

ALAIN AYERS, Bergen – Norway, Nov 2012

EKKO Festival, Bergen, Norway

Sound art and Electronic music

Ephemeral Sustainability Conference

<http://www.oestre.no/index.php/en/program/ephemeral-sustainability?group=3>



Alain Ayers attended Day 2 of the conference with a purpose to explore 'writing about', in this case, sound art. With references to 'live' notations, conversations, research and unfolding memory he found himself to be writing in what he has begun to regard as a form of enfolded intersections – Passages 1 to 7.

“I hoped to be loosening the sensation of being gripped by the event, and instead entertaining crystal and muddy thinking during this process of re writing conference. I am re engaging with writing in a way that I have been inclined to try for some time. It feels like 'writing about' is a perceiving mode and maybe phenomenological. By attending a conference actively one is not just a delegate on the floor, or a speaker, a panel member, performer and so on. We can also be enacting and take an activist position in relation to this un natural situation, make live documentation and share the experience as alive. This (object) piece of work could be like a musical score, open to revision and improvisation”

1st passage

I usually make hand written notations into a lined notebook. The formation varies and I try to work with tonality as well as specific content and broader sensations. In this process of close listening I try to let a pattern arise about what I am hearing. Listening can vary and many factors can intervene. My idea about close listening doesn't exclude wider sounds or thoughts. I don't want to be writing a conventional critical review.

When I am listening in this situation I am committed to trying to follow, and part of this following is also trying to understand. Questions naturally arise but they can be difficult to capture in some of the more dense presentations. This requires a skilful translating listening and reflecting. Simultaneity becomes the modus operandi, critical- perceptual, not ambient.

Forming a dialogic receptivity through critical engagement can become an entrapment into argument rather than developing a capacity for argumentation. What I am trying to do is to form questions that extend my pleasure around knowledge where uncertainty and openness converge. I am for the art of conversation.

Not many speakers give me enough time to reflect or wonder. Presentations can become extremely dense with meaning, information, images, text and sometimes sound. So it's good when a conference programme can invite different ways of presenting and this was partially achieved during Day 2 at 'Ephemeral Sustainability'. From this we could acknowledge diversity at the core of sustainability.

David Toops' work of the previous evening was a good example of how conference meets festival. Toop is able to construct a programme of reflexive spaces as an essayist, with a sound lecture. Is it a narrative of personal and cultural politics? Sound, image, text, a musicality of simple and accessible dimensions. But there is nothing easy about achieving this. The beauty is that he is improvising within composing and his voice engages us in a similar way to the 1950's radio voices coming out of the cave of childhood memories. We will continue to recognise memory as we go. The piece could be an autobiographical documentary but it also has a scope of minimal orchestra. If it is concerned about present-imminent, circumstantial global crisis, it is understated, but it's not going gently. The form is demanding because it invites the listener to simultaneously listen into their own circumstances and invites them to stand up and be counted. If we are to occupy every possible space and time that is common in the care of sustainable ephemerality, then it appears to begin with our own self awareness, to be prepared, to be present.

The title is 'archival footnotes (of sounding/ ignominious and abject; sublime and silent/ for discontinuous listening and permanence in forgetting) – UK, Sound Lecture'

Toops' elegant action was prepared to encounter a risky edge of over simplification, leaving each scene at a moment of vulnerable incompleteness, merging time zones, comedic silent movie timing and an encyclopedic world culture. Not embroiled into this, as a Beckett character might be, alone within the dramaturgy, but exposed never the less, through the medium of facing audience expectation for festive erudition.

The torture never stops and there's trouble every day. We were surely anxious about the American vote and the tyranny of governance and theft from the common purse, everywhere, just days before the U.S. election. I stayed up till Ohio was called, didn't we all?

The curators and project organisers of the event have worked hard in finding a depth of

content representing current practices as well as a horizon of possibility. With the newly re-opened Lydgalleriet and the Ekkofestival, and not forgetting the excellent BEK – Bergen Electronic Kunst, Bergen is well situated in its resources and commitment to artists working with sound art and electronic music.

I attended Day 2 of the conference to follow the theme, 'writing and perception in relation to listening'. To be fair I can say it was inconclusive and divisive. The day veered more towards issues of feasibility and purpose of documentation. Was documentation needed as an archive, an authentic 'portrait' of a work, or more as an integrated working process for artists and curators? It was surprising to see a resistance to documentation and of the perception that it is more to do with an historical archiving or a pragmatic approach to securing funding and project development. These would be important conditions of documentation but there was a pervasive sense that the sound artist was likely to be bound into the programmatic realisation of a 'live' event with little time or energy for anything else.

The main problem with documentation of 'live' sound-art, it was said, is that it will contain imperfections when compared to the special qualities of the real time event. The dialogue never established a difference between recording, replaying and documentation. A few people were ready to accept that sound, like images can be secondary, imperfect and a temporary reference that provides information and exchange. Others demanded the presence of sound in preference to, or as well as images. Then there were others who were more conciliatory about the purpose of images standing as an actuality from an archive and not a re cast from the event itself.

This phenomenon of the authentic moment for sound-art appears to be an ethical point of an in-exploitable, un-repeatable quality of time. There won't be an edition of video-audio recordings from sound installation art. Some video artists do sell work as unique editions as do artists working with sound art and electronic music. On reflection there appeared to be a useful but an unspoken dilemma, where relationships of live art purity and entrepreneurial musical activity were not usefully explored. It was touched on as a tangent at the end of the day. Sound-art installations become exhibitions in art galleries (even sound-art galleries) and operate in that ecology, with the artist receiving commission or performance fees as part of the funding model.

Small independent music labels still operate as a part of the fringe of the music industry. The economy of sound-art and electronic music is still essentially -left field- of the regular music business but very much a part of the contemporary art scene of galleries, after hours arts venues, festivals and trending in arts education. However, the proliferation of small independent labels and the shift into digital production has created an explosion of accessible content online. Electronic music has mushroomed, nobody needs the big labels anymore and sound art installation is a part of the gallery vocabulary.

So could it be a role for an institution like Lydgalleriet in Bergen to consider the emergent and merging role of documentation, recording, playback, performing rights and so on, or will the sound artists tell me that I am missing the point? If there are gaps in the ability and professional capacity of curatorial teams then addressing these in practical and creative development seems a crucial part of developing the deeper ecology of a sustainable ephemerality. One person I spoke with had not even considered factoring the process of project documentation as part of a budget plan.

