

Interdisciplinary Research as Musical Experimentation

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Musicianly Approaches to Sound Corpora

In which I will:

- Meditate upon Disciplinarity, Pluralism, Divergence
- Introduce *Fluid Corpus Manipulation* project
- Offer questions to community

Discipline and Pluralism

Patrick Valiquet. 2017. *Hearing the Music of Others: Pierre Schaeffer's Humanist Interdiscipline*. Music and Letters 98, 2: 255–280.

Cultivating Agonism

- Talking past each other
 - Same words, different things (e.g. ‘sound’, ‘music’)
 - Distinct, unspoken ontological commitments
 - We need *ways through* vocabulary barriers

Barry, Andrew, Georgina Born, and Gisa Wieszkalnys. 2008. ‘Logics of Interdisciplinarity’. *Economy and Society* 37 (1): 20–49.

Currie, Adrian, and Anton Killin. 2016. ‘Musical Pluralism and the Science of Music’. *European Journal for Philosophy of Science* 6 (1): 9–30.

Green, Owen. 2014. ‘NIME, Musicality and Practice-Led Methods’. In *New Interfaces for Musical Expression (NIME)*, edited by Baptiste Caramiaux, Koray Tahiroglu, Rebecca Fiebrink, and Atau Tanaka, 1–6. Goldsmith’s University of London.

Nurturing Pluralism

- Musical Plurality \Leftrightarrow Methodological Plurality
- Agonism implies epistemological pluralism
- Distinct *ways of knowing* our tools in context of lifeworld

Born, Georgina. 2010. 'For a Relational Musicology: Music and Interdisciplinarity, Beyond the Practice Turn'. *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 135 (2): 205–43.

Roholt, Tiger C. 2014. *Groove: A Phenomenology of Rhythmic Nuance*. Bloomsbury Academic.

Stockfelt, Ola. 1997. 'Adequate Modes of Listening.' In *Keeping Score: Music, Disciplinarity, Culture*, edited by David Schwarz, Anahid Kassabian, and Lawrence Siegel, 129–46.

