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RESEARCH

Tide Times: Responding to Cramond

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This article explores site-responsiveness in the context of a collaborative work, *Tide Times*, by Laura Bissell (writer) and Timothy Cooper (electroacoustic composer) created for the island of Cramond. In this co-written submission we examine the ways in which the work responded to our experience of exploring the tidal island on the East Coast of Scotland during five visits between April and August 2018. Contextualising *Tide Times* through Ingold's ideas of atmosphere and place (Ingold, 2015), theories of soundwalking (Westerkamp, 2007) and acoustic ecology (Clarke, 2005) we discuss our attempt to heighten the participants' experience of the island and encourage a playful exploration of place. This article will discuss the ways in which the electroacoustic compositions and texts responded to site, environmental sound, the natural flora and fauna of the island and its visitors. Tim's electroacoustic compositions were combined with a palimpsest of texts including reflective accounts of visits to Cramond (written by Laura and Tim), site-responsive poems (written by Laura), fragments of found text, poems and excerpts from oceanographer Rachel Carson's *The Edge of the Sea* (Carson, 2014) (curated by Laura). These audio tracks attempt to explore an experience of this place, its tidal qualities, and the multiple identities of Cramond Island over time. Inspired by the geocache we found on our first visit to the island (a global treasure hunt using GPS), we created nine treasure chests to be found using a map to accompany the audio exploration which included invitations for visitors to the island to engage in making their own creative responses to this site. Whilst the pre-recorded tracks and the invitations remain constant, the way that the participants respond to these will continue to reshape the precise nature of the work: in this way the participants become active collaborators in the creation of *Tide Times*.

Keywords: Site-responsive; tidal island; poetry; electroacoustic music; explorative

Introduction

This article explores site-responsiveness in the context of a durational work, *Tide Times*, by Laura Bissell (poet/writer) and Tim Cooper (electroacoustic composer/writer) created for the island of Cramond (**Figure 1**). In this co-written submission we examine the ways in which the work responded to our experience of exploring the tidal island on the East Coast of Scotland during five visits between April and August 2018.

Contextualising *Tide Times* through anthropologist Timothy Ingold's ideas of atmosphere and place (Ingold, 2015), theories of soundwalking (Westerkamp, 2007) and sound mapping (Stollery, 2010, 2018 and Stein and Stein, 2018) we discuss our attempt to heighten the participants' experience of the island and encourage a playful exploration of place. Using Gaston Bachelard's 'Water and Voice' (2006) and Rachel Carson's *The Edge of the Sea* (2014), to generate a poetic palimpsest of text and sound, *Tide Times* in turn invites audiences to respond to this place, its inhabitants, its tidal qualities, and the multiple identities of Cramond Island over time.



Figure 1: Cramond Walkway.

Introducing *Tide Times*

Tide Times is a work that is sensitive to, and responds to, its setting on the island of Cramond situated in the Firth of Forth at the mouth of the river Almond. The work comprises of ten audio tracks made up of poetic writing and sounds recorded from the island (listened to via a mobile device and headphones), invitations for play and making found in treasure chests hidden in various locations, and a map to navigate the island (see **Figure 2**). We present our own subjective exploration as an invitation not to experience Cramond in the way that we did but to reflect upon what we found and discovered.

We chose Cramond for its tidality: it is one of 17 tidal islands in Scotland out of 43 UK tidal islands which can be walked to from the mainland at certain times of the day. Cramond is only accessible by a causeway which is exposed twice daily when the tides are low. The influence of the tide times on our ability to access the island informed the project greatly and gave the piece its title. Neither of us had been to this place before so the experience of exploring it together was an important part of our collaborative process. After visiting five times to make the work, we held an

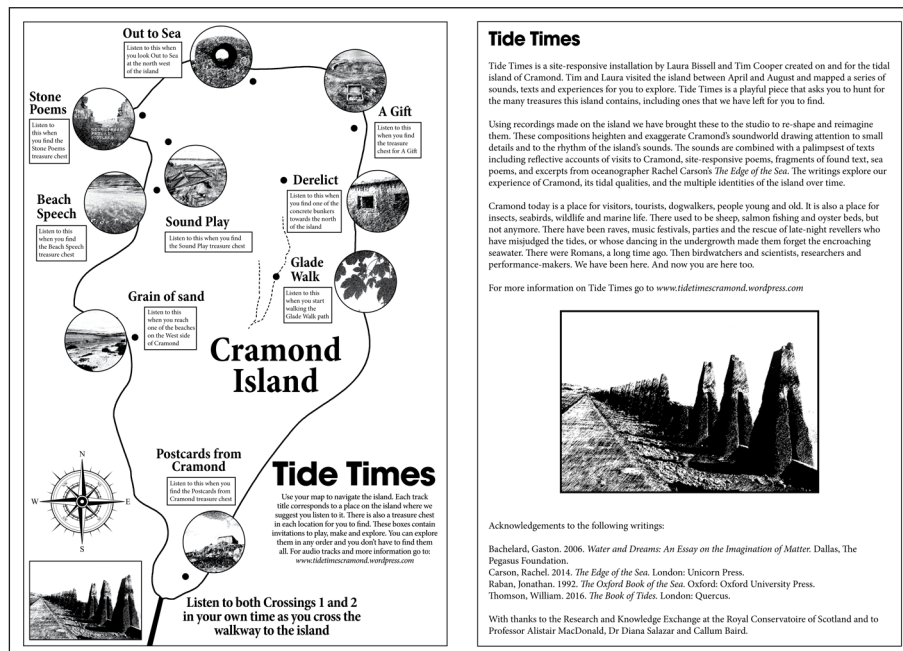


Figure 2: *Tide Times* map and programme note.

