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“We’re looking out through a window to a field of weeds and sand and stones”: The Stadium Broadcast, a radio memorial

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3 **“We’re looking out through a window to a field of weeds and sand and stones”: The**
4 **Stadium Broadcast, a radio memorial**
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3 **“We’re looking out through a window to a field of weeds and sand and stones”:**

4 **The Stadium Broadcast, a radio memorial**

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8 **Abstract:**

9 This paper explores the scope of small-scale radio to create an auditory geography of place. It
10 focuses on the short term art radio project The Stadium Broadcast, which was staged in
11 November 2014 in an earthquake-damaged sports stadium in Christchurch, New Zealand.
12 Thousands of buildings and homes in Christchurch have been demolished since the February
13 22, 2011 earthquake, and while Lancaster Park sports stadium is still standing, it has been
14 unused since that date and its future remains uncertain. The Stadium Broadcast constructed a
15 radio memorial to the Park’s 130 year history through archival recordings, the memories of
16 local people, observation of its current state, and a performed site-specificity. The Stadium
17 Broadcast reflected on the spatiality of radio sounds and transmissions, memory, post-disaster
18 transitionality, and the im-permanence of place.
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Introduction

A long sequence of earthquakes affecting Christchurch city and the broader Canterbury region began on 4 September 2010, with the most damaging aftershock on 22 February, 2011, a magnitude 6.3 quake located under the hills on the southern edge of the city (Geonet, n.d.). In the central city 1240 buildings had been demolished between the September 4, 2010 earthquake and February 20, 2015 (Gates, 2015), and a further 7050 houses in the east of the city along the Avon River (Stylianou, 2014), as a result of damage, land instability, and the relative costs of repair or rebuild. In response to this large-scale erasure of the city's built environment the national government appointed a planning body, the Christchurch Central Development Unit (CCDU) in 2012 to re-design the central city.

This paper focuses on the Stadium Broadcast, a post-quake social art project that engaged with a specific Christchurch location, the sports ground Lancaster Park, which has been closed to the public since the February 2011 earthquake. It was established in 1881 and developed into a sponsored stadium primarily for rugby and cricket in the late 1990s, known most recently as AMI Stadium on Lancaster Park. In the planning process for rebuilding the city Lancaster Park's future is unresolved, subject to insurance claims and conflicting assessments of the damage it sustained. The CCDU plan proposes a new covered stadium in the central city, but its cost, location and necessity are contested. In the meantime, cricket matches have moved to a new facility and rugby games to a temporary stadium.

For the Stadium Broadcast, Australian artist group Field Theory, with the support of local art organisations, established a temporary radio station in a caravan in Lancaster Park from November 14-17, 2014. During 72 hours of continuous broadcasting the Stadium Broadcast created a radio space in which to collect memories of Lancaster Park, excavating histories of the old stadium, and gathering responses to its current condition and speculations on its future. This paper examines how the radio format of the Stadium Broadcast provided a resonant space in which to reconstruct the history of the park, and articulate the importance of place in post-quake Christchurch. This discussion contextualises the broadcast in local theorising about the transitional city, and in broader reflections on liveness, space, and memory in radio. The paper argues that The Stadium Broadcast was a radio memorial that inscribed the stadium through words and radio waves across the space of the central city, redistributing its physical structure across the empty spaces left by other buildings that contained their own stories and memories.

