Microcultures of collaboration: entangled artistic pedagogies for students and educator

Figure 1 *Sonic Camouflage: Cave at the Beach* (Source: R. Waring, 2022)

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Abstract

This research unearths insights into the entangled pedagogic processes that occurred between students and educator when co-creating during a contemporary art project called *Sonic Camouflage*. The off-campus project-based learning environment of *Sonic Camouflage* was shown to boost and intensify learning for all participants, with an integrated re-energising tri-role for the educator to partake in art, education, and research practice. The research discovered that *Sonic Camouflage* contained intertwined learning processes that I term 'microcultures of collaboration'. These microcultures are unravelled to reveal new insights surrounding improvisational learning using a cultural instigator as provocation and around individual artistic development. *Sonic Camouflage* was also shown to react to pervasive segregating media and technology by generating an immersive sense of belonging to a co-supportive learning community that instilled an empowering resilience for participants' future art practice. Dialogic and collaborative constructivist approaches were integral methods employed to undertake the research.

Acknowledgements

Contents

Art practice audiovisual documentation

Please listen with headphones to provide clarity to the subtle sonics.

1. Showreel: Five one-minute clips of different workshops.
2. Campus edits: Nine on-campus one-minute vignettes.
3. Zarakes residency edits: Ten off-campus one-minute vignettes.
4. Zarakes residency documentation: Seven full-length, real-time videos of the off-campus culmination performances.

All videos created as part of this practice-based thesis and cited in this document can be accessed here:

https://www.youtube.com/@soniccamouflage7403/playlists

Hyperlinks are used throughout the thesis to link to relevant sections of the audiovisual documentation.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This is a practice-based research project that examines the pedagogy of collaborative contemporary art practice through a project I designed called *Sonic Camouflage.* Art practice is shown through audiovisual documentation and reflected on through participants' written feedback and analysis. The research is situated within contemporary discourse on fine art pedagogies and collaborative project based learning theories, whilst also referencing the cultural contexts of contemporary artists and exhibitions which impact on fine art learning.

Chapter 1 provides a roadmap for the entire research project. Chapters 2 and 3 continue to build contextual understanding of the research environment in preparation for the research data analysis in Chapters 4, 5, and 6. Each chapter is broken down into sections. For example, the first section of Chapter 1 provides an outline of the research project, then Section 1.2 reveals the motivations behind the research, and Section 1.3 revolves around the research questions and four types of research material. The final two sections unpack two key learning strategies: improvisational collaboration, and connecting learning into the wider world with a cultural instigator.

Chapter 2 explores the lineage and rationales of fine arts practice based learning pedagogies and acts as a literature review by providing an enquiry into surrounding contexts which impact on this research. These contexts form the basis for the research and inform my approach and analysis. Chapter 3 reveals the methodology, development, and documentation of the *Sonic Camouflage* project. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 sit under the overarching title *Sonic Camouflage project execution and reflection*, with each chapter investigating one of the three research questions in turn. Conclusions are reached in Chapter 7.

1.1 Outline

> As I write, I listen, the words forming in my mind are sounds. Listening forward in time, I sense and feel you: the reader, listening as well. While listening in this manner I'm experiencing the listening effect, which not only transports me but simultaneously centres me in the present moment. (Oliveros, 2022, p. 9)

The *Sonic Camouflage* project involved me and eight final-year students from the BA (Hons) Fine Art undergraduate degree at Arts University Bournemouth (AUB) working together to evolve a collective art practice through incremental and improvisational live sonic workshops.

Sfyria, a Greek whistling language, inspired the *Sonic Camouflage* project title and was responded to through improvisational sonic art practice workshops. Each workshop activity lasted around one hour. The *Sonic Camouflage* workshops used an enquiry-led project-based learning (PBL) methodology to engage and motivate participants through addressing real-world issues (Saavedra *et al.*, 2022), using a cultural instigator – Sfyria – as a questioning provocation and enquiry theme.

These workshops were incrementally iterative, and they aimed to test new sounds developed out of participants' research surrounding Sfyria, and to gradually integrate these sounds collaboratively through building inter-participant understandings.

Nine sonic workshops took place on AUB's main campus before the project moved, for a sustained period of ten days, to an off-campus location on the Greek island of Evia where a further ten workshops took place. This island location connected to the project's aforementioned cultural instigator, Sfyria, because this ancient, endangered language is still used by a handful of people on the island.

The *Sonic Camouflage* project began in 2019 when the students were in their first year, but was interrupted by Covid and resumed in late 2021, with the ten-day residency on Evia taking place in April 2022. Whilst most participants felt negatively toward the Covid interruption, a couple did remark that "although Covid did derail our work to begin with, I do believe it was a blessing in disguise…Covid did us a huge favour in the sense that we were allowed more time to work on this, [which] actually benefited us immensely" (P) and that "the delays caused by [Covid] played a positive role in the growth of our art making as a group, as not only did we get a chance to know each other better as students, we also got to know Richard more too" (P).

1.2 Motivations

> All artists are alike, they dream of doing something that's more social, more collaborative, and more real than art. (Graham, cited in Bishop, 2006, p. 178)

As an educator, I am aware that I am in a continual developmental state of becoming a teacher and therefore I am continually searching for new engaging learning experiences. *Sonic Camouflage* presents a multifaceted PBL environment to boost and intensify learning for students and tutor, along with a useful integrated and re-energising tri-role for undertaking art practice, education practice, and research practice. In responding to a question about how tutors may think about themselves and their role in a post-pandemic world, Swiss educator Luca Botturi responded that "teachers discovered that they are not just 'knowledge dispensers' for their students: they are also *organizers of events in which students meet with a purpose*". (Botturi, 2021, p. 726) She went on to say that tutors are "experts that students can meet and interact with also informally" and that "many teachers (re-)discovered that students are for them important social and intellectual stimuli". Botturi's statements resonate with research findings from *Sonic Camouflage* as it revealed how the intellectual stimuli and the role of educating leader is constructively shared among all participants during co-creation.

Contextual personal circumstance

I was kindly offered an artist residency on the Greek island of Evia. When researching facts and myths about the island, I discovered the ancient whistling language called Sfyria. I was motivated to discover more about this cultural specificity. It was allegedly invented to help people communicate secretly to evade capture by an enemy through disguising the human voice as birdsong. Therefore, Sfyria is a form of sonic camouflage rather than the well-known association of camouflage being a physical visual illusion.

As I found this language so intriguing, I expected others to as well. Steve Goodman provides a useful analysis of the contemporary use of sound against enemies in his book *Sonic warfare: sound, affect, and the ecology of fear* (2012), although his analysis focuses on sound used for a detrimental physical effect on enemies, not sound used to hide or obfuscate.

Importantly, *Sonic Camouflage*'s focus is not preserving or cataloguing Sfyria; it aims to critique, react to, and celebrate the language's indigenous locale, rhythm, intonation, courage,

and ancient mystique in order to create contemporary artworks that may also inspire, intrigue, and educate. The *Sonic Camouflage* project theme is further explored in Section 3.5.

After two decades of working in education, I reflected on how I could best use my experience and feedback from students and peers to design new PBL to ensure that I, as a dedicated educator, remained pedagogically motivated and engaged in the discipline whilst simultaneously sharing new knowledge about higher education learning experiences. There is little research which reviews higher education art and design curriculum content (Bridgstock, 2019), so I therefore contribute to this area by reviewing the content of *Sonic Camouflage*.

The vast majority of undergraduate fine art pedagogies focus on the individual student artist, and many students and staff are still feeling the isolating impact that Covid lockdowns had on their sense of belonging to a student-centred learning community. The everyday use of digital technology and social media also exacerbates this focus on individuality. Cooke, Colucci-Grey, and Burnard (2023) affirm that "digital and technological applications reduce complexities between humans, materials, and environments".

In reaction to these segregating factors, I wanted to create an engaging PBL framework that brought students and educators together to foster a compassionate and humanely complex culture of exploring new knowledge together through shared art practice. This would hopefully create an exciting sensation of being 'in-the-making' (Haraway, 2016) for both the practical in-the-making of the new shared artworks and the in-the-making of the collective learning experience. Therefore, *Sonic Camouflage* aimed to create enriching PBL for both students and educator by energetically punctuating the curriculum with focussed periods of co-creation that aimed to generate a sense of belonging. This sense of belonging is built gradually from a sense of trust and caring within the co-creating group, which chimes with Australian educator Peter Goodyear's view that "there's a stronger sense that the university teacher's role involves quite a complicated form of *caring*" following the pandemic (Rapanta *et al.*, 2021, p. 726, original emphasis).

My motivation for student and tutor co-creation projects built incrementally over several years through similar pedagogic initiatives. These were in part influenced by Paulo Freire's (2005) view of education as the practice of freedom, and the lowering of hierarchies and power structures between students and educator through the co-created advance of

knowledge. I'm aware that when knowledge is shared, some hierarchies and power structures occur between participants, and that these are useful when handled sensitively. Sonic improvisation also creates a new type of sonic hierarchy, one where participants' 'out-of-workshop' personality traits can or cannot be conveyed. And whilst co-creation does usefully lower the hierarchy between student and tutor, I understand that authority does remain with the educator as I acknowledge "the role of teacher and student as co-creators while still placing the teacher at its centre" (Lupton, 2013, p. 161).

Salazar's (2021) PBL research helps re-affirm that the *Sonic Camouflage* project contains pertinent pedagogical innovations, as Salazar identifies the characteristics of quality teaching as: deeply knowing the content; orchestrating the physical space; creating opportunities for inquiry-based learning; utilising a diversity of sources; enabling a sense of belonging; and encouraging students to reflect and experiment.

Building on Salazar's identifiable characteristics of quality teaching, I designed an enquiry-led PBL experience not only to integrate these characteristics, but with the knowledge that PBL can also support the development of students' social emotional skills (Culclasure, Longest and Terry, 2019). Every summer at the Salzburg Academy on Media and Global Change a collaborative residency takes place for academics and students who have an interst in how the attributes of care, empathy and agency can be intergrated in curriculi. Scholarship gleaned from the Salzburg residency has resulted in the book *Transformative Media Pedagogies*, with Henry Jenkins writing the foreword.

Jenkins (2021, p. xxii) reflects that "transformative pedagogy is governed by three core principles: caring ethics that encourages empathetic engagement with other people, imagination that explores alternatives to constraining realities, and agency that recognizes and enhances their capacities to make change in the world", and *Sonic Camouflage* utilises these three principles. The first and second of the three principles also connect with the four critical lenses for PBL proposed by Tierney *et al*. (2022): commitment to equity, identity development, student engagement, and social and emotional learning. *Sonic Camouflage* actively encourages these commitments, for example, by looking outwards into the world to an unfamiliar cultural instigator.

Challenging times

The *Sonic Camouflage* project was undertaken at a challenging time for Higher Education, at least in the UK where we are experiencing cost-cutting measures resulting in the shutting down of arts, humanities, and social science courses (Grove, 2022). These challenging times have led to a mounting scrutiny of undergraduate curriculum content and its pedagogic value and positivity towards students' perceptions of their learning within institutions. *Sonic Camouflage* reacts to this context by testing high-value PBL curriculum content that aims to provide high student and staff satisfaction in the hope that this will impact positively on future curriculum content design.

In reaction to these challenging times, there has been a steady rise in alternative art schools, both in the UK and internationally. They are also perhaps a backlash to the offerings of established and heavily codified higher education institutions, and of course, the financial cost of studying. These organisations include – but are not limited to – Tent City University, The School of the Damned, Antiuniversity Now, Open School East, The Silent University, Copenhagen Free University, The Free University of Liverpool, The Really Open University, The Alternative Art College, AltMFA, and BFAMFAPhD. Having looked into the public-facing advertising content of these programmes, while they are significantly cheaper in fees, costs have to be paid without a student loan and there is no formally recognised Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) accreditation for their qualification. This can be considered risky for the student in the longer term because employers may require a QAA accredited degree. Taking such concerns into consideration, I am motivated to ensure that dynamic and relevant contemporary content is held within mainstream formal higher education.

1.3 Research questions and four types of research material

My motivation is my desire to design innovative, collaborative pedagogies through the *Sonic Camouflage* project, so to assess the impact of the project I use three research questions to investigate key components of a successful learning experience:

1. How do participants negotiate this type of co-created artistic learning collaboration individually and collectively?

(enquires into participants' perceptions of interaction during scales of pedagogies)

2. What types of pedagogic interventions can a facilitator of this type of co-created project make to enhance the learning process during an artistic collaboration? (reflects on pre-planned frameworks and in-the-moment improvisation)

3. How does this type of co-created artistic learning collaboration affect artistic development? (provides perceptions of both collective and individual artistic identity building)

To investigate the research questions, I use four different types of research material, listed below. These are woven together to generate a non-chronological narrative expressing the richly entangled immersive nature of the project and the fluid, constantly shifting mindsets of participants. This approach also creates a broad and thorough contextual analysis.

1. Contextual mapping from relevant fields including art and educational theory.
2. Feedback from participants, attributed to a specific individual using a capital letter (such as L, T, or J), or marked with a P for participant when unattributed.
3. Live art practice workshops and performances, viewed via links to audiovisual documentation.
4. My auto-ethnographic thick narrative diary entries, presented in italics in an indented format. These are purposefully playful punctuations and reflect the character and tone of where and when these recollections took place and act as a kind of connective tissue between scholarly reflections and being in the oscillating dynamic live action "flux of perception-cognition-intuition" (Gibson, cited in Candy, 2006, p. 9). They are strategically placed to link directly into the pedagogic narrative of the project.

For example, in Chapter 4, the different types of research material investigate collaboration through wider cultural contexts that are relevant to fine art pedagogic activities, such as significant global contemporary art exhibitions and critical writing about art and learning, along with pertinent information about UK higher education and the higher education institution. I weave in participant feedback and my thick narrative diary excerpts to show how I played many pedagogic roles. This change in writing tone helps mirror the radically diverse reflexive practical actions that I had to make when participating and facilitating live in the entangled field of research action. I also use links to relevant sections of art practice

through the AV documentation. My specific nuanced approach to documenting art practice will be broken down in Section 3.6.

1.4 Collaborative improvisation

The *Sonic Camouflage* collaborative improvisational approach was used to shift emphasis from the hegemonic solitary individualist mode of art making to a concentrated, high level of collective engagement to create new and unexpected artworks that would be impossible to achieve alone. Sawyer's (2017, p. 7) research has shown that certain kinds of collaboration are most successful, ones that are "guided and planned, but in a way that doesn't kill the power of improvisation". This also connects to Jenkins' (2021) second core principle for transformative pedagogy, imaginative exploration.

Imaginative exploration entails for an imaginative curriculum, one where there are "safe and brave spaces for artistic education, especially after the pandemic" (Martinez-Zarate, 2023, p. 10). Pablo Martinez-Zarate explores new forms of compassionate pedagogy in his dynamic book *Eccentric Pedagogies* (2023) that is part research, part manifesto. He says that the book is "an invitation to find new ways to embody our educational and artistic practices."

The improvised collaboration also aimed to generate a sense of belonging among participants by incrementally learning new concepts and practical skills through the workshops' shared visual and aural dialogues. This sharing entailed mature negotiation and connected into the "deeply human need to work productively with others" (Sawyer, 2017, p. xii).

This improvised coming together also generates participant agency through interactive negotiations and heightens "the possibility of coming into contact, into collision even, across multiple sensorial planes; whereby the feeling and the sensing is at once a biological, physical, linguistic, and sonic experience" (Cooke, Colucci-Gray and Burnard, 2023, p. 28).

As there were intentionally no clear answers to the negotiation, the very nature of collaborative improvisation was used as a 'radical apparatus' (Murris, 2016), encouraging entangled and challenging exploration that may or may not result in collective agreement or success as "the group has the ideas, not the individual" (Sawyer, 2017, p. xii). I understood

that the transition of participant understanding from being focussed on one's own learning to a consideration of the whole group's learning would take time. The incremental workshop approach therefore also served the purpose of building empathetic understanding and a sense of collective belonging before going to the residency. The research indicated that it was only when the project shifted to an off-campus location that participants' mindsets fully evolved into a meaningful form of collective consensus. This is expanded on in Chapter 4.

By using an improvisational learning process, *Sonic Camouflage* allowed the educator to introduce the "chaotic potentiality of the random action" (Halberstam, 2011, p. 80). This provoked participants to embrace improvisation as a method to create and learn from unexpected new things; to embrace the 'not knowing' (Fisher and Fortnum, 2013) as a key learning device to help move the project forward. The 'not knowing' invoked through collaborative improvisation reflects Halberstam's (2011, p. 83) view that learning is "part memorization and part forgetting, part accumulation and part erasure".

Shaping pedagogy

My initial interest in using collaborative improvisation as a pedagogic method developed out of discovering certain jazz musicians and artists when I was an art student, especially the improvisational analogue/digital fusions of the monumental innovator Miles Davis, along with Ella Fitzgerald's improvised scat singing. I found Davis and Fitzgerald wildly exciting for their confident improvisations that created a challenging yet fluid sound structure. This was coupled with my obsession with the artist Kurt Schwitters, and his absurdist Dada onomatope poetry and his Merzbau improvisational sculpture that expanded through the ceilings and floors of his three-storey house in Hannover. Schwitters was heavily influenced by the artists Cezanne, Braque, and Picasso's radical mode of analysing the space around objects and buildings and translating this space this into new pictorial and sculptural configurations of space. Picasso and Braque were influenced by Cezanne and had a very close working relationship; during one period, they both signed the back of each painting, their high-level synergy indicating "that the individual identity of the painter was less important than the collaboration that had actually created the work" (Sawyer, 2017, p. 157). Vera John-Steiner (2006, p. 70) calls this high-level collaborative synergy 'integrative collaboration'*,* a level that *Sonic Camouflage* achieved.

John-Steiner's theories proposed four different levels of collaboration, with integrative collaboration being the highest. The first level is distributed collaboration, the second is complimentary collaboration, the third is family collaboration and the fourth, integrative collaboration. *Sonic Camouflage* participants worked their way through these four stages by incrementally strengthening their active listening skills and communication and empathy for others. Of course, some participants progressed quicker than others, but all evidenced the integrative collaboration stage during the off-campus locational learning residency. This is analysed further in Chapters 4, 5, and 6.

The contemporary Bahraini British musician and trumpeter Yazz Ahmed further developed the collaborative improvisational analogue digital fusion that Miles Davis developed. Whilst this is no longer considered ground-breaking, her approach is very innovative and at integrative collaboration level. It is also precarious as during live performances she records her and the band's live sounds and plays this back into the live performance. This layers the just-heard sound back into the improvisation, making it part of the live sonic. This re-recording process continues several times to create a dense and complex over and underlapping soundscape. Section 4.4 reveals how this process was discovered independantly by participant J and used dynamically within *Sonic Camouflage* workshops.

Ahmed's sonic compositions, along with most improvisational jazz, often has very long durations of experimentation where it can be said that the improvisation does not work particularly well as it doesn't cohere to create something unexpected or extraordinary, so you have to persevere through the 'not knowing' (Fisher and Fortnum, 2013). However, these periods of entangled murky testing, as with the *Sonic Camouflage* workshops, are punctuated with inexplicable sections of sound that would have been impossible to create alone and without the improvisational method, and to transcribe into notated sheet music without the collaborative learning through improvisation. I have unsuccessfully attempted to play Miles Davis's improvisations that have been paradoxically scored and sold as sheet music!

Brass band punk

At the same time I was discovering Davis's experimental analogue digital fusions, I was still part of a very structured traditional brass band in a village called Heage in Derbyshire. I had been in the brass band since I was five years old, and stayed part of until I reached 19 and left

home to study fine art in Cardiff. It was called The Heage Band after the village, and I attended compulsory two-hour long rehearsals three evenings a week. I was surrounded mainly by much older people with whom I built a great rapport and sense of belonging. They helped me learn to read and play music fluently to a very high standard, to an integrative collaboration level, in a strict instructional manner that was led by an individual conductor.

This type of music required a strict objective and formal style of learning that also adhered to the conductor's vision and slight interpretation of the sheet music's instructions about volume and pace. This was a large-scale sonic environment as it involved around twenty-five musicians collaborating to create the outcome. It was, on the one hand, very enjoyable due to the social and practical skills learned. On the other hand, I discovered that I intensely disliked the aggressive authority of the conductor and the tightness of the uninspiring overtly long overtures. I did enjoy the idiosyncrasy of the band, however, as none of my peers played in a brass band, so it made me feel somehow special.

On reflection, my paradoxical relationship to the brass band's learning methods resulted from it being strict, traditional, and objective. This type of collaborative environment taught me how engaging with one musical genre does not stereotype a person, as it pushed me to search for a contrasting musical approach. While I was enthused by Davis' analogue digital experimentations, I was also inspired by the angry, political, yet comedic and playful messages I discovered in punk and new wave music that emerged in the mid-1970s and continued throughout the 1980s. This music was characterised by short songs that were fast, powerfully rhythmic, repetitive, loud, discordant, abrasive, and strategically atonal in parts.

While not improvisational in its approach, it was strongly collaborative, with each group presenting a united intent and image. Successful bands were often described as being a 'tight unit' as they were at an integrative collaboration level. The type of improvisational experimentation that Davis used predated punk and new wave by several decades, and there is scant research to suggest that punk was inspired by jazz. One thing that I see in common is the extremely fast and bouncy improvised trumpet approach in bebop jazz that Davis performed in his early work in the late 1940s and the extremely fast 'pogoing' rhythm of punk and its abrasive, staccato approach to vocals. It's worth noting that the trumpet's sonorous monotone is considered analogous with the human voice, with the contemporary

trumpeter Alison Balsom saying it is "an extension of the body…it can say so much beyond words…into the abstract" ('Music and poetry', 2024).

Conversely, the mono process of solitary improvisation can also be used for making physical visual contemporary art as well as collaborative sonic art. For example, I visited *Ryan Sullivan* (2022), an exhibition of the painter's work at Sadie Coles HQ. Sullivan states that his paintings directly reference durational collaborative jazz improvisations by scooping up and folding the thickly painted semi-dry resin surface in on itself, pushing it around and improvising with it until he finds the right moment to stop when it somehow works for him visually, rather than auditorily. Sullivan's improvisational scooping as a process for art making chimes with Orr and Shreeve's (2017, p. 9) view that "effective teaching is serendipitous and creative, deploying the suspension of judgement, rethinking and redesigning approaches. Pedagogy needs spontaneity as well as careful planning". *Sonic Camouflage's* workshop methodology embraces this theory by encouraging a critical framework that enables intentional spontaneity.

1.5 Connecting into the world

Best practice theories surrounding experiential educational methods place emphasis on learning environments that connect directly into the stimulus for learning (Stock and Kolb, 2021). The Association for Experiential Education (no date) also regards experiential education as "a teaching philosophy that informs many methodologies in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, clarify values, and develop people's capacity to contribute to their communities". *Sonic Camouflage* directly connects the location of its enquiry-led PBL on Evia into the location of the Sfyria language provocation to stimulate collective learning through a heightened awareness of being-in-the-place of Sfyria. This can be considered another form of being 'in-the-making' (Haraway, 2016). Section 2.1 expands the idea of connecting into the world within the context of fine art learning.

Beuys and Biesta

In *Letting art teach: art education 'after' Joseph Beuys* (2017), the pedagogical theorist Gert Biesta laments the potential disappearance of art in a lot of fine art undergraduate degree courses. Biesta argues that what he has discovered on many courses is that art is instrumentalised to make a difference to something else, rather than being valued in and of itself. This includes, for example, "the development of empathetic capacities or pro-social attitudes…it is obvious that in such cases it is not art that matters but what art can produce or bring about" (Biesta, 2017, p. 37).

Biesta goes on to argue against what he calls 'expressivist' attitudes. What Biesta contests here is that if someone expresses something, it is assumed that this creative act must matter educationally. He says what is often forgotten here is that this expressed thing is not necessarily good, and consequently is not important educationally either for the person doing the expressing or for the world at large in which the expressed thing arrives. Biesta goes on to argue that educational work should not facilitate individual expression without bringing the student into 'dialogue with the world'. He discusses creative pedagogy turning the individual student towards the larger multifaceted world to increase their desire to participate with it, thus making their expressions confront or connect into realities of the world in what Biesta calls a 'grown-up way' and what Jenkins (2021, p. xxii) calls "agency that recognizes and enhances their capacities to make change in the world", his third transformative pedagogy trait.

Differing dialogues

Connecting into the world re-iterates Oliveros' (2022, p. 22) words: "we interrupt the place, and the place interrupts us". I interpret 'interrupts us' as learning how to know the content deeply, connecting to the attributes of Salazar's (2021) identifiable PBL characteristics of quality teaching. This knowing the content deeply helps us connect into the specific realities of the world through deep reflection with it, "whereby knowing is a process of 're-seeing' ourselves with(in) the world that we can uniquely advance" (Cooke, Colucci-Gray and Burnard, 2023, p. 25). *Sonic Camouflage*'s pedagogic environment connects the participants into an off-campus, real-world location and uses social constructivist methods to encourage

mature, open, critically constructive dialogue. Karen Barad (2007) calls this inter-reliance on different dialogues 'worlding'.

The contemporary art world and arts pedagogy are incredibly broad areas, both as fields in the global commercial and museum art world, and as an educational subject area where one size does not fit all. To be at home in this complex world, a student and artist educator must commit time to understand its myriad contexts and languages. I therefore agree with Biesta (2017) when he said that it is fundamental that there should be space to learn through art for art's sake on a contemporary fine art course, and for an art form that enquires into specific things in the world to be in contextual 'dialogue with the world'.

The project does not aim to preserve or raise awareness of the decreasing use of Sfyria language. It instead uses Sfyria to bring students into dialogue with the world; to make art for art's sake; to learn through the entangled collaborative processes and by concentrating attention around deep listening, place, and collective social praxis; and to use something ancient to make something contemporary. Oliveros (2022, p. 57) ardently believes that deep listening "is the foundation for a radically transformed social matrix in which compassion and love are the core motivating principles guiding creative decision making and our actions in the world".

The introduction has begun to set the context for the research by explaining the motivations and the relevance of the pedagogic methods, including the importance of the project leaving the safety bubble of the campus to expand into the real-world context during its culmination phase on the Greek island of Evia. Chapter 2 will set the pedagogies of the project in a fine art context and explore the art school environment and risk taking, and how *Sonic Camouflage* engages with this. The final two sections will help ground the important artist educator concept to understand the relevance of my tri-role during *Sonic Camouflage* as artist, educator, and researcher.

Chapter 2: Fine art pedagogies

This chapter acts as a literature review by providing a rationale of contemporary fine arts pedagogy and setting the *Sonic Camouflage* project in its fine art pedagogical context. I explore what it means for students to take risks, to change and 'turn' within the challenging expectations of the enigmatic art school environment, and how the *Sonic Camouflage* project-based learning helps re-affirm art school expectations for participants. Section 2.5, focussing on Artist in Residence schemes, will act as a contextual precursor to Section 2.6 on my tri-role as artist, educator, and researcher during *Sonic Camouflage* project. This important section helps understand specific historical and contemporary approaches to fine art pedagogies and the subsequent invention and relevance of the tri-role.

2.1 Contexts of fine art learning

> Learning is typically understood as naming the process of acquiring knowledge, wisdom or capabilities. Learning is both a process and the result of that process; a means, as well as an end; an individual practice as well as a collective endeavour. Learning is a multifaceted reality defined by context. (International Commission on the Futures of Education, 2020, p. 3)

In 1966, John Latham and Barbara Steveni formed the Artist Placement Group with the radical intention to bring art into dialogue with the world (Biesta, 2017), to release it from the confines of gallery and museum by making it public. With this in mind, the central tenet of the group was that 'the context is half the work' (Eley, 2007).

The Artist Placement Group questioned truth and how we understand the world and its durations of time through certain knowledge structures. Since 1970, contemporary art has certainly left the confines of the white cube gallery and museum by reacting to and being located in a myriad of contexts. There has been a lineage of highly regarded innovative art schools from the Bauhaus and Black Mountain College, to Kunstakademie Düsseldorf and the Cardiff School of Art and Design, yet there is little research of fine art pedagogies being delivered outside the confines of higher education institutions' campuses. Perhaps as academics are focussed on students' learning outcomes and grades, they continue using

tried and tested methods in the safe context of the campus to achieve the desired results, avoiding the many pedagogic and logistical risks involved in learning off-campus.