invited sharing on the 22nd August between 4:45 and 7:30pm and a second invited sharing on the 29th September between 9am and 1pm. In our email to the first group of participants we stated: 'We would ask that you please respect the tidalness of this island experience and return before 7pm. If you stay longer than the suggested time you risk getting stranded on the island'. During our research into the island we found multiple stories of visitors getting stranded and having to be rescued by the Queensferry Lifeboats Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), known locally as the 'Cramond taxi'. In 2011 a visitor to the island, Daniel Defoe from Livingstone, made the news after he and a friend misjudged the tides and were rescued; notable as he shared his name with the eighteenth-century author of the island classic *Robinson Crusoe*. Only a few weeks before our first sharing the Cramond Island of Punk festival took place and at a party in 2011 announced on the social networking site Bebo over 500 people attended, many of whom had to be rescued when stranded by the incoming tides. In our programme note we acknowledged the many uses the island has had over time and the visitors who have made and continue to make this place:

Cramond today is a place for visitors, tourists, dogwalkers, people young and old. It is also a place for insects, seabirds, wildlife and marine life. There used to be sheep, salmon fishing and oyster beds, but not anymore. There have been raves, music festivals, parties and the rescue of late-night revellers who have misjudged the tides, or whose dancing in the undergrowth made them forget the encroaching seawater. There were Romans, a long time ago. Then birdwatchers and scientists, researchers and performance-makers. We have been here. And now you are here too (*Tide Times*, 2018).

We wanted to remind visitors through the affirmation 'now you are here too' of the way in which their interaction with the place in this moment of visiting can impact the site. By asking them to be present, open and responsive to this place, they can affect both the site (through the invitations to make, play and explore) as well as the work itself (by co-creating elements of *Tide Times*). Human interventions are evident

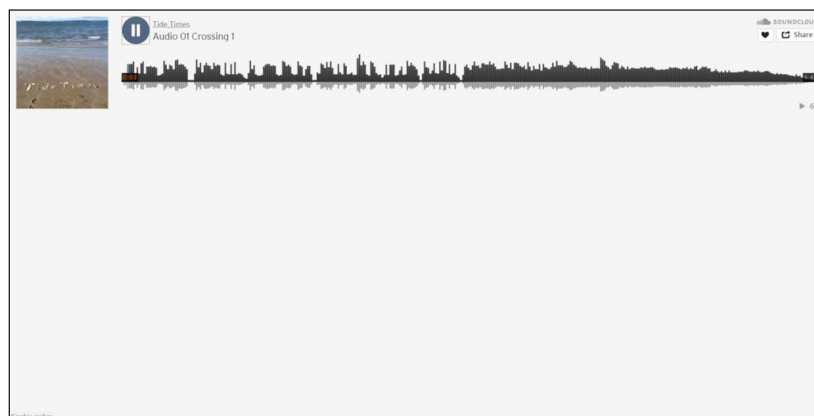
all over the island, most notably in the heavily graffitied disused military buildings to the north of the island (which became the location for *Derelict*) and we ask our participants to 'not leave any permanent trace' on this environment (*Tide Times*, 2018).

On our first visit we discovered that Cramond island was not at all remote, as we had anticipated. We describe this experience in the opening of the initial track *Crossing 1* (**Audio 01**) setting up a recurring theme of the work as we autoethnographically reflect on our visits to Cramond. As the participants reach the end of the walkway, they are free to explore the island in their own way. There is no right or wrong path to take; it is in the exploration, the play and the sensory experience that they discover the 'many treasures' that Cramond contains.

Experiencing *Tide Times*

The work consists of three elements: 'treasure chests' hidden on the island containing invitations to play, make and explore (**Figure 3**) (**Video 1** shows participants exploring the boxes); audio tracks made up of recordings of texts written by Laura and Tim, recordings of texts found on the island, and sounds recorded on the island, which were manipulated and reshaped into compositions; and a map detailing the locations of the treasure chests and the areas the audio tracks correspond to.

The participants are invited to experience the work through listening to the audio tracks (via a soundcloud playlist or a download link) in their corresponding



Audio 01: Crossing 1.



Figure 3: *Glade Walk* box nestling between tree trunks.

locations. The map indicates where the treasure chests are hidden. These varnished wooden boxes include a range of objects relevant to the invitation to experiment with sound and text in the location specified written on the inside lid of the box.

While the audio tracks created for these locations are subjective and are our responses to this place, the intention was always to invite a playful and creative response from participants who were visiting Cramond (**Video 2** shows participants exploring the island). This was one of the reasons why we decided to include 'invitations' to play – by sharing these insights into our own processes of either making sound (as in Tim's *Sound Play 1* and *2*) or generating site-responsive texts (as in *Beach Speech*, *Grain of Sand* and *Out to Sea*) we hoped participants would engage with these invitations to 'play' on the island as we had during our research process.



Video 01: Shows footage of participants exploring Cramond underpinned by excerpts from the audio works *Crossing 1*, *Glade Walk* and *Out to Sea*.



