork, the emotional reaction and memories of the participant affecting the perception of the piece. The rhythmic temporal structure of the *space between* brings together the aural and visual in the perception of the participant. The memorial experience of the piece is therefore a negotiation between sound and image. The memories the participant has attached to each material affect the memories associated with the others, creating a single memorial experience in the *space between* that is the sum of the histories attached to the materials. The effects of the punctum, the overwhelming affect of time and the confrontation of mortality become a part of the whole, creating an audiovisual punctum distinct from the aural or visual punctum.

The audiovisual punctum is exemplified in my experience of Mount Eerie's *Pts. 6 & 7* (2007), for me the images are inseparable from the sound through punctum. Its effects fill both the aural and visual space of the work despite their separation in presentation (book and vinyl). Even when only experiencing the aural or visual part of the work, the atmospheres, memories and aesthetics of the other flood my perceptions. In the case of a work like this or *Waves* where the sounds and images do not reside in the same space, if the participant experiences the punctum the piece can become an audiovisual experience whether intended that way or not. In the *space between* on the other hand, if experienced, this effect only serves to strengthen the audiovisual nature of the piece and affect of memory.

The memorial experience induced by the audiovisual punctum within the *space between* is not isolated from the dreamlike temporality of audio-photographic works. Through the repetitive rhythmic perception of sound and image that audio-photographic art induces, the participants are overwhelmed by time, becoming part of the temporal structure of the piece, entering the simultaneous past, present and future of the dreamlike *space between*. Similarly, the punctum is the result of the viewer/listener being overwhelmed by time ('the lacerating emphasis of the *noeme*' (Barthes, 2000, p.96)), experiencing a rush of memories in a simultaneous expression of past, present and future. Inside the temporal structures of digital installation, the punctum then is more than a prick but is sustained by the rhythmic perception of the aural and visual materials as the participant slips into dreamlike time. It is a powerful memorial effect that heightens the intensity and affect of the *space between*. The participant becomes part of the temporal structure of the piece as their memories flow through them, analytical thinking is lost to the visceral intensities of memory as feeling.

Given the highly subjective nature of the experience of dreamlike time in the *space between*, the 'loss of subjectivity' that Ikoniadou (2012) highlights as an entry point to the dreamlike state in *Stimuline* should be explored. Ikoniadou's description of a loss of subjectivity is not quite accurate in my experience. For example during the audiovisual performance of 'FeedCorn Ear' (Niblock, 2013) at the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, I fell into a dreamlike state. Past, present and future blurred together, video and sound depicting repetitive gestures of work (visual) and cello (sound) fell away into pure affect, colour, movement, vibrations and tones. My body lost its agency and was beholden to this piece. Yet the feeling of this state was not indeterminate, nor did it come solely from the materials of the piece, but from my own interpretation and memorial associations with it. The emotions I felt were related to previous

similar experiences and triggered memories personal to me. Though I lost my subjectivity, it was at the same time the underpinning of the experience that I had.

When entering the dreamlike time through punctum or repetition there is a perceived loss of subjectivity and yet simultaneously a heightening of it. The experience of the dreamlike state is entirely dependent on the individual's memories, emotions and perceptions of the world. The memories that form its fabric are drawn from the individual's past, present and future (Ikoniadou, 2012). Even the shared present of multiple participants inside the installation will be seen/heard/felt from different perspectives and interpreted through different pasts. Audio-photographic art takes this even further with the use of phonography and photography, materials of recorded time which are directly linked to memory, not just through association, but through the knowledge that they depict a reality that has passed. The memorial experience of audio-photographic art therefore, must go beyond the duality of subjectivity/objectivity or activity/passivity.

The *space between* and the dreamlike state that forms its temporal and memorial experience is not just a simple passive/active relationship but one of immanence. In her paper 'Pasearse. Duration and the act of photographing' (2013), Stella Baraklianou demonstrates how the photograph is not simply an active or passive recording of time but one that is immanent, a cycle of affect in which the photographer and landscape enter into a non linear relationship. In this relationship the landscape affects the photographer, their emotions, their movements. At the same time the photographer affects the landscape through their movements, their creative choices and their presence. The photograph is marked with this relationship, a product of the coming together of landscape, camera and photographer. The resultant image is a snapshot of

one outcome of an infinite number of possibilities that could arise from the interaction (Baraklianou, 2013).

In audio-photographic art the memorial immanence arises from the way in which participants may experience the dreamlike time of the *space between*. As the piece is configured in their perceptions, it brings together the within time of the materials and their own historicity, affecting the way in which it is perceived (Ricoeur, 1980). The movement of the sound and the memorial associations it may come with affect the perception of the photographic images, constantly reframing them. In the same way, the repetition of the image and the memorial associations that come with it anchor the perception of the sound against a captured piece of the past. Simultaneously, through its materials of recorded time, the piece may affect the participants through the audiovisual punctum or rhythmic time, triggering memories and entry into the dreamlike *space between*. The memorial experience of the *space between* is affected by the perception of the piece. The perception of the piece is affected by the memorial experience of the *space between* as past, present and future.

It is only partially accurate therefore to claim a loss of subjectivity. The relationship between participant and piece is a non-linear affective relationship, the piece changing the participant as the participant changes the piece. The loss of subjectivity is then a shift in the dynamics of the relationship between participant and piece, the participant not losing subjectivity per se but rather altering the way in which they are subject. It is a hyper-immersed state in which the body is more open to affect whilst still being affective itself through the subconscious.

The immanent relationship between piece, the *space between* and participant is what I have tried to explore throughout my portfolio. Whether in the expanse of *City Colours* or the more

personal interactions of *Waves* and *Escapism*, the immanent memorial affect of audio-photographic art pushes the experience of my work beyond the experience of *Stimuline* (Claus & Pook, 2008) that Ikoniadou (2012) describes, to encompass memory through recorded time directly.

The *space between* is inherently a memorial space. It originates in the temporal dissonance and memorial properties of phonography and photography. It encompasses their memories, both captured and gained through personal interaction. The punctum, if experienced, heightens its intensity in a way that seems to go beyond the memorial possibilities of the moving image. Memory does not just inform the way the audience see and hear the materials in audio-photographic work but in fact creates the very fabric of the hyper-immersive dreamlike experience in the rhythmic temporal structure provided by the *space between*. Simultaneously, it falls out of consciousness and flows through the participant, leaving them subject to the intensities of their emotions and the constellation of visceral colours and sounds of the installation.

The Atmospheric Space

When I experience art, I feel its affect on my body before any analytical thought. Throughout my life I have been affected by art in ways that both contradict and concur with the meaning the artist has ascribed to it. This affect is not something exclusive to sound or image but is manifested in any aesthetic object. The *space between* is an affective space through temporality and memory but also through its aural and visual properties. In this section I will address affective audiovisual aesthetics using Michel Foucault's discussion of representation in *The Order*

of Things (2001) and Gernot Böhme's definition of atmosphere. I will discuss how an affective audiovisual environment can be created and how it manifests itself in the *space between*.

