# A conversation through listening to everyday walks

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## Introduction

Prior to reading our words below, we invite you to spend a few minutes listening to and watching this video — https://youtu.be/SnoQu7B7bVs — What we present here is a conversation between the five authors, each residing in different places in Australia and the UK. Sharing, listening, and conversing about our everyday rambles, we set out on a collective task of recording a short 'audio walk' through our individual local environments.

As a creative act, the chapter unfolds through the experimental, creative, and collaborative form of a "conversation" as a way to listen to "ecocide" within and through the often overlooked, seemingly banal and mundane spaces of everyday life. In this era of ecocide, a 'passionate immersion in the lives of fungi, microorganisms, animals and plants is opening up new understandings, relationships, and accountabilities' (van Dooren *et al.* 2016: 1). This experimental, emergent, and creative approach is inspired by Alfred North Whitehead's process philosophy that centres speculation as the "art of life". In this

manner, our “conversation” traverses the methods, media, and conversations that took place over the duration of this small project.

We conversed via video calls, email, ethnographic reflections, and scholarly meanderings, striving to provoke awareness and contemplate how what may be nearby, and familiar to some, can be faraway, exotic, and unfamiliar to others. Through these rambling conversations, different attunements and reflections on how our many “locals” are changing through various, differing registers of ecocide – the environmental degradation, species decline, traffic and population shifts, and more – were drawn into focus through varied and fluid layers of attentiveness that emerged through our conversing together.

The project began as an idea to initiate a “conversation” between the five of us, situated in different places in Australia (Melbourne, Warragul South, and Brisbane) and the UK (Mallaig and Guildford). Although already acquainted through previous research and events, the five of us had not collaborated on a project until now. The initial idea for the project – to take a collective walk together, but apart, and record in order to listen collectively – resonated across the various interests and tangent activities that each of us had been working on at the time. The five authors met together online, setting ourselves this task of how to collectively converse through our shared walking. The aim was to go for a short walk that was part of our regular daily life – whether for leisure or exercise – and record the sounds to share with the group. Our collective task of recording the walk took the forms of audio, video, photographs, and later, ethnographic reflections. Sharing our recordings in an online folder, we each then spent time listening to each other’s recorded walks, writing short reflections on the sounds and landscapes we could hear, feel, and imagine. Integral to our approach is that what is required is more than just listening. As a number of those working in sound studies argue, an aesthetic experience is central to an *ecological* repositioning**.** Indeed, as Pinto (2017) points out, ‘in an ecologically threatened existence we need to reinvolve ourselves within what we have been distanced from’ (p. 59) and that this may be achieved through a ‘rewilding of the ear’ (p. 56) through practices of deep listening. Our collective and creative responses seek to contribute to the rich body of work conceived by researchers and artists exploring

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‘compelling and affective ways to communicate the existential risks of which we are increasingly being warned by environmental scientists’ (Page 2021: 159). Working at the edges of these creative legacies, and across significant distance, we wondered, what types of attunements and interactions can help us face ecocide?

## Starting the conversation: Attuning ourselves to our everyday places

Our focus on sound arises out of an interest in a type of relational aesthetics, as that which connects human social relations to specific contexts (Bourriaud, 2002) here understood from a multisensory perspective. We make sense of our different soundscapes through various physiological, physical and cognitive processes that then bring together various sounds as ‘points of diffusion that in listening we attempt to gather’ (Chow & Steintrager 2011: 2). Nonetheless, listening to sound is more than an aesthetic experience. As argued elsewhere, ‘paying attention to how sound prompts highly visceral experiences … offers possible insights into how sounds are worked, reworked or silenced in everyday lives in meaningful ways’ (Duffy & Waitt 2013: 468). Thus, a focus on sound as process *and* medium shapes and reshapes people and places and this offers ways to explore how sound moves through and is transmitted by bodies, things, technology, ideas, affective and emotional processes (Duffy & Waitt 2013). Such a critical exploration of sound shifts how we listen because we are asked to consider not just sound’s materiality, but also the ideologies and discourses in which sound is located. In turn, this manner of listening through an emergent arts-based practice may help us attend to our entanglement with the non-human – so that we may attune ourselves to ‘worlds otherwise’ (Gan *et al*. 2017: G10), and perhaps help make evident the impact and loss of birds, animals, plants, land and seascapes.