Video 02: *A Gift*, *Postcards from Cramond* and *Stone Poems* shows these playful interactions with three of the boxes.

When we visited the island the first time, we found a geocache (a global treasure hunt using GPS), and were inspired by the idea of encountering something physical on the island which connected disparate visitors in a shared experience and provided the impetus for a response from those who found it. On our third visit to the island we decided to test leaving a ‘treasure chest’ – our version of a geocache made specifically for this project – to see if it would stand up to the elements. We left a small box



Figure 4: *A Gift.*



Figure 5: Objects left by visitors to Cramond in pilot box.

with some shells in it tucked away in a nook at the far end of the island (**Figure 4**). When we returned exactly two weeks later, we were surprised to find the box full of trinkets and gifts. Inside was a scrap of paper with a Polish stamp on the back and a handwritten message in biro which read 'Please leave something from you and put it back'. Someone had written underneath in pencil 'What a lovely idea!' In the space of two weeks the box now contained (amongst other things): a hairband, a small white and pink pony, a selection of coins in a range of currencies, a small piece of green glass and a picture of a botanical drawing (**Figure 5**). The visitors to Cramond took ownership of this box; the way in which visitors to the island responded to it without any prompt encouraged us to develop the treasure chests for the final work.

There are a number of ways that people can experience *Tide Times*: through word of mouth from the creators of the work or previous participants; through the website <https://tidetimescramond.wordpress.com/>; by accidentally encountering one or more treasure chests on the island and discovering the invitation within (which includes the web address – see **Figure 6**) or through observing others on the island finding boxes or navigating the island via the map.



Figure 6: Treasure Chest Lid.

Context – Responding to Site

Electronic composer Lauren Hayes states: 'A site-responsive practice develops transferrable techniques in terms of both performance strategies and finding ways to encourage audiences to be more aware of their own presence and participation at a site' (2017: 88). *Tide Times* asks participants to actively engage with their environment – these are framed as invitations to respond to the place. Visitors can choose whether or not they wish to engage with them.

The intention was to heighten an experience of the place through site-responsive audio works and texts. We did not want to try to tie the site down to any particular definition of its identity, apart from that of a tidal island. Bearing in mind Minty Donald's assertion that people 'can invest in a "sense of place" while concurrently recognising the temporality, porosity and interconnectedness of that place' (Donald 2012: 223), we sought not to hark back to Cramond's military past (it was used defensively in both WWI and WWII) or its proposed touristic future (plans to extensively develop the foreshore as a tourist attraction have been put forward), but instead acknowledge the multiple identities of the site as it existed for us at the time of visiting. This range of identities and usages by both visitors and locals informed the layering of the different types of texts and sounds used in the final work.

Atmosphere

To understand our intentions in situating *Tide Times* as an artistic work and its broadest, most meaningful relationship with the atmosphere, mood and aura of Cramond, Ingold's channelling of meteorological, aesthetic and philosophical discourse on *atmosphere* provides context. In *Life of Lines* (2015) Ingold describes the seeming contradiction of meteorology and aesthetics. He suggests: 'that while meteorology gives us a notion of atmosphere as a gas-filled domain evacuated of all traces of mood and affect, aesthetics gives us what looks like the complementary opposite, a system of affects that appears to exist in a vacuum' (Ingold, 2015: 74). Initially it seems that the aesthetic concerns are more closely aligned with an experience of *Tide Times* the 'atmosphere is all about sensory experience: it is a space of affect'. Drawing a relationship between affect, mood

and atmosphere, Ingold goes on to suggest that *mood* is 'the way the atmosphere pervades every pore of a living being and lends affect to its actions' (Ingold, 2015: 89–90).

If aesthetics, geography and architecture tell us about the sensory and social experience of the participants, it neglects the space they inhabit. The subjective and sensing participants are not in a vacuum, but in an outdoor space where the effect of the weather is explicitly tied into their sensory experience: 'if the medium is a condition of interaction, then it follows that the quality of that interaction will be tempered by what is going on in the medium, that is, by *weather*' (Ingold, 2015: 74). The *atmosphere* of *Tide Times* is made through our creative interventions and activated through the experience of the participants. As a solo, embodied, immersive, exploratory experience of Cramond, the weather, location, time of day, tides and the aesthetic experience of the work create *atmosphere* based on the subjective experience of each participant. These aspects all shape an individual's reading as they navigate their own path through the work.

Soundwalking and Sound Mapping

Soundwalking – a term coined by composer Hildegard Westerkamp – aims to encourage us to 'listen with attention'. She suggests that in the act of listening we may discover more about our sounding environment, our place within it and importantly that through listening we can find a kind of therapy or a spiritual restoration. She explores soundwalking in a number of compositions, most pertinently for our discussion in *Kits Beach Soundwalk* (Westerkamp, 2010), which involves recordings made at Kits Beach in Vancouver accompanied by a voiceover written by the composer that elaborates on the creative process. There are parallels to be made between this work and *Tide Times* in terms of the exposure of the process, however, the most important connection with soundwalking is in the focus on actively listening within an environment. Westerkamp provides instructions for how to do this:

Start by listening to the sounds of your body while moving. They are the closest to you and establish the first dialogue between you and the

environment. If you can hear even the quietest of these sounds you are moving through an environment which is scaled on human proportions. In other words, with your voice or your footsteps for instance, you are “talking” to your environment which then in turn responds by giving your sounds a specific acoustic quality (2007).