Dual contexts

The contexts that define the *Sonic Camouflage* project research are two places. First, on the campus of AUB, an art and design specialist higher education institution in England, within the framework of its BA (Hons) Fine Art undergraduate degree. Second, off-campus, in what can be termed a large-scale expanded campus environment on the Greek island of Evia in an artist residency space in Zarakes village. Surrounding these two main contexts are the ongoing messy realities of working with people through collaborative engagement and many other logistical complexities that must be carefully managed. There is the funding for the project, the bi-weekly room required for workshops, the audiovisual documentation equipment, the hundreds of emails and WhatsApp threads, and crucially the people and the interplay between them through small scale one-to-one conversations to larger scales with whole group interactions – and of course the time required by all involved.

Messy realities

People can be considered the messiest and simultaneously most challenging and intriguing messy reality as they bring their 'habitus' to the table: the way a person builds their own character and agency through their developmental experiences, especially the agency of their cultural and social attributes (Bourdieu, 1977). Bourdieu used this term when investigating societal issues and advocated for a 'reflexive sociology', which is particularly important regarding myself in my tri-role as artist, educator, and researcher, requiring me to pay continual attention to my own positions. This coming together of individuals and their diverse complexities to learn together and to be in-the-making must become richly entangled and messy to enable meaningful pedagogical dialogues to occur. Accepting this entangled complexity through a socially constructive pedagogy is a major strength of successful fine art education and especially the *Sonic Camouflage* project.

Manifesto

The undergraduate fine art degree at Arts University Bournemouth has a type of manifesto that is created by the staff team who work on the course. The purpose of this is to inform the students of the course aims and objectives: what the course will do for them if they engage fully with it. This manifesto says that the course seeks "to develop informed and confident individuals with strong practical and theoretical skills and an awareness of the relationship between the artist and their audience", and that "there are opportunities, within each year, for collaborative practice and for exhibition at a local, national and international level" (Arts University Bournemouth, 2022, p. 3). This shows that my interest in collaborative and expanded sites for learning is shared by other team members.

In contrast to this, the higher education system overall encourages the cult of the individual person, as art education is measured by an individual's outcomes through the final artwork(s) or essay submitted by a student. Expanding from a historical lineage, the current line of thought in higher education is that the artistic voice must be channelled into an object or 'outcome' to be assessed and authenticated as a student's 'own work'.

Measurable individual learning outcomes are useful in many regards. They are pragmatically in the interests of both staff and students seeking a relatively smooth system of fairness and transparency and the fine art education system. They reflect the art world's value system of liberal individualism, the celebrity artist, and the individual creative lauded in the solo exhibition. However, to counter this small-scale individualism – as the staff team know that communities and networks of connected practice create a sense of belonging and that these go a long way to helping graduates sustain a creative network after graduation for employability reasons – the course team decided to introduce specific larger scale collaborative opportunities into the course manifesto. This was also due to tutors' enthusiasm for short, punctuated curriculum periods for externally connected and often collaborative student projects as they understand their powerful learning potential. This has resulted in several optional project opportunities we have called Global Networks.

The Global Networks project that *Sonic Camouflage* is part of have arisen for two reasons: first, in response to the focus of individual and campus learning, and second, because some students struggle to find their specific area of study to connect deeply into. This is known as

their 'subject matter' in the contemporary art field. Therefore, the pedagogic design of shorter periods of sustained intensity to propagate students and tutors' imagination helps find new areas of subject matter, offering a stretching and challenging activity for students if they decide to partake. The staff team also understand the benefit of learning that comes into 'dialogue with the world' to open up new cultural contexts and perspectives, and thus to encourage respect for others. Participants also raise their level of engagement when they know they will be on show in a large-scale public world away from the small-scale safety of the campus bubble.

2.2 Art school experience and 'turning' students

The fine art pedagogical conference held at Glasgow School of Art called *On not knowing: how artists teach* (2023) and *Expanding the field: rethinking methodologies in British art research* (2023) at the Paul Mellon Centre London, explored how important questioning fine art pedagogic value systems are to help educators discover new art school learning experiences through inventive speculative methodologies.

Pasmore and Hamilton were among the first in the UK to question fine art pedagogic values when they created a radical curriculum that was influenced heavily by the seminal Bauhaus school of thought (Crippa and Williamson, 2013). This new curriculum revolved around the use of group workshops, with a tutor introducing an activity – perhaps by doing it as the students watched – with the students then creating their own interpretation of what they had seen. The aim was to help participating students reflect on their workshop outcomes to help inspire ideas and skills for their individual art practice. This became known as the 'Basic Design' approach and was delivered between 1954 and 1961 on the art and design foundation course at King's College, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Daichendt (2010, p. 138) writes that "Pasmore sought a classroom atmosphere that embraced the intuitive and emotional aspects of creating art. The perceptual reflection was significant".

Pasmore tested out new material ideas for his own art practice on his students in workshops. With the students creating new artwork whilst he encouraged them, students could see and learn what each other were doing in an open plan studio area. This provided the students with

opportunities to learn new skills and ideas and to share these with the group in a constructivist social learning environment. This connects to the seminal educational thinker John Dewey's (2005) view that learning experiences are inchoate: that the student becomes more aware of their learning experience, more knowing of it, through understanding their contribution to a situation or event (Jarvis, 2006).

Sonic Camouflage's incremental workshop design utilised my understanding of inchoateness as the bi-weekly workshops started with critical conversational reflections on previous workshops learning. Dewey (2005, p. 237) also spoke of sound and the body saying, "sounds come from outside the body, but sound itself is near, intimate; it is an excitation of the organism, we feel the clash of vibrations throughout our whole body". The *Sonic Camouflage* workshop experiences are compellingly guided by the multiple collaborative sensing interactions between participants, through vision and bodily movements and the touching of sound making objects and sensing the sound created "through the ears vibrating at the 'touch' of sound waves" (Cooke, Colucci-Gray and Burnard, 2023, p. 27).

Double loop

My understanding of fine art students is that they want to have an experimental art school experience, a 'double loop' learning experience (Argyris and Schön, 1978), to be somehow changed by being part of an art school community that steps away from 'normal' societal rules, whatever these may be. This being changed by collaborative 'worlding' (Barad, 2007) dialogues is made possible by the evolution of critical reflection within the art school: "one could say that – at least since the French Revolution – the [art] school is defined as the place…to learn and accept societal norms or to work around them. With the implementation of the normal, the misfit is born" (Franz, 2024, p. 1).

At the AUB graduation ceremony in 2023, Sir Christopher Frayling, the university's chancellor, spoke about the mystery of what an art school experience actually means. He concluded that it is this very mystery that makes it special and somewhat risky, exciting, and consequently inviting. Cornford and Beck said that "the idea of 'art school' continues to stimulate the British cultural imaginary in ways that a college of further education or university department rarely manages to achieve" (Beck and Cornford, 2012, p. 60).

Co-creating through the *Sonic Camouflage* project in an art school environment brings the student and tutor together into a new 'zone of proximal development' (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978) to challenge participants to reach beyond their existing skills by being changed by things that they do not yet understand but will begin to, as they desire to pursue a new praxis through their 'turning', a concept explained below. Therefore, *Sonic Camouflage* helps challenge and transform the participants' values surrounding their art practice through both practical skills and scholarly activity by testing these new areas in a practical sense through their sonic interactions, learning things that would previously been unimaginable to them. Irit Rogoff's useful anecdote explains the changes we encounter during learning as a series of 'turns':

> Quite a long time ago, when I had just finished my PhD and was embarking on a post-doc and a radical change of path towards critical theory, I ran into my very first art history professor on the street… Having asked me what I was up to, he listened patiently as I prattled away, full of all the new ideas and possibilities which had just opened up to me…At the end of my excited recitative, he looked at me and said, 'I do not agree with what you are doing, and I certainly don't agree with how you are going about it, but I am very proud of you for doing this'…this man, who had been a genuinely great teacher of things I could no longer be excited by, saw learning as a series of turns. In a turn, we turn *away* from something or *towards* or *around* something and it is *we* who are in movement, rather than *it*. Something in us is activated, perhaps even actualised, as we turn. (Rogoff, 2010, pp. 41–42, original emphasis)

Being proud of a student for pursuing new processes that you don't understand certainly rings true with my experience of fine art pedagogy; it is inevitable if you encourage students to learn through new experiments and processes. Accepting ambiguity as a state of mind and to always feel slightly confused by 'not knowing' (Fisher and Fortnum, 2013) affirms that new learning is taking place within the ZPD by building on existing skills and knowledge. Successful contemporary fine art education therefore aims to progress student's skills and knowledge through constructivist and ZPD turning methods and to activate them by exploring new modes of making and thinking where unexpected things will happen.

While there is an element of control to the new experiments, the outcome is fluid and undetermined: you are doing it to find out what happens. This could imply a mistake has happened, yet a 'mistake' in art is not a mistake as we commonly know it in the context of contemporary art pedagogies. A mistake is something new and surprising happening through losing complete control. We then learn from this, so the mistake becomes a positive thing. "As Barthelme suggests, 'not knowing' is crucial to the creative process, but also, we suggest, vital to pedagogy in the arts and the way artists teach" (Glasgow School of Art, 2022).

I have learned that it is important to integrate turning methods into a carefully scaffolded curriculum to facilitate students' art school experience because, "as W. B. Yeats has put it, education is not about filling a bucket but about lighting a fire…students are not to be seen as objects to be molded and disciplined, but as subjects of action and responsibility" (Biesta, 2015, p. 1). For students to learn how to take responsibility for their learning, they need to acquire a suite of skills and knowledges which they can then select from to put into experimental action. Importantly, this is as much about choosing what to eliminate as it is what to use.

Clare Bishop, the influential art writer, and critic, deplores the introduction of tuition fees in art schools across Europe and its associated impact on higher education, especially in the UK, where fees are much higher than in the rest of Europe. Bishop writes about the ethos of education being changed from one of freedom and discovery to one of financial investment and a large debt: "with students perceived as consumers, experimental teaching has been phased out and teachers have become accountable providers of knowledge" (Bishop, 2007, p. 88). *Sonic Camouflage* counteracts this by embracing a sensation of freedom and discovery through collaborative improvisation while the tutor remains an 'accountable provider of knowledge' through their facilitation of the PBL method.

2.3 Risk taking

Within the fine art curriculum, there is an emphasis on students to taking risks with their art practice in order for them to 'turn'. In fact, the words 'risk taking' are often embedded in assessment criteria. This has become an overused term in fine art pedagogy, especially as it is

a term that is challenging to explain clearly to students. In my teaching, I find it useful to break down what we mean by words in our specific learning context. For example, when we used this phrase in a learning outcome around documenting their work in an experimental exhibition, we found that before we broke down in detail what we meant by the word 'experimental', students would place their work in a tree or in a supermarket trolley. While this was inventive, what we actually meant was for them to be experimental with the positioning of the work within a white cube gallery space: to re-arrange the positioning to create experimental dialogues between the works.

At a *Paradox* fine art educational conference I attended, Martin Newth (2017), then course director of BA (Hons) Fine Art at Chelsea College of Arts, now Assistant Dean of Education at the Royal College of Art, delivered a paper on the subject of risk taking. In summary, he discussed what it means for a student to academically risk-take in art practice modules. He suggested that if risk taking is embedded within assessment criteria, then the real risk is to not undertake the prescribed academicized risk. The word risk is given prominence due to tutors wanting students to push their practice into a more dynamic and somehow edgy form of contemporary making that eschews 'boring' traditional values. So perhaps using the word 'new' instead of risk is more suitable and easier to understand, as something new already carries its own inherent challenges and risks.

Regarding the educator and risk taking, Deleuze said that teaching requires "'getting something into one's head' just enough—to a teetering degree of comprehension—to be able to convey it with the inspiration of live realization in front of a class. The preparation, then, amounts to a kind of rehearsal for a performance, at best a form of planned improvisation. If the speaker doesn't find what he's saying of interest, no one else will, and so there must be an element of mutual education in which he (the teacher) is stimulated by learning something at the same time as conveying it" (Bailey, 2009, p. 4).

Co-creating during *Sonic Camouflage* runs a risky pedagogical gauntlet, in that it was so engaging for participants that everyone had to continually adjust and reflect on their shifting 'flux of perception-cognition-intuition' (Gibson, cited in Candy, 2006, p. 9). Peltzman (1975) referred to this adjusting of personal behaviour as risk compensation, and Wilde (1982) termed the amount of this adjustment the 'target level of risk'. As the facilitator of the *Sonic*

Camouflage project, I remained mindful of how much to push the adjustment level as co-creator; to judge the right amount of newness to alleviate high levels of participant anxiety.

Sonic Camouflage's target level of risk is not fixed and there is no guarantee of pedagogic value, so a lot of valuable time and effort could be squandered. Alongside this, there is scant research around PBL in fine art, so its pedagogic value has not been shared to learn from. Orr and Shreeve (2017, p. 107) state that "in some fine art courses there are no set projects or assignments as such, and the focus is on the development of the students' individual work and practice, whilst in other fine art courses, projects are deployed to support learning".

The AUB fine art curriculum design has an overall focus on independent studio-based learning while offering optional PBL and co-creation workshops. Power-knowledge relations flow through a curriculum designed and facilitated by its tutors, a further level of power-knowledge is cascaded down to these tutors from the rules and quality compliance protocols of the education institution, and this is essentially further controlled by the governmental Office for Students. Foucault (1981) uses the term power-knowledge to explain how we operate within and are unavoidably swimming through a society of entangled systems of power and knowledge. The hierarchical relationships of power and knowledge between students and tutor are flattened and subverted somewhat but not entirely within the *Sonic Camouflage* project.

2.4 Project-based learning

Given the learner-centred focus of PBL, it has always been uniquely positioned to advance educational equity (Tierney *et al.*, 2022) and is not new to educational disciplines. As Gyori (2012, pp. 174–175) explains, PBL has "been analyzed from a number of perspectives and [is] commonly linked to variety of educational milieus". Gyori goes on to explain that many tutors continue to be afraid of the risks posed by PBL as there is a shift of hierarchy, a lowering of the power dynamic between student and educator and thus a loss of overall control as the approach becomes more student centred, as with *Sonic Camouflage.*

Claire Bishop (2010, p. 12) debates the idea of losing control when co-creating and considers risk positively when she said "the gesture of ceding some or all authorial control is conventionally regarded as more egalitarian and democratic than the creation of a work by a single artist, while shared production is also seen to entail the aesthetic benefits of greater risk and unpredictability. Collaborative creativity is therefore understood both to emerge from, and to produce, a more positive and non-hierarchical social model".

PBL also involves new high-level preparatory effort and logistical organisation from the tutor, as they have to devise and pitch a clear rationale to potential participants. I have learned that this should integrate a captivating critical framework, via a cultural instigator, with potential aims and outputs, along with an explanation of how progress of the project and participants will be evaluated. If the tutor chooses not to do this, then the PBL is in danger of quickly losing participants' engagement.

I also discovered that during the *Sonic Camouflage* workshops, it was crucial to have small staging posts at the beginning and end of workshop sessions to help me check on participants' and my progress. These staging posts also helped participants motivate each other to feel progressively engaged with their learning, therefore building a sense of belonging to the collective. The lack of enthusiasm toward PBL by many fine art tutors is despite research showing that the skills acquired through successful PBL are what many creative industry employers desire (Trilling and Fadel, 2009).

There is scant research on PBL in fine art at undergraduate level, and very little at art college and lower school levels. A thorough online search through undergraduate fine art course structures does not reveal the promotion of any PBL. There is of course plenty of PBL in the educational design of other subjects, as these courses partly mirror their respective industries demands for project or problem-based employment. In the world of fine art, however, the tables are turned, with the artist making the thing, the project, to entice others into exhibiting their artwork or buying it. There are limited opportunities for fine art project commissions where a list of expectations and limitations are set.

Gyori's (2012) three-mode breakdown of learning centred mentorship was applied to the collaborative PBL approach of *Sonic Camouflage*. Gyori says that during learning-centred

mentorship, autonomy is shared and authority flows in multiple directions at once: bottom-up mentoring involves modelling, lateral mentoring involves collaborating, and top-down mentoring involves organising and supervising.

This three-mode breakdown reflects PBLWorks' (2015) essential project design elements checklist for PBL. The elements build incrementally, but also work in a cyclical nature to lead to the new knowledge. They are: key knowledge, understanding, and success skills; challenging problem or question; sustained inquiry; authenticity; student voice and choice; reflection; critique and revision; and public product. This was used as a checklist for *Sonic Camouflage*.

2.5 Artist in Residence

Artist in Residence (AiR) schemes no longer operate on most undergraduate courses, so the *Sonic Camouflage* concept was partly born out of my desire to re-introduce a new form of AiR. I hoped this would also re-energise tutors' art, education, and research practice, and synchronise this with student learning. The idea of being both an artist and educator, discussed further in the next section, used to be implemented on many BA Fine Art courses in the UK through the course having an Artist in Residence. This artist did some teaching, and students also learned from watching them.

I was fortunate to experience valuable learning interactions with the contemporary artist Cornelia Parker who was the AiR on my BA (Hons) Fine Art course at Cardiff School of Art. AiRs were early career contemporary artists of repute who saw value in being contracted into a Higher Education Institution (HEI) on a full-time salary for one academic year. Clearly the AiR was interested in pedagogy and, although never explicitly stated, they also learned from the students through collaborative 'worlding' (Barad, 2007) dialogues, which benefitted their art practice.

The AiR took their individual art practice into the large-scale shared HEI art school context. The AiR would have a working studio space within proximity of the students' art studios.

Therefore, students could watch what they were doing in their studio and have conversations with them on designated days.

Some of the most valuable pedagogies with the AiR occurred when you would fortuitously meet in an informal unplanned situation: in a corridor, in the canteen, or travelling together to an exhibition, as I once did. *Sonic Camouflage* values and expects to use these informal learning dialogues as a crucial pedagogy, as all the time spent on the Evia residency merged into one 'worlding' pedagogy with continual critical dialogues about the project taking place outside the planned workshop session times – during mealtimes, walks and socialising – so in effect there was no downtime.

My search into the field of literature about a fine art tutor co-creating with fine art students at undergraduate level showed me there is scant information. It also showed me that AiR schemes have stopped at undergraduate level in the UK. There is, however, a small amount of research into AiR schemes within the context of UK secondary-level schools, as some AiR schemes do operate in private fee-paying schools.

A thorough online search shows that many fee-paying schools use the AiR as a pedagogic marketing tool to promote the school to prospective students and their parents. For example, The Times newspaper reported that "since the financial crash, battle lines have been redrawn and are about people. The must-have thing for independent schools has become hiring an artist-in-residence. They paint, draw, sculpt, cast, or sew themselves into the fabric of school life with their hands-on demonstrations, workshops, seminars and exhibitions, oozing energy and creativity as role models for budding artists. Pupils, and more importantly parents, seem to love them" (Hurst, 2017).

In a remarkable act of altruism, the North London teacher Andria Zafirakou who won a million dollars in a global teaching prize decided to fund a scheme called Artists in Residence at her non-fee-paying state school (Brown, 2018). Zafirakou said she wanted to bring about a classroom revolution: "This is our time, this is the time for the arts, we are going to make a change and do something quite incredible … I knew what I had to do, I had to start a mission, a crusade, to help fix a mess, to raise the profile of arts in our schools".

The campaign stems from the difficulties many schools face in getting artists of any sort into schools to work with and inspire children. Zafirakou's charity will essentially be a broker between schools and artists: "I get schools, I know the problems they have, and I know the language of schools…I know that many artists cannot get into schools because of logistical problems" (Brown, 2018). The project has now rolled out to schools around the UK.

I discovered that pupils aged 11-16 in the United States and Canada – within selected schools and universities, mainly institutions that are strong in the arts but have had forms of financial austerity – are engaged with a Learning Through The Arts (LTTA) programme. Therefore, the term 'teaching artist' is in common usage in North America. This term refers to teachers who "have rich artistic backgrounds and continue to be active as artists in spite of the challenges of time, energy, and stereotypes that insist a real artist would not teach" (Graham and Goetz Zwirn, 2010, p. 219). There has been useful research into the LTTA programme to draw upon about the relationship between schoolteachers, incoming artists, and students which shows that the artist's skills of creative problem-solving and divergent thinking offers opportunities for enquiry projects.

Sonic Camouflage helped me re-affirm my role as a new type of AiR, as an artist educator immersed for a sustained period in pedagogic artistic engagement as a form of 'committed involvement' (Freire, 2005). This committed involvement meant that I was continually challenged to improve through reflective actions, both in pedagogies and my artistic understandings.

2.6 Artist, educator, researcher

The ambition of being a full-time artist is why most art students initially pursue a fine art education. For the majority, becoming a full-time artist takes many years after graduation to achieve, with graduates often pursuing a portfolio of jobs to sustain an art practice. Therefore, a job role within fine art education is especially attractive as you remain tightly connected to the subject area and imagine you will be able to pursue your art practice meaningfully. However, the multifaceted responsibilities attached to an institutional role means specific time allocated in higher education for research, scholarly activity, and art practice can easily be eroded by other demands.

35

Hickman (2010, p. 53) said that "frustration overcomes those that feel art teaching is far removed from the exciting aspects of creating objects of significance". This is epitomised by Daichendt (2010, p. 146) when he talks about challenging the tutor's frustration as "this should not be the case if art education stresses the importance of being an artist, thinking like an artist, producing artistic products, and carrying these activates over into the teaching field. One must be an artist first. The teaching methodologies are secondary".

I agree with Daichendt that art tutors should be able to 'think like an artist' to be able to teach how to be an artist, but I don't agree that the teaching methodologies are secondary, as the *Sonic Camouflage* model shows how to synchronise pedagogic methodologies alongside the behaviours of being an artist. It is important to remember that the behaviours of being an artist mean something quite different to each artist, as they do to art students.

Macel (2017) writes that "being an artist means differentiating between the private individual and the public individual, not as a person of media, but as someone who is confronted with the res publica…the modes of production of his or her disposal include an alternative within which the need for inactivity or rather non-productive action, for mind wandering and research, remain paramount". This raises interesting questions about the type of behaviour required for an artist educator.

'Non-productive action' goes against the grain of current critiques of higher education that raise issues identified by Heidegger, who questioned the way in which we "increasingly instrumentalize, professionalize, vocationalize, corporatize, and ultimately technologize education" (Thomson, 2001, p. 244, original emphasis). *Sonic Camouflage* constructively manages periods of time spent at the workplace art school into meaningful pedagogic 'modes of production' for both artist, educator, researcher, and student.

The contemporary artist and educator Liam Gillick talks about being an art student at art school at a time when:

> There was clearly still the legacy of trying to retain the feeling that teaching was a student-centred enterprise…What's happened over time is, as one gets further and further away from the political dynamic that changed those

hierarchies, and changed those power structures, that the staff themselves have become less proactive and offer less. So you have a student-centred and student-orientated system that still exists, yet the structuring of the way it operates doesn't put enough obligation – and I'm not talking in terms of administration – put enough obligation on the people teaching, or being involved on that side of it. (Gillick and Reardon, 2009, p. 176)

Gillick goes on to explain how in his teaching, he would ask educators to present their artwork alongside students in group critiques to help lower the power structure and improve learning. Gillick talks about not always imparting the knowledge that the educator holds, but about the educator also learning from the student as a co-participant. It is difficult to unpack Gillick's 'obligation'; one would, of course, hope that the tutor does have the best pedagogic intentions, yet institutional fatigue can easily set in without the educator realising.

Sonic Camouflage connects into what Paulo Freire said in the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* that "Education must begin with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers *and* students" (Freire, 2005, p. 72, original emphasis). He goes on to say that "dialogue imposes itself as the way by which they achieve significance as human beings. Dialogue is thus an existential necessity" (Freire, 2005, p. 88).

Pedagogic guidance

Certain influential educators have simultaneously been influential artists, so it is important to trace a short trajectory of some seminal artist educators that I influenced my reflections and therefore *Sonic Camouflage*.

Beuys famously said that "to be a teacher is my greatest work of art" (Sharp, 1969, p. 44). In ancient Greece, where the role of the teacher first originated, it was also considered an art form. Beuys' credibility as a figurehead of contemporary art remains high, as he is still revered by some students and has been of significant influence on many high-profile contemporary artists. Beuys' statement indicates he considered the boundaries of pedagogy and his art practice to be blurred, with him viewing the processes and actions of pedagogy as part of his contemporary art practice.

Beuys' artwork is wrapped up in mythologies of him being shot down as a German fighter pilot and being saved in an icy wilderness by local tribes who literally smothered him in animal fat and wrapped him in rolls of thick felt, materials that he went on to use in his artwork. His teaching was simultaneously serious and playfully absurd. He said his teaching became his art, and that his art embodied his pedagogy. Beuys was working in a post-war Germany that was still going through a process of denazification, with a lot of the societal systems going through vast change. His teaching often encouraged his students to question the hierarchies of power and overburdening bureaucracy within institutions.

In the essay *Class action* (2006), Jan Verwoert, whose own parents were taught by Beuys, explains the success of Beuys' legacy and teaching persona by saying that: "Walter Benjamin observed that aura is produced through the simultaneous suggestion of distance and proximity. This is the trick Beuys pulls off here. By at once casting himself as the boss and the fellow sufferer, the hero and the martyr, the invisible figure at the centre of attention, he generates an aura around his authority" (Verwoert, 2006).

While we can admire Beuys for his radical critical pedagogies and for the exciting artists who emerged from his tutelage, such as Blinky Palermo and Gerhard Richter, and of course for his legacy that has influenced contemporary artists such Tania Bruguera and Thomas Hirschhorn, we are not working in war-torn Düsseldorf or Berlin. I am working in comfortable Bournemouth, a seaside town well known for its tourism, leisure, political party conferences, and large retiree population. It is less known for its twenty thousand undergraduates at Bournemouth University and four thousand students at Arts University Bournemouth, where I currently work.

Beuys' radical teaching was made possible as his habitus grew out of the iconic German art school, The Bauhaus, which existed between 1919 and 1933. When the Nazi party gained a foothold in German politics in 1933, many of the tutors from The Bauhaus went to work at Black Mountain College (founded 1933) in North Carolina, USA. The exodus of Bauhaus tutors helped to establish the radical pedagogic reputation at Black Mountain College. Black Mountain College, like AUB, is located in the middle of a quiet middle-class housing estate, well away from the dynamism of large cities that have many other cultural offerings.

Yet radical pedagogies actually do often take place in provincial locations. Across the UK, I can think of several smaller regional places that have had radical pedagogic acclaim over the past few decades, such as Cardiff, Dartington, Ipswich, Hull, and Leeds. Like anywhere, it is the people and their attitudes that generate the pedagogic ethos; when I reflect on my degree experience, I remember when art students used to joke about our course leader, who was held in high esteem, who we said dressed like a hybrid of Joseph Beuys and Indiana Jones.

Tania Bruguera, who was highly influenced by Beuys, established an independent art school in her native Havana, Cuba. She called this school Cátedra Arte de Conducta (Behavior Art School), and most of the pedagogies used were radical collaborative actions. This school, like Beuys' ethos, was highly political and designed to last for five years to stop it becoming stale and overly administered.

Subsequently, Bruguera has continued the Behaviour Art project by staging events, lectures, and exhibitions across the globe. Notably, Bruguera's lauded work *Tatlin's Whisper No.5* (2016) has helped her secure perhaps the highest profile art commission on the planet, the Hyundai sponsored Tate Modern London Turbine Hall Commission, which opened in October 2018. It was called 10,148,451; this numerical title continually changes as the number of officially displaced people on the planet grows. The gigantic floor of the Tate turbine hall was painted in heat sensitive ink, inviting many small-scale individual viewers to lie on it in a collaborative action, to reveal to viewers, not the participant, a large-scale portrait of a young man from Syria who is now in London training to be a doctor.

Successful systems

There are other relevant examples to draw upon of both historical and contemporary methods employed by artists in the teaching of other artists, in the form of apprenticeships and ateliers. These worked in a hierarchical manner, with the student artist copying the processes and skills that the master artist demonstrated in their art studio, with students often making entire artworks that the artist directed and claimed as their own and not a collaboration. We will see, from Chapter 4, onwards how a mirroring process was enacted by all participants during *Sonic Camouflage.* Well known historical examples of this are the French atelier system and the German master class system. The French system was used from the 15th century right

through to the 19th century and was replaced by the institutional academies set up by the guilds.