Radio, Space, Memory

Radio sounds and radio waves trace particular patterns in the urban environment, describing forms of space that overlay or interweave the visually-understood structures of physical space. Many theorists have now identified differences between the shape of space understood through sound and through vision, beginning with the publication of McLuhan and Carpenter's 1960 article 'Acoustic Space' (Cavell, 1999; Gow, 2001; Schafer, 2007). Critiques of what Smith, for example, calls the "persistence of an ideology of the visual in cultural geography" (1994 233) are now well established (Rodaway, 1994; Connor, 1997; Smith, 2000; Matless, 2005; Barns, 2014). Rodaway uses the term 'Auditory geography' to describe the "sensuous experience of sounds in the environment"; the properties of the city that can be heard, or more actively listened to (1994, 84). By foregrounding the experience of sound, auditory geography describes a more immersive experience of space than is encountered visually. Because our bodies make and physically sense sounds, the auditory world surrounds us and we participate in it. Like the related concepts of acoustic space and the soundscape (Schafer, 1994; 2007), the space of the auditory "has no favored focus. [...] The eye focuses, pinpoints, abstracts, locating each object in physical space, against a background; the ear, however, favours sound from any direction." (Carpenter, cited in Schafer, 2007, p.83). In auditory space, Connor observes, "one can hear many sounds simultaneously, where it is impossible to see different visual objects at the same time without disposing them in a unified field of vision." (1997, p. 207). Walking through a city, for example, the ordered space understood through visually interpreting the location of physical objects in relation to each other is experienced simultaneously with a permeable, multilayered, immersive multiplicity of sound.

Connor argues that a shift away from single perspectival space towards auditory understandings of space was intensified by the development of radio in the early twentieth century, and in particular the way wireless transmission escaped the 'material mediation' of previous wired technologies (1997, p.208). He identifies the characteristics of radio waves as a metaphor for the way sound is able to 'pervade and to integrate objects and entities which the eye kept separate', and refers to radio's wirelesses as sound becoming "the enacted form of electromagnetic fluctuation itself." (1997, pp. 207, 208). However, the physical characteristics of radio and sound waves are so different that it is useful to consider the ways in which radio waves themselves describe a form of spatiality that is not at all auditory but exemplifies "plural, permeated space" (Connor, 1997, p. 207). Radio transmissions are

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3 ephemeral, fleeting, overtly intangible, and always moving across space. Christchurch, like
4 all cities, is overlaid with radio transmissions. They flow across visible spaces, permeating
5 physical structures, such that the people and objects of the city are “bathed in radio waves”
6 (Cage, qtd. in Milutis, 2006, p. 98). Radio, then, creates two kinds of spaces that are, in
7 Carpenter’s words “made by the thing itself, not space containing a thing” (qtd. in Rodaway
8 1994, p. 114): the plural permeating spaces of radio-mediated sound, and electromagnetic,
9 radio, waves. Spatiality is a metaphor for radio waves understood in practice by many radio
10 artists (Black, 2010), in concepts such as “electronic / digital space”, “sound objects” and
11 “radio space”, “electromagnetic ‘Hertzian Space’” (Black, 2010, p. 201), “radiophonic space”
12 (Fritz, 2008), or as a material for making art (Kanouse, 2011, p. 201).

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14 For a city in ‘transition’, in which the physical presence of buildings and empty spaces
15 has been in an ongoing state of change because of earthquake damage, demolition,
16 construction, and alternative land uses, a fluid and open sense of auditory spatiality may
17 make more sense than a visually-based desire for order. As the city has been reconfigured
18 since February 2011, it is often noted that people find it difficult to locate the self in space,
19 because the physical markers of space have gone (Parker and Bennett, 2013, p. 4). The long
20 series of earthquakes redefined the materiality of the city, and with its physical structures
21 ‘gone’ and/or reconstituted, the auditory geography of central Christchurch was transformed.
22 Diggers, demolition, birdsong, and near-silence replaced the sounds of vehicles and people,
23 once the buildings against which sounds resonated had largely gone. At the same time,
24 however, the sounds and transmission patterns of radio stations have changed comparatively
25 little since the earthquakes. Pre-quake radio stations continue to broadcast with little change
26 in transmitter location, evidencing the medium’s “rugged and inexpensive materialities”
27 (Bessire and Fisher, 2013, p.364). Sound and radio waves are articulated by a complex
28 system of transmitters, microphones, music sources, and people, located in broader structures
29 of ownership and control (Fuller, 2005), in which the physical and auditory configurations of
30 radio are intertwined. In that sense, the Stadium Broadcast was produced by the February
31 2011 earthquake, the empty disused stadium, the studio and sleeping caravans, the networks
32 of online and broadcast transmission, and the artist networks that brought Field Theory to that
33 location for that project. These are elements of what Bessire and Fisher refer to as “radio
34 fields—the specific constellations of cultural, political, and socioeconomic ‘relations of
35 force’ [...] occasioned by radio media” (2013, p.364). The Stadium Broadcast’s radio field
36 encompassed the relations of force shaping post-quake Christchurch, and the cultural,
37 political and socioeconomic past and future of the city.