Sound maps archive and document the auditory history of a place (Stein and Stein, No Date). In *Tide Times* the sounds we have created specifically respond to areas of the island. However, where soundmapping acts ‘as a sonic time capsule...preserving sounds’ we created works that evoke the atmosphere and mood of the island. Through manipulating and processing the recorded sounds we reveal interior details of the sounds creating surreal sound spaces that go beyond documenting the sounds as they existed on Cramond during our visits.

Pete Stollery, in a number of works, also seeks to ‘preserve’ sounds ‘through recording’. In the Gordon Soundscape and Hilton Soundscape projects he recorded disappearing sounds. In the Hilton Soundscape these are recordings made at the Hilton campus in Aberdeen and Stollery contacted colleagues to ask which sounds they would like preserved (‘loved and not so loved’). He describes the resulting project as a ‘sound romance’, a term borrowed from R. Murray Schaeffer, where past sounds are ‘remembered nostalgically’. Here the positioning of the work is all about the framing of the project. The sounds here are also un-manipulated and un-arranged. It is through active listening that Stollery asks audiences to ‘reflect on memories’ evoking ‘developing sound conversations.’ In *Tide Times* the framing of the work is different; we are asking the participants to actively engage in the island as they find it, not as we found it. The creative works facilitate this through our approach to the source sounds; they are not simply captured to be ‘remembered nostalgically’. As Stollery does in a number of compositions (for example *Still Voices* from the Gordon Soundscape project) we chose to edit, manipulate and arrange the sounds to create audio works that immerse the listener. The works create their own sense of *atmosphere* that interacts with the *atmosphere* of Cramond mirroring the commonality that Ingold finds between the aesthetic, meteorological and geographic understandings of *atmosphere* and how these manifest in the work.

Ideas of performative mapping also informed *Tide Times*; Mike Pearson and Michael Shanks identify the potential of maps as a form of 'theory-informed storytelling' (2001: 16), an approach which 'attempts to record and represent the grain and patina of a *location*' (our italics) (Pearson 2006: 15). Performance-maker Mona Bozdog's *Inchcolm Island Project* (2016) also used an island in the Firth of Forth for an immersive exploration of Inchcolm Island as a real-world site for an investigation into the island world portrayed in the video game *Dear Esther*. Using Sonic Maps software alongside a map of the island, participants explored the site encountering recorded sound and live performance echoing the virtual environment of the game and inherent interaction of game play.

Reality – Abstraction

John Young's Reality Abstraction Continuum – which develops Simon Emmerson's language grid – provided useful context for understanding how to structure the works. Young discusses the binary opposites of this continuum as 'Reality' and 'abstraction'. He argues from an ecological point of view, that our listening system seeks to identify the source as 'the potential for source- cause recognition is a key factor in the way we define "Reality" in sound' (Young 1996: 77). The attempt we make to identify a sound means that when listening we will identify with the smallest trace of a recognisable source or cause, whether this is 'Real' or metaphorical. But Young points out 'In the acousmatic medium of electroacoustic music "Reality" and "abstraction" are notional absolutes, which may appear... to be in constant flux and ... not always clear-cut, since judgements about sound sources are not able to be verified visually, and signal processing can undermine the interplay of recognitional cues in natural sound events' (Young 1996: 83–84).

The sound tracks in *Tide Times* also play on the spatial dimension as Young describes it, allowing abstract spatial identities to subside into 'Real' spatial identities and vice versa. This spatial dimension is important in articulating our response to Cramond and the sounds that we found there. The spaces revealed by the abstracted sounds juxtapose the spaces revealed by the environmental recordings. The abstracted spaces transport the listener to a heightened spatial domain that explores aspects of site and response that go beyond the documentary listening mode suggested by the

'Real' environments. This is important in encouraging a deeper reading of the island, a deeper *listening* and a heightened immersion in the atmosphere of the island.

Process

Taking these key ideas from Ingold, Young, Westerkamp, Stollery and Stein and Stein, our process was shaped by a keen desire to respond to place, explore interaction and creative participation. *Tide Times* is our direct response to the island and it is through these aspects that the work itself emerges as a research output. The theoretical framing is not simply an explanation of process but demonstrates the work as practice research. Through exposing our process, we will explicate the work's engagement with these concepts.

Textual responsiveness

On our first visit Laura was struck by the texts which were already present on the island, the warning signs and instructional notices at the start of the walkway, the word 'Niddrie' repeated on every brick which made up the dilapidated building which had tumbled towards the sea, and the multi-coloured and multi-lingual graffiti which covered some of the rock faces and all of the disused military buildings towards the north of the island. In early iterations of the work she created sound poems from the existing graffiti and was interested in how often the marking of a place is to anchor it to a particular moment and/or identity: 'Romania 2017', 'YO ESTOY AL DERECH DADO VUELTA ESTAS VO SI 6/5/17'. While these found texts did not make it into the final work, they were important in conceptualising the idea of capturing a particular moment of visiting this place and of our decision to include our own experiences of visiting the island as autoethnographic texts within the final piece.

