

SONIKEBANA v1 **Martin Parker, April 2018**

Welcome to St Cecilia's hall and the very first showing of *Sonikebana* v1.

Sonikebana v1 has been billed as an installation, but it's really a long-form composition that is transformed and shaped by listeners as it happens. Upstairs in St Cecilia's concert hall are six boxes on wheels. Each box contains a small computer, amplifier, speakers, battery and a compass sensor. Playing through these boxes are sounds recorded in and around the Meadows in Edinburgh. As you move the boxes around, the sound changes. When you've discovered positions that you think you like, sit back, lie down, relax and wait for others to shift things. If you want to make a change, intervene.

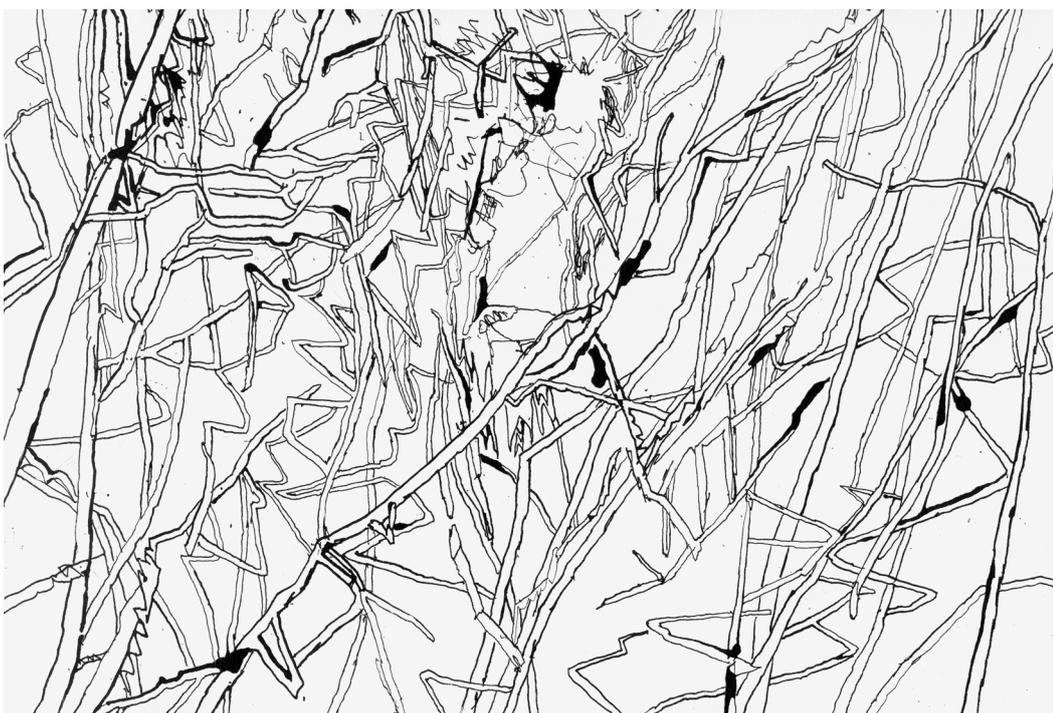
The sounds you're hearing have been manipulated by computers. Much of the processing is very simple, primarily shifting pitch and duration up and down. In doing this the sounds take on other qualities, evoking a much larger span of evolutionary utterance that blurs into the digital glitch and clutter. The interaction of these natural and processed sound worlds offers ways of thinking about how humans and the natural world may coexist.

The surfaces of the speakers have been laser-etched with drawings by artist Anna Chapman Parker. The drawings are derived from a series of ink drawings, *Too evergreen to answer*, inspired by a reading of an Alice Oswald poem. The drawn lines clearly relate to living material, but their digitised quality perhaps reflects the sonic essence of this piece; a combination of amazement in, and distance from the natural world.

Sonikebana was conceived way back in 2006, when working on an AHRC funded project with Richard Coyne, Peter Nelson and researcher Ray Lucas called *Inflexing Space*. We found ourselves manipulating recordings made in the Barras Market in Glasgow by moving speakers around a gallery space. Vocal sounds changed their intelligibility and relationship with one another when reconfigured. The idea of moving sound around a room in order to modulate a piece of music never went away. The name is a play on the Japanese art of flower arrangement called *Ikebana*.

Please feel free to photograph and share the arrangements you come up with.
#sonikebana

Martin Parker tinpark.com



Anna Chapman Parker, *Too evergreen to answer*, 2018; ink on paper 32 x 24cm

About City Sounds

Edinburgh CitySounds (citysounds.eu) is one of 17 experiments selected for the second phase of OrganiCity (organicity.eu).

CitySounds has been exploring and celebrating the richness of sounds in the city, benefiting from recent innovations in digital technology and network infrastructure. It has been looking at how sounds captured in a central urban greenspace can inform citizens and community groups about biodiversity and health and well-being, as well as provide a unique resource for artists and data scientists.

The CitySounds project is led by Edinburgh Living Lab, a city-wide collaboration founded by the City of Edinburgh Council and the University of Edinburgh, and is working with partner organisations such as the Scottish Wildlife Trust and community groups such as Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links to develop better ways for both scientists and residents to investigate biodiversity in urban greenspaces.

CitySounds is part of the University of Edinburgh's Internet of Things (IoT) Initiative which is exploring innovative ways that internet-connected devices and sensors, such as temperature sensors, motion sensors, water gauges, etc. can be used to understand and inform new approaches to improve the lives of people living and working across the Edinburgh and South East Scotland area.

citysounds.eu

organicity.eu

edinburghlivinglab.org

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Acknowledgements

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