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3 In contrast, the passage of transmission and content means that radio's ontology of
4 liveness makes it inherently fleeting, transitory, and always already a memory. As a form of
5 secondary orality, in Ong's terms, radio shares the quality of sound that it "exists only when
6 it is going out of existence" (2013, p. 32), such that stopping the movement of sound is
7 impossible - unlike a moving image "frame fixed on the screen", sound freezes only as
8 silence (Ong, 2013, p. 32). While the content of radio can be recorded and replayed, radio's
9 simultaneous electromagnetic transmission and reception can only be experienced, in
10 auditory space, moment by moment. Ephemeral, and strongly connected to the site of
11 hearing, radio is closely associated with memory creation and recollection, shaping both
12 collective and personal memory (Tacchi, 2003; Labelle, 2006; Liebes, 2006). As LaBelle
13 observes, hearing the radio in a specific place and moment creates a strong connection
14 between sound, space, and time, demonstrating some of the overlay of radio sound in the
15 spaces of everyday life (2006, p. 23).

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17 Artist Sarah Kanouse draws on the memory-building role of radio in 'radio memorials',
18 works that use small-scale transmissions to create spaces of commemoration, in a practice
19 that explicitly treats radio waves spatially. She also draws an analogy between the particular
20 spatiality and materiality of radio waves and the creation and recollection of memory:
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23 As a material, radio is eternal and ephemeral; profoundly elemental, yet invisible and unstable.
24 Electromagnetic radiation, of which radio is a type, can move infinitely through the vacuum of space.
25 On earth, however, transmissions are limited temporally and geographically. Radio waves dissipate,
26 can be blocked by objects and are distorted by the interference of solar radiation. Taken as metaphor,
27 these material characteristics echo the selective and hazy processes of cultural memory (2011, p. 202).

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29 As a material for memory, "the radio memorial functions as what James Young has
30 described as a 'counter-monument' in that it refuses to fix historical meaning. Instead, it
31 performs the contingency and instability that is characteristic of all acts of memory" (p. 202).
32 Kanouse's own works are intentionally invisible interventions, possibly inaudible, depending
33 on whether anyone within the transmission range is listening, but her intention is to explore
34 the 'ghostly presence' of the broadcast in space rather than any moment of reception. The
35 spatial presence of the radio waves carrying a particular sound is more important than
36 whether the sound is heard.

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38 A spatiality of flow and multiple perspectives, as evoked by the aural, reflects the form of
39 Christchurch city described as 'transitional' in local theorising. In Christchurch the new
40 creative and environmental organisations that responded to the earthquakes adopted the term
41 'transitional' to describe their projects, to move away from perceptions of limited and time-

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3 bound ‘temporary’ events. The transitional was then included as a component of the official
4 plans for rebuilding the city (Christchurch City Council, 2011a; 2011b; Christchurch
5 Earthquake Recovery Authority, 2012). In those official documents and other City Council
6 uses, the transitional tends to be conflated with the temporary, and with art events that attract
7 visitors and residents to the central city. In the more critical responses to those plans from arts
8 and architecture organisations the transitional is framed as an open-ended experimental and
9 creative space between a known past and uncertain future, with a potential for influencing the
10 future, and not simply marking the time before the new city is established (Bennett, Boidi, &
11 Boles, 2012 and 2013; Bennett, Dann, Johnson & Reynolds, 2014). Like other transitional art
12 projects the Stadium Broadcast was built on public engagement, using active strategies to
13 draw responses from people who had stories to tell of Lancaster park (Anderson, 2014). In
14 these the stadium was articulated as a site of memory, in which memory was enacted as an
15 “active social process” (Lavrence 2005, 32), through story-telling by visitors who narrated
16 the space in a form of “traumatic storytelling” that may reconcile loss (Davidson 2009, 340).
17 It resonated with other public art projects that engage with public space and memory (for
18 example Curtis 2004; Message 2005; Bishop 2016). The broader transitional materiality of
19 Christchurch was a recurring theme throughout the broadcast, as the hosts reflected on the
20 experience of being in the city, and conversations returned to the ongoing trials of navigating
21 around road works, and particular developments of post-quake businesses.