In the first chapter of *The Order of Things*, Foucault (2001) describes in detail the painting 'Las Meninas' (Velazquez, 1656). In the course of this description he tackles the flaws of literature when it comes to describing the visual and vice versa.

It is not that words are imperfect, or that, when confronted by the visible, they prove insuperably inadequate. Neither can be reduced to the other's terms: it is in vain that we say what we see; what we see never resides in what we say. And it is in vain that we attempt to show, by the use of images, metaphors, or similes, what we are saying; the space where they achieve their splendour is not that deployed by our eyes but that defined by the sequential elements of syntax. (Foucault, 2001, p.10)

In order to preserve the aesthetics of each medium and the 'infinite relation' between them, Foucault suggests that generalisations should be used. Instead of identifying a figure specifically e.g. Velazquez, it is preferable to generalise e.g. the painter (Foucault, 2001). This strategy does not rely on a specific knowledge of the referent but a general one allowing more space for it to be interpreted according to the historicity of the reader/viewer.

In audio-photographic art, the relationship between the aural and visual elements of the piece can be looked at in general terms. For me, one of the most important shared traits of photography and phonography is their affect on the body, a trait sometimes discussed in terms of atmosphere (Böhme, 1993). Through techniques of abstraction it is possible to reduce the referent of phonography and/or photography to just the qualities that produce the atmosphere or affect intended by the artist. This generalisation of audio and visual aesthetics allows the artist to manipulate materials to create a coherent audiovisual experience without compromising the

unique qualities of recorded sound and light. Atmosphere then is a useful framework to discuss audio-photographic aesthetics.

The definition of atmosphere often seems nebulous or unstable. It is rarely defined and yet regularly used and understood in every day conversation (Böhme, 1993). In his essay 'Atmosphere as the Fundamental Concept of a New Aesthetics', Böhme shows that an atmosphere's origins are rarely investigated or understood and yet it is familiar in its characteristics (ecstatic, melancholic, tense etc.) and understood through its affect on the body. Atmospheres are therefore a kind of shared language through feeling. Discussing aesthetics in these terms moves away from aesthetics as a framework for criticism and towards a study of perception and affect. In practice this means that the production of aesthetic work should be seen as the production of atmospheres and its reception should be seen as its affect (Böhme, 1993).

My feelings around art have always been centred around its affect. Affect is what draws me to art and what drives me to create it. For me, it is the way in which the phenomenological experience of art transcends that of every day objects. My favourite art is that which has the most affect on me, such as Gerhard Richter's *11 Panes* (2004). In *11 Panes*, Richter has created a work which reflects the atmosphere of the room in which it is placed and layers it with a new dreamlike, fractured, yet blissful atmosphere created by the numerous panes of glass and their blue-green hue. This atmosphere is the affective sum of the aesthetics of Richter's piece. I aim to create art which is affective in order that the experience of it goes beyond analytical thought and towards visceral feeling. Centralising affect as the focus of this project prioritises atmospheres and an awareness of the outcome of the aesthetics of the piece. For me the art in the pieces I create is in affective outcome rather than process.

Using atmosphere as the basis for a discussion on audio-photographic aesthetics, it is possible to explore the affect on the body and the implications this has for the experience of the *space between* in conjunction with memory. Böhme defines atmosphere in relation to Walter Benjamin's 'aura'. For him, atmosphere is 'an indeterminate spatially extended quality of feeling' particular to aesthetic work. Böhme claims that atmospheres are not free floating but are in fact the product of the aesthetics of things and the way they 'go forth', or to use his own term their 'ecstasies'. He proposes that the qualities of things radiate out into the environment and belong to the things themselves (Böhme, 1993). In doing so Böhme removes the subject/object dichotomy which enables him to demonstrate where atmospheres come from and how they are perceived. Atmospheres he claims, are not bound by a dualist subject/object dichotomy but are the product of a relationship between a person and a thing. They are not simply an objective quality but yet they are made present by the qualities of a thing 'conceived as ecstasies'. Neither are they subjective, existing entirely in perception but yet they are 'subjectlike', as they are 'sensed in bodily presence' by people (Böhme, 1993). Atmospheres according to Böhme therefore emanate from something or someone, an expression of aesthetics perceived by human beings as affect.

I believe that this view can be afforded more detail through a closer examination of the role of the person perceiving the atmosphere. Despite a shift away from the subject/object dichotomy, Böhme still places emphasis on the thing and its ecstasies with little acknowledgment of the subjectivities of person who is sensing the atmosphere. For me, atmospheres, like the memorial space, are immanent to themselves. They are part of a non-linear relationship between person and thing in which the state of the person affects the perception of the thing while the thing affects the state of the person (Baraklianou, 2013). For example, when I experience *11 Panes*

(Richter, 2004) I am experiencing it in the emotional context of my personal history, the associations I have with its physical materials, what it reflects and the memories that this may trigger. At the same time, the sum of its aesthetics, its reflected, dreamy, fractured atmospheres are affecting my emotions and my perceptions. Over time this self-perpetuating relationship changes the way I perceive the piece and the ecstasies it contains. Atmospheres then are not static in relation to their character but are constantly changing. They are the shifting sum of the relationship between the person and their historicity and the things and their qualities.

It is this relationship which I attempt to take advantage of in my work with audio-photographic art. Not only does the perceived atmosphere in the static materials change but the aural qualities themselves are also changing. Over time this creates layers of shifting atmospheres brought about by changes in perception. This allows the artist to create (or suggest) far more detailed and nuanced atmospheres across multiple temporal planes, interacting with each other and revealing themselves in more detail as the participant engages with the work. It is these shifting atmospheres that are woven into the fabric of the *space between*, the ever-changing affect that washes over the body as it is overwhelmed by time, the sum of the relationship between the memory of the participant and the aesthetics of the piece.

For me, Jesu's *Sundown/Sunrise* (2007) E.P. can draw me into the *space between* through its atmosphere. It was immediately affective when I first heard the sound and stared at the image. It felt so familiar and yet I did not recognise it. Its materials seemed different but were connected through their affect. The strength of emotion it triggered brought up memories imbued with similar atmospheres which affected the way I saw and heard the E.P. In turn its sound and image and the atmospheres that came with it attached themselves to those memories. As I fell

into the space between the materials my subjectivity changed and the atmosphere intensified in affect.

It is clear from the immanent nature of the perception of atmospheres that the aesthetic producer can never fully control the character of atmospheres. Böhme demonstrates however, that it is possible to create atmospheres according to the producer's perception through careful consideration of the aesthetics of the thing. He quotes the landscape gardener C. C. L. Hirschfeld:

The gently melancholy locality is formed by blocking off all vistas; through depths and depressions; through thick bushes and thickets, often already through mere groups of (closely planted) thickly leaved trees, whose tops are swayed by a hollow sound; through still or dully murmuring waters, whose view is hidden; through foliage of a dark or blackish green; through low hanging leaves and widespread shadow; through the absence of everything which could announce life and activity. In such a locality light only penetrates in order to protect the influence of darkness from a mournful or frightful aspect. Stillness and isolation have their home here. A bird which flutters around in cheerless fashion, a wood pigeon which coos in the hollow top of a leafless oak, and a lost nightingale which laments its solitary sorrows—are sufficient to complete the scene. (Böhme, 1993, pp.123-124)

Hirschfeld has considered the ways in which sound and light may affect the atmosphere of the garden down to minute detail. He balances the strength and colour of light to create something dull but not dark and the density and reverberation of sound to create something that sounds lonely and hollow. Through this approach a garden has been created in which seemingly every element has been considered in relation to its qualities and the atmosphere they may contribute to as a whole.

