

# The Freesound Project

A web community for free and open exchange of sounds.

*Barcelona, May 12th, 2005.*

The **Freesound Project**, an internet community supporting free exchange of sounds by musicians, sound artists and researchers, has been launched by the Music Technology Group of Pompeu Fabra University.

The **Freesound Project** web site offers a variety of community oriented features including the ability for visitors to add descriptions and "*tag words*" to any sound. Advanced searching capabilities leverage cutting-edge research at the Music Technology Group. Sounds can be browsed according to their similarity and according to semantic relationships embedded in their descriptions.

In stark contrast to the music industry's increasing focus on controlling intellectual property, the web site aims to support an ongoing process of open and legal sound exchange. Sounds contributed by community members are publically available under the Creative Commons "Sampling+" License – a license allowing most uses of the sounds provided that the source is acknowledged.

Music Technology Group director Dr. Xavier Serra, a leading sound analysis researcher for the past two decades said, "*A key project goal is to enable research which studies relationships among large collections of sounds. Often such collections must be acquired at significant expense. We aim to lower the cost of entry into this exciting field, and to enable research which has not been possible to date.*"

The project was created in the context of the 2005 International Computer Music Conference. This year's conference theme "*Free sound*" aims to raise awareness of the erosion of musical freedom by intellectual property laws, and to promote the idea of sound as a public good. The conference will be held in Barcelona at the beginning of September.

Sounds contributed so far include field recordings, domestic sound effects, recordings of musical instruments and electronic processed sounds. "*The variety of sounds already contributed is truly amazing,*" said project creator Bram de Jong, "*for example we have beautiful high-fidelity recordings of tuned wineglasses, synthesised and real birds, street noises, and close-up micro-sound recordings.*"

Since the commencement of public testing in early March this year, the project has attracted over 2,300 community members with over 1,650 sound contributions totalling more than 300 minutes of sound. With over 45,000 sound downloads in the last month the project is already proving popular with internet sound enthusiasts.

## **About the Music Technology Group**

The Music Technology Group, MTG, a group of the Audiovisual Institute, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, specializes in audio processing technologies and their music and multimedia applications. With more than 40 researchers covering a range of disciplines, the MTG carries out research and development projects in areas such as audio processing and synthesis; audio identification; audio content analysis, description and transformation; singing voice processing; interactive systems; and software tools. The MTG was created in 1994 by its current director, Dr. Xavier Serra, as one of the research groups of the Audiovisual Institute, a centre for interdisciplinary research in Digital Media.

## **Music Technology Group, UPF**

<http://www.iaa.upf.es/mtg>

**Freesound.org** allows anyone to participate by contributing and downloading sounds.  
<http://www.freesound.org/>

*...a few links*

**Acoustic Ecology Institute**  
<http://www.acousticecology.org/>

**Arts Electric** - is an internet-based information resource for new music, electronic music, and related electronic arts throughout the world.  
<http://www.arts-electric.org/>

**Audacity®** is free, open source software for recording and editing sounds. It is available for Mac OS X, Microsoft Windows, GNU/Linux, and other operating systems.  
<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>

**AudioCookbook.org** is a non-profit resource for music and sound enthusiasts made possible by contributions from Unearthed Music. The content has a slant toward the avant-garde or experimental side of audio production. Whether you have years of technical experience or you are just getting your feet wet doing sound design, you'll find unique, interesting and useful information that might inspire you, give you an idea, or simply entertain.  
<http://audiocookbook.org/>

**BBC - Science and Nature - Birds - Bird Sounds**  
[http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/programmes/radio/dawn\\_chorus/sound\\_advice.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/programmes/radio/dawn_chorus/sound_advice.shtml)

**City Noise** - Report of the Urban Noise Task Force City of Vancouver, April, 1997  
<http://vancouver.ca/tyclerk/cclerk/970513/citynoisereport/>

**Ear to the Earth** - Our goal is to create a worldwide community of musicians, sound artists, scientists, environmental activists, and an interested public, based on the compelling idea that environmental sound art can inspire in us an emotional involvement with the environmental issues that we face today.  
<http://www.eartotheearth.org/php/>

The **ElectroAcoustic Resource Site (EARS)** project has been established to provide resources for those wishing to conduct research in the area of electroacoustic music studies.  
<http://www.ears.dmu.ac.uk/>

**Five Village Soundscapes**  
<http://www.sfu.ca/~truax/FVS/fvs.html>

**Handbook for Acoustic Ecology**  
<http://www.sfu.ca/sonic-studio/handbook/index.html>

**Memoryscapes** - Voices from the hidden history of the Themes.  
<http://www.memoryscape.org.uk/>

**The International Computer Music Association** - is an international affiliation of individuals and institutions involved in the technical, creative, and performance aspects of computer music. It serves composers, computer software and hardware developers, researchers, and musicians who are interested in the integration of music and technology.  
<http://www.computermusic.org/>

**'Quiet, please'** is an audio documentary on field recordings and the people who make them.  
[http://www.quietamerican.org/related\\_qp.html](http://www.quietamerican.org/related_qp.html)

**Raven** is a software program for the acquisition, visualization, measurement, and analysis of sounds.

<http://www.birds.cornell.edu/brp/raven/RavenOverview.html>

**The Silence of the Lands** - enables participants to map and annotate the soundscape of urban and natural environments.

<http://www.thesilence.org/>

**Sonic Postcards** is a creative education project devised and delivered by Sonic Arts Network, and takes place in schools throughout the UK, encouraging pupils to engage with their sound environment and be creative with ICT.

<http://www.sonicpostcards.org/>

**Sons de Mar** - Understanding how marine mammals perceive their environment and unravelling their communication methods means investigating for the conservation of the marine ecosystems and the development of sustainable human activities in the sea.

<http://www.sonsdemar.eu/>

**Sound Recording and Reproduction**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sound\\_recording](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sound_recording)

**SoundTransit** project revolves around a growing collection of environmental sounds recorded by 'soundhunters' from all over the world. Each sound artist described the place and moment of the recording, the characteristics of the location or the peculiarity of the sound itself.

<http://soundtransit.nl/index.html>

**Tranquillity** - The Campaign to Protect Rural England

<http://www.cpre.org.uk/campaigns/landscape/tranquillity>

**Women On the Web/ElectronMedia**

<http://eamusic.dartmouth.edu/~wowem/>

**WFAE** - World Forum for Acoustic Ecology

<http://interact.uoregon.edu/MediaLit/WFAE/home/>

**Wildlife Sound Recording Society** .

The aim of the society (WSRS for short) is to encourage the participation in the collection of these wonderful sounds, and to promote the need to understand their meaning.

<http://www.wildlife-sound.org/>

**We welcome suggestions**

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