

RESEARCH in AUDIO-VISUAL COMPOSITION at Keele University



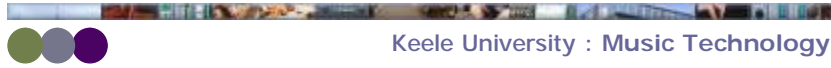
KEELE
UNIVERSITY



Music & Music Technology — School of Humanities



KEELE UNIVERSITY



Keele University : Music Technology

Keele: not twice the size of London
Beautiful and inspiring
Biggest campus in the UK
It's on the Monopoly UK edition



Aerial view



See ClockHouse bottom left
Site of the Music Department

KEELE – COMPOSERS/RESEARCHERS



Prof. Mike Vaughan



Prof. Rajmil Fischman



Dr. Sohrab Uduman



Dr. Diego Garro



Dr. Miroslav Spasov



Andy Willy



Joseph Harrison



Steve Bird



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ELECTRONIC MUSIC at KEELE UNIVERSITY

i Tim Souster , Trevor Wishart
i Mike Vaughan
i Rajmil Fischman

i Experimental styles
i Electroacoustic - Acousmatic Music
i Electroacoustic - Instruments + Tape
i Electroacoustic - Instruments + LE

Miroslav Spasov - *MetaAntropos Evolutio* (Flute and Electronics)
Mike Vaughan - *Melodie* (acousmatic)



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ELECTROACOUSTIC 'SPECTRO-MORPHOLOGICAL' APPROACH

^w *A form of art concerned with the technologically aided exploration of 'sound' in all its phenomenological aspects ('spectro-morphologies'), with the organisation of sonic material in time and with the articulation of a 'musical' discourse through typically 'non-musical' material.*

By a non specified number of people, including DG



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Andy Willy - *UNTITLED*

w Interaction
between audio
and visual



w Sonic commentary?

w Synergetic audio-visual objects



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As 1st example of approach to AV composition that stems from Spectro-morphological Electroacoustic Music:

Andy Willy – UNTITLED

PLAY VIDEOCLIP

Andy is a sonic artist and audiovisual composer in the final throws of a PhD in audiovisual composition at Keele. His most recent piece, which will be played tomorrow, is the latest in a series of works created to explore the **interaction between audio and visual gesture/texture combinations**. The project investigates whether an audiovisual soundtrack can develop from **mere sonic commentary** of existing visual gestures, to **synergetic audio-visual objects in which both media equally contribute to the whole**.

Tomorrow you will have a chance to see the whole piece and reflect upon the added value of the sounds to the visual and vice-versa.

It will also be interesting to think about the way in which video content contributes to the formation of some kind of 'musical' discourse on top of (and together with) audio spectro-morphologies

Video and audio material for this piece was generated using Max/MSP/Jitter. Audio and visual elements were created and mapped by a combination of processing techniques; audio created in MSP was used to control the creation of video material, with original video generated in Jitter used to initiate audio processing. Processing was applied using a predefined set or criteria relating to pitch, colour and density. Here is a short excerpt to demonstrate the final output.

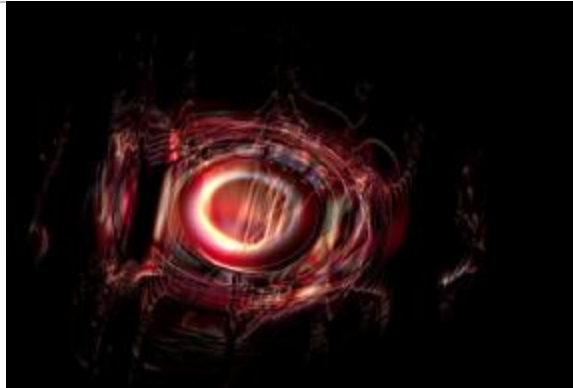
- _ Mapping
- _ Algorithmic links

Diego Garro – *PATAH*

w Complex graphics

w Integrated sonic gestures

w Compositional challenges



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On similar methodology : Diego Garro – *PATAH*

Surely another example of AV composition that stems from the typical concerns of an Electroacoustician is my last piece *PATAH*.

PLAY SHORT VIDEOCLIP

Complex computer generated motion graphics material (complex in terms of shapes, the textures, and their behaviour).

The challenge was to design sonic gestures that reflected the phenomenological attributes of the visuals and find ways in which both can seamlessly contribute to a type of audio-video-graphic discourse in the style of the pioneers of visual music.

Difficult task : audio-video synergies, but also compositional equilibrium, musical flow, balance of focus between the audio and the visual stimuli.

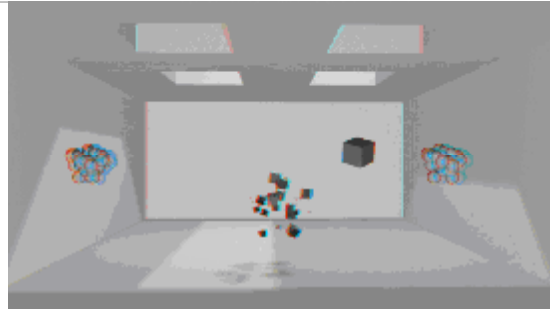
Patah is an investigation into abstract spectro-morphologies articulated in both the audio and the visual domain. Stylistically, this composition is rooted in the tradition of Electroacoustic Music but the compositional endeavour, instead of revolving solely around the evolution of audible spectra and the construction of a sonic discourse with non-musical material, has been extended to the integrated audio/video media through the utilisation of computer generated abstract animations. One possible viewing strategy can focus on the role of the sonic material in permeating the 'fractures' ('*patah*' in Indonesian) in the visual textures and on the dramatic effect that results from this interaction (notes by the author).