We know that arts education has become seriously engaged with sound art but this may not be as integrated as it could be into the broader contexts of practice outside the academy, remaining primarily in the cleaner arena of academic research.

2nd passage

As a prelude to writing today I am reading the Guardian online. In an interview with the Danish film maker Michael Haneke the interviewer receives a response to a question that situates audience as participators, "The audience completes the film by thinking about it; those who watch must not be just consumers ingesting spoon-fed images."

This is a reference to a scene where the film audience watch another audience in a theatre listening to a piano recital but the film audience, unlike the filmed theatre audience, never see the pianist.

Is this similar to speaking and writing about sound without actually hearing sound in the works referred to? If it is about sculpture do I need to bring the object into the room or is an image ok? Bernini understood this all too well. He provoked movement around his work through the spatial instability of unstable objects, never mind his firework displays.

At this conference -Day 2 - a friction arose as a result of a very thorough, if conventional, presentation by one of the speakers who used visual images and spoken word to convey the curation of two sound art exhibitions.

This omission, but let's call it an intentional absence of sound, certainly frustrated and even angered a few of the audience and what ensued was a day that pondered over and emphasised anxiety about how sound art can be documented and whether sound should always be used in relation to speaking about sound art.

My aim here is not to extensively critique the content of the presentations or even the formats, but to use the day as a method on reflecting on my own concerns. This can be understood as me learning and thinking for myself, using a method of sifting between the personal and the public, subjectivation. I am not writing as a critic, a form which doesn't actually interest me. The method is a kind of amalgam, similar to the four definitions outlined by Suzanne Lacey in *'Mapping The Terrain'*, 1995. These are four positions that outline movement between the personal and public, from subjective experienter to the engaged activist. Useful in it's capacity for investigating the situation itself as well as your own perceptions and not being overly prescriptive.

There is a traditional mode of presentation which necessitates use of documentation. These forms of documentation locate information around image and text, usually through a historical time line or thematic where the speaker speaks in direct relation to what is being shown. This mode functions primarily as education, through explanation and explication. Information, ideas, context and theory expand to communicate a form of an educative experience.

What is more difficult is to consider with this mode is what is being addressed through the actual art work, the possible intentions of the artist, when there is an emphasis on explication. Ranciere's effective example of why not to work through this mode takes place in *'The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation'*, 1981. In the rewriting of a Joseph Jacotot text, himself a teacher and educational philosopher who developed a learning process of 'intellectual emancipation' Ranciere shows that the form of teaching that uses explanation and explication keeps the listener-learner just outside of the real sense of acquiring knowledge, instead to grasp a partial view from a distance. Only the speaker here can inhabit the original field of knowledge divested through an existing institutional practice demonstrated through presentation format and archival access.

I start to reflect on our own relationship of listening and to our acquisition of understanding through hearing, what we hear and what we don't hear, the point we stop listening because we are literally lost in our own thoughts. The possibility of multidisciplinary listening and simultaneous hearing enters the room. At school, this would be have been

called day dreaming and likely to induce a causality of failure, demonstrating lack of comprehension of the task in hand, that of to follow. I know I said at the beginning about following but that's what a convention has the power to do, to take us back to the learnt responses, to slide back in and assume the position. Unlearning is what I need.

Is our own route to acquiring knowledge from who is speaking only possible if we realise that what is being withheld is what we need to get to know. This is the power and authority invested in official and approved documentation such as an archive. The archive has an official transcript of meaning and the keeper of the knowledge is from this archival – documentary tradition. This mode also forms a genuine part of the contemporary knowledge economy. The knowledge economy is not only engaged in what is revealed and shared but what is simultaneously concealed at the point of exchange.

Usually, a speaker works with an oral narration, sometimes unscripted but more often following written notes that directly relate to the images. There can also be a more formal reading of a prepared (written) paper with or without a relation to visual images.

The speaker is at the front, sitting or standing. The voice is usually amplified into a speaker system and the images are generated through a laptop programme and controlled by the speaker. Sometimes some one else needs to operate the 'slide show' but this can either feel awkward because we lose touch with the expectation of flow or it can feel fascinating because it breaks the smooth 'liquid modernity' in the speaker as an automaton in full control.

Usually the audience gets to participate in the convention of asking questions and if lucky engaging in a discussion. Is this a limitation of how participation might be experienced for audience? Are there any other modes of presenting and engaging in exchange and sharing via conference and event?

The strong convention of speaker audience relation, the division of who speaks, who listens, the architecture of the space and the design of the floor layout will frequently bring about the nature and quality of the experience of the event. It is a well trodden organisational pattern and it will always yield a result. In these places there can be an unintended dichotomy where the brain is stimulated to the point of strain along with an increasing bodily discomfort via the chair and continuous sitting. Art may need discomfort but conference frequently means uncomfortable.

Recently at a Symposium on the Dérive/drift at HEAD Geneva I outlined a way that the audience could listen, in relation to the way I had chosen to present. This included the suggestion that they could leave my words if they so chose at any stage and move with their own thoughts and return as they wished. They might follow the two video works being screened or they might follow thoughts of their own that were arising. What I was trying to begin was a reworking of my own purpose of who speaks and who listens. Is it possible for an audience to participate through the presentation creating time for this to occur? They could get up and walk around, even if the space didn't lend itself to that. Sitting all day for hours at a time can be very wearing and a real turn off to the purpose of such an event.

The use of performative presentations is not new but when we stop to consider how most conference presentations happen they certainly appear to follow an academic-scientific tradition of lecture theatre rules. There are architectural, spatial and structural guidelines about knowledge, the rhetoric of writing and speaking.

As one conference participant critically inserted - "who writes remains", which we return to. (Wer schreibt bleibt)

3rd passage

Hurricane Sandy, became an ecological partner as it struck the US coast just three days before Seth Cluett was due to speak in Bergen. We watched a pre-recorded online presentation about sound-art. Titled 'Ephemeral, Immersive, Invasive: Sound as Curatorial Theme, 1966-2012-US', it was the days keynote lecture and it felt a little disappointing to miss the actual presence of the speaker. Later however, one of the delegates expressed to me a concern about so many people travelling around the world to do these kind of events and was it not an important part of the economy and ecology of an ephemeral sustainability to consider other ways of congregating. Thinking about it like that, why did I feel any sense of disappointment that he could not be present? Didn't he convey exactly what he intended to, even if the backdrop was a room in a house in upstate New York with internet access.

