

© Copyright 2023
Breana Tavaglione

WESTERN PANORAMA

Breana Tavaglione

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Washington
2023

Reading Committee:

Richard Karpen, Chair

Juan Pampin

Tivon Rice

Program Authorized to Offer Degree:

Digital Arts & Experimental Media

University of Washington

Abstract

Western Panorama

Breana Tavaglione

Chair of the Supervisory Committee:

Richard Karpen

Digital Arts & Experimental Media

This document will provide a comprehensive view into the research trajectory and composition process culminating in *Western Panorama* (2023), an electroacoustic composition reimagining of the Western film genre exploring scale, proximity, and perception. This dissertation discusses the trajectory of work on a documentary inspired piece that conveys the vastness of a desert landscape through intimate listening. It explores the challenges of working with scale, maintaining consistency across listening devices, conveying a sense of intimacy and immersion, as well as the use of sound characters, silence, and spatial audio techniques to achieve this.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. “WHAT IS A WESTERN?” DEFINING THE WESTERN GENRE.....	4
3. TEMPORALITY, HAUNTOLOGY, AND MEMORY ALIVE.....	7
4. AUDITORY OSMOSIS.....	15
5. FORM.....	22
6. ASMR: AUTONOMOUS SENSORY MERIDIAN RESPONSE.....	28
7. ACCESSIBILITY, SCALE, AND MEDIUM.....	34
8. AUDITORY CONCEPTS, PERCEPTION AND WORKFLOW.....	41
9. THE SCORE: WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE PIECE.....	48
10. WHAT IS NEXT?.....	73
11. CONCLUSION.....	77
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	79
FILMOGRAPHY.....	83

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who has guided and supported me throughout my doctoral journey. The completion of *Western Panorama* was made possible by the Howard P. Dallas Endowed Fellowship, which I was awarded for the 2022-2023 academic year. Thank you to my dissertation advisor and mentor Richard Karpen for your invaluable guidance and wisdom. I would not be the artist I am today without you! Thank you to my dissertation committee members, Juan Pampin, Tivon Rice and Bonnie Whiting, whose prestigious bodies of work served as true inspiration and shaped the trajectory of my research. Thank you to my collaborator, Matt Camgros, for challenging my notions about percussion and contributing your percussive excellence to this work. Thank you to my family for their support and encouragement throughout my studies. I am deeply grateful for the collective support, encouragement, and inspiration from everyone who has encouraged me to complete this dissertation.

Breana Tavaglione

September 2023

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the cowboys in my life. To my father, Jim Tavaglione, thank you for always watching *Once Upon a Time in the West* with me growing up and for taking me on countless trail rides on our horses “Red” and “Mac.” In loving memory of my grandfather/Papa, Louis Tavaglione (1929-2019), the original Italian Cowboy and founder of the Riverside Rancheros, and to my uncle Donnie Tavaglione (1955-2018) team roper and untamed spirit.

Breana Tavaglione

September 2023

1. INTRODUCTION

My practice consists of fixed media compositions, sound installations, mechatronic “music boxes,” and live performances. My fixed media compositions typically explore the boundaries of the medium by questioning its limitations. The sound installations are created with regard for spatially immersive listening experiences, dependent on site-specific and thematic attributes. The mechatronic “music boxes” are a type of music box which incorporate facets of both mechanical engineering and electronics in order to create sound and music. These instruments combine the aesthetics of traditional music boxes with modern technologies to create unique programmable sound-producing instruments, some of which are intended as musical instruments for customizable musical experiences, while others are intended for sound installations. My works for live performance retain some element which is essential for conveyance through a performative or “live” aspect. I have spent much of my research practice questioning the boundaries between these varying mediums in my work, and the resultant answers to these questions creates a trajectory which leads to more questions in future works.

These works are informed by my interests, which reside along the intersections of language, oral tradition, feminism, relation to place, decolonization, and sonic experimentation. Field recording and improvisation are essential facets of my compositions. Presiding over my practice is *auditory osmosis*, a term that I use to describe the phenomenon of internalizing an experience of language/sound within the parameters of an incomplete comprehension of language/sound. *Auditory osmosis* permeates my entire approach to composition.

The process of choosing a research topic for my dissertation took longer than I anticipated. I wanted a topic that was broad, yet approachable and familiar, but also unique and perhaps understudied in the field of electroacoustic music. I wanted to delve into a research topic

more extensive than other topics I have researched in the past, hoping to have plentiful archival material to investigate, since this type of archival archaeology is a characteristic facet of my artistic process.

During the initial stage of seeking a research topic, I watched director Akira Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai* (1954), and it became the catalyst for my conception of *Western Panorama*. *Seven Samurai* (1954) is known to be the blueprint for director John Sturges' American Western film adaptation *The Magnificent Seven* (1960). I was inspired by both of these film's themes of heroism, sacrifice, feudalism, social injustice, and moral ambiguity. At this point, I decided to explore the Western genre as a research topic. The comparison of these two films led me to the question: what is a Western?

Throughout my practice, I set out to answer certain questions in a work. When I first began the PhD program at DXARTS, I was in the process of creating works stemming from the questions: What is performance? What is the essence of a space? What are the constraints of a medium and how can those be expanded upon, broken down, or transmuted? How can a fixed media artwork be integrated with features of improvisation? What are the possibilities of a sound work that is at once a performance, a sculpture, and or a musical instrument? Technological innovations open new pathways for digital arts and experimental media to thrive, so how can this be explored to its full potential? Asking questions such as these creates a through-line trajectory which connects my works, and the answers to questions in one work often lead to the questions in my next.

To begin this dissertation research into the Western genre, I started by asking multiple questions including: What is a Western? What are the essential facets of the Western film genre? Is it possible to decolonize a Western? What would a decolonial western be like? And, what role

would *auditory osmosis* play in a western? I did not set out to answer one specific research question, but rather asked as many as possible and started to weave the answers together as this research progressed.

2. “WHAT IS A WESTERN?” DEFINING THE WESTERN GENRE

So, what is a Western? The American Film Institute defines the Western genre as films “set in the West that (embody) the spirit, the struggle, and the demise of the new frontier.” Some general themes associated with the genre are revenge, individualism, justice, and honor. Other elements include a general setting in the American West, sometime during the early 19th to early 20th century, depicting locations such as small frontier towns, deserts, prairies, ranches, and mining camps. Various archetypal characters of the Western genre include cowboys, outlaws, lawmen, Native Americans, pioneers, and settlers. The protagonist is often a rugged individualist who embodies values like self-reliance and courage, although they are often depicted as morally ambiguous and represent conflicts between good and evil or right or wrong. Through this research question I have developed a loose definition of what a Western might be, resulting in this piece.

There are practical and ideological reasons why I curated a unique vision of what a Western might be. The mythologizing of the American West has numerous problematic aspects. The harmful romanticization and distortion of the historical events and characters associated with the American frontier and westward expansion during the 19th century has perpetuated a skewed and idealized version of the American West which never really existed. It is a false history, a pseudohistory of unjustified Manifest Destiny and white saviorism which side steps any acknowledgement of the negative consequences for and genocide of Indigenous peoples of North America. The Western genre’s lazy reliance on stereotypes, especially its portrayal of Native Americans as “savages” and “noble savages,” detrimentally reinforces mistruths about the Indigenous peoples of North America, ignoring the rich cultural diversity and complexity across

tribal nation's varying cultures. One informative film from my research is *Reel Injun* (2009) by director Neil Diamond, which examines the portrayal of North American Indigenous people throughout a century of cinema in the Western film genre and beyond. Another aspect of the Western genre's problematic history is its marginalization and objectification of women, often through depictions of male-gaze rape scenes and simplifications of female characters as passive and one-dimensional. While some Westerns in more recent years have challenged these traditional tropes and attempted more historically accurate and nuanced portrayals of the American West, the delusional mythologizing of the West has had a lasting impact on American culture and popular perceptions of its historical period. With consideration of these facets, what would a realist, neorealist, historically accurate, feminist, or decolonial Western be like? What are the essential and redeemable aspects of the genre that have made it so beloved over many generations?

The preliminary research began with analyzing various Western films, reading Western books including novels and non-fiction, and assembling auditory concepts I wished to employ or experiment with. I have found that the essence of the Western transcends time and place, and can be found in stories set in any location that capture this spirit, aligning with a select few main parameters. This research into various Western films and literature has allowed me to identify common themes and motifs that are integral to the genre, while also finding inspiration in works that may not be traditionally considered Westerns. Some of the main reference points are less recognizably Western and more Western-adjacent, for example, the epic literary form of author Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* (1867), or the documentary-like narrative structure of director Ermanno Olmi's film *The Tree of Wooden Clogs* (1978). I will elaborate on my interpretation of these later, in the chapter "FORM."

Following this analysis, I set out to determine how the Western genre could possibly translate as a fixed media, electroacoustic piece of music. Aside from narrative themes and motifs, I sought to determine translatable aspects of the Western, creating database style lists of Western-associated sounds, images, quotes, and definitions. I made many lists attempting to identify the auditory aspects of the Western, including individual lists of those auditory concepts for each of the identified primary reference films and books.

It took a long time to ultimately decide upon a title for this piece. I wanted a title which would be all encompassing, hinting at its aesthetic, form, and history without being too indicative of a particular narrative or theme. In other words, I wanted the title to indicate what the piece is without telling the listener what to think or giving away any particular story or moral. I also wanted the title to indicate to the listener *how* to listen, by hinting at what the medium, form or genre of the piece is. I created a long, working list of words that I might include in the title and added to it as I worked on the piece. The word *panorama* is defined as “a comprehensive view,” suggesting a wide view of a landscape or scene. It is composed of two Greek words: “pan” meaning “all” and “horama” meaning “that which is seen.” The word *western* used in this title is intentionally ambiguous and may refer to either the genre of “western” or to the geographical location of “western.” The “panorama” in the title refers to both a scenic landscape and an overview of scenes, of historical timelines and events. Ultimately, I felt that the title *Western Panorama* suited best because it uses the word “western” in an ambiguous fashion, while the word “panorama” simultaneously hints at imagery, scale and form, indicating a longer duration listening experience whilst suggesting a connection to the Western landscape or environment.

3. TEMPORALITY, HAUNTOLOGY, AND MEMORY ALIVE

Temporality and atemporality are integral to my practice given that music is a time-based media and because I am interested in history and psychoacoustics. How can the word “timeless” be applied to art making, particularly to time-based media such as music or film? Would this “timelessness” be different from atemporality? If so, how? These are questions I have sought answers to in my work over the last seven years. A technique employed within my work of hinting at historicity, confusing audiences via anachronism or other elusive means serves to create a unique aura, one that is not decisively indicative of any particular time period. Through my work I have explored the concept of *hauntology*, how this applies to electroacoustic music, and how this can be considered from a decolonial perspective. What is hauntology? In *Hauntological Shifts: Fear and Loathing of Popular (Visual) Culture*, author Kevin Tavin suggests that “hauntology refers to spectral traces, phantom voices, and palimpsestic discourses that help construct a way of understanding ourselves and acting in the world,” (Tavin 101) while Jacques Derrida’s original conception of hauntology in *Specters of Marx* expresses that, “to haunt does not mean to be present, and it is necessary to introduce haunting into the very construction of a concept” (Derrida 202). In the fields of electronic and electroacoustic music there is a tendency towards futurism, to the extent that this has become a trope. This is partly due to the associations of electronic music with science fiction film soundtracks and as a result of many artists favoring so-called futuristic aesthetics. Electronic music has now ingrained itself into our everyday existence, permeating various genres and outlets of popular culture. Personally, I am more interested in the past and what remains after. However, in experimental music and arts, these thematic and aesthetic associations become problematic, as described in Mark Fisher’s 2012 article, *What is Hauntology?*:

“from the end of World War II up until the 1990s, electronic music--whether produced by high culture composers such as Pierre Schaeffer or Karlheinz Stockhausen or by synthpop groups and dance-music products--had been synonymous with a sense of the future, so much so that film and television would habitually turn to electronic music when it wanted to invoke the future. But by 2005, electronica was no longer capable of evoking a future that felt strange or dissonant. If electronic music was “futuristic,” it was in the same sense that fonts are “gothic”--the futuristic now connoted a settled set of concepts, affects, and associations. Twenty-first-century electronic music had failed to progress beyond what had been recorded in the twentieth century: practically anything produced in the 2000s could have been recorded in the 1990s. Electronic music had succumbed to its own inertia and retrospection” (Fisher 16).

This details the concern with the stagnation of experimentalism in contemporary new media art and electroacoustic music. According to Fisher, “haunting can be seen as intrinsically resistant to the contraction and homogenization of time and space. It happens when a place is stained by time, or when a particular place becomes the site for an encounter with broken time.” All art is an expansion upon something that came before it, and all art is therefore “stained by time.” In one way, the core of my work might be described as the desire to create something new from something old.

