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The Maihak W49 filter, fidelity, and noise.

In this paper I will suggest some mechanisms by which incidental noise can contribute to the listening experience, challenging the doctrine that high fidelity equals low noise.

I will concentrate on the Maihak W49 filter used by Stockhausen in *Kontakte* (Stockhausen 1968) and *Mikrophonie I* (Stockhausen 1974). Due to the large amount of space given over to the detailed description of this filter in the scores, we can assume that its characteristics as a musical instrument are important for these two works.

Following the work of Clarke (Clarke, 2005) and Waters (Waters, 2007) I will take an ecological approach to examining the sonic and performance characteristics of this instrument, paying particular attention to deviations it exhibits from the ideal model and attitudes towards these deviations.

Finally I will make a comparison with the sound of the filtering in King Tubby's "Rebel Dance" (Holness, 1989) to illustrate some of these mechanisms, especially the aural evidence of the performer's movement through space afforded by the noise of the instrument.

Bibliography

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