Creating a Podcast :
from conception
to broadcast

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Loïc Leroux-Gaullier, director, digital strategy
Antonin Wyss, sound designer and composer

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By Marie-Laurence Rancourt

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By Marie-Laurence Rancourt
executive and artistic director of Magnéto

THE PODCAST THAT TAKES YOU FURTHER

« What awakes our attention is to watch, to listen, to witness the word as brought forth by a body : it is the emergence of the voice [word] that moves us. »

How do you begin a podcast project? What are the different genres and formats present in this universe? How do you develop your own sound writing? How to succeed with sound recording? How do you approach the question of editing? How does the distribution of a podcast work and what should be taken into account in its promotion strategy? It is to elucidate these questions and many others that this guide has been created.

Conceived and produced by Magnéto, *The Podcast That Takes You Further* aims to answer these questions and many more. It is a tool for artists who want to learn how to create a podcast. Indeed,

the objective of this guide is to share knowledge, techniques and best practices in order to develop a podcast project, from its first beginnings to its final distribution. This guide was conceived as an introduction to the making of a creative podcast for anyone interested in this new medium.

It provides tips to help prepare the ground for anyone who wants to start a podcast project. Without claiming to be exhaustive, the content presented here gives excellent entry keys to enter this universe with great creative and artistic potential.

Moreover, let's remember that it is a living practice, never finished, always to be (re)imagined and (re)invented.

If an important craze for the podcast has been felt during the last few years, if certain recipes have been able to prove their efficiency, it would be a pity not to constantly try to invent, with a certain freshness, other forms, other styles, other sound writing in order to get closer and closer to what makes the voice of each one's voice; that of an artist.

The four main chapters that make up the body of this document follow closely the stages in the development of a podcast project : conceiving and producing a podcast, collecting the sounds, post-production and broadcasting the podcast. From the preliminary note of intent to the broadcasting of the project on all podcast applications, several moments of questioning, writing and reflection are necessary, some steps requiring more technical skills than others. Thus, reflective and technical approaches dialogue together in the framework of a podcast project.

This guide lists, gathers and transmits the knowledge that is essential for the smooth progress of each stage of a podcast project.

It is an overview that offers the opportunity for those who want to introduce themselves to the discipline to become familiar with the possibilities it offers.

The knowledge presented here will then be completed and refined through the actual practice of this artistic discipline.

We hope that it will become a reference tool for those who share with us a certain love of sound, voices, meaningful words and listening.
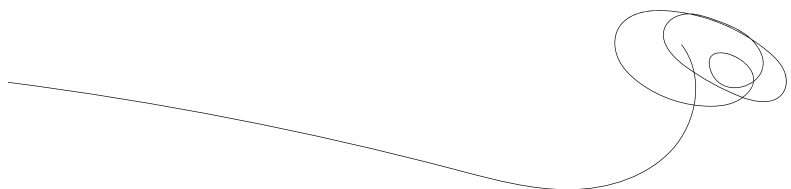
Magnéto | *It is the emergence of the voice in someone that moves us*

Magnéto is a non-profit organization specializing in creation and production that promotes bold and meaningful contemporary artistic activity. Its multidisciplinary projects bring together professional and non-professional artists and have in common a sensitivity to language, speech and listening.

Magnéto creates projects that transcend genres, bearing traces of radio, theater, literature and cinema.

Magnéto is an organization of creation and production working with language and voices from a listening posture. The organization records the contemporary and develops forms of writing where thought is set in motion by the elaboration of narratives and questions that take bold paths in relation to the current narrative.

Each of Magnéto's projects defends a certain way of thinking about art and the artist's responsibility. In particular, the organization wishes to multiply the passages between art and life so that art is not a domain outside of society and the collective, but actively contributes to transforming them. It is from this perspective that the initiatives considered are generally punctuated by sharing with the public in the form of meetings and workshops. Magnéto thus imagines passages and openings between art and the public in favor of an important dialogue between life and the arts.

Magnéto seeks to defend audacity and risk-taking through writing which is open to manifestations of life and thought, but also to other ways of living and relationships with language and the world. Since its beginnings, Magnéto has given life to sound, stage, theatrical and literary projects.

HISTORY

Since its foundation in 2016, Magnéto has dreamed of being a place favorable to thought and imagination, to ideas as well as to new forms. It is first in the field of sound and radio art that the organization made itself known, convinced that this discipline contains in itself many possibilities, favorable to ideas, languages, voices and listening, while proposing true sensitive and inventive experiences.

Magnéto takes its place in the landscape like a writer who composes stories from voices and sounds, having the certainty that radio has the possibility of being cinema, literature and theater, and that it is a little of all of these at the same time.

In 2021, under the artistic direction of Marie-Laurence Rancourt, Magnéto chose to go even further in the deployment of its vision. In particular, the organization reaffirmed its desire to multiply the envisaged forms of writing by developing its own grammars from different disciplines. Magnéto launches important creation cycles that include not only dissemination, but also genuine artistic research and sharing activities.

These cycles are sometimes oriented towards radio or theater, sometimes towards cinema or literature.

Design & production of a podcast

By Guillaume Campion

Design & production of a podcast

By Guillaume Campion
composer and sound artist

1. GENRES, APPROACHES AND REALIZATION METHODS

The objective of the "Design and Production of a Podcast" section is to share some tips, key points and perspectives with aspiring podcast creators in the start-up phase of their project. In order to situate oneself in relation to the various aesthetics that make up the podcast landscape today, firstly, an overview of the different genres, with concrete examples, is offered. This overview will be followed by a series of strategies and tools to be implemented in the first stages of a podcast project.

Let's start with a brief historical and terminological background of this practice.

1.1 BACKGROUND AND DEFINITIONS

The emergence of podcasting, at the turn of the 21st century, resulted from the conjunction of three main factors [1] :

- The introduction of portable digital music players (including the famous iPod, to which we owe the term podcast ; this will be discussed later) ;

- The appearance of the first blogs and the first publications of online content by the general public ;

- The democratization of digital audio production means, thanks to increasing access to more affordable digital recorders and editing software.
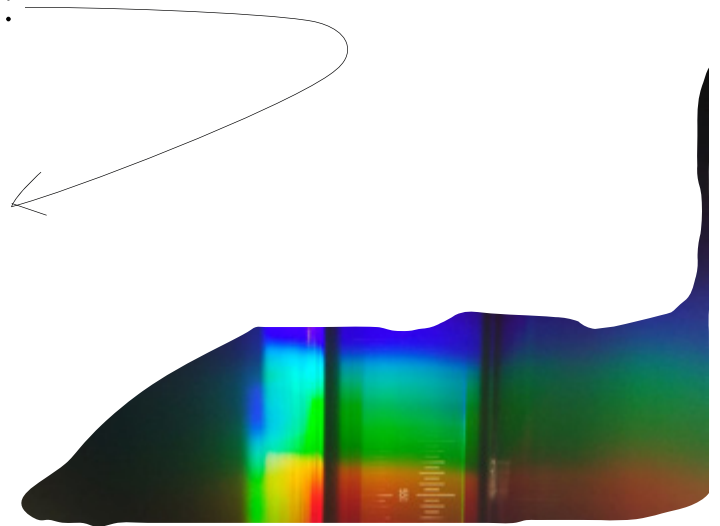
Initially conceived as a sort of audio variation of the opinion or information blog, the practice of podcasting quickly attracted amateurs who wanted to make "radio on the Web", as well as many professionals from larger media outlets in search of greater freedom. While the craze remained more or less marginal until the mid-2010s, the groundwork was nevertheless laid for the advent of the creation of radio 2.0.

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[1] For a more detailed overview of the context at the time, consult this article published in *The Guardian* (2004) :
www.theguardian.com/media/2004/feb/12/broadcasting.digitalmedia.

1.2 PODCASTING VERSUS BROADCASTING

Technically speaking, podcasting is the web-based counterpart to over-the-air broadcasting. In this sense, it is first and foremost a medium, a means of communication designed to convey content - in the same way as traditional broadcasting, which uses AM and FM bands. Can we then consider podcasting as part and parcel of a new audio practice, or is it simply a migration of radio content to another broadcast channel ?

In many respects, it is fair to say that the possibilities offered by webcasting contribute to the renewal of sound writing, but without a real paradigm shift.

Since the early 2000s, we have seen the emergence of formats and practices that differ significantly from typical radio production, while perpetuating the use of devices, methods and aesthetics that date back several decades. In concrete terms, the evolution of sound writing practices in the digital age is due above all to the change in broadcasting modes, which themselves radically modify listening habits — and eventually, sound production itself.

First and foremost, the constraint of the schedule disappears, which frees production from the formal injunctions of duration and quantity. Indeed, with the podcast, it is now possible to offer audio content of any length, in any number of episodes, and to put them online at the time of one's choice, without following a specific schedule or timetable[2]. One of the advantages of this mode of broadcasting is its great flexibility : while it opens up the possibility of taking time to explore content in depth in documentary formats or long discussions (sometimes lasting more than an hour for a single episode), it also lends itself to very short formats (for example, the 60-Second Science series from Scientific American magazine). Of course, this flexibility and freedom also applies to the audience, who now have total control over what they want to listen to, when they choose to listen to it and where they want to listen to it.

Another important feature of the podcast is the de-professionalization of sound creation practices, which can be observed since the beginning of the 21st century. Thanks to the democratization of the means of production, it is no longer necessary to be a professional to start making a podcast : practically anyone can do it, simply by having access to a computer and a microphone. Even in the professional world, unless there is a specific commission or broadcast agreement, creators are no longer governed by an imposed editorial line, format or content. This freedom generates a creative craze that is reminiscent, in many ways, of the early days of traditional radio. With radio novels, radio dramas, audio dramas, radio documentaries and other hörspiel having more or less deserted the schedules of the major broadcasters in recent decades, sound creators of all kinds are now moving into the territory of the podcast, freed from the constraints that have come to characterize traditional radio (for the most part, at least). That said, despite some truly innovative proposals, many podcasts rehabilitate - consciously or not - nearly century old radio writing.

> We are therefore witnessing a sort of renaissance of these sound writings, which podcasting contributes to deepening, renewing and transforming, by placing them firmly in the present.

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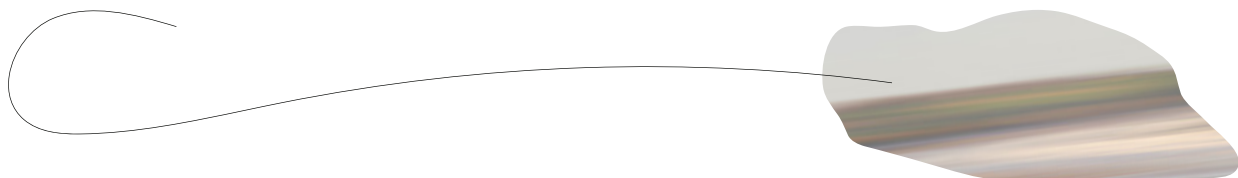
[2] Some productions, such as the series *Un podcast à soi* on ARTE Radio, still choose to structure their broadcasting according to a specific timetable : for example, a new episode of *Un podcast à soi* is broadcast every first Wednesday of the month.

1.3 TERMINOLOGIE EN USAGE

Until recently, several major broadcasters were not hesitating to offer so-called "podcasts" of their regular radio programs, which were originally broadcast over-the-air. As more and more productions are made strictly for podcasting, we will see a change in the lexicon, and it is worthwhile looking at this change.

The English word "podcasting" is a contraction of the words "broadcasting" — meaning large-scale radio or television broadcasting - and the famous iPod, the first digital portable music player proposed by Apple in the early 2000s. This neologism designates the broadcasting of audio content intended to be downloaded and listened to on the move — in a "podcast" — on a digital device.
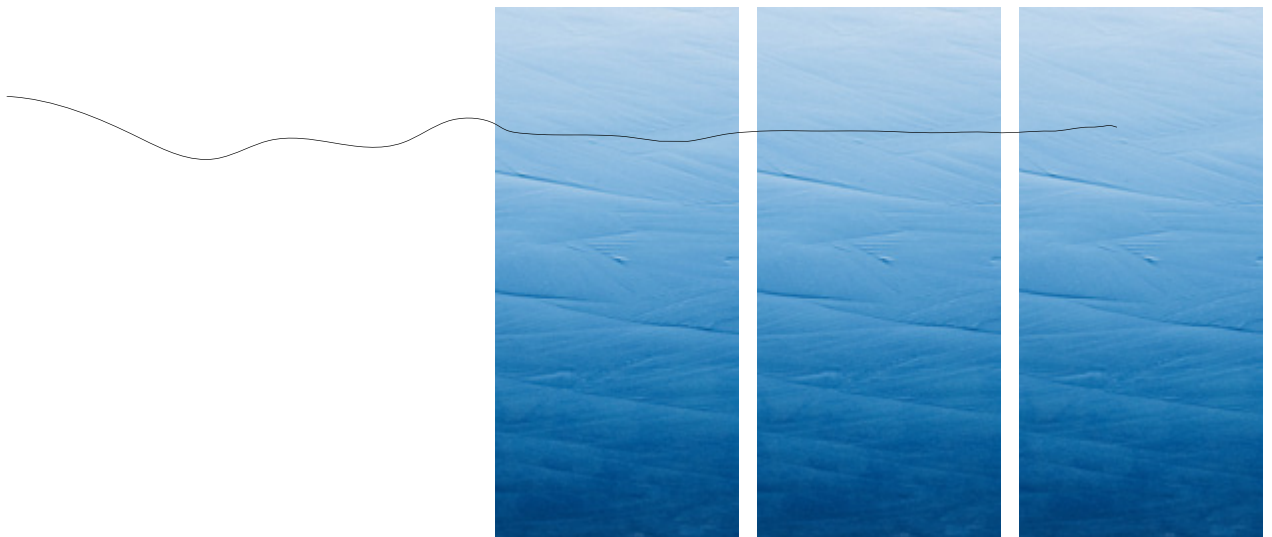
2. GENRES AND APPROACHES

While podcasting is still a young practice, certain stylistic trends have emerged since its inception, mainly in the last decade. However, it is still difficult to sketch an exhaustive portrait of the different genres and subgenres that make up this creative practice in full effervescence. The reading grid presented here provides useful guidelines for clarifying one's own approach and better situating its practice in the changing world of podcasting — while acknowledging the contribution of the radio tradition. To help us do this, we will use a classification divided into three broad categories, liberally inspired by the typology developed by Christophe Deleu in his book *Le documentaire radiophonique :* the information podcast, the observation podcast and the creation podcast.

2.1 THE INFORMATION PODCAST

This category undoubtedly accounts for the largest share of podcast production since the practice began. The primary purpose of the information podcast is, of course, to convey informative content, whatever the nature of it may be, to inform the audience on a given topic. This delivery of information can take many forms, such as discussion, interview, roundtable, a column, investigation, reporting and documentary. Through these different approaches, there is one constant which distinguishes the news podcast from the categories that will be explored later in this text : the presence of an often omniscient voice which accompanies and guides the listener through the listening experience. It may, at one time, be the voice of a journalist or investigator, a host or narrator, the author or director, etc.

The Discussion and the Round Table
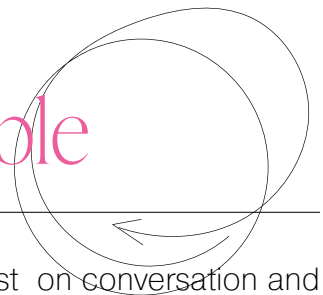
Numerous productions, both independent and professional, rely first and foremost on conversation and the discussion of topics : blog-like, they talk about personal interests or a variety of subjects (history, science, social issues : any topic is good), with different angles from one episode to the next, either solo or with different guests[3]. Very often, the editing is minimal and the discussion is simply framed by a quick introduction of the topic and the guests, accompanied by jingle-like music as an introduction and conclusion. Since this form is very widespread and requires relatively few technical and scripting resources, it will not be discussed further here, except to recommend listening to a few productions with careful and sustained content, such as *Un podcast à soi* (ARTE Radio), *Laissez-nous raconter : l'histoire crochie* (Terre innue/ Radio-Canada) or the now classic *This American Life* (WBEZ) on the English side. These examples show us that it is entirely possible to enrich a discussion podcast with careful editing, punctuated by pertinent reflections and appropriate music or sound effects.

The Investigation

In 2014, the first real popular and critical success of podcasting emerged in the United States, as the first season of the Serial podcast was downloaded nearly 70 million times in just a few months. Sarah Koenig's investigative series became the gateway to the podcast world for many who had not yet taken an interest in this practice. The catchy format, playing on the closeness of the characters and the sense of identification with the sympathetic reporter, is buoyed by a remarkable sound production, a far cry from many podcasts of the previous decade, which were often recorded and released with limited resources. Add to that a memorable theme song, and you have the perfect recipe for binge listening, reminiscent of the success of investigative series offered by video-on-demand services.

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[3] It's worth noting that some of the most popular podcasts in this category, at least in Quebec, also offer a filmed version of their content, most often on YouTube. That said, it is generally appropriate to speak of the podcast as a practice that is primarily audio, as is the case elsewhere in the world when we speak of podcasting.

Unlike the discussion podcast, which typically features voices recorded in a uniform way, in a single location, the investigation podcast involves different types of voices, each with its own tone and role. This is a typical strategy for the investigative subgenre, but also for many productions that take advantage of the constraint of having to record voices in varying locations and conditions :

It was also following the success of *Serial* that the major broadcasters began to take a more serious interest in podcasts. Given the undeniable popularity of the series, it didn't take long for a flood of emulators to follow suit, and advertising began to join in to make the broadcasting of original series on essentially free platforms profitable. In Quebec, it was in 2017 that the public broadcaster Radio-Canada offered its first investigative podcast, *L'ombre du doute*. Penned by directors Stéphane Berthomet and Cédric Chabuel, this enthralling investigative series essentially takes the American model instituted by *Serial*, while revisiting it in its own way. In fact, all the characteristic sonic ingredients of the investigative genre (and of many other podcasts that followed in *Serial*'s wake) are put to work within the first few minutes of the first season of *L'ombre du doute :* the presence of an omniscient narrator who leads the investigation, taking part in the action not only through his voice-over reflections, but also through his direct involvement in each stage of the investigation ; sound atmospheres illustrating the various places visited or evoked in the narrations ; music that is very present, providing a sort of emotional commentary at every moment of the narrative ; sound archives that support the ideas expressed ; excerpts from interviews recorded on the spot, while preserving the atmosphere of the places and some hesitations of the interlocutors, which adds to the realism of the work.

- Omniscient narration (voice-over) is usually very central, carefully recorded. It is perceptually located in an indeterminate space, above the action — like the "voice of God". The narration provides reflections that are assumed to be stated *a posteriori to the* action, and links the various sound elements that make up the narrative framework of the project (interviews, archives, soundscapes, etc.) ;

- The interviews are generally conducted in the field, which can be felt both in the sound recording and in the sound processing, which is rather raw, testifying to a desire to preserve the natural aspect ;

- Archival voices and telephone interviews provide a particular tone and effect, allowing for a variety of viewpoints, planes and sound times in the listener's perception.

The documentary chronicle

The Chronicle should be understood here not in the journalistic sense of a cultural, sports or scientific chronicle, but rather in the sense of a personal account, such as a set of events, thoughts or facts presented chronologically, from a documentary perspective. Think, for example, of Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin's film *Chronique d'un été* (1961), in which the filmmakers attempt to take the pulse of Parisians in relation to various existential issues during a summer of filming. In other words, the documentary chronicle is generally based on a personal quest for a given subject or story - echoing the idea of an investigation, but generally in a more intimate register.

In fact, documentary chronicles use certain codes of the investigative podcast, starting with the presence of an omniscient narrator, whose thoughts are followed throughout the story. Two good examples in Quebec are *T'es où, Youssef ? - Le journal du film* and *La bombe*, both by filmmaker Gabriel Allard-Gagnon. In these two podcasts, the director himself stars in personal quests and reflections that arise during the shooting of his own documentary films. Note that these are stand-alone propositions that can be listened to without having necessarily seen the films.

In a more artistic vein, another example produced in Quebec is the sound documentary *L'écorce et le noyau*, by Marie-Laurence Rancourt and Mehdi Cayenne (Magnéto). In a single episode lasting just under an hour, the author traces the quest of Mehdi Hamdad, a young Franco-Algerian man, who pursues a father who has been absent for a long time, seeking to understand his silence. The story of a family history marked by the memory of immigration and the search for a filiation gradually takes shape.

Across the Atlantic, in terms of a documentary chronicle, we can refer to the four-part series *Y'a deux écoles* by Delphine Saltel, produced by ARTE Radio. The young mother tries to make a choice that leads her to many encounters, reflections and questioning : should she send her children to the public school or to the private school in her neighbourhood ?

In contrast to many North American productions, which are often edited in a very vertical[4] fashion, the last two examples — *L'écorce et le noyau* and *Y'a deux écoles* - rely instead on long stereo recordings, captured as close as possible to the subject and making skilful use of space and sound planes, like a true cinema for the ears. The editing is very subtle, with the sound ambience supporting the narration and various discourse and also sometimes coming to the fore. This type of sound writing, which seeks to represent the world as faithfully as possible, leads us to the next category, the observation podcast.

