

Creativity and Musicality in Digital Soundscape Composing

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Plan

- Context
- What is Soundscape?
- Sound at Primary School
- What is Digital Soundscape?
- Scoping Study in an Action Research Framework
- Creativity and Musicality

Context



- Musique Concrète (e.g. music of Roger Doyle)
- Listening, Composing, Learning and Teaching
- Programmatic Music and Abstract Music
- Soundscape as a stepping stone to Abstract Music
- Action Research
- Scoping Study

What is soundscape?

What is Soundscape?



- Authentic field recording: *Vanscape*
- Manipulated recording: *Something Quite Atrocious*

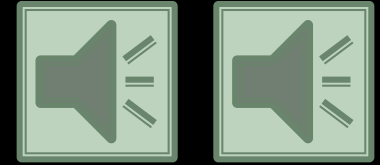
It reflects the natural conditions of the area.

It presents sounds within a defined area.

Soundscape gives the listener a sense of place.

It is an 'aural landscape'.

Sound at Primary School



Children listen to, identify and imitate familiar sounds in the immediate environment from varying sources e.g.

- Infant classes: **Rain falling**
- 1st and 2nd classes: **Ambulance**
- 3rd and 4th classes: **Tin whistle depicting birds**
- 5th and 6th classes: **Sound waves, echoes, noise**
- **Rainstorm:** Imitation of natural sounds
- **Seascape:** Recording of Infants by 3rd year student

What is Digital Soundscape?



- Editing 'found' sounds individually in an audio editor
- Positioning them in the multitrack screen
- Mixing down the piece into one final waveform

Digital soundscapes are constructed from 'found' sounds. They are coherent. The sense of location may be enhanced by adding effects and by transforming sounds.

- Pubscape: lacking composing technique

Scoping Study

Research Question:

How might digital soundscape stimulate creativity and musical learning among student teachers?

- 3 student teachers in 1st year
- 3 laptops with audio editor ('Adobe Audition')
- Own choice of themes and sounds
- Compose 3 soundscapes of 40 seconds duration

Meanings

- Creativity

Original and Worthwhile

- Musicality

Music as organised sounds.
Elements such as Timbre, Beat,
Dynamics, Tempo, Pitch, Rhythm

- Composing

Structure, Layers, Contrast,
Development of Ideas, Events,
Recurrence, Foreground,
Background, Staggered entries

Students' Responses

Question: Is this a creative activity?

- “Using the *technology* was worthwhile”
- “It enhanced my *technical* ability”
- “Learning the *software* was a worthwhile activity”

Question: Is it music?

- “I don’t *feel* that this is music”
- “This *taught* me nothing about music”
- “I don’t *hear* it as music”

Learning from Digital Soundscape

- Use of sounds: *Cathedralscape*
- Storytelling: *Hospitalscape*
- Pacing: *Bathscape*

What are the criteria for digital soundscape composing?

- Expert views

Devising Criteria for Composing

- *Beachscape*
- *Murderscape*
- *Datescape*
- *Trainscape*
- *Countrypubscape*
- *Streetscape*
- *Springscape*
- *Prisonscape*
- *Hauntscape*
- *Officescape*
- *Schoolscape*
- *Stablescape*
- *Riot scape*
- *Bad Gardenscape*
- *Student Gardenscape*

Parameters, themes, choice and number of sounds

Teaching with Digital Soundscape

- Matching images and sounds
- Scaffolding acoustic composing



- 4th year student teacher resource: Homescape

Creative and musical discussions are triggered by soundscape.

The Creative Process in Composing

- Exploring sounds, generating ideas, solving problems, being expressive, being coherent...

‘preparation, incubation, insight, evaluation, elaboration’
(Csikszentmihalyi ,1996, 79)

- Imaginative soundscape: **Saturnscape**

Thanks for your interest!

www.organisingsounds.com

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