

# Recalling and forgetting the past: A sonic transformation of sermons, using digital and analogue technology and the deficits of dementia

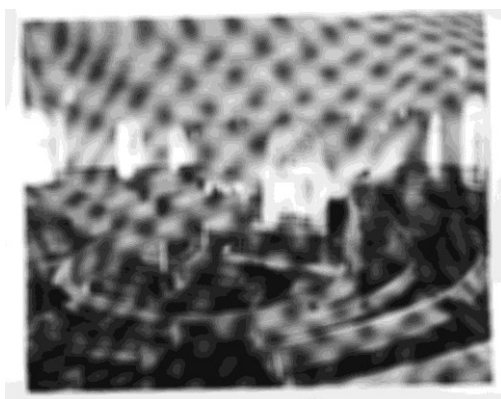
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The project was conceived as a contribution to the Royal Commission's *Explore Your Archive: Memory Archive*. One of the event's ambitions was to explore memory in relation to dementia. Accordingly, my sound-artwork, *I. Nothing. Lack.*, which this paper discusses, addressed the themes of remembering and forgetting, principally.

The source material for the project was derived from cassette-tape recordings of a quartet of sermons on Psalm 23 delivered by the Rev. J. Douglas in August 1979, at Bethel Welsh Baptist Church, Aberystwyth. The tape encoding represents a technological memory of MacMillan's preaching.



38 years later, that memory was recalled, technologically, at the place in which had been first formed. The analogue information was digitally transferred in order to permit a variety of interventions in, and reconfigurations of, the 'memory'. The processes by which the digitised content was transformed were derived from the deficits associated with dementia.



The paper presents an account of the presentation and reception of the project. Furthermore, the discussion addresses the peculiar virtues of sound-residues as historical documentation, and their analysis and interpretation through sound art practice and sonic history. It also examines how collaboration between artist-academics and public institutions can generate new insights and synergies that would be otherwise unobtainable. And, moreover, in such a way as to be publicly accessible, challenging, relevant to social concerns, and contributory to an understanding of mental illness.