

Editorial: Sonic Practice Now

Robin Parmar

Welcome to *Interference* No. 8 *Sonic Practice Now*. This issue marks a collaboration between The Irish Sound, Science and Technology Association and this journal. Formed in 2011, [ISSTA](#) promotes sonic practice in Ireland and internationally, primarily by hosting an annual conference and festival, sharing research and artistic practice through papers, installations, concerts, workshops, and other modes of presentation.

The tenth anniversary of ISSTA coincided with the worldwide spread of COVID-19 and the subsequent lock-downs. It was decided to replace the usual conference with online activities that directly addressed the societal impact of this pandemic. Contributors were invited to share responses by considering both their professional practice and changing interpersonal relationships. Somewhat presciently, the following questions were posed. “Does the pandemic mark a permanent change to how we work and share? Is this a societal event that will soon be normalised?” Answers are perhaps more apparent now than they were in those early days, so the contributions here should be read in light of a constantly shifting milieu.

The initial result of this investigation was a series of online concerts curated by ISSTA in August 2020. These featured live performance and fixed media works in audio and video formats, shared by streaming and parallel chat sessions. The responses were enthusiastic; the conversations lively. It was clear that artistic energies had not been halted by the pandemic, merely channeled into new possibilities. Given suitable forums, these activities could be expressed effectively, even profoundly.

To make space for written work, it was decided to collaborate with *Interference*. Two years later, after a most painstaking process, we can finally present the written counterpart to ISSTA 2020. In many ways the development of this issue has mirrored the common experience of the pandemic: responses were delayed, reviewers fell ill, tools stopped working, communications were frustrated. The time frame was extended, then extended again. The creation of this issue has in many ways *performed* its content as a series of deferred results, anxiety building with each new unknown.

For this issue we encouraged responses that are diaristic, conversational, and experimental, alongside more conventional academic writing. The ten contributions here cover a range of approaches and styles. Dozens of links to videos and sounds allow you to explore further.

I wish to thank everyone who made it through this long process with patience and goodwill. This includes our contributors, the reviewers, and my colleagues on the *Interference* board. Every one of these individuals has worked without remuneration, for the good of the community. This spirit was only strengthened by the trying circumstances.

This is *Sonic Practice Now*.

– Robin Parmar, *Interference* guest editor and ISSTA vice-president, July 2022