Music and Materialisms Conference 2019: *Abstracts*

Session 1a – Time and Matter

Rhythm and resistance: the materiality of time

Peter Nelson

'The first specific instance of the notion of matter is resistance.'* (Bachelard 1953, p. 10) If we regard time as a material substance, we can ask what resistance does it offer, and how does that resistance frame our experience? The framing question, 'what is it that's going on here?' (Goffman 1986, p. 8) does not have to refer only to 'plot': it can also refer to time – the question perhaps reframes as, 'what are the temporal constraints or interactions here?' You can observe this perception in a person who utters the phrase, "Don't rush me!", or alternatively "Get a move on!". Neither of these concerns plot actions; only the experience of time, and the encounter with its resistances in the course of temporal interactions with other selves (Kohn 2013, p. 16). Discussion of rhythm often centres on issues such as 'entrainment', and I will argue here that entrainment registers a particular sort of temporal resistance. But entrainment does not account for many aspects of rhythmic practice and experience, as noted by Charles Keil (Keil 1987, pp. 275-283). In particular, the presence of meaning in rhythm is poorly accounted for. Heidegger, in his writing about technology, proposes the resistance of materials to human understanding and control as an energy towards revelation: towards the coming into being of sensations and realizations which challenge an existing order formulation (Heidegger 1993, p. 339). Order is thus seen as a tendency to resist the contingencies of actions and things by presuming to understand them already. A material account of time will try to show how rhythm constitutes a technology that reveals time in a general sense, and how rhythm in music, in particular, creates a play of meaning from the surface of time.

* "La première instance spécifique de la notion de matière est la résistance."

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An ecology of time traces in 'Extinction Events and Dawn Chorus'

Liza Lim

This paper emerges out of an ongoing project that asks: What kinds of temporal attention spans and logics are proposed in supra-human and ecological situations? What are the temporal dimensions of the uncanny, of post-human or almost-human forms of representation resonant in our bio-technocratic age? How can an understanding of these ecological 'time effects' generate new forms of musical thinking?

'Extinction Events and Dawn Chorus' (2018) reflects on the anthropogenic crisis of plastic pollution and the circulatory forces that magnify destructive processes in the environment. The composition employs various temporal lenses to refract these ideas, playing with forms of repetition and glitch as well as a multiplicity of musical and cultural references to time-forms. Building upon Timothy Morton's notion that '*Every aesthetic trace, every footprint of an object, sparkles with absence. Sensual things are elegies to the disappearance of objects* (2013), the composer brings an ecological framework to working with discrepancy and slippage between various temporal objects in the composition. An assemblage of clues – technical, performative, sonic and extra-musical - is the basis for revealing how discrepancy of categorial expectation (Fabb, 2017) can generate an aesthetics of the uncanny. The composer highlights a number of paradoxical elements such as the use of quotation (Janáček) to underpin a kind of 'fictive' or marginal harmonic language, and of repetition deployed to create a theatre of disappearance. This use of quasi tonality and repetition, elements which might normally act as points of stability for the listener, can through techniques of displacement, compression and non-linear logics, become generative of perceptual uncertainty even whilst retaining traces of their affective aura. Things evoke what they used to be and what they might become without settling on either, caught in a temporal grammar of suggestive estrangement.

The role of musical material for music's historicity in Adorno's writings

Olaf Hochherz

This presentation discusses Adorno's conception of musical material in relation to his conception of cultural progress. Adorno developed an alternative to attempts to ground music in acoustics and the nature of sound. This crystallised in his use of the notion "musical material". Adorno builds, in this context, on a conception of materiality that is less bound to physical objects than to materiality as discussed in the Marxist context. A conception of materialism which does not only focus on how a conception is derived from the material world, but to the material conditions of production. It parallels to the contemporary discussion framed as "new materialism", which also attempts to resolve problems of the same "old materialism" Marx distanced himself from. Adorno's perspective provides some insights into this discussion as he framed the problems in a different way. Musical material is a material not in so far as it sounds - an experienceable entity - but in so far as it is produced. Adorno suggests that it is necessary to study musical material to understand the historicity of music. His writing implies both a discussion of the entities which appears meaningful to an audience as well as the practices to control such entities. A problem in his writing is that his ideas depends on the