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[4] "Vertical editing" refers to an editing process in which the sound elements follow one another in a marked and rhythmic way, as opposed to a more "horizontal" approach in which the sound layers are superimposed and intertwined over longer periods of time.

2.2 THE OBSERVATION PODCAST

This category continues to move closer to the realm of the intimate : in the manner of direct cinema documentary filmmakers, it attempts to capture reality at its source, as close as possible to the people, places or events being discussed. Unlike the previous category, the observation podcast generally does not include a *voice-over* commentary : all the space is left to the words of the people we meet, to the soundscapes depicted and to the subjective interpretation of each listener. If the objective remains to inform the public about different realities, here, the involvement of the production team is not apparent, and the product may therefore seem less directed.

The testimony

While the interview and discussion imply an interaction between at least two people — the person conducting the interview and whomever is participating in it — the testimonial presents an autonomous speech, meaning that the voice of the person collecting the statements is not audible in the project (it is cut out in editing). This approach is used in particular to report a life story, an experience or a true story, leaving all the space to the person in question.

This type of speech is generally obtained by setting up a mechanism that encourages free expression. More than a simple interview, it is a matter of placing the person providing the testimony at ease, so that he or she feels comfortable confiding in them. This implies a fairly discreet involvement on the part of the interviewer throughout the interview process. Since testifying requires that the questions not be edited, they must be asked in such a way that the answers obtained are self-sufficient. It is not uncommon for this type of exercise to be conducted over several hours, and sometimes even in several different sessions, with the same person. Generally, the effect obtained is that one feels very close to the reported word, but without having the impression that it is directly addressed to us ; one finds oneself rather in a position of observation of a word captured as close as possible to its source.

Of course, testimonial speech can be used in any podcast genre, in addition to other narrative devices. What makes testimonial a genre in its own right is the sheer number of productions that use this form exclusively. Here are two examples :

Un faux prophète (ARTE Radio) : this 30-minute production is based on the words of a former jihadist who recounts his journey. The voice is frontal, without any context. Only a few sound effects and discreet music accompany the discourse. Also note the large place given to silence throughout the editing, the recordings having notably been segmented and distanced at times to impose a slow rhythm conducive to the audience's reflection.

La punition (Magnéto) : here, there are no sound devices to accompany the testimony. The listener hears the bare speech of two ex-prisoners as they talk about their experiences in prison. The device used to free up their speech is obvious : the two men discuss while sharing a meal, and we don't hesitate to let their chewing noises, their breaths, their laughter and their silences come to the fore, which adds to the realism of this seemingly uninterrupted conversation, which was nevertheless recorded in several sessions.

The documentary portrait

There are many forms and definitions of documentary : there are countless ways of naming, classifying, analyzing or designating works called "documentary" as opposed to those called «fiction. Initially present in cinema, the documentary then spread to radio and more recently to an ever-increasing number of encounters between art and reality : documentary theatre, documentary comic books, documentary video games and documentary performance, to name but a few.

In the world of podcasting, as elsewhere, the terrain of the documentary seems to begin where the representation of reality takes up enough space to distinguish the work from fiction, while moving far enough away from reporting or journalism to come closer to an artistic creation. This leaves us with a very generic definition, which is insufficient on its own to qualify a myriad of works, each as diverse as the next. It would therefore be hazardous to attempt to summarize here the various approaches encompassed by this broad term[5]. Among the documentary modes specific to the observational podcast, one predominant trend stands out : the documentary portrait.

Compared to the documentary chronicle, which is discussed in the category of the news podcast, the documentary portrait differs in that it is not supported by the presence or words of the director, but rather by fragments drawn from the world of sound (conversations, voices, landscapes, various environments) that are assembled to sketch a portrait of a given reality (places, characters, situations, stories of all kinds). In the world of radio, the master of this approach is undoubtedly the Frenchman Yann Paranthoën, the famous "sound cutter" who worked at Radio France long before the advent of the podcast.

Today, his influence is still felt, particularly in series such as *Par Ouï-dire* (RTBF), *Le labo* (RTS) and *Création On Air* (France Culture), all of which offer a variety of sound documentaries that leave room for creativity and attention to reality that go beyond a strictly informative or journalistic posture.

In Quebec, we think of the very beautiful podcast *Aalaapi* by Marie-Laurence Rancourt and Daniel Capeille (Magnéto), which paints a portrait of five young women from Nunavik. We hear a succession of voices captured in the course of daily life, beautiful soundscapes that unfold over long minutes, as well as life stories and testimonies that we feel are delivered in a certain intimacy thanks to the closeness acquired during recording between the interlocutors and the director. All these elements are not accompanied by any commentary or reflection - except in the background, through the choices made during their assembly.
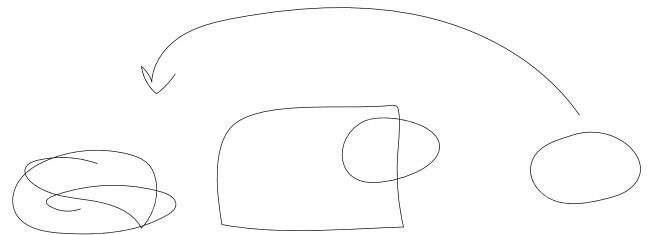

Editing remains an unavoidably subjective act which, when finely handled, can provoke resonances as revealing and rich in meaning as the word itself.

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[5] For more details on this subject, one can consult the excellent works of film critics such as Bill Nichols, François Niney or Guy Gauthier, or that of the aforementioned teacher and creator Christophe Deleu, who is himself largely inspired by these film theorists for his analysis of the radio documentary.

2.3 THE CREATION PODCAST

The two previous categories (the information podcast and the observation podcast) obviously contain a great deal of creativity and artistic research in their intention to inform or document reality. However, the creative podcast differs in that the creative or artistic intent is the primary basis of the projects that fall into this third and final category. Although this category is more marginal, it does have its share of successful productions, many of which fall within the sub-genre of the fictional podcast.

Sound experimentation
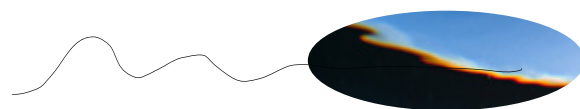
Radio studios were the first places for experimentation and sound research, before music recording studios, university research centres and, more recently, sound art and digital music practitioners took over. In the RTF studios, Frenchman Pierre Schaeffer began to pursue what would become "*musique concrète*" in the 1940s, fascinated by an earlier, studio accident (a scratched record causing a vocal segment to loop). Around the same time, German studios were giving birth to the beginnings of sound synthesis. From these early radio experiments, a variety of practices emerged over the years that explored the plasticity of sound phenomena and audio technologies : electroacoustic music, soundscapes, sound art, acousmatic music, radio art, etc.

The arrival of the podcast is an interesting playing field for creators engaged in this type of practice. Indeed, the podcast offers a new channel for broadcasting their creations, which have long been neglected by the majority of traditional radio broadcasters. In France, since 2002, the producer ARTE Radio has been broadcasting original sound creations in the form of podcasts of a wide variety of genres. These include experimental creations ranging from soundscapes to radio drama and fiction. The soundscapes of sound recordist Félix Blume are notably among the most listened to creations. His piece *Los gritos de Mexico* is a fine example of sound experimentation, reminiscent of the explorations of a composer such as Luc Ferrari 50 years earlier, in the studios of Pierre Schaeffer's *Groupe de recherches musicales*. We can see, through this performance by a broadcaster like ARTE Radio, that the soundscape, a practice relatively unknown to the general public until now, lends itself very well to the podcast format, with just a few adjustments sometimes — the piece *Amazônia*, also by Félix Blume, is for example cut into a podcast of ten short episodes[6].

The voice, the primary material of the podcast, has not escaped experimental treatments. In the 1960s, Canadian pianist Glenn Gould proposed a three-part documentary series, *Solitude Trilogy*, to the CBC, in which we can hear a surprising montage of voices in counterpoint, all evolving simultaneously like the musical parts of a baroque score. If the calls of complaint were flying when this series was first broadcast on the national radio, several listeners believing they were hearing different programmes simultaneously, one can imagine a proposal of this kind being included, these days, in the programming of ARTE Radio, for example. Among the more recent productions, one thinks of Louis-Olivier Desmarais' very beautiful *Abbaye*, broadcast by Magnéto, a skilful and sensitive blend of electroacoustic music and sound documentary, where the voices of the monks and the sounds of their environment are mixed with the musical framework by means of various digital treatments.

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[6] Note that the complete 34-minute work is also offered.

Fiction and docu-fiction

Here again, the concept of sound fiction is nothing new : a brief leap into the past informs us of the almost hundred-year-old existence of the radio-novel, the radio-theatre or the *hörspiel*[7]. The advent of the podcast increasingly allows the rehabilitation of these almost century-old practices, infusing them with a certain rejuvenation.

On the English side - especially in the United States - the ball has been rolling for some time with, among others, the very popular *Welcome to Night Vale* (Night Vale Presents). On the French side, ARTE Radio has been publishing fiction since its start almost 20 years ago, with the release of the *Hölderlin* series in 2004. The author, creator and teacher Christophe Deleu has been walking the fine line between reality and imagination for just as long, proposing docu-dramas broadcasted by *France Culture*. In Belgium, special mention should be made of the productions of the *Atelier de création sonore radiophonique* (ACSR), whose project *Beaux jeunes monstres (Beautiful young monsters)* is a kind of tragi-comic sound theatre that is at once profound, musical and colourful, based on the testimonies of children with disabilities and their families.

In Quebec, the first fiction podcast presented by Radio-Canada dates back only to 2018, with the *Cavale* series.

Featuring actors well known for their work on stage and screen, the series employs a device billed as innovative : 3D audio technology. The numerous *making-of* available teach us that it is in fact essentially binaural recording, a technology developed well before 2018[8]. Nevertheless, let's highlight the integration of such creative sound recording in a work of audio fiction, a process that public radio continues to explore through various productions on its OHdio platform.

In closing, we note the growing number of podcasts aimed at young audiences, which have resulted in a number of well-crafted audio dramas. One example is the work of *La puce à l'oreille*, a Montreal-based production company dedicated to audio content for young children, which produces, in addition to its playful dramas, audio vignettes of an informative or educational nature.

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[7] Literally "play for the ear" in Goethe's language, the hörspiel is the German counterpart to radio theater, from which it differs by proposing sound creations entirely conceived for radio rather than adaptations of already existing plays.

[8] See this article for more details : www.researchgate.net/publication/233582452_Binaural_Recording_Technology_A_Historical_Review_and_Possible_Future_Developments. It should be noted, however, that the CBC is not alone in using this type of term for binaural recording or similar technologies (such as ambisonics, which also dates back several decades) ; Sony's PS5 console, for example, incorporates a technology also called "3D Audio", which the company claims is a proprietary format developed specifically for its console.

2.4 A WORD ABOUT THE "BRANDED" PODCAST

With the exponential popularity of the podcast, the corporate world was quick to follow suit with independent productions and those of radio studios and institutions. Companies of all kinds now offer their own podcast series, including McDonald's, General Electric and, closer to home, the Exceldor brand. In the cultural sector, we are seeing the emergence of original podcasts produced by museums, theatre companies, publishing houses, etc. There is a real craze for "branded" podcasts at the moment, although they are not a category in their own right. These productions exploit the codes of the different types of existing podcasts to offer content related to their activities and their communication or commercial objectives. The result is sometimes surprisingly interesting artistically or narratively, notwithstanding the underlying aims. Here are a few examples in the different genres :

Fiction

- *Science of Survival*, episode 1 (Outside Magazine / PRX, USA)

- *The Secret Life of Art*, (Montreal Museum of Fine Arts / Magnéto and La puce à l'oreille, Quebec)

Investigative

- *Why We Eat What We Eat*, (Blue Apron / Gimlet Media, USA)

- *The Veuve Clicquot Tales*, (Maison Veuve Clicquot / Adorable Studio, France)

Docu-drama

- *The Message*, (General Electric / Panoply, USA)

Round table / topic discussion

- *Poc–poc cast*, (Exceldor / Magnéto, Québec)

- *(aparté)*, (Éditions Alto / Grand public, Québec)

3. DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

With this overview completed, it's time to look at some of the key points in thinking about and planning for the various issues involved in creating a podcast.

3.1 THE NOTE OF INTENT

The making of a podcast usually originates from the desire to get an idea, a story or a certain word heard. It is therefore usually the narrative intention that precedes the form. Then, the sound production must be thought out : the way to put the subject or the story into sound is sometimes self-evident, but it may also require additional thought. To this end, the note of intent is an essential tool.

The first step in writing a sound project, the note of intent allows you to think upstream about the originality of your project; on the type of sound writing envisaged, the place of the different sound materials, the rhythm, the ways of conducting interviews, etc. It implies closing one's eyes and starting, well before having recorded anything, to "hear" your project. When conscientiously written, the note of intent acts as a reference point throughout the process of creating the podcast.

The writing of a sound creation project therefore generally begins with this decisive step of ideation, which can borrow as much from the posture of the author as from that of a painter or composer who chooses to go out to meet the world through his or her art, with all the words, colours and sounds at his or her disposal. In an open format, depending on the nature of the project, we will put down in writing the description of the subject or issues addressed (or synopsis, if applicable), the format, genre and aesthetic envisaged, the audience or target public we are trying to reach with this project, one's motivations and one's particular vision as an author, as well as what makes the project original and stand out from the crowd.

Even in the case of a discussion podcast, for example, it's important to be clear about one's intentions, to think about the sound itself as information, and to think about the different ways in which meaning can emerge through the juxtaposition of speech and other sound materials.

It is necessary to have a vision, to try to identify from the start what will make the proposal original and relevant : all stories are good to tell, but one must find a way to tell theirs which will reflect their own signature and sensitivity to the world.

Consideration should also be given to the audience for whom the project is destined.

It goes without saying that one can talk about just about any subject to anyone, but that they will not necessarily do so in the same way depending on the audience they wish to address primarily : for example, will the best way to present the Canadian electoral system to an audience of young professionals aged 18 to 35 be the same as to an audience of 8 to 12 year olds ? Let's bet it won't, and not just in terms of the tone and level of language adopted, but also in terms of the form and type of production that will be favoured.

In addition to the target audience, one needs to ask early on what kind of experience they want to give the audience, what kind of story to tell them or what kind of information to convey. Is it to provide strictly factual information, to tell a moving story or to offer an immersive sound experience ? Information, emotion and experience : in short, the choice of form adopted will depend largely on the tension between these three intentions, which are generally found in varying proportions in all podcast projects. For example, if one wants to approach a topic from a primarily informational perspective, they may choose to use a discussion or roundtable format. If they want to reach out to people's sensibilities, they might choose an investigative piece, a column, or an observational podcast, for example. If the primary goal is to suggest an artistic, narrative or aesthetic experience, then the creative podcast is more likely to be chosen. However, these three intentions (information, emotion and experience) are not mutually exclusive, and they are likely to be involved to varying degrees in the same production.

Let us remember that it is not a question of confining oneself in a posture and not allowing oneself to deviate from it. The objective of this reflection is above all to specify the premises of one's intentions and the key elements of one's sound writing, in order to eventually identify the particular approaches that inspire us and to give ourselves the means to achieve our own creative ambitions.

This is a sort of "first writing" of a project, which will be called upon to move and become even more precise throughout the production of the podcast, until the very end of the project. This process can be thought of as a series of writing stages, since the sound recording, editing and post-production are also part of it.

## 3.2 THINKING ABOUT THE SOUND UNIVERSE

A podcast is essentially composed of four main families of sound materials :

Voice

This is the central element of almost all podcasts. As we've seen, voices in a podcast can be presented in different ways from one series to the next or even within the same work : narration, interviews, archives, testimonials, vox pop, etc. Don't be afraid to vary angles, textures and approaches, for example, by recording a voice whispering, reading or shouting, or a voice in the morning and a voice in the middle of the night. Recording a person's voice is a bit like taking a photograph of them. Pay attention to everything that goes into it and reveals itself - both in its tone, projection and pitch, but also in the way the voice stages language and speech, makes it live and resonate. Be sensitive to the voices you record and to what they say about themselves.

Sound effects

Sound effects are all sounds that are emphasized, often in the foreground or background, to punctuate, comment on, illustrate or even contradict the subject or action. By analogy to the concepts of figure and background on the visual plane, sound effects are sound elements that are perceptually as a figure on the auditory scene, as opposed to ambiences, which occupy the background.
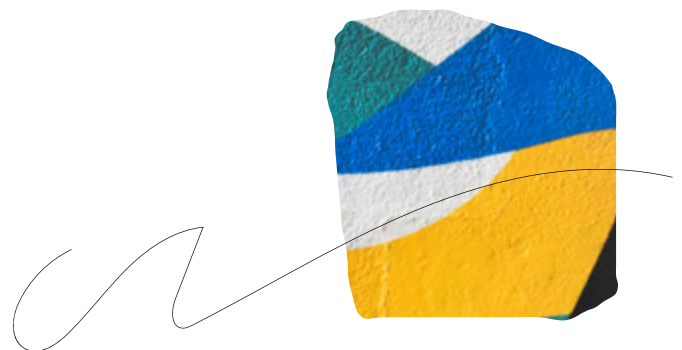
Music

Very often used at the opening and closing of an episode, music plays a big part in the sound identity of a production. A word of advice, however : avoid using it automatically to ensure your transitions. Similarly, avoid using a generic *jingle* just because it's the "usual way" to do it. Be creative, use different sound sources in addition to music and, if you can, work with a composer to bring a truly original touch to your project.

Ambiences

These are the "scenery" of sorts, the sound equivalent of a landscape photo. Let's take a simple example to distinguish ambience from sound effects : a summer scene in an urban park. We hear laughter, voices, bicycles, birds, fountains, and traffic in the distance, with none of these sounds placed more prominently than any other. This is what forms the atmosphere, which we perceive as a whole, a general setting. Suddenly, footsteps approach distinctly and a dog barks in the direction of the microphone : these are sounds that clearly stand out from the background atmosphere, setting the scene for an action and no longer for a general place or space[9].

From all the sound materials available to the director or author of a podcast, it is then a matter of thinking about their juxtaposition, the transition from one to another, their alliances and their assemblies. Just as a painter will bring one colour closer to another to create a certain effect, or a composer will harmonize his or her chords differently to evoke particular tensions or emotions, bringing a voice closer to a certain soundscape or sound effects will provoke differences in meaning when listened to - and possibly different emotions on the part of the audience.

From the author's point of view, each of the sounds collected is like a word. And with all these words, it will be a matter of composing sentences later on when editing.

[9] In this particular example, we can suppose that the sound effects are part of the same recording as the atmosphere, as a single sequence shot, but they could also have been added afterwards in the studio. This is very often the case.

3.3 SOUND PLANE NOTIONS AND LISTENER'S POSITION

In the respect as the camera in the visual domain, the position of the microphones at the time of recording makes it possible to create different shot effects that provide important acoustic clues for understanding the place, action or situation that is being heard. In a similar way to the image, we can speak, for example, of a still, moving, close-up, medium or overall sound shot. The stereo image also plays an important role in the representation of reality and in the feeling of the created space. The next chapter, devoted to sound recording, will go into more detail about these possibilities.

That being said, as soon as the project is conceived, it is advisable to think about the use of the microphone : this has an impact on the way in which the audience may feel compelled when listening to the production. There are, in fact, different ways of using the microphone depending on the "listener's position", i.e. the way in which he or she perceives what is being presented to them :

- "Confidant" position : we have the impression that the speech is addressed to us directly, like a TV host addressing the camera. This is often the position conveyed by the narration, which is obtained by a very close mono voice recording ;

- The "observer" position : this is the principle of the "fly on the wall", if we translate the traditional English expression. One observes the action or speech from a distance, without having the impression of taking part in it or being immersed in it. This position is often achieved by a distant, rather fixed stereo sound recording ;

- The "participant" position : we sense that the director wants to plunge us directly into the heart of the action, as if we were there ourselves. This position is characterized by an often up-close stereo shot, in motion.

Since these different ways of orienting the audience's attention and feelings are often key to the sound recording employed, it is worth thinking about them early on in the process to target the equipment and conditions that will be needed to achieve the desired result.

Some things can be simulated in the studio once in post-production, but nothing beats an adequately prepared recording.

3.4 TONE AND *CASTING*

The notion of *casting* is not exclusive to fiction films or theatre : in podcasting also, you have to select your "characters" carefully, so as to create a coherent sound proposal and universe, in step with the intentions of the project you are about to carry out. A *casting* may require taking into account the type of voice of the person, his or her level of language, the desired effect when speaking (touching or informing), the type of experience reported, etc.

For example, someone who is good on camera may be less convincing in front of the microphone when deprived of their non-verbal voice.

Moreover, while it may sometimes be tempting to find the "best qualified" people to speak on a subject, the sole criteria of ease of speech or expertise in a field should not suffice : other forms of discourse open up different experiences and relationships to the world.