The kinds of explorations of text within the landscape which Laura undertook as part of the process of making the work became integral to some of the invitations to play on the island. *Grain of Sand*, *Stone Poems* and *Beach Speech* all ask visitors to use language to temporarily mark the island using materials found there. All of these encourage creative interventions on the tidal space of the beach. The audio texts, that accompany these invitations for performative writing within the landscape,



Figure 7: Tidal Zone *Beach Speech*.

include excerpts from oceanographer Carson's *The Edge of the Sea*. These citations are intended to expand perceptions of this specific tidal island to the vast lunar processes that govern the tides around the globe: 'The edge of the sea is a strange and beautiful place. For no two successive days is the shoreline precisely the same. The tides advance and retreat in their eternal rhythms, the sea is never at rest' (2014). Carson's focus on the more-than-human life forms which inhabit tidal zones are considered within *Beach Speech*, asking visitors to Cramond not just to notice the environment and its inhabitants but to care for them too (**Figure 7**).

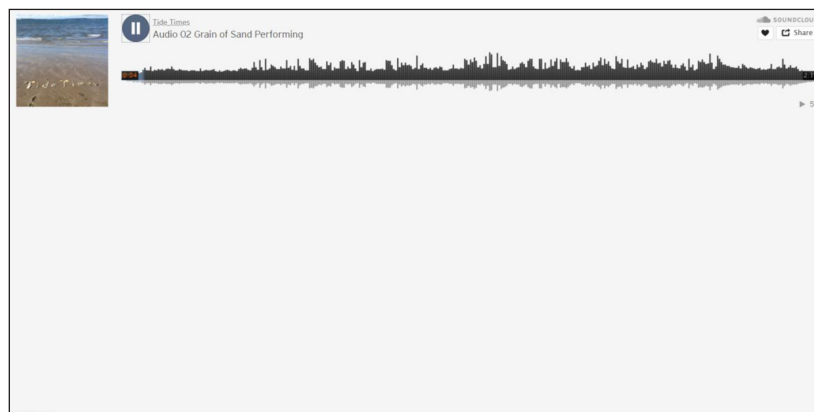
Sonic Responsiveness

In this section we will discuss the choices we made regarding the recording of the source material, the manipulation of the recorded sounds and the structuring of the audio works. Prior to creating *Tide Times* Tim was keen to avoid using closely mic'd recordings of objects. Much of his work involves detailed exploration of closely recorded sounds, revealing internal characteristics of the sound through editing, sonic manipulation and ordering/arranging sounds. This project seemed to present an opportunity to foreground different kinds of source material that did not require

or involve the objects found upon the island. We hoped we could create works that focussed on what we *found* on the island rather than what we could *make* on the island. However, when we first visited Cramond we discovered that it was noisier than we expected with background noise from Edinburgh City to the southeast and aeroplanes flying overhead to Edinburgh Airport in the southwest.

During our first visit Tim found it difficult to decide what to record, the repetitive rhythm of the planes overhead distracted him from the 'natural' sounds of the island. We found a rusted girder and rusted metal sheet on the beach on the west of the island and Tim decided to make recordings using these objects so that he had some material to work with when he returned to the studio. This led to further closely mic'd recordings on subsequent visits of branches, ferns, water and stones. Cramond did not offer us what we expected so we had to discover ways of responding to this and adapting the work to make conscious use of objects we found on the island.

Most of the sounds heard in the audio tracks were collected on the island during our visits. We do not claim these are ever-present sounds on the island; in fact, most of them would change with the seasons. However, these sounds are a response to *our* visits. Tim supplemented these sounds with field recordings made at South Gare Beach (Redcar) and at Blast Beach (Seaham). Tim found commonality between the 'foreign' sounds and the island. An older recording of rusted metal wires made on Blast Beach is used in *Grain of Sand* to create a sense of a human agent 'performing' the sounds on the beach (**Audio 02**). The recordings from South Gare of running

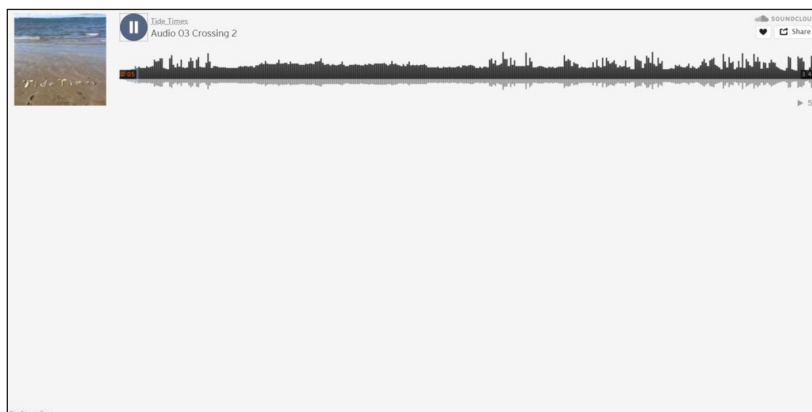


Audio 02: *Grain of Sand*.

water are used in *Out to Sea* and bladderwrack crackling and popping are used in and *Crossing 1* and *Crossing 2* which reference the seaweed clinging to the causeway (**Audio 03 Crossing 2**). In *Tide Times* it was important to create a sound world that is plausibly based on sounds from Cramond rather than insisting that all of the sounds used must be recorded from the island. Most importantly the sounds aim to heighten the participants' experience of the island.

