INTRODUCTION

In the workshop a *SONIC CITY* children and youngsters **learn to interpret, develop and recreate the biggest audio jungle out there: the sounds of the cacophonous city.** In a step-by-step process each child individually collects, analyses and recreates sounds found in the city using handy DIY tools and an easy open source software package. As a group effort, the children together reflect on how sounds work in unison to make a fuller soundscape before together uniting all their work into one big cityscape as a collective piece, running on loop as a noise symphony.

The workshop and the outcome soundscape can be presented either on location at an exhibition venue or online on a Sonic City Sound Cloud database. The database also provides a number of examples, Cover Art, inspirational DIY recordings and all the results from the previous workshops.

The Sonic Jungle workshop is available in two basic formats: Small, Medium and **Large**, ranging in user time from 20 minutes in the smallest incarnation, up to 4 hours in its full day set up that is close to masterclass format. For easy presentation all tools needed are some sound evoking DIY arts and craft material, a smart phone and a simple app. A **extended** set up is possible using some run of the mill recording and audio equipment as well.

Size of workshop	Small	Medium	Large
Step 1: **Listen to the city.**		20	**20**
Step 2: **Reflect on sounds.**		10	**20**
Step 3: **Design the sounds.**	14	30	**55**
Step 4: **Build your audio city.**	6	20	**20**
Step 5:**Visualise the city**			**60**
	20 min	80 min	**180 min**

Afterwards: **Upload your City.**	10	10	**10**

SUMMARY

1. Tools and materials.

2. Audio equipment and setup.

3. The workshop.

Step 1: **Listen to the city.**
Step 2: **Reflect on sounds.**
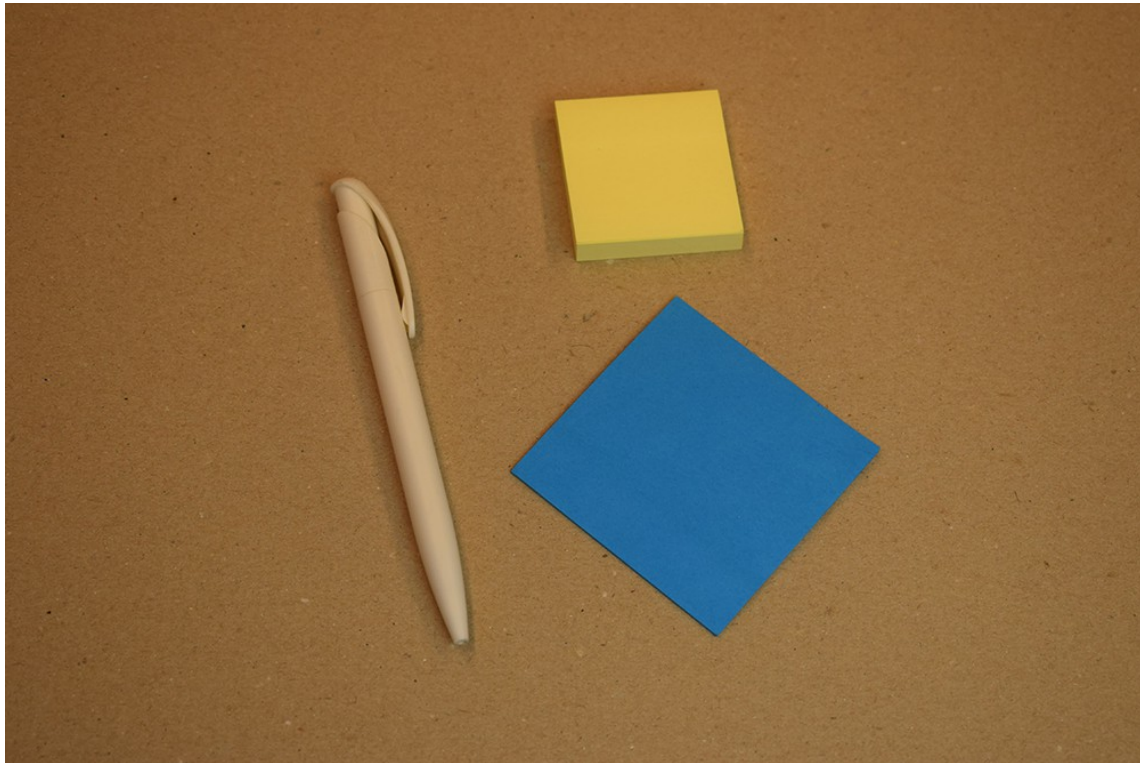Step 3: **Design the sounds.**
Step 4: **Build your Sonic city.**
Step 5: **Visualise the city**

4. Afterwards: upload your Sonic City.

1. TOOLS AND MATERIALS

Steps 1, 2:

Material: stacks of yellow/blue post its and pens.

Step 3:

1. TOOLS AND MATERIALS

Tools: scissors, saw, boxcutter knife, marker.

Materials: PVC pipes, cardboard, plastic cups, flexible plastic tube, bottles, plastic bags, straws. Additional material can be used.

Step 4:

Equipment: Ditto Mic looper, microphone, XLR cable, XLR (f) to mini jack, computer speakers. For more information, see the next chapter of this workshop.

