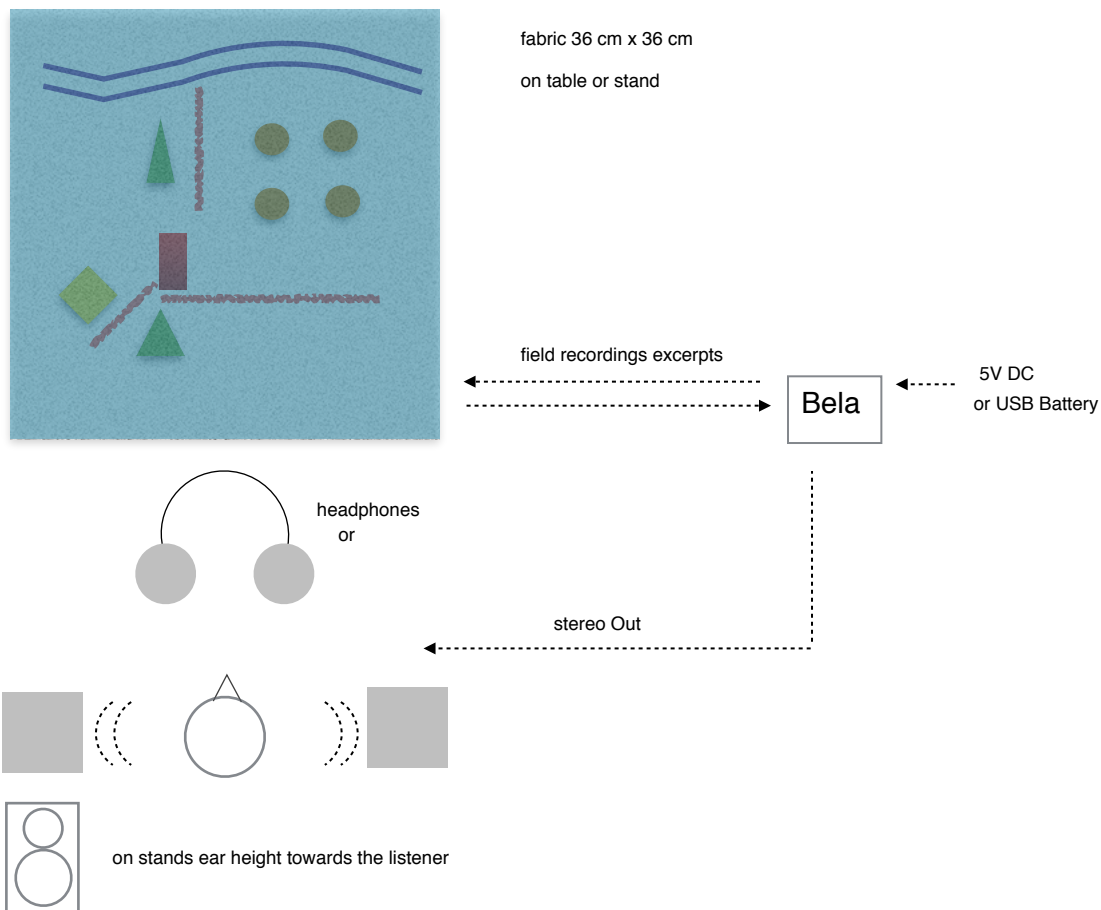


Link to listen to some excerpts:

<https://soundcloud.com/auralchar>

Technical specifications for Aural Fabric

- fabric with buttons and sensors and conductive threads available to be touched and manipulated by the audience to release the soundscapes and interact with them.
- wires from the fabric to Bela (ultra low-latency platform based on BeagleBoneBlack) in a dedicated custom made box.
- audio output departing from Bela going to a set of headphones or speakers in case the fabric can be placed without disturbing other installations/pieces.
- Bela can be powered with an USB rechargeable battery or 5 volts DC. Ideally the battery will be charged every day and replaced, to allow the maximum portability and interaction.



abstract

Aural Fabric : Greenwich consists in an interactive textile pieces hosting the experiences from some soundwalks in Greenwich, London. These soundwalks are part of the research project Aural Character of Places, investigating how people with different experience and familiarity attribute meaning to soundscapes, while raising awareness on how architecture influence the creation and spread of sound.

Aural Fabric: Greenwich is made of the sonic life of the area from which is inspired, and colours, materials, signs, shapes collected during the collaborative research experience. The recordings are placed on a symbolic map representing the area of Greenwich, whose layout is informed by the discussion with the walk participants and previous research on and in the area. The interaction with the piece is of an exploratory nature, designed for every location and route according to the feel of the place and its ambiance.