The German master class system has existed for over 200 years and is still being used in most German fine art higher education institutions. In defiance of the homogenising European HEI agenda of the 'Bologna Process', the German HEI's do not partake in this process. Due to the higher representation of German artists on the world contemporary art scene, they successfully argued that their system must be considered outstanding and therefore should not be changed.

Interestingly, according to Dillemuth, "The model of the academy current in Germany today is still based on Romantic ideas from 1820. In the 'master class' the professor has a monopoly on the training of 'his' students: for the entire duration of their studies they engage only with this professor and the other students in the same class. The reason this system has remained stable for almost two centuries is that it repeats the patriarchal structure of the family unit, which is convenient for both sides: identification with the artist-father, imitation of his work" (Enwezor, Dillemuth and Rogoff, 2006). Dillemuth goes on to say that the German masters 'pursue a strategy of obstruction within academic politics and deeply resent anything that grates with their vain self-image as artists – things like feminism, theory or 'trendy Anglo-Saxon' innovations such as Cultural Studies. Team spirit among colleagues, group work, flat hierarchies, free exchange and transparency are alien concepts at this academy; the courage to experiment and make changes is nowhere to be found."

This top-down account of the German master class system is contrasted by most contemporary fine art education in the UK which has a more student-centred bottom-up approach. Goldsmiths, University of London is especially held in high esteem in the UK for fine art pedagogies as it has an extensive list of successful modern and contemporary artist alumni, such as Lucien Freud, Bridget Riley, Anthony Gormley, Steve McQueen, Sam Taylor-Johnson, Damien Hirst, and Sarah Lucas. The artist educators at Goldsmiths also hold significant academic esteem, having helped bring about their students' commercial and academic success.

For example, American artist educator Michael Craig-Martin is lauded for his pivotal teaching of the highly successful Young British Artists group, known as YBAs, who came to prominence in the mid-1990s. This statement from Baldessari, Craig-Martin's colleague, shows how fortuitous pedagogy can be: "We just hung out in a bar, and that worked. You know, it's like all the planets surrounding you have to line up in the right way: the right students, the right time, the right faculty, the right city. Everything just aligns for a few moments" (Baldessari and Craig-Martin, 2009, pp. 46–47). I consider that the educator can help things align by designing key pedagogies.

Art practice and artwork

In the pedagogical book *Teaching Art – Kunst Lehren,* Baldessari is interviewed by students of the acclaimed Städelschule contemporary art school in Germany, Baldessari paradoxically says, "I don't think art can be taught, I really don't" (Eddy *et al.*, 2007, p. 122). He goes on to say, "I do think that one of the advantages of an art school is that the student gets to meet artists, other artists that are practicing". This shows me that the large-scale art school context produces conversational 'worlding' (Barad, 2007) dialogues provoked by visual observations and interpretation. Martinez-Zarate (2023, p.8) affirms that ongoing conversational dialogues between peers and educators are crucial for supportive learning and "that teaching is a journey of discovery that entails aesthetic and ethical commitments".

London-based art critic and educational theorist Dave Beech acknowledges what Baldessari says in his article *Teaching the unteachable* (2014) by asking what art schools should teach. He says that art was once synonymous with skill, but artists' now define their craft differently. This means that the idea of art being "unteachable" is true in a new way: the skills required by each artist are now unique to them, and thus it is not possible for them to be taught through a standardised curriculum.

This shows how challenging it is for educators to design a fine art curriculum. The artist as educator can draw upon their scholarly research to help make decisions about curriculum, being a successful educator means to be continually reflective, to simultaneously operate in the tri-role of artist, educator, researcher in order to gather artistic pedagogic information to react to. This tri-role reflexiveness is necessary for me to undertake meaningful artistic

contributions, participant interactions and pedagogic reflections during the entangled ad-hoc happenings *Sonic Camouflage*.

In his book *Eccentric pedagogy*, Martinez-Zarate (2023, p. 18) argues that "the eccentric pedagogue challenges her/his/their own ideas constantly. The eccentric pedagogue is not afraid of revealing her/his/their own fragility. The eccentric pedagogue is driven by radical tenderness and an unrestricted love for life". He also affirms that "pedagogy is an artistic practice" (Martinez-Zarate, 2023, p. 97) and the tri-role helps to connect or condense different roles into one pedagogic project.

This chapter provided important contextual information surrounding the enigma of art school pedagogic experiences and how impactful an AiR can be to enhancing learning and the art school environment. The positive impact of the AiR led into discussions about the identity of the artist educator and how the *Sonic Camouflage* project gives permission for the educator to become a new form of AiR for a period, whilst simultaneously collecting data on participants and their learning experience through written reflection and audiovisual documentation. There is also scant literature investigating project and practice based collaborative student and educator learning on an undergraduate UK fine art degree, therefore this research contributes to this area. Chapter 3 will examine how the tri-role artist-educator-researcher mindset influences the methodologies for the research, and how I honed my collaborative workshop pedagogy.

Chapter 3: Planning the *Sonic Camouflage* project

Building from the contextual information in Chapter 2, this chapter reveals how the artist-educator-researcher mindset influences the methodologies selected for *Sonic Camouflage* by exploring auto-ethnography and my positionality or 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1977). The next section swiftly unravels how negotiating the tri-role of artist, educator, researcher allowed me to hone my collaborative pedagogic design. This leads into an analysis of the project's title and provocation, *Sonic Camouflage,* and then a crucial culminating section that critiques why and how I invented a nuanced mode of audiovisual documentation for the live sonic art practice.

3.1 Auto-ethnographic methodology

We all write and speak from a particular place and time, from a history and a culture which is specific. What we say is always 'in context', *positioned*. (Hall, 1990, p. 222, original emphasis)

My context has been positioned from my habitus: having over twenty years of diverse art and design teaching experience, from Level 2 to level 7 and learning from the innumerable encounters with students and staff at different institutions learning on different courses of study. During this time, I have studied the work of other educators and scholars and undertaken regular external examination work to help me learn from different institutional approaches to curriculum delivery. Alongside these formal educational environments, I have, of course, been influenced and changed by the accumulation of learning that contributes to a person's life.

Weaver and Snaza (2017, p. 1056) identify 'methodocentrism' as "the belief that the method one chooses to guide research determines its truth, its legitimacy, its validity, and its trustworthiness" and that these methods somehow guarantee the validity of a critical investigation "by factoring out the vicissitudes of the observer's entanglement with the world".

In opposition to this view, I have discovered that it is this very entanglement with the world, this dynamically rich and complex mixing with others, that is one of the vital ingredients contained within the *Sonic Camouflage* research. It is, in fact, the incidental societal nuances, the everyday environmental sonic accidents, that often helped to propel the project forward. For example, when we were performing in Evia at a busy Zarakes village market, the loud voices of the public and traffic were considered by one participant to be a potential issue or distraction, but conversely another participant said that they embraced these sounds and considered them to be environmentally improvised sounds to help inform and direct their contribution to the workshop.

Consequently, this research uses auto-ethnography (AE) as a qualitative methodology as the researcher is purposely located within, and actively responding to, the research environment and its networks in their tri-role as artist, educator, researcher. AE allows me to consider the behaviours and actions of the group while symbiotically reflecting on my role as artist and educator and feeding this back into the group. I was purposefully part of generating, influencing, and recording new knowledge created during *Sonic Camouflage*: "it is about being personally accountable for one's situatedness in systems of power and privilege" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018, p. 1086).

My AE acknowledges Schön's (2016) model of reflective practice, as I reflect and instantaneously modify my verbal and sonic actions during the live unfolding processes of improvisational workshops. For example, a modification could be stopping or starting my sonic contribution, changing the pace or volume of my contribution, or moving myself physically to another position, with an understanding that these modifications are in response to others' actions, modifications, and so forth. I recorded key reflections on group post-workshop analysis in a written diary and as voice notes. I would reflect on these and accordingly modify my behaviour for the next workshop. On return from Evia, I was able to further reflect on these.

AE also encourages me to reflect on the complexities and entanglements of being live in the field of research action, such as, large disjointed, contradictory, and multifaceted frameworks like the university and the contemporary art world. Smaller nuances and subtleties included my behaviour and my perceptions of the students' behaviour towards myself and between

each other, along with many other unpredictable influences and unexpected nuances that occur daily. As Tyler (1986, p. 131) wrote, "ethnography is fragmentary because it cannot be otherwise. Life in the field is itself fragmentary, not at all organised". I learned that no matter how well-organised you are, the best laid plans unravel, and that you must react in the live moment of each multifaceted context and the people that the project interacts with.

AE also uses the researcher's corporeal body as form, operating within the disjointed socio-political context the researcher operates within. Tami Spry (2016, p. 37) would say that she imagined Paulo Freire whispering in her ear when she sat writing autoethnographic reflections in her comfortably sunny office, to remind her that "I can always and only speak from this oft-privileged body, that I can only speak from myself". Spry also uses the improvisational trumpeter and composer Wynton Marsalis's definition of communication with others as 'the strange dialogue' and talks about interaction with others as being performative, sceptical, and multiple.

I used auto-ethnography as a form of narrative construction (Barone, 2001, p. 25) to reflect on my 'being there' (Geertz, 1988) in my role as artist, educator, and researcher. "Ethnographic writing is a mix of narrative and analysis and the stance is both participatory and detached at the same time…the writing moves between states of immersion and detachment, between thick descriptions and narration of events, and the careful analysis of social structures and triangulation of evidence" (Berry, 2018, p. 105).

Rachel Cusk is a writer who uses a thick narrative and auto-fiction literary method in her *Outline trilogy* novels set in Athens, Greece. This means that Cusk uses highly personal, vivid reflections of the often-overlooked curiosities in people's behaviour and geographic locations as an important part of the writing. To help reflect the experience of me being there live in the field of action, to put across something of the "perspective of being entangled, embedded and enmeshed *in* and *with* a site and situation" (Arlander, 2022, p. 1, original emphasis), my reflective diary entries adopt thick narrative traits to enrich these contextually relevant reflections.

"The wonderful paradox in the ethnographic moment is that communion with the other brings the self, more fully into being and, in doing so, opens you to know the other more fully" (Madison, 2005, p. 9). Tami Spry discusses what the 'other' might be: if autoethnography is

not all about the self who is the other, the 'we' in autoethnography? It is not all "about self-definition or identity construction" (Spry, 2017, p. 51).

My observations from being live in the field of action allow me to cultivate different forms of pedagogy through my actions and dialogues. Raymond Williams (1984) suggests a theory of culture as 'collective advance' because for him cultural production cannot be understood if we look only at the individual creative act, without considering the meanings embodied by conventions and institutions.

This connects to the essence of Jacques Rancière's essay *The politics of aesthetics: the distribution of the sensible* (2006). I used an excerpt of writing from this work to lead a co-creating pilot project in Athens called *Aesthetikos*. This was based around the idea of the interdependence and reliance of one object, idea, or other people to generate meaning in another object, idea, or person within the context of Athens. Nothing can generate meaning in isolation: the nascent artwork always relies on other contexts to be activated. This also applies to the objects, ideas, and people utilised during the on and off-campus learning contexts of *Sonic Camouflage*. Akin to Rancière, Barad (2007, p. ix) said that "existence is not an individual affair" (Barad, 2007, p. ix) as it relies on others to activate the experience and to create society. While we can learn and respond to the actions of others during *Sonic Camouflage*, we cannot know what it is like to be in their habitus.

3.2 Art practice methodology

I selected Campbell's Anticipation, Action, and Analysis (AAA) as a method for *Sonic Camouflage's* art practice research:

> *Anticipation* relates to making a set of predictions informed by theory and argument, as well as using one's intuition. *Action* relates to executing practice based on those predictions, to gain experience of the operations of a theory/concept in practice (in the case of my study, the interplay between audience participation and corresponding levels/types of power exchange) and to lend a different understanding to associated theories. *Analysis* relates to reflecting upon what happened in the last stage, considering how the practice

extends the theory through embodied and emotional response. (Campbell, 2017a, p. 7, original emphasis)

Therefore, both AE and AAA processes connect into the project activities and my tri-role as artist, educator, researcher.

For example, after the first couple of on-campus *Sonic Camouflage* workshops, I understood that the group required to increase their collaborative dialogues to progress more effectively, so I decided to *anticipate* this for our next workshop. Therefore, I used a top-down intervention to raise the issue of low dialogue as a possible problem that restricted our development and impeded our sonic *actions*. During subsequent workshops, the importance of this was *analysed* and re-iterated by another participant, and we therefore agreed to continue using the process of AAA.

Anticipate also allowed us to all talk about expectations for the next workshop and what improvisations we might try out and prepare for. *Action* then put our ideas into practice where things changed radically through the actual activity of our improvisation. Then *analyse* helped us to reflect as a group through open dialogue. Occasionally we would repeat specific *actions* of sonic improvisation that we collectively agreed were successful and *analysed* what qualities made them successful. Some participants found it useful to take notes or make personal video diaries about key points of their individual and collective learning.

I am also aware of some participatory action research components, as I "'observe – reflect – act – evaluate – modify – move in new directions" (McNiff, 2017, p. 10) while participating live in the field of research.

Here I re-iterate my four different types of research material that are used to investigate the collaborative art practice in order to answer my research quations. The four different types of research material are woven together to generate a non-chronological narrative expressing the richly entangled immersive nature of the project and the fluid, constantly shifting mindsets of participants. This approach also ensures a broad and thorough contextual analysis.

1. Contextual mapping from relevant fields including art and educational theory.

2. Feedback from participants, attributed to a specific individual using a capital letter (such as L, T, or J), or marked with a P for participant when unattributed. On return from the residency I gave participants the three research questions and asked them to kindly respond. I made no request as to what media format this should be. All particapnts did decide to provide a written account of their reflections whilst some augmented this with audio and video diaries that they kept whilst on the residency.

3. Live art practice workshops and performances, viewed via links to audiovisual documentation.

4. My auto-ethnographic thick narrative diary entries, presented in italics in an indented format. These are purposefully playful punctuations and reflect the character and tone of where and when these recollections took place and act as a kind of connective tissue between scholarly reflections and being in the oscillating dynamic live action "flux of perception-cognition-intuition" (Gibson, cited in Candy, 2006, p. 9). They are strategically placed to link directly into the pedagogic narrative of the project.

3.3 Development of collaborative project-based learning workshops

> The best moments in our lives are not the passive, receptive, relaxing times…The best moments usually occur if a person's body or mind is stretched to its limits in a voluntary effort to accomplish something difficult and worthwhile. (Csikszentmihalyi, 2009, p. 3)

My desire to invent PBL collaborative workshops has built incrementally over several years through various pedagogic initiatives. These were in part motivated by an interest in Paulo Freire's (2005) statement of 'education being the practice of freedom' and the emphasis on student centred learning: to build confidence for all participants in a critically supportive learning environment by sharing knowledge fluidly. Hard power is used when using top-down teaching methods, with a form of soft power used by the group when they are in the immersed sharing of the collaborative flow.

The undergraduate is also at an age where they have gone through three stages of cognitive development, as identified by Piaget (2013), and are now in their fourth, the 'formal

operational' stage. They are adults who can think and learn in abstract terms by adopting facets of gestalt theory by combining many units of information. Therefore, the presented tenets and somewhat complex provocations of *Sonic Camouflage* enthused certain students to get involved and become participants in the project.

I have organised several international group residential study visits for large student groups where Freire's strategies were employed as they created learning opportunities for sustained dialogue between tutors and student. Through positive verbal and written student experience feedback on these study visits, I recognised the pedagogic value of off-campus dialogues: "I found it especially wonderful having conversations with many different students about my artwork and interests" (Study visit participant). I considered how I could amplify this learning through the intervention of a PBL workshop to a residential study visit. It was important that this was not onerous to partake in and that this workshop would use sound as a catalyst to help build group dialogues and conversational learning to foster new ways of reflecting on art practice.

Textures of Travel

The early processes of the Dada art movement, through the actions of artist Kurt Schwitters and his onomatope poetry, paintings, and Merz sculptures, were highly influential to my development as an artist, educator, researcher. This interest led to an awareness of the Situationist International group and artist Guy Debord, who co-authored manifestos, happenings, and writing and invented the *Derive*, an urban psychogeography practice that involved wandering through urban environments to experience the city in unexpected new ways. The Situationists believed in the processes of art and not a finished artwork, and the decentralisation of the individual through collaborative acts with a shared group name, like the *Sonic Camouflage* naming. This interest influenced a PBL workshop intervention to a residential study visit that was not onerous to partake in.

For example, during a 2019 study visit to Kraków, Poland, I tested a sonic project called *Textures of Travel* that all fifty students on the visit could contribute to. While on the visit, they were all shown as a group how to use a high-quality HD5 recording device, and were then asked to record ten seconds of sound individually. After making their recording, the task was to pass the recorder on to someone who had not yet made a recording and to refresh them

on how to use the device effectively. This often meant talking to new people outside their friendship group, thus helping the larger group to bond and building small-scale peer learning into large-scale group dialogues.

For example, the recording task for *Textures of Travel* asked the students to reflect on the material or conceptual qualities inherent in their art practice and to record a sound that connected to their regular art practice in any way. This forced the student to deeply reflect on the essence of their art practice. For example, a student who made large-scale artificial boulder-like sculptures learned through group dialogue that the small-scale granules of sugar in a bowl in a café were like tiny multiple versions of her large-scale artworks. Therefore, she recorded the sound of slowly grinding sugar between finger and thumb to create a grating and tumbling textural sonic that could not be heard by the human ear.

Several workshop participants' feedback from *Textures of Travel* showed me how useful this small task had been, helping them to consider new areas for exploration: "really listening to sounds made me think about the use of sound and how I can use it within my practice"; "I don't usually use sound within my practice but working sonically really made me think about sound and the way I can use it within my practice and I now record sounds which I hear within the everyday and collect them for future projects"; "it was interesting to learn other techniques to record an environment outside of visual stimuli"; "Setting the brief as 'textures of travel' allowed for a more focused understanding that restricted and inspired, rather than overwhelm the possibilities of sound recording" (*Textures of Travel* participants).

I edited all the separate sound clips together and played it back to the whole group on the last evening of our visit, transforming many small-scale units into a large-scale co-created culmination artwork. An artist educator who was on the visit also kindly provided this reflection:

> *Textures of Travel* revealed the actual student experience when removed from the (on campus) studio environment. The recording of sounds added a unique dimension to how they related to a new situation, they learnt to listen, whether it was the sounds of Kraków itself or the dynamics of the group as they navigated themselves around the city. Old pianos in cafés; building work; the silence of a synagogue cellar; student banter; the ghost voices of pedestrians;

together they created a sound painting where the diverse memories of a place became enmeshed to become a single experience. (Emily Hawes, 2019)

Pilot projects

The feedback from *Textures of Travel* encouraged me to develop further PBL workshop style collaborations between students and me, and several have taken place since 2019. I view these as pilot projects that lead to the *Sonic Camouflage* project as I incrementally learned how to better facilitate the activities, and how to tune myself into the students' diverse frequencies of learning, to understand their learning styles, and to make connections through conversational insights; how and when to take leadership and when to sit back and let others take control, thus enhancing my pedagogic abilities each time.

So far, these co-created projects have been: an Arts Council England-funded project in Poole Quay called *Transmission*, a collaboration between an alumnus and me; an exhibition project called *Aesthetikos* based in Athens, a collaboration between ten students and me; a commissioned project for ITV creating an ident to be played before TV programmes called *Collaborative Drawing Action* which received 34 million TV views, a collaboration between nine students and me; and a further sonic project commissioned by AUB called *Response to Dazzle*, a collaboration between eight students and me. This academic peer review of the *Aesthetikos* project by Dr Nuria Querol, currently Director of Critical Studies in Art at Goldsmiths, University of London, shows how they considered its pedagogical value:

> The situated educational project *Aesthetikos* focuses on the shared process of learning when the tutor creates new artwork alongside students. In a conversation that I facilitated with the student participants to reflect on this pedagogical activity, students highlighted the value of learning outside the classroom, the collective knowledge gained while producing site-specific works and the spontaneity of working within a new environment and an art space. All these are transferable skills and knowledge that will enhance their learning experience and students' future careers and employability. (Nuria Querol)

As these PBL collaborative initiatives incrementally increased in pedagogic quality, I learned from each experience how to subsequently best engage and motivate students and me. This was achieved by folding my artistic research interests into the different pedagogic themes of the PBL. It was important that these research interests were relatively new to me so that I would learn new things alongside the students. For example, I am interested in perception and aesthetics, so used some text, from the previously discussed, Jacques Rancière's essay *The politics of aesthetics: the distribution of the sensible* (2006) to kick-start *Aesthetikos*.

It also helps to create a specific structure and framework for each project and to have staging posts to track progress. I used Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD to help challenge and expand on the existing skills and interests of students and tutors through co-creation discourse and development. Therefore, the S*onic Camouflage* pedagogic processes develop artistic and critical reflection skills for participants and the resulting live art practice generated presents new experiential practice-based knowledge (Biggs, 2004) through the artefacts and further reflection on these. I also discovered that my collaborative PBL pedagogies included and engaged students from all backgrounds to ensure learning was "meaningful, relevant and accessible to all" (Hockings, 2010, p. 1).

3.4 Learning through improvisational collaborative workshops

The success of a workshop was judged by the level of participant involvement in the workshop. This centred around participants' conviction to creating a collective synergy through developing their sonic, along with concept innovation and skill development by using constructively critical verbal and sonic dialogues to help incrementally move up John-Steiner's (2006) collaboration levels. On-campus workshops, through familiarisation and skill building, enabled the group to gradually progress up John-Steiner's levels, through distributed collaboration, complimentary collaboration, and family collaboration, finally reaching integrative collaboration only when the project moved off-campus.

Participants who attended the majority of on-campus workshops developed their way through the three stages before integrative collaboration by incrementally improving their active listening and responding skills, practical and concept skills, and their empathy for others.

There were a couple of participants who attended only two or three of the ten on-campus workshops, yet these participants were able to slot fairly seamlessly into the larger group due to the empathetic and communication skills developed by others so far. Thus, they were welcomed and supported into the 'family collaboration' though supportive actions and dialogues.

The *Sonic Camouflage* collaborative workshops aimed to create a collective high-level learning synergy where "materials and tools often take an instrumental role in the effective delivery of information or deployment of a skill" (Cooke, Colucci-Gray and Burnard, 2023, p. 39). The series of incremental collaborative *Sonic Camouflage* workshops helped condition the participants to experience learning skills in an improvisational manner whilst simultaneously building collaborative rapport.

The incremental workshop format created a 'rhizomatic encounter' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988) between participants as they gradually understood the multiple sonics being made during the workshop, whether these be coherently harmonic or abrasively discorded. The workshop's bi-weekly incremental learning experience was styled through re-iteration of skills and ideas and continually exchanging these among the group to generate a pedagogic rhythm. Jarvis (2006) reinforces the usefulness of *Sonic Camouflage* participants' experiencing active learning in the workshops because experience is a key part of understanding.

As the workshops had the demarcation of the project title provocation, *Sonic Camouflage*, they had a type of enabling restraint, a framework, or boundary to work within. Manning and Massumi talk about enabling restraints that occurred in their project *Dancing the Virtual*. They also used them as a process to condition their participants to enact a form of structured improvisation: "emergent process, dedicated to the singular occurrence of the new, agitates inventively in an open field. Programmed organization, on the other hand, functions predictably in a bounded frame and lends itself to reproduction" (Manning and Massumi, 2014, p. 93). This agitation was used during the *Sonic Camouflage* workshops content to enable participants to negotiate and invent the learning material and focus of each workshop.

I understood from pilot projects that a lack of enabling restraints could cause a project to lose its intensity and rigour. I often see this loss of intensity and rigour in students' independent studio art practice if they have not set their own enabling restraints for their art practice to operate within. Finding the inspiration, or a specific area of 'subject matter' for one's own art practice is one of the most difficult things for a fine art student to achieve, and it frequently takes the duration of the three-year degree course to find. This is then typically developed further post-degree.

Our on-campus workshops were simply referred to as workshops, yet as we continued our workshops in Evia, we called them workshop performances. I investigate this further in Section 6.3.

Whilst the improvisatory and incremental model of the workshops was designed by me, I intentionally held back in the workshop sessions, giving limited instruction to encourage participants to invent ways forward as I understood this would generate a sense of belonging to the project and that others would have equally good ideas as myself. For example, after I had given a verbal explanation of some learning methods, such as researching the whistling language and the cultural and topographic environment of Evia, and clarified that the goal was to make a collaborative soundscape that responded to this material. I then explained that the expectation of meaningful collaboration is that responsibility for the project's development is shared between each participant. This relied on participants' new sonic skills, cultural and topographic research that they had undertaken in the two weeks between each workshop, and then somehow translating this into a collaborative form.

Orr and Shreeve (2017) reveal the frequent tension between theory and practice, and how there is often little opportunity to reflect critically on curriculum and pedagogy. Participants therefore combined theory and practice during the workshop experience, and we critically reflected as a group at the end of a sonic soundscape to consider the values held within what we had just created. For example, did we discover an unexpected synergy with other participants sound making? Did anyone learn a new practical skill, and how did this manifest itself? What difficulties did they face during the sound making, and how did they negotiate this? How did they learn to be patient by being quiet and absorbing the sonic experience before responding, or did they decide the best course of action is not to respond at all?

After several further on-campus workshops my strategy of stepping back was not working due to low level participant engagement, so I set some further top-down research tasks as I had learned that the information participants provided from pilot project tasks would add impetus and drive for all participants. For example, I suggested some participants to research the topography of the landscape around Zarakes village on the island of Evia – the reason behind this is explained in the next section. Others were asked to research the indigenous fauna and flora. I found that participants enthusiastically shared their new understandings of these topics at the beginning of the next workshop, therefore we discussed as a group how these understandings could be transformed and integrated into our sonics.

As I had not dictated what the participants' sonics would be, there were different degrees of engagement with this. Several participants engaged with one sonic apparatus for the whole project – for example a flute, trumpet, or their voice – while others adapted and changed their sonic for each workshop, with a couple of participants only finding their sonic when we went off-campus. For example, one participant wanted to find something intentionally in the site-specificity of Zarakes village when on the residency. They did discover an old metal grilled shelving rack that became a crucial structural rhythm creator during our workshop compositions, and you will hear this clearly in subsequent chapters' art practice AV links. This showed me that some participants preferred a more flexible and relaxed approach, which allowed them to keep improvising with different sonics, and that they were operating at a confident integrative collaboration level.

Within a few days of the Zarakes residency, the improvisational collaborative workshops were operating at an integrative collaboration level. This was evidenced by the participants contributing to the workshop individually by being open to 'not knowing' (Fisher and Fortnum, 2013) whilst intensely listening to the collective in order to integrate into the improvisation by responding to others sonics or by inventing new sonics to lead the composition in a different direction. Woolley *et al*. (2010) refer to this high level of group interaction as 'social sensitivity', suggesting that higher levels of social sensitivity lead to higher levels of performance.

This showed me that the incremental on-campus bi-weekly workshop strategy, along with the improvisational method, had successfully supported the participants' social sensitivity to help

them quickly arrive at the integrative collaboration level just a few days into the residency period of the project. The off-campus, continual duration residency strategy also ensured everyone was immersed in the project as they had no other distractions. This re-iterated that "group flow is more likely to emerge when everyone is fully engaged – what improvisers call 'deep listening'" (Sawyer, 2017, p. 54).

3.5 Critique of the Sonic Camouflage project theme

The provocation or title of *Sonic Camouflage* arose from discussions about collaborative pedagogies with the artist educator Sarah Cameron, whom I met when they were a visiting tutor to the AUB fine art degree. Sarah kindly invited me to propose a collaborative project to be undertaken in her residency space in the village of Zarakes on the Greek island of Evia, and after undertaking research about Zarakes and Evia Island and discovering the Sfyria language that was used to disguise human voice, I developed the idea for the title and provocation *Sonic Camouflage*.