Definitions become important and we heard about the 'sound practice archive', an archive of production, exhibition and documentation; a statistical report on 'sound themed exhibitions'. Descriptions and context, a language of sound, discourse, lexicon, critical discourse, a layered and clustering language, constellations – 'a community of practitioners'. All of this made for a kind of conviction sound art overview through the consensus of a timeline with the emphasis on an American-European axis–praxis.

Through Lucy Lippard's 'Dematerialisation of the art object' we get to conceptualised strategies, to pre computer, to LP's and telephony in a post conceptual shift back and forth with New York City as the hub. America has a vast commitment to global cultural diplomacy and this stealth orientation can become sometimes unwittingly over emphasised. A strong minimal aesthetic of space, objects, instruments and design is revealed in relation to the forms of production on record, tape, CD. We ventured into programatic curation of sound artworks in white cube galleries – on/off cycles, headphones and other mediations.

In there, at the heart of the matter I heard within the commentary where text, speech technology, the voice, language, words, sound and the body, became the body and embodied the nature of sound art as art. Listings of language in speaking about, listings and extended categorisation in speaking about sound, categorisations and taxonomies in embracing a sense of vastness, about sound and speaking about sound and the resounding transmission and receiving of sound as sound art.

Next up we looked at two projects curated by Nicole Gringras in Montreal and Berlin. One involving Raymond Gervais and the other Ralph Julius. The format becomes a confirmation of what is already known from an existing body of knowledge where the intentions of the artists work is reiterated and replayed through the process of curation.

Now I am thinking about 'how sound manifests itself', it's traces, silence and memory and how in the act of listening which is oblique to the actual sound in a space. We don't go to the actual sound or necessarily the source of the sound as we might go to the visual art object to look at and understand more. We are in oblique definitions and multiple descriptions that might build like a diorama, a sound scape that is sound art.

But a language of description shifts and makes meaning elusive, you can't locate the sound, it's everywhere. There is silence, or an absence of sound, there is music and listening and then there is the imagination around sound that I look for as the images are replayed as objects and spaces of spoken word. I don't have a memory of the sound of the work and so a vague notion sets in but the narrative is structured and I follow.

Is there a transformation in the actual work when it is a re-interpretation or is it developmental and re-performing itself through the curator's presentation? A vinyl record on a turntable, a metronome turning, an instrumentalisation of idea, 'mechanical devices', sonic dervishes, spirals, grooves and cyclones, and then an environmental impact. Import

the sculptural language of installation, equipment and an echo of Bruce Nauman, the invention of equipment when the aesthetic plays and performs itself as object-image-event. Wasn't that the language of installation? When Bill Viola began with video the technologies in the work were closer to audio than the digital environment of the computer of later work.

Extreme listening and its limitations, a type of conceptual programming as a score. Is thirteen turntables a list, a set of instructions, systems that shift from classical to atonal and then programming the sonic? A growing ritualistic presence situated in the language of installation, called 'sound installation art'. Is there a mode of seeing and listening where seeing forms a silence in the listening?

Then there is the role of fiction strategy in producing a complex conceptual environment. Bach listening to Gould, Duchamp breathing. Transactional composition face to face. Image- object-text conveying sound as idea. Beethoven's masks, alive and dead. Who knew of the one, alive?

The curator is developing a programme of the artists work as a process of replaying and re-performing as any dead or alive musician might expect. A monument is building itself in its performing as a retrospective. Maybe not intentional, maybe I am imagining this monument being constructed through the archive as a retrospective continuum. I am hoping it's not a mausoleum, a discreet language of after life.

There is beyond the monumental, space-coloured-sound, composition in space, small and small scale, perhaps momentary and transitional, where the audience perform the work by being in the work. There is the discreet minimal language of material and equipment. Blending and metamorphosis makes a composition in a paradox of sound and silence while memory is re inventing, replaying experience.

There is musicality and composition and there is spoken word. So, should sound be present in a sound work presentation? When the sound is missing are we dependent then on the communication of the subjectivity of the experience and is there a real context in the 'absence' of sound that lets us think through the curators voice and not the artists?

If sound needs to be heard in a relationship to representation then how might we speak about sound when the sound is unheard, when we can't form a relationship to what is being represented? If this begins to perform a theorisation or a re-conceptualisation there might be a valuable communication anyway.

Some people think that any documentation is invariably a limitation, a boundary, of experience but we do need boundaries, don't we? So, I ask myself does subjectivity have a place in 'speaking about' when we want to veer away from the form of re-performing selected aspects of a practice to describe a practice?

Does any practice have a distinctive singular portrait and is it the artist that we will know more about or the speaker re-performing the practice as a theorisation? I say to myself, well this is o.k. as long as we know that this is what is happening and no I don't mind this and no I don't have a strong objection to someone 'speaking about' by re/performing the work without sound and with a curatorial perception as long as it's not the only format of conference. But what of the voice, what will the voice say?

Has sound art arrived at a moment in time where some institutional critique is due? There is an accumulated body of practice and research. The more deeply held views and critical comments around presence of sound, around images conveying sound, around the role of an archive indicate that what has begun has a long road to travel. How might this happen?

4th passage

I have been reading 'The Infinite Demand of Art' by Simon Critchley, <http://www.artandresearch.org.uk/v3n2/critchley.php> . Later I watched the Zidane video again. Earlier in my studio as wind and rain lashed at the window up on the eighth floor I had been listening to The Magnetic City by Christina Kubisch on youtube. I had missed contributions from the previous day and I wanted to hear something more. I wanted to consider how she might have been thinking in relation to her comment, 'Wer schreibt bleibt'.

During the week I have also been listening to works by SØS Gunver Ryberg, who, I'd heard, had made a different kind of performative presentation the previous day. Now I am in a phase of reflecting that by only attending the 'writing about' theme on Day 2 I was missing out on possible diversity but equally my experience is a microcosm of the nature of the event and it focusses my work on writing about the sound of sound art and not an emphasis in reporting back mode of conference.

Then again, writing about and speaking about are interwoven in the way that the voice and writing becomes mixed together, which another presenter makes clear and which we are coming to. Before this there is other ground to cover. Simon Critchley is saying that there is no method, only a way, but he still does this through the introduction of a methodology.

A methodology is a process of choices, rules, principles, procedures, practices and so on. For 'Ephemeral Sustainability' the methodology seems to be the actual programme of presentations, it's contents of writing about and speaking about. The conference structure, the panel discussions that engage questions and comments, informs this methodology. From this then, we might expect a significant locating of the state of sound art and electronic music today. In what formats will we experience these findings as a result?