social as a totality, a totality that determines the meaning of things, music, and musical materials in a particular historical moment. What can be retained from his idea of musical material when such a totality is difficult to be accepted as a basis for the conception of history, music cultural change and development? In this presentation, I suggest that a basic materiality of music is not only defined by the problematisation of attempts (for example, through an ontology of sound), but also by the specific idea of thinking the identity of the basic entities of music through interacting with them - both in production and music consumption.

Session 1b – Touch

Thinking Inside the Box: Material Pedagogies of Noise Music in Contemporary Japan

James Vail

The concept of noise and noise music has become a key topic for much recent scholarly work from musicology, philosophy, critical theory, and sound studies. While such work stems from diverse theoretical perspectives, most scholars have centred on one key idea: the exteriority of noise, and its ability to disrupt both existing musical and theoretical frameworks. However, David Novak has argued that these insights need to be grounded in empirical ethnographic study (2013, 2). During the course of my ethnographic fieldwork in Tokyo and Osaka, it became increasingly evident that noise music was seen to be both a genre and a tradition to its practitioners and audiences. While there are many elements that come together to form the noise genre assemblage, this paper focuses on the material objects, technologies, and instruments that are used by musicians as part of performing and recording of noise music. I argue that there exists a tension in contemporary noise music between, on the one hand, the wild indeterminacy of musicians' compositional and performative strategies, and on the other, the relatively narrow arsenal of sound-producing objects and machines. Drawing on theories of distributed creativity and anthropological work on the concept of material agency, I suggest that these technologies play a central role in the passing on of the noise tradition between spatially disparate individuals that often work creatively in isolation.

Out of Touch? The Return of Tangibility in Electronic Instrument Design

Adam Harper

There has been much discussion over material turns in philosophy and the humanities – are we witnessing a similar turn in the design of electronic musical instruments? With the dominance of personal computers in the production and performance of electronic music (and of course, daily life), the capacity to touch and grasp technologies, and use a musician's body to exert fine and extensive control over musical change, has acquired a new urgency in particular areas of instrument design. In superseding such computers' reliance Graphics User Interfaces and the 'windows, icons, menus, pointer' style, designers have gone further even than MIDI controllers with buttons, sliders and reconfigurable touch-screens in efforts to

provide the tangibility and haptic feedback seen to be proper to (traditional) music-making and, especially, its 'expressive' components (as seen by the recent adoption of the MIDI Polyphonic Expression specification). Modified keyboard devices such as ROLI's Seaboard or TouchKeys, or musical Tangible User Interfaces such as Reactable, have aimed not just to close the gap between acoustic and electronic music-making in this regard, returning to the latter a multifarious materiality of resistance, friction, mass, but to exceed the former's capacities.

Are some instruments more 'material' than others? If not, what sorts of materiality are being pursued here, and why? And where does it leave computers, or even entirely non-tangible musical interfaces, such as the Theremin and its descendants, among them Buchla's Lightning II and Alesis's AirFX, or various musical data-glove designs that have been explored since the 1980s (e.g. Laetitia Sonami's Lady's Glove or Imogen Heap's Mi Mu gloves)? I will investigate and reflect on the aesthetic and ontological underpinnings of this new attention to certain kinds of materiality in electronic music and the new ideas and devices it has given rise to, with reference to earlier theory in this area and two recently emerged literatures: a wave of polemics against digital and virtual technologies and their putative negative effects on contemporary culture, and 'new materialist' writing and critiques of it.

