Emma Zunz: An Audio Tale

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I could not work on a tale by Jorge Luis Borges without putting his writings at the center of my thoughts. To design the sound based on technical issues would not be truthful to him and that would make my own work meaningless to myself. In pursuing this idea, the text interpretation became more than important it was crucial to the whole undertaking.
"he creates, in this way, diverse futures, diverse times which themselves also proliferate and fork"


Introduction

Emma Zunz can be seen as a strait forward story of vengeance, where an eighteen year old girl shoots a man dead after the suicide of her father. But that is like light before touching a prism, in Borges aesthetic (the prism) such a thing as strait-forwardness does not exist and the light shows its full colors (the occurrence of the 'prism' word did not happened by chance, for Borges regarded prisms as "active" objects and was of great importance in the poetry manifesto 'Ultra' which he wrote (Williamson 2004, p.86)).

The characteristics of the detective narrative is turned upside-down in 'Emma Zunz', for the reader no longer needs to solve the question of who perpetrated the crime but rather to answer what was the true reason that led to the happening (Priel 2004). Even then, Borges goes further and simple does not give answers, he poses questions and clues, than each clue leads to its own ramification of other questions. The reader, though, never stops believing that a solution exists (Brodzki 1985). Having said that, the search for the solution "retreats into the background" as argued by Beatriz Priel (2004), and the reader is given the opportunity to experience the text using, what Bion calls, "Negative Capability" (see Priel 2004), term which I will explain shortly.

On the first part of the text I will present a summary of the story followed by a display of several different angles in which the tale was viewed by different authors. At this stage my text will present the themes of 'Time', 'Identity and Mirrors', 'Narration', 'Truth and Reality', 'Ambiguity', 'Negative Capability', and the way the tale explores them.

The second part is the analysis of the sound design. At this point I will reflect upon the ideas
and considerations I had when developing the piece.

I will trace connections, through the concepts proposed in the first part of the essay, in between the text interpretation and the 'Sound Design' per se.

In my vision 'Emma Zunz' is transported from written text to the Aural medium 'Compact Disk', which will work, as far as the listener's perception is concerned, in a similar fashion to that of the radio drama. I will consider, then, theoretical writings about this medium, and will ponder upon my choices, as they are sometimes pro, sometimes against those findings.

The sound design will be, not only experimental but, an experiment, for my negation of certain principles, tested and proved to work, on mainstream radio, puts myself in a dangerous position, the risk being, to lose in the process Borges's incredible semantic verbalization. However, I want it to work with the idea, or felling, behind the words and I feel that a traditional approach will not be sufficient to achieve that; the question is, would a method based more on a text analysis then on 'following the plot', be capable of it?

First Part: The Text

The Tale

Arriving home after work, eighteen year old Emma Zunz discovers that her father had died as a consequence of accidentally poisoning himself (which the girl interprets as a suicide); the news came on a letter sign by an acquaintance the late parent.

Emma does not sleep that night and before dawn she has the perfect plan to kill the person she judges responsible for what has happened.

Her father, Emmanuel Zunz fled Buenos Aires in total dishonor, accused of cash embezzlement. He is now dead in Brazil under the name Manuel Maier. Incidentally, Emma
Zunz works at the factory owned by the very man Emmanuel accused of being the real thief, Aaron Loewenthal. Emma did not quite believed her father, when the later told her this story, however, now that he is dead, she stopped questioning his version of the facts and chooses to blame her boss.

Her plan consists of; having sex with a total stranger, arranging a meeting with Loewenthal, shooting him, telling the police that he sexually abused her, and then confessing the killing.

Reading on a paper she learns that the ship 'Nordstjärnan' will leave Argentina that night which makes any of its sailors the perfect stranger to perpetrate the "rape". She, then, searches and finds the men in some bar near the port, choses the one she likes the least (to avoid any pleasure), acts as a prostitute and has sex with him.

The meeting with Loewenthal is arranged on a pretext of talking about a strike that is about to happen at the factory Loewenthal owns.

Once at her boss's flat, the reason for killing him no longer is the dishonor suffered by her father, but the one She has just experienced; in this random hotel room near the docks, in the hands of a disgusting sailor.

After shooting the man dead she calls the police and confesses; "...he abused me, I killed him...".

