

Portfolio explanation

- I. Context of audio
- II. Multimedia Work Samples
- III. Links to selected, additional audio work

I. CONTEXT OF AUDIO (on Soundcloud)

1. The Assignment Bureau Podcast trailer, 2017.

An independent podcast project about people facing personal challenges by doing creative tasks.

Pilot episode can be found in full (59 mins.) here:

http://content.blubrry.com/theassignmentbureau/bingo_xox.mp3

A person tries to get over a broken heart by inventing a game of kissing Bingo (no, it would never work during Covid). The independent project launched in 2017, and the pilot was selected for presentation at the International Features Conference in Prague, in 2018. (You can read more about the project and find the credits here <http://www.theassignmentbureau.org/>)

2. excerpt “It's Private” in 2014 (full piece is 29 minutes)

https://soundcloud.com/brett_antenna/its-private

It's Private stood out as a humorous and exacting engagement with the themes of motherhood and privacy . . . A very timely find. – Jay Bernard, *The Double Negative*.

I produced this documentary through the Stockholm Academy of Dramatic Arts. It was nominated for a Prix Europa in the radio documentary category, and it received an honourable mention from In The Dark at the Sheffield Doc Fest. (It was also included in independent producer Rikke Houd's Amazing Radio Vertikaliser session at the Third Coast International Audio Festival.)

3. “Stranger Still”, short audio documentary about finding connections with strangers, 2015 (7 min.)

https://soundcloud.com/brett_antenna/t-t-t/s-RUFQ9?si=87e4187ec81e4f639f32c3c762c17acb

4. “Mafune Gonjo”

<https://soundcloud.com/konstnarsnamnden/mafune-gonjo> I produced this sound-rich piece as part of a non-narrated series about artists in Stockholm, 2016 (3 mins).

II. MULTIMEDIA WORK SAMPLES

What follow are two projects:

1. “A Touching Story”, text, installation and interactive performance, presented as my MFA thesis project at Konstfack University of Arts, Crafts and Design, 2010. This work is prefaced by the abstract for that thesis.

2. “YOU + NON-YOU: ASSIGNMENTS FOR APPROACHING INFINITY”, instructions sent to participants by text message and e-mail as part of the Walking Festival of Sound, 2021.

Abstract from the written portion of the M.F.A thesis at Konstfack, 2010

With the advent of virtual book technologies, the traditional experience of reading novels is in crisis. While conventionally, such reading requires long periods of uninterrupted concentration, the modern experience can be one of distraction and fragmentation. Some worry that this will re-habituate people to a shallower mode of reading, which they predict will have deep and negative ramifications for society. Using artistic research-through-practice and the methods of experience design, this thesis proposes ways to make productive and positive use of this fragmentation. With special regard to content, timing and persuasiveness, this thesis project proposed and tested activities for the reader *to do and perform* that relate to a given text, aimed at creating a sort of theater-for-one from a book. Interspersing special instructions ("action-notation") throughout the text provided the reader with sensorial, active and expressive experiences that created an invitation to play and made the text resonate in a special way. Some experiments were successful, especially the introduction to *A Touching Story*, a story which embodies the research and which became the final exhibition project.

A TOUCHING STORY

By Brett Ascarelli

DO NOT OPEN UNTIL YOU
ARE IN THE MOOD TO READ.

Prologue

Water splashes occasionally, but otherwise, the library is quiet.

Running her hand along the books' spines like an unending xylophone is I, pronounced like the seeing organ. As the first child born to a pair of eccentric Latin scholars, she wound up with the Roman numeral for 1 as her namesake. Predictably, what started as a gag led to a thousand minor identity crises, still rippling through her expanded circle. To the parents, however, each confusion meant a small triumph over a too-ordered world. Leaving behind this system of havoc creation as their legacy, they died happily and would have grinned to see the puzzled faces reading their obituary: "...I survives." In any case, Dear Reader, just remember that her name is no fault of her own.

I hums to herself while xylophoning, and eventually she finds what she's looking for.

DEAR READER, PLEASE
DOG-EAR THIS PAGE
NOW.

A Touching Story

At the check-out desk, she undergoes a required procedure to prevent characters, page must, and molecules of fiction from mixing. Contamination leads to perverse fiction. Before I can open her book, the librarian will wash her hands. He opens a card catalog drawer and chooses a small leaf of--is it paper? Nope, too slippery for that. It's actually a thin sheet of soap, which he wets in a porcelain basin on the desk.

Prologue

At first, this particular soap reeks of the centuries, which I expects. But as Mr. Spectacle lathers I's palms, fresh lavender subsumes the mustiness. By the time he reaches her pinkies, lavender gives way to sandalwood. Strange--even book soaps don't usually change so much in character... The hand wash lasts a few book minutes, and as flowers and musk mingle in I's nasal passages, a queue forms behind her.

CLOSE YOUR EYES AND SLOWLY RUN
YOUR FINGERTIPS BACK AND
FORTH OVER THIS PAGE.

A Touching Story

Suddenly, I's shoulder blades go numb.