It is possible for the artist carefully to construct an audio-photographic piece in which each element works towards a single atmospheric goal. Just as with Hirschfeld's garden, in audio-photographic art both sound and light become tools that can be manipulated to create coherent atmospheres. The creation of atmospheres through a network of qualities across the piece takes advantage of the unique ecstasies of sound and still image. Working towards a single outcome is 'preserving the infinity' of the relationship between them without undermining their aesthetics in order to force them to fit together (Foucault, 2001). Atmospheres therefore are vital to creating coherent audio-photographic works in which the aesthetics of the materials are not diluted so that the *space between* can exist.

Using Böhme and Hirschfeld as my theoretical basis, I have approached audio-photographic composition with affect at the forefront of my concern. Over the course of this project I have developed a practical audiovisual approach to atmosphere that encompasses the aural and visual materials, my memories and the temporality of the pieces I create. I have attempted throughout to balance the atmospheres between the two contrasting temporal aesthetics to create artworks with affect rather than a collection of materials that create affects through their combination. In a coherent audiovisual piece, the atmospheres evoked become a powerful affect in the *space between*.

In perception, the affect of memory, rhythmic time and audiovisual aesthetics is felt as atmosphere as a result of the immanence of its creation. In the hyper-immersed state the body acts as a conduit, channeling atmospheres as they affect emotions. The atmospheres felt are the sum of the aesthetic, temporal and memorial properties of the space, the very substance that flows through the body. The *space between* is an atmospheric space above all in the way it is felt by the participants in audio-photographic art.

WORKS

Waves

Waves was my second foray into audio-photographic art² and the odd one out within the works completed for this project. It was inspired mainly by the work of Nine Inch Nails (2007) and Taylor Deupree (2013) and consists of twelve images printed inside a photography book and six pieces of music on a CD in a sleeve on the inside of the back cover.

Following on from *Sunrise* (Santamas, 2012) a previous project which had used the same format, my intention with *Waves* was to explore the aspects of the audio-photographic relationship I had found most interesting. These were idea, memory, atmosphere and a more direct relationship through photographs as scores. Furthermore, I was attempting to create an album that was a coherent piece of audio-photographic art with both sound and image presented as equals. In the period in which I was creating *Waves*, I was also researching relevant theory which led to Barthes, Ricoeur and Böhme significantly influencing the project.

Across *Waves* there are three pieces which explore a direct relationship between sound and image through graphic scoring, 'Waves', 'Threads' and 'Windows'. The three pieces approached the idea of photography as a prompt for sound differently but stuck to the same combination of materials, a sound file and a single photograph. This emphasis on the images as an action for sound broadly affected structure and intensity and was mainly influenced by the seemingly open

² The first being *Sunrise* (Santamas, 2012) (undergraduate final project).

compositions of *Treatise* by Cornelius Cardew (1967) and Earle Brown's 'December 1952' (1961).

In 'Waves', the photograph was used as more of a general prompt. Rather than literally following shapes and colours, I used the associations I had with the image, of waves and a transcendent experience at a concert as the starting point of the piece. This manifested itself primarily in the structure, in which the sound world expands and contracts, boundaries between sections blur into each other in a similar manner to the way the colours and shapes ebb and flow in the photography.



'Threads'

The second piece, 'Threads' was stricter: instead of interpreting the photograph as a whole, I followed a rough trajectory through it, from the almost black bottom right hand corner to the top left hand corner via the black patch on the mid-right of the top edge. Despite taking a route

through the photograph, I still did not make any attempt to follow details within the photograph precisely but instead opted to follow the ideas of the shapes around the trajectory. The intensities and shapes of the image manifested themselves in the intensities and shapes of the sounds.



'Windows'

The final piece 'Windows' is the strictest of the three, not only following a clear route through the score but following it as precisely as possible, the contours of the black part running along the bottom half of the photograph matching the contours of the automation graphs and/or volume for each guitar track's send effects and the overall volume. The backing vocals' pitch follows the faint slanting horizontal line across the top of the photograph, whilst also following the black part at the bottom for volume.

Even as I was writing 'Snow', the last piece on *Waves* to be completed, I had already rejected these scored works. The very idea of the score as part of an audio-photographic work itself became problematic. Where a score is involved, the power relations between audio and visual are suddenly skewed. The creation of the music in 'Waves' is subordinate to the photograph and the outcome of the process of composition is the sound not an audiovisual work. The photographs were not treated as art in themselves but a springboard for musical creativity.

The second strand of investigation was idea, a unifying concept between sound and image that manifested itself in methods of composition and outcome. In this case the unifying idea was the glitch and the piece was 'Snow'. This approach was particularly inspired by album artwork where the images seemed to reflect the sound of the music. For example, My Bloody Valentine's *Loveless* (1991) with its blurry, distorted, dreamy sounding songs was mirrored in the visual artwork which accompanied it, from the the distorted, blurred, dreamy image of a guitar on the cover through to the over exposed, over saturated and blurred video of 'Soon' (MBVVEVO, 2012).

In 'Snow' I used several techniques across sound and images to create a glitch aesthetic. This included corrupting files by deleting or changing the code in the architecture of the file itself, automated plugins which chopped up the sounds, use of files recorded using malfunctioning equipment. Most of these strategies were limited to the sound whilst the image files were simply edited to enhance the colours and contrast then corrupted by altering the file architecture. Once again this led to a piece where the sound was far more thought through and complex than the images, despite experimenting with the effects of corrupting different image file types. The conservatism in the aesthetics of the minimally processed images and the limited approaches to visual glitch undermined my attempt to have a coherent and consistent idea behind the piece.

Furthermore my preoccupation with concepts emotionally distanced me from the content of the piece. Though it was based around memory, none were particularly emotionally affecting and so at least for me, this piece never had as affective an atmosphere as the majority of the others on *Waves*.

During my work on *Waves* I was reading Barthes' *Camera Lucida* (2000) and had begun to formulate my theory on audiovisual punctum. This had a big impact on my approach to 'Rooftop', the first piece in which I explored memory. The materials that make up the piece already existed in an incomplete state and were chosen because of their specific relationship with an important and highly emotional time in my life and the punctum they induced. This was done with the intention of creating a piece that triggered an audiovisual punctum. With this piece I had begun to understand the importance of abstraction though I had not yet properly theorised it or taken it to the extreme it needed to be taken to in order to remove its specificity. My attempts at generalisation in the piece were limited to omitting lyrics and choosing images with few clear defining features which anchored it to a specific place. These were done ostensibly to make the possibility of punctum more likely for anyone other than me, however, I feel that this was unsuccessful due to the specificity and conservatism of the images.