The following five vignettes capture glimpses of our everyday walks and entanglements arising out of our re-listening to our recordings, our often-times poetic transcription generated through reflection and remembrance of these (and other) walks, as well as the inclusion of image, all of which offer a means to touch back down in place.

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**1**

*When I return home after being away for some time, the impression I have is that my garden is purring, thrumming with life, and I'm left with the feeling of being lightly and playfully touched as sounds from my garden swirl around. I wanted to capture these sensations; the ways in which birds and insects, as well as the breezes that move around and through the plants, (and an occasional lizard or snake that may be just heard when I disturb them and they crackle the leaves and long stems of plants as they push away from me) fill up the spaces around me. I'm still exploring in my work with sound how to best capture the three-dimensionality of these sounds as they direct my attention to different spaces. The high kweeking and chittering of a flock of crimson rosellas as they move across my view of the evening sky, moving left to right, somehow momentarily anchored to place through a few repetitive caws of a crow in the far paddock. Just underneath this movement of sound are the mutterings of a few rosellas eating seed from the birdfeeder amongst the trees. The buzz of flies that are too intimate with my ear. The almost timid call of a King Parrot peaks out just to my left and hidden amongst the camellias. Then there's the unwanted intimate advances from a mosquito as it moves around my ears and face … overhead, the rosellas swing round and head back, and the crows seem to respond with a little more insistence. Beneath all of this is the hum of the solar panels as it captures the last of the sun for the day (Michelle's reflections on returning home).*

**2**

*On the mainland of Scotland, close to the Isle of Skye, Pete (Dad) and Charlie (boy) recorded their pre-Christmas holly-hunt. They meandered down a steep single track lane from the house to the sea through lichen-strewn woodland in the rain, as the wind roared and howled through the trees around them. The sphagnum moss squelched underfoot, the stream babbled away (along with Charlie – who is always excited to be outdoors) and Pete was keen to encourage Charlie to "sense" the experience, and in particular to listen to their surroundings. Yet birdsong was scarcely heard, and the focus instead was on imitating aural nature; in this case, the wind and water. Following his Dad's lead, Charlie would mimic the sounds he could hear, mediated and guided by Pete's attempts to do the*

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*same. Rather like a child draws pictures using the constraining mental frameworks and socialisation provided for them by teachers and parents, so Pete on reflection could hear how he was unfortunately giving Charlie ways of doing hearing and interpretation of the sounds, rather than letting him develop his own. From "chhhshh" (Charlie) to "whooooowooo" (Pete and Charlie). But Charlie's love of sharing the sounds and experiences also led him to extemporising – the "whooooowooo" sound being exaggerated, made louder and sweeter in his rendition. The roaring of the wind and the babbling Charlie and streams are pretty much a constant backdrop as the pair muck around in trees, ditches, mud. The sea has whitecaps all over. The roaring wind and fierceness of the day drew them closer. The fierce sounds of tough weather accentuated their warm, busy meandering, chatting and foraging – sensing, being outdoors, yet at the same time, oblivious. I suppose humans "do" being in nature in their own ways. The aesthetic practices of listening and reimagining outdoor sounds offer ways of attuning to the kinds of new realities which might lead to care and belonging – and produce a new generation who recognise nature as their original home (Peter's reflections on hearing things, feeling things, on a windy day in Scotland).*

**3**

*A beautiful, bright day. The air is fresh and the weather for walking couldn't be better. No threat of rain, a light pack on our backs and 15miles of beautiful North Downs Way countryside ahead of us as we set off from Guildford Train Station on a walk through to Denbies Vineyard. We start early, around 8am from Guildford Train Station, and the excerpt picks up as we walk to the east of Newlands Corner.*