Proclamations on Music-Technical Divergence

Extensions not
replacements

Signals are not
sounds

Technologies are not
just functions

**Musicking is
humaning!***

**Imperfection is
material!**

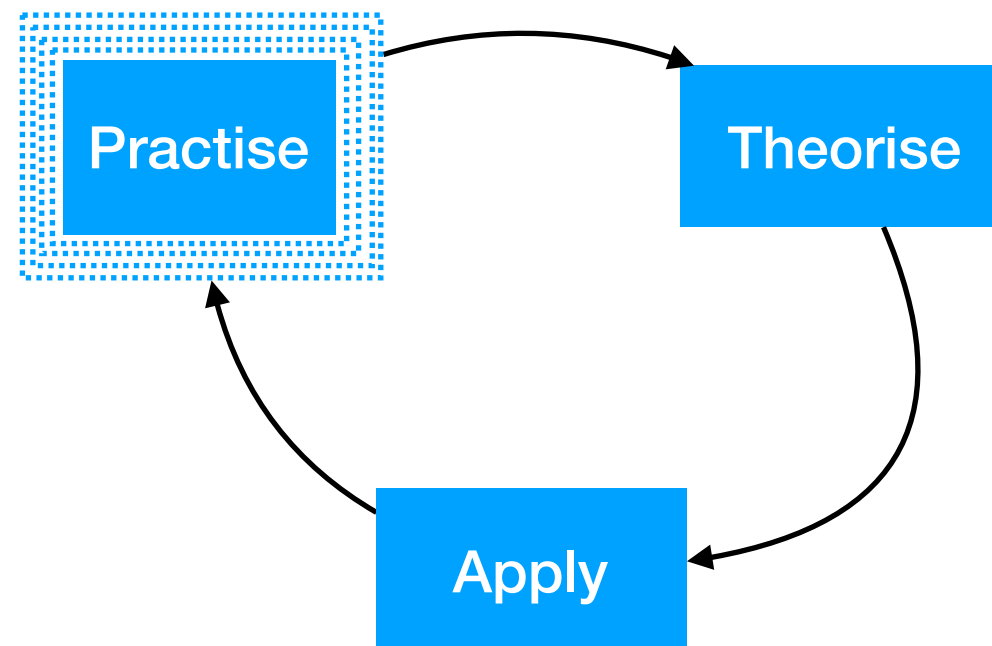
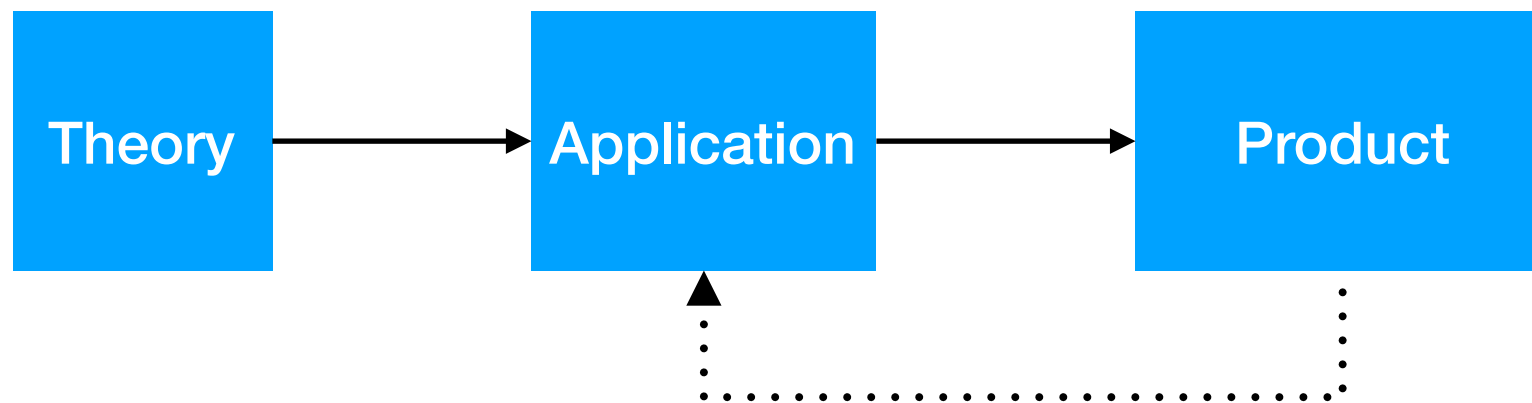
**Hearing is
practice!**

**Interface is
identity!**

People, not users

Bowers, J and Green, O, *All the Noises: Hijacking Machine Listening for Performative Research*, NIME 2018

Practice-Led Design?