A statement from the conference website reads, 'A conference about presenting, documenting, collecting and archiving sound based contemporary art. Lectures and panel talks with leading conveyers, artists, curators and thinkers within the field.'

The conference has been documented, so we might also expect some publishing of content. I think there is a case to contextualise a wider intention at the beginning and as the event unfolds by integrating a 'live' developmental/editorial platform that considers the events own language of actualities and documentation. This would mean working through the methodology itself and critically engaging with it as the event unfolds in real time. How could this be done, and does it have value for the sharing and discourses for the subject in hand? I concentrate on this aspect of purpose and outcomes because the conference format is a formal exchange and therefore is a platform to produce and disseminate knowledge. This doesn't have to be within a traditional academic model. In fact these after event phases could explore the spatial languages of production realisation, performance and reception.

Informal presentation is a good way of sharing basic information and this is what Maia Urstad managed, covering the life and travels of two key works, 'Sound Barriers' and 'Meanwhile in Shanghai'. She spoke about experiential and working relations, of museums and shipping and the 80's radio bricks that form the barrier of sounds. During the production phase the work became known about and then fortunately became part of the Borealis music festival in Bergen. It was seen at Borealis and then a long journey of exhibitions began. It helps for work to be seen as well as heard.

Much can depend on specific production teams that are sometimes, but not always, part of the curatorial process. We got an insight into working practices, the recordings over time of medium wave, fm, long wave. We understood the inherent nature of problems with sound recording, the relationships between recording, playing back, repeating and the maintenance of equipment and the reliability of the institution to keep the work in working

order. Maia plays some sound to everybody's delight, but we notice the editing and the way the sound is not the sound of the space but the sound of another soundtrack. This becomes a neat example of how to document and at the same time an illustration of our anxiety. What sound should the replay audience hear, the sound in the space that will be imperfect or the sound from the direct feed which is even more perfect than any audience will hear at the live event? Documentation promotion or documentation actuality?

Sound is an aura, it's never where you think it is, it's like the wind, you can't see it. Being on the road with a sound work is almost like being in a band or a theatre company. Each venue has its own rules, idiosyncrasies, skills and limitations when specific requirements are necessary for each work. What is needed for the best experience is a competent curatorial team that includes technical specialisms and consistent problem solving dialogue.

The language of installation for a work can be fixed or it can be responsive to each exhibition space. The audio quality of any space is more difficult to determine and to engage with in creating solutions, but with enough research and communication it can be achieved. Maintenance and expertise is a resounding message for the fragile ecology of sound reproduction on the road.

What I think about, inconclusively, is the relationship of sound art to music and how does institutional practice see this? Is there a gap between the artist practicing sound art and an institution treating sound art as it would a musical or theatrical performance? Then I wonder whether sound art by its nature, in the hybrid ground between visual arts, performance and music, in seeking to define its own unique territory risks trading its boundary breaking identity for a more stable location?

Sound art is attaching itself to other systems, language is its enemy. Sound is a space, sound is an event and it is dependent on words and photographs. Some one else says this. But then what art form isn't? I say that. Does documentation become the postcard of the painting or can it be seen for what it is, a thing in itself? Is it bound into translation, a secondary document that re opens, re views and re makes meaning? The distinct anxiety around documentation remains for the day. There is a problem with disappearing technical formats and this is the real problem according to one delegate. There is also a sense that this is a community speaking to itself, it's not addressing a wider audience but this is the tendency and maybe the necessity of conference to address its own body.

Something is coming up later though which suggests that sound art still mimics visual arts and its association to theorisation by working through historical and contextual images and forgetting to utilise documented sound when speaking about sound.

5th passage

I am listening to Messiaen, Turangalila-Symphonie because I love it and I want to hear music that challenges how I am imagining sound art. That might sound wrong in this context but it's intuitive. It's astonishing how the ondes Martenot colours the work, how the study of birdsong inspires Messiaen. I am trying to think in ways that sound art is the future of musical composition, of music performance and listening across complex musicalities. But then there is still the cadence and lyricism of writing and the voice speaking what is written, this ever present orchestration of the voice through thought and ideas.

Daniella Cascella excels in this lyrical form. She is reading, but not a paper, she is speaking as a writer, reading her work. A spoken live archive, a heritage of listening and reclaiming Pasolini's heritage from traditionalists, and with 'what thou lovest well remains', from Pound's canto resonating from the throat, song like.

Referencing Jean Rhyss, 'The Wide Sargasso Sea', Cascella speaks about an identity working itself through voices, voices recording identities that are not about sameness and easily fitting in. She brings us closer to a contemporary experience that recalls an earlier etymology of *idemptitie* and into the realm of the eighteenth century philosopher Hume who registered indentity and selfhood as 'a bundle or collection of different perceptions' and that an action of memory is 'the source of personal identity'. The possibility of the function of perception feels important and with a greater enquiry about perception, Day 2 may have remodelled the idea of the drift of sound still being articulated primarily through the history and practices of visual arts.

'En abîme: Listening, Reading, Writing. An Archival Fiction' is Cascella's latest publication and it is a book that I would want to read. Here is the heart of the matter, when there is an inspirational moment and something opens up inside and the musicality of awareness moves you towards your own possibility to act. Listening to me into her writing and then it lead me away to another memory. I remembered being in the same space as the sound of an artist working through sound art. It was an overview exhibition where there was documentation, a replay and re enactment of sound of the sound artist.

This summer in Berlin I went to the exhibition of Maryanne Amacher at the DAAD Gallery. It was a little awkward in it's design but I truly appreciated having access to objects from her archive and to sit, if uncomfortably, on a low table and listen to a range of key works through headsets. Notations, texts and images giving insight and conceptual contexts were placed on the walls and on a very large stage-like table occupying a whole space. I stayed for a couple of hours and during that time not many visitors passed through. Lines of tourists heading to or from Checkpoint Charlie streamed by the windows and I preferred it that way. Some cultural experiences are for a majority and others a significant minority. This was like a hidden treasure. To have space and time with work and to be reflecting on the work is an important quality for other artists to have. In July there had also been three concerts programmed, imagine that.

I came to her work quite late, that's my loss. Her work with programmable technology, telephony, spatial dimensions that she couldn't learn about through music studies make her work thoroughly absorbing and understandable in the context of sound art. It wasn't just the idea of sounds that interested her but the deeper project of trying to locate the ways that we actually perceive sound.

What I am thinking after Day 2 of Ephemeral Sustainability is that we have been speaking about and writing about but missing something substantial about the connecting matter of *perceiving*. I followed Amacher through the internet.