With that in mind, those engaging with my work are quick to point out that there is a “Victorian” aesthetic present in my work, although I do not regard it as a “Victorian-thing” so much as I recognize a general “historical-thing.” Alternatively, it could perhaps be dubbed a “hauntological” aesthetic, through which I am intentionally hinting at historicity, highlighting the invisible past. Once again, like other works from my practice, *Western Panorama* is indeed

reminiscent of the 19th century, as the Western genre is most commonly set during the time period regarded as the “Wild West,” between the early 1800s and the early 1900s. One reason as to why there is a recurrence of this particular era (1800s-1900s) in my work, is simply that I am fascinated by the conjunctive historical and technological shifts that took place in the 19th and early 20th centuries. As a parallel, being a member of the millennial generation I witnessed the swift and massive switch from the analog to the digital world. Ancestrally, I am a direct product of the age referred to as the Industrial Revolution, its lasting impact leaving an indelible mark on my existence. From the allotment process in Oklahoma Indian Territory that led to Oklahoma statehood in 1907, to the mass migration of Italians to the United States between 1880 to 1924, this era indeed captures my interest, and its impacts occupy my mind. I am the first in my lineage to graduate from college, my parents were the first to graduate from high school, and my grandparents were the first to read and write. This correlates to my desire to recenter the value of oral tradition, as the supremacy of literacy in Western culture is not an indicator of intelligence or worth and it is essential when working within a decolonial framework to acknowledge this. It is also important to note that there is conflict in studying the traditional or archetypal in an effort of decolonization while simultaneously attempting to create the new or experimental in art. Inevitably, some will argue that this is not even possible. It is vital when making decolonial art to shift value to oral tradition and to reject the supremacy of written culture. This is not to devalue print culture, but rather to recognize the value of oral tradition and recenter a different narrative plausibility.

My second dollhouse sound installation, *She Herself is a Haunted House* (2018) explores these concepts through themes of ancestry, womanhood, *memory alive*, tabula rasa, and relation to place. The dollhouse was prepared with 27+ tiny hidden speakers. It experiments with

hauntology and aims to find out what essentially remains in a space after something has occurred there. What is the essence of a space and what does that sound like? How does that carry over through time and how does that map onto the body? It is a meditation on transgenerational trauma. *She Herself is a Haunted House* was installed in the CalArts WaveCave January 29th – February 5th, 2018.



Photo documentation showing the dollhouse sound installation *She Herself is a Haunted House*, installed in the CalArts WaveCave January 29th – February 5th, 2018.

From a decolonial perspective, the concept of hauntology is perhaps best reframed as *memory alive*, through which author Jeanne Perreault asserts that “experience need not be individual, personal, or specific to enter memory; indeed, the word *lineage* suggests bloodlines, a heritage of the body that leaves its trace in mental effects, images, and memories.” Although both rely on a kind of lineage, hauntology is a definite and active methodology or procedure, while *memory alive* is a more organic, inevitable, and inescapable palimpsest. Following *She Herself is a Haunted House* (2018), I continued exploration of this concept in a fixed media performance work titled *Lineage I* (2019), which is an audible family tree, read aloud sequentially by the names in each generation, featuring field recordings and audio interviews. A ritual distinct from a performance, *Lineage I* conveys Perreault’s message, we are memory alive. It premiered at *Iterations* presented by DXARTS at The Chapel at the Good Shepherd Center in Seattle, Washington, 21 March 2019. This work also incorporates my first experiments with *negative space*, which I will elaborate on later in the chapter “AUDITORY OSMOSIS.”

Another work in which I explored the concepts of hauntology and *memory alive* is *Tavaglione Spirit Phone* (2018). It is one of my mechatronic music boxes, and is a speculative musical instrument and or sound installation which suggests that in the near future it will be possible to communicate with the spirits of those who have passed on via light and sound. It encourages one to engage with the dead as though they are present and may be used as a tool for ancestor veneration. *Tavaglione Spirit Phone* is inspired by Thomas Edison’s “spirit phone.” Edison described to *American Magazine* in 1920 that he had “been at work for some time, building an apparatus to see if it is possible for personalities which have left this earth to communicate with us” (Zarelli). While there is no historical evidence that Edison ever completed a spirit phone device, he did experiment with the possibility of communicating with the dead.



Photo documentation showing *Tavaglione Spirit Phone* (2018).

Accompanying this “hauntological aesthetic” in my work is a resistance to the culture of instant gratification, by which means I attempt to engage the audience in a more contemplative and immersive experience, akin to meditation. This is achieved through experimentation with temporality and perceived loudness. In this case, I use loudness to refer to the level or quality of attention a work (or a part of a work) demands. For example, a musical phrase which might feel a little too long in duration inspires tension or questions within the listener’s mind. Similarly, a sound that is slightly too quiet either in amplitude, volume, or perceived fragility inspires the listener to lean into a performance or installation in order to get a closer look. Speech and language are yet another tool for exercising a sense of temporal disjunction, whether by means of obfuscation, repetition, or signal processing. Experimenting with these techniques evokes

tension, questions, and a sense of curiosity, disrupting the listener's perception of time. I am inspired by this surrender of a sense of time as it was explored by director Andrei Tarkovsky in films such as *The Sacrifice* (1986). Thomas Odde's article, *Time Sickness in Andrey Tarkovsky's "The Sacrifice,"* describes how Tarkovsky's work "invites viewers to read movement, objects, and gesture not as narratively or conceptually determined (his ostensible spiritualism), but rather as symptoms of time" (Odde 73). Tarkovsky's films create a unique experience in which the viewer is an active participant, more so than other films. From this perspective, one has a strong sense of self-mind. This idea encapsulates much of what is at play in *Western Panorama*, which also attempts to create a unique and immersive experience through similar means. Much like Tarkovsky's work, *Western Panorama* encourages active participation from the audience, endeavoring to make them more engaged and introspective in their listening.

Playing with temporality allows for a decolonial rejection of linear narrative, and allows simultaneously for a newer yet older style of art and storytelling to thrive. I explored all of these techniques explicitly in my works *Quiet* (2020) and *Arid, Landscape Study for Viola* (2023). *Arid, Landscape Study for Viola* was written for violist Melia Watras in conjunction with *Western Panorama* and is explained in more detail in the chapter "WHAT IS NEXT?". *Quiet* (2020) is a short duration percussion performance work written for frame drum and voice, including an original poem which is read aloud both forwards and inverted backwards: "I don't feel as quiet as I am perceived." The piece was created for and performed by percussionist Yongyun Zhang, who graduated from the University of Washington in 2021 with a MM in Percussion. *Quiet* intentionally plays with the idea of a "quiet" percussion piece, and challenges the assumption or expectation that a piece of music should be easily heard or conveniently intelligible, or that it should be delivered in a comfortable way. Ultimately, both *Quiet* and *Arid, Landscape Study for*

Viola require some effort on the part of the listener – to listen more attentively and to lean in closer, indicating to the listener that there is more to be deciphered than what is initially observed. Similarly to Takovsky’s work, these elements are heard “not as narratively or conceptually determined, [...] but rather as symptoms of time” (Odde 73). These elements are not driven by a clear narrative but are experienced as indicators of the passage of time, creating a different, non-linear, and more immersive artistic experience for the audience.

I further exercised this technique in *Western Panorama* by exploring how much quietness and subtlety could be retained in the work while still retaining a sense of loose structural narrative or plot and while simultaneously attempting to sustain a feeling of overwhelm. This experiment highlights the desire to craft a multifaceted and non-linear artistic narrative which maintains a sense of subtlety. Although I do not anticipate the audience of *Western Panorama* to automatically infer the extensive time span suggested by this composition, this is a consideration I kept in mind during its creation. My intention is for it to collectively convey a sense of being “timeless” or transcendent of time. *Western Panorama* employs a dynamic range of activity and stillness, of loudness and quietness, and of exposition and obfuscation, whilst hinting at an ambiguous sense of historicity and lineage through its archival and timbral sound materials.

4. AUDITORY OSMOSIS

Auditory osmosis is a term that I use to describe the phenomenon of internalizing an experience of language/sound within the parameters of an incomplete comprehension of language/sound. It may be used to describe a phenomenon through which someone absorbs or learns information through passive exposure to sound or spoken words. The word osmosis is utilized here as it is comparable to how osmosis in biology involves the movement of molecules through a membrane, with the implication that information is being absorbed or transferred from the external environment to the individual. In other words, *auditory osmosis* refers to the passive absorption or learning of information through exposure to sound or spoken words, similar to how osmosis in biology involves the movement of molecules through a membrane. In this case the term "auditory" refers to the sense of hearing, while "osmosis" refers to the conveyance of sonic information from an external source to an individual. A colloquial phrase I use to explain this is, "you get what you get." *Auditory osmosis* permeates my entire approach to composition.

This concept of *auditory osmosis* is one that I have been developing over the past six years. The first piece in which I actively explored this concept is *Poetry* (2017). *Poetry* is an electroacoustic composition made exclusively of layered speech with varying degrees of discernibility through the reading aloud of poems. The predominant method by which I began experimenting with *auditory osmosis* was through layering speech or by obfuscating language in various ways, which led to more exploration and experiments in my work. *Auditory osmosis* permeates my entire approach to composition, and I suspect that this idea carries over to visual components of my work as well.

In my work *Lineage I* (2019), I combined field recordings, interviews with family members, and recordings of me reading the names of as many ancestors as I could identify in my

genealogical research. Subsequently, many names through different ancestral lines are missing or unknown. These absent names are as important as the known names. As in ancestry, we are as much what we think we know as we are that which we are ignorant of, and this is a functional manifestation of my concept of *negative space*.

In the revisionist Western film *Il Grande Silenzio* or *The Great Silence* (1968) directed by Sergio Corbucci, the main character named Silence is mute, subverting tropes of Western protagonists delivering overly heroic and often vulgar lines. Silence's character trait of muteness serves multiple purposes, but essentially adds depth and complexity to both his character and the story as a whole, highlighting the film's complex themes of justice, vengeance, moral ambiguity, and the subversion of traditional Western hero tropes through his portrayal as a tragic hero. In *Il Grande Silenzio* (1968) that which is unspoken, unknown, or unrevealed is as important to the story as that which is. One of the original conceptions of auditory osmosis sprung from the realization that any artwork is as much about what is heard as what is not heard, seen or unseen – a type of intentional *negative space*. In visual art, negative space is the essential empty space around and between the subjects or objects of an image which serves to define or enhance the main focus of an artwork, influencing the overall perception of an image. Connecting back to the idea of curated subjectivity, if the right elements are left out, the listener may “fill in the blanks.” This is by way of the methodology I refer to as *negative space*. The purpose is to actively experiment with the idea that leaving certain facets open or undefined in a work allows the listener to fulfill their own interpretation, fostering a sense of subjective engagement. I think of this *negative space* methodology as distinct from a methodology of *obfuscation*, in that with obfuscation an element is present, concealed, or hinted at, whereas with negative space an element is absent, left out, or invisible: it is tacit.

I consider this methodology as encompassing multiple tactics, including the use of silence, through its various definitions as “unable to be seen; not visible to the eye,” “concealed from sight; hidden,” and “treated as if unable to be seen; ignored or not taken into consideration.” Another experiment was to create the illusion and feeling of silence in the piece in the midst of constant sounds and activity. The ultimate goal is to emphasize a deliberate departure from instant gratification in favor of a more contemplative and immersive artistic experience that challenges the audience's perception of time and engages their active participation and interpretation of narrative.

Aspects of language, sound, music, and visual aesthetic elements converge in my practice to convey a narrative that is potentially individualized and may not be linear. The author Angela Carter wrote, “reading a book is like re-writing it for yourself. You bring to a novel, anything you read, all your experience of the world. You bring your history and you read it in your own terms.” The potential for an individualized experience of art and of music in particular is vastly exciting to me. This is not necessarily suggested in an active, choose-your-own-adventure kind of way, but rather in a passive, subconscious, organic process. In *Sounding new media : immersion and embodiment in the arts and culture*, author Frances Dyson describes how “with space and being reconfigured, the viewer’s physical engagement with digital media—through, for instance, the data glove, or even the point and click of Internet-based works—is said to trigger a new form of virtual embodiment and thereby deliver a new kind of subjectivity. Here, the third rhetorical maneuver comes into play, as digital space and digital being become rhetorically bonded with the concept of the posthuman” (Dyson 2). The connection between this “new form of virtual embodiment” and “a new kind of subjectivity” is the foundation of many new media artworks, although there are many other contributing factors which add to my desire

to foster this sense of “a new kind of subjectivity” in *Western Panorama*, and this is heightened by its proposed listening via headphones.

Conjunctively, I am inspired by Virginia Woolf’s experimentalism, and Maggie Humm noted how “Woolf concerns herself both with visible and ‘invisible’ vision, with what contemporary physics was recognising in Einstein’s theories of space-time, as kinesis, that is the flow of differing perspectives. In addition, Einstein believed that logical structures such as language were always preceded in the brain by a kind of ‘combinatory play’ of signs and images much like the memories experienced by Woolf’s narrators.” Woolf’s experiments with form, character, narrative, memory, and ““visible/invisible vision” through the lens of cognition are intertwined in my experiments with *auditory osmosis*.

Tangentially, composer Maryanne Amacher mused that she “would like to dream that [she] could make music that triggered another music in the listener’s mind. Imagining music is almost more interesting than the music itself really.” Amacher’s remark expresses the appeal of individualized experiences of art. Although Amacher’s work primarily focused on the psychoacoustic phenomenon of difference tones/composition tones, my work with *auditory osmosis* may be contextualized as an extension of Amacher’s research and the music she subsequently made. In the title of Amacher’s 1999 album *Sound Characters (Making the Third Ear)*, she refers to the possibilities of the combination tone phenomenon as the “third ear.” Perhaps what I am exploring with *auditory osmosis* could be the “fourth ear?”