*We have walked through the city centre, along the Wey River and out into the suburbs before reaching open countryside. Walking through each of these changing landscapes is a stark reminder that nature, and our connections with it, exist in such a wide spectrum of contexts and environments. We have heard a plethora of sounds, from trains moving swiftly along tracks, to the calm and tranquil ebb and flow of the canal water as soft wakes are brought into being by passing canal boats and rowers training in the fresh morning air. As we move across Newlands Corner, we cross the road – an abrupt interruption of relative tranquillity by traffic; the harsh sounds of tyres of tarmac, the*

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*sounds of speed as the cars cut through the countryside. We cross the road and into the comfort of the woodlands on the other side. The wind rustles through the branches; this becomes our constant companion on this section of the walk as the breeze touches every part of our surroundings and being. The branches sound their presence as they move lightly against each other; creating new encounters between non-humans on our journey, each radiating from their point of presence into the space of the neighbouring trees. The lighter sounds of birdsong (barely audible on the recording) build on the sonic patchwork we are walking through. Our footsteps interplay between rhythms of rustling and crunching on leaves as I move off the path to avoid the muddiest parts, and the rhythmic squelching of mud as our footsteps displace its surface and trap air under each step. These sounds trigger emotions and memories of childhood, of similar walks, of splashing in muddy puddles with my children, and awareness of path erosion and wider environmental concerns, as the past, present and immanent future converge in our subjective sonic experiences of place as lived through our whole bodies and the inevitable multisensorial responses that brings.*

*The soundscapes of walking become a fusion of the non-human and human. The steady, reliable sounds of goretex waterproof jackets and trousers match the rhythms of our strides as we step in and through the mud and leaves, the sounds of our breathing evidence the physicality and pace of the walk, as does the short extracts of voice as the sounds of nature become interspersed with our conversation. This creates not a symphony or cacophony, but a subdued, everydayness of sonic interplays. That is, the sounds bear evidence to the range of different relationalities and emergent rhythms that create, necessitate and concern our being as we find a sense of self in transient experiences with nature (Caroline's reflections her walk on the North Downs Way, Guildford to Dorking).*

**4**

*Chirping birds, barking dogs, roaring wheels on the freeway tarmac, whistling wind, shrieking ambulance sirens and the thud of cycle wheels co-mingle. Is that electronic crackling? There goes that aircraft again, the ambulance sirens once more and the loud reverberating echo of a December wind – it's the beginning of summer. The chatter of*

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*animated walkers along the creek, mumblings on the phone, mosquitoes buzz. Missing the raucous calls of the black cockatoos today. No involuntary sneezing - the pollen has settled temporarily after the spring hay fever season - sweet, shrill, shrieking tunes - the birds sing on this windy day.*

*The Hallam Valley trail is a 10km shared path in the City of Casey, a culturally diverse suburban area in south-eastern Melbourne. As a settler of Indian heritage I started walking along this newly constructed path with my husband and children a few years ago. Humdrum sounds emerge from factory sheds and the freeway, but what draws me to this place is the feel of warm sunlight and the beautiful gum trees. I can't hear the sounds of sunlight and trees - they listen rather than speak. I'm far from the suburban cookie-cutter landscape but also across the Indian ocean at the Strand, the Hooghly riverside walk in Kolkata. Here the sounds of "nature" such as the rippling river mingle with musical calls from street vendors, hooting horns, blaring Hindi music and loud animated voices. These sounds take me back to the trickling creek along the Hallam Valley trail again? I walk 5kms with others along the trail in a free weekly community event, the KM Reedy Reserve Parkrun. We come together through heat, heavy rain and wintry weather. But it is when the creek overflows and the path is submerged, that I hear the buzz of crickets, croaking frogs, the chatter of colourful rosellas and cockatoo tunes. Egrets, herons, cranes, ibis and pelicans on the flooded path flap their wings and disappear as I approach – it's silent! (Michele's reflections on visceral urban nature as symphony).*