At around 12:00 of her presentation for Ars Electronica, 1989, <http://vimeo.com/30955464>. Amacher makes the case for a perception through structural development and then moves on to the way that TV and comics indicated a form for an episodic continuity of her sound

work. In her description on psycho acoustic tone, sounds that we reproduce when listening she reveals how this can happen. It could be music, or sound art, as a writer reads, as a voice works like an instrument, a sonic wave. Amacher's attention to describing the relationships between composition and improvisation are simply stunning. Sights and sounds work differently on the body and the mind.

This linking of Amacher and Cascella might appear off track but what I am getting to is the way speaking about sound and writing about perception through the voice has qualities where any attempt at correlation gives way into to a form of *speculative realism*. The thingness of sound and the thingness of writing for voice is that they are distinctive languages, not the language that David Toop said is our enemy but the spatiality and timing of languages that convey themselves through and by speaking and writing, tangible differentiated languages that resonate in their own way and that can be translated. The translation is a documentation. As we attend to listening we are forming our own archives of memory that Hume refers to. Memory and forgetting become one and the same, devices that perform rewind, pause, play, stop and fast forward simultaneously.

In Something (Is) Slipping Away, Kunstkrutikk, No.1, 2012 Peter J Amdam writes about Object Orientated Ontology and asks 'Is it possible to think of theory as an *object*...?' I have recently been reading a fellow traveler, Timothy Morton's book 'Ecology Without Nature' and it chimes with the idea of an ecology that does not confuse itself with an eco friendly green consumerism as well as resisting the solution of ambience as a common ground of experience. Sustainable ephemerality for sound art is clearly rooted in memory as well as the technology that sound artists (like Amacher) propose but it is also rooted in a rhizomic form of written and spoken language. With conceptual and emotional resonance (warmth) we can also experience the instinctive and the psycho acoustical phenomena of what the heart and mind loves.

And why with a dose of *speculative realism*? Perhaps as a threshold to the act of becoming because when any complex accumulation of *objects* are thinking then we also need to become the work ourselves, to tune in and listen with care. We will become one of the things in the thinking work, forget about as much as possible the work is going, arrive at a common experience through our own openness and becoming speculative in the way we simultaneously receive, process and transmit the work itself. At this point I feel an imminent leap into some kind of enfoldment reminiscent of David Bohm's implicate and explicate orders, where everything is in everything.

Sound art can help itself by understanding more about it's sense of being multiple and simultaneous languages, objects, spatial fields and by attending to it's theory through listening to itself more and not just the sounds, as Amacher so rightly elaborated. Amdam notes the way Bruno Latour's *actants* is another version of object and Latour himself borrowed from Heidegger's Ding (thing). Heidegger saw the thingness as all of its qualities assembled as component - material, spatial, functional, aesthetic, everything about the thing itself that can be thought of.

If this has strayed into a garage philosophy then perhaps it's time to move on. Being the philosophy or the theory is only a part of the story here, it's not the end point, not an arrival. There is ample work and research to be found in Sonic Art in relation to music theory, theory of sound objects and sound art and electronic music.

Cascella again, writes sound. How can she seem to write in a way archiving a 'present' time? It is ephemeral, really, ephemeral as *object*, in presence, in shadows, in an archive that you can access in real time. It is sonorous and as she speaks, as she reads what is written on the page held close to her face, mask like, standing still at the microphone there is to an accompanying silence of the room, something solitary in the audience that my ear slowly reverberates to. In this aura of sound it goes from sonic pleasure to sonic doom, it is precarious. The crisis of sound is looming right in front of us. There is nothing to fear.

What is spoken is immediately erased, there is an ease of the vanishing as well as a soft frenzy of grasping the passing of her voice. I am writing, stitching and writing during and after listening. A wall of boxes appeared like an archive, a single box was opened and examined, items were removed and became evocations, the stitching continued as if well worn clothes were being lovingly repaired with a threaded needle. Time was eroding and threads, threaded. I sensed a process of mourning, something has departed having never arrived fully. It was not sadness, it was pleasure arriving as loss of certainty.

6th passage

Things that I have been doing in parallel as I work through my notations and my 'writing about' become a vital way of locating the experience into the world. This world is my real time and my purpose is to keep the event in flow and not as a bubble of its own time, the safe conference bubble. There is an impact of experience, it's not just an exchange, it's also absorbed, an ingestion and a real in and out of body experience. I can't find a way to write about the event itself like a bubble.

I woke today remembering that in the Zidane video some text was used at the bottom of the screen. The text was in French. This may have caused the delay in it's meaning rising up to the surface. Zidane had said that as a young boy he used to listen to a particular football commentator and that as a player during a game he was aware of sounds in the stadium. As a boy what he loved was the sound of the voice of the commentator and not what the commentator was actually saying about the game. Zidane would get up close to the radio, to envelope himself into the space of the voice and the sound scape of the voice. This seems to have had an impact on Zidane's way of playing football and I wanted to speculate on his subsequent spatial awareness within the stadium itself via sound. It made me wonder if these sound scape memories had help inform Zidane's about how space worked in the flow of the game. Many people would understand now that Zidane seemed to posses an uncanny ability to read his positioning in relation to others and to execute complex actions like a dancer. He was always one step ahead, he knew what he would do with the ball in the moments before it arrived to him. He often seemed to float above the general gravity of the game and to ride some effortless wave. In his mind he could foresee, play and replay action through time. A before, during and after.

Asbjørn Tiller gave us an account of Arne Nordheims electronic sound scapes. These are compositional and structural in relation to specific locations. If there is a sound of architecture it doesn't seem to be a constant one in relation to a building such as a note or a chord, a tone or dissonance. There does appear to be a sound of materiality and spaces, of concrete, of metal, of glass. Electronic acoustics, stadium sound scapes, sonic blocks, massive and embedded.

He covered two key works, The Drop and Feast, one at Oslo's Agency for Water and Sewerage Works, the other in the Natural Science Centre, Trondheim. The conceiving, programmatic and technical production and installation of these works is utterly fascinating. Tiller unravelled the diverse user group experiences, one site as favourable and the other as very unfavourable. The sheer overriding scale of maintenance, desired or prescribed on/off cycles or variable volumes, impact and sensation for the viewer provoked a range of responses and mixed feelings in discussion.