The field recordings collected are stitched together in a composition which has no beginning and no end, but the sensory experience with the map itself.

Conductive threads, soft and tangible sensors and buttons, textures of different density and grain, coexist in the space of a piece of fabric, releasing sounds of everyday life in ever-changing ways, according to the pace of the multi-sensory manipulation of the different materials and their different details and thresholds.

The interaction is supported by Bela, an embedded system for real-time audio, allowing excerpts to be processed and mixed together according to the form of the interaction. Touching and stretching the fabric, binaural recordings from a pair of dummy ears held by the author while leading the walk will be blended with the recordings of the same scene from the listening perspective of a sound artist wearing binaural microphones and windscreen.

The piece is the first of a series of interactive tangible maps based on rediscovering aural meanings and is profoundly inspired by the work of the pioneers in acoustic ecology, the soundwalkers, the aural architects, and those who still care about acoustic design and its importance for our everyday life.

This work is part of the PhD research of the author on the Aural Character of Places, supported by EPSRC within the Media and Arts Technology Programme and the Centre for Digital Music, Queen Mary University of London, with the collaboration of Chris Wood, sound artist, Andrew Hill, composer and lecturer in Sound Design at the University of Greenwich, Josh Reiss and Nick Bryan-Kinns, supervisors.

Biographical information

Alessia Milo is an architect from Rome currently researching into how we perceive soundscapes and acoustic spaces. Her work spans dealing with architectural and acoustic modelling to studying physical relationships with sonic spaces and their influence on us. Aside from her primary interests in architecture and acoustics, she likes creating installations engaging a dialogue with technology, animating geometrical creatures fed by sound, projecting live spectral traces on the walls and giving a sonic voice to everyday objects interacting with our body and the space around us. All these interests found a fertile terrain in the Media and Arts Technology Programme, Queen Mary University of London, where she is currently working on her PhD co-creating soundwalks while conducting situated interviews on sonic environments.

Details on Aural Fabric: Greenwich

Aural Fabric: Greenwich is based on the recordings¹ collected in the area of Greenwich, London, during the author's research on places which can carry an aural character for the local inhabitants. The area was chosen for having natural, historical and architectural landmarks and after noticing how the spaces are also used for performative events using the Old Royal Naval College and the river as the scenography .



picture of the author guiding the walk taken during the soundwalk in Greenwich, C. Wood.

The area is imbued with history and these spaces speak loud their story and their character foot after foot. It was interesting for me to listen to architecture which was originally intended as a hospital for sailors and a royal pleasure palace and I am still researching on how intentional it was designing such spaces with certain sonic effects in mind. The river Thames, st. Alfege church, Greenwich market, the Greenwich foot tunnel, they all have very distinct sounds and the aim of the research is also to help architects understand the impact of their design choices on our life.

After capturing these recordings, coming not only from the group soundwalk, but also previous fieldwork, it seemed natural for me to put them in their place, where they are, by the prime meridian, on a map. Being

Greenwich also famous for the observatory and being map-making a form of representation of space, also used with political and cultural meanings, it sounded valuable to extract the sonic textures I was asking the participants to listen to and describe and transform them into interactive gates, enabling the communication of the new listener with the aural character of the area experienced by the previous ones.

1. soundcloud.com/auralchar

SOUND WALK

9 - 10 / March / 2016

Start by listening to the sounds of your body while moving.



*sign up at the link and meet there
to take part in soundscape research.
dress comfortably and warm.*

Soundwalking
(Hildegard Westerkamp, 1974)