Body, instrument, context: material agency in 'Player Piano'

Catherine Laws

Processes of collaboration have been subject to extended critical scrutiny in recent years. This is welcome, but in the context of music making I would argue that the focus upon composer-performer relationships has often led to a failure to attend to the material agencies constitutive of performance production; particularly bodies, instruments and context.

This paper examines aspects of a recent large scale multimedia performance project, 'Player Piano', devised and performed by the author but developed in collaboration with four composers, a theatre maker and a film-maker. Exploring the creative processes at work here opens up the ways in which the performance exposes the material agency of body-subject, instrument and context. Judith Butler's work on performativity and embodiment, still relatively little used in the field of musical performance, and Carrie Noland's argument that 'the moving, trained and trainable body is always a potential source of resistance to the meanings it is required to bear' are drawn into a consideration of the dynamic interaction of embodied agency and subjection at work in this performance. However, this project is also concerned with the role of the instrument: with the significance of the piano as more than a tool for production and expression; rather as a significant actant in itself. Beyond the notion of 'instrumentality', the 'thing power' of the instrument (to appropriate Jane Bennett's term), as physical object, sound source and cultural agent, often plays a significant role in the development of new musical materials through collaborative processes of making; more so than is generally acknowledged. This paper explores the ways in which this is manifested in 'Player Piano'. Finally, the wider context of the situation of performance—in particular, the agential characteristics of space and acoustics—is considered in terms of the negotiations of material agencies.

Session 2a – Material Practices

Text and Object: Material Processes as Creative Textual Practices

Lauren Redhead

An attempt to reconcile the abstract, sonic or ephemeral aspects of the musical object with its concrete aspects (such as scores or recordings) might attempt to make their traces material. For example, such an approach might emphasise the exploratory practice of 'playing' as opposed to the abstract practice of 'composing'; and in many circumstances such practices may be inseparably embodied by a single individual. Similarly, Julia Kristeva (1984) considers the symbolic (signifying) and semiotic aspects of language – the latter specifically related to material or biological processes, and the ways that they might be experienced simultaneously and separately – within work that might be described as 'creative textual practice'. In this paper, I address examples from aspects of my own work and that of others, such as Annette Schmucki and Cornelius Schwehr, who employ creative textual practice as a form of notation in and through the materiality of sound. Thus, I am concerned with the *objects* of the musical object, and in particular the tactile and bodily aspects of the 'work' of music understood as both its instance and its labour. I consider notation, its component parts, and sonic objects that take on a material function, within music that materially employs text. Through these objects I consider the way in which notational and sonic practices enact material processes, and how in so doing they alter their own materiality from the inside. This concerns not only the material resistances of the component parts of text, notation, and their enactment, but the links between materials, processes, politics, and bodies, their reciprocal and agentive effects, and a phenomenology of such material effects beyond and through the work.

Contingency, Emergence and Subjectivity in Compositional Practice

Luc Doebereiner

If there is one idea that unities the manifold and often evasive conceptions of materialism developed by such diverse thinkers as Diderot, Darwin, Marx, Althusser or Deleuze, it is the immanence of form. Materialism, thus conceived, is the idea that matter is not shaped into form by something external to it but that matter forms itself. It is based on the idea that the contingency of matter itself produces new biological, social and physical forms. The notion of the production of form as a result of material processes rejects the traditional idea of creation as the realisation or imposition of a transcendent form on passive material. This has transforming consequences for the status of the human subject, whose creative capacities have long been held to be unique, while the material world has been conceived as governed by either insignificant randomness or by mechanistic determinism. Developing new ways of relating human and non-human agency has wide-ranging consequences that connect artistic practices to political and ecological concerns.

The notion of materialist morphogenesis, which is at the core of this paper, revolves around the relation of contingent events and the stability of organisations that these events provoke. Contingency thus needs to be conceived in conjunction with emergence. This paper deals with

ways in which compositional practices embrace material contingency and the emergence of musical form, timbre and gesture, and in doing so, challenge anthropocentric assumptions about the nature of creative processes. Embracing contingency entails dealing with non-knowledge and relinquishing the idea of mastery over the material.