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35 This paper explores the way the Stadium Broadcast functioned as a radio memorial,
36 creating a lived history of the stadium through sound and radio waves in a spatiality that
37 extended beyond its physical space into the city. It was an expression of the transitional city,
38 a work that moved in both form and content from the past to a speculative future. This
39 research is grounded in my own experience of listening to the broadcast and visiting the
40 stadium during the broadcast, in an audio ethnography along the lines proposed by Susan
41 Smith (2000). Recordings of the broadcast have remained online, and so textual analysis of
42 the content outside the broadcast moment refers to those sources, albeit disconnected from
43 the space and time of transmission. References to those recordings are notated by the
44 numbering system used by Field Theory to catalogue them in the online archive retained on
45 Spreaker.com, with the time at which the quoted words begin within each recording. Because
46 the recordings are not time stamped it is not possible to give consistent times and dates for
47 every piece of quoted material. Textually, this analysis focuses on the aspects of liveness,
48 intimacy, and aurality in the broadcast talk (Chignell, 2009). As a text the broadcast does not
49 conform to the usual genres of radio analysis (Tolson, 2006), being primarily a live, long-
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3 form art-radio performance. However it includes elements of sports radio, talk radio, phone-
4 ins, features, and media event.
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8 **The stadium Broadcast**

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10 The Stadium Broadcast was fundamentally a web and transmission radio station based in
11 a caravan on the site of a demolished spectator stand at Lancaster Park. From there five
12 members of Field Theory broadcast for 72 hours a programme dedicated to the role of the
13 stadium in the sporting, cultural, and social life of the city. The broadcast's duration, from
14 10am Friday to 10am Monday over the long Christchurch Anniversary Weekend, was an
15 endurance performance intended to echo the cricket test matches once played there.
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17 Broadcasting from a caravan located the project in the long history of live sports broadcasts
18 from mobile outside broadcast (OB) units, and Lancaster Park was itself the site of many
19 national and international broadcasts. From the caravan Field Theory referenced both the
20 mobile forms local radio stations took after the 22 February quake, and the global reach of
21 international sporting fixtures, via a web stream.
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28 The transmission aspect of the Stadium Broadcast was enabled by particular policy
29 allowance for low powered FM radio in New Zealand, while the social value of the broadcast
30 emphasises the loss of locally focused radio in New Zealand's concentrated industry. Radio
31 in New Zealand is dominated by an internationally owned duopoly that shares the
32 commercial radio audience across matching radio formats, counterbalanced by the public
33 broadcaster Radio New Zealand, and a number of more socially, culturally, and locally,
34 focused access, student, Iwi (Maori), and ethnic stations (Myllylahti, 2014). For Christchurch
35 this means a radioscape almost entirely dominated by networked radio transmitted in from
36 Auckland and Wellington, with only small-scale independent stations maintaining a focus on
37 the local. The political and economic contours of New Zealand radio broadcasting shape the
38 particular materiality of all stations, and The Stadium Broadcast's transmitted presence on
39 107FM was enabled by a class of transmission license that requires no license for low power
40 FM broadcasting in the 'guard band' at the top and bottom of the FM frequency block. The
41 broadcast's profoundly local focus, as a low powered station with a programme about a
42 single space within the city, runs counter to the overarching structure of New Zealand Radio.
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53 The programme included pre-recorded and live interviews with significant figures in the
54 stadium's sporting history, memories of the space contributed by members of the public,
55 recordings of significant events there, including visits by Queen Elizabeth, Pope John Paul II
56 and evangelist Billy Graham, and discussions of many sporting encounters. The music
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3 comprised a loose interpretation of artists who had performed in the stadium, or cover
4 versions of songs by those artists, including U2, Meatloaf, Tina Turner and Dire Straits; the
5 limitations of the musical selection illustrating the city's marginal position in international
6 touring circuits. Pre-recorded material included interviews with significant figures from the
7 ground, including the trainer of local rugby team The Crusaders' curtain-raising horses. Other
8 guests were invited to speak specifically about topics including fashion, food, and religion.
9 Interviews included local people sharing memories of working and attending occasions there
10 like school balls, parties, weddings, and ash-scatterings, among the more high profile
11 sporting and musical events. The artists-as-radio-hosts reflected on the experience of living
12 inside the Park, described the environment and surrounding area in some detail, and shared
13 stories, histories, and observations of the space. Over days and nights these elements were
14 held together by sleep-deprived on-air 'decay', or 'transcendence' described by one host
15 around 2am on the first night shift (SB4: 2-31-08), as late night conversations veered away
16 from the subject of the stadium to the experience of the broadcast performance and
17 interpersonal proximity. Paddy Scannell observes that 'The demonic problem of live speech-
18 act-events on radio and television is the ever present possibility of their breakdown, either
19 through technical error or human performance failure' (2014, p. 98). In this context 'human
20 performance failure' was structured into the art-media event, so that the way in which live
21 speech acts broke down was as integral to the overall experience as the audience participation
22 and archival recordings.
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38 **Lancaster Park**