'Sea', the final track on *Waves* was created to explore the concept of atmosphere. Drawing on the writing of Gernot Böhme (1993) I was attempting to evoke the atmosphere of a specific place at a specific time. To do this I identified what for me was the defining overall atmosphere (in this case a mixture of bliss and melancholy) and established a working method to create it. This was based around Böhme's idea that manipulation of detail towards a particular affect could evoke atmosphere (1993). I put this into practice by attempting to capture images with just the right balance of light, sea and horizon to create the right affect. At the time I felt that this balance

leant towards melancholy. In the sound I used major ascending patterns combined with reverbs and delays to give the piece an uplifting, dreamy, blissful feeling. Together these create a sense of atmosphere but for me, one that is somewhat unfocussed.

The successes and failures of *Waves* from a research perspective, are neatly summed up in 'Sea'. 'Sea' demonstrates how I undermined my objectives through visual conservatism. I was attempting to capture atmosphere rather than create it using the processing power of software as I had done with the aural parts of the piece. This can be seen across all of the pieces on *Waves*, a clear disjointed relationship between minimally processed images and the beginnings of a comprehensive approach to abstract sound. The outcome of this is a collection of pieces with concentrated aural atmospheres and visual atmospheres that were highly dependent on personal and cultural histories.

The images in 'Sea' and across the rest of *Waves* have very few maximal elements, each photograph containing little to no layers or depth of detail. In contrast, there are maximal elements in the sound but they are somewhat restrained in favour of a clearer 'song' format as opposed to lengthy drone or rhythmic works. Furthermore, the disjointed relationship was underlined in the way it was presented, with the images on paper and sounds on CD occupying separate spaces. The photo book was also not on a maximal scale nor presented to be perceived that way. These things, along with the music based language I used at the time (and have used in this document) revealed the album not to be an audiovisual piece but a musical one *with* images, exactly what I set out to avoid. As a piece of music with images, *Waves* cannot open the *space between* without active engagement on the part of the participant. My aesthetic intention had been that the artwork as a coherent whole would convey atmosphere that participants could

engage with and reflect on – not, as in *Waves*, something that had to be more constructed by the participant themselves.

There are positive outcomes I took from *Waves*. As I worked on ‘Sea’ I realised that each element of the relationship between sound and image was being utilised in order to create atmosphere. It is from here that I began to consider atmosphere as the affect of memory, a unifying concept and even elements of a direct visual–aural/aural–visual relationship. I saw promise in the abstract aesthetics of ‘Waves’, ‘Threads’ and ‘Windows’ and the more coherent compositional approach of ‘Snow’ as a way of bridging the gap between sound and image, particularly through their tentative exploration of maximalism through repetition and simultaneous noise and consonance. This had a huge effect on the way I was to go on to work on *City Colours* where I would take these ideas and apply them in a far more consistent and extreme way.

City Colours

The composition of *Waves* presented a number of aesthetic and conceptual issues I wished to overcome, namely an incoherent approach to processing the materials, attachment to musical formats and a style presentation which kept aural and visual materials in separate spaces. Ultimately I did not consider *Waves* audio–photographic art. *City Colours* was an attempt to confront as many of these issues as I could, primarily the audiovisual and temporal aesthetics of the works. The piece is an audiovisual evocation of place and the palimpsest of memory and atmosphere that place represents. (Adkins and Santamas, 2014)

I began with the format of the work. With *Waves* I had stuck to musical convention, presenting the piece in an album format. For this piece I decided to present it as an installation. This way the materials would be brought together in the same physical space enabling them to be seen

more as a single piece. Furthermore, both sound and image are projected into the space using techniques designed to spread the materials as far and intensely around the space as possible. Sonically, this meant wedge speakers projecting towards walls and ceilings to allow the sound to ricochet around the space. Visually, I used prisms and clear perspex to refract the light of the image projection around the space, repeating and overlapping the materials, filling the physical space as much as possible.



City Colours

Though I was yet to conceptualise it, I had become more aware of the *space between* and its effects and recognised that these steps were necessary to immerse the participant as much as possible in the artwork to increase the chances of them feeling a part of it. The change in presentational style brings the piece together into a single coherent space, encouraging participants to configure the narrative of the piece as audio-photographic and therefore encourage a rhythmic perception of time and entry into the *space between*. Encouraging transcendence meant not only changing the presentation of the piece but also its audiovisual aesthetics.

To change my approach to the creation of images and push the sonic element even further towards an aesthetic of maximalism I began to bring the compositional techniques of the aural and visual much closer together. As part of this process I came up with the term ‘audio-photographic art’ in an attempt to force a change in the way I saw my practice and to distinguish my work from other audiovisual art, particularly sound and moving image.

The piece consists of five images and over three hours of sound split into individual sound files which generally range from ten to twenty minutes in length. The materials were created using photography and sound recordings from areas where I had a strong emotional memory. There were also additional performed sound recordings which were included to add nuance and reflect memories that weren’t tied to a specific space. The five images were created around the five memory spaces that I had recorded.

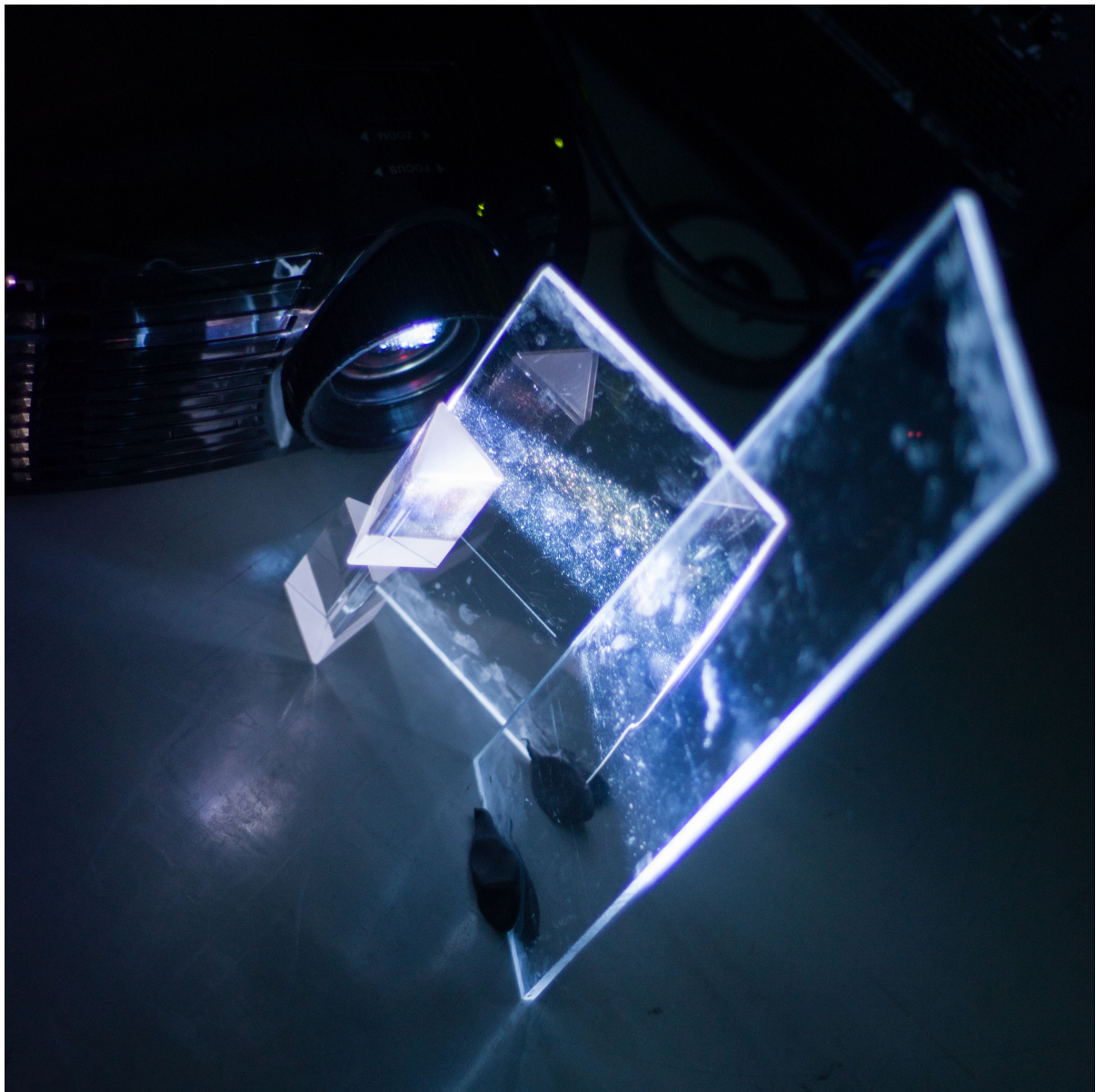
The intention to evoke place in *City Colours* necessitated a more nuanced approach to atmosphere than the one I had used on *Waves*. Rather than attempting to evoke just one atmosphere, I was trying to create an assemblage of materials, each with their own atmosphere