I have an auditory processing disorder, and I suppose this is where my obsession with sound and music originates. This simply means that I experience sound and language a little differently, although in actuality, every person experiences sound uniquely. Personally, the component of having an auditory processing disorder that is “disorderly” is my inability to

actively follow spoken language, particularly in a large, loud group of people. Or, for example, I always watch movies with the captions on because if I do not, I will miss much of the spoken content. In Nina Kraus and Karen Banai's article, *Auditory-Processing Malleability: Focus on Language and Music*, the authors describe how "auditory processing is not a rigid, encapsulated process; rather, it interacts intimately with other neural systems and is affected by experience, environmental influences, and active training." This reads similarly to the program notes of *Poetry* (2017), which "experiments with the perception of time (memory), the willingness or patience of the audience to listen through to the end (meditation), and the phenomenon of auditory osmosis." What Kraus and Banai refer to as "experience" is the psychological component of *auditory osmosis* – certain words or phrases will subjectively be more apparent to an individual based on personal life experiences. Their mention of "environmental influences" and "active training" are both applicable to the meditation and memory aspects at work in *Poetry*. Kraus and Banai conclude that "the auditory system is pervasively malleable to experience throughout life," expressing the potentiality for subjective and unlimited change.

How is *auditory osmosis* employed in *Western Panorama*? *Auditory osmosis* ultimately allows for the possibility of an individualized narrative. With *Western Panorama*, given that its primary reference materials are films, I think of it as something like an auditory equivalent of a silent film, although I know that seems paradoxical. Likewise, the piece requires the individual attention of the listener in a fashion that is comparable to the experience of reading a book, fostering a heightened sense of individualized listening. I initially intended to utilize some amount of speech or text in the piece, particularly through the use of text whispered aloud. I spent a large duration of the research trajectory seeking out archival Western texts, writing, and compiling texts I thought I might use in the piece. An important subtopic of this research

trajectory was John Lomax's *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads* (1910), a collection which includes ballads, folk songs, and cowboy songs associated with the cowboy and frontier traditions in the American West, reflecting the experiences, lifestyle, and culture of cowboys during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. I paid special attention to excerpts which indicate sonic or musical descriptions of any kind. Take for example this song with music titled THE COWBOY, which describes a cowboy's music as being the lowing of herds as they pass:

“My ceiling is the sky, my floor is the grass,
My music is the lowing of the herds as they pass;
My books are the brooks, my sermons the stones,
My parson is a wolf on his pulpit of bones” (Lomax 128).

While this textual research informed *Western Panorama* and was essential to its completion, I ultimately decided not to include any speech in the piece. The inclusion of speech resulted in an obtrusive effect, interfering with the sense of oppression and isolation, creating too much of a sense of character personality within the narrative, whereas I wanted the whole piece in general to feel sparse, isolated, and desolate.

Following the creation of my work *Achiba Panshi (Slow Hair)* (2021), I made a decision to actively avoid including any visual art in my work in order to hone in on my music composition practice and to avoid becoming reliant on visuals to convey meaning. It was an experiment and challenge for me to see what would happen in my composition practice if I removed all visual components. In a way this experiment led to the creation of *Western Panorama*, because I think it effectively functions as a film although it has no visuals. It is both *scenic* in that it has sequential scenes, “representing an action, event, or episode” but it is also

scenic, in that it paints a picture of a landscape or visual environment within the mind of the listener, “providing or relating to views of impressive or beautiful natural scenery.”

While one could say that any piece of music does that, I would think that this work truly demands a visual imagining from the listener in a way that other pieces of music do not, due to how it asks the listener to “fill in the blanks,” much like a silent movie does. While in a silent film the viewer naturally applies their own inflections of speech and prosody to the text on screen, “hearing” the lines in their mind, I think *Western Panorama* equally has the viewer apply their own vision of what the landscapes and scenes look like. This is a further exploration of *negative space*, intentionally leaving certain elements out.

5. FORM

When considering the construction of form in *Western Panorama*, I grappled with various artistic considerations and challenges related to form, narrative, and structure. I wanted to find a way to convey an epic scale, while simultaneously leaving the narrative open to the listener's interpretation, maintaining a quality of realism, and avoiding the trap of leaning into fantasy. The goal and desire was to create a grand and immersive sonic experience which feels authentic and realistic.

Another major concern was to find a balance between creating sequential, episodic, suggestive, and scenic vignettes while avoiding a feeling of piecemeal musique concrète and without making the piece feel like a disjointed collage of sounds or scenes. While many of my techniques and methodologies are borrowed directly from the lineage of musique concrète, I did not want the perception and experience of form in *Western Panorama* to feel distinctly or exclusively like musique concrète. I would prefer the perceptual experience to be more akin to a film, although it is at root, a piece of electroacoustic music. Therefore, another challenge was to find a good mix of delicacy, subtlety, slowness, and quietude while still conveying the ultimate sense of overwhelm, complexity, and chaos, creating a nuanced artistic experience by way of its form and structure.

In order to maintain a feeling of complexity and depth within an episodic or sequential framework, I set out to incorporate a “Chinese box narrative” or “frame story” technique. This typically refers to a story within a story, achieved through layering organic sounds and layered activity with regard to polyphony. I created a layered and intricate structure of sounds within the composition on multiple levels through both vignette-like scenes and layered activity within note events. Writer Italo Calvino's *Six Memos for the Next Millennium* (1996) partly inspired my

desire to experiment with storytelling by creating a fusion of different narrative forms, blurring the boundaries between genres and thus resulting in innovative and hybrid forms. I explored how the use of form, structure and nonlinear narrative is interconnected through varying reference works such as Leo Tolstoy's novel *War and Peace* (1867), Gretel Ehrlich's memoir *The Solace of Open Spaces* (1985), Abbas Kiarostami's final film *24 Frames* (2017), Ermanno Olmi's *The Tree of Wooden Clogs* (1978) and Alain Resnais' *Last Year at Marienbad* (1961).

Ermanno Olmi's *The Tree of Wooden Clogs* (1978) is characterized by its episodic, documentary-like, and contemplative form and structure. With its seamless transitions between scenes, the film itself could perhaps be considered one long scene, complementing its emphasis on subtlety rather than explicit scene transitions. The film features a nonlinear narrative structure without a clear beginning, middle, or end and portrays the daily lives and struggles of peasant families on a tenant farm in Lombardy, Italy, during the late 19th century. Adding to its authenticity and documentary feeling is its use of non-professional actors, locals of the region, many of whom were actually farmers. It is a "slice of life" film, with a focus on portraying ordinary moments and routines in the lives of the characters with no central plot in the traditional sense. "Slice of life" typically refers to a narrative technique depicting mundane experiences which are seemingly uneventful, yet revealing and which often have an open ending. While it potentially feels like very little is happening in the film plot-wise, the result is something broader in scale and more universal than the pastoral scene of tenant farm life. *The Tree of Wooden Clogs* (1978) has an extended runtime of 186 minutes, allowing for unhurried storytelling while immersing the viewer in the daily rituals and hardships of the characters. This deliberate pacing contributes to the film's contemplative and meditative qualities. Olmi employs a documentary-like approach to filmmaking, using natural lighting, on-location shooting, minimal

use of artificial elements, and a utilization of ambient and natural sounds to create atmosphere, adding to the film's authenticity and realism. The humanistic nature of *The Tree of Wooden Clogs* (1978) would lead one to expect it to be a morality tale, prescribing to the viewer right and wrong. However, Olmi manages to maintain great subtlety through an objective, documentary lens. At no point does the director tip the scale into a direction of ideology with heavy-handed exposition. All of these elements seen in *The Tree of Wooden Clogs* (1978) inspired me to experiment with duration and a sense of documentary style storytelling in order to create an immersive, complex, and transportive listening experience in *Western Panorama*.

Similarly to the poetic realism of *The Tree of Wooden Clogs* (1978), I was inspired by the form of Gretel Ehrlich's memoir *The Solace of Open Spaces* (1985), which blends genres and forms into a seamless work of creative nonfiction. Although it is structured as a series of essays, its lyrical and poetic qualities make Ehrlich's reflections seem unlike essays at all. *The Solace of Open Spaces* (1985) does not follow a traditional narrative structure, instead utilizing a thematic and episodic form through which each essay or chapter addresses different aspects of life in the American West, from observations about the landscape to the people who inhabit it. While its essays are not explicitly connected stories, the book is a nonlinear collection of interconnected meditations on place, nature, and the self which unassumingly coalesce into a brilliantly cohesive work of literature. Its "thematic" and "episodic" form inspired me to organize *Western Panorama* in a way that I think of as "scenic" and "sequential," particularly in the context of my previous works.

Another thematic and episodic structure I was inspired by is the complex and multi-layered form of Leo Tolstoy's epic novel *War and Peace* (1867) which mirrors the nuance and grandeur of its themes as well as the depth of its characters. It features an epic scope which

combines aspects of historical narrative, social commentary, character-driven storytelling, philosophy, and realism. It is regarded as one of the most extensive works of world literature, constituting well over 1,000 pages in length, which inspired me to indulge in creating a longer duration work. Tolstoy's vehement commitment to employing realism is evidenced by a meticulous attention to detail, depicting humanity in all its complexity. The sprawling, ambitious, and cyclical form and structure of *War and Peace* (1867) convey the breadth of human experience and the intricate interplay between individuals and the historical forces that shape their lives, emphasizing both the gravity of historical events and the minutiae of everyday life. The complex and consequential mood that this alternating and extensive form achieves inspired me to attempt something similar with *Western Panorama* by exploring alternating and episodic sonic vignettes or scenes.

The cyclical structure of *War and Peace* (1867) is comparable to the experimental storytelling techniques of Alain Resnais' *Last Year at Marienbad* (1961), which inspired me to play with the intensity of experiencing a sonic landscape for an extended period of time. One key question that arose from this inspiration was, 'how much sensory intensity can a person endure before it becomes overwhelming or transcendent?' I questioned the threshold at which a sound becomes too much, exploring the impact of prolonged sensory experiences. For instance, I pondered the threshold at which the sound of wind in one's ears transitions from a harmonious, immersive experience to an unpleasant cacophony. For example, how much wind can be heard in one's ears before it becomes truly unpleasant? Does one reach a transcendent state at a certain point? *Last Year at Marienbad* (1961) employs a nonlinear narrative which is intentionally fragmented, merging together seemingly disparate scenes, memories, and dialogues which are presented in a disjointed fashion but ultimately resulting in a highly stylized and cohesive vision.

This cinematic approach fascinated me, and I sought to capture a similar quality of seemingly paradoxical cohesion and disorientation in *Western Panorama*. The film's utilization of repetition, ambiguity, and minimalism contribute to the film's dreamlike atmosphere, deliberately blurring the lines between fantasy and reality. The form and structure of *Last Year at Marienbad (1961)* prioritizes ambiguity and "visual poetry" over a traditional linear narrative, resulting in a cinematic experience that intentionally defies straightforward interpretation, inviting the viewer to come to their own conclusion. All of these elements contribute to a sense of disorientation and blur the qualities of reality versus imagination. I wanted to replicate some of this feeling in *Western Panorama* through what I refer to as a sense of *vertigo of the mind*, where the listener is immersed in an ever-shifting soundscape, blurring the boundaries between reality and imagination through the use of organic and synthetic sounds. I strived to evoke the same sense of intrigue and disorientation achieved in cinema by Resnais in *Last Year at Marienbad (1961)*, but through the intricacies of soundscapes and the sensory experiences they can evoke.

Demanding attention akin to *Last Year at Marienbad (1961)* is Abbas Kiarostami's final film *24 Frames (2017)*, which is composed of 24 individual short films, each lasting approximately four and a half minutes, constituting a total runtime of approximately 114 minutes. The experimental structure of *24 Frames (2017)* is intentionally nonlinear and episodic, with each segment being a self-contained vignette resulting in a contemplative tableaux. The film exploits techniques related to the passage of time through a minimalistic approach to form, amplifying the relationship between the viewer, the images, and the sounds. This is highlighted by surrendering a traditional soundtrack or dialogue in exchange for ambient sounds, natural sounds, and silence, creating an immersive and meditative experience for the audience.

Kiarostami's experiments with the intersection of still imagery, cinema, and the passage of time through episodic and nonlinear form inspired me to strive for a similar contemplative effect with *Western Panorama*. I drew inspiration from the film's episodic structure, its use of time, and its minimalistic approach by thinking of the segments of *Western Panorama* in the context of the vignettes in *24 Frames* (2017).

Ultimately, the works mentioned above had a profound impact on the creative process and informed the construction of form in *Western Panorama*. Each of these works influenced the approach to form and narrative in different ways, ranging from complex multi-layered storytelling to contemplative and meditative approaches. These were some of my foundational considerations and challenges in achieving a specific vision while balancing disorientation, subtlety, and narrative structure yet avoiding disjointedness, and while striving for complexity, coherence, and sensory engagement in the overall composition.

6. ASMR: AUTONOMOUS SENSORY MERIDIAN RESPONSE

I investigated the concept of ASMR (Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response) and its connection to my work, specifically employing it as a technique and methodology in *Western Panorama*. I chose to explore ASMR as a methodology in order to emphasize a sense of scale, support effective spatialization, and to experiment with personal suspicions and expectations of perception in relation to ASMR, exploring how sounds trigger or elicit a specific response.