This paper aims at constructing a concept of material as a recalcitrant, active, and aleatory potential in the medium of sound by focussing on works by Alvin Lucier, David Tudor and Ashley Fure. It traces the role of contingency in these works and seeks to outline concomitant forms of artistic subjectivity.

A Materialist Defense of Musical Redundancy, Or Basso Seguente Reconsidered

Leon Chisholm

The earliest printed organ continuo part, for Giovanni Croce's Motets for Eight Voices (Venice, 1594), and the majority of organ accompaniments printed before 1620 are parts that double the lowest voice, a technique identified nowadays as *basso seguente*. In scholarship on continuo's early history, these harmonically redundant parts tend not to fare well. "Mere" basso seguente is often construed as a prototypical and mechanical version of "true" continuo, the independent accompanimental line characteristic of the later Baroque.

This traditional view of basso seguente, as an incipient, non-poietic form of a mature technique, privileges a textual understanding of stylistic change that sidelines the agency of performers, organ builders, and music printers. It also falsely equates redundancy with superfluity. While basso seguente's redundancy may be superfluous in the confines of traditional analysis, in documented performance situations from the early modern period, basso seguente's redundancy was frequently exploited for practical and/or aesthetic reasons. In such cases, basso seguente was an essential parameter for performance.

I argue that shifting the narrative of continuo's emergence to focus on doubling accompaniments allows for a holistic, materialist understanding of the nature of stylistic change that the traditional emphasis on the advent of independent continuo misses. It does this by showing how style history is a product not primarily of composerly poiesis and zeitgeist, but rather of the realities of performance, the affordances of singing and instrument playing, the feedback loops created by printing, and the cognitive imagery derived from these various material sites. I propose that the cooperative model for polyphony that a basso seguente accompanying singers affords served as the ecological foundation of the concertato style. This argument builds on Ingold's theory regarding the intertwined relationship between the form of an artifact and the forces involved in the making of that artifact.

Session 2b – Musical/Sonic Materialism

Separability, Visualism, and Presentness: Unpacking the Material-Discursive Configuration and Operations of Music's Work-Concept

William Davy Cole

This paper explores how the musical object is produced in and through dynamic bodily interactivity and how – despite thereby being fundamentally contingent, unrepeatable, and open-ended – the "work-concept" functions to engender the idea (illusion) of the musical object as a fully determinate and fully present thing-in-itself. Elaborating on Lydia Goehr's theory, I argue that the work-concept is not an inherent attribute of music but rather a specific material-discursive configuration through which distinct musical subjects and objects are constituted. I consider how the work-concept's "separability" structure was forged in early-nineteenth-century philosophical and aesthetic thought, how it emanated from aspirations to replicate the conditions of the plastic arts, how it manifests in various scholarly and artistic conceptions – ranging from critical reception of Beethoven's late work to Schaeffer's acousmatics, as well as (perhaps provocatively) Max Neuhaus' sound installation framework and subsequent "sound art" discourse, and more recent musical / aesthetic notions – and how it is embodied within the proscenium arrangement of the concert-hall environment. I want to show how the manifold material-discursive elements of the work concept's separability structure conspire to resolve music's inherent ontological indeterminacy by supporting the perceiver's espousal of a "detached-spectator" attitude.

I propose that the attitude proper to the work-concept is a *visual* attitude. Taking my cues from Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Alva Noë, Karan Barad, Rosalind Krauss and others, I cast the "visualist" separability structure of the work-concept as the field of the abstracted mind – of mind separated from body, inner separated from outer, subject separated from object – and conclude with an explication of how this characterisation can account for musical time. The "supratemporal" musical object, I argue – an "image of time", transcendent to perception in its "presentness" – is a visualist projection of the flux and flow of musical experience's *touch-like*, physical event.