starting point
Island Gardens 2 pm



*Wednesday
9th of March : West side*



*Thursday
10th of March: East side*

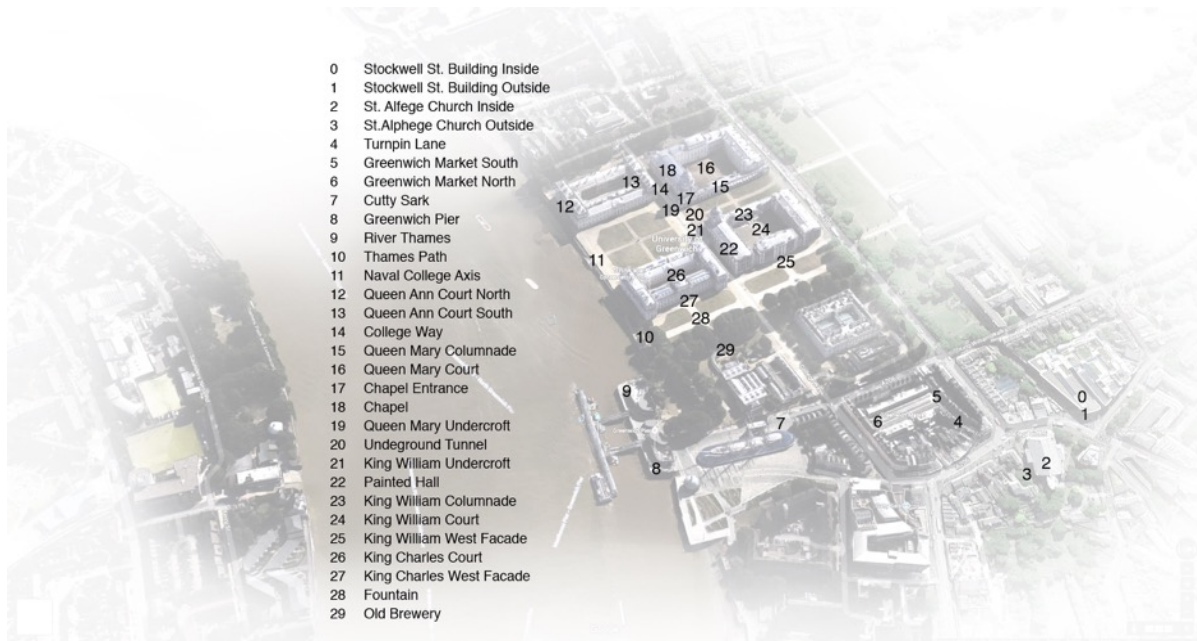


until 5 pm

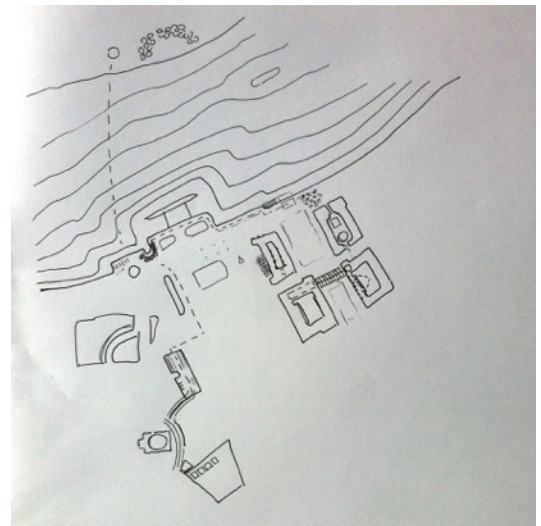
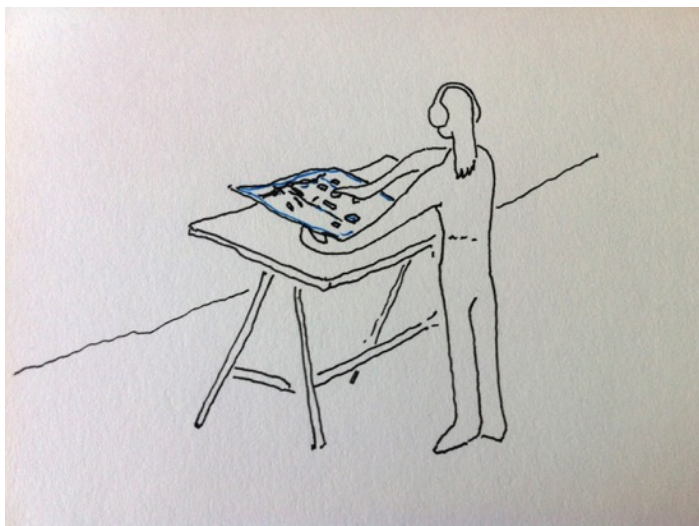
the flyer designed to gather participants from the local university. the author.



picture of the area from Island Gardens, June 2015 (low tide). the author.



picture of the map given to participants in the research. the author.



sketches of the piece. the author.

the piece is currently in progress and technical details of its fabrication together with the advancement of the PhD research will be documented live on:

auralcharacter.wordpress.com

some selected excerpts are available on

<https://soundcloud.com/auralchar>



Alessia Milo