Cramond sounds

Tim used four different kinds of sounds in the works: human activity including voices, planes/other mechanical sounds, walking etc.; recordings of the 'silence' of Cramond revealing the level of background noise and the character of the individual spaces (the beach, the concrete buildings, the glade, at the northernmost point of the island); objects that we found on the island (metal sheet, metal girder, stones, shells, branches, ferns, water running) and the recordings of our voices. Laura used four different kinds of text within the work: site-responsive poems written on the island; excerpts from Carson's *The Edge of the Sea* to offer an expanded meditation on tidal spaces; autoethnographic reflections on our visits and the invitation texts, many of which encouraged multiple ways of engaging with performative writing within – and in response to – the landscape. At times the sound and text work together to create a layering of experiences of the island and at other points the sounds of Cramond stand alone to create a particular atmosphere to be experienced at the specific site.



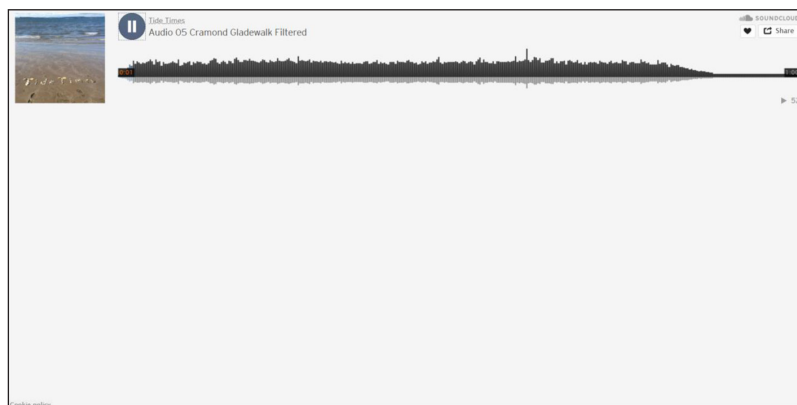
Audio 03: *Crossing 2*.

Treatment of the 'raw' sounds

In each of the longer pieces there are two ways that Tim approached the treatment of the sounds. Firstly, the arrangement of the raw recordings recreates the sonic rhythm and character of the island as we found it during our visits. These recordings might sound 'untreated' or 'natural', however, they were manipulated to heighten the character of these recordings. Through filtering the sounds, we cut out much of the background sound, which revealed smaller details not apparent like the rustling of leaves in the wind and the sounds of the human voices recorded on the island (**Audio 04** is an example of an unfiltered sound where low frequency background noise disguises sonic details and **Audio 05** is the same recording filtered to reveal the sounds of branches rustling, and a gentle breeze through the trees). This heightened



Audio 04: Cramond *Glade Walk* Unfiltered.



Audio 05: Cramond *Glade Walk* Filtered.

awareness, when participants remove their headphones, is intended to encourage them to listen more closely to the sonic environment of Cramond in the conditions in which they find the island on that particular day. These sounds allowed Tim to create passages that most obviously respond to Cramond as they seem familiar and their rhythm and sonic makeup feel *at home* on the island.

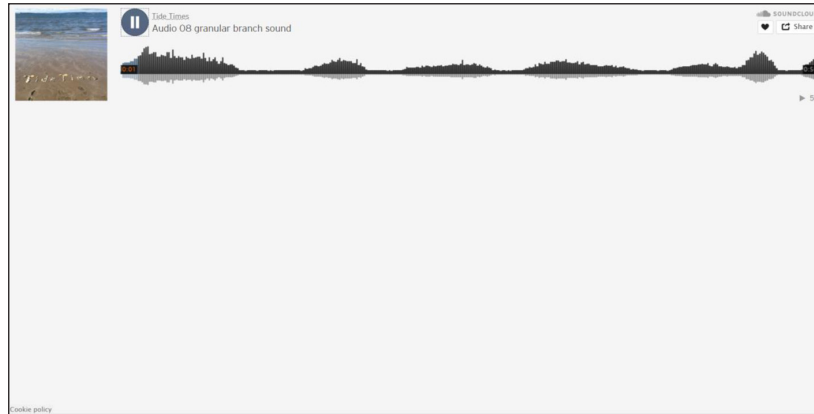
Secondly, the processing and manipulation of the recordings reveals the internal characteristics of the source recordings. Tim manipulated the sounds through dynamic filtering (**Audio 06** – dynamically filtered sound of background noise creates a dynamic shape), stretching (**Audio 07** – stretched sound of metal), and granulating (**Audio 08** – granulated sound of branches). The processing exaggerates



Audio 06: Dynamic Filtering.



Audio 07: Stretched Metal Sound.



Audio 08: Granular Branch Sound.

the sounds and makes them more ambiguous, abstracting them. The sounds are freed from their original context and take on a new character where participants can now focus on their sonic content.