Scelsi, Sense, and the Musical Matter

Dimitris Exarchos

Giacinto Scelsi's first writing on music aesthetics, 'Sens de la musique' (1942/44) provides a comprehensive account of (the sense of) music as a complex equilibrium between the human elements (rhythm, emotion, cosmic, intellect, psychic) and those of music (rhythm, melody, harmony, construction). The complexity of that equilibrium indexes a highly intricate mode of relating to musical sound, hence Scelsi's notion of *klang*—a complex sonic entity, more than just sound, chord, etc; *klang* is the material of music, the 'sonorous matter' on which listening projects 'images' created by the aforementioned elements. Music relates to language; however, its material does not necessitate discreet elements (such as words). Scelsi's landmark *Four Pieces on a single note* (1959) is a perfect example of music's materiality and

it's mode of existence in time/space. The notion of sonorous matter was developed decades later by philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy, who also focused on a notion of *sense*: listening (sensing) is in search of meaning, while at the same time touches on the materiality of sound. S*ense* is taken in its multiple meanings: sensibility, sensation, intelligibility, orientation, and is always in excess of meaning. Nancy's philosophy thus treats the relationship between matter, language, writing, and art, as one that operates on the limits; such thinking is enabled both by a materialist ontology and the excessive nature of sense (hence for Nancy the metonymy for all sense is *touch*). This paper will explore the links between the two approaches.

Ontology or onto-ethology?: Rethinking sonic materialism with Cage and Deleuze

Iain Campbell

The musical work of John Cage and the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze have both played a significant role in the recent rise of varieties of sonic materialism. Christoph Cox, for instance, perhaps the most prominent theorist of sonic materialism, has drawn together a notion of 'sound-in-itself' developed from Cage and Deleuze's concept of the virtual in order to develop an ontology of sonic flux that, he argues, steps 'beyond' the representation and signification that dominates cultural theory and seeks to discover the fundamental nature of sound. Yet Cox's position has been subject to substantial critique. Marie Thompson and Brian Kane are among those who argue that Cox's ontological stance serves to occlude the cultural, social, technological, and political constitution of sound and listening. In this paper I will evaluate the theoretical and practical grounds of this debate by returning to Cage and Deleuze, arguing that a close engagement with their work in fact challenges many of the precepts of sonic materialism and suggests a rethinking of how we are to understand materialism in the context of music.

I will approach these broad theoretical questions through an analysis of two pieces composed by Cage in the mid-1970s, *Child of Tree* (1975) and *Branches* (1976). I will argue that the use of plant materials as instrumentation that characterises these pieces is not reducible to the sonorous capacities of these materials, but is used by Cage to provoke consideration of performative, social, and ecological as well as ontological questions. I will suggest that these works can be understood in terms of the 'onto-ethology' of Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*, which itself offers a challenge to essentialist ontological inquiry in favour of a diversely constructive theory of relations. I will conclude by suggesting that both Cage and Deleuze can indeed be understood as subscribing to a materialism, but a materialism that is practical rather than doctrinal, and that with this comes a demand for a methodological pluralism.

Session 3a – Notation

Notational environments for *com-provisation*

Dimitri Papageorgiou

Ever since Gregory Bateson considered the informational couplings and "systemic circuits" between human and nonhuman actors, our understanding of resonances and consistencies across boundaries has changed. For Karen Barad, it is precisely in this "agential intra-activity" that phenomena *materialise* as embodied concepts. Interestingly, Barad's suggestion echoes Andy Clark's envisioning of a cognitive distribution, manifested by "the flexibility of the human mindbody" to co-function and merge with "nonbiological constructs." With this paper, I aim to propose the 'technicity' of (free) improvisation as a recursive loop and as a circuit between a performer and her instrument, *materialised* in the medium of sound. While following Gilbert Simondon, I will suggest that the tactile element, felt resistances, and attentive listening, construct and '*in*-form' an improvised performance in an "ontogenetic" process of discovering. The presentation will proceed by discussing the concept of 'com-provisation' and by presenting examples of the notational strategies I have been developing during the last six years. While tracing Jonathan Impett's suggestion of notations as forms of soft-technology, I aim to demonstrate that the developed notational devices function both as *environments* for 'com–provisation', and as *interfaces* between *bodies*, with the sonic-figure emerging through synergy, direct experience, and performer's physicality.