The title and provocation asked participants to question how sounds generated by people might transform the Sfyria language into a new auditory world that is somehow audible yet hidden. This new *Sonic Camouflage* auditory world responds to the Sfyria language intonation, rhythm, and its environment. As the whistling language has been used for millennia to communicate across the craggy, shrubby terrain of Evia, the language of Sfyria used birdlike sounds to help it travel over long distances, ricocheting across hillsides and valleys to far-flung listeners. Therefore, the theme asked participants to respond not only to the language itself, but to consider the topographic environment where the language is used.

> The 'language' is a speech-register of modern Greek that can form complex sentences to ask questions, haggle, or even joke. The whistling language is fascinating because it is such a cultural curiosity, but it is also inspiring because of the way it disrupts our conception of what speech is. Whistling loudly enacts a form of joy, or jouissance, a term used by Roland Barthes (1990) and Julia Kristeva (1980) to denote a gleeful rupture in constraining language systems (langue) in favour of the complex anarchy of speech

56

(parole). Sfyria's origin-myth richly embodies this sense of speech's potential for sonic subterfuge: it was, so the story goes, developed 2,500 years ago by Persian soldiers hiding out after losing the Battle of Salamis in 480 BCE. Lurking among the hills, the soldiers merged their voices with the language of birds. Encoded speech wrapped within the island's avian life, they remained audible yet hidden. Like Polari or Cockney slang, their language became an invisible cloak, a way of hiding and surviving together in sound. (Perry, 2023)

By using the Sfyria theme as a provocation, it brought students into 'dialogue with the world' (Biesta, 2017), to learn through something that originated in ancient times yet still maintains a fragile contemporary existence. While the new collaborative series of *Sonic Camouflage* artworks grew out of this theme, they didn't have a clear synergy with the Sfyria whistle. This was never its intention: instead we created a new type of *Sonic Camouflage* that slipped in and out of being subterfuge or invisible, with its low-volume sonics merging into and out of, whilst responding to, the indigenous sounds located where the workshop took place. This is analysed further in Chapters 4, 5, and 6.

3.6 Documenting art practice

Having contextualised my pedagogic research methods, I now provide an explanation of how and why I documented the collaborative improvisational workshops in the way that I did. These workshops are practice-based as they created live time-based actions that revealed new knowledge through in-the-moment sonic configurations. They can also be classed as practice-led, as the reflections on the time-based actions led to new knowledge (Candy, 2006, p. 19). Therefore, it was important to me to develop an effective form of documentation that would serve as an effective aide memoir when reflecting on the sonic workshops, and to serve as an engaging type of mediated artefact, perhaps having its own identity as an artwork. Martinez-Zarate states that "documentary practice has emerged as a necessary territory for the affirmation, questioning, and renewal of our societal coexistence" and that "the documentary mode is one the most powerful platforms for creating discourses and perceptions across the globe" (Martinez-Zarate, 2023, p. 36-37).

This documentation was especially difficult as the art practice was performative, durational, and sonic, and while the viewer cannot comprehend the experiential nature of being there to witness the performance live in the contextual environment of the sonic happening, I wanted to create something distinct that somehow captured the idiosyncrasy of the workshops and their contexts. Phelan (1993, p. 146) writes that "performance's only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representations: once it does so, it becomes something other than performance".

In contrast, Auslander (2008, p. 45) argues that "it is not realistic to propose that live performance can remain ontologically pristine or that it operates in a cultural economy separate from that of the mass media". When I reflect on the live durational *Sonic Camouflage* workshops through the documentations and from memory, I refer to Gibson's view that "the text is not an explanation of the artwork; rather, the text is an explicit, word-specific representation of processes that occur during the iterative art-making routine, processes of gradual, cyclical speculation, realisation or revelation leading to momentary, contingent degrees of understanding" (Gibson, cited in Candy, 2006, p. 9).

I had a nagging issue with deciding how we should site the recording devices. I didn't want it to have the bias of my or one participant's documentational viewpoint; I wanted it to reflect the collaborative nature of the project. To resolve this, we collectively discussed the bias issue and decided that the camera and sound recorder would be placed in certain positions and should not be moved during the workshop, thus allowing participants to choose to enter the compositional frame or not, as they knew which area – which three-dimensional rectangle of space – was being visually recorded. We also decided not to have a continuous stream of real-time moving image as the group discovered that the real-time full-length colour AV documentations were far too laborious to reflect upon and would be arduous for other viewers, and they did not reflect the sensation or disposition of the improvisational and experimental sonic art practice.

We decided on a still image being taken periodically so that the participants would not be able to stage an action to the camera. Therefore, the results would be less self-conscious and a better representation of the duration of the workshop. Curiously, this revealed that the sound recorder and camera became a focal point for the workshop participants: "I viewed the

camera itself as an additional member of the group, as it acts as an impartial eye for each performance…I believe that having the camera take an image every 20 seconds, helped ground some of the performers, as even though the click of the camera wasn't particularly loud while they were playing, the back of their mind could've caught it. This gave the camera almost a conductorial role, particularly because no one would start playing until they knew it was set up and taking pictures" (P).

The resulting documentations create a condensed 'in-between' space, as they have real-time audio coupled with still photographs. The documentational videos' imagery consists of a black-and-white slide show of students performing in each given site. These slide-like images uncouple the real-time sound excerpts from the image track. The real-time sound excerpts were selected to be representative of the overall sonics from that specific workshop event; you will hear that each is quite distinct. Watching and hearing them, I become aware that I am not glancing through a window to the event itself, but rather I am encountering a mediation of the world and the event.

Mediation is further highlighted by the draining of colour from the image to detach it from reality and focus the mind on the sonic event whilst viewing the detailed granular surface quality that black and white, the grisaille, provides. These visual techniques recall the 'distancing effects' that have been a feature of experimental film and video art for several decades now. In particular, the neo-Brechtian cinema of the 1970s or 1980s (Perry, 2017) frequently uncoupled visual recording from the soundtrack to highlight the cinematic dispositif (Callewaert, 2017) to the viewer by distancing them somewhat to force a critical observation.

This chapter critiqued facets of auto-ethnography and art practice methodologies to connect these into the research design and PBL activities, showing how they helped develop my tri-role as artist, researcher, and educator. This tri-role was then shown to direct and hone my skills in collaborative workshops and how I can also reflexively improve learning live in the pedagogic field of action, and after the live action, by enhancing future projects. This led into an analysis of the project's title and provocation, and then the crucial final section that critiqued why and how my tri-role created a very particular mode of documenting the live

sonic art practice: to help it live on as an artwork, to help audiences gain new pedagogic understandings, and to use it as a reflective research tool.

In summary, the preceding chapters have set the stage for the following three chapters, which explore and analyse the *Sonic Camouflage* projects execution through each of the research questions in turn.

Sonic Camouflage project execution and reflection

Chapter 4: How do participants negotiate an artistic learning collaboration individually and collectively?

Figure 2 *Sonic Camouflage: Zarakes Market* (Source: R. Waring, 2022)

During this chapter and Chapters 5 and 6, I use four different types of research material to investigate each question. These four different types of research material, listed in Section 1.3, are woven together to investigate the questions and generate a non-chronological narrative. The aim is to express the richly entangled, immersive nature of the project and the fluid, constantly shifting mindsets of participants in the writing. This approach also creates a broad and contextually thorough analysis. For example, this revealed successful participant negotiation surrounding group scales of improvisational learning and the importance of the incremental and iterative workshop design on these scales of learning. Sections in this chapter are titled in relation to locational contexts of workshop learning, for example, *Taverna at Night*, or to a specific overarching pedagogic experience, such as *Uncertain certainty*. As particapnts were shown to be soon be working at the *integrative collaboration stage* (Ibid) when off campus, I discovered that particapints were confident to collectively negotiate on each workshop performance location, I only suggested Zarakes Market and Pizza Night.

4.1 Negotiating on-campus learning

The collaborative improvisational approach to *Sonic Camouflage* initially proved very challenging for several participants to negotiate: 'I would say I found working collaboratively very awkward at first" (P). <u>This 30-second documentation</u> shows how static our second on-campus workshop was. With myself in educator-mode taking a top-down approach by leading the group conversations from the front with all eyes on me, we were working at the first distributed collaboration level of John-Steiner's (2006) theories.

The laughter reveals that my intention to create a welcoming and relaxed learning environment worked. I did this by using unusual anecdotes and large projected images to illustrate some concepts I had surrounding the project. I had asked participants to bring a sonic apparatus of choice, but only two individuals did, and the opportunity to use them did not arise as it would place too much pressure on those two. I also wanted to step back from directing things too strongly to begin to flatten the power dynamic of the tutor and student relationship straight away to set the shared tone of the project. I was hoping that the participants would learn from this and begin to negotiate individual control further to guide the collective in the next workshop.

On-campus workshop, first one after Covid interruption. I had booked a minimal space, dust in the corners, matt white painted walls bumpy with years of painted over and staples and holes, grey corrugated metal roof with high moss covered windows, art school feel. A tall grey filing cabinet with no doors stood sadly against the back wall, full of complicated technical things that looked broken. Hanging down from the ceiling were industrial pull-down concertina spotlights. As I entered the room and said hello, I remembered cutting my head on the sharp edges of these a few weeks earlier. I was excited to welcome everyone, feeling nervous about how it would go, a quick glance around the room confirmed that everyone selected had turned up. I congratulated everyone on being selected for the project and said I was really looking forward to working with everyone. I asked for individual introductions to make sure we all knew each other's names. Just as the introductions started, S burst into tears. I gently asked her to leave the room with me and to

bring a close friend who was also a participant. We went to stand outside in the fresh air. S explained what was wrong and insisted she wanted to carry on with the meeting. I wanted to make sure she was okay to do this, so I waited calmly outside with her a little longer than expected before we went back in. I was concerned the others may leave as we had been so long. Silence as the group stopped chatting when we came back in, so we went straight back into the introductions. Wary that I should not talk too much, yet that I had a lot to convey, I got to my points more quickly and succinctly than I would have liked to, explaining that the themes and ideas emerging from a previous collaborative student tutor work called Response to Dazzle *led to the ideas informing* Sonic Camouflage. *I lined up several small blackboards, leaning them against the white wall, to visually illustrate each on-campus workshop before we left for the residency to give the group an understanding of the project's duration and the importance of the bi-weekly commitment to the workshops.*

4.2 Taverna at Night

Staying for a night in Athens on the way to Evia, Zarakes residency. Conversation about wellbeing; all agreed it's best for participants to do their own thing at their own pace. Give each other space, look out for each other, support each other, be aware of irritation by others, tiredness. Suspicion, chatting on the rooftop bar, I stare and nod to issue a warning, as a drunk lone traveller is sharking around, trying to ingratiate himself with me, being overly friendly. So much anticipation after two years of Covid-enforced postponements. The reality of being here in real life, off-campus, is so intensely meaningful. Being acutely aware of where I was and with who I was with, pressure is on. Surfaces, smells, people are magnified, we are really doing it, so relieved yet simultaneously so anxious to somehow make it all worthwhile. Laughter as I tell students that my dark painted black and green room is called the Diesel Suite, is this irony or a celebration of diesel?

This feedback reveals how negotiating within a collective and socially constructed framework, or ZPD, had a significant impact on several individual participants: "before the project, I never believed myself to be great at collaborating. I often felt like a hermit, more comfortable with just my own thoughts" (P); "the residency helped me develop my skills of working in a collective, real-world problem solving and developing relationships between my peers and members of staff" (P).

This feedback shows how participants negotiated the pedagogic incremental staging of the on-campus workshops: "our improvisation was challenging to begin with…the mixed practice with discussion allowed us to communicate new concepts, research, how we felt about milestones and progressing practice" (P); "the discussion was informal enough to encourage members of the group to become vocal and for that communication to be continued was ultimately vital for the progression of our shared work" (P).

According to Shields and Spillane (2018, p. 3), "Creative collaboration entails shifting boundaries of power, position, and identity between domains of knowledge and collaborative participants", and these shifting boundaries of power between individuals create collective tensions that turn into synergies. This one-minute real-time clip, taken from a 15-minute culmination workshop called *Taverna at Night*, evidences some of what the group considered to be learned collaborative qualities: tensions created through the improvised live event and unexpected interactions through the discord, harmony, mumbling public voices, through call and respond processes.

Each of the project group participants pursued a different type of individual art practice in the UK on their degree course – sculpture, painting, video, drawing, printmaking, or a combination of these. No one was using performative sound collaborations as their medium. A rich melting pot of approaches and understandings was created in the improvisational workshops through mixing many different habitus, especially as participants were from India, Belgium, France, Wales, Guernsey, and England, and of extremely diverse socio-economic status. Each participant also had very diverse achievement on the degree course so far: as they were all now in their final term of the third year, everyone had received assessments for their whole first and second years, and two-thirds of their final year. I made sure to always put myself in their shoes, to keep reflecting to when I was studying fine art, to consider what

this learning experience might feel like from their perspective. Crucially, I learned that when we were all off-campus on the residency, that previous academic achievement was not clearly evident in some individual behaviours as all participants contributed enthusiastically after a difficult start to the residency:

> *Second day of Zarakes residency. Frustrated, irritated, midday Sunday – is this reasonable as I am tired and might not be thinking straight? I anticipated the participants to act seriously about the project, get into the swing of the project, to negotiate new actions for the project. Was the stop-over in Athens too much of a distraction, has it exhausted everyone? I know this helped the group bond, it is okay, I must stand back, bite my tongue, don't lead, you must go with the flow of the whole group dynamic. I yearned for somebody to take responsibility, to negotiate a serious collective mindset to get things going collaboratively. Getting the group to all meet outside at the stone table to perform together was laborious. I must stay in the moment and keep calm, smile, be positive, or the whole project would be at risk of dissolving, even though I often wanted to scream GET OUTSIDE NOW! I understood we are all very weary. The group were sat around the large sacrificial-like stone table, so I sat down too, while I wanted the group to stand. The sonics were played individually in a continuous garbled disconnected mumble, there was no calling and responding, no collaboration. Participants had forgotten to look outwards to each other, including myself. To discover what would happen, I decided not to draw the workshop to a conclusion in a top-down manner, so the workshop ambled along disconnectedly, slowly one by one each performer fizzled out, participants looked confused. Group analysis conceded that the workshop was weak yet we learnt why.*

The first residency workshop around the stone table shows how static, flat, and unmotivated the group were. I found this surprising as the recent on-campus workshops had built good rapport, energy, and confidence, and I had considered that the group had moved on to the second complimentary collaboration stage (John-Steiner, 2006). A participant reaffirmed this: "I believe the confidence of the group reached a dip when we first arrived in Evia, perhaps because of being faced with the challenge and pressure of engaging in the final days of the

project in trying to reach a finished result" (P). This revealed to me a vulnerability in the participants, and while they seemed open to new possibilities, it showed me I had to be hyper-aware of using constructive dialogues.

Rosi Braidotti argues that we should embrace vulnerability as an "express[ion of] the deeply affective and relational nature of all living entities" (Braidotti, 2019, p. 168). The clip reveals how I motivated the group as I demonstrated examples of physical movement by moving slowly away from the group as I continued to make sounds (0:48). This distance altered both the contribution of my sonic volume and physical visibility, which was then adopted by a participant (1:02), showing tenets of social learning theory as the participant mirrored my actions. This mirroring of behaviours began to grow within the collective. I found that Teacher Modelling or Behaviourist approaches were useful in certain situations to step forward and instigate leaning, then to step back swiftly to let others lead. These approaches have been theorised by Thorndike (1911), Pavlov (1927), and Skinner (1992).

Albert Bandura's social learning theory uses individual observation of others as one of its main learning methods. Bandura (1977, p. 22) explains that 'most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action'. However, social learning does not happen passively, so I was aware during *Sonic Camouflage* workshops, especially whilst in educator mode, to remind participants to pay specific attention to watching and learning from the actions of others. This also gave the collective group permission to intentionally watch and question each other to gain negotiated conversational insights. This helped the group relax as it eliminated the pressure of having to work things out individually, scaling up learning to use many minds instead of one.

4.3 Confidence increasing

I was surprised and very pleased when L confidently spoke up and said that "we need to really knuckle down and start working on the project" (L). This was coming from a student who attended only two of the on-campus workshop sessions and achieved lower-band grades academically. I had made a point of not chasing up anyone who did not attend on-campus

66

sessions, as the project was optional. The low attendance was explained voluntarily to me when the same participant reflected that "I wasn't in the best of places when the trip was approaching, but I pushed through…and it was one of the most gratifying and fun experiences I have ever had" (L). They also said that "at first I didn't think I was contributing a lot; it was an intimidating project to go into, especially knowing that the group consisted of very talented artists…[but] I began to gain social momentum within the group as time went on. I grew to understand everyone socially, personally, and professionally" (L).

This shows me that the collaborative social constructivist learning model was transformational for L, who had previously struggled to engage on the degree course when having to work individually, Now, through her collective negotiation, she was thriving and had generated a sense of belonging to the project and participants. I also observed how enthusiastic L was to go on very lengthy walks to workshop performance locations like the *Cave at the Beach* when they had spoken to the group about how unfit and unhealthy they were. This was also pronounced to the world by a hat L wore with the slogan 'eat trash die young'.

Weiner's (1974) attribution theory has been used to explain the motivational impulses of high and low achievers, and it helped me understand that my bias of expecting L not to engage thoroughly with the project was generated from low achievement levels and poor attendance. I put myself in L's position to learn that they may have avoided attending on-campus workshops due to low self-esteem and low expectations of being able to successfully co-create due to doubting her abilities both socially and sonically. As L was bereft of ideas as to what her sonic might be due to poor engagement on campus, I carefully and casually suggested to her that I had a portable electronic organ she may enjoy testing. This was only a week before we left the UK for the residency. I also considered that even if L did not want to use the organ, my offer would urge her to select another sonic.

L had never played an electronic organ, and to my surprise, when we all began travelling to Greece, L arrived with the organ keys marked up with tape and pencil to indicate certain notes. I remarked on this, and she told me she had been practising musical scales from YouTube to help get an understanding of the pitch, tone, and the capabilities of the instrument. After several days of the residency, L took a very assertive role within the group

67

with her electronic organ. This one-minute sample from the *Cave at the Beach* workshop performance shows how they confidently lead the group through negotiating and understanding the collective momentum, using a sustained melody that holds the collective sounds together. The other sonics fold in and out of L's individual organ lead, using it as motivation and inspiration. L's electronic organ crescendos by reacting to other layered sonics: the organ's increase in volume turns into a slow diminuendo, showing a highly sophisticated understanding of other sonics and a highly attuned awareness of the group members and overall improvisational composition.

During the *Taverna at Night* workshop that was performed on the penultimate evening of the residency, L assertively took individual lead of the improvisational composition at a crucial point when the collective improvised composition was starting to fall apart, using their tried and tested sustained high-pitched falling melody from *Cave at the Beach* to pull in other sonics. You can hear the organ successfully negotiate the compositional layers two seconds into this one-minute clip.

> *Flipped back to 19 years old. Whenever I hear L's organ my mind flits immediately to the track Two steps back, shiny black plastic seat, strong plastic smell intermingled with the wooden dashboard aroma, rips in the seats and scratches in the wood. Classic Triumph Herald car full of friends driving around Derbyshire, smoking, loud talking and loud music, repeating over and over The Falls album Live at the Witch Trials (1997). The track Two Steps Back has an almost identically dropping tune and pitch to L's organ, yet faster.*

L was now individually confident enough to negotiate using entirely new sonics live during the *Taverna at Night* penultimate workshop performance, experimenting with xylophone sticks. Six seconds into this 15-second clip, you can hear L using the sticks and producing light clicking sounds. This useful reflection shows me that collective social interaction with others had a positive effect: the participant quickly learned to negotiate high-level interactive collective skills in tandem with the practical skill of handling their sonic: "just being an artist, learning to create when you want to create, and allowing yourself to potentially look a bit silly in the name of art, was the biggest achievement I could get from this. I also believe I

could not have achieved such things without the help of my tutor, and my group. I also enjoyed learning how to play a keyboard, which at first seemed like a joke, but I truly learned to love that keyboard" (L).

The feedback made me consider the informality and continual interactive dialogue due to the residency duration of the off-campus learning environment, coupled with intense focal points, for example the *Zarakes Market* workshop and Sarah Cameron visiting a workshop, and how I negotiated the oscillation between educator and artist: L referred to me as her tutor in her reflection, yet when the workshop begins, I am considered a collective participant. This feedback also made me consider if the project could have been of more value to L if they had attended the on-campus workshops and not jumped into the residency, which was the middle point of the project. Perhaps not, as the renowned fine art academic and writer Irit Rogoff wrote about starting in the middle, that:

> Bureaucratic demands…must be countered by alternatives that are closer to what we believe a pedagogy might be… I want to move sideways, to argue for 'potentiality' and 'actualization' as structuring the field of education for and with and through art. What has always seemed so interesting about art education as a model for other kinds of educational and cultural activities is that it provides permission to start in the middle. This permission in turn allows those being taught to take centre stage, since they instigate its taking place and allow the processes they go through to become the substance rather than the outcome of education. (Enwezor, Dillemuth and Rogoff, 2006).

Participant L was shown to be at the centre of certain *Sonic Camouflage* workshops as the improvisational 'not knowing' method allowed her to individually negotiate and guide the collective free-form improvisations by using the layered entanglements to give her moments of deep gratification, as signalled in her reflections.

4.4 Zarakes Market

Participants of *Sonic Camouflage* were mutually important co-creators, dependent on each individual to achieve absorbing euphoric moments. In learning theory, these moments

continue to be known as 'normative dissociation' (Thorndike, 1911) as they happen at unexpected points with certain stimuli. The participants' collective abilities as co-creators were significantly pushed forward by the workshop performance we called *Zarakes Market*, which held several moments of normative dissociation. *Zarakes Market* took place on the fourth morning of the residency.

> *Third day on the Zarakes residency, time slipping away, perhaps due to the Athens hangover? No one offering leadership so I created an intense top-down intervention to push the group forward: after the group gardening and bonfire to build rapport, walking back together along the pitch-black lanes at midnight, I announced that I'd found out from the local café owner that early the next morning there was a weekly street market being held in the village and announced/anticipated that we perform at the market. Immediately a few participants said, 'are you joking? Are we going to just rock up and perform without asking anyone?' I replied that we are. Participant says, 'but we haven't asked anyone's permission, we can't just turn up and perform.' I said 'let's find out if we get stopped, and if we do, who cares?' I anticipated this workshop could really help boost our individual confidence and build collective confidence as we could respond to the many complex live public sounds happening spontaneously around the market. Wear white tops to help visually unify the collective. Participant: 'OMG what's going to happen?' Please someone improve this cacophony of disconnected individual sounds! T suggested using the call and respond method, all of a sudden something happens, telepathic collaboration begins, within a few seconds <u>high-level interconnections and collective improvisations</u> that you couldn't possibly have pre-empted, composed, scored, or written down.*

T's instigation of the call and respond method is a process used in improvisational jazz music, with one instrument responding to another instrument in a form of dialogic sound exchange or conversation. This coding of our actions, and by giving our rules a name – call and respond – allowed T to individually refer to this method to the collective. The coding helped us retain the knowledge we had learned from using the process previously, as it made it easier to recall successful sonics made in certain contexts. For example, a participant would say,

'can you remember when we were at the lower house terrace, and we had just started the workshop and T and R did the high-pitched call and respond when they were stood near the olive tree?' The approach of the call and respond method gave the participants collective confidence to negotiate the structure and composition of the workshop. This confidence had grown out of the collaborative efforts each participant had negotiated through the community of improvisational practice. Carol Dweck (2008) has extensively theorised on the power of effort to help leaners instil a 'growth mindset' in her book *Mindset: the new psychology of success*.

Nachmanovitch (2009) said that "improvising brings us into a living model of social openness—a model of people interrelating to each other through the practice of listening—in the midst of a world in which people so often retreat behind the boundaries and tensions of academic, political, racial, cultural cubbyholes, and all the other prefabricated borders that divide us". I began to observe empathetic negotiation as some participants were slightly exaggerating their actions to aid others learning from them, giving permission for others to mirror their actions. And while I cannot account for the actual experiences of other participants, I can carefully reflect on my perceptions of their actions, while being aware that "there is distraction and dispersion; what we observe and what we think, what we desire and what we get, are at odds with each other" (Dewey, 2005, p. 35).

Whilst we reiterated some processes and improvisations to build group understandings in previous workshops, it was not until the individuals were confronted with a large live public audience through the *Zarakes Market* performance that we negotiated collectively to achieve a state of "mutual togetherness in which we are attentive to how entanglements inform who we are, and how we become together" (Cooke, Colucci-Gray and Burnard, 2023, p. 26). The audience at *Zarakes Market* was diverse in the way they observed our workshop: some people walked past on their way to somewhere else, some stopped to watch and listen, and some decided to sit nearby at café tables to watch and listen intently in silence, some clapping at each of our intervals.

"At the marketplace when we were more nervous" (P); "we had never played in front of the civilians in such a busy location, in public" (P); "it was encouraging to hear valuable feedback from the civilians in the marketplace in Evia, we even received free food, which

I'm convinced improved morale and, therefore, the quality of our final outcomes" (P); "I believe that performing in front of the locals additionally influenced the quality of our performances in a positive way, as we wanted to impress" (P). My top-down individual intervention of planning the *Zarakes Market* workshop successfully challenged and intensified our actions. Having a public audience also made me aware that each of the collaborators in our group is a simultaneous audience, looking at and listening to the rest of the group.

This public exhibition was significant in pushing our collective abilities, and showed how important the location of learning was to make the sonics sensitive to the sonic environment of the market and public and responsive to each other. Our collective sound did not try to be loud; we subverted the loudness and performativity of a band in the traditional sense of being clearly heard. I noticed some of the public looking quizzically at us and tilting their heads, straining to hear something from this group who were clearly playing things. They would walk closer and experience a sense of relief when they heard us.

Our collaborative improvisations continued to grow in confidence and experimental scope after *Zarakes Market,* and we agreed that this workshop marked a turning point. We were surprised that our sonics were conversational in volume. This volume could have been because of nerves, so individuals were tentative. Yet after critiquing the workshop, we agreed that it was due to respect for not wanting to overpower co-creators and that our low volume connected into the similar volume of the sonics held within the live spatial environment: the spontaneous public voices, laughter, scooter engines, materials rustling in the wind, and metal clanking together. We were in part reacting to these sounds instantaneously as well as each other, whilst being mindful not to overwhelm other sonics. This echoes Oliveros' (2022, p. 28) words: "we interrupt the place, and the place interrupts us".

This ten-second sample presents the concrete poetry of the muted trumpet being repeated over itself. A single sustained vibrated note is played over with a three-note falling trumpet melody that simulates public laughter.

> *After Zarakes Market workshop. Later in the evening, mysterious hot coal*
> *blow-dries. We went back to the same taverna we performed opposite at the*
> *busy market as we were invited to by the taverna owners. It was now very*

quiet apart from us and two locals and the owner Dimitrios. Lots of serious chat about future careers. Participants kept asking me 'what are we going to do tomorrow?' I kept forcing myself to put the question back to them rather than say what I thought we should do. This made the group debate what to do collectively rather than be led by me individually, as I often found the participants reverted back to pre-project power dynamics. Sparks flying everywhere like a welder in full flow to everyone's amusement, yet obviously very normal to Dimitros, who was electric hair-drying charcoal wood embers to heat them up super quick, resulting in a firework display.

Sarah Cameron, an academic at Edinburgh School of Art and owner of the Zarakes residency did not know we were performing at the market and was fortuitously sat at a café near to where we performed. She was very surprised by our performance and kindly provided this feedback, which re-iterated our aim to engage socially with the villages and the live sound of the market, to merge and expand our collective community into the collaborative heart of the village community:

> These really are radically interesting ways of being on an 'artist residency', so much so that the term is perhaps misleading. Similarly, arriving in the centre of the village on market day and performing for a local non-art audience also takes guts and ambition: for these artists to play around with being seen less as bourgeois outsiders and more as people willing to experiment with social situations, to weave in and be seen but not to disrupt with political taglines or mythologised artistic 'attitude'; but truly to create *uncodable happenings,* that are too awkward, improvised and genuinely socially adapted to each new situation, to be labelled as anything simplistic. (Sarah Cameron)

Sarah used the useful phrase 'genuinely socially adapted', which seemed apt as I reflected that the collective learning experience of the incremental workshops and time spent co-creating at the Zarakes residency had enabled the participants to negotiate a form of 'communitas' (Turner, 1995) and sense of belonging through sharing a common individual experience with a unifying aim to develop their collaborative artwork.

