



Photo: Blanc Sceol, 2021

No-matter-what [*n'importe quoi*] is quite simply the plane of equality of what is real, possible, non-existent, past, impossible, true, false, or bad. It doesn't matter..

That no-matter-what is something indicates nothing other than the possibility of a flatness: that by which everything is *equally*.

—Tristan García: *Form and Object - A Treatise on Things*, trans. Mark Allan Ohm and Jon Cogburn, Edinburgh University Press, 2014, p30.

In lieu of an environment that surrounds human culture, ... picture an ontological field without any unequivocal demarcations between human, animal, vegetable, or mineral. All forces and flows (materialities) are or can become lively, affective, and signalling.

—Jane Bennett: *Vibrant Matter*, Duke University Press, 2010, p116.

no matter what extends commissions for Lofoten International Arts Festival, Gasworks / Royal College of Art and Campus for Climate Action, which have used open omni-directional microphones to pay attention to intertidal mudflats, a culverted urban river from source to outfall, and other elusive things.

The live streams can be thought of as ways to establish ontologically flat fields, within which systems of classification are provisionally suspended, creating openings for new associations to emerge. Attention to edgelands and estuaries which have partially escaped development narratives, and whose status is indeterminate, can point to their value for biological and cultural diversity, and as pools of imaginative resources with lesser known potentials (cp Third Soundscape ¹). Real-time streams are designed to convey the liveliness ² of sounds and places, and resist their conversion into environmental spectacles and recorded specimens. They can be tools for advocacy in debates over land use and public space.

n m w continues Soundcamp's interest in real-time sound and collective listening to tune into lesser known locations. As with the wet / dry sites for Hydracity, these are changeable environments that resist capture / classification. The project contributes to developing forms of ecological radio that can bring a plurality of voices, things and flows together on an equal footing.

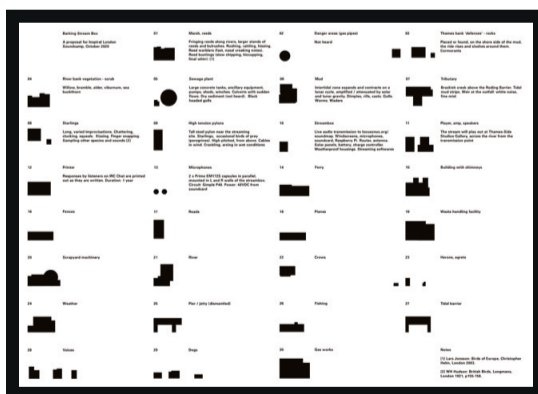
1 Leandro Pisano, John Grzinich
2 Jessie Brennan

no matter what brings together three sites in London concerned with water. By dropping a live streambox into each location, SC set up ways for listeners to access it remotely and at less heard times of night and day.

The streams are presented on a page with Internet Relay Chat (IRC), where listeners can join artists, ecologists and activists from the collaborating organisations to discuss the streams. These conversations will form a log over the weeks of the installation at Thames-Side Studios Gallery, where the sounds can also be heard.

Listen / chat at: acousticcommons.net/listen

Events: see inside.



Barking Creek – unfinished catalogue of sounds
Poster: SBS, 09/21

no matter what

Hydracity (Inspirall London) – inspirallondon.com/event
Blanc Sceol (Stephen Shiell, Hannah White) – blancsceol.co.uk
Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park, SE10 0QZ – tcv.org.uk/greenwichpeninsula
Soundmap (Locus Sonus) – locusonus.org/soundmap
Acoustic Commons – acousticcommons.net
Thames-Side Studios Gallery, SE18 5NR – thames-sidestudios.co.uk
Soundcamp – soundtent.org