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40 Lancaster park itself reflects the development of Christchurch City from wetland to
41 contemporary sprawling sub/urban environment, to a damaged space overgrown with weeds
42 and mired in uncertainty and insurance negotiations. Like much of the city it was swampy
43 land when european settlers arrived to establish a pre-planned town, and the future park was
44 sold as a rural section on the edge of the original urban boundary. In 1880 the land was
45 bought by local sporting organisations and developed as a ground for cricket, tennis, bowls,
46 athletics and rugby. Once the swamp was drained it could be watered by an artesian well, and
47 the area was described by a visitor from the parched turf of Australia in 1881 as "the finest
48 cricket ground I have ever trod on or gazed upon [... with] its wondrous dead level, its thick
49 and brilliantly coloured grasses, the velvety looking terraces, all forming a picture most rare
50 and refreshing. [...] as pleasing a spot for cricket as it is possible to conceive" (Star, 1881).
51 Over the decades Lancaster Park became increasingly built up and reduced to a single
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3 playing space and the stand-encircled stadium form. Immediately after the earthquake the
4 major concern was whether it could be repaired quickly enough to host scheduled games in
5 the 2011 Rugby World Cup. ‘Secrecy’ over the extent of damage to the buildings and field
6 were reported in local newspaper *The Press* within weeks (Greenhill, 2011). Whether the
7 stadium could be repaired, and whether it should be replaced was an ongoing theme of
8 discussion in *The Press* over the course of 2011, and in 2012, after a new temporary stadium
9 was built in a different suburb, the Central City Recovery Plan located a permanent covered
10 stadium within the central city. That plan was hugely controversial, and the future of the
11 stadium structure was only finalised in March 2017, when the cost of “re-commissioning
12 Lancaster Park as a venue capable to holding top international rugby tests” was deemed so
13 great that the stadium is to be deconstructed, while future use of the ground beneath it
14 remains unresolved (Christchurch City Council, 2017). In 2014, however the Stadium
15 broadcast was situated in the midst of a debate about the future of the old stadium, the
16 temporary stadium, and the proposed stadium.
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26 Because the public had been unable to go into the space of the stadium after 22
27 February 2011, the artists’ and visitors’ accounts of being in the stadium were the most
28 public articulations of its visible condition since the earthquake. The broadcast started with a
29 description of the state of the field itself, and information that listeners familiar with the
30 layout and naming of sponsored spectator stands could have used to locate the speakers
31 within the area of the park. The introduction was structured like a cricket commentary,
32 shifting between a slow methodical descriptive style, and statements that combined
33 observation and opinion:
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40 Announcer 1: It’s a beautiful morning. We’re sitting in a caravan. The sun is shining. We’re sitting on
41 the concrete pad of the original Hadlee stand, which is no longer here. We’re looking out through a
42 window to a field of weeds and sand and stones. The stadium. The Tui stand is in the background. The
43 Deans stand is to our left. The Kelly stand is to our right.

