Instructions

Francis Bacon’s vision of music technology is now close to 400 years old. Use his words as a starting point for a critical essay, in which you reflect on what music technology might sound and look like 50 years from now (but not later).

Guidelines

- Unlike Bacon, who formulated a general vision, I would like you to describe a single imaginary music technology device (will we
even speak of ‘devices’ then?) in detail.

- Describe the society which has created and uses this device and the underlying motivations for its constructions and use.

- Do not merely describe ‘any’ future – really try to assume the specified 50-year timeframe. It is your grandchildren who will be using the technology you describe.

2.1 Points to address

- Which cultural developments have accompanied the technological developments that you are describing, and how are they visible in society?

- Which other fields from science or art might have unexpectedly contributed to the newly available technologies?

- Which technical problems that we are facing in music technology today will we have overcome?

- Will we have overcome any aesthetic challenges that our creative spirits may currently be restricted by? Will we have experienced any aesthetic or cultural losses that coincide with the development of these technologies?

- Which new technological and aesthetic challenges will we be confronting?

3 Assessment criteria

Your essay will be assessed in terms of its imagination (in how much detail can you describe that fictional piece of audio ‘gear’?) and the critical sociocultural perspective that it demonstrates (how plausible and detailed is your description of the society that has yielded that device?). Try not to limit yourself to either, bright technofuturism or cultural pessimism.

4 Submission format

Please submit a single file named essay.pdf (2000 words max.).
References & useful resources