The tale finishes with the statement that

Actually, the story was incredible, but it impressed everyone because substantially it was true. True was Emma Zunz's tone, true was her shame, true was her hate. True was also the outrage she had suffered: only the circumstances were false, the time and one or two proper names. (Borges 2000, p.169)
The logic of time is arguably the most important theme in Emma Zunz. It is known that Borges was fascinated by it or "the metaphysical possibilities of [it]" (Williamson 2004, p.107). He was very close to, and an admirer of the Argentinean writer Macedonio who believed that time was nothing but illusion (see Williamson 2004, p.96). In 'Emma Zunz' the paradox between time and timelessness is clearly present. The story interweaves very precise time displays with non-time ones. Phrases like "on 14 January 1922", "Friday the fifteenth, the day before, elapsed", go against; "the arduous events are outside of time", "During that time outside of time", "she had already become the person she would be", "seeing them and forgetting them at the same instant" (Borges 2000, p.167/169). Perhaps Borges did not disregard the existence of 'Time' all together, but he certainly shows the non-linearity of it (at least as far as the psychology of Emma Zunz is concerned, I say psychology because the allusion of non-time, time-stopped, or the simultaneity of past, present and future is always related to her psyche, for example: "she had already become the person she would be" (Borges 2000, p.164)).

The last sentence tells me that; in a split of a second (the moment when Emma discovered the death of her father), the plan was completely designed, subconsciously she had already killed Loewenthal. Then she goes on reasoning over night, as written by Richard E Cytowic (1995); "Reason is just the endless paperwork of the mind". I am arguing here that in that exact point in time, 'Time' ceased to exist, or the opposite, it stretched infinitely, this idea of infinity, or everything contained in one single moment, is confirmed by; "the death of her father was the only thing that had happened in the world, and it would go on happening endlessly" (Borges 2000, p.164), as well as the point made by Martanézia Rodrigues Paganini (2003) in her reasoning about borges's choice to include 'Emma Zunz' in the book "El Aleph". Aleph being "the the infinite number that encompasses all the others" (Williamson 2004, p124)).
Beatriz Priel (2004) sees that the narrative devices employed by the author in this tale, lead the reader to experience a different perception of time, in her words,

    time as a mental holding and as a continuity between past and future gradually fades away [...] present time disappears altogether and different orders of time seem to collide. An atmosphere of infinite time or timelessness and repetition is created.

Paganini (2004), also reflects upon the way 'Emma Zunz' induces us to meditate over the logic of time, and points to the fact that it influences the reader on the realization that we are made of our "past, present and future", in other words; we have imprinted in our personalities earlier "experiences" (Freud 2003, p.3) as well as; we have the potential for mirroring ourselves on a imagined future; "constructing" our personality thinking on who we would like to be, and perhaps, paraphrasing Borges, we would "already become the person [we] would be". (Borges 2000. p.164)

**Identity and Mirrors**

who is Emma Zunz?

'Emma Zunz' is a character of extremely relevance in Borges oeuvre. As argued by Brodzki (1985); "Since female characters are conspicuously absent throughout Borges's writings, the mere creation of Emma Zunz is already an event in itself." If not the only woman she is certainly the most psychologically complex (Carter 1979).

The name 'Emma Zunz' has some peculiarities that are worth analyzing; 'EMMA' is contained in 'EMMA-nuel', Emma is, then, part of her father, she has characteristics of him (like the shame she inherited, for instance) (Porinsky 2002). If we consider father as 'The Creator', Jorge Luis Borges is Emma's 'real' father; "Zu-nZ" has a mirror in-between its syllables (Porinsky 2002) but the image formed is inverted. In parallel to that, it is know that Borges had a loathing of mirrors, "as if the reflected image would rob him of a sense of who he was"
(Williamson 2004, p.38). I trust that, consciously, he created Emma as a distorted image of himself. Like Emma, Borges was sexually troubled (Williamson 2004, p.69). Emma could have been raped by her father, which her "almost pathological fear of man" (Borges 2000, p.165) is symptomatic of, especially if one considers it along with the presence of the identical lozenges which connects her childhood memory ("she remembered the yellow lozenges of a window" (Borges 2000, p.164)) and that of the sex passage ("in which there was a window with lozenges identical to those in the house at Lanús." (Borges 2000, p.166)).