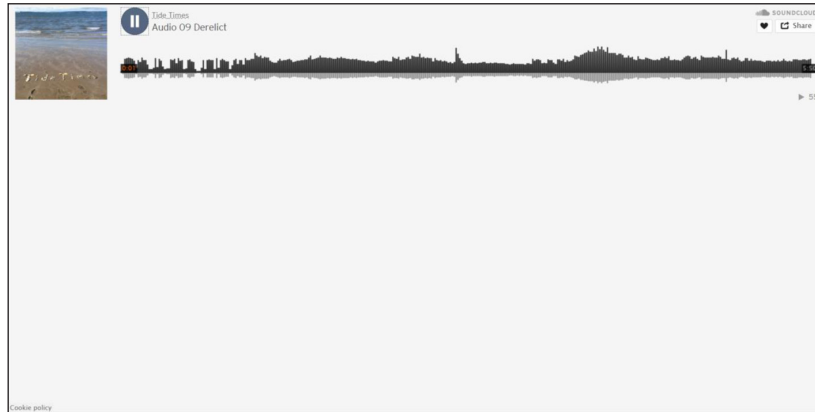
An important part of the process was spending time testing ideas on the island. Tim was able to take sounds recorded on the island back to the studio to work on them then bring the resulting audio tracks back to Cramond. There, Tim tested how these 'read' when listening outdoors, on the island in contrast to the studio. This testing meant Tim could ensure that the audio tracks deliberately and consciously translate when listening on the island and that they heighten the sonic environment of Cramond resulting in a more immersive soundworld.

Analysis

For the purpose of this article we will discuss how the audio works and invitations respond to the island of Cramond through textual/performative analysis of *Postcards from Cramond*, *Glade Walk* and *Out to Sea*. We will also discuss the creation of *Derelict* which provided the framework for the creation of the other audio works.

Derelict

The structure of *Derelict* (**Audio 09**) is based on the interaction between metallic sounds (derived from the rusted girder and metal sheet discussed earlier) and recordings of the concrete bunkers (**Figure 8**).



Audio 09: *Derelict*.



Figure 8: *Derelict*.

Following a spoken introduction, metallic sounds are established at 01:09 and these are explored in an abstracted way; the heavy processing making these sounds ambiguous. The abstracted sounds begin to subside and a 'Real' sound environment emerges (02:25–03:00) containing recordings of activity within the concrete bunkers. This transition underpins the structure of the work.

This is articulated by the rhythm and spectral shape of the individual sounds. More sustained recordings that develop more slowly, provide context and support the work. The metallic sounds evolve more quickly, with a more 'composed' rhythm and a sense of phrasing that plays on the abstracted nature of those sounds. With their own sense of pace, which is articulated by the way they move through the stereo image, the abstracted sounds provide a counterpoint to the more perceivably 'Real' sounds that are established around 2:25. This conclusion of the first section, specifically the way the abstracted sounds subside, is a reference to the derelict buildings to the north of the island, it is a conscious response to the *atmosphere* of this part of Cramond.

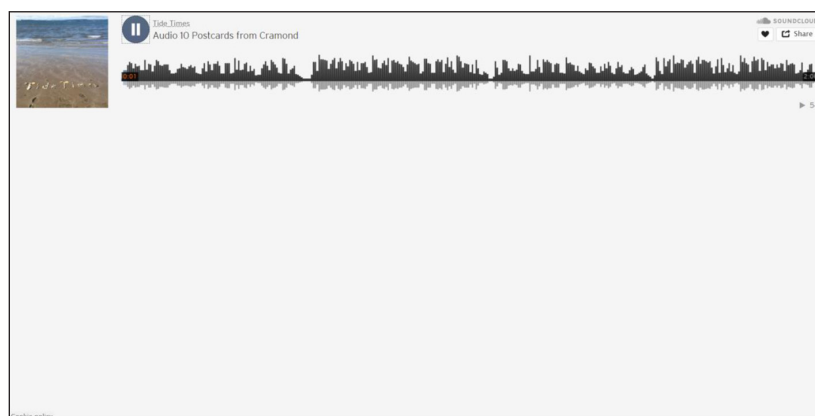
This structure, and the interplay between the abstracted and 'Real' materials, provided a model for the subsequent works made for different locations on the island. Each of the works explores environmental recordings from the location relating to the track and recordings of objects Tim found in that area manipulated and explored in similar ways to the metal sheet and metal girder. The structures of these works continue to play on the continuum between abstraction and reality.

Postcards from Cramond

Postcards from Cramond (**Audio 10**) is an audio track of our voices reading out 'postcards' to visitors and each other. It is accompanied by a treasure chest with postcards of Cramond created by Laura and an invitation to correspond with another visitor to the island. Although there is no set order in which to experience the audio tracks, sited to the south of the island in the first derelict building that is reached when you cross the walkway from the foreshore, *Postcards from Cramond* may be the first of the tracks/boxes which people encounter when they arrive on the island. The concept for *Postcards from Cramond* was developed after our third visit to the island when we had a conversation about the vast volume of tourists and visitors who came to Cramond Island. Laura tried to find any existing postcards which depicted the island but there were none so she used photos of landmarks on the island to create a postcard on which participants can write their own text. Visitors to the island are invited to take a postcard to send to another person who had found the box and then



Figure 9: *Postcards from Cramond.*



Audio 10: *Postcards from Cramond.* The text from this work can be found in Video 2.

write their address on a postcard if they wished to receive one from another participant (**Figure 9**). Inspired by the evidence of international visitors to the island from both our visits and the trinkets left in *A Gift*, we were interested to see where in the world *Postcards from Cramond* might end up. The idea of connecting visitors who might be willing to share their experience of this place was an impetus for this provocation.

