

MA Defence: “Waste Media Pedagogy: Soundscape Composition as Responsive Spatial Practice”

by Pietro Sammarco

Vu Thuy Anh Phan

School of Communication
Simon Fraser University

Our dear colleague, Pietro Sammarco, will defend his MA Thesis on Wednesday, December 16, 2015 at Harbour Centre, Room 1500 (10:00 am - 12:00 pm). Here is the abstract of his thesis “Waste Media Pedagogy”:

Abstract:

Historically, the primary aim of modern recording technique has been to control the social context in which recording happens. Modern recording technique implements a way of listening that conceptually and spatially suppresses noises that indicate the social context of studio production. While this provides technical efficiency, it displaces political questions and ethical considerations, discursively rendering production practice an activity without social consequences. Rather than teaching recording as nothing more than the technical task of operating devices and “engineering” sound, it is possible for the production studio to support a listening public and become hospitable to a wider range of social concerns.

This thesis combines the fields of soundscape composition and media education to explore pedagogical opportunities encountered by focusing on “waste” the spatial practices, material possibilities, and social meanings gathered around it. Disposability and responsibility represent the ways recording practices negate and engage the social production of Vancouver’s livability and the immateriality of the digital realm on which it depends as a global city. Researching a youth art project, this thesis reports that waste figured as a thing for organizing improvisation, and can bring together people and places normally kept separate. It is proposed that engaging waste more explicitly, with a dedicated research component, and with a durable format like an archive could counter the oblivion facilitated by disposability with a space for enabling the production of collective response.

Keywords:

soundscape composition; media education; waste management; recording; e-waste; listening publics