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What lies beneath: small soundworks for the sleepy

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what lies beneath

small soundworks for the sleepy

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Wakeup 14: “Dissairay”

May 15, 2011 - [Leave a Response](#)

Alas, it's the final Monday morning of *What Lies Beneath*, but lucky for you we've left one of the best til last.

And so. Tomorrow's wake up is by Lily Jones. It's called *Dissairay*.

[Download or play Lily's work here.](#)

Lily writes:

My sound work was made with the idea of re-creating the 'wake-up soundtrack' that is inside my own head when i wake up.

From the emerging sounds in the outside world, to the dreams coming to an end on the inside, chaos and clutter.

It's a sophisticated piece I think – and watch for the killer ending.

We sign off with an image of the inside of Lily's mind:



* * * * *

Many thanks to everyone who has listened in, woken up to *What Lies Beneath* this past fortnight, and contributed your thoughts and responses to these small soundworks for the sleepy!

Thanks to Renewable Recyclers and Australia's Industry World, where the original field recordings were made, and to PACT Theatre and Quarterbred who have presented Tiny Stadiums Festival, which this project has been a part of.

But most of all thanks and congratulations to the talented staff, and the keen young artists of Media Arts 101 at Wollongong University — without whom, of course, there would be nothing at all to hear, here...

Categorized in [Wakeups](#)

[Wakeup 13: “Wake Up and Smell the Ashes”](#)

May 14, 2011 - [One Response](#)

Your penultimate wakeup awaits.

Given that it's for Sunday morning, I recommend playing this one at a slightly lower volume than usual, to let it enter your subconscious mind more subtly. It's by Nikolas Kostianen.

[You can listen now, or download Nikolas' piece here.](#)

Nik has called his work, “Wake Up and Smell the Ashes.” He writes:

This piece is an industrial landscape of mechanical creatures moving to the monotonous grind of daily work.

Who are these creatures? What is the work they do? And what are these “Ashes” which we will smell once we awake? The artist leaves these mysteries wide open...

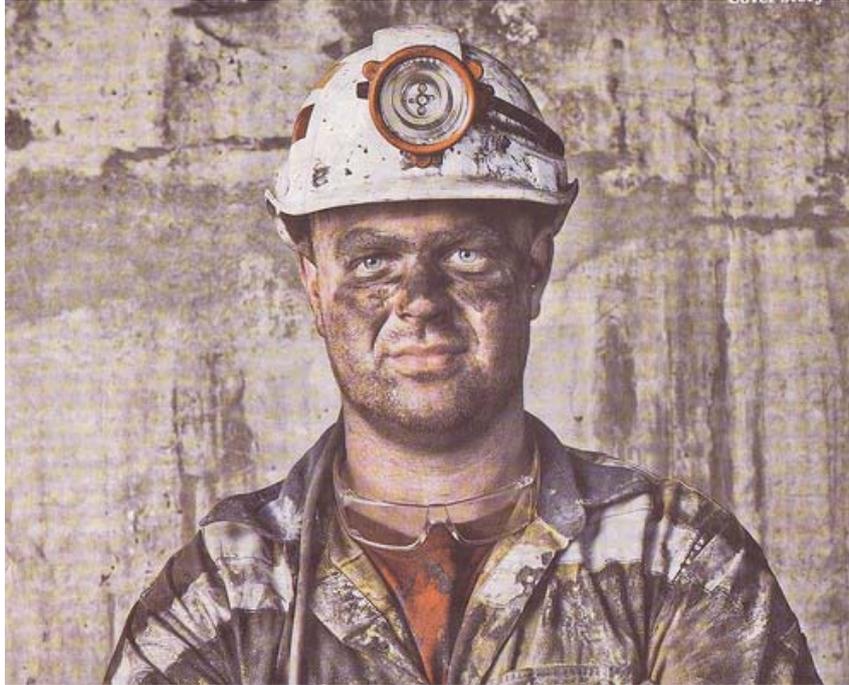
Here he is, excited to finally have his name in lights:



Categorized in [Wakeups](#)