Beware, however, that certain combinations of "expert" and "natural" speech can sometimes have unfortunate effects, as a simple shift in tone can give the impression that one form of speech is emphasized at the expense of another.

The tone of the narration is also crucial : how many productions unfortunately lose credibility because the narration is too declamatory, falsely familiar or at odds with the way the interviewees express themselves ? For example, if you choose a familiar, intimate or confidential tone of voice, make sure that no one can tell that you are reading from a lectern behind the microphone.
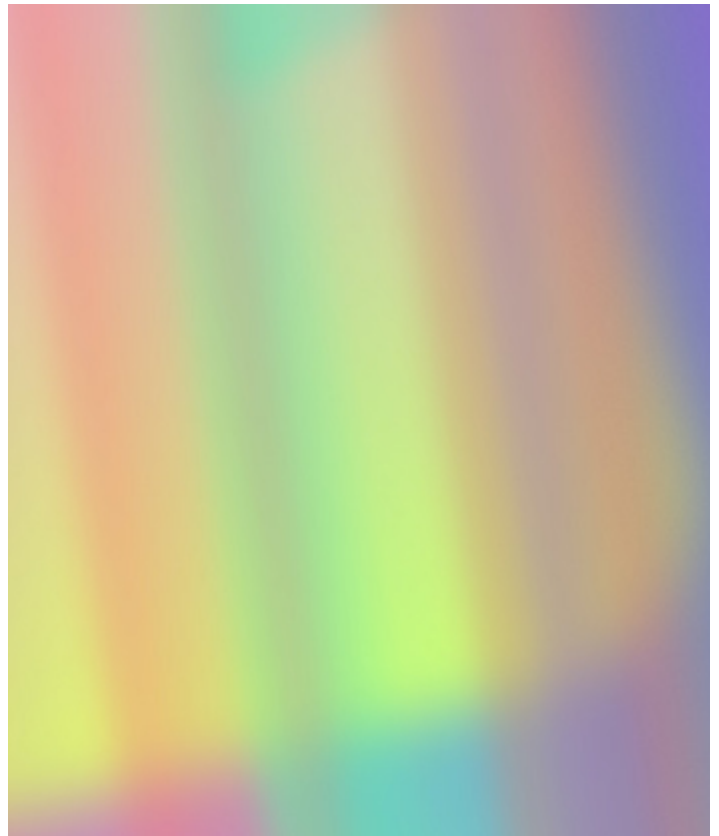
3.5 PREPARING AND CONDUCTING AN INTERVIEW

Anyone who has ever conducted interviews can certainly attest to some unfortunate anecdotes, often simply due to a lack of experience or preparation. Here are a few tips to help you prepare before and during your interviews.
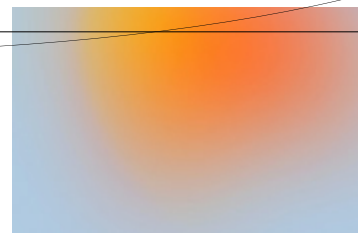
Before the interview :

- Find a suitable, quiet place where you will not be disturbed. If you have to go to a workplace or other noisy location, find out if you can get access to a quiet room. If your intention is to have a good feel for the place behind the interview, you can always take ambience recordings after or before the interview and add them in while editing ;

- Prepare an interview plan so that you are comfortable in the exchange and, above all, so that you are able to focus on listening during the discussion. Don't be rigid about this plan : your preparation must allow you to deviate from it so that it is listening to the interlocutor that guides your interview ;

- Use the inverted pyramid method : go from general to specific in the flow of questions, if applicable. The key is to find a way to properly engage the conversation to build confidence in the interviewee ;

- If appropriate, think about how to create scenarios, set up contexts or devices conducive to the release of speech. Consider, for example, the shared meal in *La punition*, mentioned in section 2.2, or the experiments proposed by producer Aurélie Charon in her series *L'Atelier intérieur* (France Culture), as she records her guests on the skating rink, in the forest, in their apartment, at a ball, etc. These situations put people in the action and allow her to collect different chatter.

During the interview :

- Arrive at the location early. If possible, have your recording equipment ready before the interviewee arrives to avoid waiting times;

- Try to work in pairs : this way, one person can record, and the other will conduct the interview. This way, your attention will not be diverted from the interview by technical issues, and vice versa;

- Take the time to put the interviewee at ease and to explain your plan, if you have not already done so. Unless there is an exceptional case, it is important to be clear about your intentions and what you intend to do with their testimony;

- In some cases, it may be advisable to begin with a pre-interview, for example, to probe the interviewee's knowledge, pace, or tone of voice. A word of caution, however : make sure that the person does not give too much away during the pre-interview. There is a good chance that they will be less talkative during the recording, or that they will constantly refer to your pre-interview, which will be difficult to foil in the editing process (e.g., "As I was telling you the other day...");

- Develop eye contact and non-verbal communication. With a little practice, one can communicate very well with their eyes and face only, without interrupting the exchange or spoiling the recording with unwanted interventions ("Hmm hmm", "Ahan", etc.). Always wait until the person has finished speaking before moving on;

- Don't be afraid of silences : during these brief moments of respite from speech, thought continues to work, and unsuspected words may be born. Silence is a precious resource one should avoid trying to fill at all costs.

During the interview (continued) :

- Don't be afraid to ask to rephrase — or make a mental note to subtly come back to the question later — if a sentence is incomplete or there is too much hesitation. This will save you a lot of work in editing, and the result will be more natural.

- Keep questions concise : leave room for the other person, and do not try to conclude in the formulation of your questions or to induce the desired answer by the way you ask them ;

- Stay tuned, present to the other person and to what he or she is delivering : this is key. This will have an influence on what you will reap in words : a person who feels listened to does not deliver in the same way at all.

3.6 THINKING AND WRITING THE NARRATION

As mentioned earlier, the key to successful podcast narration is to find the right tone. Be sure to keep in mind your target audience and stay consistent with the intent and message of the podcast, as well as the other voices and sound elements used in the production.

It's also a good idea to question the purpose of the narration at the outset : do you really need it, or could the interviews and sound bites stand on their own ? Make sure that your narration is clearly involved in telling the story being told, presenting information, relevant thoughts or specific facts, or providing background and context to your interview clips. Sometimes, if you ask yourself these questions, you'll conclude that interviews and audio materials are best left alone and don't need a narrated voice to frame them (think of the various examples in the observation podcast category).

If you choose to move forward with narratives, here are some tips :

- For a colloquial or conversational tone, write short, believable sentences in a spoken context. If you are recording your own narration, you can even try using key words for each idea rather than constructed sentences ;

- For a more formal tone, make sure that the pronunciation and diction reflect the spirit of the text. In some cases, it may be beneficial to hire a professional and even know who will be doing the narration, so you have their voice in mind ;

- For narration that contextualizes interview excerpts, make sure the tone and information help to highlight the interviewee, not the other way around ;

- For a narrative that is used to provide specialized information, keep your wording clear and concise. In general, you don't want to sound like you're listening to the audio version of a scientific dissertation ;

- Be careful not to unnecessarily repeat information already stated elsewhere, such as in interviews. It can be beneficial to hit the nail on the head in some contexts, but you want to avoid redundancy ;

- Maintain a balance in the pace and duration between narrations, interviews and different sound elements. You want to keep the audience's attention by offering a variety of viewpoints, voices, and sound materials throughout the listening experience.

3.7 DOCUMENTATION AND VISUAL IDENTITY

A podcast is a sound object available on the Web, one must keep in mind the first contact a listener will have with your production will be, first and foremost visual. It's therefore a good idea to start thinking about the visual identity of your project early on, i.e. the graphic content that will, amongst other things, support its publication.

Anticipate taking photos during your shoots and interviews and to archive your research documents, readings or any other contextual element related to your project. Consider working with a graphic designer or artist to help you develop this aspect.

In addition to the image, the title and the textual presentation are of course other elements to keep in mind in order to catch the eye and the curiosity of your future listeners, before their interest is piqued...

3.8 THE PRODUCTION SCHEDULE

Creating a podcast can take a lot of time. Plan to create a rough timeline for the major stages of production : this tool will help guide you. For a medium-sized project, for example, a complete series of ten 20- to 30-minute episodes, you can plan a schedule similar to the following :

Week 1	Ideation, note of intent and production plan
Week 2	Research and script
Week 3	Interviews
Week 4	*Unwrapping* and editing of interviews
Week 5	Sound recording and additional interviews
Weeks 6-7	Editing and mixing
Week 8	Finalization and die-cutting
Week 9 or later	Visual identity and distribution

Of course, the time required for each of these tasks will vary from one production to another, depending on the nature of the project or the production budget you have available. Nevertheless, keep in mind that each of these steps will come up at some point or another in the process and that you will need to allot time to complete them. Prepare well, but also be prepared to adapt along the way and deal with the unexpected : rescheduled interviews, a broken hard drive (make copies !), sudden unavailability of a team member, etc.

3.9 THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Just like the note of intent, the production plan is a valuable tool for clarifying intentions and communicating ideas to a production team, if applicable. It is a document that can take many forms, depending on one's work habits and the specific needs of each project. The objective is to make the connection between the message you want to convey and the means you will have to use to get there. It is therefore essential to have an overall vision of who, what, when, where and how to record. The production plan should therefore contain the following basic elements (ideally for the project as a whole, but also for each of the episodes, if necessary) :

• The title, even if it is a working title ;

• The synopsis : subject, angle, story or theme addressed ;

• The approximate duration ;

• The list of characters or speakers ;

• The list of locations ;

• The list of sound materials (sound effects, ambiences, voices, music) ;

• The approximate scenario and breakdown (to be modified and refined along the way) ;

• Various inspirations ;

• The prospective production team and the roles of each person ;

• The work schedule and important dates.

As mentioned earlier, there are several steps to writing a podcast. Keep in mind that writing a note of intent or a production plan is the first step, which will be refined during recording. This will often lead you down unexpected paths, and it is important to remain open to them. As the project progresses, you can come back to your initial plan and make adjustments to it. Then comes the final stage of writing, the editing stage, which may once again change the project - sometimes subtly, sometimes more radically.

It is not uncommon for the pieces of the puzzle to fall into place and a completely different silhouette to the one originally conceived emerges. This is quite normal and is part of the sound writing process.

Conclusion

In closing, an important element to keep in mind is to "listen to your ears", to trust them above all and not to hesitate to go beyond the usual models. Seek out daring proposals in the various productions available and try new experiences.

It is important to be able to situate yourself through the different aesthetics and approaches that exist in order to inspire oneself through them, but above all, to formulate a more personal vision and approach.

While the process presented here may seem dense, keep in mind that making a bold and creative podcast should be a way to go out into the world and explore its meanings, to critique it, to suggest other possibilities, just as any work of art would. This will, of course, require several comings and goings and stages of writing, but the experience will be all the more stimulating.

It is through experience, attempts and risk-taking that you will gradually find your own colour and develop a sound writing that distinguishes you, and that you will thus contribute to shedding other light on the world, in your own way.

PODCASTS LISTED, IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER :

60-Second Science (Scientific American)

Aalaapi (Magnéto)

Abbaye (Magnéto)

Amazônia (ARTE Radio)

(aparté) (Éditions Alto / Grand public)

Beaux jeunes monstres (Collectif Wow ! / ACSR)

Cavale (OHdio)

Création On Air (France Culture)

Laissez-nous raconter : l'histoire crochie (Terre innue)

L'atelier intérieur (France Culture)

L'écorce et le noyau (Magnéto)

La bombe (Blimp / Télé-Québec)

La punition (Magnéto)

La vie secrète de l'art (La puce à l'oreille / Magnéto)

Le labo (RTS)

L'ombre du doute (OHdio)

Los gritos de México (ARTE Radio)

Par Ouï-dire (RTBF)

Poc-poc cast (Exceldor / Cossette)

Science of Survival (Outside / PRX)

Serial (WBEZ / PRX)

T'es où, Youssef ? - Le journal du film (Blimp / Télé-Québec)

The Message (General Electric / Panoply)

The Veuve Clicquot Tales (Maison Veuve Clicquot)

This American Life (WBEZ / PRX)

Un faux prophète (ARTE Radio)

Un podcast à soi (ARTE Radio)

Welcome to Night Vale (Night Vale Presents)

Why We Eat What We Eat (Gimlet Media / Blue Apron)

Y'a deux écoles (ARTE Radio)

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The sound recording
By Daniel Capeille

The sound recording

By Daniel Capeille
sound recordist and sound designer for film and radio

Sound recording is an essential step in the creation of a podcast project. Although we can guess, we sometimes forget how many resources sound recording has to offer. And while we often think that everything "can be fixed in post-production", this is rarely the case — a bad recording is usually unrecoverable. And so, there is no substitute for good sound recording. Designing a podcast project involves focusing on this crucial step. This chapter will familiarize you with a certain approach to recording, with various concepts and techniques, as well as the recording equipment that is useful to anyone who wants to try recording.

1. APPROACH

Recording is like stretching a net between the sky and the earth to capture sound waves.

Sound waves are alternating molecular compressions and expansions that propagate through air or any other compressible medium, such as water, iron and wood. They are also called acoustic waves. Sound travels through air at about 340 m/s , but the denser the medium (for example, water is denser than air and iron is denser than wood), the faster the acoustic wave radiates.

Recording sound is not an easy task, in fact, it is an exercise fraught with pitfalls. Sound is a soft and vulnerable wave : not only does it not move fast — compared to light — but it also disintegrates quickly.

Moreover, it is somewhat nonchalant, difficult to define and circumscribe. And the sound image ? It is a muscular and swift wave, similar to modelling clay : it is easily moulded within a carefully designed frame, hermetically sealed from the rest of the world.

While image is a "concrete" and intuitive matter, sound is elusive and invisible. We become attached to it, however, and its mystery fascinates us.

Nevertheless, it remains an abstract matter for most people : it is difficult to talk about it, as if the vocabulary were sometimes lacking. In short, visually, we can think of sound as ripples similar to those we see on the surface of a body of water when pressure is applied.

However, sound can be approached. Once you have done so, you have access to an extremely creative medium of unequalled depth. It is the mark of the intimate : the intimate of voices and faces, the intimate of landscapes. Precisely because it does not show a figure as such, because it always gives itself up as an orphan, it collaborates very well with the imagination, giving it precious information that the latter transforms.

And because of this, sound is particularly good at exciting and igniting the imagination.
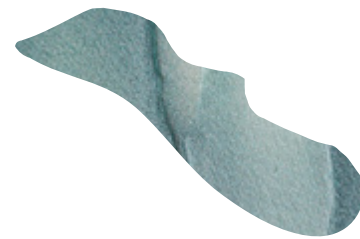
Sound must be handled with great gentleness, tact and, above all, patience. One must avoid trying to seize it with all the confidence in the world and then leaving immediately. On the contrary, we must remain a little timid and probe the mystery that it embodies. Behind our headphones, a landscape or a word gradually reveals itself to us, just as the mushrooms in the undergrowth appear when we let go of our excitement and can finally concentrate our gaze.

Time appears to be a fundamental notion when it comes to "capturing sound". It is noticeable that, when recording a speech or an exterior/interior atmosphere, the expected elements do not appear immediately. As a result, we tend to turn off the recorder too quickly, and only then does the desired element resonate in our ears.

On the other hand, the unpredictable matter that is sound can be provoked and directed in advance. If we make the right choices, both acoustically and dramaturgically, it will result in a superior outcome. Acoustics is the choice of a space in which our sound source can flow — resonate — with ease, while acquiring its clarity. As for dramaturgy, it is an extremely tenuous parameter, but no less effective and essential, that Daniel Deshays, a French sound engineer, teacher and author who has greatly contributed to theorizing and thinking about sound and its practices, does us the honour of evoking in the following chapter.

2. ACOUSTICS AND SPACE

Acoustics are one "half" of sound. A musical instrument cannot be satisfied with just the right tension of the strings or with ample and generous breath. It also needs a sounding board in which the note can develop. The same is true of any other sound. A sound is therefore made up of two parts : the attack (the body) and its resonance (the dress).

Acoustics — or resonance — provides an essential texture to sound : it is partly at the origin of its timbre. The timbre is the sound signature of a source. Note that the same source can sound different depending on the acoustics, and therefore on the location chosen for the recording.

Therefore, a voice, however relevant and touching, will be improperly rendered by an inappropriate sound box, and the clarity of the speech may even be blurred. Therefore, it is essential to think carefully about the sound box before the recording, i.e. to plan where the recording will take place. That being said, there are no acoustics to be absolutely banned : each acoustic can be effective and significant depending on the meaning and aesthetics that one is pursuing with their project.
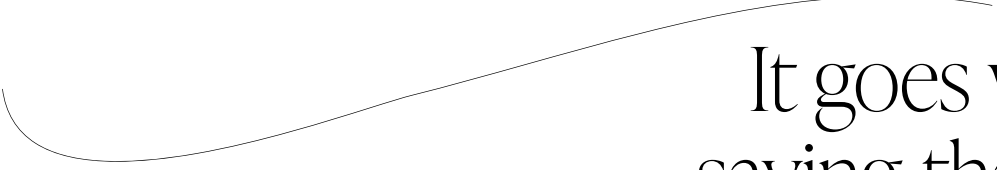
The recording studio offers a terrain without acoustics. It is a very hushed, neutral, analytical space in which a sound unfolds in complete transparency and objectivity. In such a space, sound is naked, without resonance, as if suspended in eternity. The recording of an omniscient voice (or *voice-over*) for a narration, for example, or that of isolated sound effects, is generally done in a studio. Once recorded, these sounds can easily be associated with other sounds, or integrate sound ambiences, because they do not convey any particular context, having been recorded in a neutral acoustic space, i.e. in a studio.

In contrast, the cathedral is a very reverberant space. Its singular acoustics are immediately recognizable by anyone who has ever set foot in it. A sound projected in this space will therefore have its own colour. In some cases, this echoing acoustic will be very appropriate, as it will bring an incredibly sensitive meaning to the story being told, which an infinite number of words cannot match ; in other cases, it can cause great confusion for the listener. This is why the choice of acoustics cannot be left entirely to chance, although wonders can also arise from chance.
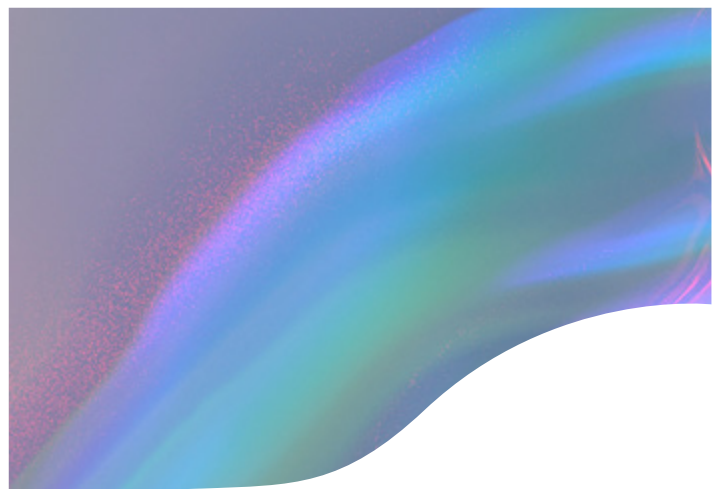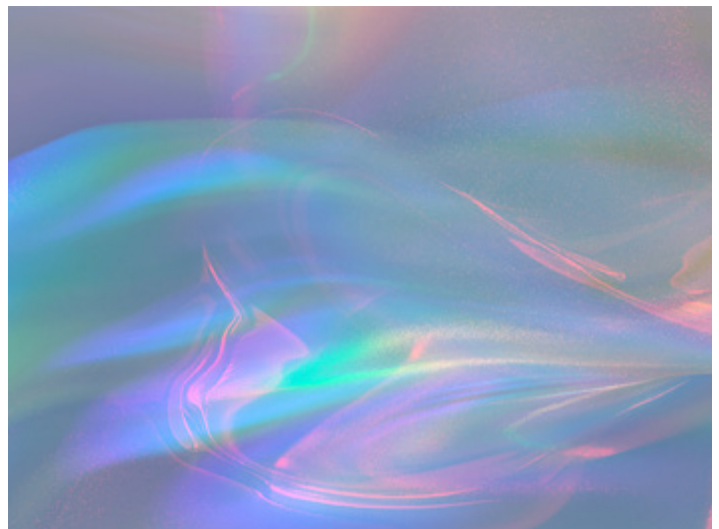
With these two examples, the studio and the cathedral, it is easier to understand why acoustics are a technical choice, but also a determining scenographic and dramaturgical choice. Therefore, it is essential to identify the location prior to any sound recording. In anticipation of a recording, it is important to listen carefully, to clap one's hands in order to stimulate the acoustics, to measure its adequacy with regard to the sound source that one would like to add.