44 Announcer 2: I mean it’s hard to think that ever really was a field, if you’re looking at it now, I mean,
45 it’s pretty much a hill in the middle of it.

46 Announcer 1: There is a small mound, and there is also a lot of holes and there is a lot of rubble lying
47 around. There are weeds that have grown up to two metres.

48 Announcer 2: It’s almost a nature park out there now (SB1: 00-02-25)

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52 In keeping with the context, the 72 hour radio broadcast carried echoes of test match
53 cricket commentary style, fulfilling the basic function of radio cricket, in which the absence
54 of imagery means that “the commentator is central to the creation of the imaginary scene
55 [...]. on radio, we are not simply listening to a game, we are listening to a commentator’s
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3 experience of a game” (Tolson, 2006, p. 106). Commentary was explicitly referenced on the
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experience of a game” (Tolson, 2006, p. 106). Commentary was explicitly referenced on the
sunday afternoon of the broadcast, when one host remarked that “We’re a couple of guys
sitting in a van... but we almost feel like we could be cricket commentators”, and the other
replied “I love the idea of cricket commentators, the durational aspect of it” (SB13: 00-17-
47).

The undulating field was an ongoing topic of observation through the broadcast,
including observations such as “I just can’t imagine that this was once the beautiful field it
once was. It’s actually quite gut wrenching to see it in its present state.” (SB7: 00-13-00), and
“Just looking out there now, it just about brings a tear to your eye” (SB13: 02-47-39).
Structural aspects of the stadium remain more obscured from view, leading to speculation
about what has happened beneath the surface, including the rumours of an empty void meters
below the built ground itself. An insight from the moment of the earthquake was offered by
one visitor who was nearby at the time: “I can’t remember if I saw it moving that much, but
there was dust and that coming out, out of the concrete walls” of the stadium structure (SB2:
01-42-00), reinforcing the difficulty of seeing tangible damage, while being unable to know
for certain what the dust means. Further live interviews enabled a deeper reflection on the
current, past, and future state of the ground. Liv Worsnop from The Plant Gang, a group
dedicated to creating ‘botanical gestures’ in post-quake Christchurch, described the variety of
plants growing where the playing turf once was, noting medicinal and culinary uses for
chamomile, yarrow, plantain, and mullein. The host observed that this new knowledge
“changes the way that I look at the field, which is really interesting. Because I no longer see
it as a wrecked field, I see it as a, and this is going to sound really corny, but as a field of
possibility.” Worsnop replied “And that’s exactly what it is!... it’s a bloody field of
possibility, but then they’ve mowed it.” (SB13: 01-33-20). The playing surface of the
stadium is going through a completely natural transition, despite being thwarted occasionally
by mowing, with the possibility of developing as a wild space of food and medicinal plants.

The Stadium Broadcast was inherently engaged with the process of transition, by
questioning what was there before, how people engaged with and used the space, and what its
future might be. This is lies at the core of the project, as articulated by two of the hosts when
asked by a visitor why there were there:

Host 1: We came here two years ago, and we were quite taken by the stadium. It’s quite a magnificent
stadium, it’s got an incredible history to it, and we were quite amazed with how the community of
Christchurch had a connection to the stadium. And so we came back and we wanted to unpack that a
little bit further, and create an oral history of the stadium.

The Stadium Broadcast

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3 Host 2: Yeah, because the stadium was in a place where no one was sure whether it was going to be
4 knocked down or not, and it had just been kind of forgotten about. And so we wanted to ask
5 Christchurch if they had memories of it, and what they thought should happen next with [it]. And
6 basically providing a platform for people to talk about those things, and discuss those things
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8 Host 1: It's something that people have in common, it seems like, regardless, all walks of life seem to
9 have this in common (SB3: 03-20-16).
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11 Discussion with visitors sharing memories of Lancaster Park included reflection on the
12 value of the temporary stadium, which many appreciated for the way it brings spectators in
13 close to the field. For the most part, participants expressed a desire for a new stadium, if
14 Lancaster Park should prove to be too damaged to repair. However even very strong and long
15 term fans of Canterbury rugby and Lancaster Park observed that it should not be a priority
16 until houses and roads are fixed (for example SB7: 02-42-00). At the same time, the long
17 histories of the space that were evoked are a reminder of the stadium's many past transitions.
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24 **Auditory, acoustic, radio, city space**