ASMR (Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response) refers to a relaxing, physical tingling sensation experienced by some individuals in response to auditory and or visual stimuli. These auditory and visual stimuli are commonly referred to as “triggers.” The tingling sensation is often described as beginning at the scalp, traveling down the spine, and sometimes continuing down the limbs. This phenomenon is said to be accompanied by feelings of relaxation, euphoria, calm, and overall well-being. Although there is currently limited scientific research investigating ASMR and its effects, it has rapidly gained popularity as an internet genre of videos intended to induce tingles since approximately 2010. The appeal of an ASMR experience is generally regarded as a form of stress-relief and relaxation, with many consumers touting its benefits for inducing sleep and relieving anxiety. These videos employ various audio visual techniques in order to achieve a tingling sensation for the viewer. For example, some of these techniques include the use of binaural audio, tapping sounds and motions, whispered or soft spoken voices, crinkling sounds, and instances of personal attention such as hairbrushing or makeup application. One through line of these triggers is that they tend to be smaller, quiet sounds and experiences. It is thought that when these mid to higher frequency range triggers are combined with lower frequency, foundational ambient sounds, they are more effective. Therefore, ASMR appears to be somewhat reliant on a perceptual sense of scale, depth, and proximity in connection to

frequency content and in relation to layering of contrasting sonic timbres. What triggers the ASMR tingling response in one person may not work in another. There are plenty of anecdotal accounts of ASMR, and one of the earliest in history is thought to be Virginia Woolf's description in a passage of *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), in which a nurse speaks to a patient "deeply, softly, like a mellow organ, but with a roughness in her voice like a grasshopper's, which rasped his spine deliciously and sent running up into his brain waves of sound" (Woolf 25). This description of "waves of sound" physically causing a rasping or running sensation matches other's descriptions of the tingling sensations associated with ASMR.

Unknowingly, I have been using specific ASMR triggers in my work since before I had ever learned of its existence. Furthermore, I believe many composers have inadvertently used ASMR triggers and techniques in electroacoustic music. One composer who is noted as having intentionally worked with the concept of ASMR is fellow Mills College alumna Holly Herndon, particularly through her 2015 collaboration with artist Claire Tolan, titled *Lonely At The Top*. This work employs a soft spoken and whispered voice technique. While I have always been interested in playing with scale and creating the effect of ASMR, I was not always aware of its name or how I was achieving this technique. For example, my piece *Poetry* (2017) utilizes soft spoken and whispered speech in a similar fashion to that heard in the genre of ASMR. My dollhouse sound installations *Broke Down Girl* (2017) and *She Herself is a Haunted House* (2018) utilize layered, tiny, intimate sounds in a way that may induce the effects of ASMR, however I was not working with the idea of ASMR in mind at that time. In more recent works, I have experimented more consciously with elements of ASMR through works such as *The Woods Enclose* (2021), *I Know My Own Heart: an Anne Lister Radio Play* (2021), and *Achiba Panshi*

(Slow Hair) (2021). These pieces utilize common ASMR trigger sounds such as fabric rustling, pages turning, writing on paper, fire, and crackling sounds produced by granular synthesis.



Photo documentation showing the dollhouse sound installation *Broke Down Girl*, installed in the CalArts WaveCave April 3rd – 10th, 2017.

Through *The Woods Enclose* (2021) I created a six-channel work of digital aural literature based on author Angela Carter's short story *The Erl King* from *The Bloody Chamber* (1979). Carter's reimagining borrows from Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's 1782 ballad *Erlkönig*, which was famously set to music in 1815 by Franz Schubert. While Goethe's *Erlkönig* depicts the wild pursuit and murder of a child, perpetrated by a supernatural woodland being, Carter's story follows a female protagonist who is seduced by the Erl King and finds herself entangled in his greenwood life. She soon realizes that the numerous caged birds in his humble cottage are in fact other girls that he has lured into the forest with his "elder bird-call," entrapped, and made to sing for him – and that he intends the same fate for her. Carter's sensuous, descriptive writing is translated in the piece through the processing of materials such as wax cylinder recordings of bird imitations performed in 1902 and 1903, a 78 RPM record by Bela Berkes circa 1914, 100+ field recordings, and bowed Appalachian dulcimer. There are elements of this piece which are reminiscent of ASMR triggers, including sounds of fabric rustling, leaves, and fire crackling. Completing this work was another learning experience in creating immersive and comprehensively spatial sonic landscapes with smaller sounds, fostering a deeply conscious regard for polyphony.

While I have used ASMR techniques both unknowingly and intentionally in previous works, I employed these techniques specifically in *Western Panorama* in order to highlight a sense of scale in the piece and to contribute to the psychological effects connected to its narrative, emphasizing the vastness of the landscape and the intimacy of being surrounded by nature. This is in order to induce a sense of nature being so close and intimate that it is tactile and felt deep within the listener's ear. With *Western Panorama*, I knew I wanted to utilize binaural audio in order to attain this sense of immersion and closeness, whereas I had not consciously or

intentionally experimented with this in previous works. I achieved this by recording binaural audio and through the use of specific sound sources including: tapping the wood on Appalachian dulcimer, touching thick carpet, brushing a horse's hair, stroking tall grass, buzzing bees, up-close wind, rattles, crickets, small percussive sounds like chains, wood wick candle burning, and granular synthesis. I employed these sounds with careful consideration of frequency content by pairing each performative, potentially ASMR-inducing sound source with sound material that would serve as foundational ambience in order to create a fuller, more immersive sonic experience. For example, because it is thought to be more effective when mid to higher frequency range triggers are combined with lower frequency, foundational ambient sounds, in *Western Panorama* some of these performative ASMR sounds which are more intimate in scope and achieve a sense of inner-ear activity, are paired with broader, ambient, foundational sounds set back in the distance of the soundscape in order to create a realistic and enveloping sound world. Achieving these effects helped to create the sense of overwhelm that I was seeking throughout the piece, rather than by relying on an employment of the conventionally expected techniques of exploiting repetition or loudness.

With regard to the listener experience of *Western Panorama*, the emotional and sensory responses of listeners will vary. This ties back to my ideas about auditory osmosis, individualized listening, and open-ended narratives, in that listeners will come to their own conclusions. Due to the nature of ASMR as being a tool for relaxation or stress relief, I acknowledge that some listeners might be inclined to fall asleep during the playback of *Western Panorama*. I am ok with it being somniferous, this given that the piece is not dependent on a strictly fixed or linear narrative, and due to the aspect that the piece is meant to be accessible by anyone, at any time, for playback on headphones, and with the opportunity to return to the piece over time. However,

there are dynamic aspects of the piece which may not allow for a sleepy listening experience. The entire piece itself is not intended to induce an ASMR experience, and only some parts of the composition employ these techniques. In essence, the listener experience depends on the individual listener.

Ultimately, ASMR plays an important role in creating specific effects and sensations within my compositions, enabling more immersive sensory experiences. My prediction is that ASMR as a phenomenon and methodology will continue to be integrated into the fields of electronic, electroacoustic, and experimental music. Although, it may either remain disparate or become its own genre, only to be viewed as adjacent to the genres, as New Age music is seen as distinctly separate from electroacoustic music. I want to continue experimenting with ASMR inspired techniques and playing with related methodologies to induce such a phenomenon in my work while remaining firmly rooted in the electroacoustic music medium and or genre.

7. ACCESSIBILITY, SCALE, AND MEDIUM

Western Panorama was intentionally composed for headphone listening for multiple reasons, namely accessibility, perception, and scale. Firstly, I acknowledge the importance of creating work which is accessible to a wide audience, and I believe that many listeners default to the use of headphones to experience audio content for the sake of convenience. Secondly, it is believed that the effects of ASMR are best induced by wearing headphones as it helps to recreate a more realistically binaural effect. Thirdly, one of the main research questions and goals in this dissertation was to investigate how to simultaneously convey a vast sonic landscape within the context of intimate listening. I found it an intriguing and fun challenge to conceptualize a way to convey a vast and expansive listening experience within the confines of a physically small speaker configuration such as headphones, and I hypothesized that this would be a more effective way to create the sense of overwhelm that I hoped to achieve. Although this might seem counterintuitive, the subversive nature of working with this idea appealed to me and I found it more exciting and fruitful to effectively convey the desired sense of overwhelming scale and intimacy. Ultimately, composing *Western Panorama* with the medium of headphones in mind served as a practical choice for presentation to a wider audience.

Accessibility is a problem of art in general, and contemplating this issue over the last few years has expanded the possibilities of venues for my work to exist in. What initially drove me to an obsession with audio recording technology is its seemingly magical potential for immortality and preservation. In general, I am disenchanted by the classism and elitism of art museums and galleries and by the fleetingness of singular, one-off performances. The internet has opened up pathways for the most unlikely of people to consume art, media, and information. For these reasons, I wanted my dissertation work to be something that could exist perpetually in the digital

world. *Western Panorama* is meant to be accessed either online or downloaded and played back via headphones in the comfort of one's chosen environment. This also enables the work to be revisited over time. I am open to the work being presented in public, but given the length of the piece I do not expect that to be a feasible or convenient venue of presentation. I am interested in how its reception would differ from audiences listening in a concert hall versus via headphones. My expectation would be that the sense of isolation created in the piece would be less apparent in a concert hall, although this would differ from person to person. I think it would have a similar, diluted psychological effect if the piece were presented as a live streamed event, with the result being that each listener would have a sense of it being a collective experience, as opposed to individual listeners getting lost in the piece's suggested and intended isolation. Likewise, listening to the work alone on headphones enhances the sense of an individual perspective, an individualized listening experience, and the potential for "a new kind of subjectivity" (Dyson 2).

Either way, enabling my work to be fully and immersively accessible via the internet is important to me. Thinking practically, most listeners over time will ultimately experience my work on headphones. With that in mind, much of the very low frequency content in *Western Panorama* was intentionally filtered out in order to maintain consistency across listening devices. Relatedly, much of the very high frequency content is boosted or exaggerated. This decision aims to prevent a sudden shift in audio quality when transitioning from headphone listening to loudspeaker listening, due to the fact that the different physical characteristics, listening environments, and design objectives of headphones and loudspeakers result in variations in their frequency responses. Given that this was created intentionally for headphone (intimate) listening, one should not switch to loudspeaker listening and suddenly feel a sense of bass-heaviness not present in the headphones experience. I suspect that the removal of lower

frequencies also adds to the sense of disorientation and vertigo injected into the work, conjunctively making it more psychologically effective and enhancing its impact.

As previously stated, *Western Panorama* is a study of the oppression of vast open landscapes and the isolation and madness that creates. This is a trope that has been portrayed in various Western films including *The Wind* (1928) directed by Victor Sjöström and based on the 1925 Dorothy Scarborough novel of the same name, and *The Wind* (2018) directed by Emma Tammi. In these films a woman is driven mad by the ever-present howling wind and rough elements of the Western prairie. With these references in mind, I decided early on in the process of composing *Western Panorama* to employ the wind as a sound carrier, a character, and a driving force of narrative and plot. I sought how to translate this effect through binaural, intimate listening, hoping to create a piece of music that is not merely intimate, but in some way tangibly tactile and close. Therefore, it made sense to create the piece with headphone listening in mind. The wind is treated as a carrier of narrative, as well as a primordial force penetrating deep into the listener's consciousness. What does the wind say? What does this force accomplish? These are open to interpretation, although I was inspired by the Western trope in which the wind causes madness. The wind embodies our deepest fears and draws them into waking life. The wind is used to evoke a sense of fear, madness, mortality, and the insignificance of humanity in the face of the vast universe. It effectively shrinks us and reminds us of our mortality—of how small we really are in relation to the grand universe.

Some broad ideas that I experimented with in order to achieve this effect include:

- exploring the state of oppression created by vertigo, a vertiginous state of the mind and of an inner dialogue

- sparse whispers of narrative and characterization, only hinted, through different directions, isolation
- the oppression of vertigo of the mind
- the paradoxical claustrophobia of open spaces, the isolation that creates, how to translate through binaural, intimate listening

With regard to accessibility, COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact for those in the arts and its effects are still being investigated. Due to the circumstances of the pandemic and the pervasive adoption of virtual tools, more people have become enthusiastic to collaborate with each other, even if they are located in another part of the world from each other. I learned that it was imperative to reframe the constraints of the global COVID-19 pandemic as new opportunities or potentialities rather than detriment, in order for those working in the fields of digital art to seize the full potential of virtuality, viewing it as a step forward for experimentalism and accessibility in digital art practices. This cultural reflection caused me to further meditate on the importance of making work widely accessible to a broad audience.

Relatedly, while my work *Poetry* (2017) was an early experiment with *auditory osmosis*, *The Secret Diaries of Miss Anne Lister: Arranged for Readers' Chorus* (2017) was a successful attempt to translate the effect of *Poetry* into an acoustic, live performance environment. In 2020 I reimagined that piece as *The Secret Diaries of Miss Anne Lister: Arranged for Virtual Readers' Chorus*, changing it to a fixed media, electroacoustic work consisting of self-tape videos submitted by collaborators from all over the world. This work ultimately became *I Know My Own Heart: an Anne Lister Radio Play* (2021). The evolution of these works from a fixed electroacoustic piece with the possibility of performance and installation, to a live acoustic performance, and back again to a fixed electroacoustic piece intended for internet distribution

and or radio play, highlights the trajectory that asking practical questions in my workflow produces. Similarly to my collaborations in *I Know My Own Heart: an Anne Lister Radio Play* (2021), with *Western Panorama* I collaborated with percussionist Matt Camgros, who graduated in 2023 from the University of Washington with a Masters in Jazz and Improvised Music. We worked via Zoom to record the percussion parts although we were in different states across the country. This trajectory of exploring the possibilities of accessibility and collaboration contributed to the desire for my dissertation to be intentionally crafted for and presented via headphones.