**5**

*Ffhllooflhh…. step, step… Walking home from the bus, at Greenslopes busway station, an inner-suburban area. Situated at the top of a grassy park area that leads down to a creek overflow catchment, and is positioned alongside the main highway entering the city. It is the afternoon traffic peak hour, so there is a lot of noise carrying over from the highway. Hopping off the bus, I walk to the pedestrian overpass bridge that straddles the bus-only route. This is a walk I do several times a week. It is not the most direct route from my university campus to my place, but it gives an opportunity to walk through the park and to catch the express bus that hurtles along the busway, which is a bit more exciting than the stop-start of the slower suburban buses.*

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*Climbing the steps, the wind buffers the microphone, although at the time I was unaware of how much air movement there was.*

*step, step, step, step, step, step, step, step, step, step, step ——— a pause in the stair–step–momentum. step, step … ————— along the middle of the overpass bridge. At the top of the overpass, even though it is enveloped by tall glass panels, the traffic and highway noise rises as the wind disappears.*

*step, step, a firmer STEP, step, step, step, step, step. Walking across the bridge, the noise surges from below as a bus travels underneath.*

*Approaching the steps on the other side to go down to the park: step, step, step – —— a very firm, loud step as I pivot down to the next flight of stairs. step, step, step…. ———— bird sounds begin to filter through: chirping, tweeting*

*Then a deeper, louder step again, I can hear/feel the final step as my foot lands on the concrete and I enter the park (Kaya's reflections on walking home).*

### Listening 1: Making sense through tone and timbre

These reflections, and the collective act of sharing them, opened up new modes of attention; helping us (re)attune and potentially reconfigure our relationships with these places. To make sense of these sounds and our responses to them, we need to consider, as Pisano (2017: 469–470) suggests, that:

> any reconfiguration of "sonic" ecology must inevitably acknowledge the invisible agency of sound as a force for revealing the possible assemblages that make up a place, and for reframing them in new and creative terrains for human and more-than-human negotiation.

Thus, our listening practices are interventionist; how we as individuals listen in and through our bodies shapes our interactions, orientations, identifications and choices with both human and non-human entities. Yet, the qualities of sound are not only caught by and inhabit bodies; a body also has a capacity to sense these sound qualities, which then enables a subject to inhabit space. Sound is therefore a relational element. The

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generative and regenerative potential of the approach we have taken in our conversations about our everyday lives lies in the re-presentation of our listening as a performative act. Our aim is to attune ourselves differently, because, as LaBelle points out, sound 'is intrinsically and unignorably relational: it emanates, propagates, communicates, vibrates, and agitates; it leaves a body and enters others; it binds and unhinges, harmonizes and traumatises' (2015: xi). Thus, our exploration is not focused on interpretation and meaning, but instead we seek, as Simpson (2009) argues in the case of music, what feelings emerge when the focus is on bodily entanglements in and with the world. By assembling certain configurations of our different ethnographies and considering this assemblage as an emergent and creative response, we attempt to communicate the various ecological, social and cultural contexts of our everyday environments that exist at the brink of ecocide, and the concerns we hold for our human and non-human futures.

Making sense of our "listening performances" requires more than "naming" the sounds recorded. We also sought to explore the qualities and relationships of these sounds because these can tell us much about our everyday and apparently mundane worlds. One such entry is through a focus on *tone* and *timbre* because it is through these sonic elements that emotion, meaning and affect may be communicated. While tone in a musical context refers to the quality, pitch and strength of a vocal or more broadly musical sound, timbre is less easily defined. Nonetheless, it plays a significant role in musical affect because it helps the listener to identify the expressive intentions of performance through timbral cues, such as tempo, dynamics and timing (Wallmark *et al.* 2018) as well as experimentation through instrumentation, vocal technique and technology (van Elferen 2018). Timbre is also significant to location. Recognising the source of a sound through its timbre is important from a survival perspective (Wallmark *et al.* 2018). Yet timbre is not confined to markers only of geographical location. As Boutin (2016: 164) explains with regards to the work of Barthes, timbre as expressed within the 'grain of the voice' signifies our location in the context of 'intersections between body and culture, materiality and meaning, voice and language'. Thus tone and timbre contribute to our understanding of how non-verbal signifying systems may enable us to attribute notions of meaning, emotion and affect.