Step 5:

Material: Ink (or alternatively paint), large square sheet of cardboard or thick paper, even larger sheet of foil (4m x 5m), tray.

2. EQUIPMENT AND SETUP

This workshop is developed to be used in various types of settings, as an extended or a simple setup. It will vary in in budget accordingly.

	Extended setup	*Simple* setup
Mirophone	Any type of microphone, for example this Behringer + microphone stand	Smartphone
Looper	TC Helicon Ditto Mic Looper	Android app: LoopStation. Apple app: Loopy HD
Connection mic to looper	XLR male to XLR female	. . .
Connection looper to speaker	When using 5.1 surround set: XLR female to minjack male. When using amplifier / speakers: XLR female to RCA	(*via computerspeakers*)
Speakers	• A 5.1 surround set. • Amplifier / speakers.	• Computerspeakers • A 5.1 surround set.

Extended setup: This does not ask for extensive knowledge of recording. Find an empty room. Place the loop station on the floor in the middle of the room. Have the microphone dangling from a high position, aimed downwards, above the loop station. Place the speakers in the four corners of the room.

 Simple setup: This setup is made to be used anywhere with just a small budget. The looper is replaced by an app that has the same functionality. Download the app on the phone. Attach the phone top the amplifier and place it in front of the (class)room.

3. The Workshop

Step 1: **Listen to the city.**

Each city has its own distinct sound. Various utility vehicles, specific types of birds, the screeching sound of brakes, honking cars, airplanes. All these fragments come together in a unique bouquet of sound for each city. In this part participants will deconstruct the soundscape of the city.

> **1.1** Go outside and listen to what you can hear in the Urban Jungle. Write each sound you hear on a *different* post-it.

Didactic note: The goal of this exercise is to deconstruct the various sounds in the city. And also to experience the power of sound by simply listening to it carefully.

Step 2: Reflect on sounds.

That different sounds that can be found in the city have similarities. In this part participants will *deepen* the understanding what the just heard, and *add* their own imaginative layer.

> **2.1** Sit together in a group. Place all the *Yellow* post-its in the middle. Discuss the various sounds the participants have experienced. See if children can categorize these various sounds. Or help them out by introducing the categories; nature, manmade, technological.

> **2.2** After all the *Yellow* post-its have been divided, hand out *Blue* post-its. These are for opening up imagination. Talk about what children would like to find in their city. Then ask how that does sound like. Place each post it in the middle.

> **2.3** Discuss the type of city the group wants to build together. Choose as many sounds as there are group members, practically by having each participant choosing a post-it. Each participant will choose its own sound.
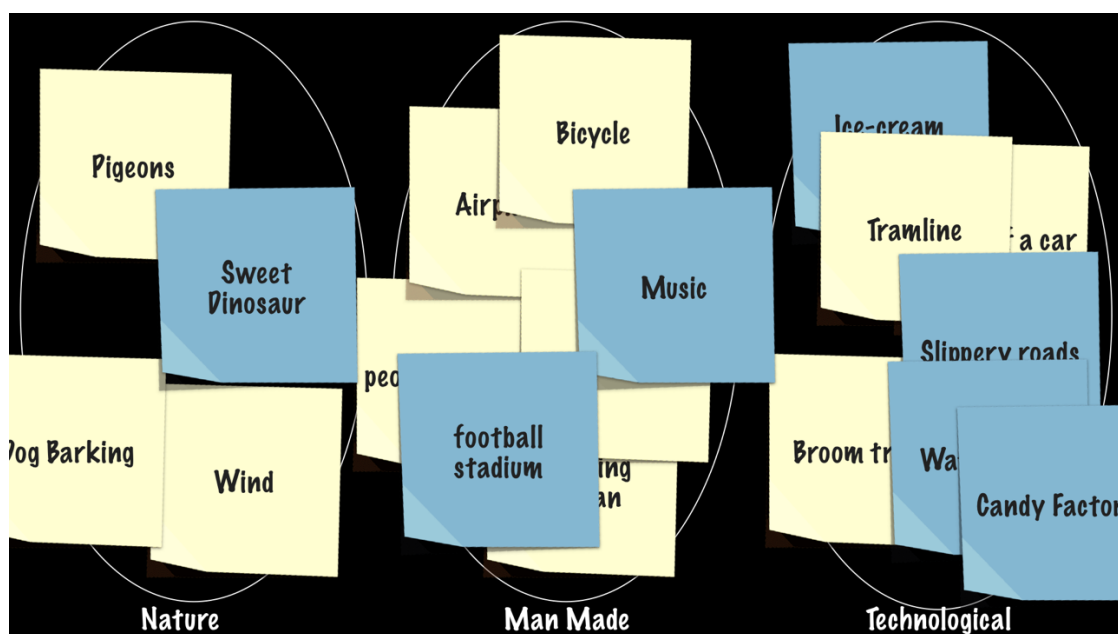

Didactic note: The goal of this exercise is to talk about sound, and to think about sound. That will probably be new to participants, so no need to further complicate this.

Step 3: Design the sounds.