relating to a memory of the place. As the participant builds up a perception of the piece, the individual atmospheres come together to create a complex overall affect. This mirrors the idea of place as palimpsest (Graham, 2010) and also acknowledges that the atmospheres felt are not just a product of the present but of historical affect too.

In contrast with the mismatched aesthetics of *Waves*, the abstraction of the materials of *City Colours* was an attempt to create a more coherent atmospheric outcome which did not rely on a specific cultural and/or personal historical relationship to the referent. Drawing on the ideas of Foucault (2001), I took advantage of the processing capabilities of the computer in both sound and image to create materials which each have their own atmospheres, sometimes shared between sound and image, sometimes unique to just one. To do this I manipulated the shape, colour, intensity and brightness of the materials to create the atmospheres intended. Furthermore as *City Colours* is an installation this gave me an opportunity to think about the space the atmosphere occupies. The piece is projected through a minimum of four wedge speakers and five projectors with a number of prisms and pieces of clear perspex. The flexibility of this set up allows the piece to work with the existing atmospheres of the room; manipulations of the prisms, perspex, projectors and speakers directing, redirecting, overlapping and layering the light and sound in whichever way I believe is necessary for the piece to be affective in the space.

As my approach to atmosphere changed and became more coherent, so too did my use of maximalism. Inspired by the vast visual world of Idris Kahn's *Every...* series (2004) I decided to create a maximal aesthetic by layering different photographs on top of each other and copying some layers multiple times with small movements in space. This ensured there was a significant amount of repetition and detail leading to a maximal outcome. It also brought the composition of the images into line with the sounds as I had been using layering as a technique in the sound

since *Waves*. Snatches of referents are everywhere but yet distorted through heavily layered and affected material whilst the piece is thrown across the installation space through wedge speakers and refracted projectors, engulfing the audience through size and volume. As well as sheer volume and noise, the audiovisual aesthetics of *City Colours* are also based around repetition, layering and gradual change. Tones and shapes change slowly across time and space. The coherent audio-photographic aesthetic of *City Colours* means that the entry into the dreamlike state is audiovisual, as the temporal effect arises from both sound and static image. Not only may the participant enter the dreamlike state but also the multiple temporalities of the memorial, atmospheric *space between*.



Prisms and clear acrylic in City Colours

Temporally, *City Colours* was a departure from the fixed length of *Waves*. Through the use of a MAX patch³ the piece is theoretically of infinite length. The patch facilitates a continually changing mix of pre-composed sound files. The sound files are all extremely repetitive over their course, some evolving slowly and others not changing in any respect other than volume. Taking inspiration from Phill Niblock's compositional methods, the way in which the files interact with each other as they are played is where much of the interest is created. This is organised using a MAX patch with three sound file players, each of which chooses to play a sound from a bank of multiple files (70% chance) or silence (30% chance, with a random length up to ten minutes.). There is an inbuilt mechanism which ensures that there is always sound playing creating a mobile and endlessly reconfigured soundscape. This endless repetition also brings the temporality of the sound into line with the theoretically infinite images, an expression of the limitlessness of maximalism. This means that not only does the sense of scale of the piece increase but the boundaries are only implied through its movement through time rather than the clear bracketing of beginning and end points of a fixed media piece or loop. This progression was necessary to allow the piece to develop on its own and to take the maximal aesthetics to their logical conclusion.

The maximal aesthetics and endless quality of the presentation of the sound and image in the same space gave the work a new temporal aesthetic that *Waves* did not have. This was a huge step forward towards an experience in which the *space between* was prioritised through careful consideration of time, memory and atmosphere. By abstracting the materials until the referents were obscured or reduced, I was able to communicate more general atmospheres and therefore open the piece up to a more interactive relationship with the participants' memories. With these atmospheres and materials occupying the same space, the narrative configured by the participant

³ See cycling74.com

may be audiovisual and therefore induce a rhythmic perception of time and entry into the *space between*. Furthermore I believe that the piece successfully evoked the place that it was intended to, albeit over a very long period of time.

City Colours still raised aesthetic issues which needed addressing further. I felt that to create the atmospheric outcome I intended successfully the participant would have to stay in the installation for a very long time. The building up of the layers of atmosphere into the intended affect takes place over hours and it is unrealistic to expect many people to spend that much time inside the piece. This leads to a *space between* that is too vague or confused, with immediate atmospheric images clashing with sounds which form just a part of a sonic atmosphere over time. Atmospherically this piece never quite feels as coherent as I would have liked so for the next piece I began to look at ways in which I could concentrate my approach into something more immediate in both the aural and visual elements.

Swell

Throughout my work on this research project one question seemed to be asked to me more than any other, why do I not use moving image? There is an underlying assumption when working with sound that using images must mean moving images due to their temporal compatibility. Over time it became clearer that this was a question I needed an answer to. In order to tackle it head on I decided to make a video piece in which I attempted to get as close to the aesthetics of the photograph that seemed to open up the *space between*. The intention was to create an audiovisual piece that was as close to audio-photographic art as possible. As well as this fundamental question I aimed to distill the evocation of memory and atmospheres into a smaller temporal frame and recreate the successes of *City Colours* on a smaller scale.