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In the individual and collective walks the authors conducted, it was the tone and timbre that emerged from the wind, the birds, the mosquitoes, the creek, the tarmac and electronic buzz that reframes negotiations with place when ecocide is an imminent danger. Attending to these sounds as the voices of the environments we humans inhabit enables engagement in more sensitive attunements with the numerous nonhuman lives around us. However, as Revill (2020) argues, at this time, what is necessary is much more than an auditory sensitivity; rather, listening 'requires a transformation in the way human and nonhuman others might be recognised in conversation, debate and decision making that is able to combine legitimacy and legibility as the grounding for political recognition' (pp. 122-123). Without such political recognition, we will not learn to feel, think and listen to the slow effects of climate change (Barry *et al.* 2021) nor find ways that will "situate us otherwise" (Stengers, 2015) and perhaps open up ways forward.

*Wind*

The wind whistles, rustles, thrums, roars and crunches as it touches leaves, clothes, feet, the path, the water and the sky. Charlie, Peter's five year-old son witnesses these tones in a special way and mimics it in language when he says "whoooohooo". For Caroline, the tones provide the sonic backdrop along stretches of the walk, changing as she moves through different micro landscapes, creating awareness of how our movements interplay with and are influenced by the forms of the landscapes through which we move. This is the tone of a cold wintry wind in the temperate zones of the UK; but "tropical bodies" like Michele's have cultural memories of a soft, soothing evening summer breeze in India and find this tone jarring. Yet, as Owain Jones, upon reading this chapter, reminds us that 'extinction and ecocide only impact on certain, if key, parts of nature. Things like the wind, the sound of running water, clouds, light will all carry on – even if in someways altered. This to me is partly reassuring, partly highly poignient' (personal communication, 2021).

*Birds/Mozquitoezzzzz*

Sweet, soft melodious tunes and high pitched repetitive shrieks – what Kaya calls chirping and tweeting. On Michele's walk she heard these vibrations but rarely saw the birds except on rainy days; human presence introduces tones that disturb their worlds.

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Birdsong was rarely audible on Pete, Charlie and Caroline's walk. Michelle has a musician's ear that is alert to the spatiality and variability of tone – chittering, kweeking, caws and even timid calls. But such attention can be too "intimate" and annoying when mosquito tones echo and are felt by the skin.

Tone and timbre therefore provided an awareness of our agency that functions as a natural filtering mechanism. For example, the background tone of wheels on tarmac is a simple, low frequency, grinding vibration that we blot out or find annoying when looking for nourishment from "pristine nature" in everyday life. Within this imagined pristine nature, however, we also miss the short melodic call of particular birds if we are not attentive. It is easier to be lured by bird tunes that coalesce in a longer and more complex tone. The tone and timbre that ran through our individual walks as well as the walks of others in distant places called for deeper as well as careful attention to the undoing of the borders between human/non-human in our separate yet entangled worlds (Van Dooren *et al.* 2016).

