

Cambridge Elements

Elements in Twenty-First Century Music Practice

edited by

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HIDDEN MUSIC

The Composer's Guide to Sonification

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Cambridge University Press & Assessment
978-1-009-50031-9 — Hidden Music: The Composer's Guide to Sonification
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Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom
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477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India
103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,
a department of the University of Cambridge.

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www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781009500319

DOI: 10.1017/9781009258555

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When citing this work, please include a reference to the DOI 10.1017/9781009258555

First published 2025

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-009-50031-9 Hardback
ISBN 978-1-009-25857-9 Paperback
ISSN 2633-4585 (online)
ISSN 2633-4577 (print)

Additional resources for this publication at www.cambridge.org/Mermikides

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Hidden Music

The Composer's Guide to Sonification

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DOI: 10.1017/9781009258555
First published online: January 2025

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Abstract: This Element explores the intersection of data sonification (the systematic translation of data into sound) and musical composition. Section 1 engages with existing discourse and offers an original model (the *sonification continuum*) which provides perspectives on the practice of sonification for composers, science communicators and those interested in this rapidly emerging field.

Section 2 engages with the sonification process itself, exploring techniques, models of translation, data fidelity, analogic and symbolic data mapping, temporality and the listener experience. In Section 3 these concepts and techniques are all made concrete in the context of a selection of the author's projects (2004–2023). Finally, some reasons are offered on how sonification as a practice might enrich composition, communication, collaboration and a sense of connection.

This Element also has a video abstract: www.cambridge.org/EMUP_Mermikides_abstract

Keywords: sonification, data, music, composition, parameter mapping

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ISBNs: 9781009500319 (HB), 9781009258579 (PB), 9781009258555 (OC)
ISSNs: 2633-4585 (online), 2633-4577 (print)

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Note to Reader: the text of this entire Element has been sonified, and is offered as a gentle optional background accompaniment to the reading experience.