[Intermission: What Lies Beneath the hills of the Illawarra...](#)

May 13, 2011 - [Leave a Response](#)



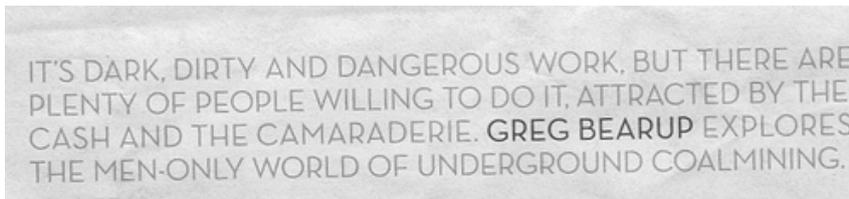
[Photo by Tim Bauer]

Just as *What Lies Beneath* was getting started, an article by Greg Bearup entitled *Risks and Riches* was published in the *Sydney Morning Herald Good Weekend* magazine.

I found it so fascinating, and some of the issues which it explores are so relevant to the questions surrounding this project (the raw industrial *-material* – underground which props up our clean urban lives) that I decided to re-post it here.

I should note that the Illawarra – the area which this article deals with – is the exact geographical territory in which all the artists who have made sound pieces for this project live, work and study.

(Please excuse the rough scanning...)



[Read the rest of this entry »](#)

Categorized in [Intermissions](#)

[Wakeup 12: “That distinct truck reversing noise”](#)

May 13, 2011 - [One Response](#)

Even though we’re heading towards the end of *What Lies Beneath*, there are still some corkers to come. This one is by Matt Korvin, one of the students who visited the Steelworks (and, incidentally, a very promising young competition surfer).

[You can listen or download Matt’s wake up call here...](#)

Like many of the students, Matt augmented his field recordings at the steelworks with others that were more personally meaningful. He writes:

My piece was originally inspired by industrial trucks operating across the road from my house. Each morning I would wake up to that distinct truck reversing noise.... Beep beep beep.

I think we all know that noise Matt – it can be disturbing first thing in the morning. I guess one of the issues we've not yet broached in this project is that industrial noises do, often begin to emanate before many of us wake up. You know, how "tradies hours" begin at the crack of dawn...

I'm not sure why, but many of the young artists whose work is featured in What Lies Beneath like to picture themselves in idyllic settings. Matt is in this category – here he is taunting us as he heads down for a dip at one of the Illawarra's gorgeous beaches:



Categorized in [Wakeups](#)

[Wakeup 11: "Friday the Thirteenth"](#)

May 12, 2011 - [2 Responses](#)

It's time for your Friday-the-Thirteenth salutation. This one's a particularly spoooky one. It comes from Matt Melendez.

[You can download or listen to Matt's work here.](#)

Matt writes:

I tried to reach, sonically, towards the state of being lost. At a certain point in the work, the subconscious meets the conscious mind. See if you can pick when that moment is...

Phaser, echo, tone and tempo changes were all used to manipulate my industrial field recordings in order to create this state.

Here's the artist taunting you with his fiendish quizzles:



Categorized in [Wakeups](#)

[Intermission: The Guru of Alarm Art](#)

May 11, 2011 - [Leave a Response](#)

A few weeks ago I bumped into [Caleb Kelly, Sydney sound maven](#). I was telling him about *What Lies Beneath*. He suggested we all check out the work of [Max Neuhaus, who made “silent” alarm clocks and timepieces](#):

Instead of a bell which begins with a sudden clang and gradually dies away, this concept is precisely the opposite. The sound is introduced gradually; beginning inaudibly it grows slowly over a period of minutes and, at its height, suddenly disappears. The long subtle emergence of the sound causes it to go unnoticed. It becomes apparent only at the instant of its disappearance, creating a sense of silence.

In this silent moment, for a few seconds after the sound has gone, a subtle transparent aural afterimage is superimposed on the everyday sounds of the environment, a spontaneous aural memory or reconstruction perhaps, shared by all who notice it, engendered by the sound's disappearance.