1

Barking Creek / River Roding outfall

[T]he perfect destination for wastes
—McGrath demolition archives

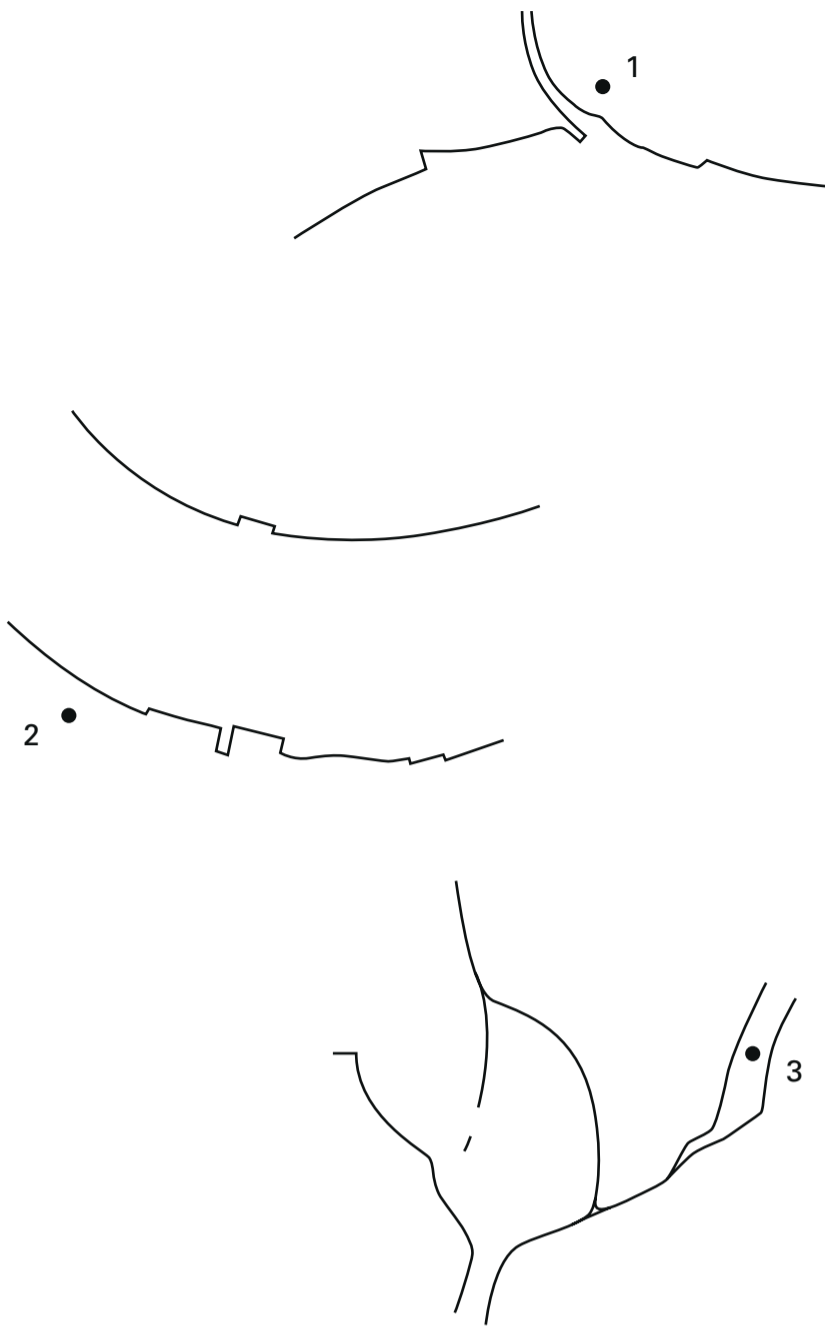
Pollution here takes many forms, as with the former Beckton Gasworks, which until quite recently had its own micro weather system: a cloud cap which could be seen from far off. Heavy contamination has brought a pause in development of the site, which supports a dense and varied soundworld.

Invertebrates and water birds (cormorants, spoonbills) populate the inter-tidal mudflats, while the waste handling facilities, sewage works and rough ground attract gulls, starlings, goldfinches and raptors, with reed warblers and buntings along the fringing reedbeds. River water, tidal movements, wastes, birds, sewage create a complex of flows. While the Thames in both directions is under active development for new housing, the soundworld here is quite wild and unresolved, and the area remains open for off-grid activities: bait collection, hanging out.

The Environment Agency manages the Roding Barrier, which is closed occasionally for flood control or testing. A collaboration in development will establish a long-term audio stream from the base of the barrier, near to where the streambox is dropped for Hydracity. The proof of concept allows us to listen collectively and extend a lexicon of more and less familiar entities: settling tanks, excrements, recycling streams, processing plants, strip-outs, shipping containers, logistics, flounder, smelt, surge tides, waders, salvage, hardcore – being constantly aggregated, segregated, assimilated, expelled.

Stream live from Friday 10 September, afternoon. Stream at: locusonus.org/soundmap or locus.creacast.com:9001/london_hydracity.mp3

Listening session from 7pm London time in the gallery or the online listening room: acousticcommons.net/listen



2

Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park

Managed by The Conservation Volunteers, the ecology park is a set of artificial habitats created since 2002 at a site just back from the Thames. Its fresh water pools, gravel spits and reedbeds, meadows and alder woodland provide key habitats and roosting areas for resident and migrating birds feeding on the mudflats at low tide, as well as bats, wetland flora and many insects.

TCV staff and volunteers manage the site, and deliver a wide range of learning activities and public engagement. For details: tcv.org.uk/greenwichpeninsula

The streambox will be a chance to hear the relatively under explored sounds of this site, including at times when it is closed and undisturbed by visitors.

Stream live from Friday 17 September, afternoon. Stream at: locusonus.org/soundmap or locus.creacast.com:9001/london_hydracity.mp3

Friday 17 September: guided walk around GPEP, followed by streambox workshop and install. Meet at the gallery at 12 noon. Workshop 2-4pm.

3

Channelsea Island

The Channelsea river in Newham has a meandering past of industry and contamination and yet sustains a quiet backwater flow for many life forms, revealing its secrets to those willing to explore. It's been culverted and infilled, its flow now coming to an end just past Channelsea Island.

—Blanc Sceol

Surge Cooperative are working to rejuvenate the Channelsea, and the wider tidal River Lea, with cooperative moorings and community engagement, proposing common actions with those connected to the river or local to the area, and encouraging collective efforts to protect and celebrate its rich natural heritage. These include a court case pending about ownership of the river and its rights.

The stream is part of an ongoing conversation between the cooperative and its surroundings, initiated by coop members and artists Stephen Shiell and Hannah White (Blanc Sceol).

Stream live in the week starting 20 September. Stream at: locusonus.org/soundmap or locus.creacast.com:9001/london_hydracity.mp3

@soundtent for stream details.

