

## PAPERS 12 Other noises, immanent sounds

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Chair – John Downie  
FRI 11.45-13.15 | RR4

### ***Lying the synthetic real – simulating a performance in Woodwork***

Mikael Eriksson

Woodwork is a 30-minute tape piece, the first of two works that will form a large part of Eriksson's artistic PhD at the Theatre Academy of Finland. The piece uses sound synthesis to create the illusion of being a recording of a live musical performance.

The main element in Woodwork is the synthesised sound of two short, split logs banged together. This sound of wood being struck is based on a digital model that can be gradually altered and slowly changed to make the sound completely different. Eriksson's concept is to then create a composition using this bare and simple sound. This musical layer will be accompanied by another layer, which consists of the characteristic sounds of a recording. The idea is to use subtle sonic cues - such as the noise of a microphone; localisation and spatialisation; the foley sounds that the imagined performers make - to make the listener believe that s/he is listening to an authentic recording of a real live performance.

Do noises – in the sense of sounds that are not part of a composition – make a recording real? How can these noises be utilised to create the feeling of a performance?

### ***Slippage and disorientation in The Master and the Margarita***

Laura Purcell Gates

Gates's site-specific adaptation of The Master and Margarita took its audiences moving through an imagistic and aural landscape, a spatial mapping that contributed to the evocation of themes central to Bulgakov's novel including paranoia, and the slippage between sanity and insanity.

Gates is interested in this moment of slippage, of disorientation; the moment when the theatre artist, loses moorings to the familiar. Within traditionally-structured play-creation processes, unexpected events are positioned as noise, as static, existing in the gaps between moments that map themselves onto a pre-established, teleological terrain of intentionality. Noise can only exist as (meaningful) sound; on the periphery is static, pushed out of conscious awareness. What happens when as theatre artists we listen to the static, when we allow these ruptures in intention to inform artistic practice? I engage with these issues by moving through the rehearsal process of The Master and Margarita encountering the moments when static was foregrounded, asking what discourses and practices made these moments possible.

### ***Intrusive noises: the performative power of theatre sounds***

Katharina Rost

Acoustic elements have always been present in theatre practice. But today their specific constitution and materiality is being given particular emphasis. Through voice, music, sound and noise, certain atmospheres and rhythms are created that have specific effects on the audience.

Rost's paper focuses on how this shift can be observed in the acoustic dimensions of performances and ponders how we might describe and classify these processes which she places in two distinct categories:

The non-musical phenomena, unserved by a traditional notation system. Only during the last decade have sound researchers begun to develop categories for the multitude of noises and their impact on the listener. How helpful are these categories when applied to the analysis of theatre performances?

Intrusive noises which have the power to affect the audience intensely. As the traditional model of understanding theatre is challenged by the practice of theatre as a laboratory for experiences, intruding noises force the spectator to develop new ways of coping with the unfamiliar.