With *Swell* I narrowed my ambitions to evoking a place at a specific time in order to create a more concentrated atmosphere. Using the same Foucault inspired abstraction techniques in composition and presentation, I was aiming to create the same complexity of atmosphere as *City Colours* but over a shorter time frame and with a less disparate affect.

Unlike my previous work, *Swell* is entirely moving and consists of two loops of different lengths, one aural (24.07) and one visual (30.54). The more simple moving temporal structure allowed me to compose both sound and image in as similar a way as possible. I used the same number of layers using equivalent temporal and frequency based effects. This not only helped me create atmospheres in the sound and image that were as close as possible but also lead to a concentration of the maximal elements of the work.

Having become more familiar with the work of Phill Niblock and Idris Khan, I decided to take a more extreme approach maximalism and the processing of the materials. Whilst I continued to use similar techniques to *City Colours*, the maximal aesthetics used on *Swell* were pushed further. As a result I based the piece around a small selection of source materials, layered on top of each other and processed to abstract referents, shift frequencies and distort form. In both sound and moving image I hoped to create a sense of stasis through slow movement both in and between the different materials. In the sound this meant a mixture of clean and noisy slow moving drones. Some are affected using multiple resonators and LFOs to create subtly shifting harmonic content and all have automated send effect and volume changes over a long period of time to create more of a sense of progression between materials. Pushing the idea of maximalism even further I made the materials both noisier and more melodic than *City Colours* at the same time as making it consistently louder. In the video I slowed down the source materials to 10% of

their original speed, layered them and automated their opacity and channel blur, delay and distortion effects to create a sense of movement in the overall form.

The approach to maximalism I used in this piece I considered to be highly successful, not just in creating an immersive sense of stasis but also in effectively evoking atmosphere within a short period of time. The immediacy, complexity and subtle changes of the materials mean that the atmosphere I wished to evoke is almost fully there immediately. The passing of time and the shifting of the aural and visual loops in relation to each other add nuance and complexity as the materials unfold without introducing any major changes like in *City Colours*. The coherency in this approach to maximalism in both sound and image led to the work's coherency as an audiovisual piece, underlined by the temporal similarity.



Swell screenshot

The temporal aesthetics of *Swell* result in a piece which is far more temporally cohesive however, this cohesion is what removes the possibility of entry into the *space between*. The *space*

between only arises out of the temporal dissonance in audio-photographic art. Without the stasis of the photographic image an audiovisual rhythmic time cannot be perceived and without audiovisual rhythmic time it is much harder to enter into the transcendent state of the dreamlike time. Furthermore without the clashing of the two temporalities the unique memorial properties of the still image and sound combined are lost as the participant cannot dwell on single frame as the sound slowly shifts around them. In both these respects the piece was aesthetically unsuccessful as through its very nature it could not reproduce the *space between*, and so unambiguously answered the question as to why I work with sound and still image.

This experience mirrors my experiences of transcendent audiovisual art such as Bill Viola's *Tristan's Ascension* (2005) and J. Spaceman and Matthew Shipp's live performance of *SpaceShipp* (2009). In the former I got lost in the roaring of the water and the moving texture of the ascending cascade. Whilst in the latter I was overwhelmed by the loud drones and stuttering movement of the video, a jellyfish in super slow motion occasionally jumping forward several frames making me question whether I had looked away or whether time had jumped forward. In both cases the feeling of losing myself was rooted in the materials, not a negotiation of memory and materials. It was a kind of temporal transcendence dictated by the piece rather than an open dialogue between participant and piece. This kind of affect is by no means undesirable but it is not what I am trying to do with this project.

Despite the failure of the temporal aesthetics in opening up the *space between*, *Swell* was up to this point the most succinct and successful iteration of my maximal audiovisual aesthetic. It feels like a coherent piece with a depth of detail throughout both audio and visual components. Through maximalism it achieves a kind of temporal transcendence but with a far less active relationship between participant and piece. This successful concentrated approach was one that I

wanted to apply in an audio-photographic context, in which I hoped that even more nuance and detail could be added through the inherent dissonant temporality.

Escapism

After the successes and failures of *Swell* and *City Colours* I decided to put together a piece which took the most successful elements of each, as well as experimenting with some new elements, and apply it to audio-photographic installation art. I wanted to take the successful concentrated evocation of atmospheres through a coherent approach to maximal aesthetics from *Swell* and combine it with the depth, temporal complexity and *space between* of *City Colours*. The idea behind the resultant piece *Escapism* is a personal exploration of escapism and the different emotional forms that it takes. It is presented across six photographic images and one hour and thirty-one minutes of audio split into sound files around five to ten minutes in length.

Returning to the more complex temporal structure of audio-photographic art from the moving aesthetics of *Swell*, I attempted to get close to the scale and complexity of the atmospheres in *City Colours* but in a more concentrated form. Once again I used similar techniques in the creation of the materials however, this time paying close attention to the intensities and outcomes rather than being as rigorous as I had been in *Swell*. I wanted to concentrate on the atmosphere as the unifying factor between sound and image rather than simply the methods and techniques of their development and composition. As I composed the materials I made sure that regardless of the techniques used to create them, the affect and its intensity were clearly the pervading shared quality.

Just as with *City Colours* the sound is configured using a MAX patch which plays sound files according to chance operations. However, in *Escapism*, the individual sound files are much

smaller and concentrated on similar atmospheres. This is mirrored in the images which are both physically smaller as well as evoking similar atmospheres to each other.

The piece is made up of three configurations of the same source materials. In each one the atmospheric outcome is intended to be a different aspect of my experiences of escapism. The main difference between the three is in intensity, achieved by the varying levels of destruction of the source materials. Once again, just as with Hirschfeld, I achieved the atmospheres intended through careful manipulations of light and sound. This approach however was not just limited to the materials but the presentation of the installation itself.