Through the workshop experience, participants achieved an acute understanding about the complex behaviours of others, demonstrated through their sonic and verbal AAA interactions and written feedback. As the off-campus residency collaborations drew to an end, I reflected that, through communitas, all participants had achieved a form of instantaneous *Kairos*. The ancient etymology of this Greek word has its roots in qualitative time and not quantitative time. It means to find the opportune moment to do something, to discover critical timing in decision making. While we were absorbed in the collective moment, we had learnt how to recognise Kairos as an 'action present' (Schön, 2016) pedagogic tool. *Sonic Camouflage* had taught me to resist the strong temptation to lead too strongly, to hold back longer than you feel is comfortable. To use Kairos to understand how others perform sonically and how to react to this – and crucially, when not to react, to remain silent, to look, listen, and learn collaboratively.

4.5 Collective approaches

The contemporary art collective ruangrupa were commissioned to be the curators of *Documenta 15* (2022). This exhibition is of such significance that academic staff would lecture on the content of *Documenta* and encourage all fine art students to be aware of it. In the handbook for the exhibition, ruangrupa wrote that "art is rooted in life, instead of commissioning new completed artworks, we wanted to show the processes that give rise to them" (ruangrupa, 2022). ruangrupa based their curatorial theme around the word lumbung. This is an Indonesian agrarian term meaning a shared village rice barn, where villages collectively contribute to the food storage as a way to manage an unpredictable future for their sustenance. This resulted with their curated 'in process' pedagogy-type exhibitions that broke away from the familiar exhibition format of presenting final artworks in a specific context, as they critiqued the 'exhibition as medium' (Hui and Mey, 2022) to arrive at the 'in process' output.

As *Documenta 15* opened just after we arrived back from Evia, it helped legitimatise *Sonic Camouflage* post-project, as the participants told me that they looked through the *Documenta 15* handbook and website and found many parallels with our project. The visitors to *Documenta 15* viewed many artist groups working live in each venue on a kind of shared

practical workshop activity, the content of which was left open and mysterious. Viewers saw people making, talking, eating, and lounging around resting. Of course, this was challenging to the viewer as they had to work hard to get some form of aesthetic or cognitive experiential value from the 'exhibition'. The challenging nature of ruangrupa's approach was re-iterated by a peer who visited *Documenta 15* when they told me that they found it hard to access, especially as there were no well-known art world stars in the exhibition, so they could not use prior knowledge to make judgments.

The intention of *Documenta 15* was that a final outcome or artwork made by the collectives would never materialise. This idea of not having an ending made our *Sonic Camouflage* workshops challenging and dynamic, as we learned that there are natural hierarchies during our unpredictable collaborations, that the lowering of power structures can be negotiated by participants choosing to follow others or by taking the lead during a workshop. There are power structures between participants and between sonic making objects and environmental contexts off-campus "whereby everything makes each other capable" (Cooke, Colucci-Gray and Burnard, 2023, p. 1).

French artist Daniel Buren (1979) argued that successful art practice should follow a process-led approach that does not have an ending: that you should not go straight to the end product and make a 'final artwork' as this will result in an overdone, weak product. I have found that most A-Level art pedagogies that I see in course application portfolios go straight to making the end thing with no process-led discovery or experimentation. Buren says that art practice is about testing processes and methods by experimenting in the studio and that something intangible dies and is lost when the art practice becomes an 'artwork' as it becomes frozen in time, static, it somehow loses its contemporary momentum. It becomes history.

Similarly, the *Sonic Camouflage* study became an exploration of process rather than an analysis of a finished thing. ruangrupa presented the process of the live momentum of social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) and constructivist methods (Bruner, 1977) by showing the collaborative collective pedagogic processes of collective learning and making as contemporary art for *Documenta 15*. *Sonic Camouflage* residency workshops evolved into a series of live workshop performances that we all unexpectedly agreed were a suitable form of culmination to the project, rather than choosing to present a final finished performance to an

audience at an individual event, which we had previously discussed as a likely culmination. This is discussed further in Section 6.1.

4.6 Uncertain certainty

Sonic Camouflage also embraced the artist Olafur Eliasson's (2018) idea of 'uncertain certainty', another term for embracing the 'not knowing' as a learning process, as a way of improvising to discover things. I encouraged students to consider this cognitive space between thinking and doing, to think of this uncertainty as improvised thoughts. This created a metacognitive space – thinking about thinking – that helped improve individual reflection and decision making, thus enhancing the collective experience. Piaget (1971) developed a theoretical framework that he called 'genetic epistemology' which he used to examine metacognition abilities at different ages. His theories on human knowledge development are relevant to *Sonic Camouflage* because they combine biological and philosophical information from each participant, who were developing physical skills and philosophical concepts at different rates of engagement during the project.

Olafur Eliasson, in conjunction with Berlin University of the Arts, instigated *The Institut fur Raumexperimente* (The Institute for Spatial Experiments), These spatial experiments were a series of collaborative workshops. Eliasson is well known in the UK for the critically acclaimed huge interior simulation of the sun that he created for the prestigious Tate Modern Turbine Hall commission. Eliasson is fascinated with the space between thinking and making. Indeed, his term, 'spatial experiments' means exactly that: the context is the space between thinking and making, and not the context of a physical space for spatial experiments like one might be led to assume.

One of the main methodological aims of The Institute for Spatial Experiments, as with *Sonic Camouflage*, was to "curate learning situations of uncertain certainty… allow[ing] unexpected and surprising ideas and energies to emerge" (Institut für Raumexperimente, no date). Through this approach, *Sonic Camouflage* provoked a participant to experiment with using their voice: "I improvised nonsense poetry and language in our next workshop, this

deliberate deconstruction of language and meaning allowed the themes of our work surrounding, the whistle and musical communication to become more prevalent" (P).

Several years ago at Cardiff School of Art, during a conversation with a colleague about the pedagogy of drawing and sketching, we discussed this space between thinking and doing. We agreed that when the hand makes a drawn mark on a surface with a medium, this represents the mind meeting the world. We also noted the significance of the tiny fraction of time between thinking and doing, a kind of very short-term memory loss, and then the almost instantaneous knowledge gained from the experience of actually making the mark. When performing sonically within the social constructed pedagogy of *Sonic Camouflage,* not only does the mind meet the world through the sonic heard by the ear, but there is also another entangled process at play: to listen and negotiate collective and individually within the live performative space.

After working laboriously through art practice processes, the 'unexpected and surprising ideas' an artist discovers constitute a dramatic 'eureka' moment, an intense moment of 'normative dissociation' (Thorndike, 1911). This intense sensation of metacognitive thinking arrives when the cogs and planets align as a form of understanding is reached, much like pushing through long periods of improvisation to arrive at the nuggets of new understandings. I termed this unexpected and surprising moment 'cognitive wildness', as at this moment, the artist suddenly makes complete sense of things, only for that perspective to quickly slip away again. The artist then repeats the process, chasing the same sensation.

4.7 Safe space

By the third on-campus workshop, we had a generated a safe space with a sense of belonging and increased self-esteem that was sufficient for some participants to move into the self-actualisation level of Maslow's (1987) hierarchy and negotiate contributing more challenging and more discordant sonics: "as the sound improvisation of the workshops became more musical through others using instruments, I became more conscious of my vocal work dictating a meaning to our sessions as opposed to being an instrument that might be more unified with our artwork as a whole" (P).

This workshop showed how the collective learning conditions were conducive for the verbally quietest participant S to hit or roll a large rock repeatedly on and across the concrete floor. This generated a harsh clanking sound to create strange reverberating echoes that dominated and led the composition, allowing other individuals to fade in and out over its clanking rhythm to create one of Bennett's (2010, p. 23) intense "living, throbbing confederations".

I responded to the call of this heavy knocking sound with the muted trumpet. To take a sonic middle ground, a participant's voice layered into the composition, using softly spoken repetitive words to find a tonal camouflage underneath the trumpet. In the clip, you can see S on the left building confidence by rolling the rock playfully (0:17): "whilst our improvisation was challenging to begin with, unsure about what sonic to produce and how to be unified in producing a sound artwork, I found that as the confidence of the group grew our improvisation improved" (S).

Motivated by the participants' discordant use of voice, I drastically re-negotiated my approach at 0:30 by intentionally moving near to the recording device. As my sonic was now lower in volume, other participants empathetically lowered their volume to allow my intense whisper-like sound to be heard clearly. The culmination of this documentation shows the collective in a relaxed and confident mood.

While this workshop presented sonic breakthroughs for participant S, I was conscious after my 'whispering' that I had taken too much of my share of time so shifted myself away from the centre. As the collective decision had placed the recording device in the centre of the space on a stool, it acted as centripetal focal point for performers to revolve around. Through group analysis we continued to use this mode of recording moving forward. I talked to the group about how this reminded me of the opening scenes of Béla Tarr and Ágnes Hranitzky's film *Werckmeister harmonies* (2000) where people act as planets with the sun in the centre that people revolve around. This generates an unusual repetitive shuffling sound from people's shoes, so I pulled this up for the group to see on a large screen in the workshop room.

> *On campus workshop. Brave breakthroughs had been achieved in the third*
> *workshop so I was looking forward to the fourth on-campus workshop,*

anticipating what sonics students might bring and what new group dynamics might occur. Yet I arrived at the workshop two weeks later to find that only one participant had come along, who said they wanted to experiment with their voice and electronic manipulations of their voice. My expectations were lowered. I considered the project could dissolve as participants had lost interest. This brought a number of questions to mind. Was it something I said or did or didn't do in the previous workshop? Was my sonic too loud or too quiet? Was I not assertive enough? Had I lost control? Or had I been too controlling, not lowering hierarchies effectively?

In my disappointment, I thought of cancelling this workshop as it might have become unproductive, but on quick reflection, I considered it an opportunity to really engage with each other. One-to-one tuition is considered an "indispensable, intense and intricate" (Gaunt, 2008, p. 230) part of instrumental and vocal learning, so this was a rare opportunity to negotiate individual and small-scale collective improvisations. I also looked ahead as I considered that the skills we had learned on this small scale could positively enhance how we fed back into the larger group if more participants attended the next workshop. I also hoped this participant may informally feed back to the larger collective that they had learned a large amount, therefore encouraging motivation for the learning potential in the project. Furthermore, I was wary about the teacher-centredness of one-to-one situations (Polifonia Working Group for Instrumental and Vocal Music Teacher Training, 2010) so I was very mindful to ensure we negotiated an equally shared approach to learning.

This concentrated small-scale one-to-one workshop started with a verbal conversation around our intentions and soon led to a sonic call and respond. In the clip, you can hear J's voice improvisations and scraping of some wood interacting with the improvised trumpet melody. Pitch shifts and pace accelerates and decelerates while the volume rises and falls through crescendos and decrescendos. A graduate intern joined in with some percussion-like tapping, and the rhythm playfully speeds up at 0:26. I positioned myself away from the recording device to allow J's voice to be heard clearly, and when I do move closer, I use the furry cover of a recording microphone as a muffler to dampen and decrease my sonic.

The analytic verbal conversation that concluded this small-scale workshop led participant J to research concrete poetry and to anticipate the next workshop through planning how to use her concrete voice in poetic collective action. Through further anticipation and planning, J sourced a specialised directional recording microphone that was able to record focussed sounds that were captured by aiming a long, thin microphone at the source of sound – it looked rather like a chunky conductor's baton. J also sourced a laptop and the relevant software required for sound overlaying, volume and pitch adjustment, and looping, and learned how to use these to the level she required.

At the next workshop, J recorded live samples of sound made by other participants directly into the sound editing software on a laptop that they carried around the workshop space. These recordings were quickly edited and then played back to the group through the computer speakers at chosen moments, creating mediated manipulated echoes of previous sonics that were layered back into the live sonics of the workshop. At the beginning of this 15-second clip, you can hear different concrete layers of low pitch voices showing how adept J had become in their new role, which inadvertently negotiated themselves to become the collective's sonic leader. You can also view J pointing the directional microphone to make her concrete recordings.

4.8 Composer/conductor

Participant J reflected that "by holding the microphone up to different members of the group at different times, I found myself in a challenging place of responsibility in being the one to choose which sound to highlight at any given time" (J). This taught me how much participants had developed in our ZPD as they had rapidly built on existing skills over the course of several workshops. Through using constructivist social learning processes and the AAA practice methodology, the collective engaged in further high-level negotiations through verbal analytical dialogue and practical experimentations. These were informed by group actions and their Kairos by reacting instantaneously to the played-back concrete poetry live in the moment of improvisation. J continued to play a significant role in the group: her learned skills and mine were developed intensely during the one-to-one session, resulting in a role for J that she initially felt uncomfortable with as "it led to my being appointed as a composer for

the group. I found this role to be quite intimidating in prospect despite having previous experience in a position of leadership as course student rep' for our year" (J).

This 47-second clip shows J assuredly moving around the group using her recording baton with different participants. J went on to analyse that "I didn't wish to dominate with my own contributions to our artwork despite reassurances to the contrary. The group were encouraging and supportive of my being in this position" (J).

Critically, collective verbal dialogues encouraged J that her 'composing' was required by the group and that it was helping the collective negotiate new sonic compositions, especially as it added new invisible members to the collective as the sonics were concretely multiplied. It simultaneously forced the participants to concentrate further and intensify their learning as they were aware of being recorded directly with the microphone. Commenting on her high-level integrative collaboration learning experience, J said that "this was in aid of the idea that I might help the sonics produced by the participants to be more synchronised as I moved from person to person to listen to them and record their sonics" (J). She added that "an example of my composing is if I were to make a hand gesture to indicate that the group or an individual should play louder or quieter. In some instances of our practice, this worked effectively – like in the caves and at one of the practices next to the stone house". In this 50-second clip, you will hear, not see, how J negotiated the synchronisation of the group's ending with her hand and baton actions in the *Lower Terrace Night* performance. The AV documentation reveals the integrative collaboration being tightly synchronised as the hopping rhythm leads to a surprisingly harmonic culmination.

4.9 Cave at the Beach

Cave at the Beach is referred to in this chapter and also in chapter 5. After several more residency workshops, J's concrete poetry was required less as a collective compositional device as she "found that we had become more synchronised naturally. I also felt I wasn't always able to hear everything the group might be playing at any given time and so some emerging improvisational riffs might be lost with my instruction" (J). She also reflected as an individual artist when she "found composing to be a good experience that encouraged me to

grow as an artist by stepping out of my comfort zone" (J). This one-minute clip from Cave at the Beach clearly shows J silhouetted, negotiating both individual centripetal concrete poetry recording device and collective compositional conductor during her concrete poetry actions.

Cave at the Beach shows the collective to be working at an integrative collaboration level. John Searle (1976) theorised that there were five key areas for successful collaborative dialogues: representative, directive, commissive, expressive, declaration. *Sonic Camouflage* adhered to these key areas, with negotiated commissive sonic and verbal actions playing an important role in progressing our work. During these commissive actions, we often had disagreements. This was clearer through verbal actions than sonic, although it was evident when an individual disagreed with a sonic as they would stay quiet. Thus, silence became a code for things not working successfully.

Leech's (1983, pp. 104–105) theories around speech acts cast conflictive speech acts as just one of four contributing acts: the others are competitive, convivial, and collaborative speech acts. All four acts were used and learned from within all *Sonic Camouflage* workshops, as I generated a convivial and welcoming tone to relax participants to help build their confidence, they were collaboratively competitive through the actions of sonic improvisation, with resulting individual sonic conflicts that were individually negotiated with sonic or silence responses.

Through collective analytical discussion directly after *Cave at the Beach,* we considered the cave as a type of vessel containing other vessels, specifically the vessels of our mouths and the vessels of the instruments. In this sense, the cave was a kind of allegorical meta-mouth that simultaneously amplified, through echoes, and contained, through the rough stone enclosed area, the sound waves. I had learned through my one-to-one interactions with J at the small scale on-campus workshop that if circumstances provided for further one-to-ones, that I should take them as it could further positively affect the larger network when the new learning is fed back into the collective, so when the opportunity arose I took it:

> *Spending informal time with participants during the Zarakes residency.*
> *Donkey Shroud: we walked into the bar, no one else wanted to come, just B*
> *and me. Several locals said yasas as we entered, dense smoke inside, peculiar*
> *flashback to England pre-2007 before indoor smoking ban. Snacks at the bar,*

B and I spoke about her penchant for films and TV shows from the 1950s, which surprised me. We talked about why she enjoyed Spartacus and El Cid other large-scale epics. Intriguing conversations with J about her final degree exhibition artwork, talked about donkeys, shrouds, sculptures covering the boat, and the problems with literalness that is inherent in some of her ideas: don't illustrate an idea, transform materials and meaning to make it more open and engaging to the viewer. This chat led onto helping J find a more specific sonic. Elastic: we left the bar and B found an intriguing heavily painted drippy whitewashed sculptural object in the country lane that looked like an ancient Roman sacrificial table. B stood on this object, it looked like her arms were as long as her body, like they became floppy, elasticated, and somehow stretched, so I took some photos and laughed in tired happy delirium.

4.10 Group negotiation

Collective increment bi-weekly on-campus workshops helped prepare individuals who attended for the residency period. This was achieved by using the AAA methodology to move up Vera John-Steiner's collaborative theory levels. John-Steiner was heavily influenced by Vygotsky and expanded on his ZPD by contributing to research on collaborative learning, cognition, and culture. Her research on 'invisible tools' helped inform our understandings of both live negotiated actions within *Sonic Camouflage* and individual participant interactions. We understood how we incrementally accumulate invisible skills and ideas from our *Sonic Camouflage* learning experiences, whilst also understanding that these built on our many previous learning contexts – what Vygotsky calls the ZPD. Negotiated participant knowledge can be considered as "emergent knowing among participants that may lead to lasting personal knowledge" (Phillips, Christensen-Strynø and Frølunde, 2022, p. 407).

Distributed collaboration was achieved after the first couple of on-campus workshops as understanding of the project built, and after several more workshops, complimentary collaboration was reached once sonic exchange and constructive verbal dialogue was evident. The third stage, family collaboration, was reached in the last couple of on-campus workshops

through collective high-level rapport and fluid sonic and verbal exchange, and I expected the final stage of integrative collaboration to be achieved within a few days of the residency.

This collective building of high-level rapport and fluid sonic and verbal exchange aided participant T, who along with participant L, had attended only one or two of the ten on-campus workshops: "unfortunately quite often not everyone turned up to the meetings and therefore we did not have many chances to practice altogether" (P). It significantly helped T that they had a confident personality, and they were musically trained as this enabled them to negotiate slotting into the improvised sonic interactions in off-campus workshops effectively. It wasn't surprising that the same participant said that "I feel my relationship with my peers developed really quickly once we set off for Greece" (T) and "when we arrived in Evia and got stuck into our work, I was so impressed with the amount of progress we made" (T). The participants who had attended most of the on-campus workshops welcomed T and L and courteously and constructively negotiated their individual sonic contributions through verbal dialogue and sonic actions during the workshops.

4.11 Chapter summary

Scales of learning

The research strongly suggested that negotiating different scales of learning is highly beneficial individually and collectively for participants, from small-scale and one-to-one, to larger groups. The research discovered that it is crucial not cancel a workshop if only one individual participant attends, as the one-to-one negotiations helped rapidly progress the participants' skills and knowledge. These understandings impacted positively on the larger-scale, collectively negotiated learning at the next workshop. Within the duration of a workshop, scales of learning would shift from two-person negotiated interactions to whole group negotiated interactions. This fluidity of scales of learning became an important workshop ingredient as participants would often continue their learning in small-scale groups outside the official larger collective scale of the workshop time, both on and off-campus.

The large collective scale of the expanded off-campus environment was shown to rapidly transform learning, revealing that participants consolidate their knowledge through negotiated

interactions with individual peers to regulate themselves as part of larger group negotiations, and that many useful contradictory opinions occur as participants learn to 'turn' their values and judgements.

The research also detected how improvisational collaboration rapidly fluctuates in these individual and collective scales of learning between participants, location, and especially the artist-educator-researcher, who instantaneously flips from a one-to-one verbal or sonic dialogue to a whole group verbal or sonic dialogue.

The research revealed that *Sonic Camouflage* fosters collective understandings and creativity through empathy, active listening, and communication skills that were developed through the incremental collaborative workshops. The World Economic Forum (2023) lists analytical thinking and creative thinking as the two biggest priorities for skill development over the next five years. Therefore, *Sonic Camouflage* was shown to build participants' soft skills that they can cite as useful qualities when applying for individual work or when in the workforce.

The research also discovered how crucial it was to be hyper-attentive to individual participants during all scales of learning – not in an overbearing way, but by tuning into the specific frequencies of each participant to negotiate meaningful interaction. This entailed critical active listening and empathy, with varying time lapses of communicative response, ranging from instantaneous, instinctive, in-the-moment reactions to each other, to much longer, deeper reflection between workshops when something was remembered, or an idea sparked that participants would then communicate. Importantly, my crucial tuning into the frequencies of learning was shown to be enabled by the tri-role and its transformative effect on the educator.

Incremental improvisational collaboration

The research showed that negotiating the incremental bi-weekly workshops by introducing research prompts and defined breakdowns of time within the session then allowed the improvisational section of the workshop to be entirely free-form. The incremental strategy also allowed participants to develop their individual contributions gradually, without feeling too much pressure, as they knew there would be further opportunities to contribute. The bi-

weekly collective workshops acted as staging posts to allow participants the option of negotiating further cognitive processes and skills in the time in-between workshops.

The research discovered that the improvisational 'not knowing' actions informed the direction of the project. This was instrumentalised by my tri-role to encourage and negotiate a particular free-form mindset within the workshops. This was shown to be achieved through leading by individual example, and then by following other participants' lead. I had to make sure that I did not act upon the desire to pin something down by designing a clear progression strategy, and the feeling that this would somehow improve the project. The research showed that by continually checking our individual mindset and participants reminding each other to remain open to the improvisational possibilities, this allowed for a far more exciting, riskier, and spontaneous series of outcomes.

Simultaneously, the research found that the improvisational collaboration enthused the negotiated pedagogy, accelerated by the live rawness of the sonic interactions and the excitement of not knowing how the spontaneous interactions would start, twist, turn, and somehow end. This feedback re-iterates how confident the individual participant had become with the collective sharing of skills and ideas: "I think collaboration is all about losing and gaining, allowing multiple minds to transform your art practice" (P).

The theme and provocation of the learning – having an outward facing cultural specificity or instigator – connected *Sonic Camouflage* into the wider world, which proved vital to enthuse participation even when the workshops were on campus. This is analysed further in the next chapter.

To put it succinctly, the research revealed that specifically designed incremental verbal and sonic dialogic actions are crucial for individuals to negotiate a successful collective communicative effect through developing a range of 'invisible tools' (John-Steiner, 2006). It was discovered that the two poor attenders to on-campus workshops, when they joined the off-campus residency period, benefitted from the third stage family collaboration understanding that most of the collective had achieved on-campus as their well-developed 'social sensitivity' (Woolley *et al.*, 2010) and rapport helped them maturely negotiate with the two poor attenders to aid their integration into the whole collective. I prioritized certain aptitudes in my tri-role to ensure that individual participants, including myself, morphed into

a tight-knit collective: while using the art practice AAA methodology I focused on clear communication and encouragement, active listening skills, and empathy. I found that these traits quickly rubbed off on other participants to help build the collective progression through John-Steiner's collaborative stages to achieve what Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (2009) terms a collaborative 'flow state'.

Chapter 5 will open the pedagogic enquiry further to investigate different types of pedagogic intervention that a project facilitator can use to enhance the collaboration learning process.

Chapter 5: What types of pedagogic interventions can a project facilitator make to enhance the learning process during an artistic collaboration?

Figure 3 *Sonic Camouflage: Split Locale* (Source: R. Waring, 2022)

Sections in this chapter are titled in relation to locational contexts of learning, for example, *Cave at the Beach 2*, or to a specific overarching pedagogic experience, for example, *Expanded campus.* The chapter is concluded with a summary of key findings surrounding locational learning and using a cultural instigator as project provocation. I continue to use four different types of research material to create a non-chronological narrative as this most effectively expresses the richly entangled nature of the project and the 'flux of perception-cognition-intuition' (Gibson, cited in Candy, 2006, p. 9).

5.1 Expanded campus

> *Travelling to Zarakes residency: Collaboration as a tug of war, good analogy,*
> *the collective team requires the individual effort or won't win, you can't rely*
> *on others yet who knows who is really pulling, really trying, is there a*
> *'diffusion of responsibilities' (Kassin, Fein and Markus, 2023)? When making*
> *sounds you can hear and see the evidence of effort, yet most in the group are*

being too polite, holding back as they don't want to dominate, perhaps
confidence is low? Sounds wait for other people to act first, anticipation,
holding back and then camouflaging yourself in the gentle sonic foliage of the
group. Dewey (1960) talks about sound making as both the highest and lowest
form of the arts, enabling the lyrical as well as the ordinary.

Designing a collaborative learning experience that had integrated reflection, analysis, and then an instantaneous synthesis of these were signature *Sonic Camouflage* pedagogies. From experience, I knew that taking the project off-campus would create a close-knit group and that this would demand involvement of participants to take the initiative with multiple learning tasks. Expanding into a large-scale public environment was therefore the most significant pedagogic intervention for *Sonic Camouflage*. This aimed to enhance and transform the learning experience by being in the environmental context of the project theme and by intensifying and accelerating the workshop methods with full participant attendance to provide the period of intensity that Reardon (2009) identifies as a common theme of success across art education, and invoke what Freire (2005, p. 69) called 'committed involvement'.

I received the most amount of feedback from participants about the transition from on to off-campus. This shows how significant this intervention was for participants: "it was fascinating to experience the change from working on the project on campus in a familiar space, to being somewhere completely unknown with an entirely different atmosphere. It became so surreal when arriving in Zarakes, it enabled me to feel more engrossed in the work with the feel of the area, rather than what I thought I knew before experiencing it. I don't feel the project could have been done without travelling to Evia. This is because no matter how much research you can do on a place, you will never truly understand its presence, and this developed the work in a way I did not expect" (P).

Further feedback said that "moving from campus to Evia felt like two completely different projects". Even though the pedagogic aim of *Sonic Camouflage* was not essentially to teach students about pedagogy, the participant feedback that "in some areas, Richard didn't even need to teach because the lesson from the environment shift, nature and the local people had a wealth of learning embedded in themselves" (P) This shows me how hyper aware this participant was about the contexts of learning and my role in the project and re-iterates how

the informal dialogue, like the AiR-type conversations I experienced but in a non-institutional environment, operated as an invaluable new layer into the entangled pedagogies.

It is especially poignant as they identified the augmented learning values in the expanded context, that this connected all learners to the *Sonic Camouflage* subject theme live in the cultures of the field and brought them into 'dialogue with the world' (Biesta, 2017) by turning the table on the isolated bubble of on-campus learning. The on-campus learning through the workshops, however, was necessary to build momentum and understanding around the subject theme and to build through John-Steiner's collaborative stages so the collective could hit the ground running during the residency.

Earlier discussion surrounding Tami Spry's auto-ethnographic research showed how the researcher's body as corporeal form, and within the project our collective bodies are literally and intentionally transported to an entirely new international learning context to somehow touch the subject. This is regularly reflected in curricula which "assume children learn best 'about', for example, nature in a disembodied manner through 2D paper and pen exercises without being in touch (literally) with the real world. Devoid of wonder, imagination or opportunities for experimentation, learners, as well as teachers, miss out in worlding" (Murris and Muller, 2018, p. 157).

Through my previous collaborative PBL co-creating activities, I understand the multifaceted learning qualities and the many things leaners come into contact with from an expanded learning environment. Bennett (2010, p. 23) argues that all things are in "living, throbbing confederations" that challenge fixed categorisation. These entangled 'throbbing confederations' manifest the "power of coming together, of seeing the world 'through the skin' troubles acquired notions of predictability, linearity, and intentionality" (Cooke, Colucci-Gray and Burnard, 2023, p. 28).