In this part, the role of participants will switch from listener to designer. The sounds of the city can be replicated, as is done in the classical radio plays. Children will built their own instruments for reenacting city sounds. Participants are free to design their own instruments.
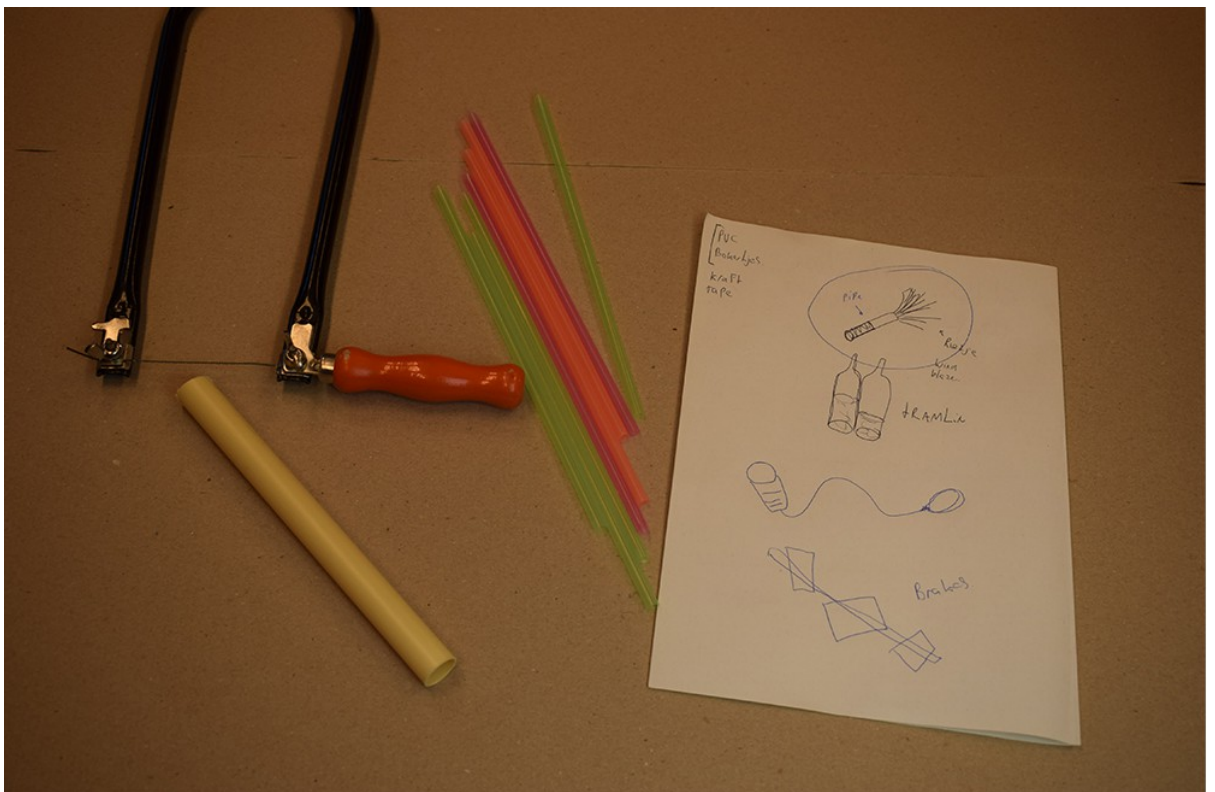
