

# Video Assignment Introduction

## Playlist

Find our playlist on field recordings here: [goo.gl/xszXpm](https://goo.gl/xszXpm). This playlist is an introduction to a selection of artists who use sounds they find around them to invoke a sense of place, or convey a message about their ideologies. Some artists you could consider more storytellers rather than musicians, some pieces one would sooner call conceptual art than a song:

### 1 +2 ) Chris Watson – Ol-lool-o / Los Mochis

Christ Watson is not a musician at all, but an award winning sound engineer working for the BBC on documentaries. He travels around the world and records whatever he hears around him, later mixing these sounds together into compositions that tell a story about a place, that may not have actually happened but still conveys the atmosphere of how it might have been. The first piece is from the album *Weather Report*, which is based on how climate conditions shape habitats, whether they be human or animal. In this piece, we travel across an arctic area. The second piece is from his album *El Tren Fantasma*, which documents a railroad service through Mexico which no longer exists. Watson made recordings of the last runs of this voyage by steam engine.

### 3) Broeder Dieleman – Lovenpolder, Boerengat

Sung in the local dialect, in this song Broeder Dieleman tells the story of how the small rural community where his grandfather lived was torn down to accommodate the expansion of the nearby petrochemical factory. The lyrics and music remind us of the songs of Robert Johnson, the blues musician who supposedly sold his soul to the devil. Here, the factory flames mirror the flames of hell. The recorded interviews are of Dieleman's grandfather's contemporaries recounting how the city council and the company went about their plans. The piece ends with sound and video recordings of the bulldozers tearing down the community of Boerengat.

### 4) Simon Scott – Below Sea Level (full album)

Although he has a full career drumming and playing guitar with the band Slowdive, Simon Scott also releases solo projects for which he wanders through the fens in East Anglia and records wildlife and nature. He later blends them with his own musical compositions.

### 5) Wishmountain – Crisps

Wishmountain is one of the many aliases of Matthew Herbert, known for using and manipulating sounds in real time. Live shows are often based around the recordings he'll make with a mic suspended over the audience with a fishing rod. His work is often very political and conceptual. *Goodbye Swingtime* (The Matthew Herbert Big Band) has inkjet printers printing entire manifestos and the sound of phone books being dropped: literally thousands of names being dropped by their government. Another example is his album *Tesco*, where the eight songs are all made using the eight best-selling items from that supermarket. This particular song is made using only a packet of crisps.

### 6) A Broken Consort – The River

A Broken Consort is Richard Skelton, who, after the death of his wife, revisited a number of places they used to visit together and catch those memories in music.

### 7) Matmos – Ultimate Care II (Excerpt nine) / Spondee

This is where we get even deeper in the conceptual and art spectrum. When Matmos discovered that the spinning cycle of their washing machine (a Whirlpool Ultimate Care II) was the perfect length of a live performance, they experimented with every part of the machine imaginable. The second piece Spondee is from the album *A Chance to Cut is a Chance to Cure*, which is composed entirely out of medical sounds, most of them made in operating theatres. One song, *Californian Rhinoplasty*, is based on the sounds of nose jobs, forehead lifts and chin implants, accompanied by a nose flute. This may not suit everyone in the classroom. Therefore Spondee is a little bit more accessible because it revolves around a hearing test, where an audiologist reads aloud spondees (words with equal stress on the first and second syllable) and the beeps and tones are the responsive curves from hearing aids.