Once the resonance has been measured, it can be useful to evaluate the isolation of the space, to detect any parasitic noises that could pollute the sound source that we wish to collect : for example, the hum of a fridge in an apartment or the traffic that seeps through windows overlooking a street. The brain is a magical organ : it is capable, without even consulting us, of «mixing» reality and inviting us into a flattering world, stripped of everything that does not contribute to the beauty of the present moment. This is why the best way to measure the rate of noise intrusion is to put on a microphone - any microphone — and put on a pair of headphones. We call this subjective listening, because the microphone does not compromise in its objective listening of the world, and is better at guiding us in the search for parasitic or undesirable noise. It is then that we can really identify the sources of noise pollution.

It goes without saying that a good sound recordist is above all a formidable sound hunter.

3. RECORDING EQUIPMENT

The microphone

The microphone is a transducer, i.e. an instrument capable of translating a mechanical wave propagating in the air into an electrical signal transmitted through an XLR cable.

It is interesting to note that the loudspeaker is the reverse transducer, since it translates an electrical signal into an acoustic wave.

MICROPHONE TECHNOLOGIES

There are two transduction technologies : mechanical and electronic. The so-called "dynamic" microphones use mechanical transduction, while the so-called "electrostatic" or "condenser" microphones use electronic transduction.

- The electrostatic microphone is particularly sensitive and its high sound quality offers great fidelity. It is also more expensive. It is most commonly used in professional recording studios and on film sets.

- The dynamic microphone is much less sensitive : its pick-up radius is restricted. The rudimentary technology makes it a slightly less efficient microphone in terms of sound fidelity, but it is more robust. It is often used on stage or for any type of sound system, because it is less prone to feedback.
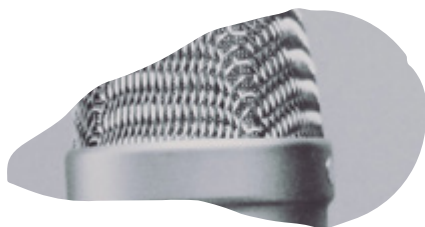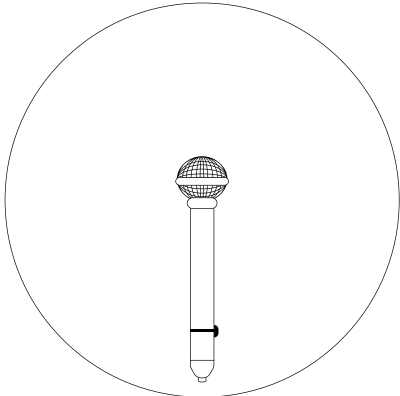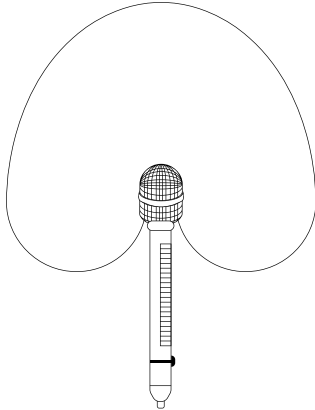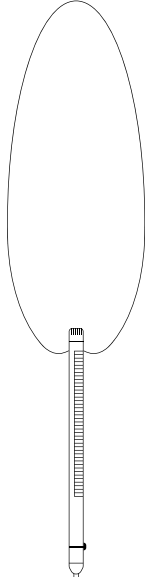
Even if the condenser microphone seems more subtle and faithful, it is not always the ideal tool, because powerful sound sources will quickly get the better of its high sensitivity. Thus, depending on the situation to be recorded, the dynamic microphone - less sensitive - will sometimes be more appropriate.
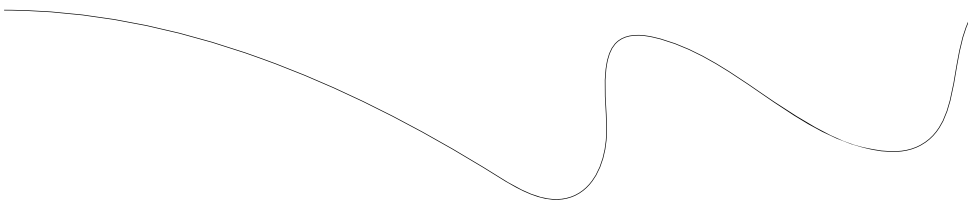
DIRECTIONALITY

Just as a camera can have different focal lengths, microphones have different directivity patterns. In contrast to the radical picture frame, the directionality of a microphone will not completely cancel out sounds outside its theoretical pickup range.

Three patterns will be presented here : these are the most common ones. However, there are intermediate directivities which we will not insist on.

- The *omnidirectional* microphone picks up sound evenly in all directions.

- The *cardioid* microphone picks up sound sources in front of its capsule more strongly.

- The *supercardioid* (or *shotgun*) microphone is highly directional. Sound sources at the rear of its body are picked up relatively little. However, it can pick up sound sources further forward.

The physical context in which we use our microphone has a major impact on the choice of directional pattern. Recording a point source of sound — for example, a voice — in a noisy environment, or capturing a distant sound such as a bird singing in a wooded area, will make us choose a directional microphone. On the other hand, if the environment is quiet or sufficiently calm, a less directional microphone may be used. When recording indoors, the directionality will be determined more by the importance of the acoustics that may affect the intelligibility of the sound to be recorded.

In addition to the directional options, manufacturers provide microphones with sound reproduction that is as multifaceted as the faces in a group of people. In other words, for the same directivity pattern, several microphone models will produce different sounds and each will bring a particular colour to the recording. The choice of a microphone therefore also involves the sensitivity and taste of each individual.

To find your way through the multitude of microphones on the market, here are a few tried and true models :
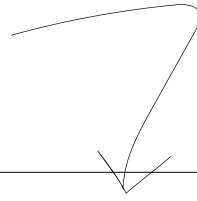
- The Shure SM58 is an inexpensive, rugged, and effective entry-level dynamic microphone for voice in all environments (noisy, wet, dusty, etc.). It is not, however, a suitable microphone for recording subtle elements, such as sound effects, or for recording ambience ;

- The Sennheiser MD21 is a microphone that is very similar to the SM58, but with better audio quality - which may explain its higher price. This microphone offers crystal clear voice reproduction. It is a microphone that has been, and still is, widely used on the radio side ;

- As for the electrostatic microphones, many models from Sennheiser, Neumann, AKG, Oktava are excellent. They allow for sound sources that are more subtle than voice, and are more frequently used to record musical instruments or ambiences of places.

THE RECORDER

The recorder is the device that receives the sound collected by the microphones and writes it onto a recording medium. Until the 1990s, sound was recorded on magnetic tapes : today, sounds are recorded on digital media. Recorders have either memory cards (SD, CF, etc.) or internal hard drives. Some have both.

The range of field recording equipment offers a wide variety, from apps that can be downloaded for free onto one's smartphone, to extremely sophisticated and expensive tools. In the realization of a podcast project, it is not necessary to invest huge sums of money in a recorder.

For example, a Zoom H5 type device can be very efficient, ergonomic and offers good audio quality.

The Zoom H5 is a multi-track digital recorder with 4 simultaneous recording tracks. It incorporates a stereo microphone and two external microphone inputs. The recording medium is an SD memory card. It is much more ergonomic and complete than its predecessors, the Zoom H1 and the H4N.

For those interested in higher-end machines, Sound-Devices or Nagra recorders are very powerful instruments and more widespread in the professional sound recording world.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

Mono and stereo

- Recording in mono means on a single channel. Voice, or even point sources, will usually be recorded in mono.

- Recording in stereo means two linked channels, thus reproducing the human listening experience which is actually done with two ears : a left channel (left/L) and a right channel (right/R).

What distinguishes stereo sound recording from mono sound recording is the feeling of space and movement that stereo sound recording allows to generate. This is why we will choose to record a sound ambiance relative to a place with a stereo device. For example, a stereo device allows us to capture the movement and space of a train station, in which passengers move around in the acoustics characteristic of this place.

There are different kinds of stereophonic devices, but overall it is a combination of two microphones, assigning one to the left (L) and one to the right (R).

The microphone built into the Zoom H5 is a stereo device : two microphone capsules are located at the end of the device, under which are silk-screened the words "L" (*left*) and "R" (*right*).

5. ACCESSORIES

Suspension

The "dynamic" microphone can easily be held in the hand, it is not very sensitive and is built to be handled in this way.

The "electrostatic" microphone, on the other hand, is a delicate membrane, very sensitive : that is why the body of the microphone must be systematically isolated from the ground or from the hand of the soundman by means of suspension. Let's face it : such a microphone is never without good suspension.

The headset

The headset is an indispensable instrument in sound recording. It allows not only to judge the sound quality, but also, the sound fluctuations in terms of intensity. It is essential to wear them during the entire recording process. If some talented sound recordists — such as the undisputed master of radio art, Yann Paranthoën — will free themselves from it in order to get closer to their subject by renouncing anything that can be a barrier to the rapport, it is necessary, to begin with, to keep one's headphones in place. With time and experience, you too may want to try this approach.

The adjustment of the headset volume is done before starting the recording. It is essential not to modify this calibration once the recording has begun : once the recording has started, rather it will be necessary to adjust the microphone sensitivity according to the volume of the sound source.

Bonnet

Wind or air movement is another important issue for the recordist : since the microphone diaphragm is sensitive to the minute changes in air pressure, which translate into sound, imagine what the slightest gust of wind can do. In this way, no microphone can do without a cap. In technical jargon, this accessory is called a bonnet : it has the texture of a foam or fur.

It is recognized that recording outdoors poses many more technical challenges than recording indoors, where the acoustic space is already controlled. However, the outdoors is an interesting and rich environment because it leaves room for life — that is, for the multitude of chances and surprises that are possible when everything is not perfectly controlled. Since we have no absolute control over the conditions of an outdoor recording, it is all the more important to equip our little transducer to deal with possible eventualities : wind, rain, snow, etc.
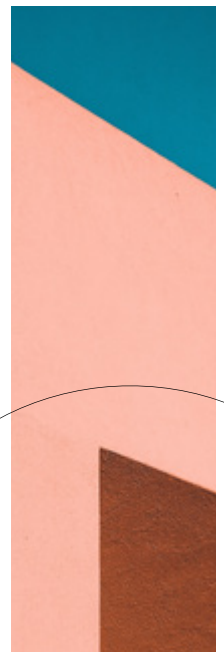
6. THE DIFFERENT RECORDING MODES

The Studio

The microphone is a relatively permeable sensor, when compared, for example, to the camera which frames and isolates with formidable efficiency. The microphone, however, does not make it possible to circumscribe a sound source captured in a living environment. The only way to completely "frame" a punctual sound source is to construct a space isolated from the rest of the world, in which the sound to be recorded can exist exclusively : this is the principle of the recording studio.

Like a laboratory, the recording studio is an artificial space. When impeccable control over the sound elements to be recorded is sought - in order to be able to shape them better afterwards - the studio is the place of choice. This is why the studio is generally used to capture voice-overs, narrations, sound effects or specific sound effects.

The Environment

In certain circumstances, a sound may need to be embedded in a living, natural environment. This environment can have an effect on the meaning of the message, particularly because a resonance occurs between the sound and its environment, sometimes provoking a desired emotion or a sensation. In this case, the preparation phase for the sound recording (location scouting, choice of recording equipment, dramaturgical choices related to the environment) is all the more important. In the field, you have to be well prepared to deal with life, which will inevitably invite itself to the recording.

It should also be noted that, generally speaking, a sound fiction will tend to be recorded in the studio, whereas the shooting of a documentary is conducive to sound recording in the field. That said, this is not always true : the French director Alexandre Plank (Making Waves collective, France Culture) does not hesitate to record fiction in the field, which gives rise to some of the most daring proposals.

It just goes to show that sometimes breaking the rules is a great idea !

7. SOUND RECORDING BY GENRE

Maintenance

The interview is not usually tied to a particular space. An interview is usually best recorded in a location with a controlled sound environment, such as a recording studio. Recording interviews in a studio is a common practice. Occasionally, the interview can also take place in a lively space or in a natural environment : this can be a very interesting set-up.

The voice is the predominant sound element in any interview. In the case of an interview recorded in a studio, the voice takes over the entire field. When the interview is recorded in a live environment, the voice co-exists with the setting.

In order to allow the listener to listen comfortably, it is necessary, when recording in a live environment, to pay particular attention to the intelligibility of the voice, to ensure that it is not dominated or muffled by the surrounding context.

The documentary

If intelligibility is a primary issue in any recording, embodiment is an equally important one — especially in a documentary podcast project. By embodiment, one must understand all the sensitive and tenuous aspects that stand outside the intelligible part. For example, the grain of the voice, a concept borrowed from the philosopher Roland Barthes, that is to say its texture and roughness, allows for the incarnation of the person speaking. Indeed, the characteristics of a voice make the speaker tangible, and allow us to imagine his temperament, his personality, his history and his emotions. Thus, even before what the spoken words can express, the voice externalizes information that will touch us — or not. A voice allows us, in a way, to draw a portrait of the person speaking.

Accessing and rendering this precious incarnation that is the voice — or any sound or noise in the end, because "each sound is a unique character" as Yann Paranthoën used to say — is the job of the sound recordist in general, but perhaps even more so of the one who invests in a documentary podcast project.

In practical terms, to properly record a specific sound — such as a voice — you need to get the microphone close enough to the source that is making the sound. Recording a person is not the same as recording sound from any source. Indeed, some people may be intimidated by the proximity of the microphone when they are about to speak : in this case, a trick for the sound recordist is to stand next to the person speaking rather than directly in front of him or her.
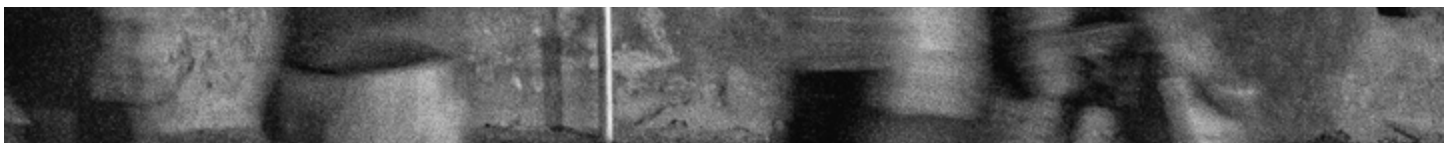
Fiction

Fiction allows us to recreate a sound universe from scratch. This sound universe can be composed of several elements, such as voices, sound effects, ambiences and music. It is important to record each of the sound elements in isolation in order to make it possible, during editing, to juxtapose them in order to recreate places, atmospheres, situations, etc., by combining them in an artificial way.

In fiction, the various sounds should be recorded independently of each other. For example, voices and sound effects are preferably recorded in a recording studio. The ambiences, however, are recorded in a live environment and then integrated into the editing of the fiction.

Staging the sound
By Daniel Deshays

Staging the sound

By Daniel Deshays
sound engineer, teacher and author

Sound production begins before recording. Just as cinema requires location scouting, choosing a site, a time of day, a season, acoustics, an atmosphere, are all determining factors which, as soon as the microphones are on, will orient the form. The resonances of the architecture will mix with the sounds to colour them and enrich the sound breaks that are necessary for editing. These preliminary choices will feed the listeners' desire to listen. Far be it from me to advocate excess, the overabundance of signs; on the contrary, it is through purification, through a "degreasing" of the sound recording, that we can make things readable. The choice of distance from the objects captured and the silences specific to these spaces are precious determinants. The place and the activity chosen are not necessarily correlated to the recording project, on the contrary. I mean that recording in a church does not imply uniquely that one is recording mass or a concert. The gap between the acoustics of a place and the action that one is likely to record there is also a factor that makes listening more interesting. It is these discrepancies integrated into the very material of the sound recordings that fuel our attention.

Can sound design be scripted? Even in film, documentary is an uncertain construction whose quality depends on the hazards of each day. The form will evolve and be determined in relation to the events encountered : density, energy, speed, silence, the nature of the materiality are all variables that almost by default collaborate in the conception.

To build, two methods can be used : according to Lumière or according to Méliès.

1   As in the cinematographic construction of Lumière, directing the sound can collect the sound reality of the world by organizing the recording distances. It is up to the sound director to stage the action. I remember inviting some young actors in the early morning in a forest, for a play. It was in an area sparsely occupied by beech trees. I decided to organize the route of their mutual runs through the maze of trees. Moving away from the microphones, the trace of their laughter set the scene. The distance of the cries, revealing the resonance of the woods, built a sound architecture that fed the imagination. The couple [nature of the voices] / [acoustics of the forest], increased by the energy of their games, built the whole dramaturgy.

2   On the contrary, according to Méliès, we start from an empty place in which we build a construction that simulates the choices of "listening to reality". A limited number of chosen elements are brought together over silence in order to build a "clarified world", just as our listening cannot, like a microphone, hear everything at once. A succession of chosen elements, appearing in turn, will produce a narrative that has no need of linearity. Let's remember that our listening to the world is discontinuous and that the sound surges are always unexpected.

At the take, whatever the method chosen by construction or deconstruction, what will be heard is a set of addressed gestures, i.e. indications of existing relationships between beings.

A voice-over is accurate if it knows to whom it is addressed. To speak, to give or take, to act is a social action whose sound nature defines the type of underlying relationship.

The sound of an object is only the sound of a way of holding it in a relationship : slamming a door is not only producing a door noise, it is the expression of a tense relationship between beings. This example shows that every gesture is, in essence, a sound that we are going to record and that the proportioning of the energies that are exchanged determines the energy of the whole sound piece. Behind this, a general economy of editing and mixing will have to be thought out, and the dramaturgy must be built from this energy. But let's not believe that the sound expressions must be powerful, on the contrary, what the listener likes to spot are the small events, everything that would be a harbinger of uncertain and promising "things to come". All our listening is oriented towards the future, towards what could happen, it is constantly looking for clues.

Apart from authoritarian methods, it is better to prefer one's natural conditions of existence to find the silence necessary for any recording, to choose calm places beforehand, to work at night, out of urban areas that are too agitated. Staging the sounds on a silent sediment will make them easier to read. It is necessary to organize the arrival of silence rather than wait for it; this moment constitutes in itself a remarkable event. Documentaries and fiction need silence in the same way. It is up to the director, of course, to imagine the final dosage.

Staging means organising the conditions of existence of the circulations, we see here the globality of conception that must preside over it. The game is situated in the flows, sound is but a brief expression held in sequences : time and its variations in duration are at the heart of sound expression, continuous atmospheres are harmful.

Choosing to place the sound recording at the threshold of two different acoustic spaces makes them appear in an instantaneous comparison that reveals their mutual existence and evolution to our consciousness. It is especially perceived at the moment of rupture at the threshold of two spaces. It makes us perceive the difference in quality of the places both in terms of volumes and in terms of the plasticity of their construction materials (the garage and the alcove, concrete or velvet).
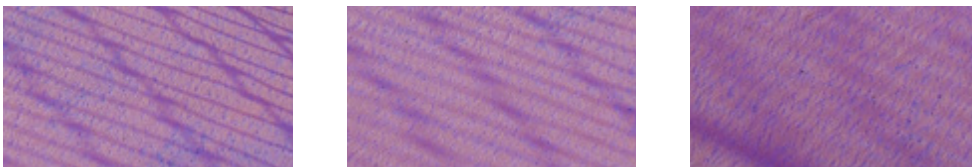
Concerning the voices, the work must contribute to the appearance of the desire of speech in the interlocutor and it is your silence and the concentration of your listening which will make the collected remarks powerful.

It is on our behaviour that the other person's speech depends. The sound recording is nothing compared to its conditioning by our desire to listen. What we want to reveal is a way of doing things, what in the theatre or in the cinema is called interpretation.

What opposes itself to vitality, to their ability to produce sensibility and to the richness of being are the protocols of realization. What I call "protocol" here refers to the succession of stages in the construction of a project that responds to automatisms, to induced pathways, to the use of operating modes conceived in a procedural convention dedicated to obtaining, in a more or less certain way, a calibrated object dedicated to a use defined by a distribution circuit.

Commentaries or voice-overs are particularly delicate from this point of view. Taking on an actor is not always the best choice, especially if you don't direct him or if you don't manage to do so. If it speaks falsely, it is that one's word is not addressed. What I wish to hear in the recording, is the quality of the desire for exchange that is at play. The slightest detail of movement produced by hesitation or, on the contrary, by certainty, will feed the whole quality of meaning. Whether it is the movement of a voice, that of an object or the playing of an instrument. It is these extremely thin data that are at the heart of the listening process.

✳
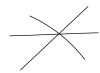
Recording sound is indeed an act of writing. Each writing of sound must be specific to its project, sound recording dies of its so-called "neutrality". There is no such thing as neutrality in demonstration, it does not exist. Therein lies an ideology of neutrality to which filmmaking too often conforms and which has always been detrimental to it.

Voices like noises, as much as music, must contribute to the same energetic unity, even if it is heterogeneous or rambling. Any sound construction must be established in a dynamic imbalance. An imbalance gives rise to its resolution, just as one step will be resolved by the next, the following imbalance will be resolved in displacement, that is to say in circulation. In this movement, resulting from the succession of the entry and exit of sounds, there is a channelling of energies. Whatever the sound material, what is important is that the issues are legible, that the rules are clear to the listener, for a volitional listening. All these data are those which preside over the general economy of the recording. And it is a mistake to speak of the actor's abilities, for it places these abilities as apart from the ensemble, in separation.