Through the creative process of *Western Panorama*, I defined intentions regarding the use of sound to manipulate scale. I wanted to create a sense of intimacy and convey complex emotional and psychological themes in this work whilst drawing inspiration from the Western genre and its associated tropes. When considering scale, how does one convey the vastness of a landscape, reminiscent of what one would expect to see in the Western genre, within the confines of a close, intimate, and quiet listening experience? This involves exploring the contrast between the small scale of the listener's intended environment (headphones) and the vastness of the mental landscape evoked by the sounds.

To provide further context for this exploration of scale and intimacy, I found through my previous works *Broke Down Girl* (2017) and *She Herself is a Haunted House* (2018), both dollhouse sound installations, that the scale of an installation significantly impacts the perceptual and emotional responses of the audience. This is an example of the listening experience becoming not merely intimate but tactile. In order to achieve an immersive sensory experience, the effect should be physically felt as a result of the psychological impact of the sounds. During the interview process applying for DXARTS, department head Juan Pampin questioned the role

of scale in my dollhouse sound installations. While this might seem like quite an obvious question to consider in the context of working with miniatures, I had not discovered the full implications of working in this mode until the first dollhouse sound installation was completed. The themes of *Broke Down Girl* were naturally exaggerated by the scale of the installation (meaning the size of the dollhouse in relation to the viewer). The disembodied characters and voices represented in the work were effectively dwarfed, and the listeners/viewers were both seemingly enlarged and made aware of their hulking physicality in relation to the fragility of the dollhouse and its sounds. This created a heightened tension and cognizance of the delicacy of the subject. An unintentional but curious result of this was that some people felt they had been placed in the role of predator in relation to the work. While I might expect some people to feel like a clumsy labrador retriever gently sniffing around a baby, I did not expect the reaction that some viewers of the installation reported as feeling “predatory,” as though they had stepped into the role of the objectifier, or, predator.

I have continued to explore this dichotomy of scale in other works, but most notably in *Western Panorama*, using sound to create specific psychological effects, including a feeling of claustrophobia in an open Western setting, as well as a sense of oppression and entrapment. The goal is to engage the listener on a deep emotional and psychological level. Therefore, a primary goal of this research is to determine how to convey the scope of a vast landscape within the confines of close, intimate listening, omitting obvious choices or methodologies (such as applying reverb). This piece needed to be dry, not wet, and warm, not cold. I wanted to convey the feeling of standing in the middle of a hot, dry desert, and the senses of oppression and entrapment that accompany it. There is a paradox and counterintuitiveness in conveying a sense of claustrophobia in a stereotypical Western setting such as panoramic, open plains or desert

landscapes. The level of intimacy should be so that it is not merely intimate, but that it is tactile – it is felt physically as a result of the psychological effect.

Creating *Western Panorama* with considerations of accessibility, scale, and headphone listening ultimately presented a productive and valuable research experiment. The challenge of creating a sense of overwhelming scale within the constraints of headphone listening proved to be a fertile research experiment, serving multiple purposes by enabling further accessibility, maintaining consistency across listening devices and environments, and ensuring an immersive experience evoking specific psychological effects in the audience. Exploring these techniques of scale served to be a productive and valuable area of research which led to interesting and beneficial results, creating a paradox by conveying a sense of claustrophobia in an open Western landscape, engaging listeners both emotionally and psychologically.

8. AUDITORY CONCEPTS, PERCEPTION AND WORKFLOW

The process of completing *Western Panorama* began with decisions about auditory concepts, perceptual goals, and a strictly adhered to workflow. This trajectory enabled me to create a meaningful and comprehensive composition.

I first created a long list of conceptually abstract auditory concepts to experiment with, to compose or translate as sound and music. For example, I collected tropes from the Western genre and reimagined them as sound phenomena. The following list is a series of thoughts and concepts related to the translation of various ideas and experiences into the medium of music or sound. This list is a contemplation on how these different sensory and thematic elements could be represented through sound and music in a work inspired by the Western genre. Some of these experimental themes and concepts include:

- How would the concept of a mirage translate as music? Exploring how the concept of a mirage, something appearing from a distance, could be expressed through music.
- The sound of earthquakes, the Earth moving, the arrival of a new age, simultaneous crescendo and decrescendo of natural phenomena.
- The sound of sand storm, dust storm
- Using the sound of wind both as an isolating character and as a carrier of other sounds, events, information. The wind as a character moving the plot and narrative forward.
- Expressing the emotions of oppression, isolation, and madness caused by vast, open spaces, translating that through binaural, intimate listening experiences.

- Capturing the inner dialogue and the concept of "vertigo of the mind" as an oppressive state, through sound.
- The intensity of existing in this sonic landscape for an extended period of time, what is the threshold? Reflecting on the intensity of existing in a particular sonic environment for an extended period and exploring the threshold of discomfort or transcendence. How much wind sound can be in your ear before it becomes truly unpleasant? Do you reach a transcendent state at a certain point in this sonic landscape?
- Utilizing a frame story narrative or a "story within a story" form through layered sound activity, creating narrative layers.
- Representing the exhaustion of the states of survival mode, perfectionism, and control through sonic elements.
- Examining how the Western genre can be a metaphor for a rejection of both feudalism and capitalism and its rejections of feudalism.
- Exploring the relationship between people and the land in the American West, emphasizing the concept of reciprocity through relation to place.
- Using visual tropes as sound phenomena and allowing the narrative to come to the listener somewhat like a lucid dream, the apparently organic transforming into metaphor, to be experienced in darkness.
- Reflecting the feeling of it being characterless and scant, to further emphasize the cerebral/pensive quality from your own point of view, that feeling itself being oppressive.

- Considering the balance between narrative voice-over, inner ear whisper voice effect, and the effect of a disembodied voice.

I also made a list of sound source material that I wanted to experiment with, including sounds with associations to the Western genre or deriving from specific Western films. Note that not all of these sounds made it into the final piece. These sound sources, in alphabetical order, include:

- Accordion
- "Arrows"
- Autoharp
- "Breathing"
- Bullet
- "Buffalo running"
- Cattle
- Chickens
- Coyotes
- Cowboy ballads
- Crickets
- Dobro
- Dog cries
- Dulcimer
- "Earthquakes"
- Fiddle
- Flute (wood)

- Harmonica
- Harmonics
- Harmonics on violin as wind
- Horses walking
- Hurdy gurdy
- Man singing softly to himself
- Mourning doves
- Owl
- Piano
- Ropes, soft, flying
- Shaker
- Sparse whispers
- Spatial percussion
- Train whistle
- "Sand storm"
- Whips, hard, sonic boom
- Wind

I was concerned about *Western Panorama* seeming anachronistically retro-futuristic while working in simultaneously synthetic/processed and naturalistic/field recording territory of sound materials. A great challenge was to find a balance between different elements of sound in the piece. This required taking stock of both the naturalistic sounds and the synthetic sounds in order to create a cohesive sound world which is not too reminiscent of either sci-fi soundtracks or of stereotypical Western film scores. To this end, I assigned, divided, and organized each

sound source into categories of either synthetic or naturalistic (either may or may not be actually synthesized or raw, this depends on each sound's quality of treatment and processing), near or far in proximity, high or low in effective frequency, wet or dry in resonance, and active or still in ambience and activity. From there, I sought to find a balance between these dual aspects, combining each source to create an immersive blend. I was very careful to layer these different categories of sound together, avoiding an overindulgence into either a fantasy or documentary style. Another source of inspiration for exploring the boundaries of the dichotomy of fantasy/documentary is director Robert J. Flaherty's silent film *Nanook of the North* (1922), which is recognized both for its cinematic realism and for its staged ethnographic elements, experimentally (and controversially) combining elements of documentary and docudrama/docufiction. The film originated debates about the ethics of documentary filmmaking. Combining seemingly contrasting elements proved to be one of the main challenges in maintaining coherence in *Western Panorama*.

In the construction of *Western Panorama*, I approached my workflow and process slightly differently than I normally would. Given the large scale of the piece and the numerous sonic materials I wanted to include, I committed to a strictly organized process of workflow. I worked on this piece more sequentially than I ever have before, focusing on individual sections of the piece one at a time and tackling small parts of the piece in succession, moving through the composition step by step without going back and forth between different sections. This approach was chosen to further emphasize the work's episodic nature. I ended up using multiple, separate digital audio workstation sessions to experiment with and pre-compose parts, organizing groups of sound in layers, in order to investigate their overall effect and without becoming overwhelmed by the daunting size of the composition as a whole. In the past I have relied on fewer digital

audio workstation sessions, choosing to streamline the composition process in a visual way. I found the resulting difference was that I was able to indulge in exploring contrasting sound worlds within the context of an extended duration composition, allowing me to further challenge my composition skills in order to make the piece cohesive.

Another working challenge I set out is that I attempted to utilize all of the recorded material that I had, treating it like a massive thousand piece puzzle I was trying to assemble in a way that would make sense, until I could see the whole picture. I was determined to incorporate all available elements in order to create a complex and immersive sonic landscape. While it is always a goal to retain subtlety in a composition, one extra challenge that resulted from this maximalist approach throughout the working process was that I wanted the piece to retain a thematic sense of sparsity, stillness, and quiet while functioning artistically as a maximalist, comprehensive, “epic” composition. Considering that subtlety implies a delicate or understated quality in the work, I needed to avoid the work becoming crude, overstated, profane, or exaggerated by way of too many sound worlds or other extraneous qualities. In other words, I wanted to convey a sense of minimalism within a functionally maximalist, epic composition. As I continued adding in new parts, I became increasingly concerned that the piece was losing its feelings of sparseness, desolation, and remoteness. Creating this composition proved to be an experiment in conveying the effect of minimalism through a methodology of maximalism, adding to its simultaneous effects of isolation and overwhelm.

After compiling the sound source lists and deciding upon sonic ideas to try out, I obtained audio materials from various sources including the Internet Archive and VHS tapes from the De Anza Trail Caballeros. I created dozens of field recordings and instrument recordings utilizing binaural, A-B, and X-Y stereo recording techniques in order to experiment with capturing a

sense of space. These sources provided a diverse range of sounds for the composition. From there, the basic workflow was to edit and clean up each recording so that they would be ready for processing in larger batches, playing with granular synthesis, with the goal of transforming the original recordings into more complex and sonically interesting elements, and then to experiment with different textures and effects. At this point, the new sounds were ready to be layered together and experimented with to create new timbres, textures, and rhythms for the whole composition. The final step was to arrange everything in time, experiment with feelings of duration, and overall flow.

9. THE SCORE: WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE PIECE

The following passage is a detailed, sequential description of the score and its narrative in time within the piece. It explains what is happening in the music, how the composition was created, and the reasons behind the creative decisions. There is no distinct or set narrative, and the “scenes” of the piece may or may not be linear. The narrative and or plot of the piece is open to interpretation by the listener. Timestamps of minutes and seconds are included before each part discussion, corresponding to specific moments within the composition to indicate when each description takes place.

~0.0-1.30

The introduction of the piece is a loose homage to Sergio Leone’s and Ennio Morricone’s work on *Once Upon a Time in the West* (1968), which opens with a notable 10+ minute scene that creates a visceral sense of zooming in and out, drawing the viewer into the arid desert environment on screen. Leone’s clever opening itself is a parody of *High Noon* (1952), portraying three bored and irritable gunmen biding their time as they wait for a train, ironically trivializing the final minutes of their lives. While generally a quiet scene, particularly intriguing features of this opening sequence include the grating sounds of a windmill turning with its axle ungreased and shoddy, singing a distinct whistle-like melody as if haunted, the volume of the windmill “zooms” in and out with the perspective of the characters on screen, becoming louder when a wide landscape shot is shown and quieter when the men’s faces are showcased, a fly buzzing closely around and on a man on screen, a telegraph tapping and clicking sound, and

scarce droplets of water first dripping to a man's head at a higher frequency, then followed by water tapping his hat at a lower, muffled resonance when he puts on his hat.

Leone's scene is interrupted by the dramatic entrance of the steam locomotive rushing through the empty desert as it pulls into the station, symbolizing the arrival of a new era, much like the train transition from 18th to 19th century in Sally Potter's *Orlando* (1992), a film adaptation of Virginia Woolf's 1928 novel. Leone's work of intense portraiture is contrasted with broad shots of the landscape, emphasizing its brutality and vastness, and capturing what John Fawell describes in *The Art of Sergio Leone's Once Upon a Time in the West: a Critical Appreciation* as "introspection set to music" (Fawell 175). This description of introspection set to music is hinting at an experiment with scale in Leone's and Morricone's work, pulling the viewer in deep to the character's mind, creating an intimacy so close that the viewer in turn inhabits the character. It should also be noted here that Leone filmed these scenes with Morricone's film soundtrack playing in the background for the actors to hear in real time.

Similarly, the use of sound and foley in Akira Kurosawa's *Dersu Uzala* (1975) emphasizes the harshness of nature and posits the land as a main character. Based on my interpretation of what qualifies as a Western, I consider *Dersu Uzala* to be one, even though it is set in the Sikhote-Alin region of the Russian Far East and includes no cowboys or stereotypical Western tropes. Take for example two scenes from *Dersu Uzala*, the first of which has the two main characters build a shelter of reeds in the middle of a barren landscape to protect themselves from a fierce storm, with the intense sounds of wind overpowering the soundtrack. The second scene has the two characters sharing a meal with a family inside their home, the sounds of the fire cooking food in the center of the room recorded very close up, and the sounds of chewing are loud and intimate in comparison to what one might normally expect to hear in a film. *Dersu*

Uzala's use of scale inspired me to also highlight the sounds of the environment as main characters, placing them directly into the listener's ear, slightly (or dramatically) louder than one might typically expect. This technique is utilized throughout *Western Panorama*.