Sketches and Autographs as Sources of Gestures: Towards the Interplay of Musical Notation and Performance

Bernhard Alexander Achhorner

"Writing and instrument, the poles of interpretation" (Adorno 2001). This note can be found in Theodor W. Adorno's book *Towards a Theory of Musical Reproduction*. The central question in his reflections is whether music had become uninterpretable. With his remarks he provides food for thought about the "inadequacy of writing", as writing is not able to express its inherent "certain intangibles" (Adorno 2001). Furthermore, he suggests a closer examination of the relationship between musical notation and the interpreter.

Was musicology "primarily a philological discipline of texts" (Hinrichsen 2013), in which notation was treated as a storage media, the latest state of the art is that musical writing is more than the mere phonological transcript of sound: it combines discursive, notational, and iconic aspects (Nanni 2013). This realignment brought particularly the visual attributes of writing into the focus of research. Phenomena like the movement of writing (*Schriftbewegung*) and the pictorial character of writing (*Schriftbildlichkeit*), which did not get attention in a phonological perspective, provide new findings concerning a "third referential element" of musical notation. Therefore, the question is: What is the additional information which is codified in the cultural memory of musical notation and how does this information relate to the performer? The gestural character of musical notation expresses itself especially in the visualization of musical events. Herein lie certain dynamics which brings together textual as

well as performative aspects. This interplay will be examined based on sketches and autographs of Beethoven's chamber music works.

Braille music and spoken scores: constructing musical abilities for blind musicians

Floris Schuiling

This paper forms part of a larger inquiry into 'Notation Cultures', a comparative project that places notation at the intersection of material culture and creative practice, defining notation as *interfaces for imagining virtual musical relations*. This paper presents results from fieldwork with blind musicians in the Netherlands. Throughout the twentieth century, blind musicians have used a special form of Braille notation to read music, but its use has always been restricted, both because of a lack of resources as well as the perceived difficulty of reading this notation. More recently, Dutch libraries for the blind have started producing "spoken scores". With the increasing availability of audio devices—which have led to a decreased Braille literacy among the blind more generally—such spoken scores have become quite popular, especially amongst late-blind musicians.

Peter Szendy describes arrangements as 'a mutation of bodies—of the instrumental body as well as the interpretative body—that opens new possibilities to translate music to the letter' (Szendy 2008, 55-56). From this perspective, we may ask how music notation for the blind, both Braille music and spoken scores, construct the musical abilities of blind musicians, and consequently what forms of musical skills and knowledge are enabled by their blindness, not despite it but because of it. Answering such questions may help us reconceptualise the creative agency of performing musicians more generally in terms of relationality and interdependence rather than freedom and autonomy.

Session 3b – Medial Materialisms

Haptic Aurality: Touching the Voice in Drag Lip-Sync Performance

Jacob Mallinson Bird

Many drag queens draw attention to the importance of feeling the voice in lip-sync performances. Stating that the volume of the track needs to be so loud as to immerse the performer, resonating around them, the tactility of voice aids the performer in creating a singularity out of necessarily discrete parts (the performing body of the drag queen removed from the sound source of the track). This paper will explore the importance of tactility in lip-syncing, focussing on interview work conducted with the London-based drag queen, Rodent. Rodent spoke not only of the importance of increased volume in order to close to space between the queen and the sound source, explaining that in ideal conditions the sound is "almost tactile", "reverberating through you", but also that when performing to such loud sounds "your perception of emotion becomes so much higher". Through Rodent's

observations, I propose a notion of haptic aurality, drawing upon Deleuze and Guattari; after this initial setting, I will question why Rodent feels a stronger emotional response to loud, tactile sonorities, using Michael Heller's theorisation of "listener collapse" as my starting point. Taking issue with some of Heller's assumptions, I hope to offer a more conclusive theorisation of listener collapse, bringing in Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, specifically the idea of incomplete reversibility. What will become apparent is that the use of sound's tactile potential through increased amplitude allows for a cutaneous connection with the voice through touch, but one that must, in the very nature of touch, highlight difference at the very moment of its connection.

