

Listening to the inner soundscape: A pedagogical tool for opening minds to sound-based music.



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*A. Sound based music paints pictures in my head which I think is quite good*

*B. When my eyes were closed I could imagine the place much more. It was more visual*

This suggests the extent to which a listener experiences sound through transmodal perception, could influence their level of appreciation for soundscape works. However, as demonstrated by the greater accuracy and detail in the answers given by blind participants, this is clearly an ability that needs time and practice in order to develop.

narrative emerged as a theme in explanations for positive responses, as indicated by these participant's answers:

*C. Yes because you hear sounds you've never heard before and it's more natural music. It's also in a way telling a story*

*D. Yes it was very interesting as I could hear sounds that I didn't really hear before or things I don't really pay attention to. The music almost told a story.*

## **Extending heightened listening through greater participation**

Conversations with teachers, as well as observing the loss of concentration among some listeners during the workshops, indicated that the results, particularly in terms of future access, could have been more convincing given extra time and greater participation. The encouraging responses in other projects where this has been put into practice reinforces this, not only at De Montfort University (Therapontos, 2012) (Wolf, 2013), but also in other projects such as Anna Maria Higgins' research with 16-17 year old music students, which proposed:

*That comprehension of and focused listening to electroacoustic music can be better achieved through composing (Higgins, 2004:15).*

The imaginative aspect of heightened listening also showed potential for development if combined with this element of participation. Additionally



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which is when a memory or past situation is evoked by sound (Augoyard and Torgue, 2005:21). Although this is frequently subjective there are common aspects, which are often cultural. There are many shared experiences that can produce archetypal anamneses, which are common references produced by sounds for people from a particular culture (ibid:23). Composers could exploit these types of anamneses in order to create narratives that a particular audience could identify with.

There were examples in the HL project of participants using their listening to make more imaginative connections that drew from their experiences of the world. Additionally it indicated that narrative or the idea of 'telling a story' through sound was recognised by children, as demonstrated by this response:

*H. You could understand what was happening in the piece as it was like a story of music*

For this project writing can be used as a method to help clarify and develop a participant's autoethnography in relation to particular sounds that have been chosen as material for a work. Furthermore, this inner listening can be used as a means of opening up the imaginative and creative possibilities of real world sound-based music to children. How to enable children, in practice, to learn to listen and work with sound is explained by the methodology.

## **Methodology**

Using writing methods to help students explore their imaginations through sounds, the research aims to further develop heightened listening as a way that non-specialist listeners can positively experience sound-based music.

Written exercises are used to help

imaginatively explore sounds and establish a narrative that can form the basis of a composition. Participants are required to use sounds that will support that narrative, sometimes through metaphor and association. These tech2 (ci)-0.TJ ET Q qt aaaosr ndciciaa0.2



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