Nordheim is playing on my laptop and outside the window someone is hammering in the harbour and for a moment it becomes part of the sound work. It takes a split second for the brain to process the difference but in that split second wasn't the hammering part of the music? Varese might have scored the sounds of the street into his musical scores in that the score was ultimately the work and it was the score that was performed each time. By the time I am listening to 'In C' by Terry Riley the score has shifted and the piece can never be performed the same twice. The score has changed and the way I am able to listen has changed forever. Some people say that Cage made us aware of silence and noise.

It's easy to form immediate opinions about the success and failure of programmatic sound works in a context of architectural and functional spatiality as with Nordheim but we can also consider how musicality pervades our perception of common social spaces at any given moment. What is the noise and what is the music? There is no obvious way of becoming aware of or being receptive to this sound track other than through our own experience. It's no longer limited to the muzak of elevators and malls or of walking the walk with our mp3 players. This contemporary sound leap is something sound-art has as a viable means of apprehending as well as playing with. Spatiality is sound arts big

discovery, allied with the emergent research into perceptual phenomena, of the the infinity of sound objects and an association with musicality. Sound-art feels like the coupling and uncoupling of the rails, in the phases of undoing and doing before the audibility of memory has been recalibrated.

In Nordheim's two sites there could be a problematic novelty around object-image-action-duration. The curiosity in those relationships with architecture, materials, programming and replay equipment, speakers, computerisation, cabling, the technical fixes into the socially configured grid and so on; the object-listener in the space as a form of participatory interactive installation. This proposes a different quality than of the object-listener being the work and more like a system of creating distance, of standing back and viewing the relationship of the sound with its space. In saying this I am still trying to consider the special thing that indicates the sound of sound art when compared to an electronic music installation.

It's not until much later that I am able to tease out what I found both awkward and fascinating about this presentation. The sound of the spoken text from Tiller began to mimic compositional phenomena. An effect of ventriloquising the meaning of the work through the sound of spoken language, enhancing the speaker as a prosthetic of the musical and spatial structures that are being researched. (Here I am trying to imagine a repositioning of the section 'The Natural and The Artificial' from 'The Infinite Demand of Art', Critchley)

Can research based writing about sound art and electronic music begin to unintentionally mimic the sound structure itself. In this case, a kind of written sonic minimalism, writing sound as if it was a part of the data base of the programmed compositions themselves? A programmatic written minimalism, connecting systems and environments. The writer-speaker begins to sound like what is being written about. It has the component parts of an 'eco-mimesis' that Timothy Morton questions. His critique of those writing about environmental campaigning by employing an ambient romanticism to create a narrative impressionism is compelling. They sound like they are evoking the Nature that we can all believe in and this is a benign and beneficent one. They appear to re enact the experience through nature with a process of writing about an encountering of nature, and so the eco-mimesis begins. We can know everything as a catalogued actuality of a sound art work but what will it tell us about what it sounds like or how it becomes situated into memory and what makes it resounding?

A comment I liked from a Guardian reader in response to 'When Brian Eno met Ha-Joon Chang', Nov 12, 2012, provides a timely perspective on our relation to the natural environment. When minimal ambient-electronic music vies for an equivalency with the open ended time cycles that we ascribe to nature then it's duration plays like an infinite ecology. In this version of sound art we chose to remember biodiversity and biodynamics but forget about climate change, viruses and plate tectonics. As the reader noted "When you spend a lot of time in the forest you don't want to listen to recordings of birds. Instead you tend to listen to stuff like Frank Zappa or the Allman Brothers or Japanese heavy metal. I lost interest in ambient because when I am listening to music I want to be fully engaged in the complexity of it rather than as an architectural function." When I read this I knew what he meant. Then I wanted to know what the effect would be of Messiaen played in the Oslo underground space? If you're in the environment itself do you want to be surrounded by sound that is replicated by that environment?

What's more, I became anxious about diminishing the quality of Nordheim's work because it could now appear to be like an illustration. It would sound like a systematisation of the space, ascribing sonic categories to mimic existing mechanical ones and thereby accidentally (or deliberately) producing this illustration. This would make it impossible to inhabit and experience the space itself, now veiled with sound, a sound producing invisibility. Somehow not satisfying at all, unless you could see the idea of an illustrational parallel sound space as brilliant. I still couldn't make up my mind.

Composing building functionality or architectural structure is like punctuation in language. Is the colour, the emotional warmth necessarily discarded for a conventional apparatus of logic? A world where only Spock could be the captain of the Enterprise. Or as such a sound work evolves, can a new building of entwined sonic and spatial memory emerge through expanded language, with not so much dependency on the gravity of the built environment but with an extra time based material of sonic evolution? Are we back to Futurism?

Feast was currently inaudible due to requests from building users. The nature and dilemma of sound in such a context was neatly summarised by a delegate from the floor who conveyed that although she had not heard a piece of music associated with the hospital in Bergen, she had read about it and this imagined sound memory had always been incredibly important to her. She felt that one day she would hear the work in reality. It was the very idea of the piece existing that was meaningful.

http://www.radiolab.org/2007/jun/07/?utm_source=local&utm_medium=treatment&utm_campaign=daMost&utm_content=damostviwed

Then I made another leap to an online 'Radiolab' piece, 'Memory and Forgetting' because I had already listened to one odd piece on ants. There is nothing more systematic than Argentinian ants but they are also devastatingly one track minded. Monstrous. When I coupled that thread of memory and forgetting with Maryanne Amacher's disclosures about the psycho acoustics that play out in the ear I wondered what it is that we all have memory of. In the Radiolab piece they said that each time we use memory it's more creative, constantly like an artist, infused with imagination, not the same each time like a series of zeros and ones. It's a physical trace in the brain, a protein, a bridge or a structure. Memory works on what is already remembered chemically in the brain, built for all time.

Salomé Voegelin is going to test my ability to remember and what is in my memory. Two ideas that are elaborated through two stories. Unicorns and Airplanes Landing, like two sounds art works, or text language installation, inside the room, upside my head. I am a sound work and my mind is the sound source and the space. It is a concentrated form of a research based presentation, working with a paper and image-text slides.

While the complexity of the paper was challenging and combined clarity and obscurity my notations were at their most fragmented and I wanted to understand this. Am I following? Could I have tried in this instance to listen and do nothing else. In one way I wanted to just listen but at the same time I felt that I needed to be consistent with notations.

We only have the most recent recollection of any memory. Each time we go through the memory it gets further from the original, it becomes embellished and reconstructed. Now Salomé is asking me to work harder, probably in a relaxed way, but as I try to work through things now, days after the talk, my memory is fuzzy. The day is entering the stage where stamina is required. It could be that she was able to simultaneously play and erase through a sonic sense that was designed to do so. And what am I experiencing now? I am having an amnesia response about the presentation. It's erased and I can't remember tones or colour, so if I reconstruct what I have as the amnesiac it will, according to Radiolab, be at it's most original state.