To clarify my point Freud (2003, p.7) is instructive. In his writings about early childhood memories, he tells us that a trivial image from our early childhood that suddenly reappears in our consciousness, triggered by an event, a smell, a song, or another image, is important not in itself, but because it is linked to the issue that matters, which has been "suppressed", in order to avoid pain. In Emma's tale the similarity of the lozenges from the present and from the past, are the link to something hidden, perhaps a rape. Brodzki (1985) Believes that her trauma is linked to the fact that she witnessed her parents having sexual intercourse. Hence the narrator stating that "her father had done to her mother the hideous thing that was being done to her now" (Borges 2000, p.167).

Borges, also, had a troubled relationship with his father (Williamson 2004, p.65), among other things, he was pressured by him, to lose his virginity in an event that was extremely traumatic for the young man (he was 19 years old, virtually the same age as Emma), and in a way, like Emma, he was sexually abused by the father. Adding to his conflict, in the same encounter Borges realized that his father had also used the services of same prostitute, and this knowledge made him an accomplice of his old man, and a sentiment of betrayal of his mother emerged, sentiment, perhaps shared with Emma Zunz in her 'Oedipal' conflict (Priel 2004).

Another point of connection in between writer and character is the fact that both had to deal with the oppression of living in the shadow of a powerful family history, Emma with her
father's shame (represented by the sharing name (Porinsky 2002)) Borges with the past glory of a family of heros which, due to Argentinean political events, had lost is it status quo within the Buenos Aires's society (Williamson 2004, 38). Emma used the 'Revolver' in her quest to clean her name from the shame, Borges used the pen, instead of the "Dagger" (Williamson 2004, 49).

If this theory is correct, the "UN" from 'zUNz' is revealing, as 'Un' means 'one' in Spanish (Porinsky 2002); One being, Emma/Emmanuel/Borges.

**Narration**

Who is the narrator? Is it he or she? It could be Emma; she is, maybe, psychotic. It could be the writer pondering over his character. One thing is certain, the narrator is someone who has access to some vital information about Emma's psyche, but, and this is extremely important, not all. It is not the super-human being that is everywhere and sees everything, like the ones on most novels. The narrator in 'Emma Zunz' is very human in the sense that he "knows [things] and doesn't know [other things]" (Priel 2004), he is, basically, "partially omniscient" (Brodzki 1985). And this characteristic makes the reader question the narrator's knowledge, and by association, question truth in what he or she says (Priel 2004), which points to the conclusion that the truth lies somewhere outside the text, and in order to reach it we must "meet the writer on the level of wordless understanding" (Wheelock 1985). Knowledge will only be reached by intuition (Priel 2004).

**Truth and Reality**

The main character is in psychological turmoil, she loses her sense of reality and time; this occurrences are symptoms of, according to Bion, "the invention of lies" (see Priel 2004).
Continuing with Priel (2004), after receiving the letter containing the news about the death of her father, Emma creates a scenario, that is not necessarily real; like an iceberg, truth shows only its tip, for instance, we don't know if Emmanuel Zunz really committed suicide; it is only known that he "had taken by mistake a large dose of veronal" (Borges 2000, p164), we don't know, for certain, if Aaron Loewenthal was the real thief; but it is known that not even Emma believed in this version of the facts when she first heard it from her dad. Nevertheless, she creates a story in which her father kills himself and the sole responsible is Loewenthal. Adding to this uncertainties, the real motivation for the crime is, perhaps, other than the, assumed, wrong doing by the factory owner, and, in the view of Wardi (see Priel 2004), it is really a desire for "incest and parricide", idea shared with E. D. Carter (1979) who also believes in the 'Oedipal' subtext. For Paganini (2004), Emma goes trough hell and back in order to break up with her past and materialize her first sexual experience, fact disagreed by Carter (1979) who states that; in choosing the least attractive sailor Emma avoids any sexual pleasure.

From within this web of inconsistent facts, it emerges that we only know part of the story and everything else is speculation, or instinct.

Ambiguity

"Ambiguity [...] is richness" (Borges see Coleman 2005).

Borges laid a puzzle in which several pieces have exactly the same shape (but different content). Any of them can, perfectly, fit the picture, but as we choose one or another, the final result will be completely different; we have no way of knowing which image Borges had in mind, perhaps it was a blank paper, for he knew we have "colors" on us, and we can paint.