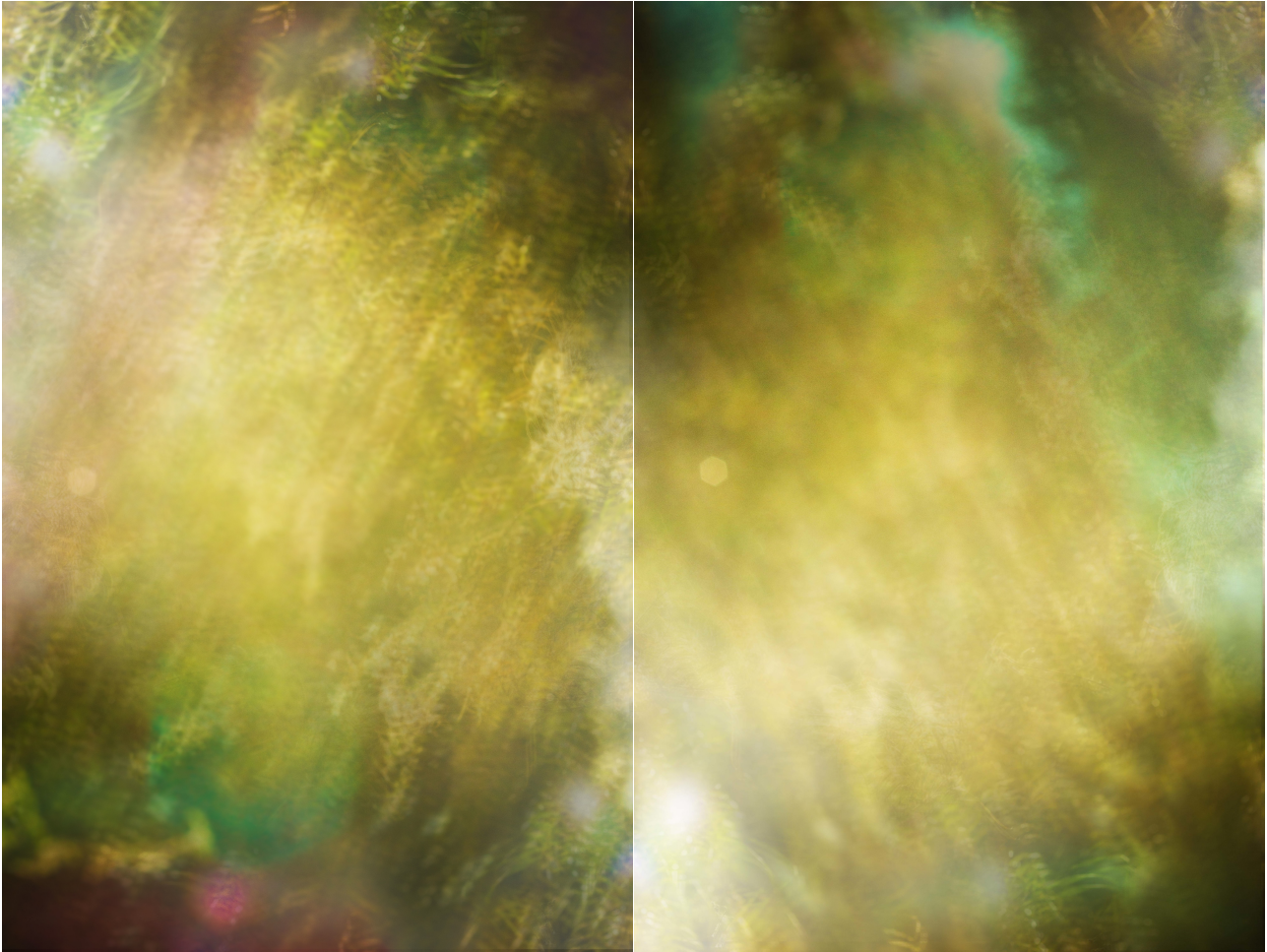
Looking back on *Swell* and *City Colours*, I felt that whilst the projection methods had been successful in filling the room, they were still working within a pre-existing atmosphere. Furthermore the kind of interaction I hope to encourage with my work is a very personal one and presenting the piece within a public space may hinder that. To remedy this I decided to create the space in which the work is presented so I had greater control over the pre-existing atmosphere. It is presented as a triptych installation with three iterations of the source materials in different configurations each with their own atmosphere. Each iteration is displayed identically across two portrait television screens and a pair of headphones in its own space. They are designed to be in an out of the way place in the corner of a space or gallery, as a destination of escape themselves. The television screens are set at an angle of 90° to 120° to each other (dependent on the space) and at or near floor level opposite the walled corner. The space is then covered with dark cloth to block out the light of the space outside the installation. A small gap is left on one side between one of the televisions and the wall for the participant to crawl into the space.



Escapism (Iteration 1)

In *Escapism* I consolidated my approach to maximalism. Like *Swell* I used a much smaller pool of aural and visual materials in order to concentrate the affect in a more static temporality. I took the same approach to the presentation of audio as *City Colours* using a MAX patch for playback so that the sound sound is endlessly repeating, bringing it into line with the endless repetition of the photographic images. However, this time each of the six threads of sound had its own player and each player had a greater chance of being silent (up to 40%). This means that whilst there are fewer materials, the soundscape can be far more dense than that of *City Colours*. The major difference between *Escapism* and the previous two installations is physical scale. Unlike *Swell* and *City Colours* the sound is presented on headphones and the volume is never extreme, though it does get loud. Nor do the images cover the whole room, instead they are restricted to two widescreen televisions. In the context of the installation however, the televisions are dominant,

making up two sides of the installation space, the light of the images radiating from them, immersing the dark space with their presence.. Likewise with the sound, though it is not loud, its playback through headphones means that it is likely the only thing the participant will hear. So whilst not maximal in physical scale, it is maximal in relative terms.