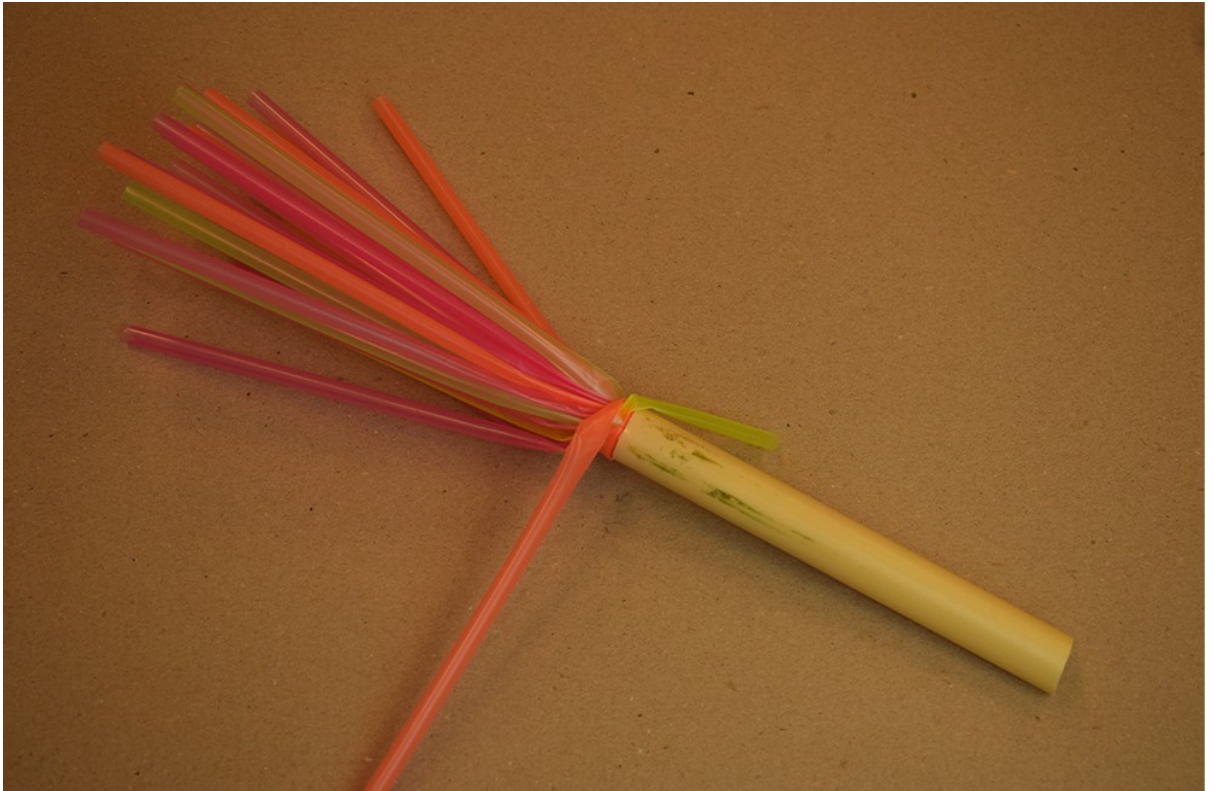> **3.1** Make sure all participants know what sound they want to mimic.
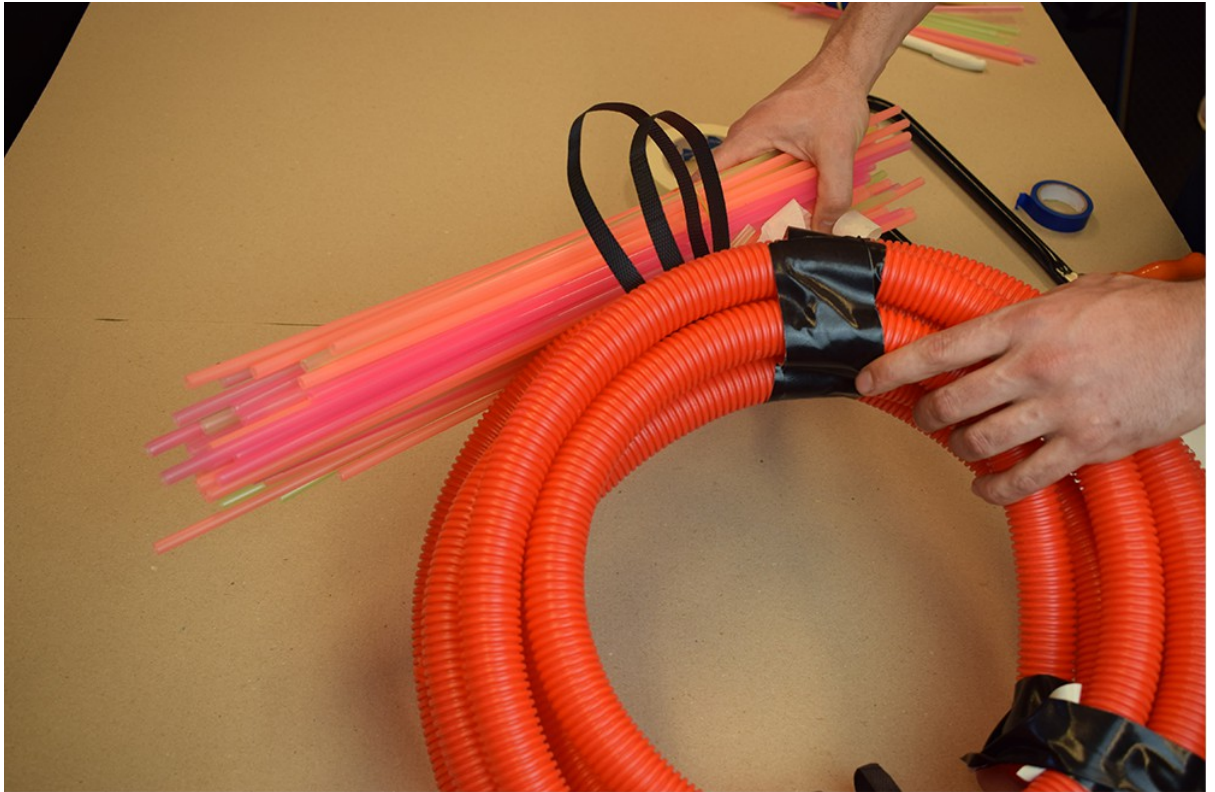
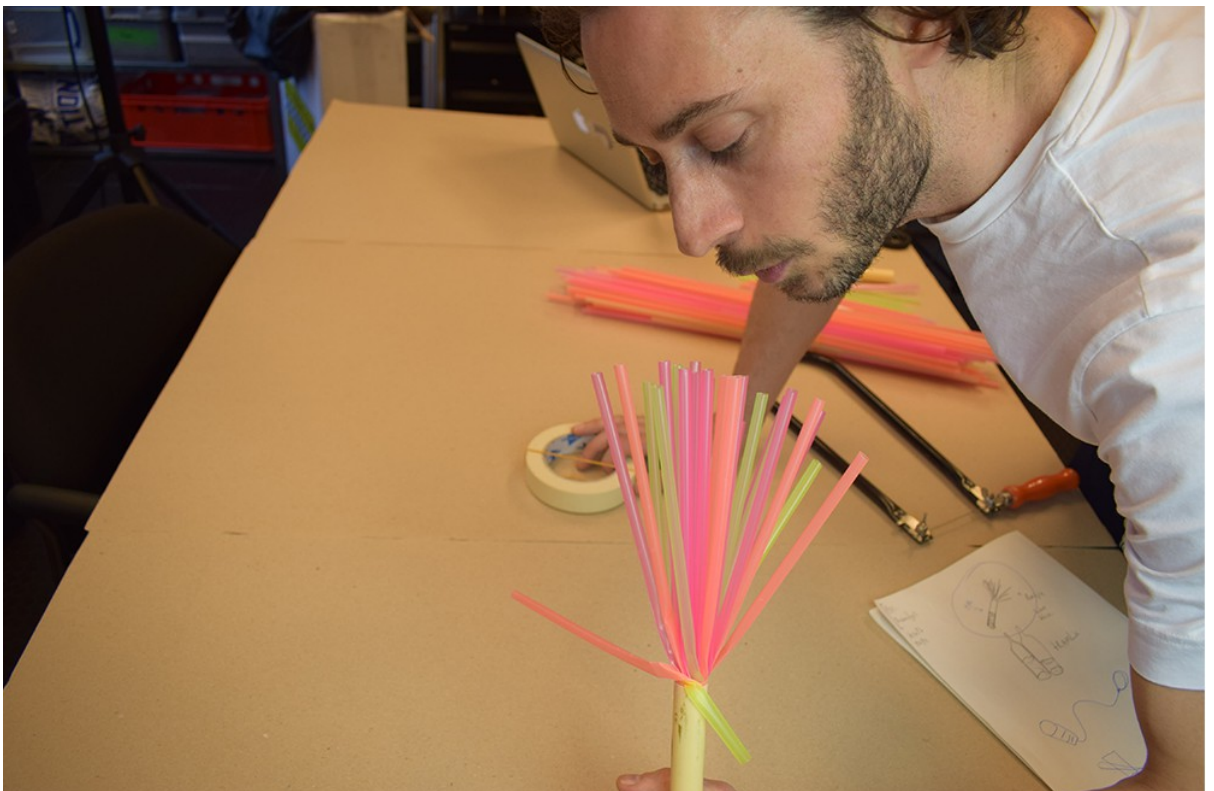> **3.2** Check the materials, investigate how they can be combined.
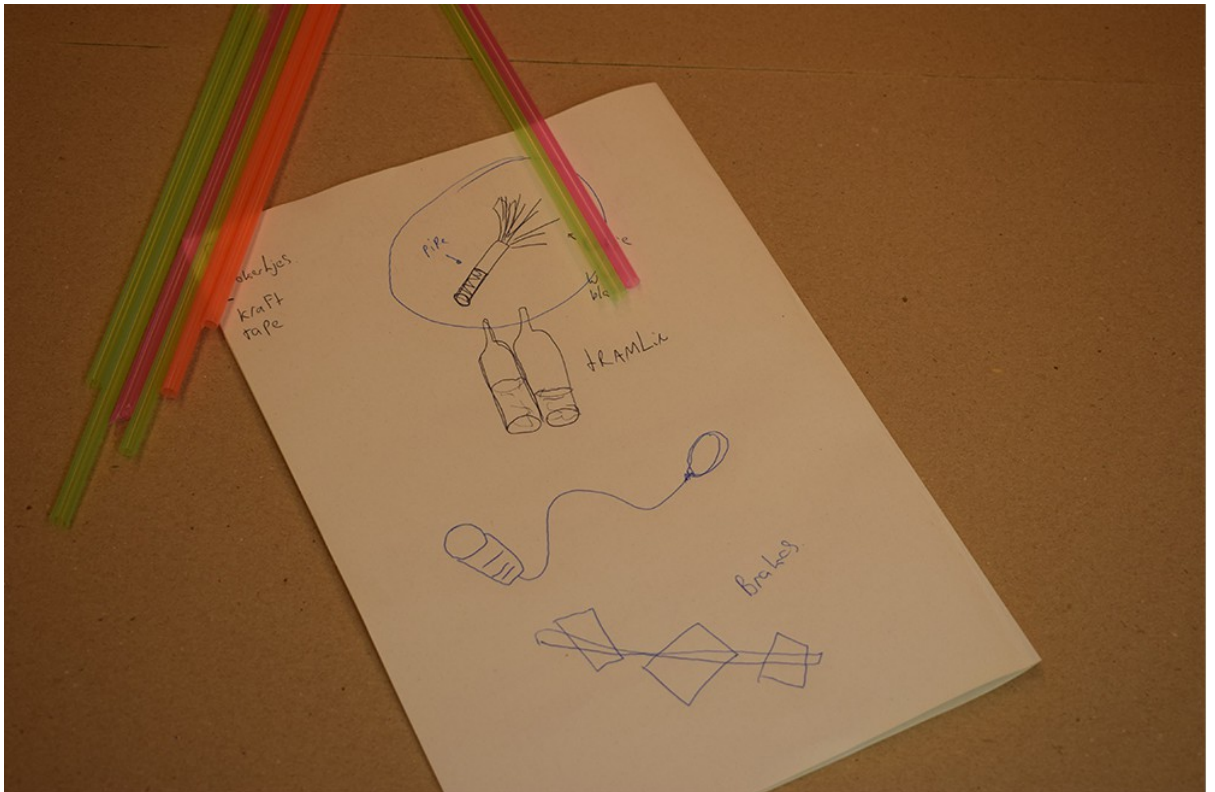
3.3 Sketch the instruments.