Sonic Camouflage embraces complex troubling notions like 'not knowing' by being open to new unexpected sonic processes, materials, and ideas to help drive the improvisational nature of the project forward. Having a fascination with material analysis and perception, as these are the components of my art practice, I always think about how everything in the world is made up of different miniscule particles, and that an "infinite set of possibilities, or infinite sum of histories, entails a particle touching itself, and then that touching touching itself, and

so on, ad infinitum" (Barad, 2012, p. 212). Due to the live entangled conversations, actions, and multifaceted locations of learning during *Sonic Camouflage,* this type of deep cultural material reflection from Barad is similar to some *Sonic Camouflage* verbal dialogues, either during a workshop or in an everyday situation at a café, shop, or mealtime.

5.2 Rural learning

After the Covid lockdowns, we considered not going to the rurally located residency, as it seemed uncertain and somewhat risky logistically. Therefore, we discussed culminating the project in a local area that had some topographical traits of the rugged Evian landscape, or even online if we had to. After much collective discussion and as more time passed, we decided to stick with the original plan of travelling to the rural Evian residency space as we anticipated learning in the contextual location of where the Sfyria language was born could be significant, so this motivated us to continue in the best possible manner and not to be pulled back by the anxiety inducing and apathetic effect of Covid.

> *Project restarts in real life on-campus after Covid interruption. Doubt creeping in, here I go again, why do I make things so complex, going down into the swampy lowlands when I could stay up in the high hard ground (Schön, 2016) I could keep my head down and lead some predictable, simple, contained, orderly one-to-one tutorials in a reliably safe room on campus within normal working hours that hits learning aims and outcomes and achieves satisfactory learning experiences. Why bother with the messy risky realities of collaboration in the challenging contexts in the real world? I've never made things easy for myself, I'm always seeking out new learning experiences to test myself and other learners and after all, "the whole idea of becoming good at collaboration is dubious. Collaboration is like art. What's most valuable is the risk, surprise, and mystery involved. Collaboration is like being in love. Being 'good at it' doesn't quite capture the feeling" (Spillane, 2018, p. 86).*

The contemporary artistic relevance of learning in a rural environment is shown in *The Rural* (2019), which "questions and frustrates the current cultural hegemony of the urban and declares the rural a place of and for contemporary cultural production" (Böhm and Feenstra, 2019, p. 12). The intervention of changing the context and duration of learning was reinforced by some participants when they said, "it was incredible how it all came together when we were in Evia and practising daily with just this project to focus on" (P); "it was a little disappointing how we only very rarely had meetings with the whole group leading up to the trip due to people being unable to make it. However, that made it even more special when we had that time all of us in one place for a single purpose" (P).

The importance of the learning location and the lack of reflection on this is expressed by Sagan (2011, p. 142), who writes that "Literature on education, from government policy to pedagogical research, is replete with references to the learning environment and its potential to motivate learners and promote learning as an activity…[but] while we all have some idea of the constituent factors of a good learning space, there is in fact a dearth of studies exploring what this might actually be, and what, if any, is its impact". The *Sonic Camouflage* research contributes to this area.

The off-campus learning environment also provided a useful contrast between the on campus 'formal' urban environment and the off-campus 'informal' rural environment as specifically expressed by some participants: "this was one of the most exciting and challenging parts of the experience" (P); "suddenly our group were the closest people around us in the middle of this new place and I wanted to help make people feel as cared for as possible in an environment so far from home" (P); "the challenge was to not feel overwhelmed by the numerous possibilities that the new location provided, but rather embrace it all and start somewhere" (P); "the experience of transitioning location was very multi-dimensional" (P). These comments re-iterate Murris and Muller's (2018) words about being literally in touch with the real world, and Bennett's (2010) arguments about entangled 'throbbing confederations'.

5.3 Participant intervention

Campbell (2018, p. 112) recognised the concentrated liveness of entangled dialogue, whether small scale one-to-one dialogue or a collective sonic or verbal dialogue when he wrote that "teaching and learning is a live process and the teacher needs to be on full alert, ready with tactics such as 'improvisation' to deal with the serendipitous nature of this two-way process between teacher and learner".

As intrinsically live processes are at the heart of the *Sonic Camouflage* pedagogy, this allowed participants to challenge each other swiftly and regularly through the fluid roles each participant played during the live workshops. As we reached John-Steiner's family collaboration stage and a well-developed collective 'social sensitivity' when we started the residency, participants felt comfortable doing this. For example, as participants made choices about when to step into the background of a soundscape during a workshop, our sonic actions would regularly safely meander along and become gradually more and more passive by letting others take the lead, with eventually no one taking the lead. Then suddenly this would flip into an intensification to the moment when a participant, including myself, decided to take things into unchartered entangled territory by dramatically altering the atmosphere and character of the workshop by adding discord or a different pace or volume. Manfred Schewe (2016, cited in Campbell, 2017b, p. 34) reflects on this pedagogical balance and interruption of mediocrity: "In any pedagogical situation, you want the learners to feel safe. On the other hand, you must know that you may be faced with group where there isn't a lot of dynamics, there's a lot of sleepiness and so on, and you [the teacher] want to somehow make them active, challenge them. Performative arts would have a lot of strategies".

During this 30-second clip of the first session back on-campus after the Covid lockdown, you can see only my sonic present in the foreground, a pocket trumpet with wooden mute on the table. I had expected others to contribute collectively as I had invited them to bring a sonic, but none did, so at the beginning of the workshop I decided to see this as an opportunity to operate in two roles simultaneously, as a collaborative participant of the collective and also taking on a role of leading within this, invoking a form of power hierarchy. My roles could be viewed by the participants as a top-down leadership role, being at the front of the space, but it was also a collaborative act of sharing through my verbal re-iteration of the project theme and discussion of the improvisational pedagogy of the workshops; I made sure this was clear and accessible to the group whilst inviting questions by asking participants what they thought. For

example, I gave an overview of some research I had done about bird calls and improvisation in art and music, and this helped generate a relaxed conversational tone to encourage participants to join in which they did.

I had not intended to invoke this top-down intervention as I had anticipated flattening the hierarchy with sharing from other participants, but I considered it necessary to react in the moment and not be concerned about using a top-down approach as I understood that collaborations had inherent power structures where power shifts and is shared among the participants. Therefore, I found it useful to continually remind myself not to expect what I consider to be the best-case scenario pedagogically before a workshop, to see what happens, and to go with the flow.

Yet this feedback shows my intervention was useful: "Richard also helpfully provided some research behind our practice going forward – such as providing us a documentary piece on birdsong or pieces of jazz music which used improvisational techniques in a similar way to how our practice was beginning to shape itself" (P). I only used this approach for on-campus workshops when I felt it was my equal turn to lead as most participants began to share developmental thoughts openly about the project and their sonic. This participant feedback shows me that whilst this open sharing of material caused some negative tensions initially, it was nevertheless a useful process to help progress the artwork and to move up through collaborative stages: "We had a lot of theoretical discussions in the beginning and everyone in the group had interesting theoretical ideas which clashed and created tensions, but with hindsight most of those ideas later dissolved into scrapped ideas. This is good as final works usually stand on the shoulders of tried bad ideas" (P).

My intervention of using the relaxed, informal conversational tone during the first workshop was to persuasively encourage participants to bring any kind of sonic apparatus to the next workshop. I was mindful to emphasize that it didn't matter what this sonic was, by saying this was likely to change anyway during the development of the project. This intervention was successful as participants did bring a sonic to the next session, and this 30-second clip shows much more dynamism and active listening skills are on display. You will see a couple of participants enter the space late, 0:42 and 0:45, and join in the improvisational actions, you will also hear that I took a partial lead with generating some muted trumpet melodies that

94

others reacted to. I learned that it would have been more successful not to have requested participants to bring a sonic to the first session and to have held a relaxed open conversation about possible sonics and the project theme in general.

For example, I used my understanding of my previous successful top-down sharing intervention to make a further top-down request to the group, as I knew this would kickstart the collaboration and I could then move away from a position of leading. I asked participants to work in small-scale groups to research specific things indigenous to Evia and to present the findings for around five minutes per group, to the larger scale collective at the next session. I asked I, S, and R to present some research on trees, T, and J to present information on soil type and insects, and J, E, and L to find some information about geology and topography. I asked the group what they would like me to research, and I was tasked to present information on indigenous Evian music.

The information each group fed back was curiously diverse; for example, some were geographic facts about the terrain and type of rock, and other information was about how Greek scientists had proven how trees communicate underground to help each other with nutrient deficiency. I presented my Evian music research to the group by playing it loudly on high-quality speakers: this was both ancient folk music and contemporary electronic music created by Evian musicians. I had expected not to use this top-down intervention again but used it once more several weeks later when I felt a need to refresh the workshop format to ensure they remained sonically focussed as far too much talking was taking place, which meant sonic development was negated. I arrived at a workshop with a sheet of paper that I held up to each participant as they arrived with the large words 'no verbal speaking, only sonics':

> *On campus workshop when I set the intervention 'no speaking only sonics':*
> *Some mundane questions straight back to me, 'what do you mean?' These*
> *were ignored by me and others already in attendance. Slowly immersing into*
> *the session each participant reacted to each other in turn. Connections with*
> *each other individually at different points until sonics oscillated, expanded,*
> *and reached out further to merge into the whole collective. It is dynamic when*
> *two or three sonics interact closely and weave together, and that this is*

happening simultaneously with another small, concentrated group within the larger group. Excitement builds when the small networks connect together to form an improvised large-scale rhythm, with each participant taking turns over the melodic sections. For example, blowing through grass provided an abrasive squeaky high pitch noise that proved discordantly useful to break up the slow rumbling of deep frequencies. The session reminded me that improvisation is reliant on multiple understandings and confidence building through the incremental John-Steiner stages: when the second complimentary stage is reached participants are not afraid to make seemingly absurd sounds and actions and that these can become really important qualities and normalised within the composition. We continue to use WhatsApp to share voice and sound files, pleased when a member of the group who had not attended very well told the group post workshop how much they had gained from the session, that they had really enjoyed it and it felt like a type of wellbeing session they did not know they needed. Without WhatsApp, this rapport-building information would not have been shared, showing how it can successfully build participants opinions and confidence.

5.4 Constructive gardening

Two of the participants were close friends and the rest of the collective did not know each other very well before negotiating together as a collective. A member of the group showed how valuable spending time together during the extended residency period was when they said: "I hadn't previously spent time with others in the group unless it was specifically for this project's workshops and through learning more about the members of the project during our time in Greece, I found that our strengths sonically and artistically were amplified by our improving knowledge and support of each other" (P). This amplification was generated through the collaborative stage progression, with the incremental on-campus workshops building into the residency duration. I created an important group labour intervention to generate further 'social sensitivity' when faced with a problem on the second day in Evia. This was when the collective had not reached the highest integrative collaboration stage and

were yet to thoroughly engage in the *Sonic Camouflage* workshops. I also expected *Sonic Camouflage* conversations to occur whilst undertaking this seemingly disconnected activity.

> *Zarakes Residency second day: Arrival in Evia and meeting Sarah who owned the residency, a barn-like space that is nothing like any space on campus; long rectangular room, rough textured stone walls, huge wooden trussed ceiling beams, smooth art gallery polished concrete floor. We discovered Sarah had not been to Evia for over two and half years due to Covid. This meant that the area around the residency barn and her adjacent small two-room house had become very overgrown. Inaccessible with various plants and olive tree branches vigorously sprouting everywhere, the garden was in effect a continuation of the surrounding countryside with its various plants and olive trees. Sarah inherited the properties from her late father who had renovated them from a ruin in the traditional Turkish manner in the 1960s: Ottomans were the first ancient settlers who made a community in the valley of Zarakes, known locally as 'Old Turkey'. Sarah told me that there is now only one local builder who can work stone in the traditional Turkish manner and he is Albanian. Thousand-year-old olive trees grow tough small trees vertically up from along their horizontal roots, so these need continual pruning.*

Sarah was surprised yet grateful when I suggested I buy thick gardening gloves for everyone from the village store, and that we could use a collective gardening intervention to build group rapport and a sense of belonging. In a careful manner, I explained to the other participants that we could clear the overgrown areas with tools that Sarah would demonstrate how to use. With an aim to persuade the group that collective gardening was a useful idea, I referred briefly to *Derek Jarman's Modern Nature* (2022), a recent retrospective exhibition held at the John Hansard Gallery. I connected the extended duration of Sfyria's use, continually learned by new generations of Evians, into a quote from Olivia Laing I recalled from the exhibition catalogue about gardens being *outside of time* (see Laing, 2020).

Moving forward, we used our communal gardening for three consecutive mornings. I observed that the group bonded through exercise, conversation, and people having to help each other to cut out thick roots and carry heavy logs. Importantly, after each gardening

session we held a workshop, and whilst the gardening intervention could seem somewhat disconnected from the project, I understood that I needed to react to the entangled surprises that the off-campus situation throws at you because "life in the field is itself fragmentary, not at all organised" (Tyler, 1986, p. 131). Significantly, I noticed that one of the participants with low attendance at the on campus sessions took an organisational lead with some gardening tasks, which translated into them having more confidence during the next workshop, thus building what Searle (2017) calls their 'status functions'.

> *Gardening intervention: Do not apologise, keep reminding J she does not have to apologise after anything she says, how did this develop? It's working, the apologies are slowing. L asking me if she could stay at Sarah's house another time. If I was brutally honest, I should have said probably not as you have not contributed to much of the gardening, you stood around watching. L swept a couple of steps of the debris that I had left behind from laboriously hacking out strong roots for an hour, then proclaimed 'I have cleared the steps!' I bit my tongue and understood she may not have experienced work like this, and she was still helping. I wanted to say that you could impress Sarah in some way, then she may let you stay in exchange for some gardening work. I said yes, why don't you ask Sarah? But she didn't. Chatting with Sarah whilst we gardened, overheard by the collective, participants chipping in, theoretical conversations about the psychology of group work dynamics, yes, we had amazing group dynamics today, it felt right. Sarah previously advised us to come for at least ten days to become absorbed into the landscape, into the sensation of it, and I can see why already, being immersed in the green druid balm of the valley. When chatting with the group whilst gardening I made some suggestions about us being more performative during our workshops by moving our individual locations at key points, reconfiguring our positions. Curiously, the three participants who pursue sculpture back on campus were dead against it. I learned not to dive straight back in to try and persuade them but to remain silent and let other conversations happen, and within half an hour they had voluntarily changed their minds and raised the idea again and said let's try it.*

5.5 Split locale

> *Zarakes residency third day, second day of collective morning gardening.
> Dynamic intervention of splitting whole group into smaller separate units. We
> agreed to meet at the lower house that has two separate outdoor terraced
> platforms and had some useful discussions about progress so far and what
> elements to push forward. We had a sonic warm up and then L suggested
> having percussion coming in at the beginning and we build up slowly over this
> though layering sounds. I was pleased as I had wanted this to happen too, but
> had held back from speaking about it. The group agreed. Then T suggested we
> split people across two different house terrace spaces to enact a call and
> respond, and to have recording devices in the middle of the two groups to
> record equally. The workshop created unexpected new melodies emerging out
> of lengthy jangly discordant sections, abrasive squeaks and yelps coupled with
> harmonious rhythm, the melodies faded in and out. Confidence building in the
> ZPD.*

During a post workshop group critique of T's split platform intervention, a participant said
that Sfyria was often used to communicate long distances across ravines and valleys.

> *Patience, listen to group discussions, go with the collective flow, and agree
> with other suggestions, losing control. I'm really holding back and waiting to
> play, sensing the right moment that sometimes does not come, patience. I feel
> like I need to practice more on my own, apart from the practices with the
> group, to play more, get my lip in as I can't sustain high notes and my lips are
> numbing too quickly. The students decided that we should have some
> workshops across the valley the next morning, pleased these ideas came from
> the students and not from me as I really wanted to test this. Showing how T's
> split platform group separation of 30 metres had now expanded to around 700
> metres across the large-scale valley.*

Imagine from the tip of a stretched triangle a rough track cut into the edge of the hillside
skirting along the edge of each side of the valley. This was ideal for positioning the two
groups of performers on. This intervention proved to be useful to encourage participants to

move further away physically from other participants whilst performing, thus dramatically deceasing the sonic volume of half the group, and forcing more haphazard improvisation as most eye contact and body language was lost. At the beginning of this one-minute clip, you will hear the low humming of the wind as it travels through the valley, and collective confidence and interaction building through the rhythm with the metal rack and trumpet repetition. At 0:17, pink circles appear to show the location of the split group on opposite sides of the valley.

The distance between the two split groups meant that only tiny fragments of drifting sound were occasionally audible to each group, so the two groups improvised among themselves. We had decided to place the dominant sounds of the flute and trumpet apart, with one in each group. A recording device was located within each separate group of performers, and a loud single clap at the beginning of the workshop helped synchronise the two different recordings in post-production so they could be layered together. When we listened back to this single recording that had fused the two layers, we learnt that the two groups of disconnected sonics created a new way to improvise, as the results created unconscious and curiously abrasive melodies as this 30-second clip reveals. Whilst we could not hear all the performers, we were surprised at how all participants in both groups gradually wound down their contributions after 14 minutes of performing. This is shown in this clip from the final minute.

A participant fed back that during this workshop "I felt we connected with the nature around us". This was useful to hear as I also felt that the open vistas connected us visually to distant hills and horizons and new sounds whilst we performed, deeply affecting the types of sounds we made. This improved the connection with nature in our expanded learning environment, as well as with participants. This links us into Springgay's (2019, p. 59) theories, as it created "a touching encounter…[in which] human and nonhuman matter composes" together.

This one-minute clip of both groups layered together from around halfway through the 14-minute workshop shows how participants created a more sparse composition than previous workshops, with alternating sonic interventions, some subtle and some more prominent. A post workshop critique led us to the consensus that participants were being equally absorbed by the environmental sounds and the small group, giving more silent space within the composition. For example, the goat bell instrument seems to become more concentrated when

it is heard drifting across the valley where the actual goats are, the flute is emphasised when playing in starkly staccato bird call-like bursts, and the human voice undulates to respond to the wind. Curiously, at 0:36 the trumpet and abrasive flute play together to create a disjointed, unheard call and response, demonstrating new unconscious synchronisations.

The *Zarakes Valley* workshop dislocated the group from the eight participant sounds we had become accustomed to collaborating with. It broke us out of our habits (Cooke, Colucci-Gray and Burnard, 2023) thus far in the workshops. It is useful to reflect and challenge the "disciplinary concepts and theories which we embody" (Cooke, Colucci-Gray and Burnard, 2023, p. 35) in order to learn more.

This intervention therefore helped explore the dynamics of smaller group sonics, thus intensifying smaller group sensing abilities and furthering 'social sensitivity', along with improved responsiveness to hearing each other more intimately moving forward. For example, the metal rack that often kept a semi-constant clacking rhythm was absent from one group, and they reported they missed it: "we found that communicating sonically across the hills placed too much distance between us, most of us seemed to agree that our best performances were when we were in closer proximity with each other. This is likely because it allowed us to listen more effectively to one another so that our responses became more fluid and natural to the progression of each improvisation" (P). During the post workshop critique, I understood we had been two discordant quartets. In fact, this discordance was of benefit as it connected into Evian folk music, which is typically purposefully discordant and out of tune as it uses many layered sharp notes with flat notes to generate a rasping vibration.

With fewer participants in each smaller scale collective, we became much clearer sonically to the other three in our group of four, so we operated more like soloists, taking turns to take the lead. When the two recordings were layered to fuse the eight sounds, it created a type of Dada or Fluxus absurdist sonic poetry (the Fluxus group created happenings known as Event Scores, which revolved around responding to musical scores in new ways). Therefore, this workshop intervention was deemed by the group the most challenging so far, yet in a useful way. The challenging nature of this workshop fostered participant leadership roles, from T's top-down organisational suggestion to individual solo interventions that reacted to both the three participant sonics and nature sounds emerging from the locale. I understood that the

101

group was critically buoyed by this activity when they all keenly suggested to meet early the next morning with all of our sonic equipment to walk for an hour and a half to a large cave.

5.6 Cave at the Beach

Cave at the Beach workshop followed the discordant *Zarakes Valley* split locale workshop. *Cave at the Beach* was a form of improvised intervention as it occurred fortuitously due to a recommendation from a villager to the collective in a Zarakes cafe. *Cave at the Beach* was deemed a successful workshop at it combined a new duality of harmonic structures with periods of discordant absurdity learned from *Zarakes Valley*. We were now over the halfway point of the residency and substantial experiential learning (Rogers and Freiberg, 1995) had taken place.

Cave at the Beach reveals high-level interactive listening and concentration by participants, resulting in an integrative understanding of diverse approaches to pace, rhythm, volumes, and compositional space, with hyper-sensitive sequences of near silence also utilised: "an example of my composing is if I were to make a hand gesture to indicate that the group or an individual should play louder or quieter. In some instances of our practice this worked effectively – like in the cave" (P). Participants' on and off-campus environmental actions in *Sonic Camouflage* workshops can be said to be having 'intra-actions'. Barad (2007) uses this term to describe complex interactions when the interacting things are continually shifting and in flux when 'in-the-making' (Haraway, 2016).

Bandura's (1977) research reveals the benefits in seeing others making intra-actions when 'in-the-making', and in our case, when a participant performs a new sonic intervention, this action or intervention builds on what is permissible to the collective. This quickly changes and raises levels of expectation and helps participants critique the value of what we could and should not be doing. Other participants and myself often used this intervention that I see as simultaneously top-down and bottom-up as when we invented and influenced others, they would instantaneously simulate.

This is shown with the unexpected use of a guitar during a workshop. At the very beginning of this one-minute clip of the *Taverna at Night* workshop you can hear talking, laughter, and

the phrase 'I can see everyone', then the workshop begins after a period of group chatter. When a guitar is offered by the Taverna owner to J, they confidently use it for the very first time during the project (0:17). This immediately sets a serious tone and specific melody to respond to within the composition, followed by repetition and gentle pianissimo sounds for the clacking rhythm of the metal rack and two voices to enter, gradually layering up the composition and increasing the volume.

As we were following Campbell's AAA art practice methodology, this meant that we would always analyse the content of a workshop collectively. One participant specifically re-iterated the usefulness of the AAA method when they said that "for future projects like this, I would always start it off with a 10-minute discussion at the start of the sessions about what we might do, followed by 35 minutes of improvisation, and end the session by attempting to repeat the aspects we enjoyed most" (P). Another participant said that 'Richard also asked for our thoughts and feelings on our practice at the start of every workshop and meeting. It's clear he wanted the project to be student-led from beginning to end which was something thrilling and something I appreciated; especially since I imagine it's difficult to balance many students' opinions with his leadership of the project and in helping us progress" (P).

This shows me that the student had developed high-level empathy skills by imagining themselves in my position. We continued to use the bookending collective analysis as "critiquing areas that did not work and editing people's parts out was essential to development and we were quite democratic with it" (P). As we had deemed *Cave at the Beach* to be of particular importance, we decided to further analyse its content through what we called a deep listening critique.

5.7 Deep listening critique

The Swiss educational reformer Pestalozzi (1746-1827) is cited as having invented the group critique, calling it 'simultaneous instruction'. Skipping forward several centuries, the 'crit' format remained similar and became a pedagogic cornerstone, encouraged by Josef and Anni Albers at The Bauhaus and subsequently at Black Mountain College. The contemporary art school crit involves students responding to contextual questions about their presented artwork

by a group of peers and often, but not always, a tutor. When I facilitate a crit' I find it useful to set some rules by suggesting that the groups verbal dialogue does not to use the words 'nice', 'interesting', or 'like', instead aiming to get closer to the essence of the feedback: why exactly do you find something nice, interesting, or like it, and how do you contextualise that? "In the twentieth century, the process of discussing and critiquing artwork with fellow students has become one of the cornerstones of the system, since stylistic heterogeneity has eliminated any sense of an accepted set of canonical norms" (Wilsher, 2023, p. 108).

Sonic Camouflage workshops continued to be bookended with the anticipate and analyse dialogue by critiquing ideas at the beginning and to culminate each workshop. This allowed for a transparent critical understanding of each other's sonic practice and ideas and action: by working through problems in our own work, we can relate to others' problems (Thornton, 2012, p. 68).

One participant reflected that "the combination of doing practical improvisations and then all discussing how we thought it went was particularly useful for helping the group progress. Doing this meant that everyone was able to contribute while the session was still in their mind, so any small moments that stood out could be talked about" (P). A two-hour post workshop crit of *Cave at the Beach* allowed the group to listen back deeply and analytically to the workshop recording with a high-quality speaker. This workshop crit showed multiple subtly nuanced and sophisticated participant interventions and shifts of leadership, and breaking these down in a deep listening crit intervention helped the collective to implement these new understandings.

Much of the crit dialogue can be framed as what Leech (1983) calls 'illocutionary speech acts', especially as *Sonic Camouflage* participant feedback embodies Leech's four key illocutionary areas of competitive, convivial, collaborative, and conflictive.

The following table offers a breakdown of the *Cave at the Beach* deep listening crit analysis into convenient sections to describe some live actions and some subsequent learning traits with contextual referencing. I use one of Leech's four areas to headline the dominant illocutionary intention and sensation of each workshop section.

Time range	Illocutionary area	Description
0:10-0:30	Convivial	Syncopated confident repetitive voice connected me to the introductory section of *Watermelon man* (1973) by Herbie Hancock, which disturbs the regular flow of rhythm by using a flute that sounds like a human voice. It is used in an offbeat or seemingly nearly-too-late manner before other instruments layer in. Hancock was a regular improviser with Miles Davis and fed these new understandings into his more mainstream musical releases. The rhythm of *Watermelon man* is now considered a precursor to hip-hop and has been heavily sampled. It is analogous with the use of environmental sounds during *Sonic Camouflage* workshops because it responded to environmental sounds of cartwheels turning over street cobbles that Hancock heard as a young boy in 1940s Chicago.
0:30-0:52	Convivial	Period of gentle sonic layering over and into the subtle soundscape of sea waves collapsing onto the nearby shoreline emphasises the learning resources of locational learning. Through the collaborative social constructivist process, participants were confident to hold back their sonic and enter the composition strategically. Participants respond to natural ambient sounds of real waves by gradually layering in the use of voice from two participants, then the goat bell, then the metal rack and stick, showing high-level active listening skills and empathetic understanding of different scales of learning.
0:52-1:20	Convivial	Increase in pace and sonic dynamic takes place with drum and then flute layering into the composition, showing how crucial participants' location within the cave is, with participants physically moving slowly around the cave's learning space. Some participants now stand in the entrance, and some are deep inside the wet-walled cave. There is an overwhelming sensation of geological deep time, of being in dialogue with the world, resulting in satisfyingly discordant tones and repetition. The composition is content in its slow building compositional drift and scales of learning.
1:20-2:20	Convivial	Various melodies are overlaid by different sonics, participants carefully testing which will stick and be followed by others; voices become more pronounced, confidence is building through the community of practice and 'social sensitivity'.

2:20-2:40	Convivial	L's organ confidently and quietly repeats a high pitch falling melody.
2:40-3:22	Convivial	Organ pitch surprisingly shifts down an octave whilst using the same melody, showing how deft L's understanding of the instrument has become and how 'in-the-making' she is. As the organ becomes more significant in the soundscape, its pitch shifts back up. This behaviour is modelled by metal rack, strong voices, and drum connecting into L's melody, which then scaffold the whole compositional structure. Quiet trumpet begins to contribute to increase the scale of learning.
3:22-3:43	Convivial	Wooden muted trumpet mirrors L's organ and the voices' behaviour confidently. "I used my breath and voice to imitate the rhythms and tones of each of the instruments more loudly than I had done before, and my voice had a naive quality that complemented J's trained voice" (P).
3:43-4:22	Competitive	Muted trumpet, voices, rack, and drum confidently generate an offbeat syncopation, initially creating a faster pace to the composition and then stalling and becoming sparse.
4:22-5:00	Collaborative	Composition shifts to staccato and percussion-like. Without melodies, ambient wave sound becomes prominent. Spatial composition shows how confident participants are to listen and wait to respond.
5:00-6:08	Collaborative	Muted trumpet develops sustained melody mirroring L's melody and other participants' contributions. This quickly moves to a more staccato melody, where flute and voices follow. Metal rack joins in and takes the lead; others fade out to leave the sea and rack interplaying. Sonics fade to near silence. High-level convivial confidence shown through the complex yet fluid shifting of multiple scales of learning.
6:08-7:00	Competitive Conflictive	Singular voice is joined by other voices and then the tinkling rack. Voices oscillate rhythmically with the sea waves and the goat bell and rack. Minimal discordant trumpet.
7:00-8:10	Convivial	Organ melody drifts back in. Voices forcefully increase volume and tempo. Trumpet disrupts pace.