J. B. Hall (1982) underlines the importance of keeping the doors open to the ambiguous nature of this particular story, and points out that, to have a single interpretation of it would
greatly diminish what it has to offer. Ambiguity is a key word to explore Emma's world, and it is, clearly, reflected upon the text if one questions Emma's motivations, narrator's knowledge and honesty (Priel 2004), Loewenthal's guilty, her father's innocence, her father's suicide, the father/daughter relationship (Brodzki 1985), and her triumph, as depending on the answer for those questions, the tale can be seen as the ultimate achievement, for she got what she wanted and could not be punished. Or it can be seen as a total failure, for she violated her body, and became a murderer by killing an innocent man.

**Negative Capability**

The writing devices that Borges deploys in Emma Zunz induces the reader to develop the "Negative Capability" which is, in Priel's (2004) words, "a capability to not to search for the truth, but to allow oneself be affected by it" for, according to Green (see Priel 2004), truth is unobtainable in this tale, however, the reader feels it exists and Emma's "fabrications of lies" and the narrator's doubts help in making the reader experience (as opposed to interpret) the text and with it the "limitations and the richness of what might be known".

Wheelock (1985) proposes that to fully appreciate Borges's tales the reader must "meet the writer on the level of wordless understanding". In Emma Zunz one has to find, also, the characters in that same place.

To illustrate the negative capability concept we can think on the film 'Muholland Drive' by David Lynch. The viewers do not, necessarily, have to interpret all the various visual symbols contained in the film (like the blue box for instance) to appreciate it. When I first saw the movie, I did not understand it (perhaps I still don't), but that did not stopped me being captivated by it and, lets say, guided through its imagery. I am certain of one thing, my subconscious had the answers all along.
Second Part: The Sound

Time

As proposed above, the vicissitudes of time is one of the main concerns in the story, and, therefore, my sound design tries to underline it. Not only representing it, but, hopefully, creating an experience. The experience of things happening in and "outside of time" (Borges 2000, p.167), paradoxically, our raw material (sound), by its very nature, develops in time, and it can be precisely measured. Psychologically, however, the sensation of 'time passing' varies from individual to individual and from situation to situation. Filmmakers, and dramatists in general, use this duality in in their favor, Chion (1994, p.13) considers the influence of sound in creating the illusion of passing time, in a sense that, time can be "exact, detailed, immediate, concrete - or vague, fluctuating, broad". Take for example the scene in which "Bené" is killed, from the film 'City of God' by Fernando Meirelles, a cacophony of reverberant distorted guitar creates a sensation of time passing much slower than the quick few seconds in which the scene, actually, unfolds (my own writing, see de Farias 2006).

In my design, two worlds are happening simultaneously, the Narrator's world, in which time is linear, and Emma's world, where time has lost its linearity. With my thoughts on Borges words (2000, p.166)

The arduous events are outside of time, either because the immediate past is as if disconnected from the future, or because the parts which form these events do not seem to be consecutive.

I laid the sounds in an order other than the one proposed by the narrator's words.

Technically speaking, I handled the concept of time in 'Emma Zunz' in different ways. I have used repetition, stretching, shortening, and one inspired by the Steve Reich's 'Phase pieces' (In which one short sound material is played, or reproduced, by different musicians or machines or a combination of both; the every so slightly difference in speed in between the members, gets them "out of phase"). To do so, I developed a standalone max/MSP software
(see the CD room) that simulates Reich's concept.

**Identity and Mirrors**

I will not reveal every single aspect of the sound design, I would not be able to, for intuition is present in my work, as I truly believe, as Cytowic (1995) does, that reason is only one side of our knowledge, the other being emotion. I will, however, ponder about the more palpable characteristics of the design.

Since the sound's direct relation with the text was partially lost due to my insistence in breaking up with the semantic "rule", it felt the need for an alternative organization for the sounds, some logical reason, even if a hidden one. I found the answer in music.

Musical form derived from the idea of mirrors is not something new, but it seemed an appropriate approach to this particular piece, for, as discussed earlier, mirrors are of extreme relevance to this tale.