The introductory, loose homage to *Once Upon a Time in the West* (1968) of *Western Panorama* utilizes field recordings of horses walking, cows breathing, birds chirping, wind blowing, bees swarming a palm frond on the ground, and bowed Appalachian dulcimer. These are equalized to suppress the lower frequencies and to boost areas of interest, for example, the ~349 Hz hum of dozens of bees buzzing. These sounds are layered together in an active cacophony in order to give the piece a literary effect of *in medias res*, meaning that the piece seems to begin in the middle of a narrative or in the midst of a plot. The Appalachian dulcimer parts are used as a reference to a specific sound from *Once Upon a Time in the West* (1968), the sound of a grating windmill, loudly and laboriously squeaking in the center of the desert. This effect was achieved by bowing the Appalachian dulcimer strings, equalization, and slowing down the recording.

~1.30

The next wind part was the first experiment with the threshold of listening to “too much wind,” creating an oppressive listening experience and setting up the sonic landscape that introduces the first piano theme. The wind is created from recordings of both natural wind sounds and from “whisper whistle wind” sounds that I performed and improvised with. There is some granular synthesis applied to one of these, plus use of equalization, slowing down and heavy layering. From about 2 minutes 55 seconds on is the introduction of the piano theme, which is essentially a deconstructed Chopin nocturne—a minimalist reimagining of *Op. 55 No. 1*

in F minor, which is then processed and detuned through various methods. These methods include some very light granular synthesis processing in the first appearance of the piano, although this appearance of the piano theme is the most organic or realistic version of it in the piece as a whole. Later appearances of the piano theme are less organic sounding. This initial appearance of the piano recording is of an upright piano, microphoned from above to create a sense of space and distance, and includes some reverb, equalization, and very minimal granular synthesis layering. The piano theme is played with a disregard to conventional time or rhythm, reliant on the complete decay of each chord and or note. The introduction of the piano part early in the piece serves as a reminder of film scores: it acts as narrative, pulling you in, like an opening credits sequence. The first use of piano in this piece is the most realistic and organic version of it, the later appearance of piano is more processed and synthetic sounding. The piano theme leads into an otherworldly yet recognizably natural landscape – however, something is “off.”

I initially thought of the piano phrase as an equivalent to *Jill's Theme* from *Once Upon a Time in the West*, an empathy-inducing leitmotif which calls to mind maternal bonds, familial loyalty, and ancestral traumas. While there might not be an obvious connection between Morricone's operatic *Jill's Theme* and Chopin's *Op. 55 No. 1 in F minor*, I came to this connection after hearing composer Brian Tyler's *Crimes of Heritage* from the soundtrack of the Western soap opera television series *Yellowstone (2018-)*. *Crimes of Heritage* is a short 2 minutes and 11 seconds track beginning with a lamentable, minimalist piano part that transitions into a driving action rhythm of dangerous low strings. Its usage and mood conjures thoughts of a reluctant inheritance, the burdens and duties bequeathed by the ancestors to the next generation. I wanted to create a similar mood to these two pieces of music, and landed upon this piano theme.

Another rendition of it is planted again later in the piece, further processed, deconstructed and distressed.

a) NOCTURNE.

A C.S.
Andante. (M. M. ♩ = 96)

Th. Kullak.
Fr Chopin, Op. 55. N^o 1.

a) The chief subject A-B is bipartite and betrays a gloomy, melancholy mood. We may be permitted to represent to ourselves in fancy a wanderer, who goes his way solitary and sad, after taking leave of his beloved home and all his dear ones. The secondary subject is also bipartite. Its first part *B is march-like in character, as if the wanderer had resolved henceforth to go on more courageously. The second part *C grows steadily more passionate and excited.

At C begins a fragment of the chief subject; but after a few measures it passes over into a closing part D, in which the base for a while retains its old motive, though accelerated in pace, and abandons it only when it no longer seems able to follow the right hand as it hurries ever more lightly and swiftly away. The last measures sound like; "Thank God - the goal is reached."

Chopin's *Op. 55 No. 1 in F minor* via Library of Congress, from which the recurring piano theme in *Western Panorama* is derived.

~6.52

This segment transforms into an intricate soundscape of natural activity, insects, animals, and the life of the land, serving to communicate that the land itself is a living organism. Harking back again to *Dersu Uzala*, the livelihood of the environment is heightened by the ear. I think of this part of the piece as a more synthetic and abstract section, as it utilizes more processing and granular synthesis. Sound sources heard here include bees buzzing in a lemon tree, birds chirping, walking my horse “Ranger” through tall grass, multiple horses walking by, and a field recording of an ambient nighttime soundscape. This leads into more sounds of human activity, horses being ridden, and insects buzzing.

~10.05

This part is a section of heightened, otherworldly cricket sounds. The crickets were an important motif for me to experiment with as they appeared in many Western film soundtracks and are used to create an instant sense of spaciousness and vastness. The recordings of rattles were performed by percussionist Matt Camgros using a gourd with beads, both stirring and shaking the instrument on a tom drum. I took these recordings and processed them with some granular synthesis to create a cricket song effect. The rattles transform into a swell of field recordings of real crickets heard at night. These are equalized to emphasize the higher frequency content. The effect achieved here is an arid, dry, and overwhelming cerebral, pensive section which ultimately creates a sense of solitude.

~16.40

Around 16 minutes 40 seconds, a change is introduced into this passage of the composition by slow strums of an autoharp, leading into a nighttime soundscape of song, Appalachian dulcimer, coyotes, and dogs. At 17 minutes 20 seconds, a seemingly disembodied female voice enters the soundscape, as if it is erupting out of the Earth like lava. Two of my main reference texts in my dissertation research were *Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey* (1982) by Lillian Schlissel and *Split Tooth* (2018) by Tanya Tagaq. *Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey* (1982) offers a unique and often overlooked perspective on the westward expansion of the United States through a collection of women's diaries which provides insight into the experiences of women settlers and so-called pioneers. *Split Tooth* (2018) by Tanya Tagaq, an Inuk artist and musician, combines elements of memoir, fiction, poetry, and mythology and reflects on themes of Indigenous feminist empowerment and resilience. It was important for me to find a way to center a female narrative within the piece in some way, without prescribing a specific character of any kind. If I had to define it, this maternal female voice is representative of the Earth itself, conveying a sense of the dominance and power of nature. This wordless melody is derived from *Moj e bukura more*, or *O E Bukura More*, a traditional Arbëreshë folk song. The song itself is recognized for its 600 year old history, documenting the displacement of Albanians fleeing the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans between the 14th and 18th centuries, seeking refuge across the Adriatic Sea in Italy. *Moj e bukura more* is a lamentation for the land of origin, a love song to the land. In *MY HEART SINGS TO ME: Song as the Memory of Language in the Arbëresh Community of Chieuti* by Sara Jane Bell, the author describes "Bukura More" as being "filled with nostalgia for home" and how its popularity "illuminates the abiding sense of exile that was braided into Arbëreshë identity" (Bell 71). My treatment of the song employs it as a

voice of the land which is not necessarily disembodied, but embodied by and erupting of the land itself.

Bell's translation of *O E Bukura More*:

“O E BUKURA MORE

O e bukura More Si të le
u më ngë të pe!

Si të le
Si të le
Si të le
U më ngë të pe!

Atje kam u zotin tat
Atje kam u zojën meme
Atje kam edhe t'im vëlla

O BEAUTIFUL MOREA

O beautiful Morea
Since I left you
No longer do I see you

Since I left you
Since I left you
Since I left you
No longer do I see you

There I have a father
There I have a mother
There I have my brother too.”

~19.39

This sonic eruption from the land acts as a warning or an omen which transforms into the next section—earthquakes. One of the first auditory concepts I conceived of for this piece is “earthquakes.” I wanted to find a way to compose the symbolic sound of the Earth shaking and crumbling. This part employs a simultaneous crescendo and decrescendo, where one earthquake stops another stops, a kind of rhythmic version of a Shepard tone effect. Earthquakes might be short in duration in real life, typically between a few seconds to a couple minutes, but those seconds can feel like minutes and those minutes can feel like hours. Therefore, this primeval earthquake section is longer in duration, about 4 minutes. This is a metaphorical representation of dramatic shifts in time and culture. For example, the historical and cultural shifts of the 19th

century into the 20th century, or of the 20th into the 21st. This connects back to Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*, and the possibilities of one artwork's narrative to traverse centuries or lifetimes. While I do not expect the listener of *Western Panorama* to automatically assume that this piece spans such a broad period of time, this is something that I kept in mind while composing the piece; I want it to conjunctively feel "timeless." The "earthquakes" themselves are composed from multiple recordings of fireworks exploding, ocean waves, and some of the percussive material provided by Matt Camgros. This part utilizes more low frequency content than the rest of *Western Panorama*, in order to access a quality of fear or overwhelm. These recordings are majorly equalized, layered, and processed to achieve the desired effect of disintegration. It includes processing and effects of low pass filtering, reversing, and granular synthesis.

~23.31

This earthquake section brings the listener into an execution scene, this is the "hog slaughter" scene of *The Tree of Wooden Clogs* (1978) directed by Ermanno Olmi. In this film the slaughtering of a hog effectively provides a context for the realities of life in 19th century tenant farming, yet feels quite shocking to the average modern observer from the sterile perspective of the "Standard American Diet" or the "Western pattern diet." These dietary patterns, which are defined by a high intake of pre-packaged foods, refined grains, processed meats, and high-sugar drinks, rely on factory farming of livestock such as cows, pigs, chickens, and fish. As a result, factory farming allows for a high yield of animal products while concealing its realities from the consumer, so that the average contemporary American consumer is far removed from and oblivious to the actuality of domestic daily life for our ancestors. *The Tree of Wooden Clogs* "hog slaughter" scene plays such an integral role in setting the mood of the film, and more

specifically, in creating its unique lens as being documentary-like, that I knew it would be imperative to recreate a unique scene by including a section in *Western Panorama* with a contrasting level of intensity and mood. Olmi's achievement of this neorealist, documentary-like manner is evidenced both by the film's objective camera style and by its narrative form and slow pacing.

The "hog slaughter" scene includes multiple binaural recordings of beef cattle sniffing around my head, with the sounds of their beastly heavy breathing, plus sounds of the cattle bumping into each other and into wire fencing, creating a springy and reverberant sound. I did not approach conveying a documentary-lens by simply throwing in raw field recordings for playback, but rather curated and composed the whole scene distinctly as music. While using these field recordings of cows is not shocking in terms of content, and might seem quite benign in comparison to the violent hog slaughter in *The Tree of Wooden Clogs*, it is then interwoven with an intentionally militaristic drum part that, hopefully, evokes an execution scene. I was inspired by the use of percussion in *Once Upon a Time in the West* (1968) which is tense, spatial, and militaristic. It is utilized to create a slow tension leading up to a battle or shoot out, but the action which follows is quick and dramatic. For the listener, identifying who is being executed does not matter so much, as long as the sense of this dramatic, climactic, deathly event is hinted at. This drum part is also performed by Matt Camgros. I directed him to improvise using "vaguely militaristic" rhythmic patterns; meanwhile he had not yet heard any sound from *Western Panorama*. The drum part was initially inspired by the drums in the soundtrack of *Once Upon a time in the West* (1968), which utilizes drums in a spatial way to create tension and slow build up, leading to scenes of conflict or shoot out, which are over quickly in comparison with action that is very quick. The drums recorded for *Western Panorama* were those of a modern

drum set, not hand drums or other calfskin drums, so the consideration of these factors was important to fulfill this vision. These drum recordings were turned into a multi-layered texture, with some granular synthesis processing and one is reversed. I also included a field recording of a seemingly agitated crow cawing in an unsettled way from above, as if watching the scene unfold below. This section also includes some harmonica granular synthesis processing and some recorded improvisation with a metallic, lightweight chain.

~28.32

This somber death scene leads into the most social and extroverted part of the piece. This section may be thought of as a sort of intermission as the midpoint of the piece. It was partly inspired by a scene near the end of *The Tree of Wooden Clogs*, in which two newlywed characters undertake a honeymoon trip to Milan, only to be confronted by the realities of big city life. The couple, who have spent their entire lives on a rural tenant farm, first witness prisoners being led through the streets, see a different kind of poverty unknown to them in their tight-knit tenant farm community, and then unwittingly inherit a baby from an orphanage on their first day of marriage. This pilgrimage scene is jarring to both the characters and to the viewer, contrasting a quiet and laborious pastoral farm life with an urban and industrial reality. A similar line is drawn in Alice Rohrwacher's *Happy as Lazzaro* (2018), which portrays a group of isolated farmhands in the countryside, working through the late 20th century as though feudalism never really ended, who are then "liberated" and removed to a life of poverty through crime in the city. A poignant scene shows one of the former farmhands discovering to his shock that "food" grows "for free" alongside the railway track, conveying how far these people have sundered from their previous lives, redefining what poverty really means. In *Western Panorama*, including this one

instance of intense human society and activity serves to highlight the isolation, introversion, and introspection present in the rest of the piece, to the point that it is jarring.