All sound plays and interprets the sensitivities present. If the sensitivities appear, the dramaturgy will in fact already be constituted.

Post production

By Antonin Wyss
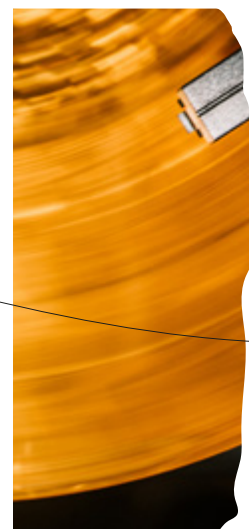
Post production

By Antonin Wyss
composer and sound designer

TECHNIQUES AND STEPS :
FROM SOUND LOGGING TO THE FINAL MIX

This chapter deals with post production, i.e. all the steps following the recording of a sound in preparation for the production of a podcast. This stage includes the sound logging, editing and mixing of the recorded sounds. It is a phase that may require certain technical knowledge and specific skills. It is also a very rich stage in terms of creativity.

This moment in the process of making a podcast is intimately linked to the history of sound recording and the technical means and media developed to fix sound and preserve it over time.

This history of sound recording goes from wax rolls and gramophone records to vinyl records, to film and magnetic tape, and today to digital sound preservation.

In fact, digital recording of sound makes it easier to work with and model : cutting, mixing, and filtering sounds is now a practice accessible to anyone with a computer, tablet, or smartphone, thanks to the many audio post production software programs available.

In the era of podcasting, the many technical possibilities offered are accompanied by questions that go hand in hand with the sensibility of each person : what to keep from a recording and according to what effects, intentions or desired renderings ? Many other questions arise : what should the listener hear ? How to give rhythm to the editing ? What effect do we want to give to the sounds : to reinforce, attenuate, surprise, contradict or accompany the words ? It's all a question of proportion and nuance, but also of intention and sensibility. Choices will be made throughout the process of making a podcast, from the writing of the note of intent to the post production phase, through the stages of realization and sound recording : the important thing is that these choices show a certain coherence, thus best serving the intention and the final result of the project. These choices must also allow a certain balance to be found between, for example, what is to be heard and the many noises and other sounds that creep into a recording — and that are synonymous with life.

1. TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS BY GENRE

A) Maintenance

Interviewing necessarily involves dealing with voices. Whether it's a dialogue between two people or a round-table discussion, each voice must be recorded independently of the others, that is to say, with its own microphone, on its own track. you go into post-production, you therefore need to have a microphone for each voice recorded. Recording each speaker separately makes it much easier to clean up and edit later on.

Image : three mono tracks corresponding here to three people's voices.

In addition, when editing dialogue — for example, again in the context of a round table discussion — it is important to remove the "silences" from each voice, as, quite often, the mics of the non-speakers will still pick up the distant sound of the speaker, creating an unwanted reverberation effect. Here, in order to illustrate this editing work, we have removed the "silences" from tracks 2 and 3 (grey spaces on the photo above).

Another tip regarding the interview : when it was recorded in a place with very muffled acoustics — such as a recording studio — it is a good idea to add a slight reverberation to the voices in order to "link" the different parts of the sentences. Conversely, you can also choose to use a voice that is completely devoid of acoustics, which will generate an effect of great closeness of this voice to the listener.

Often, when one person speaks in front of another, one tends to use all sorts of superfluous mimics, words and sounds that can become disturbing for the listener. It is these hesitations, mouth noises, breaths or repetitions that we then take care to remove in order to lighten the speech and thus make the dialogue more pleasant to listen to. Be careful : it is not necessarily a matter of eliminating all these sounds, but rather of finely judging which ones should be removed and which ones should be kept so as not to lose the unique color of each voice as well as the diversity of the ways of expressing oneself. It all depends on the desired tone of the discussion : an informal interview can generally tolerate more of these little noises than a more formal one.

During the interview, it is important to keep in mind that the intelligibility of the speakers' words is essential. When mixing, it can therefore be very useful to use a frequency equalizer on the voices to make them perfectly audible. For example, increasing the high frequencies (2500 Hz and above) can give them a bit of brightness, while lowering the mid frequencies slightly can be useful in the case of more nasal voices. On the other hand, increasing the presence of the low frequencies can give body to a voice.

It is important to remember that there is no magic formula and that each voice sounds different depending on the microphone used to record it. So you have to listen — again and again — and adjust the setting until you find the one that is suitable.

B) The Documentary

Let's take the example of the documentary genre, since it generally involves field recordings : in this case, the ambiences of the locations and their particular acoustics are necessarily more important than for sounds collected during studio recordings.

When recording in the field, it is essential to take the time to record the "room" or ambient noise of each location. For example, if you are recording an interview with someone in a park, it is important to take the time to record a few minutes of the atmosphere of the park, without the presence of your interlocutor's voice. This recorded atmosphere makes it easier to edit a speech, or to give the story of your podcast project some breathing room. As mentioned in the previous chapter, sound recording is an important issue outside the studio : the subsequent editing and mixing stages must take advantage of the colours and acoustics of each location.

C) Fiction

From the post production point of view, the fiction genre is the playground *par excellence.* We can have fun recreating, staging, reproducing and inventing sound worlds in order to make the listener's imagination travel.

By recording the voices needed for a project in a neutral studio space, it is then possible to add the ambience of different locations. Recording the voices in the studio and then placing them in the desired space is a key tactic for greater agility when editing.

It is quite possible to record a comedian breathless on his or her bike by holding the microphone towards him or her and recording in the heat of the action, which may capture a series of interesting unexpected events. However, it is also possible to choose to record a scene between two actors climbing a mountain by recording their voices in the studio and then adding the desired soundscape. It is then a matter of working with available sound banks or, even better, with your own sound bank, the objective being to situate the characters in the desired environment, the scene being created in the meeting between the voices and the sound effects acting as a sound background.

You can record your own ambience, background and sound effects specifically for a podcast project : it's often a great way to get the sounds you need to tell your story.

In the post production of a fiction, one can also allow oneself to divert situations and — why not — to create anachronistic recording situations or ones that are not adapted to the scene being played out. For example, why not juxtapose an impassioned monologue with the atmosphere of a demonstration ? Or add the softness of a text spoken in a low voice to a crowd atmosphere ? Creating and recreating also means seeking to surprise and push the boundaries of audacity !
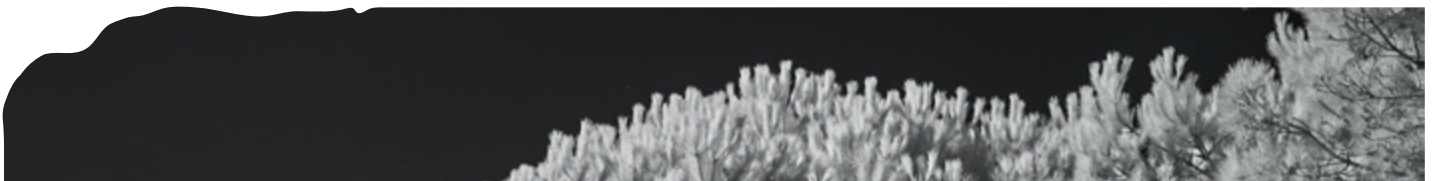
2. PRESENTATION OF AN EDITING SOFTWARE : REAPER

The editing software is the environment that allows the work of the sound. It is the place where it is possible to visualize the sounds and their waveforms.

Commonly known as DAW (digital audio workstation), audio editing software allows you to record and carry out all the stages of post production, such as organizing the various sound sources over time. It allows you to work with numerous tracks and effects, which are known as "plug-ins". There are several types of editing software on the market, but most have similar functions and offer similar possibilities.

Some examples of editing software are Adobe Audition, Avid Pro Tools, Cubase, GarageBand, Live, Logic and Reaper.

The visual examples presented here are taken from the Reaper software, a frequently recommended editing tool, notably because it is a compact software, offering all the features of a DAW. Moreover, it is entirely customizable and its cost is very affordable.

The image below represents the window which is displayed at the starting of the Reaper software.

- Action Buttons
- Timeline
- Space for Tracks
- Transport Section
- *Master Fader*
- *Dock*
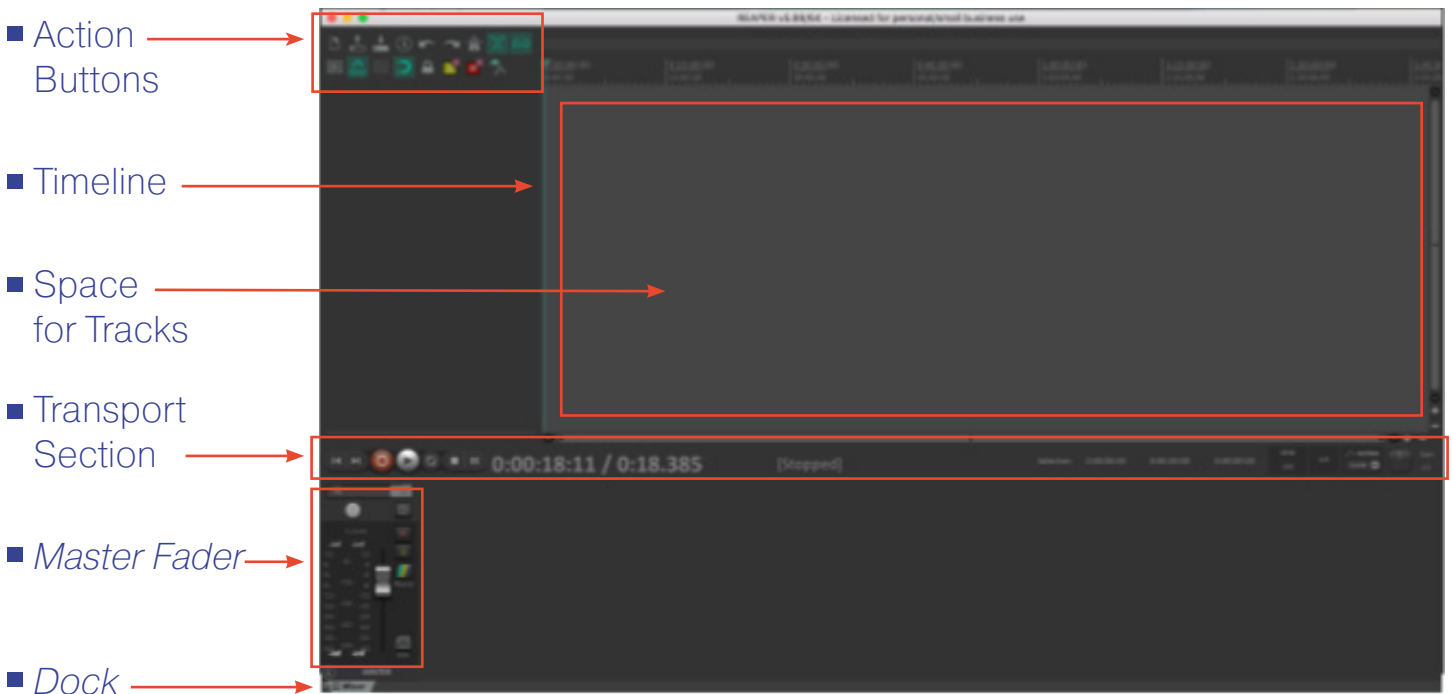
Reaper's interface is made up of a main window in which there is an area of command buttons for current actions (undo, redo, save or open a project, automatic crossfade, solo, mute, etc.), the timeline, the space for the various audio tracks, the transport section (section with the play, pause, stop, advance, rewind and record buttons), the volume potentiometer or main fader and the main fader.), the timeline, the space for the various audio tracks, the transport section (section with the play, pause, stop, advance, rewind and record buttons), the volume potentiometer or main fader as well as a section — specific to Reaper — called the "Dock". This section can accommodate all the windows available in the "View" menu directly on the main window. The "Dock" can be visible or not, according to one's preferences.

The following illustration shows a work session with three audio tracks : a mono voice track, a stereo ambient track, and a stereo music track.

- Item   - Cursor Line
- Track 1
- Track 2
- Track 3
- Tracks *Fader* 1,2 & 3
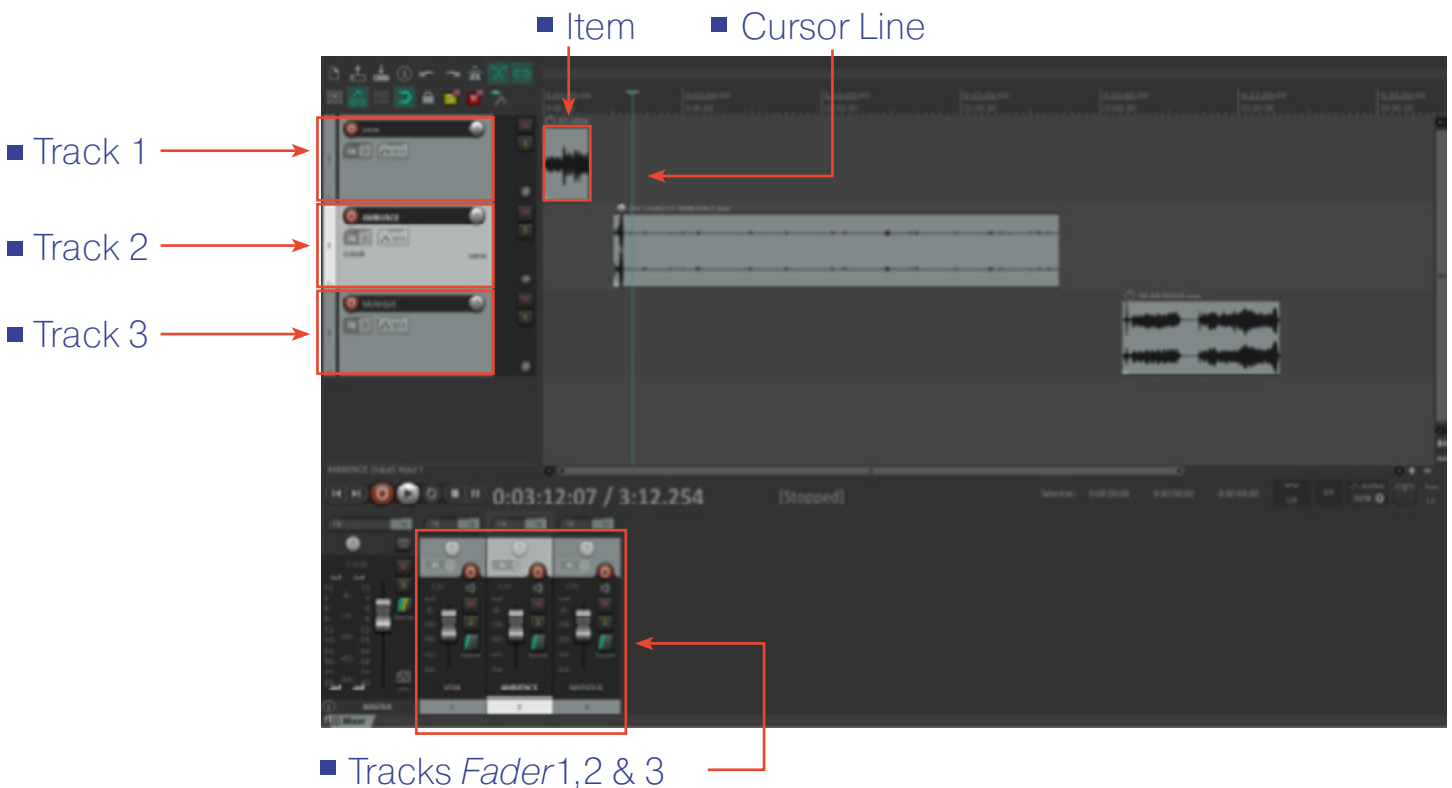
In the "*Mixer*" tab of the dock, you can see the three potentiometers corresponding to each of the three tracks. Each of the gray blocks in which the waveforms are drawn are called "item". In their current position, the three items follow one another with a "white silence" between them. Of course, it is possible to play several sounds at the same time if they are placed one on top of the other.

In the previous image, we can also notice the presence of a green vertical line corresponding to the cursor, which is the moving mark on the display screen : the cursor tells us where the sound playback starts.

Working with audio editing software can be demanding. By taking it step by step and being patient, you will gradually master more functions and keyboard shortcuts. In most cases, these shortcuts will increase the speed of the work process.
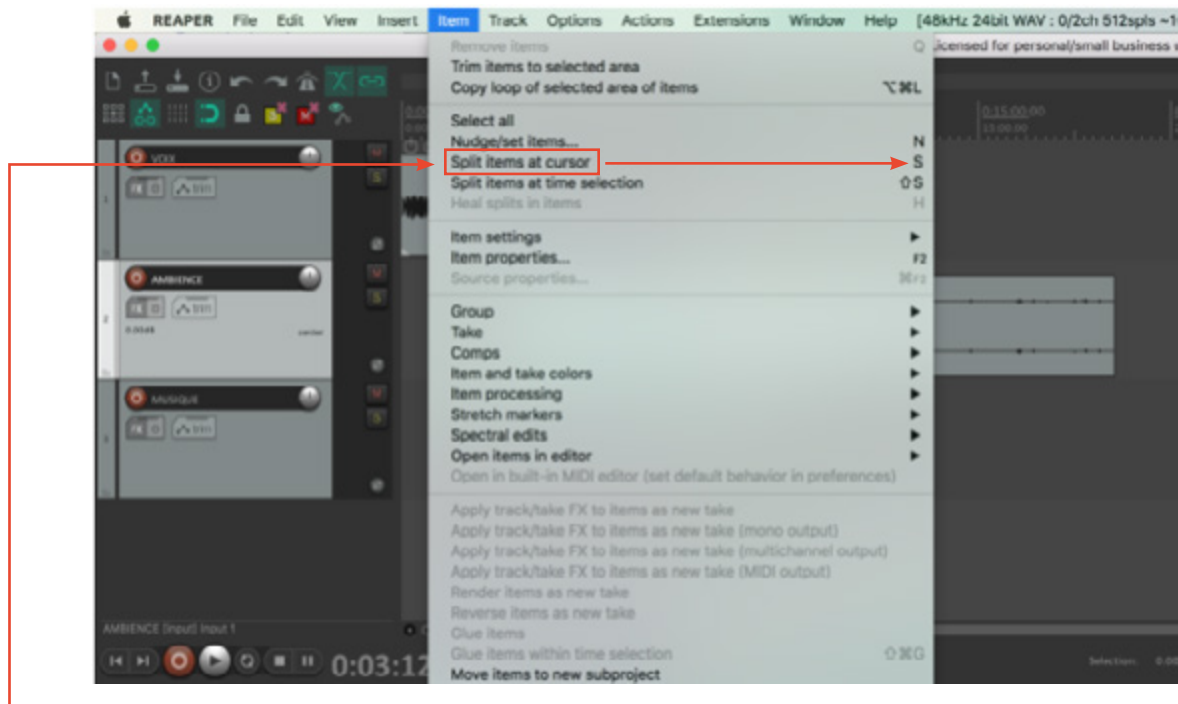
- Reaper displays at the end of each line of a menu item the keyboard shortcuts corresponding to the proposed actions.

3. POST PRODUCTION STEPS AND METHODOLOGIES

There are three main stages in the post production phase : sound logging, editing and mixing.

Methodology of sound logging

Post-production involves listening - again and again — to all of the sounds recorded. This stage also involves organizing all the sounds collected so that they can easily be found later, especially when editing. As mentioned above, choices will have to be made, since classifying the sounds means choosing some while discarding others, depending on the objectives and intentions that were set when the podcast project was conceived (see Chapter 1).

The "rushes" are the raw recordings taken from the recorder. Among these rushes, there are usually successful recordings, others that are failures, false starts, repeats, silences, etc. These rushes usually contain different sound materials, such as voices, sound effects, atmospheres or music, depending on what was recorded.

The process of sound logging involves organizing the sound material, that is, listening to all the rushes and naming them so as to be able to find them easily afterwards. It is a question of classifying the sounds by giving them names, according to what can be heard or what is being talked about.

You can either derush on paper, notating the exact timings (timecodes) of the sections you wish to keep or you can choose to work directly in an editing software, naming each of the sounds and passages to be kept in the software you are using. This allows you to generate a printable list that can be clicked on, making it possible to move from one marker to another quickly : just click on the marker in question (see image p. 74).

