

June 9, 2025
Christa Wells
DXARTS 462
Final Project Reflections

For my final project, I used a combination of sound synthesis techniques learned throughout the 46x series, including PAGS, Warp1 Shuffle, Glissando, and PlayBuf. I mapped sound files from our Meany Hall recording sessions to MIDI sliders and captured the results as I shifted parameters in real time. Additionally, I recorded outdoor environmental sounds using the Zoom ambisonic mic, which I then processed through PlayBuf, mapping their playback rate and pitch to slider movement as well. These textures formed the raw material of my piece.

My goal was to create a pastiche of Jean-Claude Risset's *SUD*, Part 2. What I found compelling in that piece was the blend of familiar natural sounds, like waves and birds - with moments of subtle, unexpected synthesis that blurred the line between organic and artificial. Rather than directly mimicking the structure or sounds of *SUD*, I aimed to use my own recorded material to evoke a similar sense of immersion. I was interested in the disorienting yet beautiful quality of being surrounded by a natural environment that gradually reveals its sonic manipulations.

In the final composition, bird calls and ocean waves slip in and out of synthetic glissandi and warped layers. The result is a slowly shifting soundscape that feels like being just beneath the surface of something, an ocean, a memory, or perhaps a dream. I was especially interested in exploring how slight modulations in pitch, playback rate, or granulation density could dramatically reshape a listener's perception of time and place.

This project challenged me to think about spatial and emotional continuity in acousmatic sound. It also deepened my appreciation for Risset's work, not just as a technical achievement, but as a poetic approach to composition that invites the listener into a liminal, open-ended sonic world.