Having as starting point; 'zu-nz' (the upside-down idea pointed out in the 'Identity - Mirrors' section of present the text), I imagined a form based, not in a plane but, in a convex mirror (where the virtual image can be upside-down). Coincidentally the image formed, by the events in the 'Matrix' window of the Logic software, turned out to be a lozenge (see picture bellow); "...the yellow lozenges of a window..." (Borges 2000, p.164).
The actual form of the piece is: [A-B-A'-B'] (think on the image above times two), where [B and B'] are the upside-down reflection of [A and A'] respectively; [A'-B'] is the distorted image of [A-B]. The concept behind, is the idea of Emma being a distorted image of Borges, hinted upon, earlier in the text.

In effect, we have two convex mirrors inside a plane mirror; [A (convex mirror) B] (plane mirror) [A' (convex mirror) B']

In a more technical view, I have distributed the sound files (excluding music, verbal and a couple of non verbal long files) as if each one of the eleven chosen sounds was a different instrument (sampled in the Logic software). The piece has an 11/1 time signature, however, it has a feel of being a polyrhythmic composition, for each event stresses a different bit (it would be, certainly, felt if instead of using sounds with no clear rhythmic structure, I had used files with one single attack, see the score 'Twin' in the CD room for a more detailed view)

Initially (see picture above) all sounds were assembled as a single instrument, where each different one was assign to a different key on the keyboard, I, then, separate and treat them as distinct instruments, and in 'Logic', in a random fashion, I create, working from the root note, a variation of one tone up and down, to propose the question, which one of the sounds is the real one?

The duration of the hole piece, originally though to have a maximum of 15 minutes, become much longer. It needed a (see the next section). It, also, needed some breathing points, where listeners would have time think about what they have heard, if so they wished.

Narration

Although, much of 'Emma Zunz's content is actually out of the text, it is through its words that
we are led to search somewhere else, or to simply let our subconscious find answers. On top of that, falling in love with the text was the reason why I decided to work on it, in the first place. So, every single word had to be there, and sole Borges words. I was to do no adaptation. The rhythm is perhaps the only structural comment, due to repetitions and silences (anyhow, in written story, each reader has a individual rhythm and may repeat again and again, words or passages as he pleases).

In the following lines I will briefly expose some considerations I had prior to recording the Narration, thinking not only on the text by also in some characteristics of ‘The Human Voice’ when it is contained in a exclusive aural medium.

As proposed in the first part of this essay, there's no single interpretation of 'Emma Zunz', and in being so, my directions to the actors involved, specially the one who did the narration, was minimal, for I was very interested in their input. The actors were given the text weeks before the recording sessions, for I wanted them, more than to practice, to reflect upon the story. Daniel Mckenzie, who acted the narrator, had, after a first reading, come up with his own questions, his main concern was, as one would expect, about the identity of his character, he though the narrator could be a police officer, who after all, discovered the plot, but he wasn't certain, and his uncertainty was perfect. He was also, a bit shocked with Emma’s response to the news of her father's death and believed that there was something else, other than vengeance, involved. Edna Forbes, who plays 'Emma', did not go past the vengeance theory, which suited me well, for Emma, also, was not conscious of her true motivations, whatever they were.

Having the words of T. Van Leeuwen (1999, p.44) in my mind

In reading, intonation and rhythm always add the reader's interpretation of the written word. To stress a syllable means to single it out as important

I underlined a few words in the text that I sent to MR Mckenzie, only stating that they were
were special but, by no means, the only special ones and he would have total freedom to find his own 'Important Words' and passages as well as to interpret 'My Important Words' as he wished. The only other direction was to treat it as an informal monologue and I encourage him, at the recording session, to drink the water available if he felt like, and not to worry about body and clothes noises, for the narrator is partially human, partially on omniscient being (Brodzki 1985). The omniscient side of the narrator occurs naturally in this, exclusive, aural setting. Chion (1999, p.18) clarifies it very well; "acousmatic is said of a sound that is heard without its cause or source being seen", then he states (1999, p.23-24) "in radio the voice always carries something of magical as the body that produces it will never be known" for him voice in an aural medium will always be "acousmatic" and, therefore, will have some inhuman power, it will always be "ubiquitous, pan-optic, omniscient [and] omnipotent". T Crook (1999, p.86) disagrees with Chion as for him, when a character is described by the text, it is "de-acoustumated". Anyhow, in my version of 'Emma Zunz", one character is, somewhat, described (Emma) and the other, the narrator, is not, fitting well with the idea.