In short, sound logging consists of going through the recordings and delineating and naming the segments selected for editing.
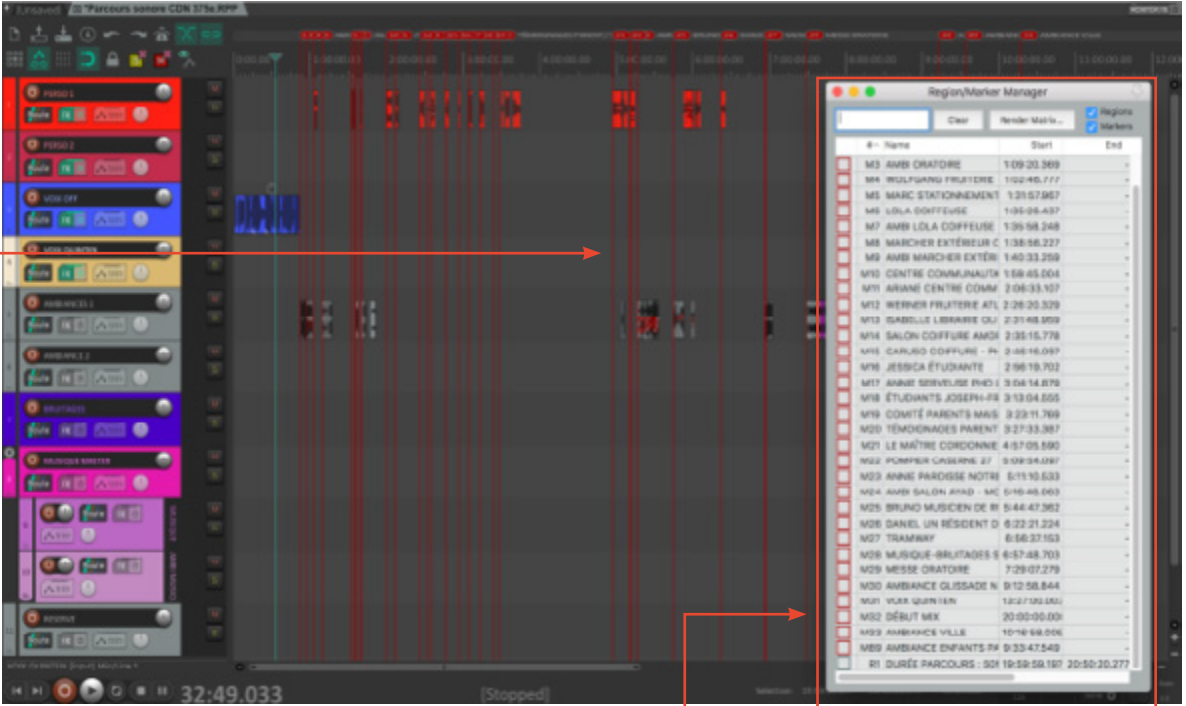
- First, it is advisable to organize your sound types by track. In the trade, we talk about organizing your sounds into "stems". A good practice is to create a track for the voices, a track for the ambiences, a track for the music and so on. It is then easier to find your way around. Be careful to position the sounds one after the other and not on top of each other : this will make listening much easier later !

- Listening to the sounds and creating markers (fixed points in time) or regions (time segments) are steps that go hand in hand (see image p. 74). It may be useful to adopt a nomenclature that allows for a rough hierarchy of the quality of the named segments, for example according to the following scale : 1 - *Keep ;* 2 - *Interesting ;* 3 - *Not interesting.* In this way, the number at the beginning of the marker name will be easy to spot when editing the various selected segments.

- It is recommended that you never delete a sound at this stage of the work : it is preferable to mute it (make it silent) or to mark it as 0. If necessary, you will always be able to find this sound. What we sometimes think is not useful at this stage may become so later on when editing.
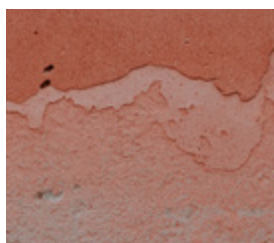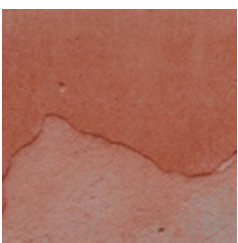
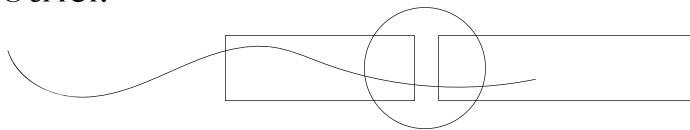Here's an example of a derushed session.

■ Markers

■ List of Markers and Regions

Assembly Methodology

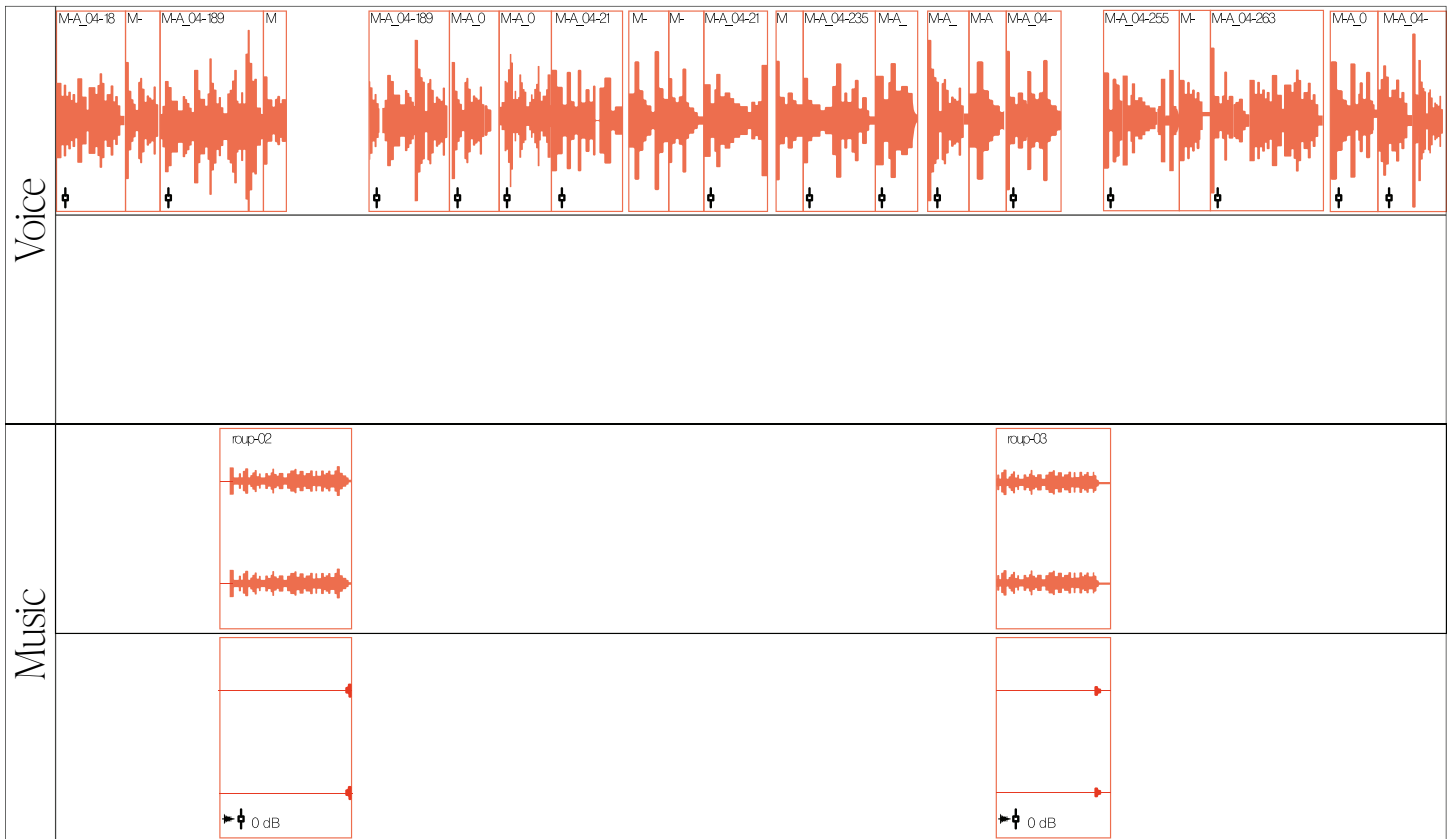Editing involves organizing the different sounds in relation to each other.

Using an editing program, it is then possible to position the different sounds on a timeline and organize them by genre (voice, ambience, sound effects, music, etc.) using different tracks for each. The objective of the editing process is to position the selected sounds so that they flow together or overlap in a beautiful way.

When editing, care is also taken to edit the voice by removing, for example, hesitations, mouth noises or excessive breathing that will disturb the listener's ear. One can also choose to intervene on the elocution or the flow of a voice. Editing a voice is an important step in the post-production phase, and this work can take many hours.
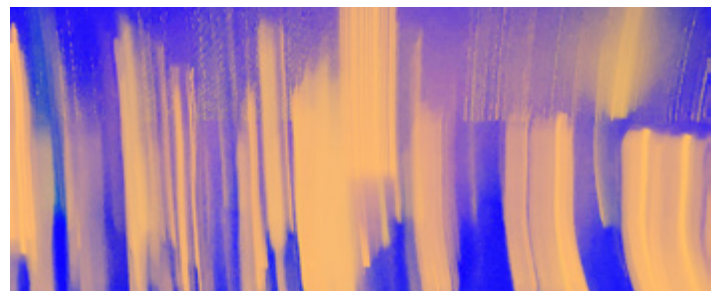
Here is an example of an editing session of a voice reading a text, interspersed with music. This voice has been cleaned up : mouth noises, hang-ups and repeats have been removed as part of the editing process.

Voice

| M-A_04-18 | M- | M-A_04-189 | M | | M-A_04-189 | M-A_0 | M-A_0 | M-A_04-21 | M- | M- | M-A_04-21 | M | M-A_04-235 | M-A_ | | M-A_ | M-A | M-A_04- | | M-A_04-255 | M- | M-A_04-263 | | M-A_0 | M-A_04- |

Music

roup-02

roup-03

0 dB

0 dB

Editing is a phase that also allows the construction of a certain dramaturgy in terms of production : a successful edit is one that, in its own way, has rhythm and transports the listener, makes him think, touches him or surprises him.

Here's what to do when you start an edit :

- The first step is to define a start location : a "Start" or "IN V1" marker is placed there. It is suggested that you work in the same session where the rushes are stored, as this makes it easier to access them. A trick to keep the timecode readable is to choose a round number as the start, such as 04'00'00'' : it will then be easier to estimate the duration of your edit while working.

- While keeping the organization of the tracks in stems, we can then start to place our sounds in relation to each other. Frequent replay of the transition passages is necessary to organize the overlaps in a precise way. You can also roughly adjust the volumes to make everything more audible and make a first uniformity of the different sounds (premix).

- This stage of post production often reveals new needs requiring the addition or removal of sound elements. Markers can then be used to indicate the passages that may need to be revisited.
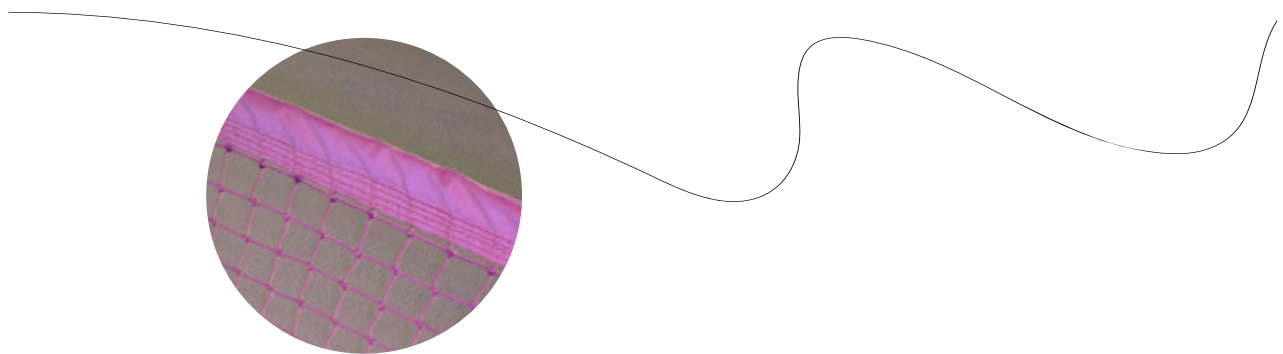
The following image shows an example of a more complex editing session including narration, moods, music, voices and sound effects.

- **Voice**
- **Ambiance & Sound Effects**
- **Music (multitracks)**
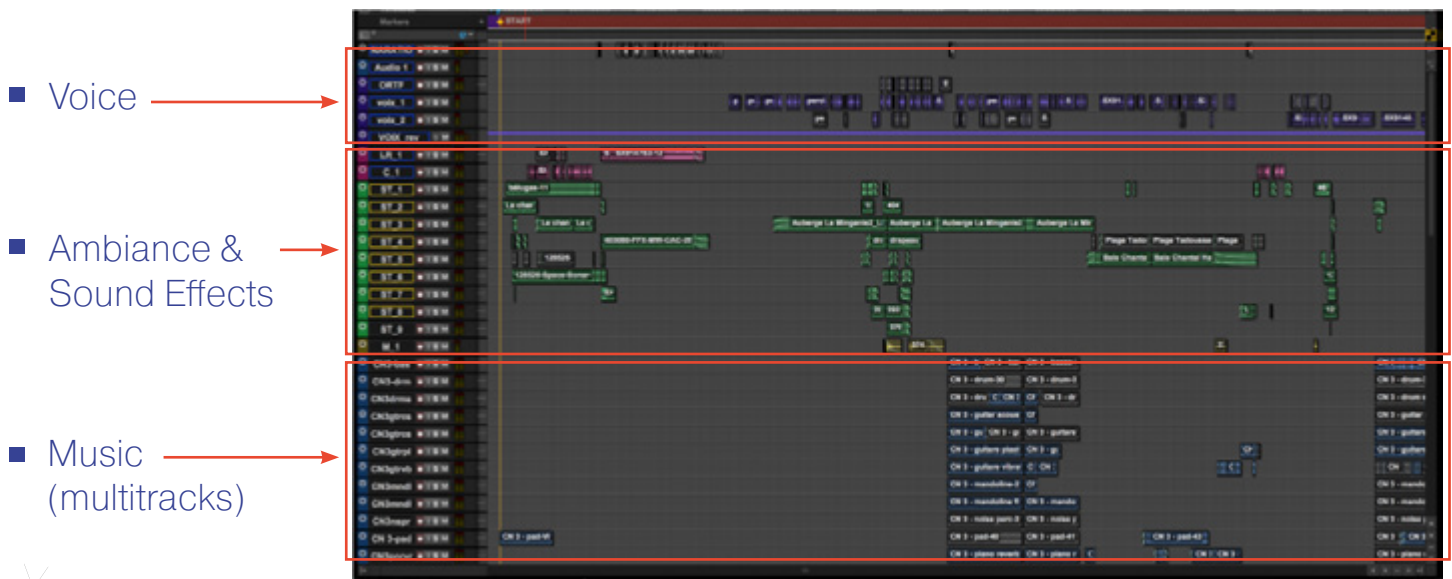
During editing, it is common to start mixing, especially when it comes to adjusting volumes : this step is called premixing. This can help prioritize sounds as well as determine what is possible or interesting, as well as what is not.

Mixing methodology

Mixing follows the editing stage. It is a process that allows one to proceed to different adjustments in order to create a beautiful interweaving of sounds while respecting the intentions of the project. Mixing is like the varnish brought to one's project : it ensures an overall sound coherence, whereas a podcast project is generally composed of a multitude of sounds.

Mixing uses different functions : volume, frequency equalizers, effects, automation curves, etc. These notions will be detailed later in this chapter. After mixing, we can proceed to the final rendering (bounce) of the edit, which will allow us to obtain a single sound file. We will come back to these elements in the next few pages.

The mixing process allows one to adjust the sound levels of the different sources in order to understand what is going on and to give more or less importance to certain sounds, according to the point of view envisaged. The use of automations (or "envelopes"), takes place at this stage. These curves, linked to a track that can be made to evolve over time by placing points on it, allow the adjustment of various parameters, including the volume. Mixing is also the moment to arrange the sound sources in space, either more or less to the left, right or center. This is known as panning, which is the "pan" button on each track.

The use of plug-ins (a small computer program which enables adding special functions to the editing software) also comes into play at this stage : there are many plug-ins, but let's mention here the frequency equalizers that can accentuate or reduce certain parts of the sound spectrum, notably, the compressors that can be used to even out the level of the voices, the reverb and delay effects, the frequency filters and the denoisers.

In order to have a successful mix, you need a system that is capable of reproducing the authenticity of the sound. This is why we usually work with reference speakers (or monitoring speakers) or closed quality headphones (e.g. Beyerdynamic DT770, Sennheiser HD 25 or Sony MDR-7506).

List of the Main Mixing Steps

A. ADJUSTMENT OF THE SOUND VOLUMES OF EACH TRACK THROUGH THE USE OF VOLUME AUTOMATIONS (OR "ENVELOPES")

At the very beginning of the mixing process, you must take care to adjust the sound volume and not touch it afterwards. This allows you to have a reference level, and thus, to adjust the volume of the sound sources. You can also use VU meters to determine the average modulation level of voices, for example. Do the automations allow you to vary different parameters, such as the volume? By "drawing" variations on the volume curve at the desired moments, we acquire a certain precision in the variation of volumes.
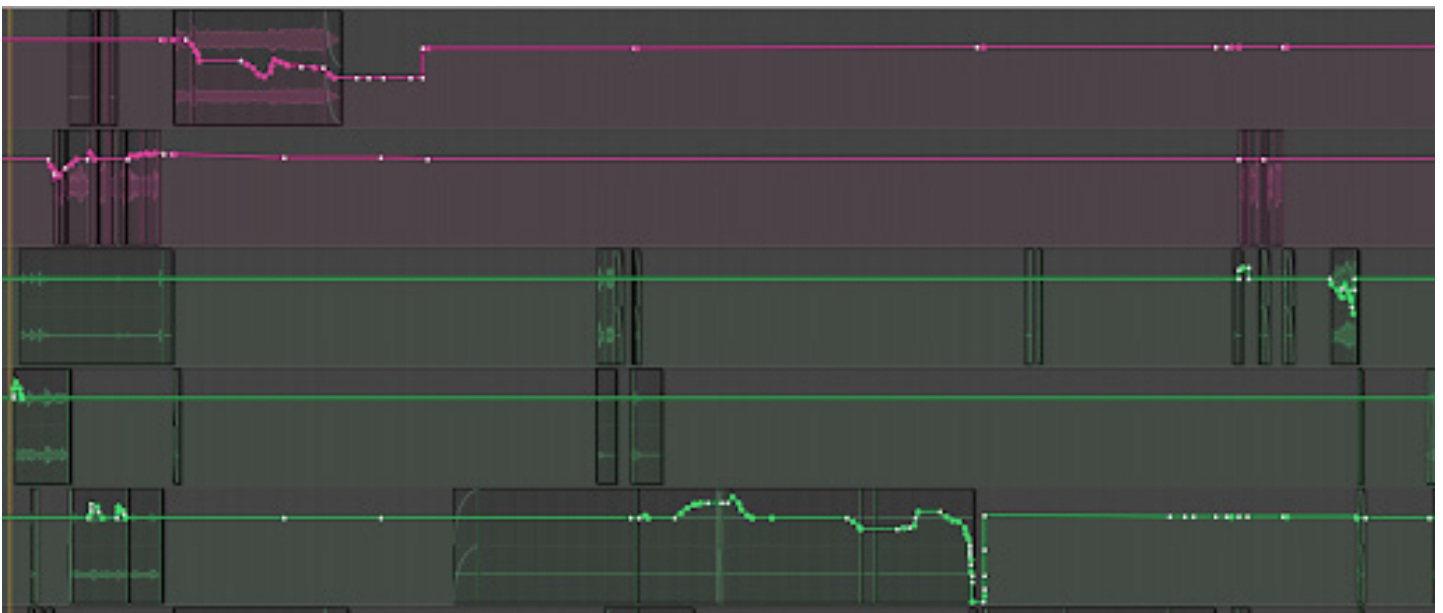
B. CREATION OF FADE-IN, FADE-OUT AND CROSS-FADE TO TAKE CARE OF THE BEGINNING, THE END AND THE SEQUENCE OF THE SECTIONS.

The use of fades generally completes the work done with the volume automations. Sometimes, a sound cut at a precise point creates a brief artifact or a parasitic noise during playback by the software. In this case, it is best to start each item with a short fade in and end it with a short fade out.