This part was created using recordings of cowboys on a week-long “trail ride,” a horseback ride which typically follows an established route outdoors, usually for recreation. These sounds include horses walking, cowboys talking, whistling, singing, and cooking on a barbecue. I also included what I call a “dulcimer orchestra,” featuring 14 separate layers of Appalachian dulcimer recordings. It also utilizes some of John A. Lomax’s recordings of historical cattle calls, demonstrated by cowboy singer Sloan Matthews in Alpine, Texas circa 1942. In the context of cattle ranching, “cattle calls” refers to vocal cues and sounds which are employed by cowboys and ranchers to communicate with their cattle, whether to move the cattle in a specific direction, speed up or slow down, or keep them in place.

The trail ride recordings come from the De Anza Trail Caballeros annual ride through California. These recordings are archival material from the 1980s. The De Anza Trail Caballeros is a registered nonprofit organization describing their mission as “to honor and to commemorate the achievement of the revered captain Juan Bautista De Anza, who blazed the first overland trail from Mexico to the Northern California coast; and to encourage the development of the saddle horse for pleasure riding.” The ride retraces the trail of colonizer Juan Bautista De Anza (1736-1788), a Spanish expeditionary leader in California under the Spanish Empire. De Anza’s original route, which he traveled from 1775-1776, extended from Mexico to what is now known as San Francisco. The De Anza Trail Caballeros men gather each year for a week-long recreational horseback ride through parts of California. The De Anza Trail Caballeros ride has basic connections and similarities to historical reenactment events, although the ride itself is ultimately a recreational horseback ride for pleasure and cowboy camaraderie. The audio

recordings that I chose to use from the ride include cowboys talking and singing, lunch being cooked on the barbecue, horses' hooves clomping, and sounds around the campsites. These field recordings are combined and contrasted with recordings of Appalachian mountain dulcimer and some delicate granular synthesis processing of a barbecue sizzling on the trail ride. The dulcimer part consists of the instrument being bowed, plucked, and tapped. There are multiple performance recordings of this which are layered to create the "dulcimer orchestra" effect.

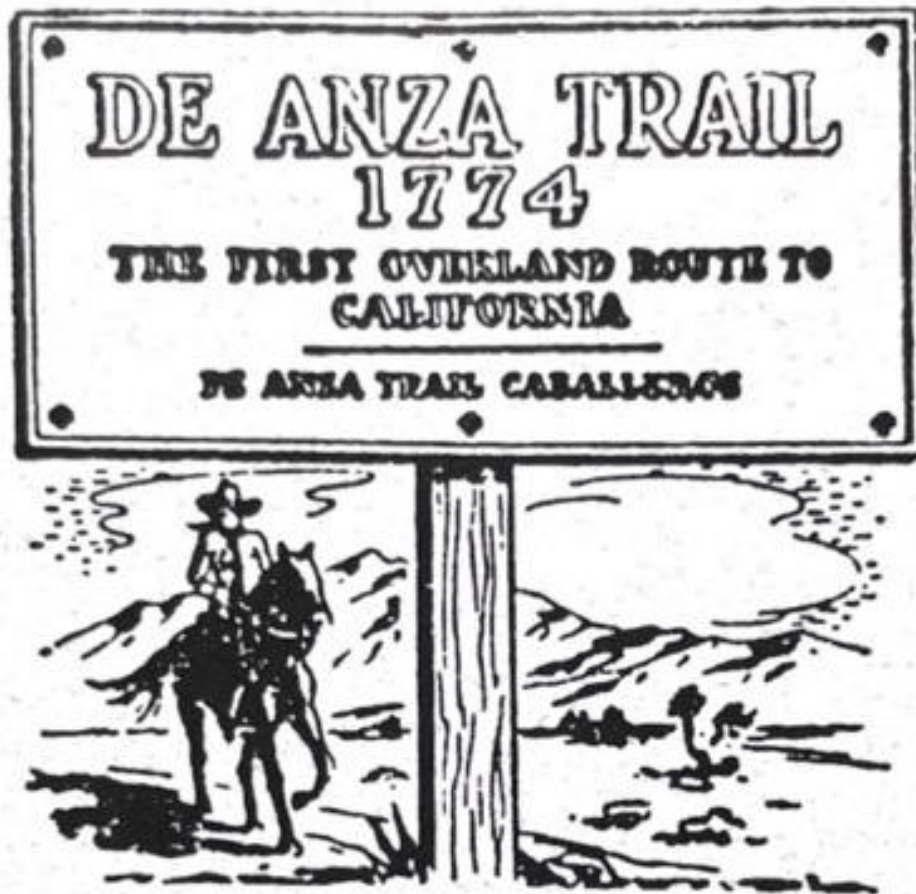


Photo scan showing an image used by the De Anza Trail Caballeros organization, which reads: DE ANZA TRAIL – 1774 – THE FIRST OVERLAND ROUTE TO CALIFORNIA – DE ANZA TRAIL CABALLEROS.

It is rousing to imagine the sounds of the 18th century, including the sounds of life in Indigenous communities of California. This historical perspective is envisioned in contrast with present-day California through the lens of the original De Anza Trail expedition. With hauntology in mind, these hauntings of sound are remembered through the recordings of the De Anza Trail Caballeros ride, exploring how sounds from the past continue to resonate in the present. These historical soundscapes are brought to life through the processing of archival recordings of the De Anza Trail Caballeros ride, serving as a means of preserving, subverting, and reimagining the sonic aspects of this history.



Photo from archival VHS tape showing cowboys lining up for lunch on the De Anza Trail Caballeros ride, 1980s.

~31.42

We are taken out of this intermission by the striking of a match and lighting of a woodwick candle, transforming into a section that carries a more introspective tone in contrast to the extroverted nature of the “intermission.” This part includes sounds of walking, improvisation with a metal Slinky toy, sounds of brushing tall grass and foliage with a soft Cypress branch, and sounds of brushing my horse with both metal and soft hair brushes. This then leads into a thoughtfully filtered and looped recording of the wheels of a steam train, lulling us into a trance-like state of meditation by way of its lurching yet repetitive rhythm. The train from which the audio recording is obtained is a narrow gauge steam locomotive #488 from the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad in Chama, New Mexico, near the Colorado-New Mexico border. I wanted to include train sounds in some way, as a reference to the train’s presence in many Western films, but also as a metaphor for the changes brought by the epoch of the Industrial Revolution. Rather than utilize the sounds of a train in a typical way, as a loud and boisterous machine, I wanted to find a way to subvert the train sound and use it in an unexpected and quiet way.



Photo showing the train from which the “train loop” audio is created.

~38.07

This transitions to a section featuring a recording of a powwow drum, a glass cake stand lid played like a singing bowl, and improvisation with a metallic, lightweight chain. The powwow drum is not stationary, but alive and moving throughout the sonic space. It is equalized, processed, and layered using granular synthesis, formant shifting, and low-pass filtering. I recorded the powwow drum at a powwow in 2014. Similarly to the disembodied voice singing *Moj e bukura more*, I wanted to utilize the powwow drum recording in an acousmatic way, to remove it from its original context, and to purport it as a living character rather than a supporting instrument, as if it is sound generated by the Earth itself, or rather by the character of nature itself. This recording is majorly equalized and processed using granular synthesis, to the point

that it is nearly unrecognizable from its original state.



Photo documentation showing the glass cake stand lid from which the singing bowl sound is captured.

In the book *The Solace of Open Spaces* (1985), author Gretel Ehrlich reflects upon the grandiosity of the vast and wild landscapes of Wyoming, contemplating the intricate relationship between the American West, its inhabitants, and the natural environment. Many of Ehrlich's

lyrical and eloquent descriptions and keen observations served as inspiration for an exploration of auditory concepts in composing *Western Panorama*. A central, overarching theme in Ehrlich's work is not just the feeling of isolation or solitude but, more profoundly, the concept of relation to place and how the environment of Wyoming shapes the people who reside there, rather than the other way around. It is not merely about recognizing one's own insignificance in comparison to the land; it is about acknowledging the overwhelming dominance of nature itself. She notes many apparent paradoxes throughout the book, describing for example how "in the silence that such cold creates [she] felt like the first person on earth, or the last" (Ehrlich 10) and reflecting on the sensation of numbness amidst the vividness of life, writing that "I feel numb. Numb in all this vividness. I don't seem to occupy my life fully" (57). These seeming paradoxes serve to convey the smallness of a single human life in relation to the vast landscape of the American West, a deceptive sense of polarity that ultimately results in a discovery of its multitudinous, multifarious nature. These apparent contradictions ultimately reveal the multifaceted and diverse nature of this landscape, and this is the kind of nuance and effect that I hoped to bring to the soundscape of *Western Panorama*.

The idea for the unconventional and dramatic panning technique employed in the powwow drum track was inspired by the binaural technique used in Aphex Twin's *Gwely Mernans* (2001). This use of hard left and right panning with rapid movement is a technique that I tend to avoid, especially for an active or performative sound source. Typically, I find this dramatic panning effect to be functionally distracting and unsubtle, creating an unrealistic and unnecessary sensation of physical movement. However, in this instance, I aimed to further dissociate this drum sound from its usual environment, as if the drum itself were a metaphorical element rather than a static musical instrument, so that it becomes part of the landscape as a

living thing, rather than a piece of furniture within the soundscape and ear. The goal was to integrate the drum into the sonic landscape as a living entity rather than merely a component of the sonic backdrop. Another interesting aspect presented by *Gwely Mernans* is the distribution of its frequency content. For example, in general one might expect the lower-frequency elements to remain relatively stationary, while the high frequency components might exhibit more variability or to be more mutable, but it is not the case for this composition. This concept resonated with Brian Tyler's use of inverted or reversed pedal tones in the *Yellowstone* soundtrack, in which he utilizes higher frequencies as the underlying foundation and lower frequencies as the driving actions and note events. Consequently, I designated the drum track to represent the lower-frequency element and set out to identify a suitable sound source for the higher-frequency, inverted pedal tone inspired component, hoping to capture a dirge-like quality. Ultimately, I ended up using a recording of a glass cake stand lid being struck and brushed by an avocado fruit, creating a sound reminiscent of a crystal singing bowl. This recording is equalized and processed to bring out certain tonal qualities, smoothing out the timbre, and increasing its resonance.

~41.12

This transitions back to the piano theme from the beginning, but this time the piano is less like a traditional piano, further removed, and more synthetic sounding due to curated excess processing. This section includes field recordings of owls and improvisation sessions of Appalachian dulcimer, autoharp, mandolin and various percussive objects such as marbles and bells. While the first appearance of this piano theme is employed more similarly to a film soundtrack, i.e. in order to set a mood, I think of this second appearance of the piano theme as a

feature of its soundscape. It is a tailored, non-percussive, piano instrument and perhaps the electronic music answer to the Western saloon piano sound trope heard in many Western films. The Western saloon piano sound I refer to is the distinctive musical style associated with the American West which is characterized by a lively, honky-tonk style of piano playing that was commonly heard in the saloons and bars of that era, influenced by ragtime music's syncopated rhythms. In Western films, the saloon piano is often portrayed as being slightly out-of-tune and with a tinny quality of timbre, so I wanted to find a unique way to incorporate this reference without it sounding overfamiliar, dinky, or toy-like.

An interesting connection I discovered in relation to this piano part is through Delia Derbyshire's innovative approaches to sound manipulation in her electronic compositions. The specific link I have made is to Derbyshire's *Blue Veils and Golden Sands* (1968), which was written for the episode *The Last Caravans* in the documentary series *The World About Us* (1968). In an interview with John Cavanagh for BBC Radio Scotland's series "Original Masters" in 1997, Derbyshire described how *Blue Veils and Golden Sands* (1968) was for "a documentary program about the Tuareg tribe. The Tuareg tribe are nomads in the Sahara desert and I think they live by bartering, taking salt, I think it was, across the desert. In the piece [...] I tried to convey the distance of the horizon and the heat haze, the strands of camels wandering across the desert, and then there's this very high, slow reedy sound. That indicates the strand of camels seen at a distance, wandering across the desert. That in fact was made from square waves on the valve oscillators we've just talked about, but square waves put through every filter I could possibly find to take out all the bass frequencies and so one just hears the very high frequencies. It had to be something out of this world" (Derbyshire). Derbyshire's description of wanting to create music reminiscent of the desert by focusing on "the very high frequencies" is inspiring. Her discussion

of conveying “the distance of the horizon and the heat haze” also relates to these explorational ideas about relaying a sense of scale in relation to the landscape and the idea of sonifying a mirage.

Derbyshire is known to have described how "My most beautiful sound at the time was a tatty green BBC lampshade. It was the wrong colour, but it had a beautiful ringing sound to it. I hit the lampshade, recorded that, faded it up into the ringing part without the percussive start. I analysed the sound into all of its partials and frequencies, and took the 12 strongest, and reconstructed the sound on the workshop's famous 12 oscillators to give a whooshing sound. So the camels rode off into the sunset with my voice in their hooves and a green lampshade on their backs" (Hodgson). Derbyshire's green lampshade sounds were also used in her other compositions, including *The Dreams* (1964).



Delia Derbyshire's green 'Coolicon' utility lighting shade, British Patent No 419602, Registered Design No 777912. Photo from the Science Museum in London, Phil Taylor.