8:10-9:10	Competitive	Trumpet continues with quicker, percussion-like notes that mimic organ melody. Trumpet slows. Very discordant flute. Participants can't handle abrasiveness and drop out, leading to a flute solo. Support offered by voice, metal rack, and trumpet. Flipped back into unconscious, absurdly raw improvisation.
9:10-10:10	Convivial	Trio of metal rack, flute, and voice oscillate until trumpet and xylophone join.
10:10-11:28	Convivial	Composition pace is slowed by muted trumpet when it introduces a new sombre sounding melody. Creaking timber wooden sounds are contrasted with stark aggressive metal rack. Voices are bird call-like. Successful integration of new style responses.
11:28-11:42	Collaborative	All deeply tuned into the workshop frequencies. The sonics fade out, almost silence. I look around, all performers serious faced, concentrating, acutely aware of their surrounding sonics, deeply in the flow. The atmosphere is expectant and tense, yet simultaneously calm.
11:42-12:42	Convivial	Organ solo fractured with muted trumpet. Voices enter with building metal rack. Pace builds.
12:42-13:42	Competitive	L's organ re-introduces her melody, soon layered by all participants' sonics. Pace and volume build. Disharmony flips to harmony. Voice echoes through concrete recordings overlays. Relevance of locational learning is emphasised: "I can hear myself and each of the other instruments in the artworks more on the performances at the cave" (P).
13:42-14:50	Collaborative	Repetition of rhythm as compositional tool continues. Voices almost forming recognisable words. Rhythm remains steady, led by the voices, and all decrescendo.
14:50-15:12	Collaborative	All sonics fade out, leaving voices to weave into the waves, showing an ultra-connected telepathy between participants, and many instances of cognitive wildness.

Dusk, after deep listening workshop critique. Past echoes of the future sustained melodic tinkling, low level volume of space, vacuum-like, sound waves sucked out, interjections punctuate conversational volumes. Multiple layers of lichen swimming, moving like the skin of the sea. Whispering in the sun and wind. T invented this insight, 'that some compositions within Cave at the Beach sounded like the disembodied voice of the landscape.'

During the deep listening crit, most of the group lay down, exhausted. A couple sat on chairs as we sank into the long reflective listening.

> Another moment that stuck out to me was when we all sat on the terrace and just sat and listened to the workshop and then discussed after, I believe this was over the halfway point of the trip and we could have an open conversation of what we all thought about all the experiments we had done but we were blinded by the performance we had just finished. From that conversation I spoke confidently about what worked the best and what we should explore further. (T)

The intervention of this critically constructive deep listening crit dialogue allowed the group to decide how to approach the final few days of the residency. I was wary that even within the experimental realms of improvisation, actions can easily become repetitive and stale. Therefore, this relaxed critical conversation was vital to make sure we all remained vigilant to ensure learning continued to be enthusiastic, experimental, and challenging. The pedagogic necessity to challengingly drive content forward through improvised trial and error is re-iterated by Harvey (2018, p. 56) saying that "studying standard sensible strategies and well-worn paths is problematic, and, arguably, the dumbest way to get to where we are trying to go. It is far better, and more energizing and ethical, to stay open to new approaches, pivot towards the particularities of a given class or student, take risks, and welcome occasional failure".

5.8 Chapter summary

Locational learning

The expanded off-campus locational learning environment intervention was discovered to considerably enhance learning, with feedback recognising that the on-campus environments presented learning in a safe, expected, and controlled space. Participants recognised that the off-campus environments offered a more dynamic, riskier, unexpected, and richly entangled higher-level learning experience as participants were encountering many new learning instigators in new real-world environments. As *Sonic Camouflage* revealed a sensitive and considered response to sounds from object things and locational environments, the project's approach connects into Bennett's (2010, p. 108) theories which challenge us "to devise new procedures, technologies, and regimes of perception that enable us to consult nonhumans more closely, or to listen and respond more carefully to their outbreaks, objections, testimonies, and propositions". Bennett proposes closer attentiveness to thing-power as interventions, and the agency specific things hold.

When the project progressed off-campus, the research showed that for all participants that this was a transformative learning experience (Mezirow, 1997). Revealing that this transformative learning experience was in part due to participants being able to re-invent themselves, releasing them from previous perceptions about their abilities and certain pressures they faced in the UK. Therefore, the improvisational collaborative actions and dialogues within new locational learning spaces acted as a form of release and also heightened group sensitivities to the place and others. Locational learning workshop dialogues broke down negative barriers from years of identity building within their respective cultural contexts, and these workshop dialogues occurred in both small and large-scale groups. This revealed that Jenkins (2021, p. xxii) three transformative pedagogy attributes of care, imagination and agency, occurred during *Sonic Camouflage*. Connecting our learning into the focus of scholarship gleaned from the Salzburg Academy residency that resulted in the book *Transformative Media Pedagogies*.

Connecting into the world with a contextually relevant cultural instigator

The research revealed that the Sfyria whistling language as cultural instigator was key to providing the theme for an inquiry-led PBL environment. It was shown to be especially

poignant as participants anticipated that they would be working within the context of the cultural specificity for the residency period. Salazar's (2021) research on the identifiable characteristics of quality higher education teaching showed how important it is to for educators to make opportunities for inquiry-based learning. This outward facing inquiry kept everyone looking forward and excited and "open to the world's aliveness, *literally being in touch* with its bodied encounters of material and affective figurations and reconfigurations" (Cooke, Colucci-Gray and Burnard, 2023, p. 26, original emphasis). As the project expanded from its on-campus location to the off-campus residency period, the research showed how significant the location was to augmenting the learning experience.

The research taught me how educators have the micro-level capacity to integrate powerful dynamic interventions to enhance learning, with findings revealing that Sfyria used as contextual cultural instigator drove participant curiosity and informed the overarching *Sonic Camouflage* provocation.

In conclusion, this chapter showed how the pedagogic intervention of culminating *Sonic Camouflage* off-campus in the rural location significantly and positively impacted learning. It revealed how participants' research surrounding the project folded into the moving parts and richly entangled processes of *Sonic Camouflage* and its AAA methodology. Many new sonic skills were learned through incremental improvisational workshops which emphasised that the group were at the integrative collaboration stage, with most participants taking fluid top-down leadership interventions in the form of ad hoc sonic turns to lead the workshop in new sonic directions.

For example, the *Split Platform* workshop channelled new collective understandings into the *Zarakes Valley* workshop, and then *Cave at the Beach*. The listening crit analysis of *Cave at the Beach* revealed how participants 'flux of perception-cognition-intuition' (Ibid) had become part of their collectively absorbed 'flow state' (Ibid). The impact of folding in skills and understandings into individual and collective artistic approaches will be explored further in Chapter 6, where I examine how improvisational collaboration affects artistic development.

Chapter 6: How does an artistic learning collaboration affect artistic development?
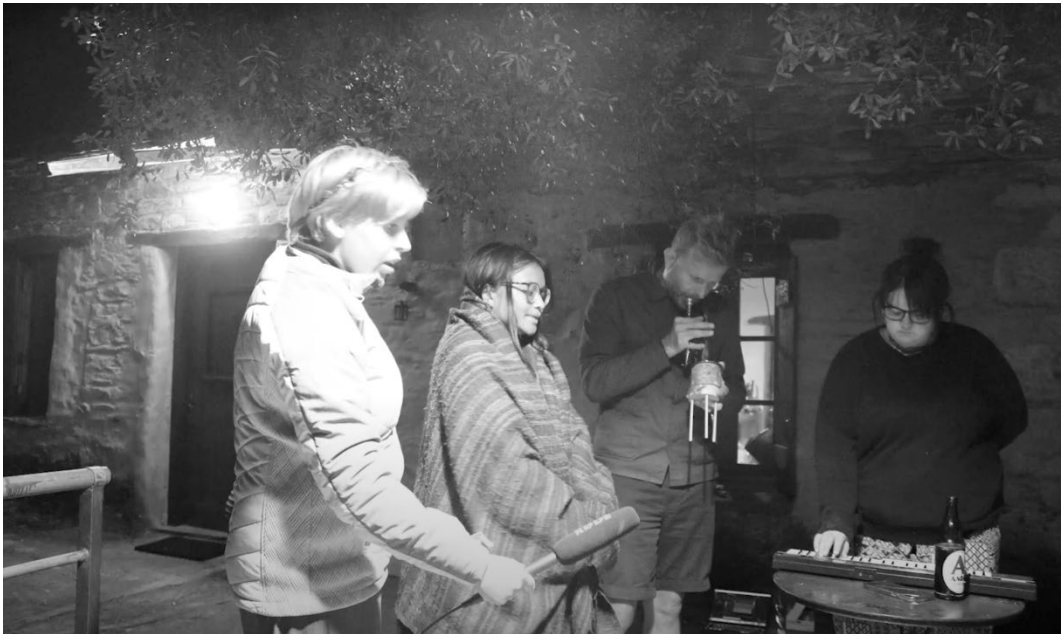

Figure 4 *Sonic Camouflage: Terrace at Night* (Source: R. Waring, 2022)

Sections in this chapter are titled in relation to a specific theme that affected individual and collective artistic development. For example, the section *Rehearsal as form* reveals the significance of collaborative workshop analysis as participants decided that the process of improvisation itself should be articulated as a series of culmination artworks. I continue to use four different types of research material, and conclude with a summary of key findings surrounding the use of the tri-role and how this role impacted the documentation of the project and its resulting new mediated artworks.

6.1 Collective play

Collective play is a balancing act of egos and interests, of purposes and intentions. Play is always on the verge of destruction, of itself and of its players, and that is precisely why it matters. Play is a movement between order and chaos. (Sicart, 2014, p. 3)

I regularly refer to the process of playing with ideas and materials to test materials and conceptual properties to aid artistic development, whether that be with physical drawing materials or via *Sonic Camouflage*'s ephemeral improvisation. Yet play has to have certain rules or parameters to work within or towards.

For example, first-year undergraduates often say to me that they chose to study fine art as it allows them freedom to do whatever they want, which is true to an extent. However, they soon learn that if they are to gain any traction, skill, and momentum with their respective artistic development, then they have to work with certain languages, rules, and contexts so that they can be understood in order to play with them. For example, within the framework of *Sonic Camouflage*, it had certain generic constraints like budget and timeframe, but rather than limiting the project, these kickstarted it and enabled swift, concentrated creativity within the framework of the learning experience through individual and collaborative work.

Participant B, who engaged thoroughly in collective play, thus effecting artistic development, said that "it never felt like we were being studied or graded on our work, and nothing felt wrong, nothing felt like it had to be toned down in any sort of way due to the participation of a tutor" (B). B was a high achiever on the degree course, and through experience I was aware that educators often spend less time supporting higher achievers as they successfully work independently. As B was learning so effectively and independently within the PBL framework, I was mindful not to influence the direction of her thoughts and actions, but I also did not want her to feel that I was not communicating respectfully with her as I was engaging more with other participants. Although I was operating as an artist within the collective, I was still swapping hats with my role as educator too. Therefore, I carefully engaged with B at a similar level that other participants had with her. This is in contrast to L, who had only attended one on-campus workshop, so I tended to chat with L when I had an opportunity outside the workshops.

> *Seeing L on campus smoking on her own. I walk over and say hi and act*
> *relaxed and informal by asking about everyday things. Experience has shown*
> *me that if I don't approach the topic immediately then the learner will bring*
> *up what they will know is on both our minds. L started to ask me about* Sonic
> Camouflage *and began to apologise and explain her lack of engagement, I*

respond by saying the project is for you, not me, so don't apologise as you can take from it what you want, and as you have told me you have complex things happening in your life. I carefully weave in how inspiring and motivating the project will become, especially when we go off-campus, yet I had doubts whether L would come.

6.2 Project-based learning as a tool for artistic development

The PBL framework of *Sonic Camouflage* encouraged improvised collective play and Orr and Shreeve (2017, p. 107) state that "in some fine art courses there are no set projects or assignments as such, and the focus is on the development of the students' individual work and practice". My experience as an educator and external examiner of fine art degrees is that the vast majority of UK fine art pedagogies focus on the individual student artist as a result of the "paradigm shift towards student-centred learning that has swept across educational discourse in the past 30 years" (Wilsher, 2023, p. 109).

Yet *Sonic Camouflage*'s PBL methodology has revealed multiple instances and layers of positive learning values, and recent research also that shows that matching instruction to a learners perceived learning style through student-centred learning has no value in terms of achievement (Husmann and O'Loughlin, 2019). A useful paradox within the provocation of *Sonic Camouflage* is that student-centred dialogue happens simultaneously through collective dialogues, and that this is extremely flexible to enable various shifting learning styles.

The effect of collaborative PBL on individual and collective artistic development was analysed by participants. These reflections reveal that having a project theme was "helpful, it has allowed me to research the theme in-depth before travelling" (P); "I work best with the foundation of a theme, I feel we were able to still have artistic freedom within a theme" (P); "I think as it was a group project, it would have been too time-consuming and overwhelming for us to establish an ongoing theme, especially with Covid interrupting an entire year of the project" (P); "the idea of working on a project that was already somewhat laid out felt like a safe start with such a new group of people coming together" (P); "I feel the project brief anchored our experiments" (P).

This feedback, on the other hand, shows some apprehension towards a themed project: "combining themes of this project with themes of my own and other collaborators has been a challenge" (P). Further reflection from the same participant showed how they were able to act constructively by connecting their interests into the theme as they went on a "journey of making these links through creating and reading, visiting museums and ritual sites, seeing the rocky ritual sites of Stonehenge and the Acropolis, reading about Henry Moore's travels to Greece to combine them with *Sonic Camouflage* work have helped put my several practices together like a jigsaw puzzle to form a cohesive exhibition in my individual practice" (P).

Further feedback also follows a similar path of apprehension followed by personal discovery: "as an artist, I have also found I value my independence as a researcher and creator and enjoy exploring my own themes for a project, as opposed to working under an overarching theme. I found it challenging throughout the course of the project to balance my own interests in mythical narratives with the theme of the project and the broader interests of the group…as the project progressed nonetheless, I learned to embrace these challenges and new ways of working and I am ultimately proud of our final outcomes" (P).

This apprehensive feedback helped me understand that whilst having a PBL theme is initially top-down and didactic, it is flexible enough to allow multiple individual intelligences (Gardner, 2000) to emerge independently at different times during the project, whilst conversely being part of a collective. It's also significant that this participant identifies as being part of a collective 'communitas' (Turner, 1995) by saying *our* final outcomes and not *my* final outcomes. This shows me that the participant empathetically developed their individual skills and knowledge in order to simultaneously inform *our* outcome. The simultaneous existence of two conflicting desires – developing individual originality whilst developing collectively – generates an ambivalent "unity that emerges in meaning-making is the tensional product of two competing tendencies, the centripetal tendency towards unity and the centrifugal tendency towards difference" (Phillips, Christensen-Strynø and Frølunde, 2022, p. 396).

The development and progression of participant roles within the collective PBL, with some stepping forward, others back, re-iterated to me how different people work at different speeds. I therefore learned to be less anxious about how much each participant contributed.

For example, whilst they were not doing the action I had expected, like finding a sonic quickly, they were doing something equally productive by seeking their best individual approach to their collaborative contribution. The richly entangled development of participants within the multiple new workshop locations became more pertinent as the project moved into the residency period and the incremental pedagogy dramatically speeded up.

6.3 Incremental pedagogy

The AAA methodology allowed us to critically anticipate, action, and analyse our workshop content, and it was through collective analysis that consensus was reached that the best way to culminate the project would be a series of developmental workshops that would be considered as a sequence of expositions to culminate the project. The collective incremental advance of the artwork was achieved through a progression up John-Steiner's collaborative stages, with the group arriving at the final integrative stage a few days into the residency.

As *Sonic Camouflage's* pedagogy was incremental, the group said there was an underlying assumption that the workshops would lead to something else, with the likelihood that it would be some a singular *Sonic Camouflage* culmination performance, perhaps with advertising and an audience in the village or back on campus. However, the collective came to the consensus that the entangled live sonic processes that occurred during the improvisational workshops were the activating ingredients of our shared artwork, both the sonic processes from each other and from the locational environment that we responded to. Collectively agreeing that the entangled processes were the components, the very substance, of our art practice was a significant moment in the project.

I understood from previous co-creating projects that when improvisation is used as a socially constructed and fluid shifting from top-down to bottom-up to strategies, this type of pedagogy would be new to most participants artistic development. Therefore, it was initially very challenging for participants to continually self-assess and reframe their artistic development through the instantaneous verbal and sonic dialogues during *Sonic Camouflage* workshops, but as we grew up through John Steiner's collaborative stages, using the AAA art practice methodology, the steady patient diligence of the incremental workshops paid off.

"Before the project commenced, I did not quite comprehend the reasons for improvisations becoming the actual final artworks, I sincerely believe that it has changed my contemporary art values" (P). This transformative comment reveals how *Sonic Camouflage's* collaborative and richly entangled processes affected the participant's artistic development through "metacognitive application of critical thinking that transforms an acquired *frame of reference* – a mind-set or worldview of orienting assumptions and expectations involving values, beliefs, and concepts" (Dirkx, Mezirow and Cranton, 2006, p. 124, original emphasis).

I can point toward the collective and incremental improvisational methodology of *Sonic Camouflage* as contributing to this participant's changing of values, and several other participants referred to the impact of the workshops on their artistic development: "this improvisational element of sound creation as well as experimentation with my voice is something I hope to continue in my future artworks" (P); "I did not quite comprehend the reasons for improvisations becoming the final works. This was something that I grew more and more intrigued by when our collaboration developed" (P); "on the good days, we knew what one another felt despite it being improvisation it was a wonderful learning experience" (P).

6.4 Rehearsal as form

David Dale Gallery and Studios has recently hosted a series of events that explore 'rehearsal as form'. Artist Rebecca Lennon, who exhibited at one of the events, said, "the performance event at DDG suits my artwork as rather than producing discreet finished works I like to think of my artwork as rehearsals, sketches or iterations that take different forms" (*Visiting practitioner: Rebecca Lennon 25/11/2021*, 2022). This idea of publicly showing the processes of art practice and exhibiting the developmental improvisational experiments connects into what ruangrupa did at *Documenta 15*. It also chimes with Buren's (1979) view that art practice is more interesting than finished artworks, as they are frozen in time and something of their dynamism is lost.

Lennon talked about disembodying her voice by testing the "performer as image or object, of disassociating voice from mouth, confusing that which is live or that is which is recorded.

Using the sound of the mouth to pass the voice through air and the sound from the larynx in the throat before it reaches the mouth by using contact microphones to amplify the internal sound" (*Visiting practitioner: Rebecca Lennon 25/11/2021*, 2022). My interest in other artists' practice, like Lennon, who has taught on the AUB fine art course, showed me that participants who had used voice during *Sonic Camouflage* had analogies with Lennon and may be inspired by her artwork, so I would point this out to them.

To re-iterate the connections, T maturely reflected that "some compositions within *Cave at the Beach* sounded like the disembodied voice of the landscape" (T). I have artistic development connections with how the voice was disembodied through the entangled improvisational processes of a co-created pilot project called *Response to Dazzle* that responded to Dazzle Pattern used in WW1. This live improvised artwork that I facilitated aimed to distort and question the viewer's perception of sounds associated with Dazzle pattern: this two-minute interview summarises this.

Two *Sonic Camouflage* participants decided to develop their voice as sonic apparatus: B used only their voice, and J used their voice alongside the concrete poetry digital recordings of other participants' sonics, that were analysed earlier. B's reflections show that the project was having a significant effect on her artistic development and 'status functions' (Searle, 2017) when she said that "I decided that time put into this project would be absolutely intentional and contribute something of value to both practical and theoretical parts of my final degree project" (B). She also said that "my interest in playfulness with sonics and musical conversation with others created a great energy with the other collaborators" (B).

This reveals how the PBL environment worked for her: it was made clear to me through both individual and collective dialogue with B that she would become a crucial member of the group, both sonically and motivationally to others. "How I used my voice as an instrument within the group often did reflect my identity, moods and relationships to other collaborators" (B). This demonstrates B's high-level of social sensitivity.

> *Profound insights after concentrated individual reflection on C*ave at the Beach *and* Zarakes Market *recordings: Echoes from the future through sustained melodies with clear tinkling light, relative quietness of the space and interjections punctuating conversational level volume. Multiple layers of*

117

lichen swimming, moving, like the sea. Whispering in the sun and wind. T
offered this insight; 'that some compositions sounded like the disembodied
voice of the landscape.' This prompted me to recall to the group that a
member of the public had told one of our participants that the Zarakes Market
workshop reminded them of the sounds of Evia, re-creating a sensation of the
'tone of a place' (LaBelle, 2011).

6.5 Individual and collective artistic development

Artistic development of all participants, albeit at different levels, had been significantly affected over the period of the residency. We had moved into Jon-Steiner's family collaboration stage, the third of four stages. The sensation of the penultimate workshop was relaxed and confident with illocutionary spatial sonic acts (Leech, 1983). "I had a positive experience of forming a relaxed, collaborative connection with our tutor in a comparable way to how we, as students, were forming connections with each other" (P); "there were natural moments of solos, silence and almost chord like parts, and I felt that it became easier to move into different melodies and parts of our composition the more we practised" (P). This one-minute clip from the penultimate on-campus workshop shows high-level understandings through vocal layers over rhythmic stone clacking, with a gentle tinkling bell entering the composition.

The final on-campus workshop took place around three weeks before we left for Evia: this one-minute clip shows how the workshop concluded with a fast-paced energy. The compositional space is full of complex beats and builds a foreboding melody involving all participants. It draws to a synchronised finale. The visuals from 30 seconds in show the participants sat on the floor enthusiastically critiquing the content of the workshop.

This one-minute clip reveals how far the collaborative distance travelled was from the on-campus workshops, by showing participants fully immersed in high-level 'in-the-making' (Haraway, 2016) during the *Taverna Night* workshop.

Taverna Night was the penultimate Zarakes workshop and was deemed a success by all participants: "*Taverna Night* is considered by many of us to be our best performance, the UK-

based artist Maddison Collymore managed to join us that night and I remember wishing to impress her whilst also being in a state of relaxation after a good meal, unlike at the marketplace when we were more nervous" (P); "at both the *Zarakes Market* day and *Taverna Night* workshop we not only responded to one another but also to the sounds of the locals and the vehicles that passed us" (P); "I believe that performing in front of the locals additionally influenced the quality of our performances in a positive way" (P); "we were more relaxed as a group, even though being in Greece meant that the project was now in full swing, the pressure seemed minimal" (P); "we were able to create such amazing work, purely by just looking around us and letting our surroundings soak in" (P).

This participant had previously encouraged the further use the locational sounds in the *Zarakes Market* post-workshop analysis, saying "let's use these sounds to respond to sonically, to help guide our composition" (P). This device was embraced by the collective therefore driving our artistic development forward and impacting on *Taverna Night.*

> *Final day of the residency. Mellowness of decay, tumbledown aesthetic, crumbly walls, broken objects, foliage growing through walls, steady growth slowly pushing hard stone and cement apart. Fragmented tracks held together with gravity. No rush to repair things, one or two strangely pristine buildings look starkly out of place. Stormy and moody, drizzly showers. We agreed to give each other some space for a few hours and to meet later in the evening, everyone brought their sonic up to the top house with an outdoor pizza oven, as I'd offered to cook for everyone. I'd collected old, coppiced olive wood bit by bit throughout the day from Sarah's land, made dough and bought other ingredients. After cooking ten pizzas, as we had two guests, it was midnight and the group thought we had abandoned the final workshop until I instigated a final top-down pedagogy to rally everyone outside for a workshop. Reluctant participants huddled under the outdoor pizza oven shelter, the rain in close proximity. I sensed this could be an exciting ending.*

"I loved the rawness of this trip, and I had the most fun and I think that is reflected in our audio, specifically at the *Taverna Night* and the *Pizza Night* workshops. Listening to the audio it transports me back to that time and brings

back the emotions I was feeling, the warmth of working with staff and peers"
(P).

My individual artistic development during *Sonic Camouflage* has been significant due to the constructively critical collaborative dialogues and having dedicated time put aside for the project to engage with artistic development. This was evidenced in my interactions with participants and my contributions to the artworks, along with the creation of a new type of mediated artwork through the documentation conundrum. A participant's perception of me as being solely an educator had shifted as they reflected that "Richard also seemed to transition more from the role of a tutor within the seminar rooms and studio rooms in England to an artist participator and a less formal mentor in Evia. I imagine this was due to our enjoying many of the days in Greece in informal settings together as well as more formal settings" (P).

The same participant's individual video art practice was affected by *Sonic Camouflage*: "learning about Persian history [during *Sonic Camouflage*] allowed me to use these little conceptual overlaps between our theories to develop some of my own works", and "learning how to use sonic art and tie that in with my video art, has really put my videos over the top and I finally feel like I am capable of bringing my ideas to life in a whole new way" (P).

My enthusiasm for live co-created projects connects into facets of my artist engagement with painting, my fascination with the picture plane and its illusory space and its physicality as an object positioned on the vertical white gallery wall. I'm intrigued by compositional space within the picture plane and how it is constructed with colour to create form and surface. A composition in painting means locating visual components and surfaces within the parameters of the picture plane, whereas a composition for collaborative sonic action is dynamically complex: the real-world three-dimensional environment interacts with the movement of participants and their emission of myriad sound waves bouncing off multiple angled surface textures.

The challenge is that the picture plane rectangle of the recording device has to somehow collapse this performative space into a two-dimensional plane. In short, controlling the components of a static abstract painting by a singular artist is arguably a more contained task, but a collaborative sonic action that occurs in real time and space opens up a multiplicity of live, in the moment relationships.

120

The maker and viewer are somewhat controlled when experiencing the processes contained in a painting positioned on a wall, but the collaborative maker and viewer experiencing the unfolding durational and layered processes of a sonic collective action contains uncontrollable entangled happenings. Either of these materially different art processes, for myself as an artist educator, can be a point of departure for a practical project, with *Sonic Camouflage* fusing my pedagogic and artistic practice and affecting my artistic development through the production of new artistic and pedagogic knowledge.

The singular instrumental components of *Sonic Camouflage* are individually abstract before they form collective meaning that is recognised as a new collective linguistic, using participants' sonic contribution as a new form of language and communication.

6.6 Documentation as mediated art form

Section 3.6 provided an explanation of how and why I documented the collaborative improvisational workshops in the way that I did. This section gives contextual reference to how working on this influenced my artistic development.

Whilst the whole collective decided on where to position the moving image and sound recording devices, the group agreed that I would edit the images and sound into a form of documentation. I had no idea how the transformation of live event into archival record would occur until I started experimenting as an artist using the 'not knowing' method, but I did expect, as I was using my artist mindset, that I did not want a real-time version of the live moments. With the idea of rehearsal as form strong in my mind, the challenge was to capture the essence or 'Genius Loci' of the live action to engage myself as an artist and future viewers.

I knew that Phelan (1993) and Auslander (2008) offered contrasting perspectives on the effectiveness of documenting a live event, and I had decided I was going to attempt this using moving image as well as sound, and that the output would be rectangular, painting-like, following the format of the TV screen.

During the residency period I began to question modes of live art documentation. Testing still image documentation in black and white, you see the light and surface so vividly and intensely here, more definition, more granular textured surfaces, zooming in, magnifying. Monochrome is simultaneously more informative of surface texture than colour whilst somehow allowing the real time sonics more concentrated clarity, you can hear the sound clearer in monochrome than with colour imagery, less complexity for the brain to deal with? I realise that my fascination with material surface and a painted surface can be transferred to video because you're looking at the real-life experience documented in a small rectangle that can be controlled, and monochrome defines contrast, subtle undulations in surface, shallow shadows in a material, this is really important to me because I visualise the sound waves / sonic vibrations bouncing off the different surfaces. You can really see the reflective texture of the surface much better in a monochrome image rather than colour because it accentuates contrast much more. It defines everything in a more granular manner and concentrates the mind and eyes more easily and seriously than colour. I recall Vilém Flusser (2000) talking about a black and white static image being so unusual in today's brightly coloured over saturated fast-moving world.