NARRATIONS

-0 dB

NARRATIONS_01-166

+0 dB
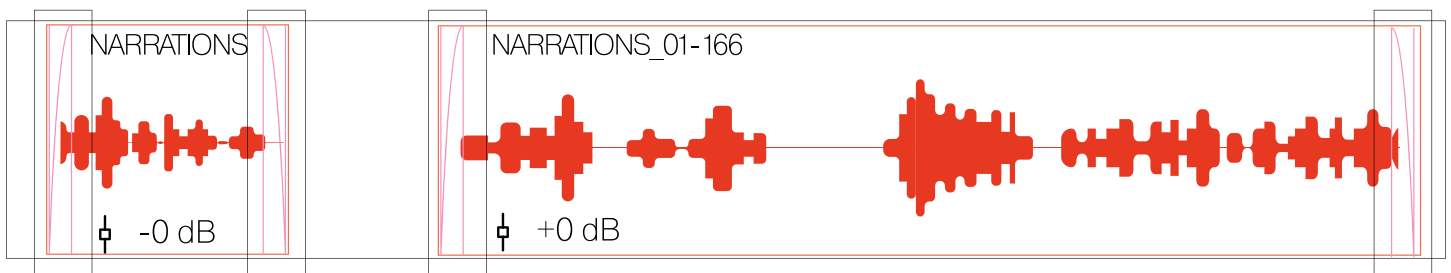
# C. USE OF THE FREQUENCY EQUALIZERS (EQ) TO ADJUST THE SOUND SPECTRUM FOR EACH VOICE

Equalizers are generally used to correct a sound by playing on the frequencies that make up the sound. For example, you can raise or lower the level of certain frequencies in a voice. Always make sure to give a slight boost to the high frequencies : they are the ones that make a voice more articulate and that the ear struggles to hear, and this, the older you get. Similarly, the mid-range frequencies of a nasal voice, or the low frequencies of a deep voice, can be slightly attenuated. Often, it is advisable to remove the low frequencies by adding a low-cut filter of 80 to 100 Hz, especially when it is a question of making up for a recording where the wind's blowing interferes with the listening experience.
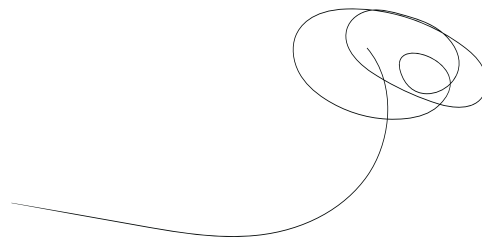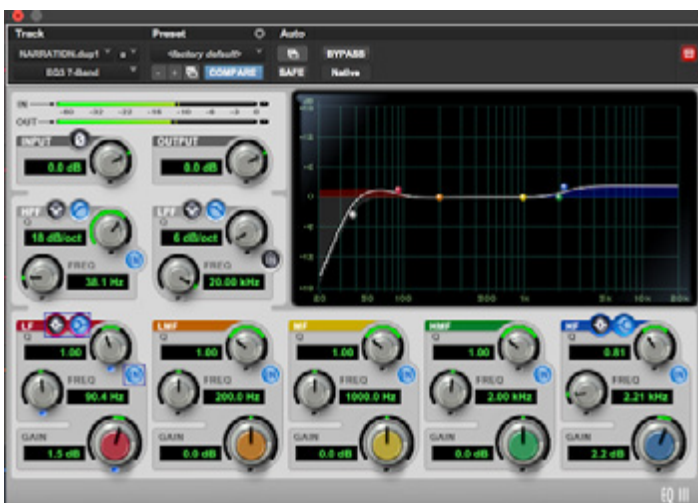
D. USE OF A VOICE COMPRESSOR (PLUG-IN)

Using a compressor allows you to adjust the modulation of the voices. Some voices modulate a lot. This is the case for people who speak with large volume differences, sometimes loud, sometimes soft. In this case, it is necessary to slightly increase the gain of the voice (about 3 dB) by adjusting the threshold of the limiter to the volume level of the voice. Be careful not to abuse the compressors, as the voices will quickly become distorted and sound artificial !
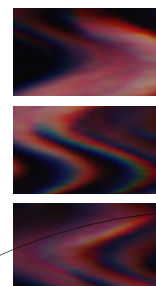
E. RE-LISTENING AND RETOUCHING

Listen, listen again a few days later, adjust, listen again... This is the key to a subtle and successful mix.

After a moment of intense work, the ear gets tired : it then becomes difficult to hear the details that are essential to a good mix. This is why it is important, at certain moments, to let your ear rest and come back to your work later.

On the other hand, seeing the settings and sequences in the editing software can become negative when listening to the sounds. Closing your eyes or turning your head away from your screen allows you to pay better attention.

F. SOUND EXPORT

Finally comes the export stage (render or bounce), which allows to render in a single file, generally stereo, all the sounds worked on. In the case of a podcast, two formats are preferred : .wav (uncompressed) for archiving and .mp3 (compressed) for posting online. It is then possible to render the entire project, i.e. the entire work session, or to render a temporal selection, as shown in the image below.

- Rendering Tags
- Rendering Time Selection
- File name
- File format

G. MASTERING

Mastering is a step that requires specific knowledge in sound engineering. This step comes at the end of the podcast post production process, consisting first of a careful listening of the product submitted to the mastering engineer.

Mastering consists of listening to audio content in the best possible conditions in order to evaluate if this content requires additional audio signal processing. This step is sometimes necessary to comply with different transmission standards, as well as to correct certain sound defects or anomalies. Mastering is therefore the finishing stage of the audio content : it calls upon the knowledge and know-how that are generally those of the mastering engineer.

Mastering is a notion that refers to the production of a matrix, which will serve as a mould in the serial reproduction of a sound content. Let's think of the production of vinyl records, where the content is of course the music ; the support, the record. Thus, the job of the mastering engineer is to adapt the sound to the chosen medium or support. His role is to optimize the sound object in anticipation of its distribution.

Spectral balancing, frequency range adjustment, compression, levelling and limiting are some of the processes that can help optimize audio content for a given medium or media. In the case of podcasts, maximum audio volume standards are, for example, -16 dB (LUFS) at a broadcaster like Apple.

Optimizing sound content generally involves two main criteria : the first, more technical, concerns the intelligibility of sound. It is linked to what is called the "signal-to-noise ratio". The second criterion, which can be described as "biological", is related to psychoacoustics. It concerns the listener's natural reactions to the intensity or quality of the sounds present. Throughout the mastering process, these two criteria must be given special and sustained attention.

The mastering engineer will listen to the sound content for the umpteenth time, which means that one will have the advantage of being able to "freshly" listen in the best possible conditions, having at his or her disposal excellent loudspeakers with acoustics favourable to good listening. These advantageous conditions will allow one to detect any problems that may have crept into the sound at earlier stages of production.
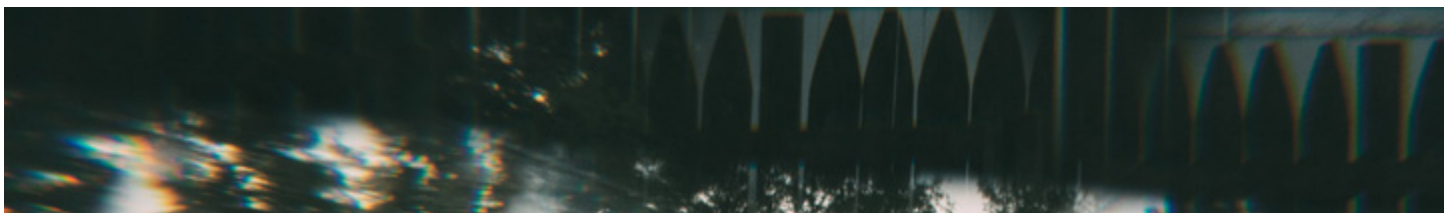
4. USE OF MUSIC AND SOUND BANKS

Music is often an essential component of a podcast, because it can provide rhythm, colour, or evoke an era and emotions. However, it is important to be aware of the legal limits of its use — the same goes for ambient sounds and sound effects. The ethical choices a director, producer or designer makes reflect the respect and consideration one has for the work of others.

In Canada, there is no specific legislation governing the use of music in podcasts. Unlike radio and film, it is very difficult to use licensed music in audio content that is not produced by a broadcaster governed by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) rules. In light of this, there are generally three choices for anyone wishing to use music in their podcast :

1. Compose your own music, adapted to the needs of your production ;

2. Use music available through paid or royalty-free sound banks - a quick and convenient choice ;

3. Contact the person who composed the selected music or who owns the rights to it in order to negotiate the rate for its use, which will depend on several criteria (duration, territories of distribution, etc.).

The existing sound or music banks are numerous and of variable quality. It is not always easy to find what you are looking for or to manipulate the sound with ease, even if more and more music banks provide the different tracks that make up a single song.

When faced with the challenges of using music in a podcast, it is again advisable to be inventive. Ask yourself what you really need in terms of music : is there another way to convey this or that emotion? Sometimes exploring other possibilities in terms of musicality can be very interesting. Indeed, a melody hummed timidly by one of your interlocutors can magnificently replace music from a sound bank !

Broadcasting your podcast

By Loïc Leroux-Gaullier

Broadcasting your podcast

By Loïc Leroux-Gaullier
digital strategy director
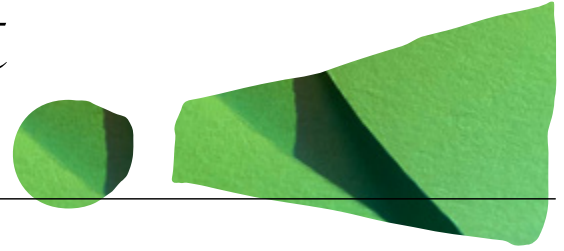
This last section deals with the distribution of a podcast. It lists useful information and suggests good practices and techniques to implement when thinking about the distribution of your sound project. Moreover, if this step comes after the post-production, it should ideally be considered well in advance, before the end of the project, because it is a decisive step : the moment when the listeners will hear the final product !

THE STAGES OF DISSEMINATION

| Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Uploading audio files and metadata to a host (free or paid)	Distributing the RSS feed in podcast applications (free)	Promotion of the podcast : website, newsletter, social networks, media, etc. using different tools (trailer, audiogram, etc.)

STEP 1 : PUTTING IT ONLINE ON A HOST

The host

The host has 4 important functions :

■ Stores audio content on the web (.mp3 - 320kbps recommended format) and metadata. *Note that the single upload on a host does not allow any visibility of the podcast, which is why it is important to undertake the other steps.*

■ Automatically generates an RSS feed of the podcast, respecting the updated standards.

■ Gather basic data on the podcast audience.

■ Produce a mini website for the podcast.

In addition, a host allows you to schedule in advance the date and time of release of your podcasts. It also allows you to format the text of the descriptions (bold, italic, paragraph break) of the podcast and the episodes.
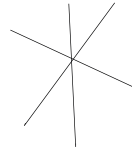
Here are a few references in terms of hosts specialized in hosting podcasts :

The subscription to a paid host costs about $48 per month.

- ANCHOR (completely free)
- ACAST OPEN (a free plan exists, excellent support)
- LIBSYN
- BUZZSPROUT
- BLUBRRY
- PODBEAN
- SIMPLECAST

EXAMPLE OF A HOST : ANCHOR

It is a reliable and efficient host. Here are some of Anchor's features :

It belongs to Spotify ;

It has 10 to 39% of the world market share ;

It is free to use, because in the United States it offers to insert advertising and keeps a portion of the revenue generated.

As of November 21, 2021, however, Anchor has some limitations :

One user account = 1 podcast. It is therefore not possible to manage all of one's podcasts from a single account ;

The description of the podcast is limited to 600 characters (including spaces and credits) ;

It is not possible to integrate a playlist, but only one audio player per episode.

STEP 2 : DISTRIBUTION ON APPLICATIONS

First, what is an RSS feed ? It is a file whose purpose is to list the metadata associated with audio content, such as the title or description of an episode of a podcast. It is from the RSS feed that the applications list and display the different podcasts. As for the applications, they are simple RSS feed readers, the equivalent of a browser that displays data from a website.

Here is some useful information about podcasting applications :

- About 90% of listeners in Canada use Apple Podcasts, Spotify or Google Podcasts. That's why your podcast must be available on these 3 applications on the day of its launch.

- Generally, other applications copy the Apple Podcasts directory.

- Soundcloud is rarely used as a podcast application.

List of actions prior to distributing the podcast on applications

Before submitting a podcast to the various applications,
you must have informed the host :

· The sound file(s) — with a "published" status ;

· The visual of the podcast ;

· Titles and descriptions of the podcast and each of the published episodes ;

· One category (or more) ;

· A language (example : French - Canada).

Google Podcasts and Apple Podcasts indicate about 5 working days before the podcast is available there. Warning : the delays are random, and a delay of 4 weeks has already been observed before the distribution is carried out on Google Podcasts. It is therefore important to take this variable into account in your distribution plan. Here is a trick to overcome the randomness of the distribution. As mentioned, in order to ensure the availability of a podcast on the main platforms on the day of its launch, it must be distributed well in advance, up to 5 weeks before its official release. If your podcast is not ready 5 weeks before its release, it is possible, so that it is distributed on the desired date, to inform on the host of temporary data, that is :

- A sound file : a rush sequence of at least 1 minute ;

- A visual : a free photo obtained on the site unsplash.com ;

- Titles and descriptions of the podcast (and of each episode) which can then consist of random text. By entering random text without a keyword, you ensure that no listener accesses your content before the official launch of the podcast ;

- One category (or more) ;

- A language (example : French - Canada). It is essential to indicate the correct language of your podcast, because an erroneous language will result in a refusal from the applications.

The next step is to replace this content with the correct one whenever possible, as all this information and data can be modified at any time. Generally, the changes made are quickly taken into account by the applications, i.e. within a few hours.
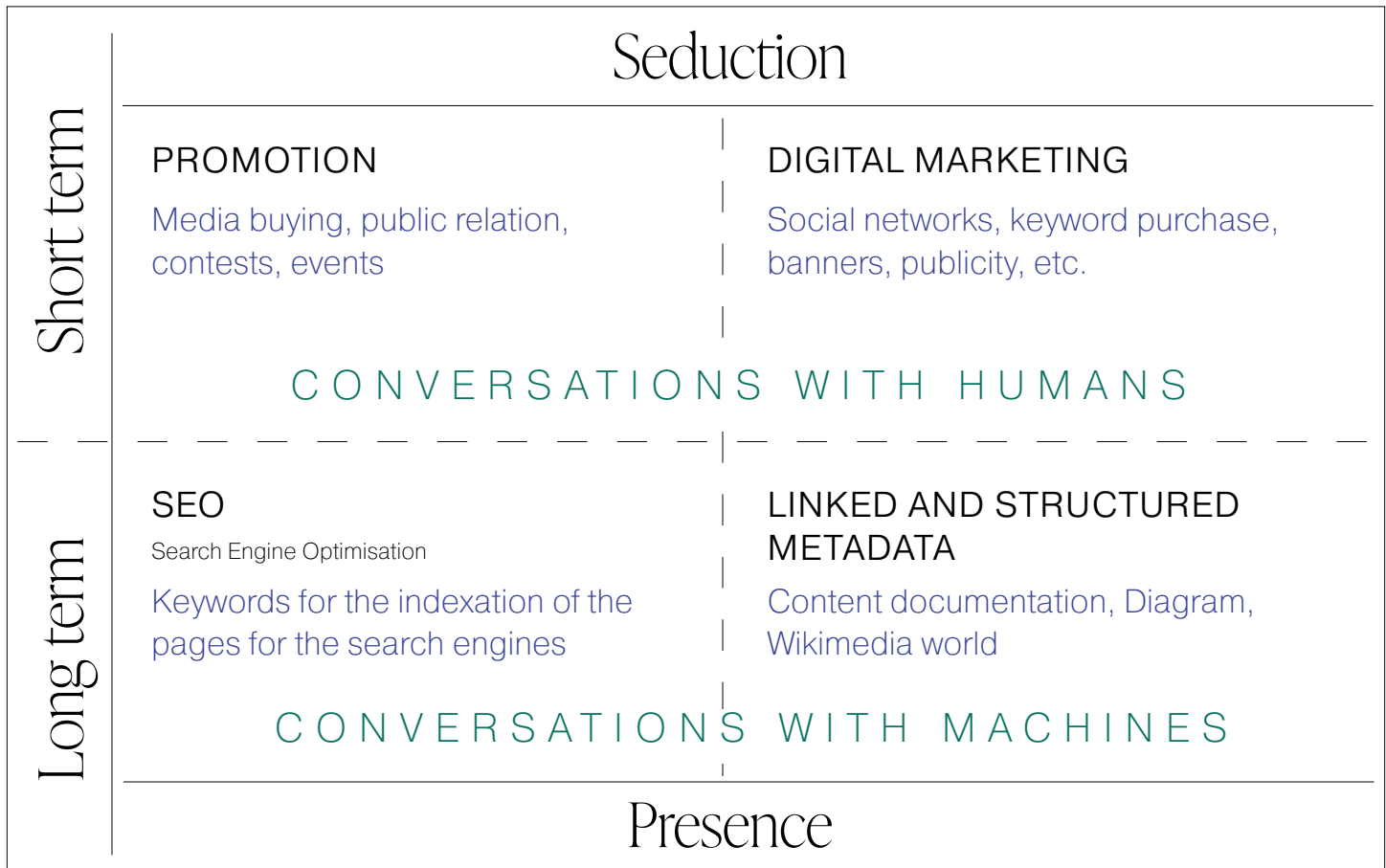
Submission of the podcast to the applications

Depending on the host, submission can be automatic : the host will then submit the podcast to the main applications with a single click. If the submission is not automatic, you must manually submit the podcast to each application. Manual submission : if automatic submission is not proposed, you must then indicate the URL of the RSS feed to the 3 portals mentioned below :

Applications	URL	Theoretical Timeframe (working days)	Prerequisites
Apple Podcasts	podcastsconnect.apple.com	5	Having a iTunes account (enter a credit card in iTunes)
Spotify	podcasters.spotify.com	2	Open a Podcasters' account at podcasters.spotify.com
Google Podcasts	podcastsmanager.google.com/add-feed?hl=en	5	None

Discoverability

THE 4 PILLARS OF DISCOVERABILITY

	Seduction	
Short term	**PROMOTION** Media buying, public relation, contests, events	**DIGITAL MARKETING** Social networks, keyword purchase, banners, publicity, etc.
	CONVERSATIONS WITH HUMANS	
Long term	**SEO** Search Engine Optimisation Keywords for the indexation of the pages for the search engines	**LINKED AND STRUCTURED METADATA** Content documentation, Diagram, Wikimedia world
	CONVERSATIONS WITH MACHINES	
	Presence	

Discoverability is the potential for content, available online, to be easily discovered by Internet users on the web. Discoverability is an important strategic element to consider for a podcast.
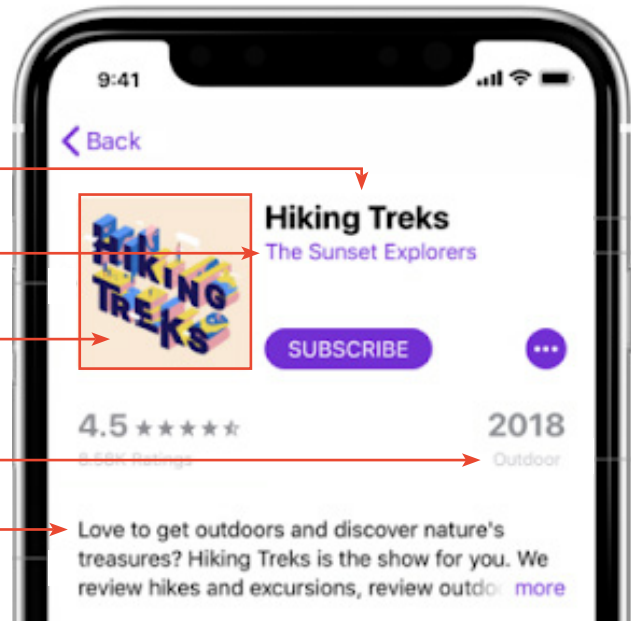
The first stage of discoverability is that the podcast appears in the results when the potential listener searches for it in their app. 90% of searches are done by entering the title of the podcast in the search engine of an application.

In order to appear among the first results, the podcast must contain enough occurrences of the keywords. Therefore, it is a matter of repeating the keywords that the potential listener might enter in the podcast metadata : for example, the title of the podcast or its subject.

This work of optimizing the metadata is essential for the podcast to be *discoverable*.

Concerning the generic metadata of a podcast, it is possible to generate manually :

- The title
- The author
- The visual

- The category
- The description

9:41

< Back

Hiking Treks
The Sunset Explorers

SUBSCRIBE

4.5 ★★★★☆

2018

Outdoor

Love to get outdoors and discover nature's treasures? Hiking Treks is the show for you. We review hikes and excursions, review outdo more

The review of the podcast as well as its year are automatically generated by the application.

Concerning the metadata of an episode, it is possible to generate manually :

- The title ;
- The description ;
- The visual
  (by default, the one of the podcast) ;
- The season number ;
- The episode number ;
- The title of the .mp3 file ;
- The date of publication ;
- The size ;
- The duration.

