‘Data and the Sonic Art Research Unit’
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Research Data Management in the arts and humanities
St Anne’s College, 3rd and 4th September 2013
SARU
Sonic Art Research Unit

Group of researchers, primarily practice-based... work outputs include performances, installations, audio releases, online, web-based projects...

Lots of people who are both freelance artists and researchers in transition – either employed on short contracts or to do short-term research projects (PhD programmes, for example).
One website to act as a portal for all the research going on within the dept. is one part of the solution…

…but SARU researchers tend to struggle with maintaining an up-to-date presence on their personal websites, which are more useful when working in the capacity as freelance artists!
What kind of digital research outputs do practitioners in the SARU generate?

- Digital field recordings
- Documentation of performances, happenings, installations
- Digital photographs documenting creative process
- Digital photographs documenting installations, performances etc.
- Documentary film clips, showing performances
- Digitised papers, articles, texts
- URLs for practitioner websites
- Digitised drawings
- Radio shows/podcasts etc.
How might outputs from SARU be used by research practitioners in the future?
Digitised resources used:

- Daphne Oram’s book
  (ubuweb - PDF)
- Oramics app (iTunes)
- Wobbulator (BBC R&D)
- Daphne Oram tapes
  (digital download, Boomkat)
Need to publicise work and frame practice in terms that work for collaborative cultural partners and commissioning institutions.

Need to reach and connect with audiences online.

Need to frame practice in own aesthetic terms and in graphic language appropriate to practice.

Need to document work and frame practice in terms that work for research grants, REFs and University plans.

Need to connect practice with research agenda of SARU and to connect online audiences with SARU (impact). Also, to document practice in a way which preserves it for posterity.
Case study: MobileSCOUT – a sonic field guide interactive online project by Marina Zurkow, Julian Bleecker and Scott Patterson (2004) fantastic essay by Sarah Cook dealing with Online/Offline Community and the internet as a specific sort of social space – the project is now difficult to find!

“Mobile Scout defined place as being made of social habitats, not geography. Users’ recordings were organized into an audio/visual field guide according to the kind of space you occupy, be it play, work, nature, culture, public, private, branded or free speech.”

Mobile Scout was commissioned for the exhibition "Database Imaginary" in Canada in 2004.

The complexity of the situation is exacerbated by the erratic, impermanent nature of the internet... even while that same context for audience engagement is so exciting for so many artists.
A FIELD GUIDE OF AUDIO NARRATIVES

Are you in a concrete jungle or swamped by tourists? Who's around you, what do you see? A deer, a dump, or a daydream? Saintly acts or sinful facts?

Mobile Scout is a public art project that collects audio narratives of your local surroundings, personal rituals, and public sightings. Using your mobile phone, you leave a voice message of your observations with the Mobile Scout Ranger, our automated quirky naturalist.

Mobile Scout asks you to be on the lookout for rare or endangered "species" of landscape, character, and event. Reveal moments that would otherwise remain invisible or disappear, like the accidental performance art you encounter, a land developer's crimes, or the wind as you ride your bicycle up a hillside.

Turn your observation into a brief message about the flora (landscapes), fauna (characters) or behaviors (events) that populate your surroundings.

Call the phone number below. The Mobile Scout Ranger will guide you through the prompts.

WHEN YOU CALL, YOU'LL:  
- pick your mission  
- pick two habitat attributes  
- leave a recording

Mobile Scout defines place as being made of social habitats, not geography. Your recordings are organized into an audio/visual field guide according to the kind of space you occupy, be it play, work, nature, culture, public, private, branded or free speech.

See the field guide and listen to recordings by accessing the web site: www.mobilescout.org

CALL MobileSCOUT  
TOLL-FREE IN CANADA & USA  
1 (877) 564-3060  
WWW.MOBILESCOUT.ORG

Mobile Scout was commissioned by Curated by Sarah Cook, Steve Dietz & Anthony Kiedes  
Water Mill Gallery, Bortz Centre

Mobile Scout was conceived and created by artist Marina Zurkow, architected by Scott Paterson and technology Julian Bleeker. With Mobile Scout, the team extends the world of P.P.O.W's ongoing mapping project www.ppw.com/about

BEVOCA.