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26 By opening the gates and inviting people to walk on the field, The Stadium Broadcast
27 reintegrated Lancaster Park into the physical space of the city. Outside the stadium, for most
28 listeners, live and later, the broadcast was most likely heard through the web stream, however
29 it was the low powered FM transmission that electromagnetically covered much of the central
30 city. All sound distribution mechanisms displace signals from their original source to the
31 listener, in a process soundscape theorist R. Murray Schaeffer described as 'schizophonic,'
32 (1994, p. 88). Schaeffer frames this displacement as part of modern technology's erasure of
33 environmental sound, however translating the very localised sounds of Lancaster Park across
34 the city and the internet created a distributed auditory space that drew attention to the Park
35 environment. The broadcast expanded the sound of inside-the-stadium to the space outside-
36 the-stadium. It created an auditory space 'outside' filled with speech about and in the park,
37 the ambient sounds around the studio caravan, and the temporally shifted sounds of the park
38 over time.
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48 A live broadcast event creates a sense for the audience of being in two places at once:
49 where they are and the space of the broadcast. This is a doubling described by Paddy
50 Scannell in the live coverage of news events that interrupt broadcast television and radio
51 flows (2014, p. 191-24). He observes that "Public events now occur, simultaneously, in two
52 different places: the place of the event itself and that in which it is watched and heard" (qtd.
53 in Moores 2004, p. 21), and Moores argues that this 'doubling of place' is "bound up more
54 generally with 'the liveness of radio and television' that is also part of broadcasting's
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3 dailiness” (2012, p. 16). The liveness of the stadium broadcast was more akin to the dailiness
4 of broadcasting than the catastrophe-based event television Scannell focuses on, although it
5 was responding to the aftermath of catastrophe. The public media event of the stadium
6 broadcast occurred simultaneously in the stadium and in the places in which people listened
7 to it. More than that, the broadcast event occurred, simultaneously, in two different place-
8 times: the place of the event itself at the same time, and the place of the event itself in a
9 previous time - for example during the 1963 royal visit, the 1989 U2 concert, the 2006 run-
10 score of cricketer Nathan Astle. Some listeners may have been able to hear themselves,
11 identifiably or not, in the crowd noise of archival recordings, adding another layer to the
12 multiplicity of place and time.

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20 A stadium broadcast listener walking with a radio inside the transmission signal, in the
21 city, would have been immersed in an auditory geography of the present and the multiples
22 pasts of Lancaster Park. This listener may be imaginary, but the radio waves from the
23 transmitter describe a shape in space that loosely traces the stadium into the area of the
24 central city, inscribing the stadium into the fabric of buildings and spaces. The sound of a
25 radio within that space tuned to 107fm would in turn trace a smaller stadium space around
26 itself. The imaginary listener would experience the space and temporal multiplicity of the
27 stadium overlaid on the live sounds of the city immediately around them, in an immersive
28 plurality of sound (Rodaway, 1994). Low-powered transmission waves, however, cannot
29 create a complete and whole space across the city, and at the edges the signal will fade in and
30 out of reach. Because the transmission antenna was located away from the stadium itself,
31 more centrally in the city, locations closer to the stadium were on the edge of the broadcast
32 signal. On the outskirts of the signal the stadium broadcast was audible through the hiss, but
33 only with very close concentration, echoing the variability of acoustic emissions from the
34 stadium itself before the earthquake. Significant moments could be interpreted from the roar
35 of a crowd, depending on listener location, wind direction, spectator numbers, and the
36 intensity of the moment. The radio signal evoked that sense of being within audible range of
37 a stadium, and in doing so it emphasised the absence of that sound.