### Listening 2: Making sense through mobility and rhythm

Integral to this listening performance was a focus on our everyday habits; the routine, banal and mundane journeys we took almost every day. Our intention was to listen anew, and carefully consider our relations with our everyday places. In doing this our focus is brought to the relationships that arise between bodies, places and habits, and are often made present through attention to rhythmic sequences of mobility. As Boyd and Duffy (2012) suggest, habits are comprised of rhythmic sequences at different bodily scales, from that of the pulse, heartbeat, and breath, to walking and walking in particular places at certain times. Such regular repetition interpellates us with-place through repeated and familiar experiences; a rhythmic attunement that helps in 'forging body-space relationships' (Duffy *et al.* 2011: 17). One approach to attuning ourselves to place is offered in Lefebvre's (2004) rhythmanalysis, although the original intent was that the rhythmanalyst be external to the rhythms of daily life and so made the body strangely absent (Simpson 2008).

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We did not set out to perform a rhythmanalysis. Everyday walking is mobility that expresses the rhythms of place that are felt and embodied, but as one strolls, we often 'barely register' the micro mobilities (Barry 2019: 374) of footsteps, rhythms and vibrations of placing down foot against the soil, or how a quick pace might interact with air currents, altering the conditions as we take the next step forward. These are interactions that 'disrupt the singularity of experience' (Barry 2019: 374). Rather than walking on the earth through footprints that touch the dirt or paved path, we were keen to learn how to walk *with* the earth and how to feel its various rhythms (Boyd and Duffy 2012).

*Movement*

The rhythms of the wind and breath come together, the footsteps slicking on the concrete remind us of the continuous fusion and entanglements of human and more-than-human worlds. We recognise, listening to each other's steps, the rhythms of foot-breath-ground-air. Yet, the hard, impermeable objects of urban infrastructure provide access, mobility and intersection points as we move and flow through, in and around spaces in our lives. The agency of such impermeable spaces provides support, guidance and direction. It provides reassurance, yet simultaneously shifts our perceptions between human-made and more-than-human spaces. We walk through them (paths), up them (steps) and over them (river) rather than on and within them. It brings to light the co-presences of human and more-than-human worlds. The rhythms of breathing and walking, wind and traffic continue.

*Breath*

Quickly the rhythm of Michele's walking lulls us; as we listen, we find a pattern and rhythm, the slight tingly noise of the audio recorder adds another tone, which heightens the pattern. Kaya finds herself absorbed by the rhythmic quality of the walking with Michele, Peter, Charlie and Caroline, forced to reflect on one's own walking. These moments of attunement, even to the rhythm of breath or steps, are potent , as Gibson *et al.* explain, they 'Have the capacity to reach beyond abstractions and move us to concern and action' (2015: ii). Reflecting on our breathing and walking again, later, after listening and re-listening to the collected recordings, might the rhythm of one's own footsteps, get us

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closer to thinking about human impact, and our movements of all scales that are entangled with and in the world?

*Metallic Buzz*

Tap tap on the overpass, ambulance sirens, electronic crackling, wheels on the tarmac..grrrrr...aircraft...zzzz cycle wheels...bump bump. Kaya, Pete and Charlie bring to the fore the different and at times competing registers of the more-than-human. This is cacophony rather than a symphony that runs through all the walks – simple tones move between, echo and converge from the concrete, the highway, tall glass panels, the bridge and buildings but also waterproof jackets and trousers.

In our walks, attentiveness to simple and complex tones is a "passionate immersion" (Tsing 2011) in the rhythm of more-than-human worlds. Perhaps we hear the call or the cry from the depths of the earth and are learning how to ethically respond through new habits of moving and listening to the melodious symphony but also the jarring cacophony. When tones mingle, surge, burst through, become atmospheric but also evaporate it slows us down in our well-travelled tracks. Our walks are integral to an 'expanded conception of listening' concerned with 'the responsiveness of bodies encountering sound – bodies of any and every kind, in different ways and contexts' (Gallagher *et al.* 2017: 620).