Joseph Harrison – *SOUND ROOM*

w 'Popular'
Electronic
Music

w Spatial
attributes

w Anaglyph 3-D imagery



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Another example of approaches based on Electroacoustic Music with emphasis on spectro-morphology:

Joseph Harrison – *SOUND ROOM*

Influences from Electronica and Glitch

PLAY SHORT VIDEOCLIP

Joseph embraced Electroacoustic Composition as part of his UG studies, during which he tried, among other thing, to reconcile experimental and more vernacular styles of electronic music.

Interested in spatial attributes of sound. Combine spatial attributes and behaviour of sound with those of visuals generated in 3-D modelling computer environments.

He embraced 3-D anaglyph graphics to explore this ideas.

Extended to 5.1 surround in Z-Depth

While studying Music Technology as part of my undergraduate studies at Keele University, I developed an active interest in audio-visual composition practices. I found that I could express my creative ideas through the use of audio-visual media, developing my own style and becoming more familiar with the tools and techniques required.

This composition is part of a research project (Mres) that deals with the use of spatial morphological types as means of artistic expression, utilising sonic gestures and textures coalesced with visual objects operating in 3D through anaglyph graphics.

This composition aims to explore the spatial visual perception of 3D objects and discover sound-object relationships within a stereo environment.



ELECTROACOUSTIC 'ANECDOTAL' APPROACH

w *Electroacoustic music that employs recognisable sounds more for their 'anecdotal' or narrative aspect than for their abstract potential.*

Rodolfo Caesar (1992)



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We have seen so far an approach to AV composition centred on the spectro-morphological attributes of the materials and on the way the attributes in the audio relate to the attributes in the visuals.

Now I want to show you a slightly different approach followed by other practitioners at Keele. And that is the

ELECTROACOUSTIC 'ANECDOTAL' APPROACH

See definition of 'anecdotal' on the slide. As this was the approach they used in their sound-based composition, it is not surprising that they extended a similar approach when working in the AV domain.

ANECDOTAL (definition by Rodolfo Caesar)

The first piece to be named thus ("Hétérozygote" by Luc Ferrari) was not the first anecdotal work. It was preceded by many of Schaeffer's compositions and the music of other composers.

Rajmil Fischman – ¿TE ACUERDAS HIJO?

w Spectro
morphologies

w Anecdotic
reference
(in memory of
his father)

w Narrative (unfolding family history)



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An example of AV composition with anecdotal elements is
Rajmil Fischman – ¿TE ACUERDAS HIJO?

PLAY SHORT VIDEOCLIP

There is still spectro-morphological approach in many respects but also
Anecdotal
Narrative (Family, unfolding of family history through successive generations)
Poignant
Memory

¿Te Acuerdas Hijo? (2006) Do You Remember Son? *Duration: 16'40"*

¿Te Acuerdas Hijo? is dedicated to the memory of my father, Alberto Fischman (1920-1983).

The text appearing in the video is taken from the beginning of the Medieval Spanish poem *Coplas on the Death of My Father*, by Jorge Manrique (1440-1479), translated by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow:

*O let the soul her slumbers break, Let thought be quickened, and awake;
Awake to see How soon this life is past and gone,
And death comes softly stealing on, How silently!*

The words spoken at ca. 9:00 translate as follows:

Do you remember son? Here I also see you ...

Steve Bird – ONE

- w The 'real' as artistic statement
- w Deconstruction reinterpretation of the world
- w Electroacoustics but also linguistics, cinematography, fine arts, cinema
- w Audio-visual poetry



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Another example of AV composition that stems from the anecdotal approach is Steve Bird - ONE

PLAY SHORT VIDEOCLIP

Visual Arts – Painting
Memory
Visual Poetry

Steve Bird spent many years working in the performing and visual arts and as a gigging blues musician, before studying both traditional and electroacoustic music at Keele. His compositional strategy is based on the deconstruction and reinterpretation of the world around us.

The use of "real" imagery opens the doors for a richer use of audiovisual language than is possible with pure abstract imagery alone. This arms the composer with not only conventional musical devices, but expands the available creative pallet to include linguistic concepts such as metaphor, simile and hyperbole, cinematic techniques such as montage and narrative and fine art conventions such as symbolic juxtaposition, most of these can be translated from one medium to another.

These works are not Visual Music, although they encompasses Visual Music theories they also take advantage of centuries of Fine Art, Literature, Poetry, Music, Cinema and Television practice.

All works are created in 720p HD video format with 5.1 multichannel surround sound. All source material is filmed and recorded on location by the artist in high resolution video and audio.

RECAP: Audio-Visual composition at Keele University

- i Academic background in Electroacoustic Music
- i Spectro-morphological qualities of the soundtracks
- i Personal backgrounds (popular music, fine arts, literature)
- i Compositional approaches influenced by all of the above
- i Outcomes: common elements but also diverse directions



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Academic backgrounds in the Electroacoustic Music

Focus on the spectro-morphological qualities of the soundtracks

Personal backgrounds (popular music, fine arts)

Compositional approaches are influenced by all the above

Outcomes: common elements but also diverse directions

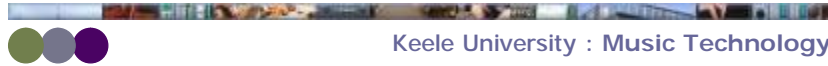


LINKS

Keele University - Music & Music Technology
www.keele.ac.uk/depts/mu

Steve Bird
www.soundmangler.co.uk

Andy Willy
www.andywilly.net



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