Glade Walk

Glade Walk (**Audio 11**) was created in response to the area in the middle of the island which grew denser and greener with the foliage of ferns, trees and wildflowers as the summer progressed. The presence of these Cramond botanicals and the noisy bird and insect sounds which inhabited the foliage-dense centre of the island were the impetus for *Glade Walk*, an audio track to be listened to as participants made their way along the path through the undergrowth. The box to accompany this was placed in a tree that forms part of the glade of the title. In this treasure chest was a small book of wildflowers, a scrapbook in which Laura placed a cutting of purple loosestrife, some pencils and an invitation to identify and collect a wildflower from the island and add it to the inventory (**Figure 10**). The audio text refers to the



Figure 10: *Glade Walk*.



Audio 11: Glade Walk.

plethora of wildflowers to be found on the island while the poetic botanical names of the plants are combined with site-responsive poems and our account of not being able to find the glade when we returned a second time: 'We expected the shoreline to change from visit to visit with the twice daily tides, but the deep green heart of the island is shapeshifting too' (Bissell and Cooper, 2018).

Out to Sea

In an early stage of our process Laura had been interested in the idea of language which imitated the sound of water. Gaston Bachelard asserts that the materiality, movement and liquidity of water is synonymous with language in his essay 'Water's Voice' from *Water and Dreams*. In this he claims 'Liquidity is, in my opinion, the very desire of language. Language needs to flow'. Ingold asks 'how was the sound taken out of language?' (2015: 8) and for our collaboration we were interested in the euphonic possibility of water words as being of value as well as their meaning. Bachelard states: 'the vowel *a* is the water vowel. It is dominant in aqua, appa, wasser. It is the phenomenon of creation by water...After the *a* of the tempest, after the howling of the north wind, we are happy to hear the 'o's of water (eaus), the whirlwinds and the lovely roundness of their sounds' (Bachelard 1999: 189–192). In *Out to Sea* (and *Grain of Sand*) the words that Laura uses in the poetic texts are predominantly made up of water words, those with vowel sounds which according to Bachelard, mimic the sound of water. *Out to Sea* (**Audio 12**) is the most far removed from the physical



Figure 11: Location for *Out to Sea*.



Audio 12: *Out to Sea*.

experience of the island as it explores the imagined soundworld of a dolphin we witnessed on our first visit (**Figure 11**).

Further Reflections

On Saturday 29th September 2018 Tim took a second group of participants to visit Cramond. We were interested to check the locations for the boxes and to find out if they were still where we had hidden them. Five of the boxes were missing, one was water damaged (**Figure 12**) and three were in good condition in the hiding places we had left them. Only one of the boxes *Beach Speech*, had clearly been interacted



Figure 12: *Out to Sea* damaged.

with as numerous shells and sticks had been added to the box. The invitation for *Beach Speech* is 'write your own beach text with the materials you find there'. Inside the box Laura had included images with words made from materials like shells and seaweed spelling out the name of the material to draw attention to the tidal environment (**Figures 13** and **14**). The intention of the invitation was that this should provoke an intervention on the beach. As far as we can tell all of those that found the box chose to write their name on a shell or piece of wood and add this to the box. In our pilot, the way in which *A Gift* took on a life of its own showed an appetite from some visitors to Cramond for this kind of play and connection with other visitors. It is interesting that what was left in the box echoed the intention of the graffiti on the island – a marking that identifies the visitor and says 'I was here' rather than engaging explicitly with the environment. That numerous boxes have now disappeared asks us to consider the way in which the physical environment and participants may desecrate or remove the boxes from the site.



Figure 13: Shells.



Figure 14: Seaweed.



Figure 15: View of tidal walkway from Cramond Island.

In both sharings some participants did not find any, or many, boxes. In our view the invitations are integral for the following reasons: Firstly, they are playful and the work seeks to encourage and facilitate a playful engagement with the island of Cramond. Secondly, they respond to and imprint upon the island creating short-term and long-term histories for the work. Mark-making through writing on the beach or on stones will result in creations that will last in different ways for different lengths of time. High tide will wipe the beach clean leaving blank sand for a new intervention, however markings on a stone may last for longer. The stones may be swept into the sea to reappear in other locations carrying a trace of Cramond and of *Tide Times* further afield than this small tidal island (**Figure 15**). This responds directly to *our* experience and exploration of Cramond, which sought to facilitate a reflective, playful experience for participants. We intend for the invitations to exist online with the audio tracks to ensure that they are still a part of the work. It was initially our intention for the work to remain accessible indefinitely; after reflecting on our sharings we will allow the remaining boxes to last the duration of their own natural lives.

Conclusion

Returning to our discussion of Ingold, it is in the connectedness of our ideas and the *atmosphere* of the island that *Tide Times* responds to Cramond. Our process of visiting the island shaped the work as being made for and by the visitors who come to the island. The invitations to play encourage reflection, creative engagement with the landscape and experimentation with sound and text. The map, treasure chests and solo walking experience encourage a playful exploration of place, sound and text with the participant having agency to explore the island how they wish. The audio tracks invite the listener into a curated sound world that explores, examines and elaborates upon sounds that we found upon the island and the experiences we had there. *Tide Times* asks participants to listen deeply to this place and to become immersed in the experience; not simply in what we left in the place, but what was there already. The tidal nature of Cramond shaped the work as the tide times on any given day influenced the light, the volume of visitors and the weather inviting a sense of presence and drawing attention to the here-and-nowness of the experience. *Tide Times* heightens and exaggerates the participant's interaction with the *atmosphere* and mood of the island in the conditions that *they find it*.

Competing Interests

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

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