## Listening 3: Assembling sound: Composition/ism

In approaching our gathered aural experiences and recordings, it is perhaps unsurprising that we chose to use conceptualisations drawn from the arts, and particularly from music: rhythm, tone, timbre and composition. However, we take composition as something more than the act of assembling, and draw on Latour's *A Compositionist Manifesto* (2010) in regarding this as a not-entirely-managed process. We suggest that composition is not purely directed and purposive, but leans on the affordances and immanences of the more-than-human and experience and accepts the idea of a wider ontology, beyond human consciousness. Further, our sensing of the more-than-human is fraught with filtering

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issues drawn from socialising processes, “tuning-in” and “tuning-out” sounds, layers, significance and more.

Composition from an anthropocentric perspective might seek to order the cacophony into something which might have shape and form comprehensible for human consumption – a form of sense-making and critical human editing according to our sense of separation and dominance. However, as Latour opines, compositionism might be seen as oppositional to the practice of critique, in that critique demands artifice in dividing ‘what is felt and what is real’ (2010: 475). Thus, in our sense/s, composition might include a letting-be of the soundscape; a reappraisal of it when recorded and revisited that moves beyond critique in its potential to ‘repair, reassemble, stitch-together’ (2010: 475). More than this, composition requires accommodation – the acceptance of the multiple layers of cacophonous soundscapes, or of the beauty of monotony, perhaps. This attempting to make sense of what we hear resonates with the approach taken by Schafer, whose interest in the work of John Cage led to an opening up of how we might conceptualise the sounds of the more-than-human as part of ‘a continuous field of possibilities lying *within the comprehensive dominion of music*’ (Schafer, 1997: 5, italics in original). This then embraces the fact that meaning exceeds our human cognitive ability. What does a tree “do” with the sound of a rock? How does a babbling stream interpret the wind in the grass? We are thus left with what Latour calls a lumpy epistemological conundrum (2010: 476) in which the ‘We’ aspect of this piece – initially the human agents – cannot explain, capture, or understand the very limited aural phenomena afforded to us in our backyard soundscapes.

Our conversation stretched over many months and meetings; we talked for hours on video calls, took notes, journalling, and collective writing – all of which exceeded the original instance of the recorded walks. We struggled to articulate exactly what was eluding us – how were these sounds in our walks continually hovering on the peripheries of one’s attention? As researchers interested in the multi-sensory in everyday life, we have been conditioned, if you will, to research in and through our bodies (Duffy 2012), using our corporeal, immediate experience as the ‘conduit for exploring the sensations that usually happen on the peripheries’ of our attention (Barry 2019: 374). These are

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valuable techniques, but this conversation takes us further, urging us to listen across multiple bodies creating a complex fusion of intersubjectivities as we all become researched (Scarles 2010): the others in this creative task, and the non-human environment, the birds, the wind, rocks, or footpaths we walk over.

The human world must become comfortable within and amongst the cacophony of the more-than-human. This is where we are suggesting art and creativity is located in this epoch of ecocide. That is, we need to move beyond control and order and become open to listening, learning, accepting, reflecting and leaving space for the sounds and voices of nature to be present. Perhaps by turning our attention to her rhythms, tones and timbres we provide a starting point for a compositionism of the natural commons.

## Where to from here? Conversing through ecocide in the everyday

When ecocide is a slow but ongoing threat our individual and collective walks perform and illuminate the potential to respond, a means to enact a response-ability. Haraway (2016) calls for cultivating a feminist ethics of response-ability that composes the world with others and is therefore 'more capable of surprise' (p. 988). This is the surprise we encountered in our individual and collaborative acts of listening to place on what might seem mundane daily walks with urban nature. Therefore, rather than saturating our being with attachments that focus on the violence of ecocide or turning away from?with detachment or indifference, our aim was to respond to an 'unasked obligation' (Haraway 2016: 130). This is an obligation and response-ability that must be felt in our blood, our breath, our skin, our bones, our muscles and our very being. In this chapter it was sound ecologies that attuned us to this response-ability and moved the fibres of our being so that we could begin to respond to worlds we had not noticed or felt before. Haraway argues that 'every fibred being' (2016: 30) is interrelated and therefore we have the potential to repattern processes and craft response-ability through collective acts – in this chapter the collective acts of listening, doing, thinking and writing are the agency that runs through more-than-human worlds. Nonetheless, what is required is a significant rethinking of a capitalist modernity that has pushed and shaped us as isolated selves because this is the framework that facilitates ecocide. Forming and reforming collectives offers some form of resistance; we face and share grief together rather than alone.