I have some notes and some screen images. Saul A. Kripke's, 'Naming and Necessity' is a form of analytical philosophy, we see right in front of our eyes language's hostage to descriptivism dissolve its structural conduct and we can hear the necessity of meaning fade into an oblivion. Where am I? I am somewhere else, un-signposted and being guided away and out of the things I have been taking for granted, the middle ground of middle thinking, of middling things.

Unicorns. Language arrives in another form, as building blocks and the reconstructing of naming and the signposting of naming feels twisted around like those acts of resistance by partisans and rebels alike. The mathematics and logic of Kripke's language defeats me but

Voegelin could be some kind of interlocutor for the thing, object, actuality, locator-identifier extraordinaire, subject-object minstrel, known or unknowable for certainty, with coded un reliability in the naming of things.

Airplanes Landing. Sonic descriptive, sonic thing, as she is speaking about airplanes landing, outside through the walls, the windows hum, a plane is buzzing in the air, certainly, maybe in-between landing, taking off and landing. Is flying overhead both the thing and its attributes? Am I in a narrative encounter? Not essentialist.

Blog form as a scroll, un rolling – un folding – en folding, complex plurality, inconsistencies. It is and I am 'a possible thing of sound'. Incidental-ambient, played/ing, processing and its materialities. If only this could be heard. Live in my head. Then what is audible? Sonic materiality; musicality; artistic discourse; slow to hear, fast to actualise. I arrive to sonic impossibility, If sonic, then what, unheard not now audible?

I go outside of my head, not out of my head. I switched to listening to 'London – Mobile Radio', The Principle of Yeast, July 2012. 'Titled "Can the principle of yeast be applied to a lot of other things?" (Fischli & Weiss), this was a sonic exploration of the process of vinification from a biodynamic wine estate at the Mosel in Germany.' At sixteen minutes a reference to cutting (pruning), and occasionally throughout, the sound of airplanes overhead. I come back to this other journey as I write, after all, I am not locked into some un-natural silent code of conduct. It is a kind of noise as well, not an inhibitor to tuning in to my writing but screening out the undesirable thoughts that fly too fast and furious about the room. It's what I relate to in Voegelin's spoken paper; present-contemplative. Un sound sound.

Let me re-group. The audible – inaudible and precariousness of language. How might our horizons become audible; ephemeral and inaudible? These two sessions of Daniela and Salomé, I need to record, are getting to the heart of the matter for me. Salomé's *thing* is Heidegger's *ding* as she tells me, even though I have traced my own version through OOO (Object Orientated Ontology). The 'Ding' and materiality, the object through phenomenology, writing as object practice and the sound of writing. Voegelin's work through sound art is not self consciously art as sound. She plays an extraordinary and exquisitely unplaceable sound work that plays with an audibility of space and duration. It's not formalist or music. It is un traceable in it's continuity. Sound art's unravelling of a sound, enfolded into a sound file as sonic waves, replayed audibly, simultaneously erased from memory.

I begin to think about the naming; music / composer, instrumentalist, conductor / artist, curator, historian-theorist-critic. The naming of practice. Who knows what the epistemology of the artwork is, how does the modality of the artwork become experienced, when is the retreat from the boundaries performed as a reenactment artwork? The inaudible reenactment. We have witnessed the ability of cultural capital to absorb critically engaged practice and to produce unsustainable ephemerality, to dis engage it's necessary object-temporality into a wilful object-commodity and step by step into an object-knowledge economy. Stripped down, de problematised and willing.

The range of presentations are sometimes dangerously close to this wilfully un situated sensations of middling. It was becoming apparent during the day that it may not be sufficient for the art-work sound-art work only to be produced. It also requires skilful deployment through beauty's sweet cruelty. We will also need to take a detournement into the thorny ecology of the political present, that we might gain the rapture of sustainability. Cultural diplomacy may fund many art forms and ideas going international but without it's critical discourses audible-visible, the ephemeral sustainability of sound art and electronic music becomes diminished. Voegelin knows this.

7th passage

'Sound Art is an art of working with sound that follows neither strictly musical traditions nor is it entirely representative of the conventions of visual art.' Voegelin is passionate about this distinction and feels that the conventions of visual art, its long history and institutional practices switch discussion about sound into its own associative visual matrix.

'Wer schreibt bleibt' – seemed to be the antithetical position towards the artist who writes or the theorist who institutes currency or a curator who creates a new context via practitioners. Any call on practitioners to perform across all of these domains of making and doing, practice and research, speaking and writing, performing and presenting is a difficult call. This conference has attempted to be broadly representative of practice domains but might also have been too general in this respect. A conference will generally present a programme with orchestrated content plus its own identity as 'event'. What we rarely get is something truly discursive and live that seeks to form content and structure as you go. To create both structure and improvisation and to reform the definition of conference as it unfolds sounds impossible now I propose it. The device of the plenary or a distinctive follow up process for delegates is a worthy attribute for post conference bewilderment and if you continue to wonder about what the main outcomes and orientations were.

Now I am stepping into a key problem. What I usually miss is getting more from phases of public conversation. Not the conversation of breaks, lunches, evenings, that's mostly nice already and ubiquitous. It's the form of conversation where an exchange occurs with skilful mediation and where depth is examined. Curiously this might actually need work done prior to the event itself and a much closer examination of what is being presented and how.

The conference tended towards argument more than a methodology of sharing and exchange. Conference mode always steers a tricky passage around the charismatic, academic and soft sell. It is a very difficult format that few people have any opportunity to really develop and where even fewer, through experience, can confidently occupy without domineering. Dominant voices can emerge which may be not be the overall voice of conference, just a louder voice from the front. There is a time and place for formal presentation where information and knowledge is transmitted in a lively way. It can have a declared purpose and criteria, can be scientific, function in relation to an abstract, reflexive in a space of dialogue, devolving and so on. What seems more problematic is when a range of open formats all cram together in heaps, the pre conference clarity dissolves into dissonance. Unintentionally, this might produce an emphasis on noise.

Back to writing about. In the discussions that hovered around sound arts and visual arts I wondered what an artist like Brandon LaBelle would say. He has developed a writing practice that has grown in relation to a music and visual arts practice where writing has continued to form a thread of ideas moving from a private to a more public concern. His publishing title *Errant Bodies* has run since the early 90's but it's as if this body of writing-publishing has also been informed through his long association with visual arts practices.