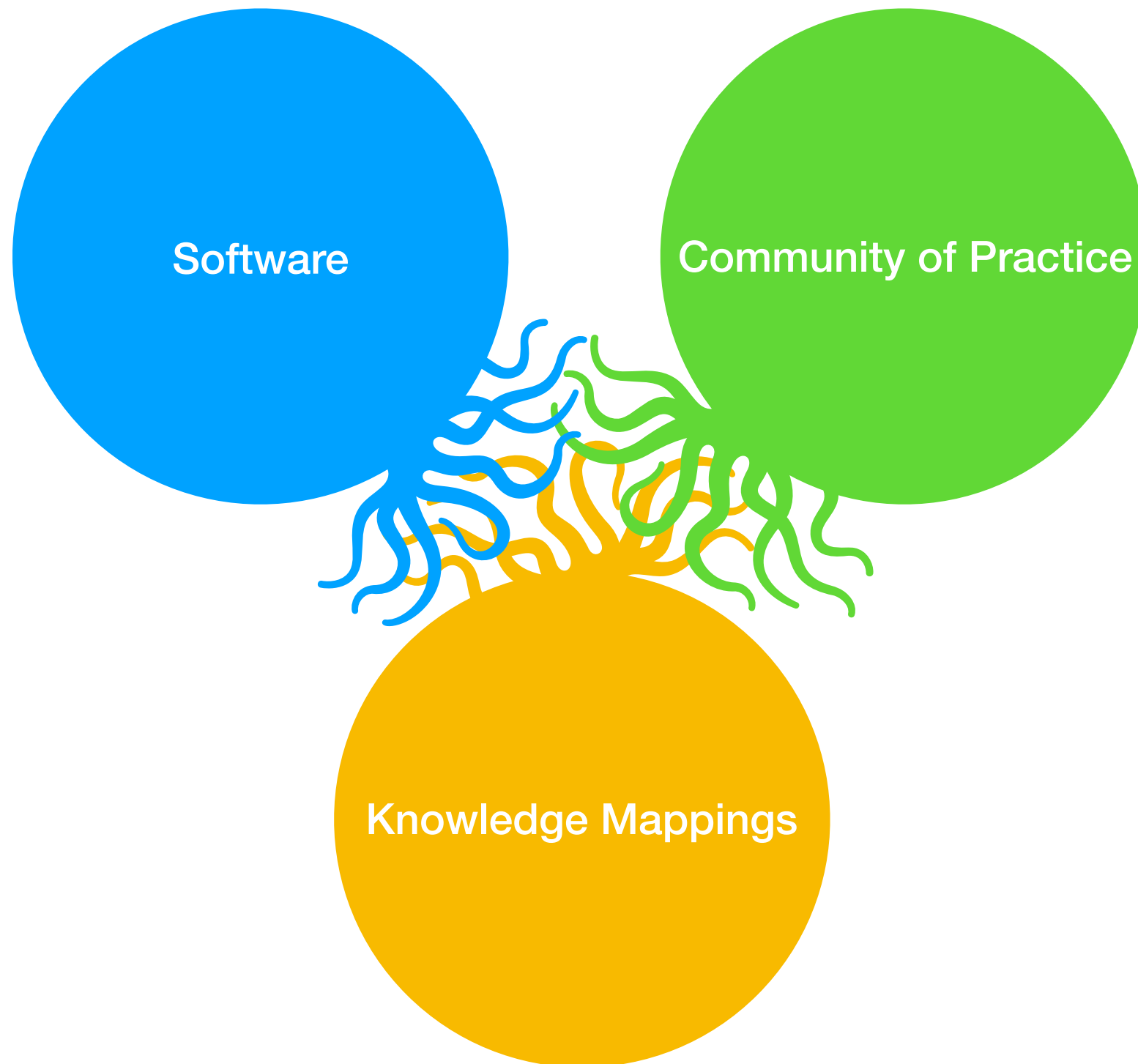
The FluCoMa Project

- Working *musically* with large collections of recorded sound
- Bridging a gap between what's possible and what's available
- Aimed at *techno-fluent* musicians
- Promoting divergent usage

Musical Impulses

- Hybridising sounds
- Wayfinding through materials
- Interpolating between sounds
- Playing with symbol \rightleftharpoons sound

Software *and* Community



And Method...

- Constant artistic interrogation
- Three progressively wider practice-based research circles:
 - Local: the lab and its surrounding community
 - 8 professional commissions
 - The world at large
- First four commissions Sept 2018-2019
- Next four: 2019-2020

The Software Bits

- Two toolkits (for Max, Supercollider)
 - Signal Decomposition
 - Corpus Exploration

The Software Bits

- Two toolkits (for Max, Supercollider)
 - Signal Decomposition
 - *Slices*: ways of dividing in time
 - *Layers*: separating in to ‘archetypes’
 - *Objects*: user-driven separation
 - Creative Corpus Exploration

The Software Bits

- Early results available at www.flucoma.org/publications.html
- Technical papers
- Embryonic software

Music-Technical Dispositions

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Conjecture on *Techno-Fluency*:



Contextual, not genetic

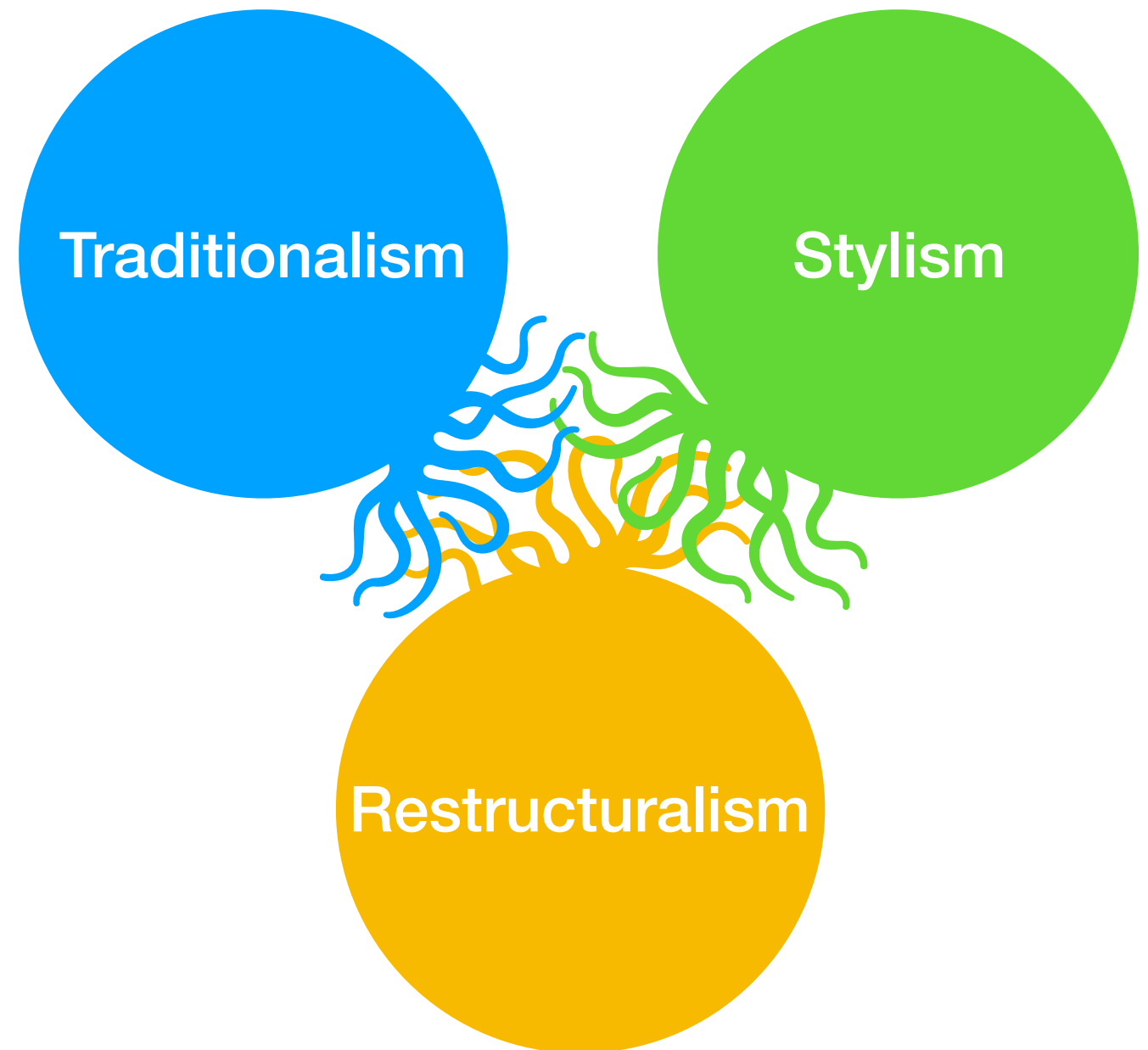
Conjecture on Techno-Fluency

- Supported by interviews with commissioned composers
- Other categories emerging from transcripts
 - instrument makers :: world-builders
 - librarians :: tabula rasa-ers

⇒ Diversity of attitudes towards corpora, instruments

Music-Experimental Dispositions?

- Anthony Braxton's model
- Again: *contextual, not genetic*



Lock, Graham. 1989. *Forces In Motion: The Music And Thoughts Of Anthony Braxton*. New York, N.Y: Da Capo Press.

Knowledge Maps

- Aspirations:
 - *Musically grounded* explanations of technical processes
 - Can we do as well as Wishart?
 - Many different points of entry and ways through (cf dispositions)
 - Deal with unavoidable contingency / partiality

Wishart, Trevor. 1994. *Audible Design: A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Sound Composition*. Place of publication not identified: Orpheus the Pantomime.

To Come

- Software to be released on Github (ono) as early as is reasonable
 - ➡ We want feedback, critique, curveballs
- Online forum to appear with software
 - ➡ We want to establish community around broad topic of musicking with corpora
- Platform for knowledge mapping to gestate

Q1

How to
design for
divergence?

Q2

How to be musicianly with AI?

Q3

How modular
to make
things?

Q4

Is there a thirst
for technical
detail?