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We are acutely aware of the urgency of our task: our duty as creative, social, and cultural researchers is to develop robust insights and methods that complement and extend scientific endeavours towards shaping new global futures that are not catastrophic but instead offer multiple futures, different temporalities, new subjectivities. Attending to the 'dramatic changes that lay ahead in the post-apocalyptic narratives that the Anthropocene conjures' (Barry & Keane 2020: 7) requires a reorientation of humans to the Earth (Gibson *et al.* 2015; Haraway 2016; Latour 2010). How do we attend to ecocide in our everyday lives? This task needs to work across scales, places, and locales, drawing together individuals into collective forms of action (attention, creation, conceptualisation). We are inspired in part by the 'London National Park' campaign, which asks the public to consider each and every 'green space' from the weeds and moss to the imported flowers and trees as desiring our attention and conservation. The divide between urban and rural, the everyday or the exoticised afar places, plays into what Saarinen describes as a '"fortress" model of global conservation thinking, separating wilderness from culture and nature from people" (2016: 2). How we might listen to and *with* our local environments to foster appreciations of the many rhythms, flows, and moorings that take place and break down barriers between the 'wild' spaces and our inhabited quotidian places?

Such minor or everyday activism can emerge in different, creative, spontaneous and often overlooked ways. The global pandemic lockdowns reveal with force the enchantment and fascination one can have on their own doorstep – gazing at the trees in the distance, admiring the growth of grass along the footpath. In this vein, the ordinary becomes the extraordinary, and we attend to our immediate worlds through conversational "starting points" that lead to new configurations and relations with-and-in-the world. This is the conceptual and empirical lure that is central to Whitehead's process philosophy or the "art of life" (Stengers 2011; Whitehead 1958, 1978). For Whitehead (1978: 21), creativity focuses less on critique or explanation and is associated with the "principle of novelty" and the "production of novel togetherness" that emerges through risky experimentation (Stengers 2011). We draw on this approach that is experimental, emergent and creative to engage in Whiteheadian adventures of thought in exploring these sound recordings. The recordings are prompts for multi-sensory attunements to different rhythms, flows, and relations between human action and the nonhuman world.

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They lure us to potential transformations and appreciations of everyday life as interconnected. If reconsidered through this lens, even the most habitual journeys in our everyday, have the potential to alter and attune us to the changes, shifts, and entanglements we have with the environment. Further, they may put us back in the world – making our stories less 'about us' and a little more connected to a non-human universe with its own inexhaustible fund of sounds, stories, struggles, beauty and disaster. These soundscapes and explorations provide tiny cues for a reimagined world of coexisting beings and things;

> While attunement, mindfulness, or whatever you want to name it as cannot solve these massive issues alone, we advocate that practised attention and dedication to embarking on creative re-imaginings of everyday processes and movements should be included. (Barry & Keane 2020: 208)

Using the sound recordings as prompts, we discussed the potentials for the multi-sensory attunements to different rhythms, flows, and relations between human action and the nonhuman world, and what types of potential transformations and appreciations of everyday life as interconnected might be uncovered. If reconsidered through this lens, even the most routinised or habitual journeys in our everyday, have the potential to alter and attune us to the changes, shifts, and entanglements we have with the environment. Further, they may remind us that we belong in and with the world – making our stories less "about us" and a little more connected to a non-human universe with its own inexhaustible fund of sounds, stories, struggles, beauty and disaster. Such an approach can offer means to a creative, collective effort that may generate more-than-human narratives and response-abilities. Our soundscapes and explorations provide tiny cues for (re)entering a world of coexisting more-than-human beings.

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