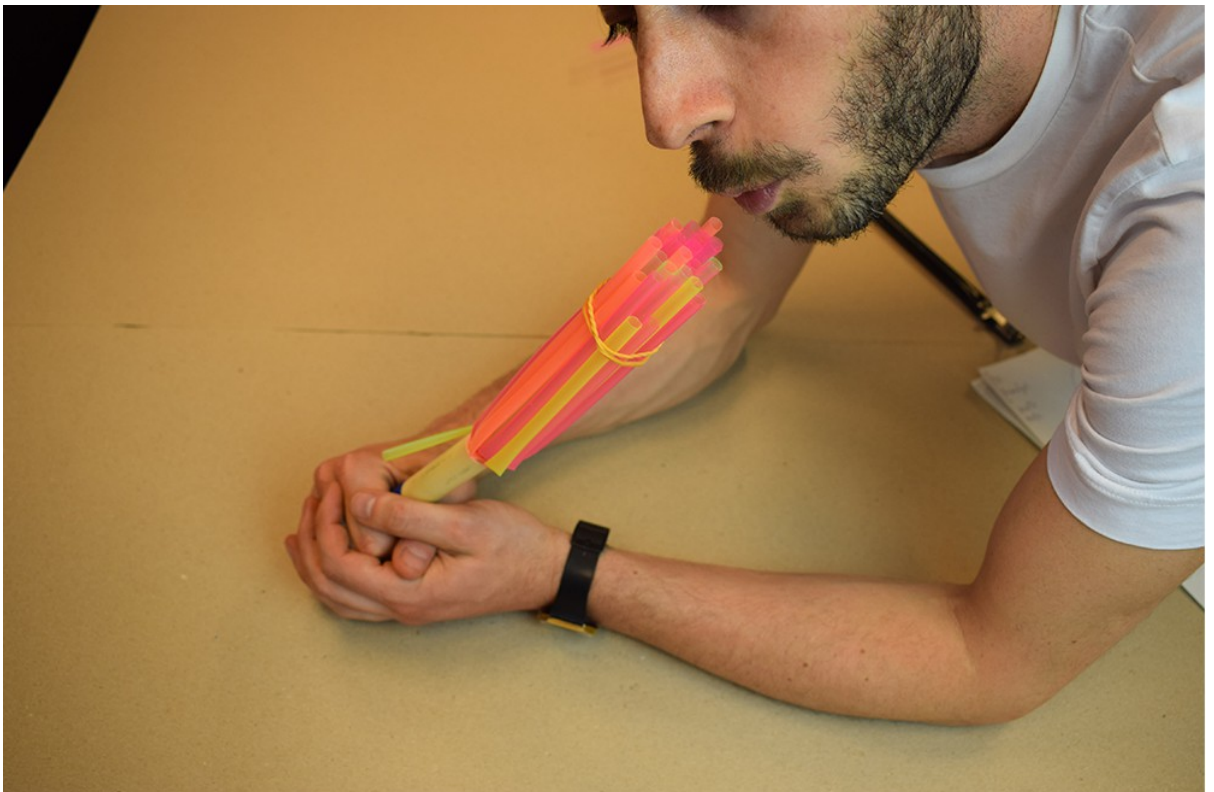**3.4** Start building the instrument.