<http://soundandmusic.org/features/ear-room/brandon-labelle>

In this interview he expands on the way sound art, the broader visual arts and writing have performed in creative collaboration. He infers that to have a contemporary practice of critical relevance then the coordination and engagement into this broader field is essential. Perhaps those who choose to write as part of practice will establish a higher visibility but they will also be operating with a synthesis of language that can mediate and contextualise an artistic practice. Are these a part of the research based practices of the educational turn at work?

The critical contexts that contemporary sound artists (such as Voegelin and LaBelle) work

through are notionally different but surely this is where there is more work to do, around explorations into the differing spatiality's of what the visual and the sonic are? What is personal and what is political? Here I am remembering the lack of reference to perception and coupling this with spatiality as social and public. I was considering three phases of the nature of sound art that could be distinct. 1. Perception of sound, mindfulness with the body. 2 Performing (being) sound, the body in relation to spatiality's . 3. Public spaces of sound, city-polis-politics. In these three interwoven threads I imagined a whole mass of urgency and crisis to be play with.

While sound is indeed present in many forms of contemporary art, is the work of the sound artist to weave other speculative realities? Does sound perform forgetting and remembering in order that memory stays renewable, exposing the ephemeral to continual diversity and creating sustainability? Reflecting (day dreaming) on Bill Viola's comments about his work coming from sound, (not sound as music or dialogue) and his understanding of the way sound describes space in wave form that plays into the psycho acoustic experience, we arrive to the close of the day with a sense of diverging practices and awareness. I felt inclined to reckon that interactivity in the fields of image-object-sound, or music-sound-image were more vibrant than worrying about how sound art needed visual art as an opposition. I also felt that sound art's tricky relationship with electronic music, that wasn't presented or discussed, was an issue worth pursuing.

The final panel of the day was perhaps a stage too far and vital aspects remained untouched. It felt like a closing ritual. Actualities, writing as practice, modalities of writing connected to listening. What was writing – doing – listening? A possible example; questioning a traditional position, a music student writing about music. A process of research and forms of practice that have scope. Multiple channel practices that write about sound or music, the music of sound, psycho acoustics, streaming user generated content, formless. Permanent sound works from commissions were of it's time and confounded by the problems of maintenance. Permanent sound installations had some value. The permanency of the form could also drive it's modality and be a useful category to establish programmatic processes of sound scores. Were the terms temporary or permanent merely an adjustment of duration?

Documentation was returned to and it appeared to become about differentiation, by whom and for whom through a naming; artist, curator, writer, researcher, gallerist, festival organiser, audience. Something was missing. The tendency was to define documentation in constricting ways, as fixing and as archive material, not a process that unfolds as a part of making and realisation. The making-doing role has always been the recognised state of action for the artist but we were awkwardly touching on an emergent theme about broader process of realisation and contexts. This confirmed the connecting fields developing through curatorial practices. Who performs these actions are possibly the new cultural operators, maybe even as artists, but it's most definitely collaborative in all of the stages. Phases of disorientation are normally a requirement of evolving ecologies utilising adaptation.

The term 'dynamic system' used by Hans Ulrich Obrist in reference to the work '*No ghost just a shell*' by Philippe Pareno and Pierre Huyghe sounds like the right one just now. It might appear to be another visual arts influence but the construct of this work looks conceptually compatible to Amacher's investigations about sound. Perception and reception move between the personal and the political and although partially present, this was the vital ingredient that we needed to hear more about on this occasion.

We moved to the actual close of a very full day. Joost Fonteyne, a Festival Organiser based in Belgium had some practical and pragmatic observations to make. He had made music, organised sound, music, and visual arts. Curators were to be capable, to provide the best possible condition, to keep it alive and with this came responsibilities. He worked on 'Sounding city' in Kortrijk, a sound art installation project along with Happy New Ears, a Flanders Festival where he supported production by collaborating with the city. He developed new commissions and sound walks. He thought of sound as temporal or permanent, temporary or programmatic, sound work as a 'genre', sometimes with

inadequacies of curatorial teams or spaces or technical needs.

Given the slot he occupied he read his audience and proposed not to over elaborate, this being greeted with quiet approval. At the core of his informal talk there were some important considerations about the way sound art and electronic music could make connections to music festivals and arts festivals. He had an entrepreneurial and consumer enthusiasm. When electronic music leaves the gallery what might it sound and look like? Is it Kraftwerk, Laurie Anderson, Eno, raves? Is it laptop DJ culture, a digital minimalism, one small metal box with a single knob? There was a hint of bringing gallery sound art installation into the broader frameworks of festivalisation and fringe stages were already doing this. He was touching on an uncomfortable edge. So many possibilities when we arrived at this destination, the strange conjoining of sound art with electronic music.

What happens post conference? We don't really know. Some return to their homes, others are heading for the next gig, some have pressing lives to return to, families, loved ones, jobs. Others must clear the debris. A few stay in the stream of thinking, reflect, comment, email, get in touch. The post mortem ensues and then gradually documented experience is reviewed, located and ascribed value. It feeds into wider inter-subjectivities, and parallel epistemologies.

As we conclude some one says that art includes discomfort and some one else says that there is a power struggle of knowledge and that it's political and economic. How will the critically engaged sustainable model resist the centralising tendency of cultural capital? Several days into my writing about, a whole new bag of tricks was opened through reading this document <http://www.kulturkontakt nord.org/lang-en/nordic-culture-point/culture-forums/culture-forums-2012>

Other questions I have had about sustainability that are less about the sound of sound art have surfaced in relation to thinking about how the arts get funded. For example, cultural diplomacy is a common strategy now and the one million dollar 'smART Power' program in the U.S is a good example of this. It's hosted through the Bronx Museum and selected artists have been funded to work with local communities in key international countries where the U.S. needs to exert influence. Sound art as an art form is inevitably drawn into this context of politics quite readily but let's hope it's not with deaf ears. I chose this example as a means of considering that the terms 'ephemeral' and 'sustainability' do not only refer to inner working practices but to the critical and engaged outward looking integration with the crisis of globality that one delegate had suggested was lacking in expression.

Lydgalleriet are also part of the Resonance network <http://www.resonancenetwork.eu/> The new gallery opened this year, 2012. Ekko Festival is in it's ninth year in Bergen. There have been major exhibitions held in previous years and this is the first conference.

©Alain Ayers, Bergen-Norway, Nov 2012