51 **Memory**

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53 The stadium broadcast was a project built from memory, in which the abandoned
54 stadium was created, fleetingly, by people standing in that space and re-constructing it in
55 words. In the memories shared on air, moments of great personal and national significance
56 were recounted over the wreckage of the ground, the abandoned stands, and their uncertain
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The Stadium Broadcast

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3 future. Many visitors and radio guests expressed gratitude at being given the chance to revisit
4 the space and their own memories. A visitor on the first day of broadcast also recognised the
5 experience as a new memory of the space:
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8 What you guys are doing is amazing, especially for someone like me who's got such a connection to
9 the place. I can bring the kids down here and get a photo of them on it and it can go in the memory
10 bank.... Well done guys, I really appreciate what you're doing (SB2: 03-29-00).
11

12 For those participants who visited the stadium and walked the field before telling their
13 stories the memories became multilayered, containing the past, present, and future of the
14 stadium. Their accounts often carry traces of emotion (McHugh, 2012), a strain resonating
15 from shock and grief for the city as a whole and that space in particular. In content that
16 directly referred to the pre-quake past, sounds, stories and voices of the now-lost city aurally
17 reconstituted the ghosts of the past, layering sounds and memories of the old city into the
18 sound space of the transitional city.
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24 The stadium still stands as its own monument. However the physical structure is an
25 empty, damaged, version of itself. In contrast the narration of the stadium by the radio hosts
26 and visitors created a space filled with people and life. In relation to the physical structure,
27 the Stadium Broadcast functioned as a 'counter-monument' (Kanouse 2011, p. 202). The
28 multiplicity of memories recounted included shared experiences of living near it, attending
29 events, or participating in significant moments, but there is no single unifying historical
30 meaning. The whole broadcast performed "the contingency and instability that is
31 characteristic of all acts of memory" (Kanouse, p.202), as participants performed a range of
32 memory acts - in some cases recounting events in great detail, and naming the dates and
33 circumstances of multiple significant personal moments. Others struggled with specifics but
34 recalled the overall tone and atmosphere over multiple occasions.
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44 **Conclusion**

45 Since the September 2010 earthquake Christchurch has lost a significant number of
46 buildings from the central city area. Lancaster Park is still standing on the periphery of the
47 central city, but its current condition is contested and its future is uncertain. The Stadium
48 Broadcast created a space to reflect on the role of Lancaster Park in the social and cultural
49 fabric of the city. Its long form radio format facilitated reminiscences from members of the
50 public who would not usually have an opportunity to speak freely on the radio. From one
51 visitor to the next over the course of the weekend the conversation ranged widely across the
52 history of the Park, including significant sporting and cultural moments, but also more
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3 everyday experiences of life in and around the city and the sports ground. As a radio show,
4 The Stadium Broadcast provided a focus on place at odds with the nationally networked
5 placelessness of New Zealand's commercial radio market. As sound content the broadcast
6 restored life and stories to a space that was formerly defined by the noise of competition and
7 crowds, but was silenced on 22 February 2011. With a tight focus on the current state of the
8 ground and its stands, the broadcasters opened it up to a broader potential public than those
9 who were able to physically visit it. Listening to the broadcast meant hearing the space of the
10 ground, the undulations of the field, and the wild plants, bees and birds, and multiple histories
11 of past life in the space overlaid on the surroundings of the listener. The past and present of
12 the stadium were recreated in two places at once: in a caravan within the stadium, and in the
13 place where people listened. Many may have been listening to the web stream far away from
14 Christchurch, but a low power FM transmission propagated across the central city, tracing out
15 a space in radio waves within which the stadium was reconstructed, and could be encountered
16 through a radio antenna. Across radio space the stadium was schizophonicly redistributed,
17 filling the empty space of the demolished city with memories of some of its past lives. This
18 was a radio memorial, not just to the physical structures around major sporting encounters,
19 but to the pre-quake city, and its many physical, social, and economic transformations since
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IMAGES: The Stadium Broadcast Project



Field Theory, The Stadium Broadcast, 2014 (image courtesy of Jason Maling)

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For Peer Review

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