

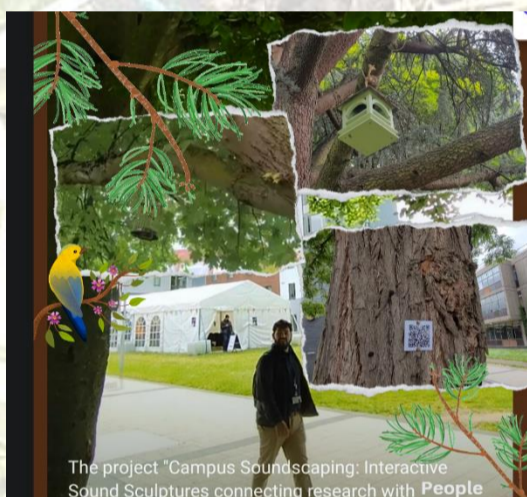
Art-based research for Public Engagement: Qualitative research sound-scaping for the VCS

Dr Mariana Bogdanova

The voluntary sector's work lives on in the voices of those working in and engaging with it. Mixed with poetry and sound, bits of conversations stream from the trees. Birdhouses and birdcages are designed to let the public know about what's going on in our own communities through its organisations... but it also lets us feel what's going on! Should these lines be blurred when dealing with impact-driven research and public engagement?

LSE 2018

Brunel 2024



The installation is designed as soundboxes representing two types of stories: the "lark in the park" are the good news stories of the sector, and the "canary in the cage" warns of trouble (in the sector's mines). Findings include data from interviews and discussions with VCOs collected for the CSF 2018 project and a Brunel University project 2024 for the Hayes and Hillington area, the University's neighbourhood. Voices are curated into four themes and mixed with music, field recordings, and poetry (with a social conscience). These streaming soundscapes on a loop play from the trees in public spaces as people walk by.

The project is funded by Brunel University's Public Engagement Fund 2024. It is a continuation of an artist-based engagement with the Civil Society Futures 2018, an independent inquiry of the state of the sector in England.

ENGAGING THE LISTENER:

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION ON SOUNDSCAPE EXPERIENCE

Live reflection-in-action:

1. What concepts and topics make a strong impression?
2. Were there elements which are elusive?

Reflection on soundscape experience:

3. What themes can you recall from the soundscape?
4. Any questions that popped into your head whilst listening?
5. How did the music affect your experience?
6. How does the poetry affect your experience?
7. How do the sound affect your experience?

Engaging with report:

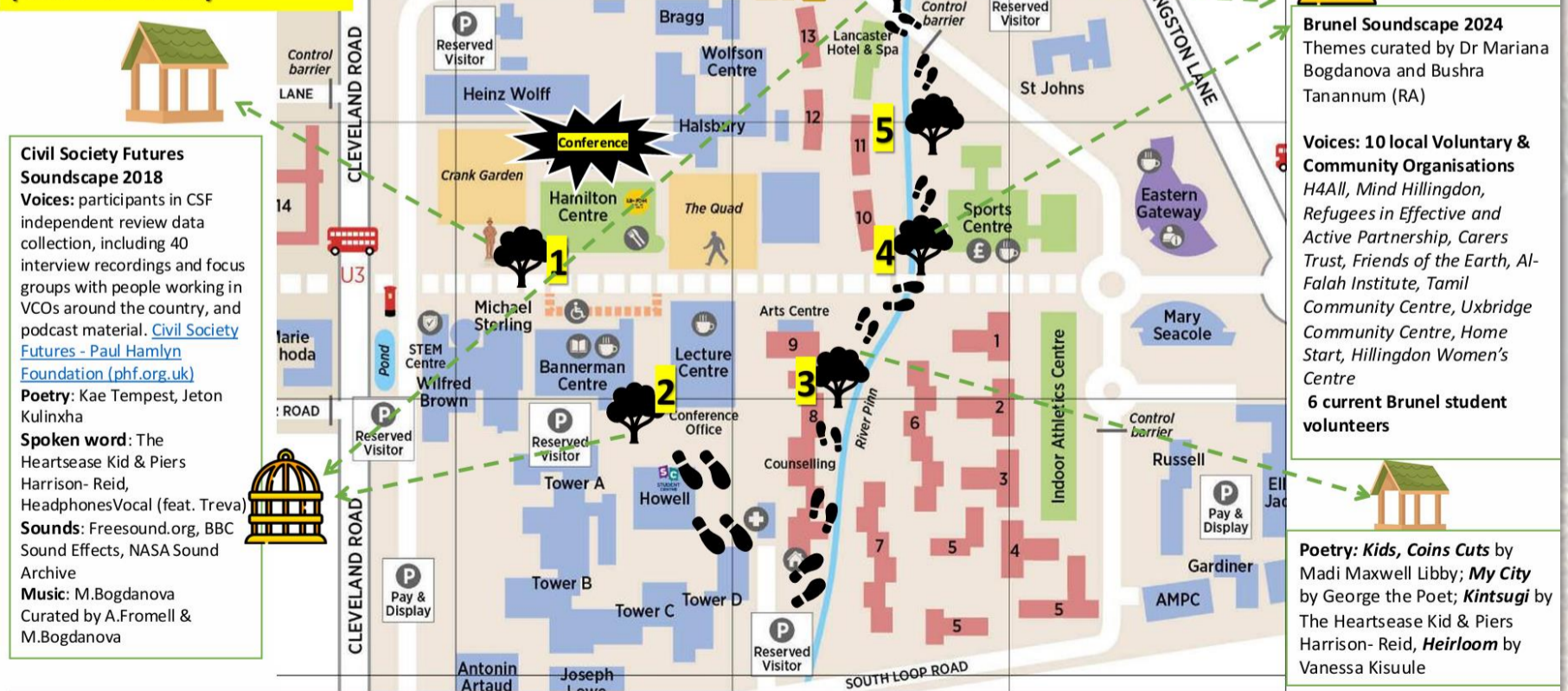
Spend 5min with the report looking through the sections.

8. What concepts and topics in the report make a strong impression?
9. How does the soundscape affect your experience of engaging with the report?

Overall experience:

10. Is this art or science?
11. Do you feel informed or entertained by the soundscape?
12. Is it a good idea to add such research soundscapes to public spaces?

Walk along river Pinn for Soundscape Installation (takes 30-45min)



Brunel 2024 Soundscape Credits: Field recording radio.aporee.com; maps-sounds-of-the-world.com Cra. 46 #3611, Cali, Valle del Cauca, Colombia; 29 Hung Shing Ye, Lamma Island, Hong Kong; [Pixabay](http://Pixabay.com) content by Zakhar Valah (Perfect Beauty) and Aleksey Christlin, Piotr Witowski (Relaxing music), Mr Rogers' Neighbourhood theme song (FRP License); Sesame Street: James Gandalfini Talks About Feeling Scared; Excerpt from Mary Poppins 1964

The Author

Mariana Bogdanova is an organisation studies scholar (Bayes Business School alumna), currently a Lecturer in Management at Brunel Business School. Her research interests include voluntary sector management, civil society, knowledge and learning in organisations, and creative teaching and research methods. Mariana also writes and performs music as Kuma Lisa band.

More information mariana.bogdanova@brunel.ac.uk

