*I can't fix what you broke*, 2014
Mark Fell

*"Time is not something that happens outside of us, a kind of receptacle of being; we ourselves are time. The processes of the world are encountered in time."*

Martin Heidegger. *Supplements: From the Earliest Essays to Being and Time and Beyond.* (1910–1925)

Western musics are both embedded within and sustain beliefs about time and our relation to it. Just as in the realm of visual art, first person linear perspective promotes a particular conception of ourselves as separable observers of the world… as static points around which the world happens in an ordered, coherent and rational manner. So too music presents us with the sense of ourselves inhabiting an infinitely narrow now point (the present), sandwiched between everything that has happened (the past) and everything that will happen (the future). This has been referred to as linear-ordinary time consciousness.
Is it a coincidence that this exactly mirrors how Western music is represented on a score or within computer based environments such as Logic or Pro Tools? Music, and its means of representation and organization, can be thought of as technologies within which temporal experience is both constructed and interpreted. However this linear ordinary time consciousness is clearly not universal.
In a number of publications, including *The Geometry of Psychological Time* the Slovakian mathematician Metod Saniga has offered a several alternatives. Following the research of anthropologist A. P. Elkin into non-western cosmogony, this installation attempts to imbue a spatial rather than temporal self-world *gestalt*. Here, time as a formal component of the work is removed and the harmonic content is given a spatial form.
Throughout the 20th century and in recent years there have been many explorations of multichannel spatialised sound and music. However works in this field tend to focus on how sound can be moved around the listener: for example using Ambisonics; the complex panning of GRM's Acousmonium; or current research into wavefield synthesis. These methods are reminiscent of the linear perspective model of space and time. Similarly works employing such techniques are often described using visual metaphors. Dennis Smalley for example compares his music to a natural landscape with rivers, birds, foreground and background textures and so on. This work rejects the sonic landscape analogy.

Here ten audio monitors are distributed around a totally blacked out room, each monitor produces a single synthetic tone. These tones were recorded by Fell with the Serge modular system at Elektronmusikstudion EMS Stockholm Sweden during summer 2013. Perhaps the central appeal of modular synthesis is its potential for extremely complex temporal modulations of sound using a variety of time-based processes, think for example of the work by Fell's label mate Keith Fullerton Whitman. Here by contrast each tone does not vary in a time domain (other than the tuning instabilities present in analogue synthesis).

In this respect the piece could be aligned with works including *The Dream House* (La Monte Young, 1967). Whereas such works speak of transcendence and employ the rhetoric of Indian mysticism, by contrast Fell's work alludes to disorientation, alienation and opposition. This is evident in a recent work premiered at Issue Project Room (NYC, 2014). Here Fell presented an extended mix of canonical tonal works—ostensibly produced to transcend the western "clock time" and foster some kind of out of time meditative state—yet throughout the piece a large LED clock is placed centre-stage reiterating the geometricized structure of linear time consciousness, obviating any transcendent experience of time and self. Boredom, impatience, incredulity thus become the central vocabulary of Fell's aesthetic.