

10th Annual SPA Conference: Keynote Abstracts

[Amanda Bayley:](#)

Eco-creative approaches to environmental listening and intercultural musicking

By using sound as a way of knowing, Steven Feld's description of 'sounding and listening as knowing-in-action' (2017) can help to teach humans to re-learn how to listen. Dylan Robinson (2020) similarly encourages us to rethink critical listening positionality and relationality, arguing for an empathic listening. Reflections on two interdisciplinary research projects will show how listening to sounds in nature can help to develop music pedagogies, cultural literacy, and ecoliteracy, valuable both for environmentally sustainable growth and ecological urbanism. 'Hear Water: building environmental empathy through deep listening' aims to increase knowledge and understanding of climate change, the value of blue spaces, and actions individuals can take through community-based, public engagement activities. 'Ecotones: Soundscapes of Trees' seeks new ways to communicate an awareness of environmental issues in rural and urban environments, in the UK and in South Korea, through cross-cultural connections and an eco-creative approach to environmental listening. Each project emphasises the significance and diversity of sounds from human and beyond-human worlds, highlighting their mutual impacts.

Connecting creatively through intercultural exchange is further illustrated in the project 'Transforming Lives through Ethnomusicological Engagement in Kwando, Namibia', where collaborative methods are employed to contribute to health and wellbeing, and to drive positive social change in the context of music, cultural and ecological sustainability. A range of examples from educational and community-based activities in each of the three projects will extend boundaries of artistic expression relating to natural and cultural heritage. In these different contexts of

listening and musicking, new tools and methodologies are being developed for decentring the West, and encouraging a plurality of voices that challenges current forms of knowledge and knowledge production.

Lee Miller and Joanne "Bob" Whalley:

Subject/Object/Practice/Place: Practising Digital Senescence

As two academics with over sixty years of body-based practices between us, the emergence of volumetric capturing technologies (LIDAR, structured light, photogrammetry, 360 video, light fields etc.), and virtual production contexts, affords us a radical intervention into the conjoined territories of Subject/Object/Practice/Place.

This keynote seeks to consider the potential impact that these developments might have upon the dramaturgical strategies employed within ephemeral, process-driven performance practice. The potential doubling evoked by the originary referent and its digital twin requires that the practitioner-researcher acknowledges the potential cleaving between the source and its document. Inherent therein is the slow degrading of source to output, and the complexity this assumes. Starting from the limits presented by our ageing bodies and their digital doubles, our paper takes an approach from Erin Manning whose work 'refuses a strict boundary between body and world, individual and other' (2023: 188) in an attempt to find the benefits of such limits.

[Cara Hagan:](#)

Where Ritual and Civic Practice Meet

This talk explores civic practice through the lens of artmaking. Learning to live mindfully in community is the first step to having what Hagan calls, a “civic practice,” which is a deep ritual practice unto itself that requires our full attention and a consistent recommitment to its existence and its health. To be clear, a civic practice means playing an active role in one’s community, driven by a concern for that community’s social, cultural, organizational, and infrastructural well-being. It includes the voluntary contribution of one’s time and talent (like any good ritual) to attend to the needs of one’s community. This looks different for everyone, and when people are tending to their communities from a place of agency, rooted in their power, participating in ways that are both manageable and productive given the shape of their lives, a civic practice is potent medicine against the forces of oppression. Hagan will share works of varied genres as a way of stitching together her experience of living in community with a passion for reimagining the world and how we exist in it.