And again:

It's a device emitting a continuous tone slowly increasing in volume until it suddenly stops at the appointed time, thus awakening the sleeper. It's not the subtle sound that actually awakes, but its disappearing. (via [Continuo](#))



Categorized in [Intermissions](#)

[Wakeup 10: “Questions”](#)

May 11, 2011 - [2 Responses](#)

Here’s something ponderous to start your Thursday. Our sonic alarmist du Jour, Jo McGeorge asks:

How do we know when we are really awake??

What do our brains do with outside sounds in our dreams??

What happens in our brains when the sounds around us become part of our dreams, and when do they start to define our actual reality as we begin to wake-up?

[Download or listen to Jo McGeorge’s answers to these questions here.](#)

She continues, on somewhat more solid ground:

I used household ‘morning’ sounds, the sounds that fill our brains as we start to wake up, eg. the shower, coffee machine, doors closing etc, to show the process of moving from dreaming to awake.

Here’s the dreamer at work:



Categorized in [Wakeups](#)

[What Lies Beneath on the Airwaves](#)

May 10, 2011 - [Leave a Response](#)

Last week I went along to [FBI radio](#) to do an interview about the *What Lies Beneath* project with Brooke from the [Sunday Night at the Movies](#) show. Jamie Gray (one of the young artists whose work is featured here) travelled up from the ‘gong to be interviewed too.

[You can download or listen to our ravings – as well as a mashup selection of tracks featured in this project, which were played on air, by clicking here.](#)

Categorized in [Media](#)

[Wakeup 9: “Two’s right to charge ay”](#)

May 9, 2011 - [2 Responses](#)

At the glowing heart of the steelmaking process is a mix of super-refined coal and scraps of iron, cooked together in an enormous cauldron at two thousand degrees until a new molten substance, burning and spitting orange fury — whose heat can be felt for hundreds of metres — is poured out into molds.

To me it seemed mediaeval.

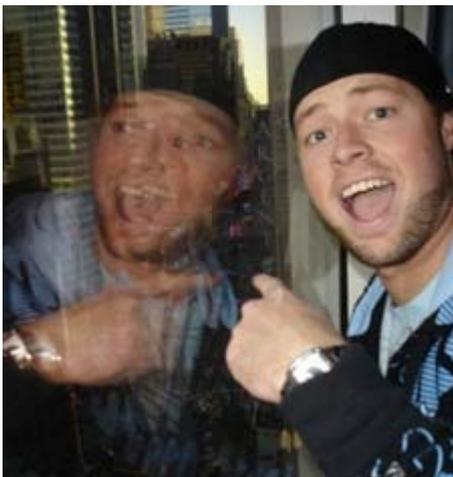
And yet, the mixing (or “charging”) of the cauldron is controlled by sophisticated computers hidden behind triple reinforced glass – the operators sitting at consoles on wheeled ergonomic chairs, twiddling knobs on a three metre wide custom built desk like the pilot of a space ship.

In this environment, piped in music helps the 12 hour shift drift by. Commercial radio, classic hits. And when his computer readout tells him the time is right, our operator leans into his microphone and says: “TWO’S RIGHT TO CHARGE AY! THANKYOU VERY MUCH”. And the steel is poured.

Aidan O’Brien smelts this very local soundbite into your Wednesday morning wake up call for *What Lies Beneath*.

[You can download or listen to Aidan’s work here.](#)

And here’s the Jimmy Barnes of experimental sound himself:



Categorized in [Wakeups](#)

[Intermission: “A clang. A ring. Steel on steel.”](#)

May 9, 2011 - [Leave a Response](#)



A clang.

A ring. Steel on steel.

The Crashes. Heat.

Pounding on your memory.

You see it. You hear it. You feel it.

Molten steel.

Pouring through your veins.

Boiling from the inside.

Your ears are burning.

The sound is continuous.

Percussive. Consuming.

Crashing into you as the heat washes over you.

It's beautiful.

An ocean of sound in a city of heat.

* * * * *

(Text by Jess Morgan, written after [visiting the Port Kembla Steelworks](#), May 2011.)

Categorized in [Intermissions](#)

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