One last consideration on the narration; The actor is 18 years old, and I feel that the narrator in the tale is older than that. Adding to this fact, I felt that the comprehension of the text would benefit from a slightly slower recording. I then slowed it down and, by doing that, pitch-shifted it down (less than a semi-tone), creating a more mature voice.

**Truth and Reality**

I wanted to propose, with my sound design, that what is heard, apart from the narrator's voice, is, perhaps, all fruit of Emma's imagination, perhaps all happened during the time she was planning the killing, maybe rehearsing words, perhaps all the sounds we hear, are actually part of her auditory imagery, but only perhaps. The sounds then repeat, sometimes slightly differently, and reflecting her confusion, in no apparent order. Also to highlight this
ambiguity (what is real, what is imagined?) the exploration of spatial dimension (by means of reverberation and position), as proposed by Cory (1974, p.47) was of extremely importance.

Another aspect of reality I wanted to explore was truth, or the absence of it. Again, in the assumption that truth exists, but perhaps it is unobtainable (Green, see Priel, 2004). Pascal Amphoux (see Augoyard 2005, p.130-144) talks about a sound effect which became clear to me I would have to explore if I was to create the illusion of presence of, lets say, an unknown truth, "The Ubiquity Effect". According to him,

diffused, unstable, omnidirectional sounds presents an intrinsic tendency toward ubiquity[...] and the ubiquity effect opens the way to the metaphysical dimentions of sound.

I, then, explored position, character, timbre, low frequencies in my design, more precisely, in each of the sound files.

**Ambiguity**

In an analogy with the moving pictures, Tim Crook (1999, p.83) wrote that "to avoid ambiguity" sounds, in radio drama, need to have a direct link with the text, and words are in effect the "lenses" of the radio. More directly, in the absence of "visual clues" the speech should clarify any ambivalence. However, one of the most clear characteristics of Borges's 'Emma Zunz' is its lack of certainties (as proposed on the first part of this essay). I could not, therefore, ignore this feature and ambiguity is also in the core of my design. This fact led me to go in opposition to Crook and I chose a path in a similar direction as the one proposed by Mary Louise Hill in her 'Developing a Blind Understanding' (see Weis 2001, p.109); analyzing the radio play 'A Blind Understanding' by R.C. Scriven she comes to the conclusion that sound effects, speech and silence work "in counterpoint [...] to produce a polyphony similar to that of a symphony". In other words, the relation in between text and sound effects don't, necessarily, happen simultaneously or literally.
Analyzing the last three films of Andrei Tarkovsky (The Stalker, 1979; Nostalgia, 1983; and Sacrifice, 1986), Andrea Truppin (see Altman 1992, p.235-248) points out to the importance of ambiguity in those films, and how Tarkovsky explores it by means of the sound design. The connection in between the later works and Borges's 'Emma Zunz' is that their essence is found somewhere outside the actual work, the meaning of faith in Tarkovsky's (Turpin, see Altman 1992, p.235), and Emma's true motivations in Borges's. It is instructive, then, to shed some light over the usage of sound in the mentioned works.

In the following paragraphs are some of the devices Tarkovsky deployed in order to keep aural ambiguity:

Tarkovsky sometimes uses very long fades as well as keeps some sounds barely audible, creating a sense of uncertainty as for when and from where the sounds appeared, and the question; was it always there? arises. (Turpin see Altman 1992, p.237)

Instead of using sounds for orientating viewers, to point to an object on the diegesis for example, he sometimes uses sounds that don't have a direct connection with anything on the screen, which makes one wonder about the very important question of why the sound is there in the first place (Turpin, see Altman 1992, p.237-238). In my case, which the medium is exclusive aural, one can consider the direct association with the text as being the visual counterpart, as proposed by Crook (1999, p.83).

Sometimes sounds are clearly identifiable, but, going through a process of subtle "metamorphosis", they become something else, making one question one's "prior assumptions", to illustrate this, Turpin (see Altman 1992, p.238) uses one example extracted from 'Sacrifice', in which an "eerie" voice is heard throughout the film, which is mix of a woman's voice with Japanese flute (Svensson, Unknown date), that becomes the "simple calls of a goose-girl to her flock".

Sometimes we can't be certain if a particular sound is heard by the characters on the screen
Sometimes one hears the sound of a seen object, however, the object is still and, therefore, should not be making any noise (Turpin, see Altman 1992, p.239).