In *Western Panorama's* piano part, the attack times are all carefully enveloped and removed. Similarly, in Derbyshire's work, the recording of the aluminum lampshade being struck has edited attack times, effectively creating a new and unique instrument entirely. Making this connection of similar methodology to Delia Derbyshire proved to be kismet confirmation that I was working in the right direction for *Western Panorama*, given that Derbyshire's *Blue Veils and Golden Sands* (1968) was also meant to convey the ambience of a vast desert landscape. In *Western Panorama's* piano part, again like Derbyshire's lampshade, the recording is majorly equalized, removing what she referred to as the bass frequencies, creating a sound more akin to a synthesizer rather than an acoustic piano. This iteration of the piano theme is also pitched up and

has added reverb. In essence, both *Western Panorama* and *Blue Veils and Golden Sands* (1968) involve careful editing of attack times, the removal of bass frequencies to create new, synthetic instruments, and both works share a common goal to convey the atmosphere of desert landscapes.

~46.12

This transforms into another cerebral, pensive, indrawn, and meditative segment featuring recordings of a fireplace recorded close-up, an automatic driveway gate speaker with wind sounds, real wind, “whisper whistle wind” improvisation, coyotes outside at night, Appalachian dulcimer taps and slides, and sounds of brushing and tapping soft carpet. This might perhaps be thought of as a nighttime cowboy campfire reference, and is reminiscent of *Dersu Uzala*’s sound design with its up-close sound.

~53.33

This opens out into more narrative or plot related activity, and then climaxes into a harmonica performance call to action, signaling an oncoming natural event. Following more wind sounds, the story is carried forward into a climactic and final sandstorm. The initial idea for the penultimate sandstorm originated with a virtual improvisation session with percussionist Matt Camgros, during which we played to the prompt of “sonifying a sandstorm” using an Appalachian/mountain dulcimer, a drum set, brushes, and shakers. This harks back again to *Dersu Uzala* (1975), reminiscent of the scene during which Dersu and the captain build a desperate shelter from a terrible, all-consuming storm in the middle of a barren landscape, the

sound intensifying and shrinking the viewer in a claustrophobic way. This is meant to convey a sense of being in the middle of a terrible sandstorm, being pelted with sand and debris, unable to escape the severity of nature. The sandstorm part includes multiple field recordings of real wind, one of which is reversed, a breathy and light harmonica improvisation, whispered and whistled wind-like sounds which have some reverb and granular synthesis processing in multiple layers, recordings of Matt Camgros performing “swirling,” circular, and smooth improvisations on a snare drum with wire brushes, “swirling” granular synthesis, and recordings of the sounds of a metal Slinky toy.

~57.24

The piece concludes with a minimalist yet dramatic “overtones” section featuring granular synthesis processing of overtone material, which was played on drums using a wooden stick held vertically on a variety of different sized cymbals to collect the overtones, in multiple layers, conveying a sense of loss, grief, stillness, and isolation after the climax and sharp effect of the sandstorm.

10. WHAT IS NEXT?

Now that I have completed *Western Panorama*, there are a few major lessons that I have learned which have shaped what the next steps will be in my practice. I would consider revisiting *Western Panorama* in the future in order to see what I would change once some time has gone by. I am very curious to find out how my own perception of the piece changes once I have an extended period of time away from it and am able to listen to it with fresh ears. Although I chose not to utilize speech or text in the *Western Panorama* because of how it interfered with the effect of isolation, I am sure I would choose to use speech or text in a large scale piece like this in the future if it did not interfere with any aesthetic or perceptual goals. I will continue to work in the direction of hauntology, as the concept still intrigues me and I intend to continue working with archival materials for the foreseeable future. I am interested in continuing to work with the concept of *memory alive*, employing it as a methodology perhaps via future site-specific works. While I had once considered creating a third dollhouse sound installation, that idea is not interesting to me at the moment. Although I am not currently planning to complete another dollhouse sound installation, I do intend to continue to explore the concept of scale in my future compositions. *Western Panorama* proved to be my most complex and in-depth experiment with form, and completing this work has given me more confidence to attempt other ideas I have in mind for experimentation with form and structure, particularly in longer duration works. I aim to continue my exploration of ASMR-inspired techniques and the manipulation of associated methods to evoke specific sensory experiences in my work, whilst remaining within the framework of the electroacoustic music medium and genre. I will inevitably continue to work with methodologies of perception and psychological effects through deeper experiments with *auditory osmosis* and *negative space*.

While working on *Western Panorama*, in conjunction, I composed *Arid, Landscape Study for Viola* (2023) for violist Melia Watras. It is an electroacoustic work for live viola and fixed media playback of a soundtrack which is comprised of recordings of Watras' viola, so that she is essentially performing with herself. The work premiered in Seattle at the University of Washington 4 May 2023. As follows are the program notes from the concert:

“Arid, Landscape Study for Viola is a reflection on panoramic desert scenery, simultaneously remote and near. It was created in conjunction with my dissertation piece, an electroacoustic reimagining of the Western film genre exploring scale, proximity, and perception. All material is sourced from Melia’s viola, integrating some delicate granular synthesis.”



Photo showing dry ground in Southern California, projected during Melia Watras' performance of *Arid, Landscape Study for Viola* (2023).

Following the creation of *Arid, Landscape Study for Viola*, I collaborated with percussionist Matt Camgros to create *The Alchemist* (2023), which premiered in Seattle, Washington at the Chapel at the Good Shepherd Center, 26 May 2023. A second iteration of *The Alchemist* was presented in Valencia, California at California Institute of the Arts, 29 September 2023. The program notes from this event are as follows:

“*The Alchemist*, presented by Breana Tavaglione and Matt Camgros, is an electroacoustic work featuring field recordings, electronics and live percussion. As in oral tradition, this iterative composition explores themes of grief, ancestry and displacement via fixed narrative. This is the second public presentation of this piece.”



Photo showing the performance of *The Alchemist* 26 May 2023.

Through the process of completing *Western Panorama* and as a result of my collaboration with percussionist Matt Camgros, I conceived of a multi-channel sound installation work I wish to complete in the near future. This yet to be completed work is called *Sandstorm* and will feature a sonic exploration of the phenomenon of sand or dust storms. The idea is to compose and record parts for drum set which will subsequently be processed and arranged into an immersive cacophony of percussive sound, aiming to recreate a physical sensation of an abrasive and dry storm experience.

11. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, creating *Western Panorama* enabled me to fulfill my wish to study a substantial research topic and create a work equally epic in scale in relation to the genre of the Western film, whilst allowing me to open up my research and composition practice to new methodologies and pathways of thought. Composing *Western Panorama* while taking into account accessibility, scale, and headphone-centric listening provided an enriching and worthwhile research endeavor. The task of evoking a profound sense of grandeur within the confines of headphone-based listening emerged as a fruitful research experiment, serving various objectives such as broadening accessibility, collaboration via the internet, upholding uniformity across listening platforms and contexts, and delivering an immersive encounter that elicits distinct psychological responses in the audience. Composing this piece allowed me to discover new methodologies in achieving perceptual effects and concepts. These discoveries have opened new pathways of thought for me in my artistic practice.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- AFI's 10 top 10*. American Film Institute. (n.d.). Retrieved March 16, 2023, from <https://www.afi.com/afis-10-top-10/>
- Amacher, Maryanne. (1999). *Sound Characters (Making the Third Ear)* [CD]. Tzadik Records.
- Bell, S. J. (2011). MY HEART SINGS TO ME: Song as the Memory of Language in the Arbëresh Community of Chieuti. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
- Calvino, Italo. *Six Memos for the next Millenium*. Vintage Books, 1993.
- Carter, Angela. (2016, October 02). Angela Carter. Retrieved from <https://usa.angelacarter.co.uk/>
- Carter, Angela. *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*. Vintage Classics, Penguin Random House, 2016.
- Cavanagh, John, et al. "BBC Radio Scotland." Original Masters, BBC, 1997.
- Chopin, Frederick. *Nocturne in F Minor, Op. 55, No. 1*. Schirmer, G., New York, monographic, 1881. Notated Music. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, www.loc.gov/item/sm1881.21059/.
- Derrida, J. (2011). *Specters of Marx: The state of the debt, the work of mourning, and the new international*. New York, New York: Routledge.
- Dyson, F. (2009). *Sounding new media : immersion and embodiment in the arts and culture*. University of California Press.

Fawell, J. W. (2005). *The Art of Sergio Leone's Once Upon a Time in the West: A Critical Appreciation*. McFarland.

Fisher, Mark. "What Is Hauntology?" *Film Quarterly*, vol. 66, no. 1, 2012, pp. 16–24. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/fq.2012.66.1.16.

Humm, M. (2010). Virginia Woolf and visual culture. In 1130929238 852672381 S. Sellers (Author), *The Cambridge companion to Virginia Woolf*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Hodgson, Brian. "Obituary Delia Derbyshire: Pioneer of Electronic Music Who Produced the Distinctive Sound of Dr Who." *The Guardian*, July 2001.

Kim, Young-Suk, and Beth Phillips. "Cognitive Correlates of Listening Comprehension." *Reading Research Quarterly*, vol. 49, no. 3, 2014, pp. 269–281. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/43497184.

Kraus, Nina, and Karen Banai. "Auditory-Processing Malleability: Focus on Language and Music." *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, vol. 16, no. 2, 2007, pp. 105–110. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/20183172.

Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads. comp by Lomax, John A New York, The Macmillan Company, 1922. Pdf. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <www.loc.gov/item/23026571/>.

Taylor, Phil. *delia_derbyshire_green_lampshade_science_museum*. 2022. Effectrode, https://www.effectrode.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/delia_derbyshire_green_lampshade_science_museum.jpg.

ODDE, THOMAS. "TIME SICKNESS IN ANDREY TARKOVSKY'S 'THE SACRIFICE.'" *Revue Canadienne D'Études Cinématographiques / Canadian Journal of Film Studies*, vol. 18, no. 2, 2009, pp. 66–86. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/24411708.

Oteri, F. (2004, May 01). Extremities: Maryanne Amacher. Retrieved from <https://nmbx.newmusicusa.org/extremities-maryanne-amacher-in-conversation-with-frank-j-oteri/>

Perreault, J. (2010). "Memory Alive" An Inquiry into the Uses of Memory by Marilyn Dumont, Jeannette Armstrong, Louise Halfe, and Joy Harjo. In 1130930730 852673311 C. Suzack (Author), *Indigenous women and feminism: Politics, activism, culture*. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Scarborough, Dorothy. *The Wind*. Wilder Publications, 2021.

Schlissel, Lillian. *Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey*. Schocken Books, 1982.

Tagaq, Tanya. *Split Tooth*. And Other Stories, 2018.

Tavaglione, B. (2020). Breana Tavaglione. Retrieved 2023, from <https://beetav.wordpress.com/>

Tavin, Kevin. "Hauntological Shifts: Fear and Loathing of Popular (Visual) Culture." *Studies in Art Education*, vol. 46, no. 2, 2005, pp. 101–117. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/3497070.

Totaro, Donato. "Time and the Film Aesthetics of Andrei Tarkovsky." *Revue Canadienne D'Études Cinématographiques / Canadian Journal of Film Studies*, vol. 2, no. 1, 1992, pp. 21–30. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/24402079.

Woolf, Virginia. *Mrs Dalloway*. Penguin Books, 2021.

Zarrelli, N. (2016, October 20). Dial-a-Ghost on Thomas Edison's Least Successful Invention:
The Spirit Phone. Retrieved from

<https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/dial-a-ghost-on-thomas-edisons-least-successful-invention-the-spirit-phone>

FILMOGRAPHY

Corbucci, Sergio, director. *Il Grande Silenzio*. 20th Century Studios, 1968.

Diamond, Neil, director. *Reel Injun*. Domino Film, 2009.

Flaherty, Robert J., director. *Nanook of the North*, Pathé Exchange, 1922.

Kiarostami, Abbas, director. *24 Frames*. The Criterion Collection, 2017.

Kurosawa, Akira, director. *Dersu Uzala*. Mosfilm, 1975.

Kurosawa, Akira, director. *Seven Samurai*. The Criterion Collection, 1954.

Leone, Sergio, director. *Once Upon a Time in the West*. Paramount Pictures, 1968.

Mahdavian, Emelie, director. *Bitterbrush*. Magnolia Pictures, 2021.

Olmi, Ermanno, director. *The Tree of Wooden Clogs*. Rai-Tv Channel 1, 1978.

Potter, Sally, director. *Orlando*. Sony Pictures Classics, 1992.

Resnais, Alain, director. *Last Year at Marienbad*. The Criterion Collection, 1961.

Rohrwacher, Alice, director. *Happy as Lazzaro*. 01 Distribution, 2018.

Sjöström, Victor, director. *The Wind*. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1928.

Sturges, John, director. *The Magnificent Seven*. United Artists, 1960.

Tammi, Emma, director. *The Wind*. IFC Films, 2018.

Tarkovsky, Andrei, director. *The Sacrifice*. Sandrew Metronome, 1986.

Zinnemann, Fred, director. *High Noon*. United Artists, 1952.

VITA

Composer and sound artist Breana Tavaglione utilizes composition as a means to paint with sound, creating an immersive sensory experience in which she deconstructs conceptual themes in order to convey a specific mood or aesthetic, transporting listeners to an alternative sonic landscape. She graduated from California Institute of the Arts in 2018 with an MFA Experimental Sound Practices, and from Mills College in 2016 BA Music Composition with an Emphasis in Media Technology and Electronic Music. She is a PhD candidate in Digital Arts and Experimental Media (DXARTS) at the University of Washington.