Optimizing the metadata of your podcast

8%
Visual

21%
Brand

50%
Host

72%
Word of mouth

73%
Description of
episode/series
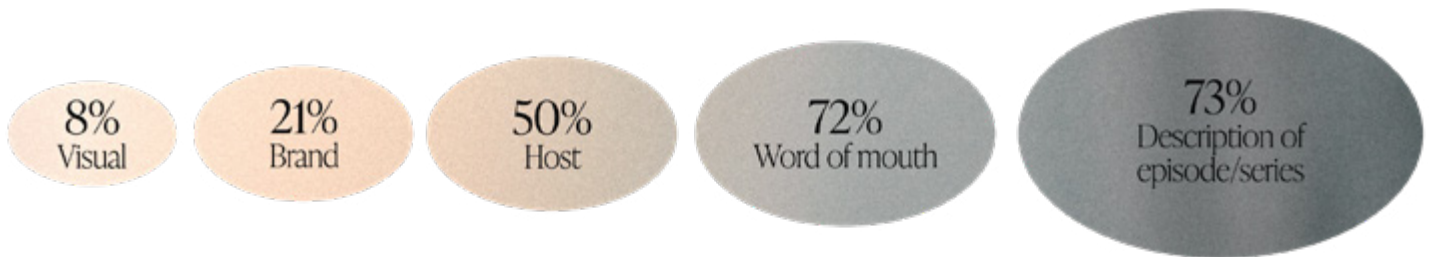
Where to focus your efforts to convert a potential listener into an actual listener ?

Surprisingly perhaps, the previous survey shows that the artwork is a determining factor for only 8% of respondents... On the other hand, descriptions and word-of-mouth are for about 3 out of 4 listeners.

Conclusion : focus your efforts on writing great descriptions and mobilizing your community to relay the podcast to their networks.

The titles

A good title must meet the following criteria :

Be optimized for search	Be unique : test your title in Apple Podcasts and Spotify to avoid repetition !	Be easy to spell and therefore avoid units of measurement, numbers, homonyms

In addition, a good title is usually specific and short, in addition to being catchy, memorable and unique to your concept ! The title of the podcast should be highlighted in the description to generate an indelible memory.

The descriptions
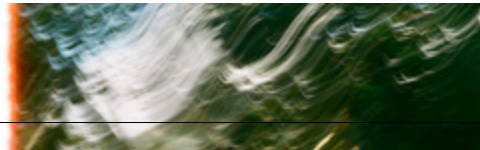
A good podcast description should be both informative and catchy. Eye-catching — that's why the first few characters need to be worked on to appear in application previews.

What to include?

- A hook;

- What? genre
  (i.e. documentary, interview, fiction...);

- What? Content. Make a concise and specific promise to the listener;

- Who? Host (especially if well known), guests;

- When? Frequency of episodes;

- How? Style, tone
  (e.g. intimate portraits, friendly interviews, testimonials, soundscape, etc.).
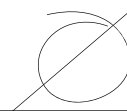
Pitfalls to avoid :

- Not specifying the category/genre;

- Entering irrelevant content
  (e.g., guest biography);

- Writing a text that is too long;

- Not adequately formatting it
  (line breaks, bullets);

- Using the past or the future. The present should be preferred : the podcast is content that will last for a long time;

- Mentioning a one-time event (e.g., festival, conference, etc.) that might suggest that the content is no longer current.

Example of a good description :

TWENTY THOUSAND HERTZ PODCAST :

"The stories behind the world's most recognizable and interesting sounds."

73 characters. Not one too many. An excellent description, i.e. concise and precise.
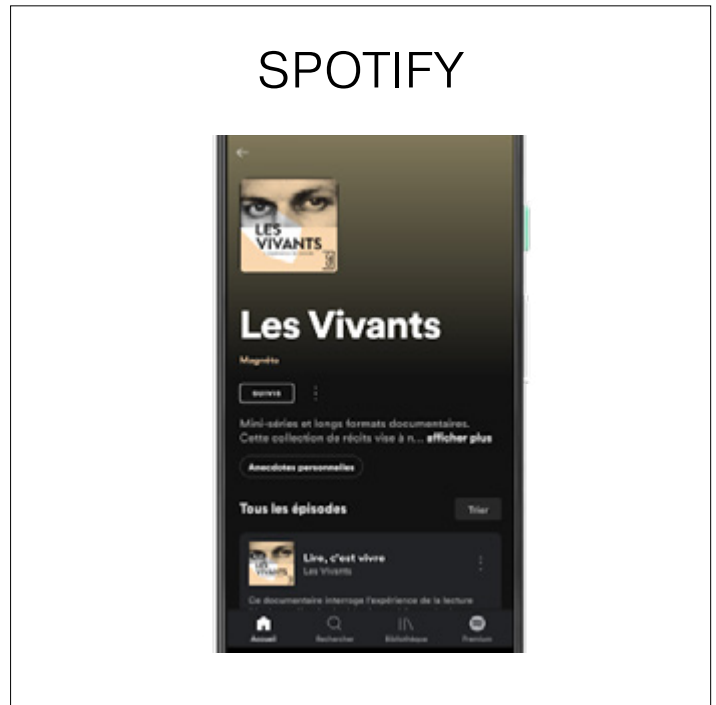
To ensure that the description is complete, do not hesitate to have it reread by someone from outside the project and ask them what they understand from it and if they are missing information to understand what the podcast is about.

The visual identity
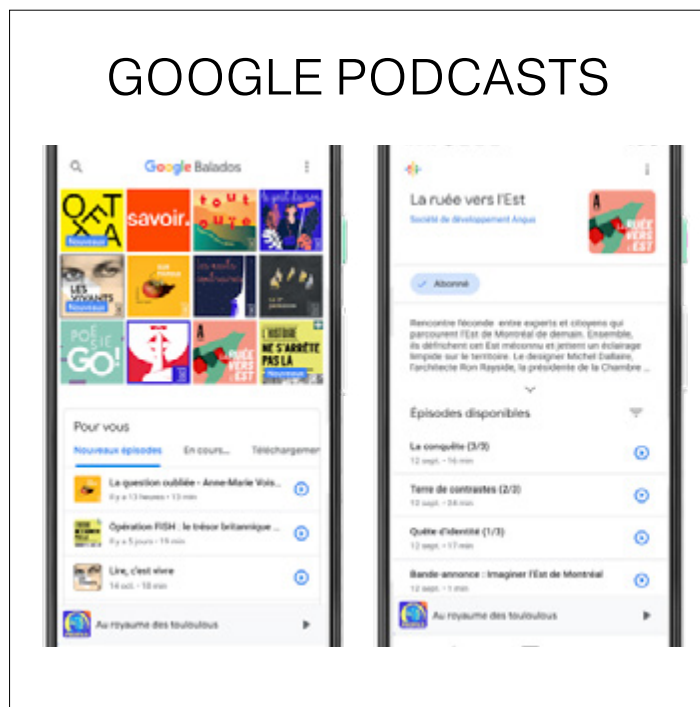# Display on different applications

APPLE PODCASTS
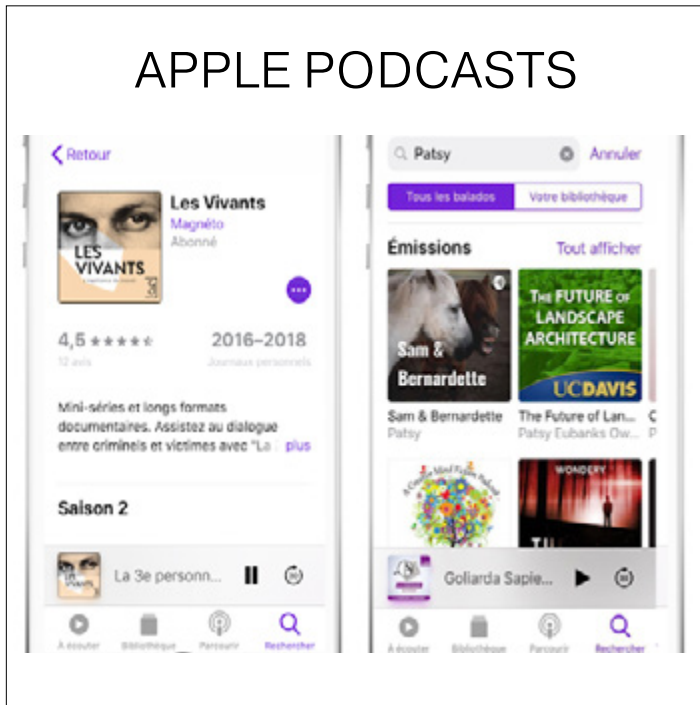
SPOTIFY

GOOGLE PODCASTS

The composition of the visual

Since the previews are the size of a postage stamp, certain compositional principles must be respected.

1/3

2/3

Technical characteristics of the image

- Dimensions : 3000 x 3000 pixels
- Resolution : 72 dpi
- PNG (recommended) or JPEG format
- Color space : RGB
- Size : 512 kb maximum

Marks are commonly placed at the top, centered or on the right ;

The title should take up about ⅓ of the thumbnail to be readable on a smartphone.

Avoid :

- Visuals too rich in detail ;

- The neighbouring colour ranges ;

- White or black backgrounds, as the visual will not display correctly in Apple Podcasts and Spotify ;

- Commonplace visuals : individual at the microphone, headphones, studio, etc.

Preferred :

- Synthetic visuals ;

- The contrast between the elements ;

- Visuals that complement or illustrate the subject.

STEP 3 : PROMOTION

Without communication around the distribution of a podcast, there will unfortunately be no listening, because your podcast will not be promoted by the application. That's why you need to think about an adequate promotion strategy.

Here are some examples of promotional activities that can be carried out :

- Sequencing communications to measure the impact of each communication action undertaken ;

- Communicate in your target channels ;

- Focus on a single Call-To-Action such as "Subscribe" or "Tell others about it".

The release strategy in the case of several episodes
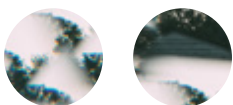
Episodes : grouped or staggered release ?

Grouped release relevant if :

- 5 episodes or less ;

- Individual episodes ;

- Few resources available for communications.

Numbering the episodes ?

Does the order matter ?

If yes, then put the numbering in the title of the episodes. If not, do not number the contents.

Staggered release over time relevant if :

- 6 episodes and more ;

- Series ;

- Many resources for communication ;

- Very catchy content, strong suspense element.

Subscriptions

Why ask listeners to subscribe ?

The subscription allows :

- Saving the podcast in your library so you can come back to it later ;

- Receiving notifications when new episodes are broadcast ;

- Automatically downloading new episodes.

My podcast's web page

The web page of a podcast is an essential communication medium that should not be neglected. As a proof, in 2020, 35% of the listening took place on a computer according to the firm Edison Research.

Your web page must be equipped with audio players, the integration code of which is provided by the host.

Designing a promotional strategy

In the design of a promotional strategy, it is essential to identify a target audience to ensure optimal outreach of one's podcast project. To do this, it is possible to refer to the following questionnaire, which aims to characterize the project and then identify the target audience to associate with it and the channels through which it will be possible to reach them.

- What is the purpose of my podcast : to educate ? to raise awareness ? to entertain ? to provide a special experience ?

- What are the themes addressed, what is the genre, the tone, who are the protagonists (guests, participants, narrator ?)

- What audience might be interested in my project ? Demographics or communities of interest ?

- What are the communication channels through which we can reach it ?

Communicating on social networks

In order to feed the communications on the podcast, it is essential to collect support material, both textual and visual. This content must be collected throughout the project's execution and post-production phase : it is better to think about it sooner rather than later !

Textual support elements :

- Quotes ;

- Transcript.

Visual aids :

- Photos taken during the recordings ;

- Photos of the explored topic ;

- Photos of personalities or speakers ;

- Declinations of the visual for social networks ;

- Audiograms.

Good example of the use of quotes :

The audiogram

The audiogram is a video created from a still visual and an .mp3, animated by a sound wave. It is useful for sharing a trailer and excerpts from your podcast on social networks.

Magnéto

···

Make yourself comfortable in a quiet place. Turn on your speakers, or better yet, put on your headphones. Breath deeply.
Ready? Enter the Abbey:
https://podnews.net/podcast/1438703912/listen

Suggested tool for designing an audiogram : (www.headliner.app).

What link should be included in a publication featuring an episode ?

A deep link, also called "smart link" or "magic link". A deep link identifies and directly opens the podcast application installed on the user's smartphone. If the user is using a computer, the link directs them to the associated web page. It avoids multiplying the links to all the applications, which would have the effect of reducing the conversion rate.

Get yours at podnews.net or chartable.com.

Communicate via other channels

The launch event can be a great opportunity to :

- Build an email database for subsequent communications ;

- Receive feedback on your project ;

- Co-present with a partner association or organization that also has an audience ;

- To introduce podcast projects to newcomers, and thus increase the community of listeners and creators !

Traditional media

Provision of a press kit (including a press kit with an interview, photos of filming, trailer) to journalists covering podcast news, art and culture, technology, digital, etc.
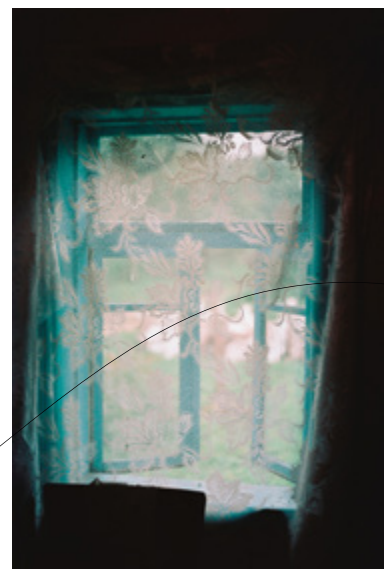
The trailer

The trailer is a very practical promotional tool.
Role before release of the episode(s) :

- Submit RSS feed ;

- Recruiting subscribers with the "Subscribe" call to action.

Role at all times :

- Informs about the format : interviews between X people, presented by... ;

- Informs about the episode schedule ;

- Informs about the style.

Programming
By Marie-Laurence Rancourt

Magnéto

Artistic Director: Marie-Laurence Rancourt

ABOUT MAGNÉTO

Magnéto is a non-profit creation and production organization that promotes bold and meaningful contemporary artistic activity. Its projects bring together different disciplines, professional and non-professional artists, and have in common a sensitivity to language, speech and listening. Magnéto invents creations that transgress genres, bearing traces of radio, theater, literature, and cinema.

Marie-Laurence Rancourt

Artistic Director

Marie-Laurence Rancourt has degrees in anthropology and sociology. In 2016, she co-founded Magnéto, a creative organization that brings to life artistic projects that demonstrate a sensitivity to language, speech and listening. It is from this place that she invents idea-friendly forms: L'écorce et le noyau, La punition, La nuit Myra Cree, Les travaux et les jours, Gemellus, Aalaapi, L'écoute d'une émotion, Radio Live, Magnéto on air, O.R.
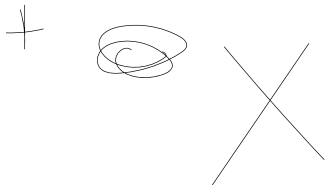
CREATIVE PROJECTS

Past

Upcoming

Sound creations

- *Les travaux et les jours*, audio documentary, 2022.

- *La nuit Myra Cree*, audio creation, 2020.

- *AALAAPI, faire silence pour entendre quelque chose de beau*, audio documentary, 2019.

- *La Punition*, audio documentary, 2019.

- *L'écorce et le noyau*, audio documentary, 2018.

Shows

- *AALAAPI*, play created at the Centre du théâtre d'Aujourd'hui, 2020.

- *Radio Live*, play created at the Théâtre aux Écuries, 2016.

Publications

- *The Podcast That Takes You Further*, pedagogical guide, 2022.

- *AALAAPI*, Collection Pièces, Atelier 10, 2020. Finalist for the Governor General's Award of Canada.

Radio interviews

- *Jour et nuit*, 2020-2021.

- *Les heures d'été*, 2019.

Events

- *Le Festival Résonance*, annual festival, 2017-2018-2019 editions.

Shows

- *L'écoute d'une émotion*, play created at Théâtre Espace Go, May 2023, revived at the NAC in 2023-2024.
  Co-produced by the National Arts Centre French Theatre.

- *Magnéto on air : la radio prend vie*, 2023.

- *L'entretien*, play.

- *Beauce*, play.

Sound Creations

- *Gemellus*, sound creation, 2023.

- *L'écoute d'une émotion*, sound creation, 2023.

Publications

- *O. R*, story.

Transmit

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

Magnéto's workshops are an engagement with the public imagined around our creations.

These activities allow the public to enter Magnéto's creative workshop, by meeting the artists behind the projects, by participating in their research and creation process and by attending the making of the projects, by joining a rehearsal room for example!

These original workshops are conceived as places of discussion and public research, adapted to all and allowing the public to enter into the creative process of a work.

For all the information about our workshops and to register, visit our website.

With the collaboration of the Monument-National & The National Theatre School of Canada.

Animate

Whether in front of an audience or in the studio, Magnéto prepares and conducts interviews using a singular approach, insisting on listening, depth and boldness in the use of questions.

In particular, Magnéto creates situations for exchanges and encounters between the cultural and artistic communities and citizens.

Interviews can be recorded and broadcast in podcast format for wider distribution.
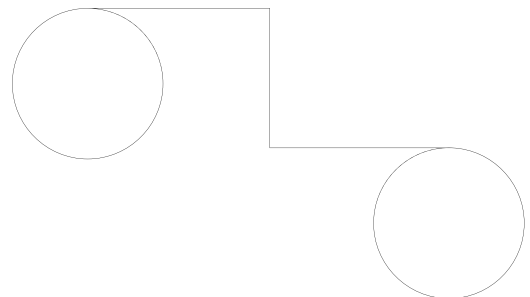
Collaborate

Magnéto also signs projects led with partners.

Some of Magnéto's partners :

Espace Go, NAC French Theatre, Théâtre de Quat'Sous, Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Musée de la civilisation, Société de développement Angus, Société des alcools du Québec, Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec.

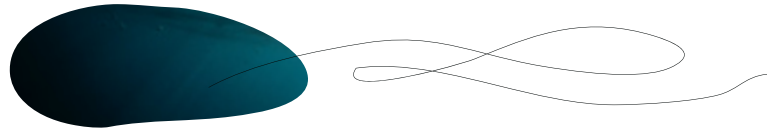You want to collaborate with Magnéto?

Send us a message!
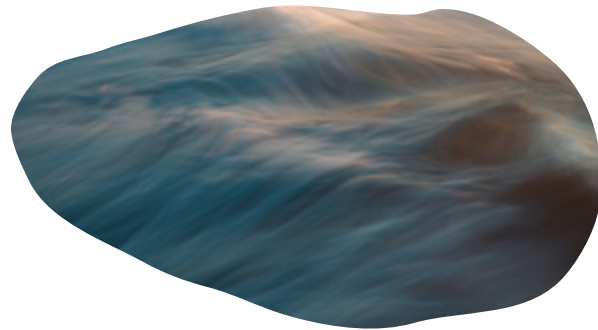
Practical information

General & artistic direction : Marie-Laurence Rancourt

E-mail : contact@magnetobalado.com

THE AUTHORS

Guillaume Campion

Guillaume Campion is a composer and sound artist. Combining music, speech and in situ sound recordings, his works are at the crossroads of electroacoustic music and sound documentary. Co-founder of Trames, a collective dedicated to digital audio creation and the democratization of sound art, he is also very active in the field of cultural mediation and as a trainer.

www.tramesaudio.com   soundcloud.com/guillaume-campion

Daniel Capeille

Daniel Capeille is a navigator in the undulations, surges and backwash of sound, who not only collects seas of oil -understanding silences- which he particularly cherishes and for which he causes a certain swell (Prize " Paysage Sonore " at the Phonurgia Nova Awards).

Antonin Wyss

Antonin Wyss is an improviser and craftsman, passionate about music, radio and sound. He has been playing with keyboards and falling asleep with the radio since he was very young. Guided by his research and his desires, he held various positions in Montreal radio stations for several years. First as an on-air director, researcher, then as a host, producer and manager, he then turned to the podcast format and co-founded the Magnéto organization in 2016. He has participated in the production of more than 80 podcasts as sound recordist, editor, composer and sound designer.

Daniel Deshays

Daniel Deshays is a sound recordist, sound director and university professor at the Ecole nationale supérieure des arts et techniques du théâtre, in Paris.

Loïc Leroux-Gaullier

Loïc Leroux-Gaullier is passionate about immersive experiences. He is on the lookout for all techniques to promote audio content. His motto : "do whatever it takes". He explores metadata optimization as well as best practices in terms of marketing, all with one objective in mind : that the projects reach their full potential and reach their target audience. Loïc has a master's degree in management. He has worked in the renewable energy sector, insurance, and for a famous e-commerce site before joining Magnéto in December 2018.

PUBLISHING TEAM

Artistic direction —————————— Marie-Laurence Rancourt

Conception and production —————— Magnéto

Writing ——————————————— Guillaume Campion, Daniel Capeille, Daniel Deshays, Antonin Wyss et Loïc Leroux-Gaullier

Linguistic revision —————————— Marilou Cloutier

Translation ————————————— Marie-Paule Berthiaume

Graphic design ————————————— Don Carlo

Thanks to Raphaëlle Bodenez, Dominique Cormier, Zoé Gagnon-Paquin, Solène Quesnel, Séléna Théret and Alexandra Viau.

Magnéto also thanks la Machinerie des arts for their contribution.

Follow Magnéto