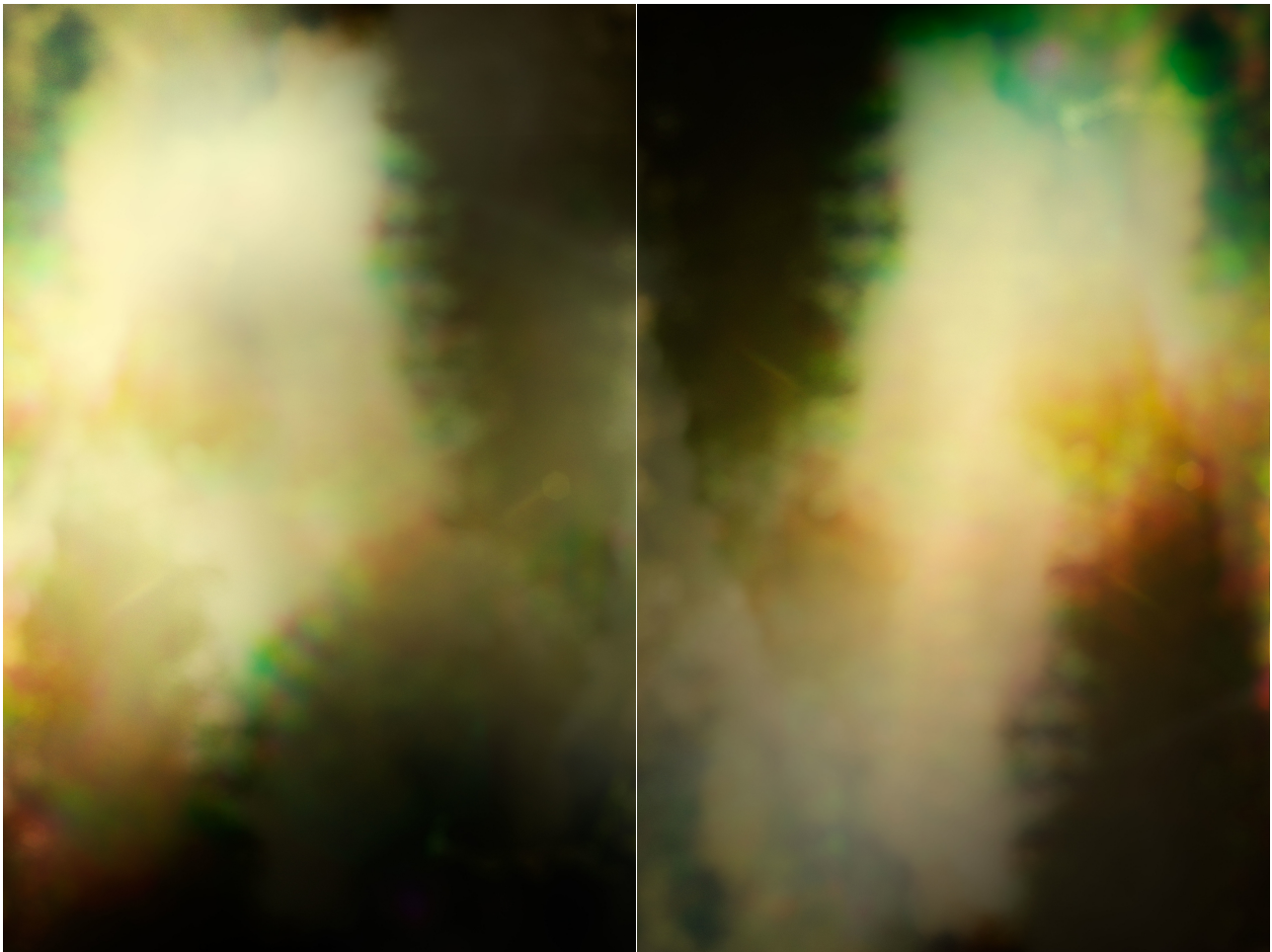


Escapism (Iteration II)

The way that maximal aesthetics manifest themselves varies between the three iterations of the installation. In the first iteration, the focus is on stasis; the materials are repetitive or without a clear progression. For the most part they are presented in a clean manner, with only a little distortion affecting the original referent; they are recognisable but still processed. In the second iteration there is more intensity. The materials are further abstracted from the referent, distorted until only glimpses of their origins are recognisable. Many of the sounds have been processed becoming drones through the use of reverbs and delays. In this second iteration the images

again become more distorted and repetitive. In the sound, a lot more noise is introduced here, balancing out the clearer/melodic sounds and creating a maximal negative beauty throughout.

In the final iteration the materials are still repetitive but are mainly characterised by noise and are further abstracted from the original. The referents have been destroyed through various methods of aural and visual transformation from extreme saturation through to the separation of their constitutive elements. Each of these approaches not only creates the conditions for temporal transcendence into the dreamlike time but also through a coherent audiovisual aesthetic enables the participant to enter the *space between*.



Escapism (Iteration III)

Temporally I consider this piece to be the most successful I have made. The temporal dissonance between aural and visual materials create audio-photographic rhythmic time when configured

by the participant and open up the *space between*. This means that the participant will have a more active relationship with the piece, their memory and the atmosphere it evokes. The almost immediate nature of the atmosphere of each iteration means that the participant's experience is as I intended within a relatively short amount of time rather than built up over hours as is the case with *City Colours*. All three iterations of the piece not only work individually but also together creating an overall atmosphere if all are experienced.

For me the piece is successful due to the coherency of the audiovisual aesthetics, its immediacy of atmosphere and the immersive quality of its presentation. It represents the sum of everything I have discovered during the research period and for me, my most coherent expression of audio-photographic art. *Escapism* was a success in the ways I intended it and for me demonstrates the effects of the *space between* more effectively than any other piece in the portfolio.

Conclusion

For me the *space between* is more than just a theory, it is an affect, a relationship with audio-photographic art. It goes all the way back to the first time I sat with a new CD and stared at the artwork whilst listening to the music, at first trying to unpick the relationship between the images and sound before becoming lost in the aural and visual world in front of me. In my creative work it is an expression of the temporal transcendence of past experiences of aural, visual and audiovisual art, an escape into memory, an immersion in the affect of atmospheres. It is those deeply affecting experiences of the past that I set out to recreate and push further in my work using the unique aesthetics of sound and photography to create affective atmospheres.

The *space between* is a temporal space perceived by the participant through an audiovisual rhythmic time created through maximal and audio-photographic aesthetics. Its temporality

transcends measurable clock time and is perceived as a dreamlike state of past, present and future. It is an affective hyper-immersive space in which the participant becomes part of the work, their memories coming together with the atmospheres of the piece to create an experience unique to each person. Memory is built into the art through the materials of recorded time across multiple temporalities and the possibility of experiencing the punctum. In this portfolio the *space between* is an expression of my own emotional memory and atmosphere as the starting point for participants to experience something.

My creative practice has changed throughout the course of this PhD, informed by my developing theoretical practice. With *Waves* I created an album of sound *with* image, then went on to attempt to define audio-photographic art as its own practice with *City Colours*. On *Swell* I tested video to see if I could achieve the same affect then finally with *Escapism* I found what I consider to be my defining piece of audio-photographic art. In *Escapism* I developed my practice to the point where I now feel I no longer need to define it against other audiovisual art. In this spirit I believe that *Escapism* is not just my most developed expression of audio-photographic art but also the stepping stone away from it. I hope that in future I will simply consider my work art, defining itself positively rather than against other practices.

It is not just the aesthetics of the creative practice that have changed through this portfolio but my understanding of what I have been trying to create. When I started with *Waves* I was trying to recreate an experience that was very personal to me, one that in hindsight could not be easily replicated. This led me to change the way in which I judged the success and failure of my work. Rather than judging it on how it recreated my formative active experiences of CDs presented with photography, I began to explore its potential to create something that took the key elements of these experiences much further, building the conditions for that type of affect

into the pieces themselves. It was whilst working on *City Colours* and *Swell* that I attempted to identify and distill the essence of the transcendent experiences into immersive installation pieces. I judged the successes of *City Colours* and *Swell* not just by past experiences of other artists' work but by potential new experiences encompassed in the *space between*, taking advantage of the unique aspects of sound and photography.

When I began work on *Escapism* my intentions had moved well beyond the replication of personal experience. Through my experimentation of the previous pieces I once again altered my expectations. Honing in on the personal non-linear relationship between piece and audience, I aimed to create a piece with the intimacy of *Waves*, the intensity of *Swell* and the non-linear relationships in the *space between* of *City Colours*. With *Escapism* I believe I was successful in these criteria. It does not just replicate the effects of past experiences but creates its own complex affective space, specific to each participant in the intersection of materials and memory. It goes far beyond what I initially envisaged my creative work to be.

For me this portfolio is the beginning of a wider exploration of the *space between* and its potential as an affective space. Reorienting the creative act towards a focus on its affect rather than centralising its process enables me to prioritise the experience of art as its primary reason for being. In future through this experience of art I hope to explore its potential as a political, utopian and queer space that goes beyond a representation of possibility through to a reproduction of its aims.

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Index

The following materials are contained in the creative portfolio submitted on the enclosed memory stick.⁴

Waves

Materials

Audio files and images.

City Colours

Materials

MAX patch and images.

Documentation

Photographs, video and sound.

Swell

Materials

Audio and video files.

Documentation

Photographs and video.

Escapism

Materials

MAX patch and images.

Documentation

Floor plan, photographs and sound.

⁴ MAX 6 runtime is needed to play MAX patches. It can be downloaded here for free: <https://cycling74.com/downloads/older/>