DO YOU WANT TO:  
Share a secret?  
Voice a complaint?  
Report on an endangered place?  
Reveal a weird encounter?

HAVE YOU FOUND:  
A secret passageway?  
A public place to party?  
A hole to another universe?  
THEN CALL AND TELL!!!!!
In 2008 we started a website called “Sound Diaries” which was intended from the outset – like MobileSCOUT – to use the specific social environment of the Internet as a context for sharing sounds.

In 2011 our web-hosting service went bust.
• Public-facing
• Aesthetic design appropriate to project/audience
• Plugged into social media and easy to share/disseminate

• Safe storage for digital research
• Far easier for academics to find information
• Repository of data and searchable database of works
• Vibrant example of practice led research
BACKEND/REPOSITORY OF DATA MANAGED ON RADAR

- Research protected and not vulnerable to same problems as privately hosted data
- University has incentive to protect the data
- Data is fully searchable, and has amazing keyword/metadata functionality, making it easy for people to find specific resources when studying SARU in the future!

FRONTEND/PUBLIC POINT OF ACCESS TO RESEARCH, THROUGH EASILY CUSTOMISABLE WEBSITE FORMATS

- Allows researchers to frame research in appropriate aesthetic language, but to still show clear pathways between public access and University research data
- Plugs research directly into social networks, allowing for greater access to research
Anatomy of a digital sound art research project...

How does this messy sprawl of a project and lack of a centralised information point disadvantage the practitioner and the host institution?

UK Soundmap / sonic time capsule

In May 2011, Felicity Ford created a Sound Diary inspired by the idea of making a sort of sonic time capsule. This project was undertaken in conjunction with the British Library’s UK Soundmap initiative, and sounds typical of Felicity’s daily life in Britain in 2011 were recorded, considered and presented here on the Sound Diaries website, and uploaded to the UK Soundmap via audioboo.

Felicity’s introduction to the project, recordings, and notes are presented below.

I recently attended a meeting at The British Library, in which a group of us reviewed the progress of The UK Soundmap project. During his presentation there, Ian Rawes* played some sounds from earlier times in history, and described the specific way in which sound...
"Through Walls" by Shirley Pegna, 2011

Description
"Through Walls" was a sound piece created for Audiograf 2011 where people inside a room could hear sounds through the walls or through the glass window. Viewer-listeners could press their ears on the walls or the glass window, or use a listening device like a tumbler, funnel, horn, stethoscope etc. to enhance their natural hearing. Speakers played sound ...

Details

Title
"Through Walls" by Shirley Pegna, 2011

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filename
s.pegna_audiograf-2011_01.JPG, s.pegna_audiograf-2011_02.JPG, s.pegna_audiograf-2011_03.JPG, s.pegna_audiograf-2011_04.JPG, s.pegna_audiograf-2011_05.JPG, s.pegna_audiograf-2011_06.JPG, s.pegna_audiograf-2011_07.JPG, s.pegna_audiograf-2011_08.JPG, s.pegna_audiograf-2011_09.JPG, s.pegna_audiograf-2011_10.JPG, s.pegna_audiograf-2011_11.JPG

itemtype
upload

Links To Resources

File Viewer
Large Image Viewer
File: s.pegna_audiograf-2011_01.JPG
File: s.pegna_audiograf-2011_02.JPG
NOW (2013)
- Research disseminated across multiple private websites without links back to University
- Research documentation existing on multiple platforms – Soundcloud, Vimeo, YouTube, etc.
- Research difficult to locate except through individual artist’s websites, and then no links back to SARU
- How can the impact of research be measured?

MARCH 2014
- Research disseminated across multiple private websites with links back to University, plus more data stored on RADAR – reciprocity and traceable use of digital research assets
- Research documentation existing more on RADAR and less on expensive, unreliable platforms
- Research assets searchable and impact made measurable