Sneaking a glance over one unfeeling shoulder, she sees the next man in line glaring at her and Mr. Spectacle. The librarian is too engrossed to notice. Cupping his hands with clean water, he delivers the rinse. It lasts as long as it takes them both to silently count to $\sqrt{-25}$. But instead of concentrating, I can only focus on the uncomfortable non-feeling in her shoulders and wonder if the man is somehow its cause.



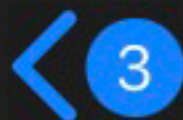
YOU + NON-YOU: ASSIGNMENTS FOR APPROACHING INFINITY /

Brett Ascarelli

"Initially I was confused about how to enter the dialogue and couldn't find my voice." - Julie Ault

An aspen. An ancestor. An adolescent. An alga. "You + Non-You: Assignments for Approaching Infinity" provides a set of assignments inviting you to try to embody elements of non-you things and beings whom you might not at first understand. Can listening help you find out where you overlap with a non-you, thereby revealing and even erasing the edge of your understanding? Some assignments hinge on making an actual connection with a non-you (like, picking up the phone), whereas others are faster and rely solely on your own imagination (think Ono's Grapefruit). There won't be any grades, but if you choose, you'll be able to share the fruits of your labor. Sign up to receive assignments throughout the festival. Indicate whether you'd like to receive them via WhatsApp, e-mail or SMS (only for iPhone). Most assignments will be delivered during the waking hours of Central European Time, but other deliveries may be timed to coincide with optimal conditions in your city or town, so please list where you are located.

23:10



+1 (917)

Fri, 9 Apr, 15:17

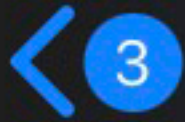


YOU + NON-YOU Assignment "Present"

Make a short, sonic gift to delight the ears of the youngest person or critter you know.

It can be recorded or live, musical, a concrete sound, a story, nonsense, whatever you think they would really like.

Deliver your gift to them however you see fit, and, if possible, listen to their reaction. If it's a good one, tuck this moment away for yourself.



+1 (917) [redacted]

Sun, 18 Apr, 18:04

YOU + NON-YOU 4th Assignment: "Umbilical or Other Continuities"

Today, call someone you love who is much older than you.

That's enough.

But if you're curious . . . what is their dream for your future and the world in which you will live after they're gone? Ask them to elaborate.

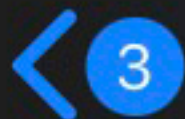
If the people whom you love are younger than you, call one of them.

That's enough. But if you're so inclined, tell them your dream for their future and the world in which they will live after you're gone.

Elaborate.

Pay special attention to the sound of their voice.

23:11

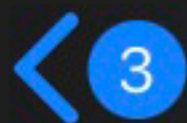


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Tue, 20 Apr, 21:44

YOU + NON-YOU 5th Assignment:
"+/+"

Choose someone who speaks a language that you don't understand at all. Ask them to tell you a story or poem in that language. (If no one who speaks a language that's foreign to you is available, remember that someone from a different generation might speak a language that's hard for you to understand.) Then, tell them what you think the story or poem might have been about and listen to how they respond.



+1 (917)

know if you'll be attending!

Sunday 11:57

YOU + NON-YOU 7th Assignment:
"Embodying the Ancestral Voice"

Find a quiet space.

Think of a specific ancestor of yours. Imagine what their voice and accent would have sounded like on a day when there was hope in the air.

Place your hand at your throat like a turtleneck collar and hum or try to embody their voice somehow. How similar do you think your voices would have felt or sounded? What would a harmony sound like between your voice and their voice? How are the inflections of your dreams compared to theirs?

Document your reflection if you'd like and keep for yourself or to share.

III. LINKS TO SELECTED, ADDITIONAL AUDIO WORK

Please get in touch if you'd like to hear more of a range of subjects, including political reporting. You can also find links to more pieces here: <http://brettascarelli.com/radio/>. Here are a few additional links to audio work that I have produced.

“We don't answer on the roof”, for Swedish Radio in 2011 (5 minutes)

<https://sverigesradio.se/artikel/4383572>

Who needs a corner office when you have the best view in town, working to clear ice and snow off the rooftops? I produced and reported this segment, which was later featured by the Stanford Storytelling Project.

“25 years after Chernobyl, how Sweden found out” for Swedish Radio in 2011(29 minutes)

<https://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel.aspx?programid=2054&artikel=4468603>

In the spring of 1986, Cliff Robinson was working at a Swedish nuclear power plant when the alarm went off. But just what had gone wrong was a mystery. I produced and reported this narrated history feature.

“Discrimination against elderly in Sweden is so bad” for Swedish Radio in 2021 (6 minutes)

<https://sverigesradio.se/artikel/discrimination-against-elderly-in-sweden-is-so-bad>

This was part of a series I reported on this year that dealt with what it's like to reach pension age in Sweden.

“It's year 2100. Are there crocodiles in Sweden?” for Swedish Radio in 2015 (29 minutes)

<https://sverigesradio.se/avsnitt/647008>

I produced this a few years ago to envision how the country could change as the global temperature rises.

“Many leave Lost and Found empty-handed” for Swedish Radio in 2013 (6 minutes)

<https://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel.aspx?programid=2054&artikel=5416465>

Did you lose a pair of brown gloves on December 7th? There's a box just for that at the Lost and Found in Stockholm... I produced this lively piece after losing a special item.