

CampusKlangKarte

TU Berlin Projektwerkstatt ‚SoundScapes‘ SS23

1. Introduction

Where does it sound on the TU Campus? Everywhere and all the time, we are exposed not only to visual but also to acoustic stimuli that allow us to discover the world around us, by which the differences between music and noise are intertwined. The CampusKlangKarte is intended to be a small guide for listening more closely to what can sound and where (inconspicuous) objects can be found.

“Impression is only half of perception. The other half is expression”, is what Murray Schafer said. With him being a pioneer in soundscape research, we will follow his idea [1]. The impression part will be realised by a soundwalk around the campus, focusing on soundscapes that portray life on campus. Inspiration for the expressive part of perception, is the StadtKlangKarte of Selbstgebaute Musik. A project creating spaces for listening to and playing with soundscapes in the urban berlin area.

2. Experiment Design

Whilst Selbstgebaute Musik combines listening and playing at their locations, we are going to separate between the active and passive part. At first there will be about 6 passive stations. This will be done in form of a traditional soundwalk, stopping by locations, that characterize the life on campus in one way or another.

At the end of the soundwalk there will be one final station summarizing the experience that was just made. Making it possible to not only auditorily perceive the campus, but also interact with the sounds that were just heard. Briding the gap between perception and action [2]. This will be realized, by making a small installation representing one of the former soundwalk stations. It is intended to encourage participation and discovery, so that small interactive concerts can be created and through the sharpened senses, the students' everyday surroundings can perhaps be perceived a little differently.

For example the first station could be in between the central library and the mensa, we really liked the sound of the stone sculptors working there sometimes. A noisy and bright sound, made by tough yet gentle work. The corresponding installation at the last station, could be a hammer, a chisel and a stone. Making it possible to recreate and actively experience the soundscape.

A map of the campus will be displayed at the final station as well, each installation will be representing an area on the map. Mapping by sound and ear, will follow the idea of countermapping we talked about in the world café workshop this semester.

3. The Practice of Soundwalking

Simply put, soundwalks are walks in which participants consciously listen to their surroundings. They move slowly through the space and perceive sounds. Soundwalks are mostly group activities and, according to Christos Carras, are an ideal introduction to sonic art. They can help to get away from the classical image of physical materiality and to decipher one's own environment and relationships between human and non-human actors in the city. It shows how sounds influence our perception of places and our feelings. Different activities come to the fore: walking at a slow speed, which only allows one to perceive the environment in detail, i.e. as a kind of '*flâneur*' (Carras, 2019) and active listening; thus moving through one's surroundings and being able to understand different layers and interactions and whereby acoustic exchange in urban environments becomes perceptible (Carras, 2019).

We mainly refer to the Listening Soundwalk 'Collective Environmental Composition' designed by Pauline Oliveros which is performed as follows: [3]

Each participant explores an environment to find a listening place with something interesting to hear and listens for a while.

Each participant invites the other participants to hear their found listening place. There may be one or more places with contrasting sounds.

Each participant finds a way to enhance, nullify or otherwise interact with the sound or sounds that the group goes to hear.

Each participant finds a way to connect all the sounds, either literally, metaphorically or graphically.

A performance agreement is negotiated.

Performing this practice our group has found certain points of interest on the campus, that we want to include in our project. Inviting participants to explore those places as well.

4. Countermapping by Sonification

Traditional maps have the inability to help navigating through urban life. The idea of soundmapping extends classical maps beyond the current parameters. [4] There are apps and websites already putting this practice into use. <https://citiesandmemory.com/> is a great example, allowing people from all around the world, to upload filed recordings to a certain spot on the map. Giving this area context besides the position, making this a practice of sonification of space.

Our interactive sound installation will be a way to countermap our campus. An intervention, focusing on life on campus and what it sounds like. A map making it possible to auditory navigate around the campus.



Abbildung 1: Beispielkarte für den Campus mit möglichen Stops für einen Soundwalk

Bibliography

- [1] R. M. Schafer. The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World. Destiny Books, 1994(1977).
- [2] Serafin, Stefania & Franinovic, Karmen & Hermann, Thomas & Lemaitre, Guillaume & Rinott, Michal & Rocchesso, Davide. Sonic Interaction Design. (2011).
- [3] P. Oliveros. Deep Listening: A Composer's Sound Practice. (2005)
- [4] N. Waltham-Smith. Cart-otographies of Cities: Soundmapping Urban Political Economies.