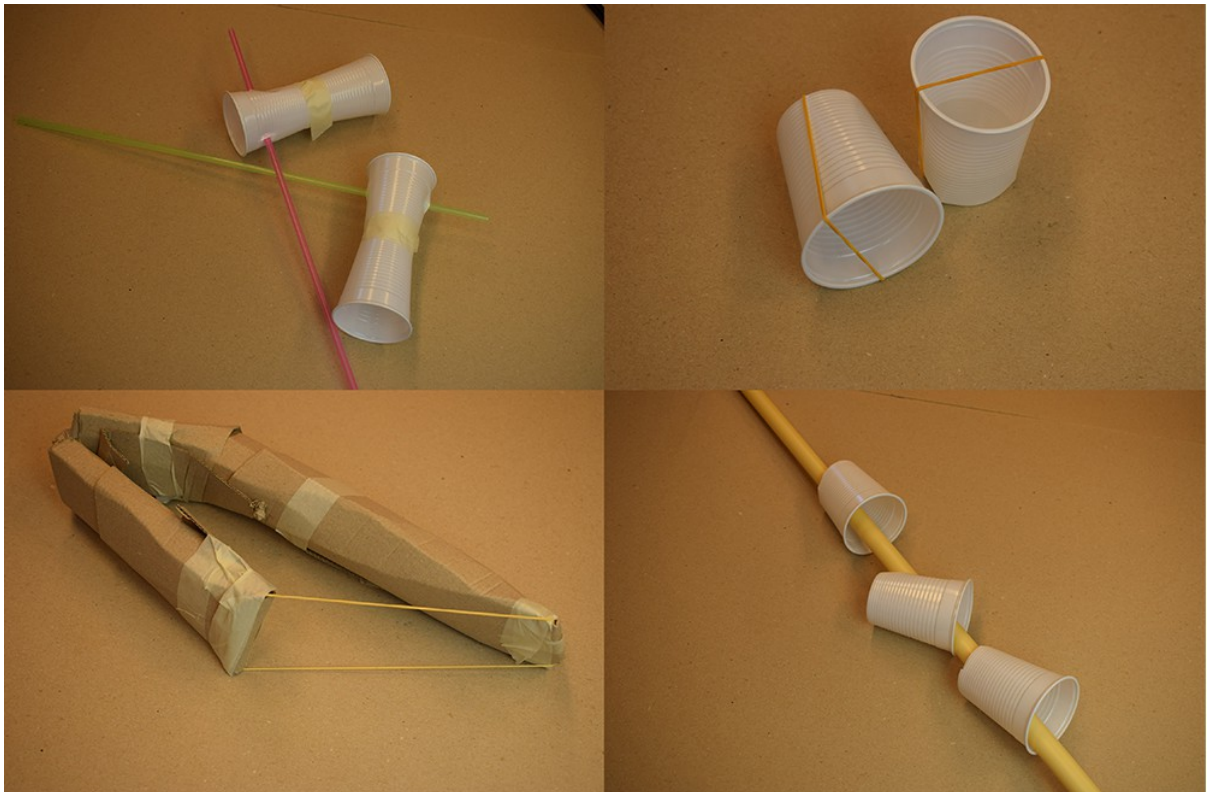**3.5** The first version is not necessarily the best.