I understood that my knowledge of other artists' work, my habitus, would influence my artistic development to documentation. The use of still imagery moving into another still image also recalls artist filmmaker Chris Marker's seminal *La Jetée* (1962), <u>which consists almost entirely of still photographs</u> within a kind of science-fiction travelogue narrated from a cataclysmic future. It has real-time audio. I am also reminded of Nan Goldin's slide show work, *The ballad of sexual dependency* (1989). She said that after she edited the still photographs into a screening order, she applied sound, often music, to act as a narrative that glues the work together.

Sonic Camouflage's animated still imagery is also, more specifically, a response to the problem of how to record performance or 'live art'. Live art was, from its inception in the 1960s, troubled by the issue of remediation. What happens when a live 'event', whose power is its evanescence, is recorded on film or video? An innovative solution was developed by

Joan Jonas in her live performances of the 1970s, such as *Organic honey's visual telepathy* (1972), where mirrors and video feedback were incorporated directly into the performance. The video records of these performances that survive today are largely a result of these acts of media manipulation.

6.7 Compositional silence

The *Lower Terrace at Night* workshop residency workshop provided a substantial breakthrough for collective artistic development as it effectively used the space of silence as a new compositional device. This research showed me that the group had become dialogically and critically confident within the socially constructed learning environment and were operating at an integrative collaboration stage. The research also made me understand the impact of the rural learning location as the post-workshop analysis revealed that the quietness of the location, the 'tone of a place' had translated into using quietness as a compositional tool by using a conversational volume. Participants stopped feeling the need to fill silence with sound unless it was deemed necessary: the collective had developed their artwork into dialogue with the world.

This breakthrough created a sensation of calm confidence in the group, which was shown by combining subtle and low-volume repeating melodies that used the call and respond method. This forging ahead together, or 'worlding', was also reflected in feedback from participant J which showed how the development was challenging artistically and collaboratively: "we were constantly bouncing ideas off each other and critiquing each other. It created tensions in England where we did not know what to do with all the differing ideas but in Evia when our work was more developed, it only relieved tensions because there was an open kind of honesty and freedom to have differing opinions" (J).

This abrasive syncopated harmony shows all participants synchronising to create <u>one discordant 30-second section</u>. I learned that it was rare for all participants to continue together. Having been continually wary to not overpower or dominate compositions with my muted trumpet, I had been using my sonic less than I perhaps could have. I decided to inject some disruptive pace into the workshop to contrast the overall slow gentle rhythm, which

perhaps mirrored the late-night timing of the workshop. <u>You will hear that other participants swiftly decide to respond to my call</u>, including J's voice.

> *In the middle of residency. After the Lower Terrace at Night workshop that we were considering calling over and over again and again. Effective late evening outdoor workshop, we took food down to the other group's house that was situated lower in the valley. All standing outside, we positioned ourselves around the single light bulb hanging from the olive tree, resting the recording device in a giant ceramic urn that was placed directly under the light. I remembered this is where our house keys were hidden on exhausted arrival. T suggested she would record still images by moving around rather than a fixed point, we all agreed. Quiet and sensitive session where I initially restrained my sonic. We became immersed into the improvisation, surprisingly innovative harmonies, especially with the organ and the vocals of J, and myself on trumpet acting like a voice. We played a repetitive riff over and over again and variations from different participants drifted off this. I noticed that S was not getting involved. I wanted her to feel involved by contributing more, though through discussion with her after l learned that she was really happy with the workshop. She said she decided to hold back intentionally which showed me how much she had developed and integrated into the collective and was a reminder for me to consider that not contributing sonically is a form of silent contribution. <u>Reflecting back on the visual documentation</u>, it revealed to me strong analogies with centuries old chiaroscuro painting, famed in Caravaggio's and Rembrandt's work. It also reminded me of Joseph Wright of Derby's single light source painting that I had viewed recently,* An experiment on a bird in the air pump *(1768), with the pitch black night contrasting with the single candlelight source, thus providing dramatic high contrast light conditions.*

6.8 Art and music

Through collective research sharing throughout *Sonic Camouflage*, and anticipating, actioning, and analysing this, participants' skills and awareness of music and sonic art increased. The artist Maryanne Amacher provided a useful insight about music and sound art when she said: "In regular music you don't have any models to learn about spatial aspects because usually the performers are on stage or the music's on a record and you don't really hear things far away and you don't hear things close-up and you don't hear nothings and you don't hear things appearing and disappearing and all these kinds of shapes that emerge from this" (LaBelle, 2011, p. 204).

Several other prominent sonic artists also consider music's relationship to their art form, such as Laurie Anderson, who utilised digital repetition and pop music melodies, John Cage who applied the term 'organisation of sound' to everything he created, and Pauline Oliveros, who combined political activism with experimental music and developed deep listening art as meditative process.

A participant acknowledged that T and I had acquired musical knowledge through having previous musical training, thus aiding our audible senses: "Richard and T stood out as having a musical ear too so when the artwork began to blur lines with music, there was an awareness where we could compose a musically as well as artistically engaging piece" (P). This showed me that this participant was considering their learning to be through the lens of an art-music fusion.

Sarah, the Zarakes residency owner, on her approach to visit the collective along the dark country lane to listen to the workshop *Lower Terrace at Night*, reflected on this art-music fusion: 'The sound of a bohemian and almost eastern European traveller music emanated from the dark, night-time coming together moments of the group, who had brought an array of instruments and improvised many more sound making devices" (Sarah Cameron). Whilst you cannot view any of the sound making participants in the imagery during this 19-second clip selected from the 24-minute *Lower Terrace at Night* workshop, you can clearly hear T's flute and my muted trumpet calling and responding to each other over the top of a clacking rhythm generated from the metal rack. After a few seconds, you can hear J's voice confidently reacting to T's sonic, and T's flute reacts back.

125

During the culmination minute of *Lower Terrace at Night* there is a structured and spatially confident music-like rhythm where all sonics are clearly audible, with confident use of J's voice rising and falling in its own new melody that seems to use abstracted words. Through post-workshop analysis, we were very surprised at how the collaboration suddenly arrived at an interconnected sustained harmonic culmination.

This culmination sounds scripted or pre-rehearsed, which prompted new dialogues about art and music in our post-workshop analysis. For example, our analysis revolved around questions like "when does art become music and music, art?" (P), and about how our collective, due to being at the integrative collaborative stage, had begun to cross over into being a musical group as we understood each other fluently. We agreed that music is produced with sound and art uses sound as an investigative tool, so it's therefore inevitable that sonic art will have musical traits and vice versa.

We discussed the playfully engaging art music made by the UK Turner Prize winning contemporary artist Martin Creed. This one-minute clip of a track aptly called *Understanding* (2016) shows how he places multiple visual emphasis on the ears and the lyrics are about listening as the composition layers up.

My regular use of the pocket trumpet for the project led me to discover the musician Don Cherry. A pocket trumpet is a half-length version of a standard trumpet but with the same pipe diameters. There are more turns in the pipes, and it is smaller to aid transportation, and has become known for specific sonic qualities in its own right. Don Cherry prefers the unique sound and look of a pocket trumpet: when he was asked about his music for a Swedish television documentary, he pertinently connected his knowledge into lowering and sharing of power structures and hierarchies, as is implicit in the *Sonic Camouflage* methodology, when he said, "well for one thing it's not actually my music because it's a culmination of different experiences, different cultures, different composers that we play together" (*Don Cherry Swedish TV documentary 1978*, 2019).

Along with Ornette Coleman, he "created cacophony without hierarchy" (Kalia, 2022). This 30-second clip shows how Cherry's sonic had a sensation of rawness through his somewhat tinny, punchy, brittle, and cracked note muted approach whilst engaging in catchy melodies. This can be heard especially clearly around 0:18 when higher pitches are introduced. This

melodic approach is contrasted with his experimental work with Ulmer and Ali, as this unmuted 13-second clip shows.

Like Cherry, I prefer feeling the vibrations a small pocket trumpet instead of the traditional twice-as-long instrument that I was familiar with before this project. The sound emitted from the bell on a pocket trumpet is much closer to your ears than a traditional trumpet, changing the acoustics dramatically, and this makes me feel more connected to the instrument and absorbed in its sound, thus altering my playing method.

My hand-crafted wooden mute – which I learned lathing skills to make – further manipulates the sound that the trumpet emits, making it deeper, distortedly discordant, flat and off-key. This adds another layer of melancholy to the mournful mono-sonorous voice-like sound, and I enjoyed playing around with this sombre sound by playing contradictory uplifting melodies and skits. This connected me into learning about the melancholic sounding and rebelliously urban Greek music Rebetiko during the project. Rebetiko has been around for approximately a century. Curiously, the modern Greek word rembetis is used to describe contemporary subculture dress and behaviour.

Each moment presents what happens (2023), a solo exhibition at Whitechapel Gallery, refreshed my knowledge of the Sweden-based artist Johanna Billing. Her audiovisual exhibition has analogies with *Sonic Camouflage* as Billing also explores cultural specificities through improvisation, collaboration, and education by using music, rhythm, and movement, which she documents with real-time video.

6.9 Rural effect

Due to the rural use of Sfyria, the project's provocation, and the rural location of the residency, I investigated other rural contemporary art sonics to learn how to better situate my pedagogic and artistic development to ensure my contemporary currency. For example, I investigated the pedagogies of the educational sonic arts residency *Free.wav 2.0* (2023), held in Kerala.

This featured a listening workshop that was based around transcribing sounds into words, curious words like stabby, sibilant, sour and glossy being used to extract sonic qualities. During *Sonic Camouflage*, we were also continually using inventive words to describe the language of our sounds: words like crackly, brittle, and sonorous were used regularly by participants during analysis.

Further research I shared with our group was about bioacoustics and that listening extends beyond the human. For example, even before they hatch, birds can be negatively impacted by the noise pollution of urban environments (Quaglia, 2024).

Participant J, through her 'flux of perception-cognition-intuition' (Ibid), imagined herself back in the mysterious ancient period of Sfyria's genesis, using her "voice in my practice to produce ghostly ritualized echoes which act as remnants and reconnections to a time when we first began to work the soil and see it as our provider" (J). J's reference to soil, growth, and the ancient has analogies with processes used by contemporary artist Nour Mobarak. Mobarak collaborated with Dirfis Mushrooms, co-incidentally located on Evia to produce several Mycelium coated sculptures for *God's facsimiles* (2023), an exhibition at Rodeo. Each ancient-looking sculpture represents a silent operatic singing character, the artwork exploring the development of spoken word into narrative song: "language – assembled in our embodied minds, fixed in our larynx, emitted from our mouths, resonating in our chests, our backs, our sinuses – made story into song" (Stuker and Mobarak, 2023).

6.10 Culmination rumination

Whilst *Pizza Night* was the last night of the residency, the collective did not view it as a finale as we had decided that the series of residency workshops were a collective culmination, a kind of collaboration of collaborations. Therefore, there was no extra pressure on the final workshop and participants did not even mention it being the last. This set of consequential feedback from *Pizza Night* shows me how the workshop affected the participants artistic development as their technical skills were fluent, and they had the ability to instantaneously interact, or intra-act (Barad, 2007), to the complex behaviours of others.

Social learning theorists like Thorndike (1911), Pavlov (1927), and Skinner (1992) argue that mirroring behaviours enhances positive interaction.

> I used my breath and voice to imitate the rhythms and tones of each of the instrument more loudly than I had done before and my voice had a naive quality that complemented J's trained voice…and that gave our final collaborative artwork the suggestion of a young character and a spiritual character, guiding the piece through a breath-taking and shifting landscape without the use of poetry, or even words. I felt that I had finally become more unified with the instruments, whilst remaining poetic and performative. (B)

> *Misty damp midnight, last residency night. Many tired pedagogic actors on a gloomy stage, huddled under a peculiar outdoor structure, jostling for performative positions. During a period of silence, hilarity ensued as L accidentally hit the very loud auto-beat button on her organ, blaring out a galloping waltz rhythm into the night sky. I absurdly skipped away in rhythm into the darkness to participants' laughter.*

For some participants, this was far removed from the early on campus workshops as their artistic development had been substantial. This revealing feedback tells me that the participant associated on-campus university learning with being cold and unfriendly, and that their expectations were positively enhanced: "you would think it would feel very cold and institutional working alongside a tutor, but Richard has made the experience feel very immersive, emotive, and human. His art practice as a collaboration of multiple roles as tutor, artist and collaborator is very freeing to me as I used to think you were only allowed to study one thing" (P).

Towards the end of this one-minute clip, you will hear the confident abstract voice and flute almost barking in a staccato manner whilst the trumpet becomes more mellow, creating a curious ambivalence that leads to an intuitively and collaboratively connected culmination that recalled the *Terrace at Night* unified ending. The organ drops out of the composition with the two percussion sonics reducing their fast rhythm to a few choice hits, creating a subtle de-crescendo and mystery. The trumpet meanwhile repetitively accelerates, with the

flute playfully skipping in and out. Suddenly, the trumpet joins the flute's game, and it is over.

The *Pizza Night* workshop meandered along for ten minutes, with each participant deftly changing their role from leading to following by drifting in and out of the composition. After ten minutes, a muted trumpet melody emerged, <u>as this 10-second clip shows</u>. After this melody, I stopped my sonic contribution for several minutes to see how others contributed. I picked up the melody again once the voice and organ respond with a new playful variation of the trumpet melody. The metal rack kept its reliable clacking rhythm; the participant had become so adept at using her sonic, it was becoming a complex, two-handed, syncopated beat. This deeply reflective metal rack participant emphasises their significant artistic development. Notice how she uses the term 'we' instead of 'I':

> I didn't find my part very essential until we found my final 'instrument'. In the beginning I was banging on different pots and pans without truly fitting in (as much as we could fit in). Towards the final product of our piece, I ended up being one of the lead sounds which people used to follow to keep the overall rhythm. I also had the opportunity to start many of our compositions which gave me the chance to take charge in a very different way than previously. Whilst performing I could see people waiting for my signal to start their parts and although we tested versions of the piece in which J directed us, I felt as if it became my job towards the last couple of performances we did. Overall, I would say we all managed to find a sound that became essential to the final piece, but looking back how far I've come personally, I think it's one of the most drastic changes in position and sound, as I went from being more of a background sound playing off of the other instruments and mimicking them, to then being becoming one of the 'leading' instruments. I believe my part became extremely essential as it stayed stable through each piece, following the same rhythm and pace, allowing people to come back to it at any point if they felt lost in the different instruments. (P)

Post-workshop analysis of *Pizza Night* showed me that a participant felt the workshop had a mechanical, clock-like sensation that delicately demarcated segments of time with sonics

filling this space in a graceful rhythmic manner, swinging from sparse to dense sonic layering. Another participant said, "I believe the *Pizza Night* workshop had a hypnotic and fragile quality to it that is unique and emotive" (P).

I also reflected that the collaborative development of sonic art practice had culminated in a highly sophisticated level of 'co-creating with consciousness' (Oliveros, 2022) as it was revealed that the "music's communicative and affective capacities, and its potential to act as an agent of social bonding and affiliation" (Clarke, DeNora and Vuoskoski, 2015, p. 1) was helping redefine our collaborative community in an intercultural context. This participant succinctly summarises the impact of *Sonic Camouflage* on their artistic development: "I think collaboration is all about losing and gaining, allowing multiple minds to transform your art practice" (P).

6.11 Chapter summary

Tri-role: artist, educator, researcher

The research indicated that the tri-role of artist, educator, and researcher permeated my reflection and analysis. There was a blurring and losing sense of roles, meaning that my discoveries were rooted in the entangled interactions of being within the collaborative field of learning. I discovered that the tri-role is key to enable meaningful artistic contribution, participant interaction, and pedagogic reflection during a co-created project. My mindset was a knowingness about how I might undertake these roles, but was open as to how they would interrelate and function in reality, thus remaining very flexible.

To my surprise, the research revealed that the tri-role gave me dynamic permission "to enact modes of knowing differently" (Cooke, Colucci-Gray and Burnard, 2023, p. 39) as I compassionately directed my 'live in the field' actions as an artist and educator, and then reflected thoroughly on these afterwards as researcher.

The cultural specificity and improvisational learning method allowed me to contribute openly to the challenges and successes of the collective endeavour, as the subject of the cultural specificity was entirely new to me as well as to the group. I did have some experience with

improvisational collaboration, which gave me confidence that I could use my logistical and pedagogical experience to undertake this methodology successfully.

The research revealed that during the off-campus residency workshops, when contributing to the shared artwork, I found myself becoming hyper-focussed to hear and see all the moving parts through my multi-layered flux of perception-cognition-intuition. I had no sense of being an educator in these moments: I was an artist entangled within the collaborative whole. It was only when the workshop ended that I would begin to speak as an artist and then drift into educator mode when the group reflected on the content of the workshop and considered its new direction. For example, to ensure inclusivity I would carefully encourage all participants to speak reflectively if they had not contributed, and participants would naturally ask me about other university matters. The post-workshop analysis and participant research reflections were shown to build a trust and respect between participants and led to the discovery that the tri-role could enable a new form of pedagogic satiation for the artist-educator-researcher.

Participant feedback on the tri-role also showed that it lowered hierarchies between student and tutor somewhat, but not entirely, as power structures still existed through affecting critiquing discourses and sonic workshop actions. This chimes with Salazar's (2014, p. 35) findings that students considered the best tutors "those who treated them as 'fellow artists' and 'equals', with the professors, as one student said, 'just happening to know more'". I learned that useful hierarchies of leadership, of a collaborative type, do still ebb and flow within the collective.

The research strongly suggested that the tri-role improved my depth of thinking and, consequently, my actions, as it encouraged three-dimensional thinking by having an overview of the whole project's myriad components and complexities, both pedagogically and logistically. Research revealed that I had to be simultaneously aware of the incremental development of participants, myself, and the multiple learning environment locations and the challenges and opportunities these offered. This deep three-dimensional sensing promoted "care-full and sense-full attending to the relationalities of all sensorial modes" (Cooke, Colucci-Gray and Burnard, 2023, p. 39).

Documentation as mediated artwork

To my surprise, the research uncovered that the collaborative improvisational methodology of the workshops evolved to become the actual art form. By using a kind of rehearsal as exhibition form, this entirely changed participants' artistic development. The very substance of the richly entangled workshop processes, the sonic collaborative actions with supportively challenging interactions, became the components that made the artwork. This was completely unexpected. This revealed that providing a guided yet free-form improvisational and collaborative pedagogy, along with the idiosyncratic cultural instigator, best developed participant intra-actions to confidently connect into the pedagogic flow state.

The research allowed me to discover a new form of mediated artwork through the challenges of documenting live workshop performances. This was shown to happen due to my integrated mindset as an artist, educator, and researcher, along with the desire to suitably record *Sonic Camouflage* for posterity and for it to act as an aide memoir when analysing workshop activity. These films attempted to compress the multifaceted live workshop experiences into flattened two-dimensional mediated artworks composed of recorded images and sound to somehow articulate and translate something clearly about the essence of the multilayered complex learning experience and its co-created pedagogy. I learned that the videos provide a slower, more distanced mediated analysis of image, place, and sound to represent the sensation of dissolving time akin to the participant being completely absorbed in the flow of the learning experience.

Reflecting on the new mediated artworks, the research showed how *Sonic Camouflage* used the provocation of the sonically camouflaged Sfyria language and subverted Sfyria, as the language formerly used to communicate secretly is transformed into a clearly audible and visual contemporary phenomena that is no longer camouflaged, albeit with a low conversational sound level. I learned that the sonic improvisations dictated the participants' relationship to each other and responded to the sonic and topographical situations of the various off-campus learning environments. I also discovered that at several points in the videos, the sound of the wind overloading the microphone capsule was a kind of "temporal diffraction" (Cooke, Colucci-Gray and Burnard, 2023, p. 30) which acts as an intruder to the sonic landscape. This shows the limitations of the sound-capturing device and how this new

sonic glitch acts as a useful break, a momentary aural jolt back into the landscape of the situated learning environment.

To conclude, this chapter showed how the symbiosis of knowledge ebbing back and forth between participants affects artistic development in specific learning locations. The research discovered that within the duration and actions of the workshop, there were many shifting boundaries of power and that this created useful tensions, and that these tensions, if handled correctly by the collaborators, turned into creative synergies. The research proves that each participant held a different power dynamic whilst working towards a common goal to improvise live artworks: "we were constantly bouncing ideas off each other and critiquing each other" (P). Yet this goal was improvised – it did not have a defined result. The result was mysteriously enigmatic and acted as a moving target, with each collaborator firing their arrows, some hitting each other in mid-air, some missing the target entirely, and some hitting the bullseye.

It was this shifting fluidity of behaviours that was revealed to lead to new dynamic tensions and synergies in the co-creation of learning, to manifest a new network of shared understandings. This adaptability and loose fluidity is identified by Thomson (2005, p. 218) when he says that "fine art is not a subject of study. It does not define itself by negotiating boundaries with other subjects. Nor is it a discipline. It has no 'root' or normative rules of procedure. Rather, it is a loose assemblage of first-order materially based activities taking place in a speculative existential territory that has no boundaries".

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Overall, the research revealed *Sonic Camouflage* to be a critically compassionate and multi-faceted project-based learning environment that served as a collective improvisational polyphonic learning experience. Through the order of improvisational disorder, I learned that the project utilised a form of entropic pedagogy through incrementally immersive workshops. These allowed participants to wildly explore new ways of making and thinking collaboratively, then actively stabilised the improvisation into new structural forms through the PBL pedagogic organisation and administration via the workshops' AAA methodology and my oversight of all the project's moving parts.

This entropic pedagogy heavily influenced the collectively agreed upon culmination series of workshops, as participants were so ingrained in the entangled multi-layered and interactive learning processes that they could not comprehend how a single performative act or event could summarise our collaborative findings.

Sonic Camouflage was shown to propagate meaningful artistic exploration through PBL co-creation; discovering new learning, values, and knowledge; and an understanding that participants achieved a prevailing "sense of joy, of getting things done and of learning through life with one another" (Salazar, 2021, p. 77).

The research also guided me to view *Sonic Camouflage* as a type of collaborative machine where all the entangled moving parts, the 'microcultures of collaboration', somehow synchronise to energise arts practice pedagogy.

7.1 Microcultures of collaboration

This *Sonic Camouflage* research analysis revealed a number of integrated pedagogic components that all contribute to what I termed 'microcultures of collaboration'. These microcultures were discovered to be symbiotically entangled into the many pedagogic processes of the project. I unravelled and expanded on the discoveries in the summary of the question analysis chapters, and list them here as six clear pedagogic components with succinct discovery summaries for each one. Specific components from these microcultures

can be referred to as a pedagogic toolkit when designing similar projects for co-creation. These will help improve participants' communication, active listening, and empathy skills whilst instilling a strong sense of belonging to a learning community and providing an empowering resilience for future art practice.

Scales of learning

It is crucial to be hyper-attentive to individual participants during all scales of learning – not in an overbearing way, but by tuning into the specific frequencies of each participant to negotiate meaningful interaction. This required critical active listening and empathy with varying time lapses of communicative response, ranging from instantaneous, instinctive, in-the-moment reactions to each other, to much longer, deeper reflection between workshops when something was remembered, or an idea sparked that participants would then communicate.

Incremental improvisational collaboration

To my surprise, the collaborative improvisational methodology of the workshops evolved to become the actual artform, a form of ongoing free-form rehearsal as exhibition. This entirely changed participants' artistic development and perception of their art practice and what constitutes an exhibition. The unpredictable improvised substance of the richly entangled sonic workshop became the components that made the artwork. This was completely unexpected. Incremental bi-weekly workshops introduced with research prompts and defined breakdowns of time within the session allowed the collective to relax and be co-supportive with the improvisational free-form section of the workshop. This free-forming was crucial for individuals to negotiate a successful collective communicative effect through developing a range of 'invisible tools' (John-Steiner, 2006). These critical tools allowed participants to learn how to make confident semi-spontaneous sonic responses and interactions. This was accelerated and intensified by the live rawness of the workshop and the dynamism of not knowing how the interactions would begin and end.

Locational learning

The off-campus locations considerably enhanced learning as participants recognised that the new real-world environments offered a more alert, dynamic, risky, unexpected, and richly

entangled higher-level learning experience than on-campus spaces. Bennett (2010, p. 108) proposes closer attentiveness to 'thing-power' as interventions, and the agency specific things hold. *Sonic Camouflage* revealed a highly sensitive consideration to *thing-power* through the sonic response to objects and ambient sounds in locational environments. Locational learning proved to be a transformative learning experience (Mezirow, 1997) for all participants. Participants were shown to re-invent themselves, releasing them from perceptions about their abilities and certain pressures they faced in the UK, helping break down negative barriers from years of identity building within their respective cultural contexts.

Connecting into the world with a contextually relevant cultural instigator

The use of Sfyria as provocation was shown to be key to the inquiry-led PBL environment. It was especially meaningful as participants eagerly anticipated that they would be locationally learning within the context of the cultural specificity for the residency period. Salazar's (2021) research on the identifiable characteristics of quality higher education teaching showed how important it is to for educators to make opportunities for inquiry-based learning. This outward facing inquiry kept everyone looking forward and "open to the world's aliveness, *literally being in touch* with its bodied encounters of material and affective figurations and reconfigurations" (Cooke, Colucci-Gray and Burnard, 2023, p. 26, original emphasis).

Tri-role: artist, educator, researcher

While enacting the tri-role I found myself becoming hyper-focussed to hear and see all the moving parts through my multi-layered perceptions and reactions. I had no sense of being an educator in these moments: I was an artist entangled within the collaborative whole. It was only when the workshop ended that I would begin to drift into educator mode when the group reflected on the content of the workshop and considered its new direction. Martinez-Zarate (2023, p. 97) affirms that "pedagogy is an artistic practice" and the tri-role blurred different roles into one pedagogic and artistic research project. The fluidity of my behaviours was revealed to create new dynamic tensions to manifest itself in new networks of shared understandings that led to unexpected artistic and pedagogic outcomes as shown throughout the research.

Documentation as mediated artwork

The tri-role mindset allowed me to discover a new form of mediated artwork through the challenges of documenting live workshop performances. The documentation was instigated by my desire to suitably record *Sonic Camouflage* for posterity and for it to act as an aide memoir when analysing workshop activity. The challenge was to compress the multifaceted live locational learning workshop experiences into a flattened two-dimensional representation that would somehow articulate something about the essence of the multilayered, complex, co-created learning experience. The videos provide a slower, more distanced mediated analysis of image, place, and sound through a desaturation of surface to create a somewhat granulated sensation of looking in through a window onto the learning experience.

7.2 Summary

This research was initated to re-energise educators' art and pedagogic practice whilst simultanesouly enhancing students' learning as collaborative participants, and to undertake this through practice-based methods. The research journey has been beneficial to strenghtening my practice and understandings as an artist educator and researcher. The pilot projects helped build my knowledge of co-creating pedagogies, ranging from the large-scale *Textures of Travel* in Poland to the smaller scale of *Collaborative Drawing Action* for ITV in London.

To my surprise, the tri-role gave me dynamic permission "to enact modes of knowing differently" (Cooke, Colucci-Gray and Burnard, 2023, p. 39) as I directed my 'live in the field' actions as an artist and educator and then reflected on these afterwards as researcher. These reflections on being live in the field allowed me to pick up on many learning nuances that would otherwise be overlooked, from verbal dialogues to learning from looking and observing actions. Reflection supported by memory, written notes, and audiovisual prompts gave me a helpful perspective as to what to do next live in the field of action. Having the three research questions created an expectation of discoveries, yet the discoveries were on the whole surprising and enhanced my collaborative interactions, generating ideas for future projects.

The research has helped narrow down, then open up, new pedagogic designs. I propose that a balanced fine art curriculum should have spaces for injections of learning intensity through supportive, co-created PBL activites that use a cultural instigator to frame and inspire. It may not always be possible to use an international learning location, yet as my pilot projects showed, a national off-campus environment is still successful, propelling all participants' imagination, enthusiasm, and learning potential forward.

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