

ALEXANDRA BAIXINHO AND TINE BLOM: MOUNTAIN MEETS URBAN WATERFRONT

Our proposal is an experiment in combining two different soundscapes:

- 1) An urban waterfront atmosphere, with the site-specific real time sounds of Islands Brygge and its contemporary recreational uses
- 2) A sonic composition of field recordings from Hallingskarvet mountain.

We want to explore what happens when we mix the sounds of a Danish urban, post-industrial waterfront environment, with sounds from a Norwegian mountain. How does the pre-existent aural environment integrate and dialogue with the broadcast of our “invading” sonic composition? How do people sense and make sense of the sonic mix, overlap and contrasts from two different spaces? The audio paper will reflect on the content of both independent soundscapes and explore the outcomes of this mingling. We are interested in the “interferences” (or confluences) generated by our emplaced sonic intervention.

How is the perception of pre-existing place transformed by our installation? How does the waterfront soundscape host the mountain one – do they dialogue, do they clash? Which sounds combine, which ones collide? How is the site affected by a foreign ambience being broadcasted via loud speakers? How do people engage with the new sonic environment, and how do they respond to it? Are seasonal or environmental elements recognized? Does a new ephemeral (imaginary) place/time emerge?

Participant observation and local recordings of this experiment, as well as our (and other people’s) reflections on the surprises and insights it will trigger, are the core of our audiopaper.

Audiopaper plan

- 1) Introduction: who we are, our research backgrounds, and what this sonic installation is about.
- 2) Bits of both soundscapes (the mountain and the waterfront), before being joint together.
 - A) Sounds from the Norwegian mountain environment (winds, snow, ice and water), and the way they range from soft and subtle to raging and violent, evoking the sense of the forces of the mountain. Some sonic traces of human presence are audible.
 - B) The post-industrial harbour location of Islands Brygge (in the north-western shore of Amager), and its site-specific sonorities, capturing contemporary rhythms and social uses. The textured ambiance of the waterfront, with water splashing along the former quays, recreational boating, outdoor sports, the harbour baths, esplanades, ice cream vendors, etc. Does the harbour still resonate in nowadays listening of this space? Do we hear the sirens of nearby cruise ships? Can we still hear the area's industrial past (its docklands, warehouses, railway tracks, rusty steel structures)? Or do leisure and cultural uses now completely dominate the sonic panorama?
- 3) The interweaving of sounds from these distinct proveniences. Are sounds are capable of place-making? How do they challenge our perception and foster our sensory imagination? Recordings from the overall buzz, and the "dialogue" between the waterfront and the sonic presence mountain. Sounding our audience: gathering local opinions/comments to (and within) the new temporary sonic background, set with our installation.
- 4) Sonic assemblage of the most interesting aural fragments produced in the course of our experiment. Voice over (or interweaved with bits from in-site recordings) reflecting on this sonic encounter, and the concepts and theories it mobilized. Further contributions, issued from the event and the questions and responses it arouse.

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