Materialistic aesthetics in musical VR-performances

Andreas Pirchner

The aim of the talk is to argue to what extend a post-humanistic materialistic view (Barad, 2007) can contribute to aesthetic considerations of ergodic (Aarseth, 1997) musical compositions and performances including human performers, algorithmic actors and spatial entanglements of virtual and physical realities. The reflections are unfolded by the example of the composition ›Terrain Study‹ for Solo Violin by Christof Ressi, which was composed for the artistic research project ›Gamified Audiovisual Performance and Performance Practice‹*. In this work a setup with auditive and visible elements is used that combines virtual reality with the physical performance environment that is inhabited by the performer and the audience.

A materialistic aesthetic analysis shows how the meaning of the piece emerges through the performative discourse of intra-actions within the field of possibilities specific for the piece. For the audience, musical form and sonic characteristics statements as well as the perceived features of actors and space emerge from this ongoing process.

As sound and sound-oriented intra-actions of the performer become parameters that shape the behavior of the virtual environment the virtual performance space gets more and more estranged from the familiar logic of physical world. It becomes a world, of which the materiality depends on the sonic intra-actions of the performer. These on the other hand also affect the materiality of the performer herself. It is further argued that the introduction of VR to the setup of ergodic audiovisual music performances and the resulting entanglement of two different rule-sets (physical and coded) causes a reconfiguration of the perception of the materiality of the physical space and the performer of the musical performance.

The investigations are supported by qualitative and quantitative data gained through questionnaires and interviews with the audience, performer and composer collected at lab-concerts as well as audiovisual documentation of the performance.

Barad, Karen (2007): *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning.* Durham & London: Duke University Press.

Aarseth, Espen J. (1997): *Perspectives on Ergodic Literature.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Music and the Affective Advert

Marc Brooks

Music in television advertising has received a fair amount of attention recently (Nicholas Cook 1998, Bethany Klein 2009, Graakær and Jantzen 2009). However, most of the methodological frameworks developed for this work concentrate on representational/communicative meaning. This is surprising because while such meaning is certainly involved, an advert's effectiveness lies more in what it *does* than what it *means*. By generating a feeling of inadequacy, an advert can make viewers believe that if they owned the commodity, their life would be improved. Advertisers have known, at least since the 1960s, that one of the best ways to produce (or capture) desire was through affect (Timothy D. Taylor, 2012). *Mad Men*'s Don Draper sums up the situation nicely to his young protégée Peggy Olsen: 'You are the product. You *feeling* something. That's what sells'. Music, advertisers came to realise, is particularly good at making viewers feel things.

This talk will draw on ideas from radical embodied cognition (i.a. Anthony Chemero), ecological perception (i.a. Tim Ingold, Eric Clarke) and their precursors in Deleuze, to start to develop a materialist framework for understanding music in television advertising that can account for its effectiveness. By analysing a group of US car adverts from the Super Bowl 2017, I hope to show how music is used in affective adverts to prey upon viewers' strong emotional attachment to their 'common sense' (as understood by Deleuze) values. I argue adverts are at their most insidiously effective when music makes the viewer feel on a pre-reflective level that the product's use value (it reliably gets you to A from B) is inextricably bound up with one of their deeply held common sense values—social/technological progress, the comfort and security of one's family, or individual freedom, in the adverts in question.

Session 4 – Keynote: Prof. Eric Clarke