3.6 Test the instrument.

3.7 if necessary update the instrument.

3.5 Test the instrument. The sound might be different than expected.
Listen and experiment. What does it sound like?

3.7 When all instruments are finished, have participants present their sounds. These four instruments were created in our workshop.

3.8 Discuss how a sound should be heard, for example; birds chatter continuously, while a siren might pass only once. Practice combining the city sounds before going to the next step.

Didactic note: The goal of this exercise is to replicate sound with new materials. By engineering sounds, participants will latently deepen their understanding of audio.

Step 4: Build your Sonic city.

The core of this workshop is to add the deconstructed sounds, and (re)build a sound city. To do this, we will use a loop station. It allows participants to add the different sounds of their city, thus creating their own soundscape. To do so, you will use a [Ditto MIC looper.](#)

A loop station works with layers of sound. Each new layer will be added on all the previous layers. Once a layer is added, it is 'stuck' to the rest of the sounds. The first layer defines the length of the loop. If the first layer is short (5 seconds) it will create a fast repetition of the sounds on top. A longer first layer will offer more room for variation.

Example.mp3
a Sonic City in 6 layers
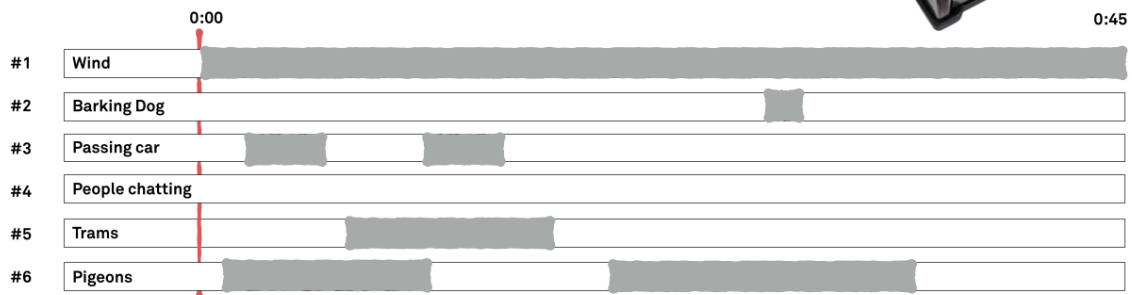
To build a city in audio will require a first layer of sound of at least 45 seconds. This long layer allows us to vary with the playback frequency of sound. For example, the wind could cover the full length of the 45 seconds, while a sneeze of a passerby happens only once.

Clean, quiet mic pre-amp with phantom power (24 V)

Balanced XLR output

Automatic mic input gain for quick and painless setup. No distortion even when you get loud!

Set the perfect balance between loop and mic level. Great for live fade-outs and fade-ins

Mic-control feature allows remote control looping via TC-Helicon MP-75 mic

Latest loop and overdubs stored even when power is off

LED shows Record, Play, Overdub, Undo and Loop Ready modes

Stop / noise-free Erase

Record / Play / Overdub / Undo/Redo

4.1 Demonstrate the Looper to the group. Make a short loop and add a couple of layers so participants understand how it works.

