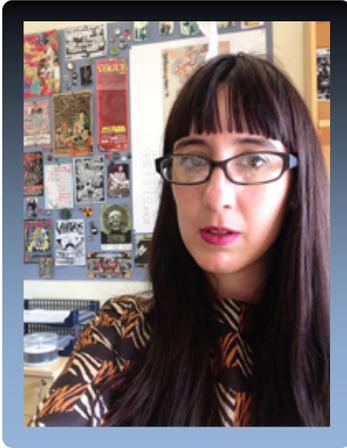


Guest Lecture Series

Topics in the Aesthetics of Music and Sound

Thursday, November 24, 2016
3:15-5 p.m. in U141

Voicing the Real in Extreme Metal: Horror, Gender and the Growl

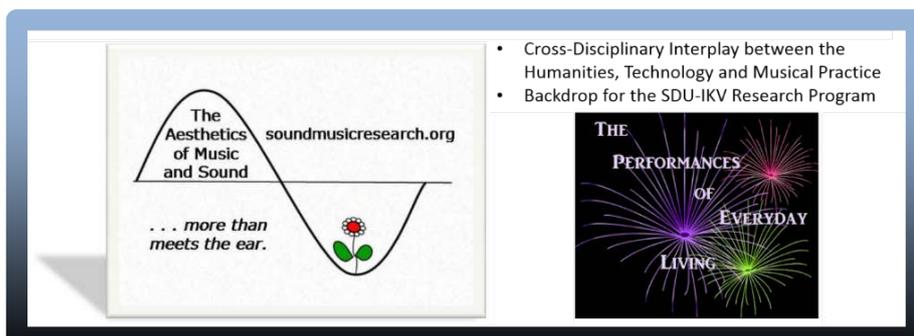


Rosemary Overell, Rosemary Overell completed a doctorate, majoring in cultural studies and Japanese studies, at the University of Melbourne in 2012. Her thesis, *Brutal: Affect Belonging In, and Between, Australia and Japan's Grindcore Scenes*, explored how fans of grindcore metal music feel 'at home' in scenic spaces. Rosemary's research included two years of ethnographic fieldwork in Osaka, Japan, as well as in Melbourne, Australia. In 2014, Rosemary published her book *Affective Intensities in Extreme Music Scenes* with Palgrave. Currently, she is teaching two second-year communications subjects and working on *nikkeijin* migrants and youth cultures in Nagoya, Japan. She is also interested in experimental ethnographic methodologies. She is also a member of the [Performance of the Real](#) research theme steering group. **Via Adobe Connect.**

Abstract: Extreme metal is regularly at the centre of mediatised controversy over its symbolic representations of horror, violence and gore. This leads to a popular assumption that the representational content of extreme metal (lyrics, images etc.) generates particular gendered and anti-social violence 'in real life'. While this has been disputed in studies of extreme metal, many of these critiques centre on the reworking of the representational to include inverted representations with an apparently 'feminist' focus. This might be in terms of all-female bands writing lyrics expressing violence against men. I suggest this is a crude form of representational politics and that, instead, we need to turn to the more-than-representational to account for a more nuanced mode of gender relations than the standard reading. That is, we need to account for the more-than-symbolic to think through gendered experiences in extreme metal.

Through an account of Japanese and Australian grindcore scenes I propose that a focus on the 'metal voice' – what I term the brutal voice – yields such a more-than-symbolic account. For this, I draw on Mladen Dolar's (2006) work on the voice as the space of the Lacanian Real. I suggest that the growl present in grindcore songs refuses gendered boundaries and resists symbolisation. It directs us to the Real and is thus horrifying and experienced affectively (following Colette Soler [2016]) as a site of gendered anxiety.

- Dolar, Mladen. 2006. *A Voice and Nothing More*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Soler, Colette. 2016. *Lacanian Affects: The function of affect in Lacan's Work*. Bruce Fink. Trans. London: Routledge.



All are welcome - also via Adobe Connect

Adobe Connect Meeting Room = <https://c.deic.dk/extrememusic>

| Password = "music"

Sign-up is not required, but is appreciated, please see