Sometimes the "reverb, volume, frequency and timbre" assigned for a sound does not match with milieu we see on the diegesis (Turpin, see Altman 1992, p.241).

Tarkovsky combine sounds that would never share a space, "either [because of] their position or their spatial signature" (Turpin, see Altman 1992, p.241), this is a characteristic called "Parallel Sounds" by Turpin (see Altman 1992, p.243), for they belong to distinct "worlds".

The reason I laid down some of Tarkovsky uses for 'Sound', is that I have used most of the ideas above when composing the Emma Zunz's soundtrack, in hope to create some of the ambiguity the Director so successful achieved in his later three movies. I used for example, "Parallel Sounds" in reverse, when Emma and The Narrator share a milieu; long fades; Sounds with, apparently, no connection with the text; metamorphosis; etc.

Negative Capability

The ambivalence in the use of sound helps blurring the boundaries in between intellect and faith (Trupin, see Altman 1992, p.235). Faith in the sense of believing in an "absent truth" (Priel 2004). I will, then, come back to the idea of "meet[ing] the writer [and the characters] on the level of wordless understanding" (Wheelock 1985), for some of my sounds don't (or don't seem to) have a direct relation with the text. Some of the sounds happen before its semantic clue for example; or they are so distorted that they lost their link with the semantic. Specially on the later case, interpretations will be as many as there will be listeners, however, on a subconscious level the responses will be, I hope, a little more universal. In any case, I
believe my design will aloud, listeners to develop the "Negative Capability", as Borges's 'Emma Zunz' does, for exclusive "semantic verbalization [of those sounds, will not be] sufficient [to engage with my design] because the [sound] no longer serves only a semantic function" (Cori 1974, p.33).

I would like to point out to a particular sound file used in the work, which I will call 'The Incest File'. It was extracted from the incest sequence of the film 'Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me' by David Lynch; It is a comment on the idea that perhaps Emma Zunz, like the character Laura Palmer from Lynch's movie, was abused by her father.

The Music

The Music serves two functions; Firstly, to declare itself, and myself, overtly, sympathetic to Emma Zunz's drama, not her quest to kill Loewenthal, but to her troubled persona. Secondly, to confirm the link with Lynch's 'Fire Walk With Me'. For it is, in a way, a pastiche of Angelo Badalamenti's music; Lynch's long term collaborator.

Criollo Guitar (Williamson 2004, p.132) was the popular genre of music in Emma Zunz's Buenos Aires, and would be, I imagine, the music heard in pubs near the port. So I derived the harmony of the piece from the first of the 'Seis Estilos Criollos' transcribed for guitar by Juan Alais (See CD room). I, then, added some tension notes to approximate it to Badalamenti's style.
Conclusion

The immense number of papers written about 'Emma Zunz', plus the fact that each one of them has a different interpretation, sometimes sharing points, sometimes going in an opposing direction, shows the richness of the tale. When I first had the idea of working on a sound design for it, I was wary that the story could lose the magical effect it has on me. Well, it did not, in fact it is now even more mysterious, it fascinates me even more. I see now, with more clarity, that the questions it evokes, prepares the ground for its beauty to flourish and metamorphoses itself for each single reader.

The extensive analysis of the text have proven to be an incredible tool to my sound design, it certainly, opened wide the narrow path of 'following the plot'.

By adding the views of different people to the way I see the text, I hope to have created a singular view, even slightly detached from my own, and perhaps more universal.

It is difficult to say if I achieve my intent (To base the sound design on a text analysis, as opposed to following, and without jeopardizing, the plot), I trust I did, but because my closeness to the story I was not able to listen to it with “virgin” ears, and perhaps a listening session, with several different people commenting on my design, would have answer my main doubts; Does the feeling behind the words comes across? Is the text still a strong presence? I decided against such a session, for I was scared that any verbal influence could inhibit some of my intuitive developments (important in my work, as explained before), and by doing that, make the work lifeless, for real beings are irrational at times. I acknowledge, however, that it would have been extremely beneficial from a technical point of view, and probably aesthetic, but, again, I took a risk, hopefully a worth taking risk.
Appendix

Content of the CDs

Emma Zunz

The Audio Tale

CD Rom

Folders

The Essay

Scores

Twin

Seis Estilos Criollos

The Actors

Pictures

Software

FASErecorder
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