4.2 Tap the loop pedal once. The light will turn red while recording.

4.3 Tap again to stop the loop. The light will turn blinking green now.

4.4. The newly added sound is now continuously playing until you press the loop pedal again. Repeat step 4.2/4.4 to add the various layers of sound. Build the city together with the participants, by adding sound one layer at a time.

4.5 If you would like to delete the entire track, hold down the stop button.

4.6 Continue until you have an interesting sounding city. Learn from the process and restart when necessary.

4.7 Give the city a name together with the group

Didactic note: The goal of this exercise is to paste all the sounds that were deconstructed in step 1 and 2, and that were engineered in step 3 back together.

Step 5: Visualise the city

After finalizing the sonic city, it is now time to visualize the city. The group will create this image collaboratively as the instruments will turn into brushes.

5.1 Lay plastic on the ground and place a large square piece of paper in the middle.

5.2 Gather around, paint collaboratively using the instruments as brushes.

5.3 After the image is finished the workshop is done. Let the paper dry.

Didactic note: The goal of this exercise is to move back from listening to making and to see how the various instruments resonate differently as a brush. No need to stretch this didactic note, just have fun with the experimental brushes.
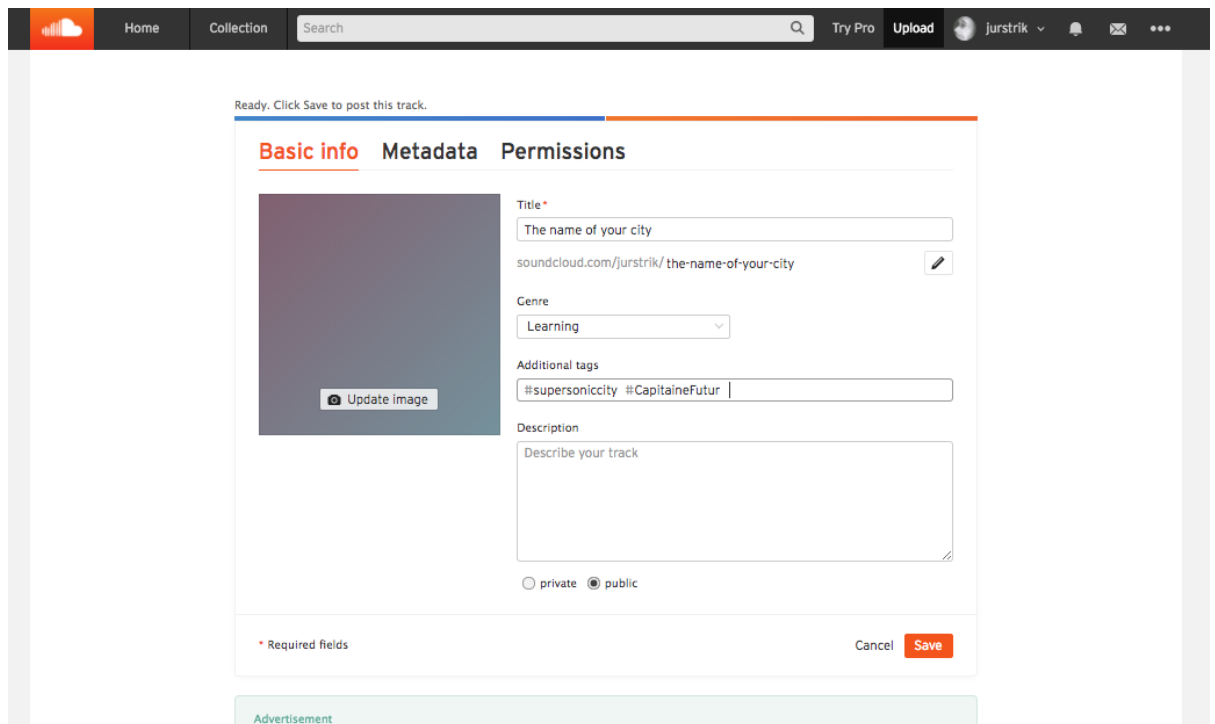
- **End of workshop!**

4. AFTERWARDS: UPLOAD YOUR SONIC CITY

4.1 Hang the dried visualization of the city (step 5) on the wall. Photograph in a square ratio. Or make a regular picture and crop it into a square image.
4.2 Transfer the audio file of the Sonic City to your computer.
4.3 Save the recording. Rename the file and give it the name your city.
4.4 Log into your Soundcloud.com account or create an account.
4.5 Upload the cityscapes to Soundcloud.

- *Title* is the name of the city.
- *Genre* is Learning
- *Additional tags* are **#asoniccity** and **#CaptaineFutur,** <u>don't forget these tags!</u>
- *Update image* with the image you have created in *Step 5*.
- *Description* whatever you like to say about the workshop.
- Check if the button is set to *public*.

Find all the different Sonic Cities via this link.

CREDITS

The Sonic City workshop was designed Jurian Strik, with support from Cinekid festival's team, as part of the *Les Voyages de Capitaine futur* European cooperation project led by La Gaîté Lyrique, Cinekid, KIKK and WoeLab.

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